Introduction: Why Rural Matters in Canadian Education

Michael Corbett and Dianne Gereluk

Abstract In this chapter, we introduce the book and its genesis. We highlight some of the features of the Canadian rural education context and address the particularity of Canada's highly decentralized system of educational governance and delivery and how this influences the provision of education across a vast geography. We also elaborate how we understand the rural suggesting that contemporary spatial theory can productively support complex, relational understandings of rural education and rural teacher education. We conclude with a brief "road map" of the territory the book traverses.

Keywords Rural education · Policy · Canada

1 Introduction

The field of rural education is one that is shrouded in mystique that relates to the larger mystique associated with the rural today. What indeed is rural and why does it matter in education? The title of this book refers to both an ongoing conversation about the nature and value of rural Canada and what this implies for education as well as to the idea of land which is central to the very idea of the rural. As Halfacree (2006) pointed out, rural is a fundamentally spatial concept. Conversations concerning land in a settler society like Canada relate to the relations of people to place, the fundamentals of sustenance, the massive changed wrought by capitalism and colonization and pressing questions of environment and Indigeneity. The central challenge posed by the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission positions land as a key feature of what reconciliation might mean and how decolonization is not a metaphorical notion but rather a question of rethinking what land itself means (Alfred, 2009; Tuck

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and Yang 2012). Climate scientists, activists, Indigenous people and rural producers have also raised the alarm reporting experience and analysis of what is happening to land in the face of a changing climate. As Martin Nakata (2007) argues, the path forward is a critical examination of what he calls the "cultural interface" which has emerged beyond the colonization of Oceana, the Americas and other settler societies.

Rural Canada is at a kind of crossroads in terms of social and economic development, cultural practices and pressing questions of social justice and equity and the state of the environment in the face of potentially catastrophic patterns of production and consumption. Just as urban populations require a different kind of education that provides the human capital required in what is called the knowledge or even post-carbon economy, so too is the quality and character of education in rural Canada a crucial foundational problematic. Politically and socially as well, the tensions that run through most advanced democracies have given rise to new forms of authoritarian leaders and populist politics of resentment that draw on rural mythologies concerning who belongs on the land and who does not (Cramer 2016; Hochschild 2016; Kerrigan 2018). While some argue that these forces are less likely to take strong root in Canada (Adams 2017), emerging literatures on the nature, character and sources of rural racism point to the potential dangers of ignoring the concerns or rural citizens who remain a significant electoral constituency.

The rise of comparative educational metrics and the globalization of educational policy and governance have also created the conditions for increasing standardization of educational policy practice, policy borrowing and system centralization. The process of centralization has a long history in rural education as village schools have given way to amalgamations and consolidation, school closing and ubiquitous bussing. Globalization and related changes in monetary and fiscal policy, supply chains and mechanization/automation have created new labour force demands that place additional pressure on education systems to produce different kinds of workers with different skill sets (Corbett & Beack, 2016; Corbett & Forsey, 2017). These comparative metrics tell stories about rural educational (under)performance at different scales, and these stories meet those of people living, working and educating in rural places.

Global measurement and comparison schemes like the (OECD's) Organization for International Cooperation and Development Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) appear to demonstrate that Canada is a high-equity, high-performing system similar to those found in Scandinavia, Finland and select elite European and Asian systems of education. There is a certain truth in this story, but it is also one that obscures critical differences and inequities in Canadian education, a situation which is also the case in other national systems identified in international testing as "high performing". Given the radical decentralization of Canadian education with its thirteen different systems, curricula and governance structures, it is problematic to identify "Canadian" education as a unified entity as the PISA and other similar national comparative assessments tend to do.

Canadian education is riven with equity and inclusion challenges found in all advanced capitalist societies, which are well known and too numerous to catalogue

here. For instance, the share of Indigenous students in rural schools needs our attention as Canadian society continues along the path of truth and reconciliation and this is a central theme in this collection. For example, Bollman and Looker (2020) note, one result of the long (and unfortunate) history of Indigenous peoples in Canada is marked differences in educational outcomes. In each type of community along the gradient from urban to rural to remote, Indigenous students are less likely to complete their secondary schooling, compared to non-Indigenous students, and while there is a large Indigenous presence in most urban centres, many of these students live in places defined as rural and remote.

This book seeks to focus on one particular challenge that is common yet unique in each Canadian province and territory, and this is the struggle to provide quality education across a vast geography. This is arguably *the* problem of rural education, and in this book, we are concerned with the related problem of preparing teachers for work in rural communities.

2 The Genesis of the Book

Driven by success on international testing and skills assessments over the past decade or so, there is a narrative that has played out that positions Canadian public education systems across the country as responsive to the needs of all citizens. Through its ranking system and publications, the OECD portrays Canadian public education as an idealized global exemplar. Canada has provided an egalitarian, high-performing, education system that the OECD positions as a model of global policy. Yet, within Canadian education, there is considerable geographic, social, cultural, and economic diversity along with substantial unevenness of educational outcomes. Canada has a radically decentralized education system that is exclusively governed at the provincial level. In addition, most Canadian provinces have governing school boards that regulate educational provision in subregions of each province. While the OECD's indicators in the global PISA results suggest high student achievement, retention and equity, a more nuanced look suggests geographically inequitable outcomes are important to understand within high-performing national educational systems. One important aspect of this inequity concerns education in rural regions, where other forms of disadvantage intersect with rurality.

Problems relating to rural education are, of course, not lost on the OECD. Rural places are identified in their analysis as educational underperformers in terms of comparative evidence produced by multiple international assessment schemes. Although there are notable exceptions, the general picture is high-performing cities and rural areas that lag behind. As Andreas Schleicher puts it summarizing analysis of the PISA,

> (T)hese differences in performance between students living in rural areas and those in big cities can sometimes be linked to socio-economic disparities between their populations. But PISA results show that differences in social background explain only part of the story; much

> of the performance gap remains even after accounting for socio-economic status. So there does seem to be something distinct about education in large cities. (2018, p. 185)

We wish to complicate this all-too-common framing of what the Canadian Council on Learning (2008) described as the rural/urban gap. Rural communities, or communities defined as rural by one or another demographic classification are not uniform, and indeed, some are highly advantaged. The definitional problems associated with determining which places are and which are not rural are matter given a considerable amount of attention throughout this text. Given the economic, social and cultural challenges faced in many rural communities, it may well be that rural schools "punch above their weight" in terms of educational performance (Corbett 2014; Roberts 2016). These findings echo and reinforce the well-established research into the importance of the teachers, principals and other school leaders to improving student achievement, which in turn supports the need for high-quality preservice and inservice professional learning. The chapters in this volume provide a set of nuanced and contextualized accounts of teacher education practices in Canada that suggest considerable activity outside the metropolis that is addressing pressing contemporary issues in the field. The qualitative focus of much of the work in this collection also complicates and troubles the simplicity of linear comparison, quantification and classification of educational quality accomplished by broad scope quantitative instruments like the PISA and other forms of standardized testing.

None of this is to suggest that rural education and/or rural teacher education receives the resourcing and support required to provide a uniformly high quality of education across the country. Increasingly, local and national governing bodies call upon teacher education programmes to address the multiple challenges of spatial educational inequality. In particular, there are calls for systemic and programmatic changes to address the gap between urban and rural learning environments. Typically, rural education is viewed from a "metrocentric" perspective as a deficit educational space that needs to be somehow "fixed". This metrocentric view coupled with the very pragmatic reality of the increasing closure of rural schools due to decreased demand for workers in mechanizing primary production industries, resultant depopulation and declining enrolment in rural schools is not to be underestimated for the real consequences it may have on a community's ability to flourish and regenerate (Oncsecu and Giles 2014).

In the light of these current discussions, the genesis of this book is a desire amongst a group of education scholars to shift the debate towards reimagining a relational vision of what it means to teach well in rural areas rather than focus on (Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2013). Indeed, schools and schooling are and have always been a crucial part of the lifeblood of these rural areas. The initial call to scholars across Canada began when Dianne Gereluk invited educators from teacher education programmes who were trying to reconceptualize how to provide more robust learning experiences for future teachers in rural regions. The challenge of addressing rural teaching and learning is in part located in the nuances and complexities of the particular places, yet this challenge has overlapping threads that weave across the communities and sit within rural, regional and remote educational, cultural, economic, and social

geographies. If individually we were all grappling with the question of how to better support rural students, teachers, and parents in their schools and communities, how might we find ways to share and build upon each other's knowledge despite the reality of decentralized provincial educational jurisdictions that facilitate the development of programmes at a local level through school boards or regional education authorities?

In 2017, a group of educational researchers came together at a think tank at the University of Calgary that provided a space to reflect and begin a dialogue on a larger scale beyond what we were doing within our own post-secondary programmes in the regions that we typically serve. Some of us are quantitative researchers operating in a sociological frame. Others do qualitative work and narrative inquiry that seeks to understand the experience of rural citizens and rural education more fully. A number of us were also working with and in Indigenous communities, which have provided for several authors in this collection, an important element of how they think about rurality. Quickly, we realized that our focus on intersectionality in education compels us to consider broader scale work that explores Canadian trends in sociology, geography, economics, the analysis of poverty and Indigeneity, and to consider broader national questions that inform and influence rural schooling. While we all recognized that these themes are inextricably tied, ironically, most literature and research comfortably bracketed out such notions as distinct and separate issues other than demonstrating a fairly superficial acknowledgement that intersectionality does indeed exist. In this book, we see rurality as one dimension of intersectionality that inflects, for instance, standard structural categories such as race, social class, sex and gender that are now central to educational research.

Our circle of scholars thus expanded as we looked to see how others were considering the question of rurality beyond our teacher education programmes, and to start providing more nuanced and entangled stories that weave between such issues. Researchers from across Canada were invited to this conversation to provide a more nuanced examination of lived rural experiences on a micro and macro level for sustainable and vibrant rural communities. The invitation to broaden our circle was a reminder to each of us of our collective responsibility to elevate the conversation about why rural matters in education and society, and our concomitant responsibility to work together *in* and *with* these communities to think deeply about how we can support and cultivate the conditions for people to live well across our Canadian lands.

This book offers a new perspective concerning how Canadian educators and sociologists are shifting the conversation from a deficit model to a more hopeful discourse that relates to how together we can foster meaningful rural learning environments that will contribute to building stronger rural communities. Many of the chapters include and draw upon the voices, stories and expertise of rural people who believe and share in cultivating the conditions for people to flourish in rural areas. In so doing, there is a recognition of their rightful place and identity in this larger story, and a repositioning of historical tendencies that have silenced or furthered both-inward looking rural exceptionalism and the deficit stereotypes of the rural experience.

3 Rural Education in Modernity

In late August of 2019, just as we were finalizing this manuscript, the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) published a document entitled *Farmer 4.0*. This document outlines what is presented as a crucial gap between the kinds of agricultural practices, skill sets, education and technologies necessary for Canadian farming to keep pace with the remarkable growth in productivity that is possible in today's economic conditions. While agriculture only represents a small portion of Canada's rural population, the RBC report illustrates the sort of pressure facing established industries across rural geography. The general picture is that Canadian farm productivity growth is being outpaced by that of rising economies such as China, Brazil, Indonesia and India. These emerging economies have been steadily increasing market share in the global economy. Meanwhile, Canada's global market share has fallen from 6.3% in 2000 to 3.9% in 2017 despite increased raw output. Like much analysis of rural issues, productivity and modernization problems are constituted simultaneously in terms of economic growth, technological advancement and efficiency in tandem with a proposed need for a differently educated worker. In *Farmer 4.0*, RBC writes:

> We concluded that with the right mix of skills, capital and technology, agriculture could add $11 billion to Canada's GDP by 2030. To get there, we need to rethink our approach to education, both for agriculture and the growing range of sectors that affect it; do more to attract young people to farming; and invest in the skills needed to attract a growing immigrant population to the sector. (Royal Bank of Canada 2019, p. 1)

This narrative is one of many that invokes a human capital-focused neoliberal analysis of rurality as a problem space within the national economy (Corbett and Baeck 2016; Corbett and Forsey 2017). In this analysis, rural Canada is insufficiently developed, and the problem can be traced back to educational deficits primarily. In this analysis, rural matters in education because it represents a system failure in the sense that education has not kept up with the demands of a radically and rapidly changing labour market. The combination of increasing mechanization and the development of new production and distribution technologies, an ageing farmer population and labour shortages due to more retirees leaving the workforce than new workers entering it (Bollman 2014), insufficient education and recruitment, increased global competition from countries that are innovating and using technology, and the resulting differentiation of agricultural work itself into different types of managerial, engineering/technical, scientific/research and manual work create a complex picture of future needs. For the RBC, this all adds up not necessarily to a crisis (although it could be read this way), but certainly a massive loss of potential productivity for the nation.

The field of rural education has seen a protracted naming and shaming of people and systems that have failed to modernize dating back at least to the work of Cubberley (1922) who identified what he called the "rural school problem" as a subset of a larger "rural-life problem". Work that has followed from this analysis has been principally focused on "modernizing" rural schools, subjecting them to more centralized governance and control, professionalizing teaching, and amalgamating

and consolidating small rural schools into larger more "efficient" and specialized units. Another key feature of this analysis has been a focus on what is now called "raising aspirations" of rural people who are essentially blamed for their educational and subsequent economic marginalization (Byun et al. 2012; Corbett 2016; Robbins 2012). Indeed, rural education is very often situated as a classic problem of raising aspirations given that:

> (R)ural-urban gaps in academic performance generally disappear after accounting for socio-economic status and rural students are less likely to expect completing a university degree than city students, but this gap in expectations persists even when rural students have a similar socio-economic status, on average across OECD countries. (Echazarra and Radinger 2019, p. 4)

Unlike the twentieth century modernization literatures on rural education and the low aspirations deficit discourse, more nuanced contemporary analyses like that of the OECD (Echazarra and Radinger 2019) and the RBC situate rural educational underperformance as a more complex phenomenon of global social change forces, community and social development, limited access, as well as low aspirations. While the RBC still recognizes the demand for what they call "doers", or those workers who do the kinds of labour requiring relatively rudimentary levels of education by contemporary standards, they highlight the stronger demand for a range of technically skilled knowledge workers, entrepreneurs and managers to build, maintain and sustain a globally competitive agricultural industry. This contemporary work tends to be situated between international development literature, some of which take a more critical view of the development of contemporary globalization drawing on a Marxist-inspired analysis of the uneven development of capitalist societies (Pain and Hansen 2019; Stephens 2018). But more prevalent is the influence of human capital literatures that claim to be more politically neutral and even celebratory of technological and political developments and neoliberal globalization of the last 30 years (Becker 2009; Beck and Cronin 2006; Giddens 1999). Similar human capital-oriented calls for improved education have resonated through the myriad private sector and government reports from around the world up to and including *Farmer 4.0*.

In this analysis, rural matters in education because it is part of a larger phenomenon of underdeveloped human capital and shrinking rural labour forces Bollman (2014). This phenomenon is highlighted and reinforced in our analysis here. People living in rural areas (however they are defined) are, as Cubberley (1922) pointed out a century ago, a problem for education. The physical reality of their distribution across the expanse of Canadian physical geography, the vast western farmland, the Indigenous communities established in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries around strategically (from the point of view of the colonial powers), yet remotely positioned trading posts, the Atlantic and Pacific coastal villages, and the logging and mining communities of the Canadian interior, have created a vast network of educational infrastructure that most Canadian provinces struggle to operate and staff. How this situation is problematized and understood is the subject of considerable debate.

Fundamentally, rural educational underperformance in terms of generally lower standardized testing and international assessment scores, graduation and continuation rates and post-secondary participation has been incorrectly understood either

as a problem of access, of aspirations, or both (Corbett 2016; Fleming and Grace 2017; Robbins 2012; Watson et al. 2016; Zipin et al. 2015). To reiterate, Canadian rural students outperformed urban students in reading tests when adjustments for socio-economic status are made (Cartwright and Allen 2002). Roberts has found that adjusting for socio-economic circumstances produces similar results for Australian rural students (2016). Furthermore, in some national contexts, rural students (e.g. the USA, Belgium, Great Britain) have higher raw PISA scores than urban students (Echazarra and Radinger 2019). What this analysis reveals is that the measured performance of rural students and their schools cannot be explained in psychological terms.

The question concerning why rural matters also raises broader questions of how to define rurality, which is a persistent problem that has been noted and explored by demographers, geographers, rural studies experts and sociologists since at least the 1960s (Pahl 1966). Any definition of rural will inevitably include some inappropriate people and places within the category and exclude some who should probably be included. This is a chronic problem in and for rural studies, and it is one that Looker and Bollman (2020) and Smith and Peller (2020) address in this book by taking great care to articulate exactly what definitions and parameters they use to demarcate rural space. However, relying entirely on demographic categorization is crucial to classify people rather than countryside. Rural geographers have more or less concluded that when we invoke the term rural and there are infinite complexities and diversities that generate different results depending on the employment of classification schemes.

Yet, for those of us who have lived and worked in rural communities, this seems ridiculous. Rural people know who they are, and they know that they face particular kinds of challenges and opportunities in the modern world. If there is one consistent story in qualitative rural education research, it is the myth that rural people do not aspire or want formal education. The challenges associated with educational access, performance and success are both individual and collective and they are as complex in rural areas as in other places.

Despite myths of rural homogeneity, social class, race, culture, language, ethnicity, disability, gender and sex all intersect in rural social space. The global techno-industrial changes illustrated in the OECD and RBC documents are, of course, familiar to many people who work and live in rural Canada, and while they are embraced by many rural entrepreneurs in both traditional rural industries and emerging spaces like ecotourism, high amenity development, alternative energy production and niche agriculture. These transformations can appear as threats to existing lifeways rather than as opportunities. This can be particularly poignant when governments and corporations call for change. The resulting policies and directives often focus on education and innovation which often ironically appear in tandem with the withdrawal of services from rural communities. These reductions in service also very often accompany the increasing centralization and capitalization of industries such as agriculture, forestry and fishing where more and more of the hands-on work is being done by temporary or immigrant labour.

All of these large-scale social and economic change forces pressure rural communities and rural citizens, and rural education cannot be understood adequately apart

from this context. Around the world, rural communities have been moved to action which can appear as futile resistance to inevitable change, but which also tends to signal both the disjuncture between worldviews and unease with the sorts of change modernity brings to rural communities. The defence of a school is generally understood as the defence of the community itself by rural citizen activists. Woods (2006) describes what he calls the "politics of the rural" to describe the way that rural space is increasingly politicised and the site of struggle. Indeed, several of the chapters in this volume relate to the educational face of these political struggles over governance and service provision outside the metropolis.

Here, we encounter the limits of demographic analysis, which is important, yet it is only one dimension of what Reid et al. (2010) and White et al. (2011) call rural social space (see Fig. 1). Rural social space as it has been developed by Bill Green, Jo Reid, Simone White and colleagues is a multifaceted way of understanding rurality that combines economy, geography and demography. This framework integrates the material, distribution of human population, culture and industry to suggest a complex perspective that draws on trialectical understandings of space (Green and Letts 2007) developed by Lefebvre (1992) and extended by a range of cultural geographers, most notably perhaps Soja (1996) and Massey (2005). Rather than understanding space as a container within which human activity takes place, space is

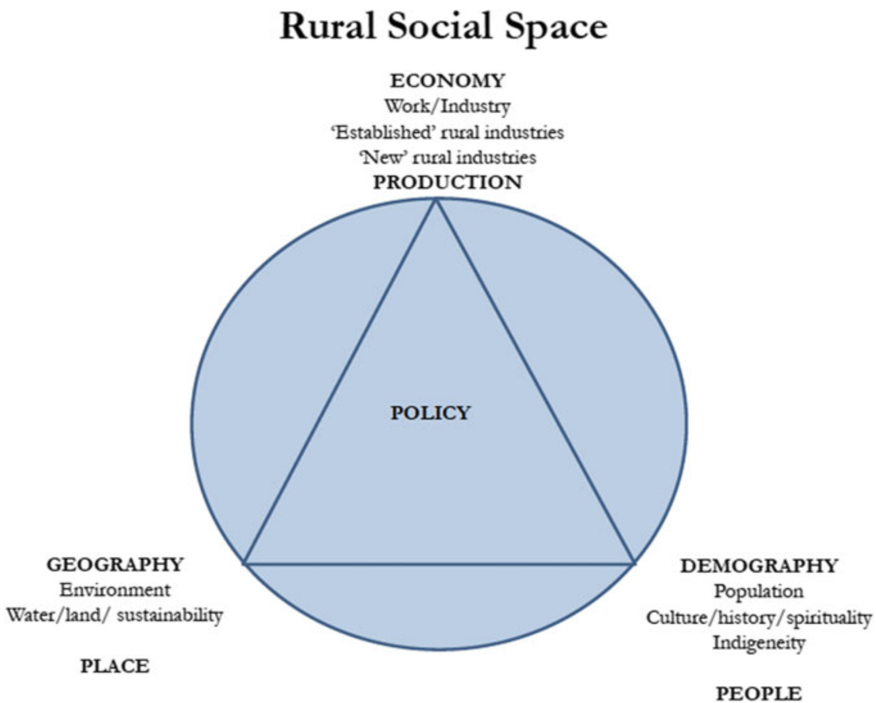

Fig. 1 Rural social space (Reid et al. 2010)

complex, multi-dimensional, overlapping, emergent and what Massey calls "thrown together". This complex characterization allows for a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between the realist quantitative parsing of space into place, and corollary, relational understandings of the qualitative socially and culturally mediated experience of place and space as a symbolic and lived phenomenon.

Much of the inquiry in this book presents analysis of life and education in communities populated by people who live outside metropolitan areas, i.e. cities and larger towns. They are people who have lived in rural areas for varying lengths of time and whose experience of place and culture puts rich substance into the raw demographics that define a locale in relation to population density or distance from a dense population (Looker and Bollman 2020). Here, we encounter questions beyond the realm of either critical theory or human capital discourses, questions of labour and technology and the psychology of aspirations that typically frame discussions of rural education, including those of RBC and the OECD cited above. These are ultimately stories of people in/and place.

We do not disagree with the analyses presented in high-level policy framing; the development of rural communities does demand the same high-quality education required in those spaces defined as urban or suburban. We agree that relatively low levels of university participation of rural youth (Frenette 2006) are a pressing problem, and more proximate community colleges have become more attractive to rural youth who see this form of post-secondary education as a recognizable path to a stable, well-paying rural job (Corbett 2009). However, at the same time we recognize, and the contributions to this volume demonstrate, how rural matters for cultural reasons as well. To live rurally is to live in relation with a particular physical and human geography and to participate at some level in cultural practices that have their roots in established ways of living and working outside the metropolis.

These diverse non-metropolitan cultural practices have been, it must be recognized, seen as marginal to what was considered the core business of formal education and by extension to what is seen as the core business of development itself which is urbanization. Rural people, their language and cultural practices and the everyday "rustic" things that many of us do and say (Ching and Creed 1996; Corbett 2014), have been, for the most part, placed either entirely outside the purview of formal education, situated as the object of change and reform, or at best, relegated to remedial and vocational programming (Corbett and Ackerson 2019; Ching and Creed 1996; Theobald 1996, 1997). In other words, rurality has been understood educationally from a deficit perspective and what this collection seeks to do is assert that rural is different and distinct, but not lesser than urban.

Finally, this book takes up a complex of issues that are rarely addressed in rural education scholarship, the relationship between Indigenous and settler populations. Canada is a classic settler society, violently colonized by European interests whose descendants have come to dominate the state and its culture. This domination includes the ideological and symbolic domination and exclusion built into a system of education that has worked in tandem with the interests of established capital to ensure the preservation and growth of systematic economic and cultural exclusion. While this has been well understood as injustice for generations, we have only recently begun

to seriously address what "truth and reconciliation" might look like. Rural places are often the most charged sites of interaction, exclusion and violence following from colonization and its aftermath (Scott and Louie 2020; Scully 2020), and much of the work in this volume begins to address the complexity of the Indigenous-rural interface and the politics it engenders. Many of the chapters in this volume emphasize the importance and power of place, but we hope in a more nuanced and complex relational way than the kinds of place-sensitive analysis found in much rural education scholarship. While rural education scholarship has attended to the power of place, it has been less ready to interrogate the place of power in its educational analysis (Corbett 2015).

While we address rural teacher education specifically in this book, we situate our analysis in broader teacher education, place and spatial analysis, rural studies and rural education discussions. What this book seeks to achieve is productive engagement between and across: (1) the human capital analysis of the kind of rural education that makes sense (and to whom) in a contemporary economy; (2) the ubiquitous rural aspirations discourse which, while important, is always partial and often psychologized; (3) the problems of culture that go beyond simple demography and illustrate how rurality matters to those who live and identify as rural people; (4) the questions of geographic distance and access that are never far from discussions of rural education; (5) the ubiquitous resistances, social justice struggles (often to grow the community in order to keep schools open) and political mobilization of rural people for recognition and survival in the face of bureaucracies and business interests that often fail to understand why services should be provided beyond the city limits and finally; (6) the often troubled, yet potentially productive space of the Indigenous-rural interface.

4 A Road Map

The book is divided into five sections. In the introductory section, we set the stage for the text attempting to situate the Canadian experience within the rural education literature following the Calgary workshop in 2017 that provided the foundation for our work. We begin by challenging the deficit perspective which has been the normal framing for work in rural education both nationally and globally. Canada is often presented in contemporary international education discourse as something of a success story, and in many ways we believe it is. One of the core secrets of this success, we suspect may have something to do with Canada's decentralized educational governance that tends to draw attention to smaller scale and scope educational problems in the provinces, many of which remain largely rural in demography and in cultural character.

The chapter by Looker and Bollman offers original analysis of national and regional population trends, teacher demand and supply in rural Canada (including a focus on Indigenous communities), the nature of teachers' contractual conditions, length of service, and teacher mobility. They also examine how school completion rates differ in rural areas for those who do and do not identify as Aboriginal. Smith

and Peller use spatial analytic tools to examine the accessibility of teacher education programming to Canadians living outside metropolitan areas. Martin then moves the discussion of the landscape of rural education towards a consideration of neoliberal individualism as a central framing motif in contemporary educational policy and practice. Scott and Louie conclude this section reporting on a study of programming aimed at incorporating Indigenous cultures and traditions into a rural school district.

The third section focuses on identity and relationality, reporting on how identity and conceptions of community and belonging are being addressed and incorporated in rural education and teacher education. While Looker and Bollman's work in this volume complexifies and nuances the problems associated with common assumptions about teacher demand and supply in rural Canada, they specifically highlight that teacher turnover is higher in remote and northern schools. The recruitment and retention of teachers to the most isolated of Canada's rural communities is a central problem in/for rural education. Two of these chapters, by Gereluk, Dressler, Sarah Eaton and Becker as well as the chapter co-authored by Danyluk, Scott and Burns report on rural teacher education initiatives that focus on preparing candidates who are already established in remote rural communities. These programmes focus on what Gereluk et al. call "home grown" teachers, particularly candidates who are already employed in rural schools in quasi-professional roles. The other three chapters in this section highlight the experience of different actors in the rural education landscape. Stelmach's chapter examines rural parents' sense of community in a western Canadian rural locale incorporating an analysis of the discursive constructions of insiders and outsiders. Murphy, Driedger-Enns and Huber then construct a closely drawn narrative analysis of a beginning teacher and principal who explore the meaning of rural place and deep relational roots. Finally, in a piece that focuses on a common rural education theme, but in a small city locale Cristall, Roger and Hibbert take up the power of grassroots resistance which will resonate with rural education activists.

The fourth section of the book is composed of four diverse analyses of place and land-based education. Place-based education is a movement that has had considerable influence in the field of rural education dating back to the advent of the influence of Deweyan ideas in the middle decades of the twentieth century. This emphasis has remained prominent in the field, particularly in the USA as a recent meta-analysis demonstrates (Reagan et al. 2019). In Canada, interest in place has been powerfully inflected in recent years by Indigenous education scholars who focus on land and the deep relationality implicated in dwelling in a place. The release of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015 has foregrounded historic deficits in Canadian education as well as the pressing need for educators to develop pedagogies that support a more positive, educational future for all Canadians. A sample of this emerging rural scholarship is developed throughout the book, but the first three chapters in this section focus specifically on land-based education in teacher education. Scully's chapter examines how land-based education integrated with critical place-based education can challenge and disrupt teacher education candidates' ordinary understandings of what it is to teach on land and how to take on different ways of understanding. Dawn Wallin begins with a narrative analysis of her own position as

a rural settler-educator to set up an analysis of a land-based educational leadership programme conducted with Sherry Pedan that valorizes northern, Indigenous and rural space. Kevin O'Connor then takes land and place-oriented pedagogies into the particular domain of science and environmental education developing an analysis of the infusion of Indigenous knowledge into the place-based study of science. Corbett concludes this section with a critical interrogation of conceptual challenges facing place-based education in a globalized and deeply interconnected world.

In the final section, we offer some provocations and suggest some directions for Canadian rural education and rural teacher education arising from the experience of developing this book out of our initial meetings in Calgary in 2017. Leyton Schellnert, the Eleanor Rix Chair of Rural Teacher Education at the University of British Columbia, offers an afterword to conclude the book. We hope this book will offer readers some answers to the question concerning why rural matters in education and indeed, why it is important to consider space, place and the multiple, complex and often messy relations that a forthright and complex analysis of rural education requires. Rural education is not a phenomenon that has been bypassed or left behind by some homogenizing juggernaut of modernity where place becomes as Giddens (1990) famously put it, "phantasmagorical". Nor is it a monolithic and monochrome facet of close-knit, allegedly pre-modern communities of people who toil on land and sea. Rather it is part of what Lefebvre (1992) called the "production of space", the emerging relational world we inhabit where diversity and difference compose a rich and sometimes frightening tapestry that includes different blends of the country and the city.

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