



Rural and Rurality with Truly Performativity in Human Geography

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Abstract

Reflective studies to better comprehend 'the rural' have endeavored to embed research of rural within the concept of performativity. Performativity expect that the capacity of language isn't simply to connect but also to whereupon citation, perfect activity uses of ideas create a progression of material effects. Generally, this philosophical move has also ensnared geographers as dynamic agents in performing, producing and reproducing rurality. This paper gives a basic assessment of what this new insistence truly implies for the production of geographical knowledge. Utilizing framework analysis as a technique, the paper investigates numerous reportedly powerful papers on the topic of rural performativity. Our discoveries uncover that, while without a doubt reflexive on academic integrity methodology issues and ethics, performances of rurality are consistently put 'out there' among 'country individuals', i.e. in from the earlier characterized and regularly characteristically comprehended contexts, either by method for 'activity or spatial delimitation'. Effectively, such declarations give a truncated condition of fidelity, where performance situated reflexivity is seconded by opposing empirics of uneven esteem and with some commonalities. We determine that by turning towards performativity as apurportedly more helpful method for getting rural coherence.

Keywords: Performativity, Framework Analysis, Rurality, Rural Geography, Human Geography

Introduction

As one of the most seasoned geographical ideas still in widespread utilize, the concept of 'rurality' today stands in stark contrast to the huge changes experienced by the society amid the most recent century, let unaccompanied decades. Steady, fast-paced changes in the natural, economic and social measurements [1] have rendered the rural-urban contrast a contentious one a conceptual remnant of sorts, whose obscured and pliable characteristics, huge spatial analysis and aspectual comprehensiveness form an odd marriage between former world perspectives and a globalized Twenty First century truth of interconnectedness [2, 3, 4, 5]. Be that as it may, while the trickiness of 'rural' as an inter-subjective analytical notion is widely recognized, it keeps on being widely sustained all through the society within a extensive range of conditions [6]. The main point is that due to growing rural-urban obscuring (accordingly expanded subjectivity and solipsism included with this method), there is an ever more noteworthy probability present understandings of 'rural' as utilized as a part of formal situations (administration, land utilize, legislation, research and funding) may misunderstand the societal phenomena this idea indicates to clarify and, by that, get in the way of making sound planning, strategy and improvement decisions. Moreover, lessening complexity to simplicity for the sake of convenience almost unintentionally leads to prohibitions [7, 8]. Geographers worried about this stressing improvement have attempted to connect rurality to the concept of performativity - i.e. how the 'rural' appears in regular daily existence [9, 10, 11, 12, 13] with regards to "performing urbanity". The idea of "regular" presumes the existence of mundanity, first-hand stories and a contrasting option to grand narratives that generally inform and defend the

universality of the rural as a reasonable idea [14]. It also indirectly increases a solicitation to the creation of 'the rural' through a focus on conceptual performing. Recently, this philosophical understanding has also come to embroil geographers themselves as dynamic performers of rurality [15]. Recognizing the rural as performed additionally implies recognizing the manner by which rural geographers ourselves perform rurality through our study, several rural research subjects also with look into research funders and users, our determination and utilization of various research techniques, and the policy and political implications of our research work. In these ways, the exercise of rural geography is closely attached to the performance of rurality, and rural geographers are uncovered not only as onlookers and recorders of the rural but also as dynamic agents in producing or reproducing and performing rurality. There is a proviso however. Albeit commendable from an ethical perspective, sheer acknowledgment of one's own part during the process of theoretical enactment alone is probably to be effective unless we really can identify how such enactment makes realities.

However, this specific relation needs to date not been examined, or completely understood. Utilizing a selection of critical academic writings, the aim for this paper is to critically investigate the effect of geographers' own understanding production upon the real rurality performances. Various research inquiries will help acquire that goal:

1. how would we recognize, approach and utilize 'the rural
2. where precisely do we place those "performances of rural"
3. Who is actually performing rurality?

We don't put on a show to give authoritative answers,

however point rather at stimulating debate about an unavoidable trend within human geography, namely to hoist the local, the mundane and the quotidian to a position of authority in academic information production, including the uncharted effects such transposition has on scholarly consistency.

Study of Everyday Rural Performances

The developing enthusiasm of rural geographers in the rurality performance reflects to some recognition of the constraints of the social constructivist approach to deal with conceptualizing the rural, which has been predominant in rural geography since the 1990s^[16]. Social constructivism highlights the addresses through which concepts regarding rurality are produced and reproduced and the texts through which they are characterized, and has conveniently given an insight into the contingent and challenged nature of rurality; yet, as discussed in year age's progress report, social constructivism has also been criticized for ignoring the material measurements of the rural condition that real impact on the experiences of people living, working and playing in rural space^[16]. Concentrate the rurality performance can help to link this gap, by uncovering how speeches of rurality are enacted and routinized with material effects, and indicating how the performs or performances of rural peoples in material settings contribute to the reproduction or production of speeches of rurality.

While rural geography investigation has engaged with elements of performance in studies of rural identities, presence and absence, and the commodification of rural experiences for tourism, this has frequently been as an aside and study of the real performance has rarely been foregrounded. As such, Edensor's^[17] chapter in the Handbook of rural studies is important for making the case for the study of rural performances to be situated all the more centrally in rural studies, and for outlining examples of how this may be done. Edensor utilizes the term performance comprehensively, in incorporating enactions extending from staged events to iterative everyday practices. What accurately are "everyday ruralities"? This gathering comprises of 2 signifiers. The characteristic "everyday" is easy to understand. It infers some type of rhythmicity (every+day) and routineness (as 'extraordinary' is probably not going to happen every day); in other words something 'commonplace'. In any case, what are "ruralities"? In this manner, he notices that 'altered rural performances are enacted on different stages by different performers: at farm-life centers, village greens, heritage attractions, grouse fields, farmyards, mountains and long-separate pathways in rural spaces distinguished as "wilderness". He offers as examples 'pheasant shoots and the dramatized rituals of grouse, the performances of rural traditions for example traditional music revivals, Morris Dancing and well dressing and famous film and TV plays', before focusing on case readings of the inactions of leisure-seeking city dwellers, the touristic staging of the rural and the regular performances of 'nation people'. Staged performances of rurality are scripted and choreographed events that plainly carry on specific portrayals of rural life. These consist of the representation of rural life in film and TV program, performed reconstructions, historical centers, cultivate parks, interpretative centers and heritage sites but also staging's where the message is more understood.

Lewis Holloway such as, demonstrates how agricultural shows are utilized as chances to 'stage manage the explanation of agriculture to large numbers of non-cultivating visitors'^[18] portrayals of rurality are also performed through poetry and traditional music, with the portrayal present at the same time as both a text and a performance. In any case, as Edensor illustrates, rurality is also performed in a less-staged way in there gular enactions of people who live or work in the farmland, and in the occasionally self-conscious rural presentations of visitors and tourists. These enactions are regularly loosely scripted or choreographed by instruction or guide manuals and involve the utilization of props, such that 'culturally specific ways of acting in rural auditoriums are organized around which garments, styles of movement, modes of looking, shooting and recording, communicating delight, expressing meaning or sharing experiences. After time, however, the rehashed performance of regular performs becomes intuitive and instinctive. Accordingly, the ways of residence, working, socializing and comforting in familiar space can be considered as largely un-reflexive habits, quotidian performances that tie people to dwelling, creating serial senses via everyday tasks, schedules and pleasures. In the geography, as somewhere else, distinct structures of feeling are fashioned through a feel for the tasks that needs to be done and for the atmosphere in which they are performed, as monotonous interaction with tools, space, people and different creatures is carried out^[17].

In see that sociology science helps enact realities the initial point for our analysis is that whenever "everyday ruralities" are evoked, the 'everyday' of one important group is probably going to be discarded that of the geographers: similar geographers who go to work every day and create places, people and things rural. These everyday practices can include types of exemplified being in rural space that can't be satisfactorily represented in language or text, and which rural sociologist^[19] has defined as 'thinking-as-bodies'. Carolan argues that conceptualizing the rural as a psychological construct, or a sociocultural phenomenon, is unsustainable because 'we can't separate mind from body when discussing about knowledge of the world'. Or maybe, he contends, 'mind is body; cognizance is human; thinking is sensuous. In short, our understanding of space is more than representational. It is a lived practice. To disregard how understandings of the geography are embodied is to cut from our inquiry a major (to be sure the primary) source of knowledge'. Taken together,^[17] and^[19] give both potential conceptual frameworks and rational coherence for an already settled structure of research on performance in rural geography. Specifically, rural sociologists and rural geographers have connected with performance in three famous contexts.

First, analysis of rural communities have acknowledged the importance of collective practices and social interactions to the structure of community. Exchanging gossip, casual surveillance, volunteering, participating in games club and town associations, attending and understanding community performances, working common land, socializing and drinking are between the performances that has been detected as exercise that serve to perform rural community.

Second, analysis on ranch households has uncovered the

significance of embodied practices to the creation of ranch identities and cultures as well as to the constitution of genders role in farming., for example, acquired the anthropological idea of ‘life scape’ to define ethical dimensions and ‘the spatial, emotional of the relationship between landscape, livestock and farming community’, which is explained through the iterative everyday practices of the ranch household.

Third, analysis on rural tourism has observed the performances of visitors in enacting specific rural experiences, and the real information's and impressions that form part of these experiences. Specifically, these exercises have been examined with respect to tourism activities, involving jet boating, bungee jumping, kayaking, whale watching and 4-WD safaris, swimming with fishes like dolphins ^[20]. All of which possibly include a degree of staged performance but geographers including ^[21] and ^[22] have also highlighted the embodied performances characteristic for more unremarkable recreational activities, like walking.

In this paper, we put our supposition to the test by scrutinizing a selection of influential papers, which have explicitly found the problem of geographers’ enactment of rurality. More specifically, our methodological task is to critically evaluate what this specific insistence really means for the production of geographical information.

Method and data

This paper utilizes framework analysis as its principal method. Framework analysis is a tool for analyzing textual material to create an audit trail between the original material and the final conclusions. It is used to manage & organize research by means of summarization, outcomes in a robust yet flexible matrix result which permits for analyzing data both by theme and event. By borrowing principles from different epistemological traditions, framework analysis works independently of theoretical approach as long as sufficient preliminary thinking about the studied material has been done in (1). The method is most effective for analysis of primary data, such as in efficient reviews of published texts and of in-depth qualitative data, where it can be utilized to check a theory or to develop it ^[23].

As any other method, framework analysis has its limitations. Firstly, the method involves coding, which, although systematic, is a subjective process. Second, the method is resource-intensive, and with a limited manpower can only be applied to a relatively small sample. Lastly, its ‘spreadsheet’ look may trigger the attraction to quantify qualitative records in spite of knowledge that sampling in qualitative investigation “is not designed to be characteristic of a wider residents, but purposive to capture diversity around a phenomenon”.

The investigated data material represents seven papers handpicked by ^[15] as a point of embarkation in his important paper in *Progress in Human Geography* around performing rurality, and which he symbolizes to “have critically reflected on the exercise and positionality of being a rural researcher” ^[24]. Leaving the selection process to an expert on the topic is not uncontroversial, but by so doing we could subvert our own selection bias ^[25]. The papers were read thrice; first in a read-

through manner, second relevant chunks of text were re-read for context, situatedness and cues of intertextuality, third the correspondence between the analysis, the argumentation and the data material was cross-referenced during the writing process. The procedure then followed the protocols for framework analysis as outlined by ^[26]. Which were modified to context: transcription, familiarization, coding, developing a working analytical framework, applying the analytical framework, charting data into the framework matrix and, finally, interpreting the data. The purpose of the procedure was to outline the relation between the creators’ placed philosophical position on the training and positionality of being a “rural performance”.

Findings and analysis

1. Performing rurality

The first step was done in a dual fashion. We observed both into how the authors evinced reflexivity with respect to their own rurality performances, but also how the confirmed benefits of better understanding ‘the rural’ were tied to the idea of performativity. The results show that the researchers conceptualize their own reflexivity around performances of rural research in different ways. Leysheon emphasized that little attention “have been given to ethical considerations” ^[27] in relation to rural study on youth related issues. Accordingly, the chief subject of reflexivity was not rurality essence, but rather the investigation process, seen as a “exceedingly politicized act” ^[27] of social relations and of identity traits amongst teenagers, like class, age, gender and ethnicity. Chacko emphasized that research is a feasible tool of “obtaining valid representations of people and their actions in real space” ^[28]. However, it was less clear what the implications of these ‘experiences’ were, both for the object of research and for the researcher’s relationship to rurality; especially when Chacko characterized the researcher as a person “torn between insider and outsider in a state of uneasy balance” ^[28].

Moseley stressed that rural researchers inside an African setting are frequently assigned their investigation site by the NGOs [Non-Governmental Organizations], as these “have the most active development programs in rural areas” ^[24]. Thereby, researchers engage in performing rurality according to the standards of organizational ‘experts’, which are not necessarily representative of “rural Africa” as aentire. Meanwhile, McAreavey stressed that the double position of at the same time being are presentative and a researcher allows for experiences into “institutional politics and power games” ^[29], which to some extend legitimize “practitioner expertise” ^[29].

In summary, number of papers neglected to reflect upon the authors’ own particular part in performing rurality in essence, and simply evinced their political and ethical stances with respect to performances of rural. Only Pini’s, Moseley’s and McAreavey’s papers were tangentially reflective of what this suggests for the formation of geographic information about “the rural”. Still, this was less of an intellectual issue than a teleological one, well in line with D. Haraway’s calls for “a tradition of thought which highlights the significance of the subject as far as both political and ethical accountability” ^[30].

2. Actual performances of rurality

With those insights in mind, in the second step of our research we wanted to pinpoint the whereabouts of the knowledge that instantiated the authors' reflections inclination and positionality; as such, how "rurality" was identified in the first place. For some papers, the objects of study were readily legible; for others, some backtracking was necessary. This was done either by following upon the sources connected to the referenced research project or, if the insights drew on the totality of previous experiences, by evaluating the author's overall research profile.

Leysnon conducted his study within self-appointed "rural area" of South West England. No other detailed description of the area was provided as "the names of the villages have been changed". Since the organization tied to their search project was located in this area, the studied youth issues were effectively made 'rural' by the organization, with no possibility for the readers to determine in what way they were considered rural and what was the role of rurality for their search outcomes. Similarly, Chacko conducted her study in self-appointed "rural areas" of West Bengal (India), more specifically in Kultali Thana as this area is supposedly "entirely rural, lacking in infrastructural facilities, and characterized by chronic poverty" [28]. It should be noted though that the town of Kultali had 187,942 inhabitants, and even Chacko herself depicts the area of West Bengal (subdivided into 24 administrative units) as one that ranks fairly high in terms of socioeconomic indicators inside the India.

Dougill [31] study was situated in Peak District National Park in central England, where the authors focused on the role of stakeholder involvement in "rural research". The study was done in collaboration with the 'Moors for the Future', an activist group consisting of "representatives of the National Park, Farmers Union, Land Owners' organization, conservation agencies and private water companies". Thereby, the special interests of the lobby group came to locate rurality within the boundaries of the National Park (which also encompasses the town of Bakewell and much of western Sheffield, UK's third largest city with 575,400 inhabitants).

Pini's study was conducted at "two different agricultural sites that make up the Australian sugar industry" and was undertaken in partnership with an agri-political group of 6000 sugar cane farming families, who provided "cash and in-kind support" for the research as well as meeting facilities. As such, she was restricted to an understanding of the rural as one of the sugar cane industry within the collective. It is unclear, though, in what other way the studied sites were rural, or even where exactly they were located.

Lastly, Edelman's paper on the "rural social movements" is maybe the most prohibitive as to clues in (2), although the name of the venue *Journal of Peasant Studies* and the declared focus "mainly on peasant and farmer movements provide some indication. There is no method section but the author states that he "draws on a reading of materials produced by movement and professional and academic researchers, on many conversations over the years, and on his own experience as a researcher". Noteworthy is the ease with which peasant and farmer movements were made "rural social movements" just by reading professional and academic materials, and

which probably made the now generally false equality among rurality and farming both in developed [32] and developing countries. As Edelman states upfront, his choice of approach "results from the author's own disciplinary location". Such geographical ("rural") perspectives, however, can run the risk of leaving out sufficient consideration whether the invoked phenomena really warrant the use of the label "rural".

Performativity and performativity paradox

The concept of "performing rurality" has been splendidly laid out by [17] in the *Handbook of Rural Studies*, where it signifies "ways in which people are to do unchallenged and ongoing practices in rural settings", but also "ways by which the meanings of rural space and materiality are consolidated, reproduced and contested". The coherence of "performing rurality", hence, draws on the notion of repeated conventions in specific settings, in which they supposedly "reinforce group and placial identities" [17, 33]. While Edensor's exposé goes into great detail to account for the fluidity and non-stativity of rural performances, the concept of rurality is handled rather one-sidedly throughout the paper, boiling down to all-too-familiar paraphernalia, such as: craft products, golf centers, vineyards, gardens, family farms, cheese dairies, themed pubs, manor houses, hedgerows, farm yards, barns, streams, fences, pastures, horse breeding, foxhunting, hounds men and the blowing of horns, silage and fertilizers, livestock and farming techniques, and "a sensual apprehension of the textures of turf, hay and soil, the smells of beasts and vegetation, and the sounds of animals and machinery". Perhaps more worryingly, it does not state explicitly why certain (and not other) performances come to count as rural (and not something else) and, importantly, by whom.

When discussing performativity, it is therefore important to understand how that concept relates to established methods in the context of conceptual research. Different methods, as Law and Urry explain, produce different and often very inconsistent results, and this has been a major concern of social science [34]. While some might argue that some methods are "better" than others (epistemology), others say that methods are "tools", and different tools do different jobs (pragmatism); yet still others contend that different methodological approaches imply different "perspectives" which a priori inform the quality of the outcome (perspectivism). Concerned with the power of social science, which by its methods enact, rather than merely describe, social realities, Law and Urry argue that all three approaches direct attention away from the performativity of the method and make it "difficult to imagine that different research practices might be making multiple worlds that are equally valid, equally true, but simply unlike one another. This led Law and Urry to conclude that well-known methods don't resonate well with important reality performances in that they deal unwell with the fleeting, the distributed, the multiple, the sensory, the emotional and the kinesthetic. In other words, they are ill-adapted to conceptual research and tacitly reproduce the idea that there is a single reality out there, waiting to be "discovered", "understood", and ontologically politicized: We argue that social and physical changes in the world are and need to be paralleled by changes in the methods of social

inquiry. The sociologies requirement to reimagine themselves, their worlds and methods, if they are to work beneficially in the twenty-first century where social relations show up progressively intricate, slippery, transient, and unpredictable [35].

Performativity gives much from that parallel. Although ‘reflectiveness’ about one’s choice of methodology is a standing prerequisite of the scholarly community, a truly axiological discussion about method (and its capacity to say something about the world) is often omitted, allowing for the researcher to hide behind what is simply a historically established procedure. This tendency is particularly visible in academic texts, which, even though they do engage in discussions about the ‘shortcomings’ of the employed tools, they reticently dismiss the flaws and go on with the research (which inevitably produces very concrete results). It is our contention that the concept of performativity inscribes itself into that category and therefore requires serious attention.

The presented empirical material gives rise to certain regularities. While investigative rural performativity geographers either depart from an activity and spatial delimitation. When departing from a spatial delimitation, geographers commonly emphasis on certain material manifestations of rurality (remoteness, open landscape, or “nature”) and When departing from an activity delimitation, on the other hand, ‘rural activities’ are often identified from a preconceived traditionalist understanding of rurality (mining, farming, hunting, etc.) geographers will always be able to sort any spatiality or performance “rural”. It should be noted,

however, that this is not an unconditional indictment of geographers as uncritical. Performance as a rule have been reprimanded for the difficulty to pinpoint the subject, since the subject issue emerges when the epistemological start of the performance approach is produced with ‘conventional’ sociology at large, it effectively renders entirety a performance. In view of the imperceptible subject problem, turning to the ‘performativity of rurality’, hence, hesitates on the finish line. While performativity is undeniably connected to the concept of a performance, it is a slippery term in that ‘the performativity’ isn’t itself an idea signifying a separate act (‘the performance’). To make space “rural” today,

1. We need a physical locality, which importantly no longer must be constituted by distinctive spatial (“rural”) practices (our first alteration).
2. That locality must be tied to some mental representation of rurality (no alteration on our behalf).
3. To make a representation-infused locality “rural”, we need people whose choices to make it “rural”(rather than “something else”) are not random buttied to a number of factors like psychological and sociological (cf. Dymitrow and Brauer, forthcoming). In brief, anyone doing something by referring to the notion “rural” is in fact performing rurality (Fig. 1, right)
4. Lastly, we need agents (“apostles”, “propagandists”, “campaigners”, if you will) to make the ideated locality “rural” by proclaiming in speech or writing - that it is “rural” (Fig. 2).

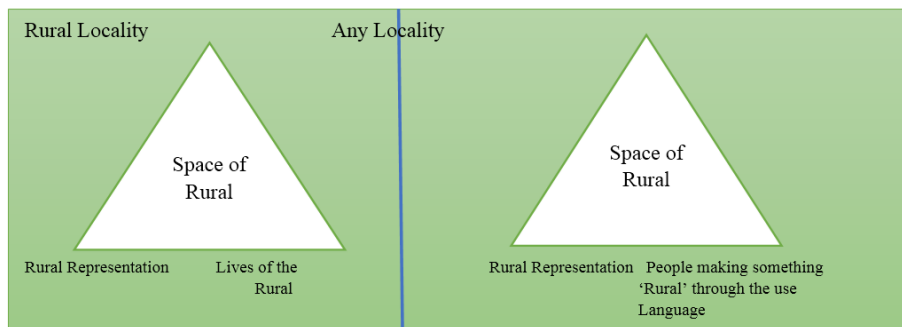


Fig 1: Left: The hybrid totality of rural space as envisioned by K. Halfacree, Right: The authors’ suggestions for alteration Source: Left: [36]; Right: The authors’ reinterpretation [36]

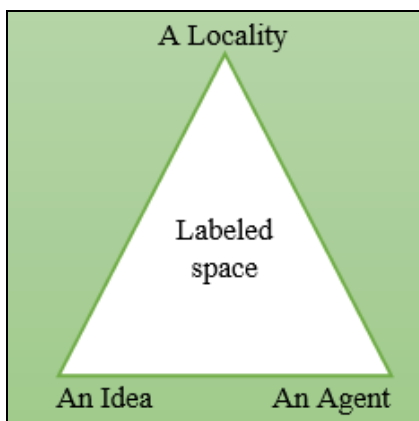


Fig 2: The hybrid totality of labeled space (e.g. “rural”, “urban”, etc.) Source: The authors, inspired by Halfacree [36].

Notes

- (1) Ontologically, the method adheres most closely to subtle realism, i.e. the assumption that we can only know reality from our own perspective of it.
- (2) Backtracking Edelman’s prior research experience takes us to Spanish Central America, especially Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

Conclusions

Rurality is performed by rural citizens and migrants, ranchers, landowners, laborers, vacationers and tourist attractions, policy-makers, recreational visitors, media, and academic analysts. Recent work in rural geography has started to engage with the performance of rurality, moving beyond previous foci on the materiality of the rural, on its political-economic structures, and on its social production. However, unlike

Michael Woods, who interprets ‘performing rurality’ as the “enactment of rurality through performance and the everyday practices of rural life” also visible in Halfacree’s tripartite structure of rural space, our interpretation of performativity is different. In line with the supposition that the capability of language is not easy to communicate but also to perfect action, performing “rurality” (an abstraction) must not be tied to the lives and practices of “rural people” but reflects the lives and practices of anybody using this concept. ‘Rurality’ is definitely a complicated concept, something geographers have increasingly become aware of. In an attempt to improve social theory, the growing interest in the performativity of concepts has since actively sought to attend to its interdependencies across various places, scales, and cultures. However, regardless of whether it is research, policy or market investigation we are dealing with, performativity rarely involves the throwing out of a *carte blanche* to be filled with personalized opinions. Think about it. If you ask somebody ‘How is it like to be rural?’ you will get some form of an answer. But if you instead ask that same person ‘How is it like to be you?’ you will probably not hear rurality mentioned. In that vein, resorting to “everyday ruralities” as the new nexus of geographical understanding, rurality’s actual whereabouts move toward becoming glossed over, and conformity to “rural universality” takes priority above the intellectual method. If rurality is simply a creation of imagination, then “everyday ruralities” only belong to those envisioning them. Yes, “everyday ruralities” can take place ‘out there’, but this can only occur if rurality is definitely the notion its alleged performers recognize their performances by. Perhaps more often than not they unfold ‘in here’, ‘on the other side’, whilst what happens ‘out there’ are merely our own projections and transpositions. If performativity is truly the way we want to obtain better knowledge about the rural, we first need to clear our own backyard.

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