



Ruraling Career Guidance

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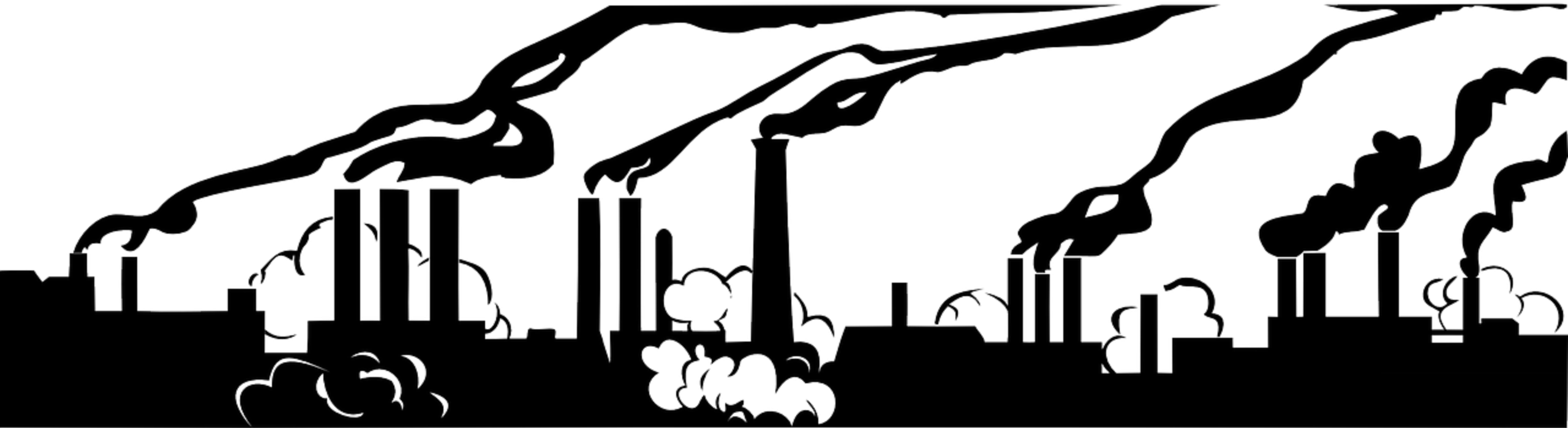
This presentation

- The urban origins of career guidance
- Challenges of career guidance in rural areas
- Rural perspectives on career guidance
- Practices of guidance in rural areas
- What we can learn from 'ruraling' career guidance more widely.

This presentation is based on a paper by Alexander and Fuqua (in development) on Ruraling Career Guidance



Career guidance: urban origins?



Career guidance as a field emerged in the context of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation in the late 19th Century (McMahon & Arthur, 2018, p. 3)

But....



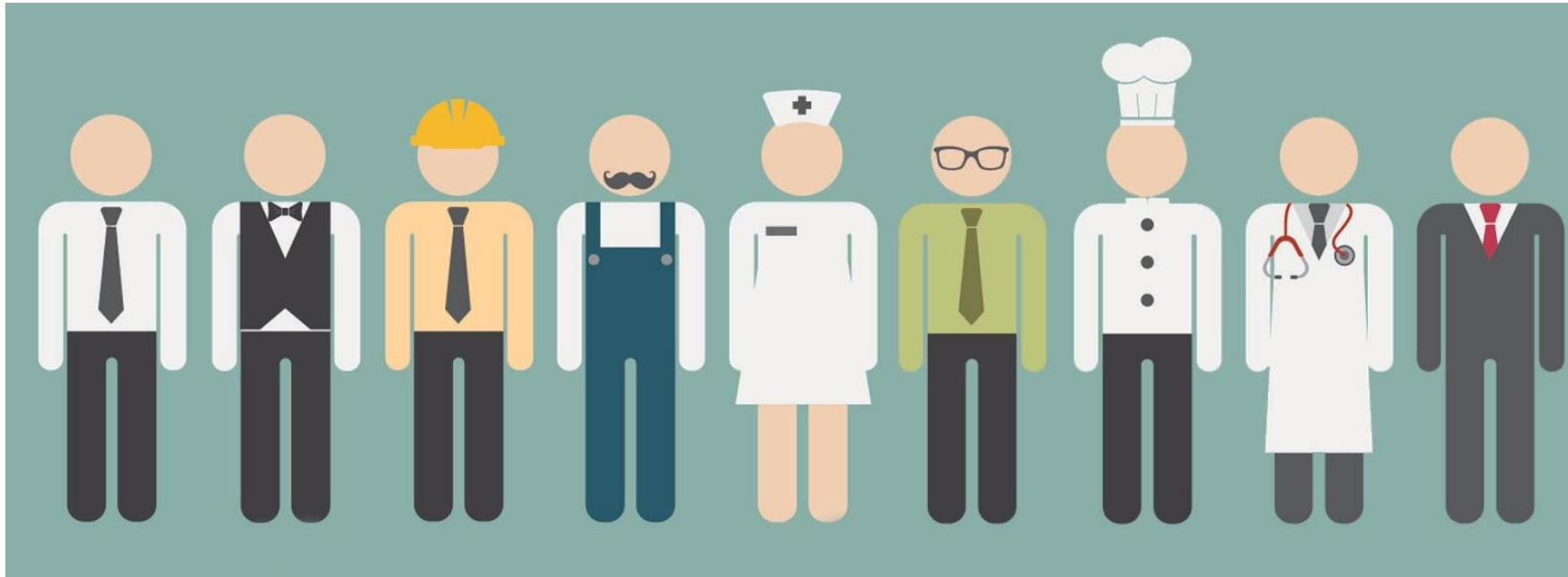
What happens when you think about career guidance through a rural lens? What kind of challenges are there? What kinds of solutions?



Career guidance : rural challenges

The rural challenge

“services intended to assist people... make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities.” (OECD, 2004, p. 19)



“Career guidance” ignores place

- Careers advisers typically focus on interests and careers without thinking about place (Rosvall, 2020)
- This can support the normative idea that career choices should be prioritised over location (Ennerberg et al., 2022)



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“Career” exists elsewhere

- The concept of “career” itself is more difficult in rural areas (Bakke & Hooley, 2022; Kalyanram et al., 2014)
- Divisions between those orientated to national or local labour markets (Wierenga, 2009; Rönnlund et al., 2018).



Thinking about place: Rural alternatives



Rural social space

- The RSS model was developed by Green and Reid (2010; 2021)
 - “The lack of attention to place and space in educational research has meant that teachers are prepared with generalised, ‘metrocentric’ understandings about society, students, and learning.”
 - “The rural social space model draws attention to key issues impacting on the lives and learning of people living in particular places.”
- It was developed for Teachers to think through their rural spaces, although Green and Reid also suggest it could be useful for other rural professionals.
- So....Let’s think what it does for careers advisers

Rural Social Space

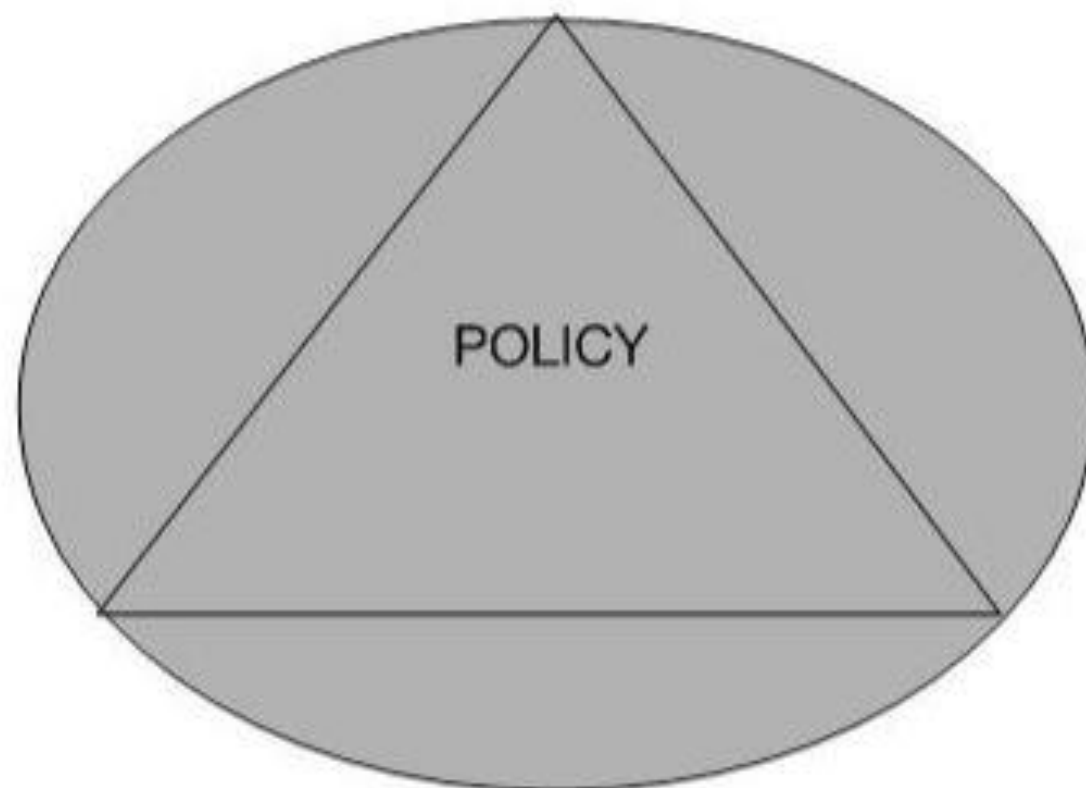
Economy

WORK/INDUSTRY

Established rural industries

New rural industries

Production



Geography

ENVIRONMENT

Water

Land

Sustainability

Place

Demography

POPULATION

Integrity

Culture

History

Spirituality

People

RSS highlights

- Rural labour markets are complex, and changing
- Places have meaning to individuals beyond the labour market
- Careers in rural places might hold different meanings



Rural career development

- Rural people have a long history of prioritising non-economic outcomes: lifestyle migration, 'radical rural'.
- These ideas are apparent in career development theories e.g. Super and Schein's career anchors.
- They encourage us to frame 'career' in a different, more holistic way
- Local space becomes valid, not just a deficit.

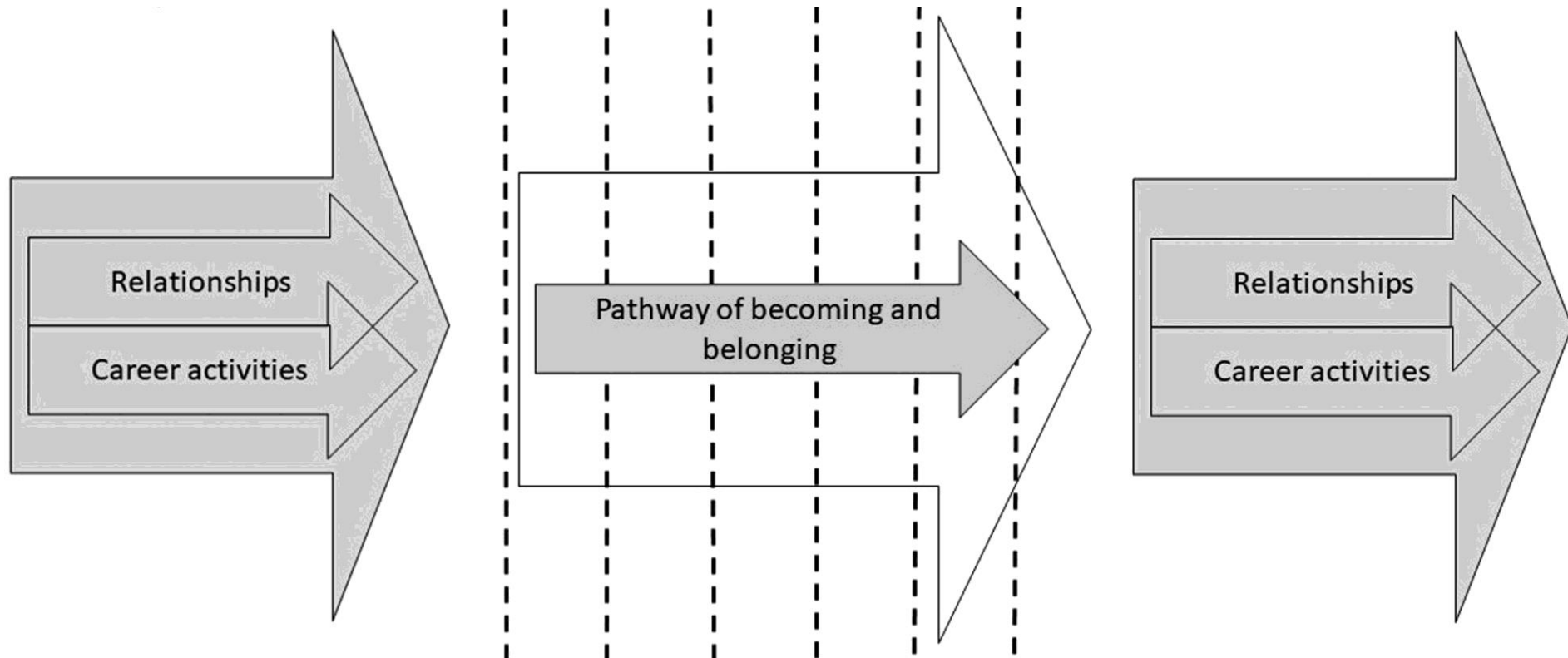


Thinking about practice: Rural alternatives



Models of Career development

- Threefold dynamics of **people places and careers** are also important in how people's careers develop over time and place (Alexander, 2022)



Thinking beyond narrow definitions of 'career'

- How do we address issues of spatial belonging, and relationships in career guidance practice?
- Rural ideas of career guidance emphasise it is important to move beyond narrow definitions of career:

*It must ask not just *What do you want to be?* but also *Who do you want to be?* *Where do you want to be?* *Why and how do you want to be?* and, importantly, *How can we support you?* (Tieken, 2016)*



Specific needs of clients

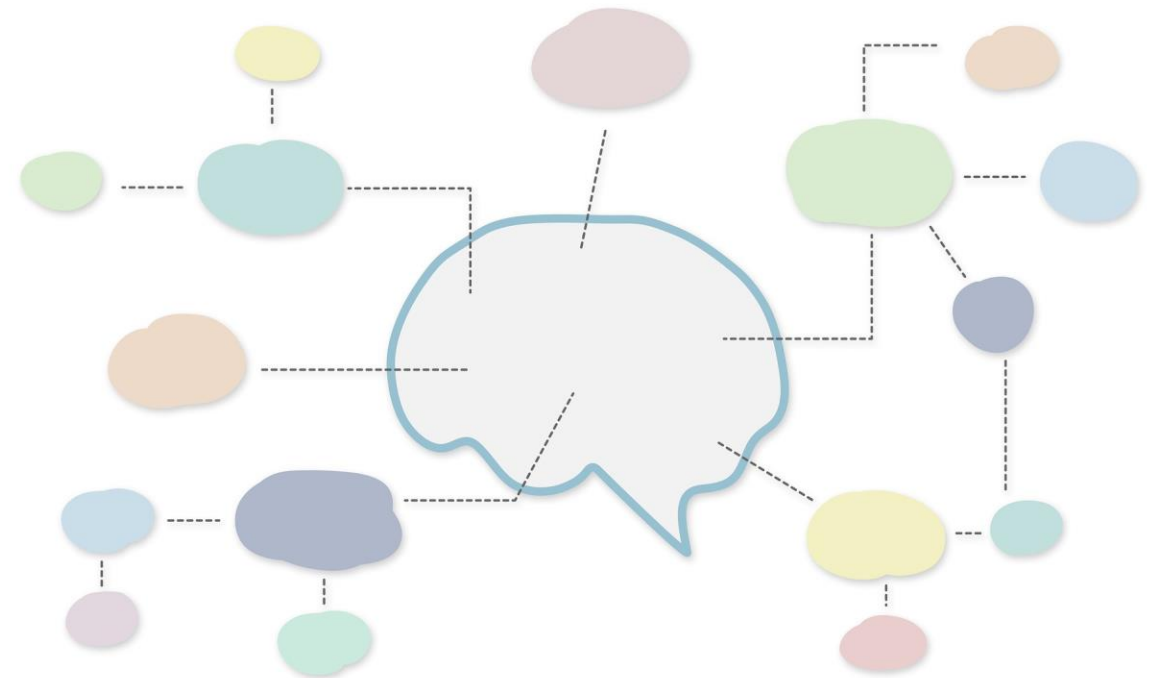
- Informal job applications rather than speculative
- Specific skills: problem solving, interdisciplinary working, “social floating”, ability to work with confidentiality
- Flexibility and openness in career development rather than planning

(Alexander, 2013)



Rural professional approaches & tools

- Occupational databases and matching tools are problematic (Alexander 2018b), life mapping approaches may be more valid
- LMI has limitations, local learning and connections should be considered as professional learning (Fuqua, 2021)
- Advisers can use RSS model for understanding their places.



Ethical dilemmas

- How do we create and support ideas of rural and urban places in our work? (Reid and Green, 2010)
- Do we support mobility, or take a 'community activist' or 'integrative' stance? (Alexander, 2018a; Shepherd and Hooley, 2016)
- Or can we help clients adopt critical spatial perspectives? (Alexander, 2018b)

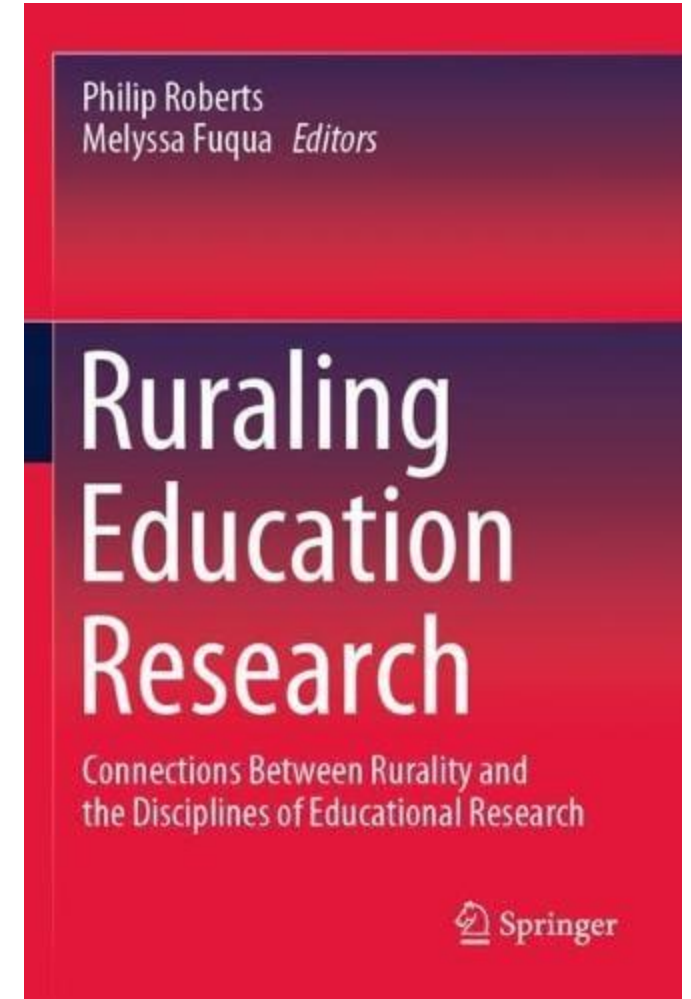


'Ruraling' career guidance



“Ruraling”

- Ruraling, a concept from Roberts and Fuqua (2021)
- Farrugia (2014, p. 294) argues that because research in rural areas “necessitates a closer attention to space” research in rural areas can enrich “the theoretical armoury of the field [of youth studies] as a whole”.
- “Ruraling” is a way of de-peripheralizing rural knowledges, recognising them as valid, and identifying the contributions they can make



Linking to wider debates

“Ruraling” practice highlights the following.....:

- The challenge of defining ‘career’
- The way pathways may be shaped by wider than economic decision making.
- The importance of context-specific approaches to career development and understanding of client needs
- Different ways of thinking about our professional guidance, and the approaches we use.
- Ethical and social justice considerations.

.....all of these are of interest in career guidance more widely.

How can you reflect on the role of place in your work?



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