

SPATIALISING CAREER GUIDANCE AND DEVELOPMENT



DANISH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

AARHUS UNIVERSITY

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CAREER AS A JOURNEY....

The journey is “the commonest career metaphor of all” which is “attractive because of its ability to incorporate two key underlying facets of career: movement between *places*, and *time*” Inkson (2004: 3)

BUT

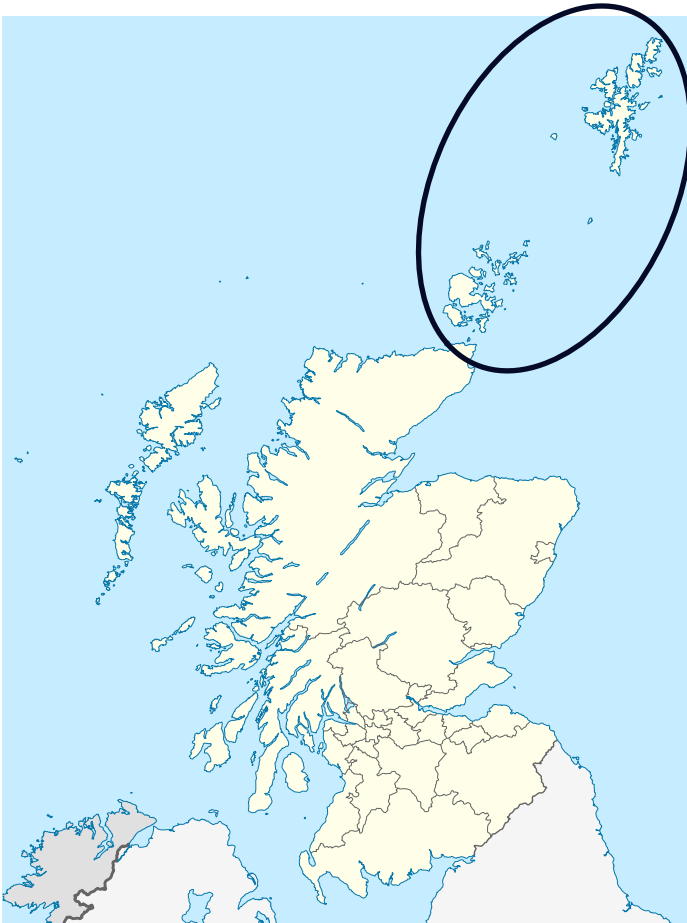
Career development theory has typically focused on *time* and neglected *place* (Alexander & Hooley, 2018; Inkson & Thorn, 2010; Patton & McMahon, 2014).

SO

How can we incorporate an understanding of place into career development theory....?



BACKGROUND



PhD research project:
Longitudinal qualitative interviewing with 22 undergraduates
from Orkney and Shetland



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PLACE IN CAREER THEORY

Where place is considered it is often: as contexts for decisions or community influences (e.g. Law 1981, 2009; Thomsen 2012), or as labour markets restricting choices (e.g. Roberts, 2009, Schein, 1990). Places can be chosen (cf Savickas et al 2009; Savickas, 2013) or can be a constraint.

BUT

Little theory brings these aspects of place together. Where place is considered this is mostly in relation to decisions at a single point in time.



THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS: PLACE

Place is a fundamental dimension of our lives

Place and time are intertwined (as time-space)

“It is, irretrievably, here *and* now. It won’t be the same ‘here’ when it is no longer now” (Massey, 2005 p.139).

Mobilities are not a way of overcoming place, but are spatial experiences ([Adey, 2017](#); [Cresswell, 2006](#); [Fallov et al., 2013](#)).



CAREERSHIP THEORY

“Pragmatically rational decision making” from an individual’s position.

Builds on Bourdieusian ideas of:

- Field
- Habitus
- Capital

Also focuses on: interactions with others in the field, and locations of decisions in the life-course. (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997; Hodkinson, 2008; Hodkinson, Sparkes and Hodkinson, 1996)



PLACE IN CAREERSHIP

- Very limited in early publications: spatiality of the labour market
- Later publication: 'geographical positioning includes local educational provision and local labour markets, but where a person lives also influences their dispositions' (2008, 8).
- Connecting spatial **habitus** alongside place as a '**field**' for decisions, and the position of individuals in their places (and/or orientation to mobility) according to their **capital**.
- Linked to growing interest in spatialising the Bourdieusian toolkit ([Atkinson, 2016](#); [Reed-Danahay, 2022](#); [Savage, 2012](#)).



BEYOND BOURDIEU....

- A problem: Bourdieusian understandings of place often focus on disadvantage/advantage aligned to interests in social class (Atkinson, 2016; Bathmaker, 2015)
- This can focus on how some young people have 'global' and others 'local' horizons. Some young people are trapped in local spaces while others transcend them. This connects social and spatial mobility.
- Replicates ideas that mobility is a way of overcoming space, and focuses on linear understandings of equality and progression.
- Thinks about place at a 'snapshot' in time



ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTUALISATIONS

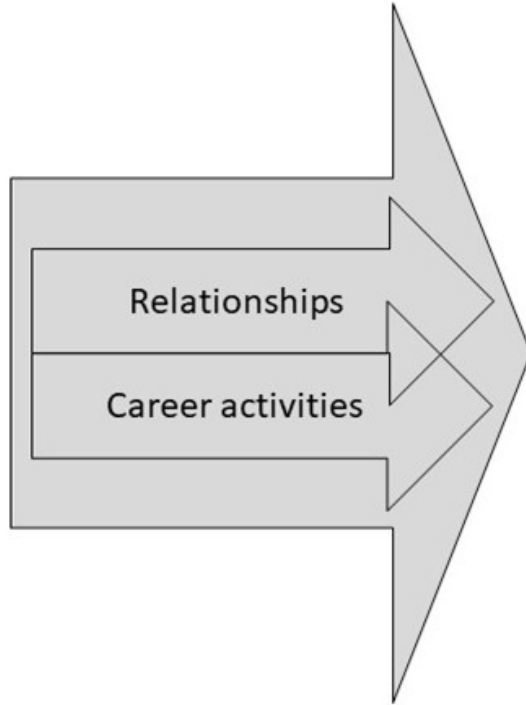
- Bourdieusian scholarship has typically focused on field analysis, not on individual experience.
- To understand individual experience we must understand that individuals are part of multiple fields (Atkinson [2016](#)). Habitus is layered or reflexive.
- Fields have localized and more generalized realisations (Ferrare and Apple, 2015), they can 'link' us to other spaces.
- Our experiences change, and our spatial and social positions change over time, which means our habitus can also change



CONCLUSIONS: A SPATIO-RELATIONAL MODEL

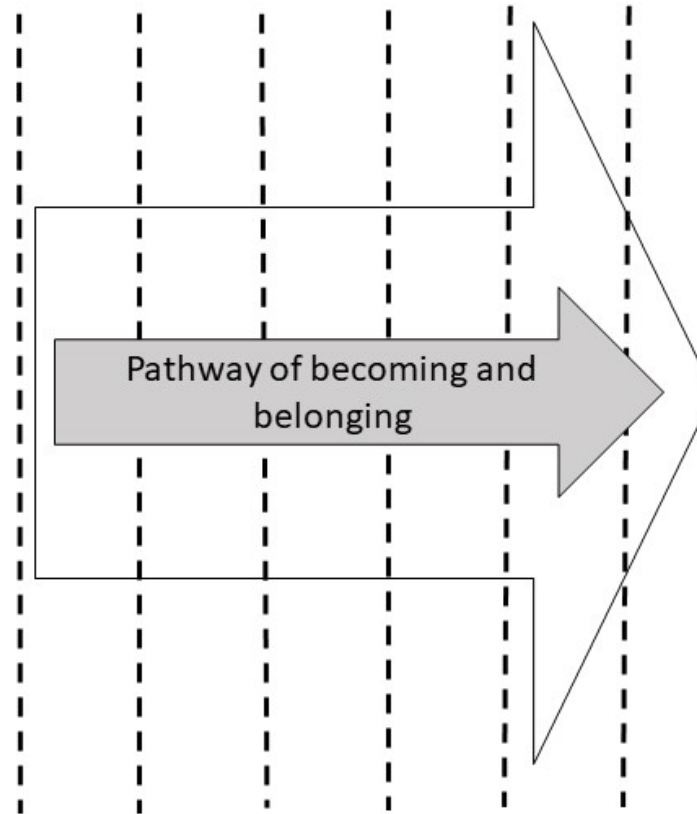
Present time-space position

Shaped by past spatial locations, activities and relationships



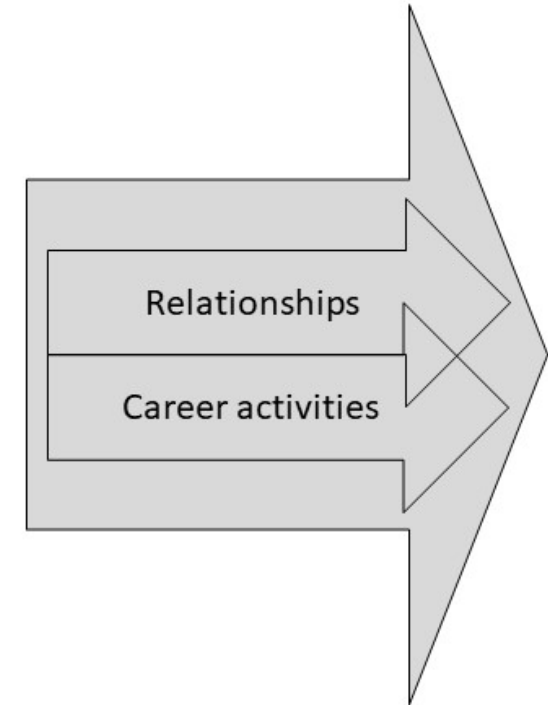
Development over time-space:

Pathways of becoming and belonging, shaped by relational and career frameworks



Emergent futures:

Balancing career, relationship and spatial outcomes



LINKS

Full references available in these publications





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Spatialising careership: towards a spatio-relational model of career development

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ABSTRACT

Career development theory is critical in understanding how individuals make transitions through education and the workplace. However, despite evidence of the importance of geographical place in shaping individual trajectories, limited theoretical work has focused on the topic. In this paper, the potential for the development of a theoretical framework of career development that explicitly addresses the role of place is explored. This paper starts by outlining the limited ways that place has been conceptualised in existing career development literature, and then explores potential developments utilising the theoretical tools from careership theory and the work of Pierre Bourdieu and integrating insights from contemporary spatial theorists. The paper finishes by drawing together a spatio-relational framework for career development which both encompasses insights from the existing literature and extends this work arguing that place is a salient dimension in career development to a much more significant extent than has been previously recognised.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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KEYWORDS

Career development;
place; geography;
careership; Bourdieu

Introduction

Following the ‘spatial turn’ in the social sciences (Gieryn 2000; Massey 2005), geographical disparities in labour markets, youth employment, higher education access and youth mobility have all been the focus of significant academic interest. The evidence around the importance of geography in structuring life chances has also contributed to the growing political interest in the topic within the UK and elsewhere, for example in the ‘Levelling Up’ agenda

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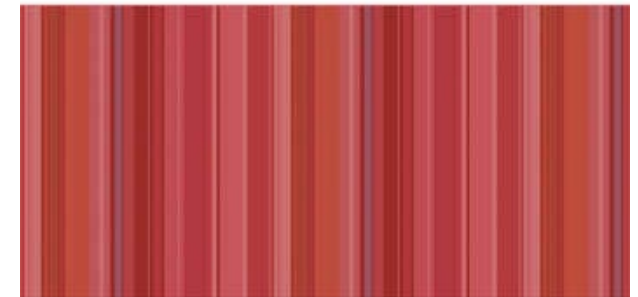
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