

Spatial Justice and its implications for rural studies.

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1: Welcome to Country.

In Australia we begin meetings and presentations with a recognition of the traditional owners and custodians of the land upon which we meet, and pay our respects to their elders past/present/future.

2: Definitions & background.

- i. In 2011 over ½ the world's population can be defined as 'urban'! what does this mean for how what is 'normal' is understood?
- ii. Soja: 'Seeking Spatial Justice' (2010) examines the spatial dimension of justice and how inequity is spatially produced. It argues that traditional approaches to social justice are dominated by **historical** and **social** ways of understanding the world. These are 'fixed' in space, or space-neutral. That is, the geography of justice is only a backdrop that social practice happens within and not a substantive factor in creating and producing inequity. Soja proposes 'spatiality' as a third way of seeing the world, in a trialectic relationship with historical and social approaches. Sees geography, space and place as important ideas in social justice.
 - a. Do we merely 'spatialise' historical and social approaches or something more?
- iii. His argument is city based
- iv. Readily transferable to the rural (Roberts & Green, 2013).
- v. Draws on the construction developed by Lefebvre (1991) and used by Soja (1996) of *space* as constituted in a trialectic of *perceived*, *conceived* and *lived* space that can be real-and-imagined.
- vi. I am using *space* as a broad theoretical tool and *place* as somewhat more specific and situated, though equally temporal.
- vii. Gruenewald's (2003) formulation of a critical pedagogy of place
- viii. Nesor (2006) centre-periphery dynamics need to be reconsidered,
- ix. Cuervo's (2012) call for an enlarged social justice agenda
- x. Spatial turn in social theory (Gulson & Symes, 2007)
- xi. Howley, Howley and Yahn's (2014) call to engage with rurality in research
- xii. Sher and Sher's (1994) call to value rural people and communities.

2: Modernity as the move to the city.

- i. Williams (1973) in 'The Country and the City' contends that the city constitutes the vision of modernity, which produces a 'city-centeredness' that informs 'taste'.
- ii. Soja (2010) - modernity as primarily about urbanization and the development of the urban-industrial state.
- iii. Foucault (1984), the city was the organizing principle for the governing rationality that was to apply to the whole territory of a state in early modern Europe.
- iv. Metro-normativity (Green, 2013) or Metro-centricity (Roberts 2016) - assume the metropolitan experience to be normal and do not allow opportunities to consider other perspectives.

3: Social Justice perspectives.

- i. **Distributive – Social Democratic** (Rawls, 1971). Difference model in that it recognises that not all people have the same needs; equity which recognises difference, traditionally in relation to individuals rather than social groups or places; the market is to be controlled
- ii. **Distributive – Liberal Individualistic** (Rawls, 1971). A deficits form as it regards everyone as having the same basic needs; equality as sameness; The market is the basic provider of social justice.
- iii. **Recognitive** (Fraser 1995; Fraser 2008, Young 1990, Gewirtz, 2006) meaning looking at how processes produce injustice and reforming relationships based on this understanding,
- iv. **Recognitional** (Fraser 1995; Fraser 2008, Young 1990, Gewirtz, 2006) meaning recognising that groups/categories exist and have specific needs based on their specific cultures etc
- v. **Associational** (Fraser 1995; Fraser 2008, Young 1990, Gewirtz, 2006) refers to the ability of recognised groups to actually get together to have a say in things that impact upon them.
- vi. **Curricular** (Connell 1991; 1992; 1993). What kind of education is being provided? - is just, and meaningful, for all groups in society? Curricula practices that allow some groups to gain a greater share of social power, which confirm or justify disadvantage, block Socio-educational change towards equality, and reduces peoples capacity to remake their world – are unjust.
- vii. **Aesthetic** (Gielen, P. & Tomme, 2015) Role of art in confronting and representing injustice – and appropriation of image.
- viii. **Cultural Justice** (Fraser, 1997) the absence of **cultural domination** non-recognition and disrespect.
- ix. **Relational** (Gewirtz 1998, Smith, Todd, & Laing, 2018) focuses on the **nature of relationships** that constitute society, from micro to marco level and linked to recognitional
- x. **Geographic** (Hallsén & Nordin, 2018; Román et al., 2015): Draws on spatial justice, a spatial and temporal dimension looking at **distributions via geography**, but also how ‘areas’ change and the effect of that.
- xi. **Epistemic** (Fricker, 2010; Fricker, 2007; Anderson, 2012). The wrong done to someone in their **capacity as a knower**, through a form of prejudice against certain speakers.
- xii. **Cognitive** (Visvanathan, 2007; De Sousa Santos, 2007, 2014; Odora Hoppers, 2009) Recognises a plurality of knowledges, and the right of other knowledges to exist. Particularly, **epistemologies of the south** valuing ecologies of knowledge from the south.
- xiii. **Spatial** – see above

4: Organising principles?

- i. Are these approaches ‘spatial’? Most framed in historical or social approaches, and a re a response to forms of injustice or silences. Used as a noun or past tense verb.
- ii. We can look at the distribution of existing inequities, and some of the historical processes (such as modernity, move to the city etc) e.g. education outcomes, distribution of staff, resource distribution, marginalisation of indigenous. Though such responses are confined to redistribution or marginal inclusions – they don’t change things.
- iii. Social justice as ‘Spatial equalisation’ – \$(AUD) Billions redistributed on the basis of geographic location, aimed at reducing difference in outcomes.
- iv. Spatial justice goes beyond redistribution & decision making to the geographic distribution of justice where space is **productive and generative**. We can use it as a present & future tense verb.



- v. Especially powerful when we come at social justice through Epistemic & Cognitive frames of reference. Change the nature of what is assumed and hegemonic: western masculine epistemology. It can open avenues of epistemological thinking that have often been kept marginal due to arguments of relativity.
 - vi. Complication – not to appropriate Indigenous epistemologies and fights for knowledge, or De Sousa Santos’s epistemologies born of struggle. Avoid neo-colonialism.
5. The rural studies link – defining the rural.
- i. Rural studies frames ‘the rural’ positively, in its own right and recognises the plurality of meanings and definitions.
 - ii. We look at rurality as knowledge producing and culturally meaningful, not absent of knowledge and value or deficit as much education and social research does – see modernity point above.
 - iii. The rural is inherently spatial (Halfacree, 2006). ‘[t]he idea of rurality seems to be firmly entrenched in popular discourse about space, place and society in the Western world’ (Cloke, 2006, p. 18).
 - iv. The multiple ways of representing the rural tend to draw upon divergent epistemological traditions, emphasising that researching the rural must similarly draw upon various epistemological traditions.
 - v. Halfacree (2006). Three-fold model of rural space: rural locality (inscribed through practices of production and consumption), formal representations of the rural (particularly how it is framed in capitalist consumption), and everyday lives of the rural (with reference to culture).
 - vi. Cloke (2006). Three theoretical frames: functional (land use and life linked to land), political-economic (social production), and social (culture and values).
 - vii. Balfour, Mitchell and Molestone (2008). Generative theory of rurality: rurality as context, forces (space, place and time), agencies (movement, systems, will) and resources (situated, material and psychosocial).
 - viii. Reid et al. (2010) rural social space model: demography (population, culture, people), economy (work, industry, production), and geography (environment, place). Looking at how these may come together in relation to defining particular rural communities.
 - ix. Howley and Howley (2010) propose three rural community types: durable agrarian (sustainable rural industries), resource extraction (mining, logging), and suburbanizing (becoming other than rural).
6. Fields
- i. The rural education field has tended to work from within its own boundaries. Consequently the field has been becoming increasingly narrow and removed from the parent disciplines.
 - ii. Rural education is somewhat ambiguously placed - it draws primarily from the traditions of sociology and geography, with broader engagements with the non-education fields of rural sociology and rural geography.
 - iii. Sociology, and the sociology of education, does not engage significantly with the rural – hence the development of sub-fields of rural education and rural sociology.
 - iv. Consequently, scholarship is necessary in order to bridge these divides and enhance the quality, and breadth, of scholarship in all related fields.
 - v. New possibilities...

7: Focus on knowledge

- i. Curriculum is a representation of knowledge deemed valuable (2010) – what nation does it represent?
- ii. Soja (2010) suggests there are ‘no’ program to address inequity/in-justice equating to spatial thinking or that space produces power - I’m suggesting thinking about dominant knowledges of the metropolitan centre or specific knowledges’ of the rural, ie rural knowledges (knowledge in/of/for the rural, Downes & Roberts, 2015)
- iii. Subjects linked to traditions of western (European) universities and sciences (Teese 2013)
- iv. Hierarchies of subjects (Teese 2013, Blazby 2015)
- v. Connell (2007) ‘Southern Theory’ + De Sousa Santos(2014) ‘Epistemologies of the South’
- vi. Knowledge transfer in rural studies work – e.g (Phillipson et al, 2012; Proctor & Klerkx, 2013)
- vii. Rural Literacies (Donehower, Hogg & Schell, 2007; Green & Corbett, 2013),
- viii. Rural Social Space (Reid et al, 2010) and its relationship to educational enactment.
- ix. Spatial reasoning in mathematics (Lowrie & Jorgensen, 2018)
- x. Young (2007) rethinking knowledge & curriculum, Young & Muller (2016) ‘Powerful knowledge’ / ‘Knowledge of the powerful’.
- xi. Learning starts in place and connection – a foundation since Dewey & a basis of Vygotsky. Alternative is context free abstract knowledge & pedagogy.

8: questions of method & measures

- i. How to research for spatial justice when methodologies valued are rooted in the western university science tradition.
- ii. Ditto evidence valued in policy
- iii. e.g. Measuring ‘average’ performance will always be weighted to larger population groupings
- iv. e.g. the cultural/knowledge bias of the measure
- v. A form of ‘strategic eclecticism’ (Roberts & Green, 2013)

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