Power in the production of spaces transformed by rural tourism

Svein Frisvoll a,b,∗

a Centre for Rural Research, NO-7491 Trondheim, Norway
b Department of Geography, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NO-7491 Trondheim, Norway

A B S T R A C T

The article critiques Halfacree’s conceptualisation of rural space for masking the workings of power within ‘black boxes’ such as structural coherence and trial by space. One consequence is that rural change’s social activities and also their social and personal consequences are cloaked, thereby rendering the localised fault lines of rurality analytically out of reach. Halfacree’s conceptualisation is developed further by attaching a conceptual extension comprising three hubs: an immaterial hub, a material hub, and a personal hub. This is done as an attempt to give Halfacree’s tool for deconstructing the social production of rural space analytical sensitivity to the actors engaged in the processes implied by social production. In order to demonstrate the analytical potential of the extended Halfacree approach, the conceptual model is applied to a case study: data from two communities undergoing rapid change, as they shifted from being dominated by primary industry to becoming tourism destinations.

© 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Rural research has been criticised for not addressing sufficiently the subject of power, having withdrawn from studying social practices, relations and struggles (Cloke, 2006). One of the contributions seen to amend the field’s conceptual shortcomings is Halfacree’s (2004, 2006, 2007) threefold architecture for the deconstruction of rurality and rural space (Cloke, 2006; Woods, 2009). However, my argument is that neither Halfacree’s architecture should escape such critique as application of it reveals limitations. When employed to empirically investigate the transformation of specific locations, social actors — who translate or activate representations of rurality (and other social representations) into lived space and everyday life — and their interactions and agency are left analytically out of reach, and thus the dynamics of power remain hidden.

Such veiling is problematic, as it impedes our understanding of processes in which, in the words of Murdoch and Pratt (1993, p. 411), ‘actors impose “their” rurality on others’. Without an analytical tool for power, the localised fault lines of rurality remain in the dark. In the present article, Halfacree’s model is developed further, and a conceptual extension is suggested, providing the original model with analytical sensitivity to actors’ social actions and power. By employing this framework, actors and their agency, social relations, social practices, and struggles are brought back into the understanding of rurality, while continuing to illuminate the role of discourse and representations.

The extended Halfacree conceptualisation is analytically employed in two cases of communities undergoing rapid transformations. From being dominated by traditional primary industry, the studied communities are becoming increasingly dependent upon tourism. Three research questions are investigated: (1) How many ‘species’ of rurality fight to dominate the two cases’ space? (2) How do actors involved in the social production of rural space champion their desired rurality? (3) How is entangled power articulated in the studied communities’ production of rural space? Before I turn to these research questions, first the article’s conceptual critique, the suggested conceptual extension, and methodological considerations are accounted for, followed by a presentation of the cases.

2. Powering up rurality

Rural researchers have long been aware that power is an issue in rural change, emphasising the rural as a place of contest, conflict

Angry as a bull he came after me, grabbing hold of me, wrenching me around, and I told him: ‘Listen, you’ve achieved what you wanted. Now I don’t want to talk to you anymore.’ I had to sit down over there, shaking, thinking this is going to be hell. (Key owner, Codville Ltd.)
and diversity (e.g. Bell and Valentine, 1995; Halfacree, 1996; Holloway, 2004; Murdoch and Ward, 1997; Woods, 1998). Nonetheless, rural studies after the cultural turn is criticised for taking unequal power relations and following tensions for granted, avoiding studying social practices, relations and struggle (Bell, 2007; Bell et al., 2010; Cloke, 2006). This is a severe critique as it is not social structures that act and produce social effects and outcomes, but rather social actors, individuals or groups that do so through their actions and interactions in a countryside that is formed by a complex dynamic tangle of social relations, representations, networks, material features, humans and their actions (Engelstad, 2009; Murdoch, 2003, 2006).

2.1. Social production of rurality and power: a 'black box'

Halfacree (2004, 2006, 2007), in adopting a socially-based spatiality, where space is conceptualised as integral to social practice and simultaneously constitutes social practice and is constituted by social practice, provides a Lefebvre-influenced (1991) model that demonstrates how different notions of rurality and the relationship between them can be deconstructed (Cloke, 2006) (Fig. 1).

Halfacree’s (2007) model of rural space consists of three elements: representations of the rural, rural localities, and lives of the rural. Together, the elements constitute each other and reciprocally influence each other, thereby creating ‘rural space’ and associated notions. The first element, ‘representations of the rural’, refers to how the rural is portrayed in formal contexts, such as in authorities’ policies, planning documents, and industrial interests. The second, ‘rural localities’ and their characteristics (e.g. natural landscape, cultural landscape, aesthetics, etc.) relates to localities as inscribed through spatial practices. The third element, ‘lives of the rural’, refers to people’s reproduction of rural practices in everyday life.

Two concepts stand out when attempting to understand the nature of power and the role of power in the construction of rural/rurality: ‘structural coherence’ (Halfacree, 2006), and ‘trial by space’, where ‘structural coherence’ is employed as ‘stages’ or sub-processes in the overarching ‘trial by space’ (Halfacree, 2007).

‘Trial by space’, a concept that Halfacree borrows from Lefebvre (1991), refers to the process through which a notion about a geographical space becomes the notion that is commonly recognised as applying to that particular kind of space (Halfacree, 2007). Lefebvre (1991) saw struggles to be part of trial by space as he writes that it involves “confrontations and clashes” (p. 417) and that it “invariably reaches a dramatic moment when whatever is being tried (...) is put radically into question.” (p. 417, my emphasis). Lefebvre, however, leaves few clues as to the nature and inner workings of his ‘trial by space’. As with most of Lefebvre’s work on space, it is left to the user to interpret the concept and adapt it to their research (Merrifield, 2000); Halfacree’s solution is to apply the concept of ‘structural coherence’.

The application of ‘structural coherence’ is designed to indicate to what extent ‘harmony’ is present within rural localities, and thus the extent ‘to which rural residents, policy makers, business interests, pressure groups, etc. “are singing from the same hymn sheet” (Halfacree, 2007, p. 128). There are three kinds of spatial coherence: (1) congruent and united, (2) contradictory and disjointed, and (3) chaotic and incoherent. In the first category, the elements of rural space come together in a relatively smooth, consistent manner, yielding harmony. The lived, the conceived, and the perceived internalise each other, whereas the spatial character is open for debate in the other two categories. In the second category, there is contradiction within and between elements of rural space. Although there is tension, an overall coherence holds. In the third and last category, there are fundamental contradictions within and/or between elements of rural space. Fundamental conflicting ruralities co-exist and the elements of rural space fail to internalise each other (Halfacree, 2007).

Very little is explicitly said about actors’ social actions in Halfacree’s conceptualisation, although actors are a constituent in the conceptualisation’s foundations. In works predating his conceptual model, Halfacree, deals with actors and their power (cf. Halfacree and Boyle, 1998). Another example is where he writes, with reference to Lefebvre’s triad, that it is ‘the actions — flows, transfers, interactions — that “secrete” society’s space, facilitating socioeconomic reproductions. Practices are linked to … the rules and norms that bind society together’ (Halfacree, 2004, p. 294).

However, the actors/agency and the social aspects of their (everyday) lives seem to have been lost in the abstractions. Halfacree (2004, 2006, 2007) employs the model of rural space to analyse rurality on a systemic level in a British context, and finds four different ‘species’ of rurality (cf. Halfacree, 2007, p. 127). The actors and their agency seem only to play an abstract part, as a constituent in the conceptual ‘explanation’ of how these particular ruralities have emerged; analytically, actors and their agency are infinitesimal.

A similar critique can be made for power. Certain keyword phrases (e.g. ‘cohere in a relatively smooth, consistent manner’, ‘tension and contradiction’, and ‘fought for through trial by space’ (Halfacree, 2007, pp. 127, 128, and 136 respectively)) bear witness to a recognition of power, but actors’ social relations, which by all measures of social science must be seen as imbued with power, do not. Halfacree’s notions of power are on a systemic level, as he discusses the clash between different ruralities in the British countryside (2006; 2007). Beyond what is read into ‘structural coherence’ and ‘trial by space’, very little is said about the workings of power.

2.2. Perspectives on power

Although power is at the core of all issues approached by social science research, it is possibly the concept that is hardest to come to terms with (Haugaard and Clegg, 2009). The concept has been vastly debated and theorised (Clegg, 1989; Clegg and Hauggaard, 2009; Panelli, 2004; Sharp et al., 2000a). The debate on ‘power’ has shifted from common sense understandings of power as coercion to more systemic, less agent-specific perceptions of power, in...
which power is understood as the constitutor of reality (Haugaard and Clegg, 2009).

Two different perspectives on power are identified in what Sharp et al. (2000b) call orthodox accounts: power as domination, and power as resistance. In the domination perspective, power is seen as the capacity to exert force over people and spaces. This capacity is seen as something that could be possessed by institutions or individuals. Power is perceived as enabling institutions or individuals to ‘control’ certain spaces and coerce people into following particular rules, and power relationships are understood chiefly in terms of how dominance over others is achieved. In the second orthodox perspective on power, power is approached from the viewpoint of resistance. Traditionally, this second perspective has conceptualised power as a binary of opposing forces between those of dominating power and those in resistance to it. Common to these two approaches to power is that they maintain a domination–resistance binary.

Sharp et al. (2000b), based on Foucault as well as their own critique of orthodox approaches, formulate a third understanding of power, ‘power as entanglements’, which is the perspective on power upon this article rests. Here, power is not conceived as the force of domination, but as something that is insinuated throughout all social activity. By contrast to orthodox understandings, power is not seen as a resource to be held or executed by someone, but as something circulating as a network of unsettled social relations. This implies that power is not conceived as an object and cannot be studied as such. Instead, it is a social practice, in which power is embedded within action that needs to be studied. The concept of ‘power as entanglements’ also adheres to Foucault’s dyad of resistance and domination, as well as to his union between ‘knowledge’, ‘truth’, ‘discourse’, and ‘power’ (Panelli, 2004; Sharp et al., 2000b).

Power is conceptualised as an amalgam of forces, practices, processes, and relations that ‘spin out along the precarious threads of society and space.’ (Sharp et al., 2000b, p. 20). In ‘power as entanglements’, power is thus not seen as ‘blocks of institutional structures, with pre-established, fixed tasks (to dominate, to manipulate), or as mechanisms for imposing order from the top downwards, but rather as a social relation diffused through all spaces’ (Sharp et al., 2000b, p. 20).

The material space is where it all comes together, as it is here that people, institutions, and social structures become entangled and generate relational power (Few, 2002; Sharp et al., 2000b). However, as pointed out by Halfacree, rural space is more than its material side. Representations are equally important, as are the lives of the rural. Doreen Massey (2005) promotes place as conjunctures of trajectories, where spatial narratives meet up or configure. In consequence, places ‘pose a challenge’ (Massey, 2005, p. 141), as they are not isolated islands of coherence that are only disturbed by external forces:

“What is special about place is precisely that thrown togetherness, the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here–and–now (itself drawing on a history and a geography of ‘thens’ and ‘theres’); and a negotiation which must take place within and between both human and nonhuman.” (p. 140)

2.3. A conceptual model for decloaking entangled power

The extension needs to be sensitive to entangled power's concreteatisation into something heartfelt and concerned about by the people performing the different constituents of a community’s trial by space. This is a challenge that Halfacree’s model has to overcome if it is to be used to guide research on rural change’s different processes and effects in concrete locations, as places are constructed and experienced both as material ecological artefacts and intricate networks of social relations, being solidifying configurations of social relations, material practices, elements in discourse and forms of power (Murdoch, 2003, 2006; Sharp et al., 2000b).

Furthermore, places are the focus of the imaginary, of desires, of beliefs, and of discursive activity. In short, places are filled with symbolic and representational meanings, as well as people and their social dealings. Halfacree’s model is only equipped to enable an understanding of the former. Consequently, questions arise: What is the nature of the processes involved in ‘trial by space’? What social processes are involved? Are there conditions that influence the ‘trial’ (i.e. power)? How and why are these conditions influential? Although practices and everyday life is stressed by Halfacree’s conceptualisation, there is no conceptual impetus to investigate actors’ social relations within the spatial production.

I suggest an extension to Halfacree’s conceptualisation, comprising three hubs through which entangled power could be analytically pursued: an immaterial hub, a material hub, and a personal hub (see Fig. 2). As shown in Section 2.2, the understanding of power as entanglements sees power as networks of unsettled social relations within a space that is more than just material, or social, or practices. Furthermore, it asserts that the only way power can be studied is through studying the social practices in which power is embedded within action. The proposed conceptual hubs call for social practices embedded with action to be examined from three perspectives: immaterial, material, and personal.

The three hubs are formulated quite loosely to give them flexibility, as the phenomena to which they address are likely to vary across time and space. Nonetheless, the immaterial hub would typically in a Western society refer to the juridical side (law, by-laws, and regulations) of actors’ social relations, as well as to actors’ network relations and normative convictions (i.e. the formal guidelines incorporated into a community’s socio-historical fabric). Here, it should be noted that this extension differs from Halfacree’s ‘representations of rural’, which refer to formal representations of rural space and its rurality, not the formal and informal rules regulating, swaying and guiding actors’ actions, to which this hub engenders sensitivity towards.

The material hub directs analytical attention to the material side of actors’ social relations. In this regard, typical elements are property, its location, usufruct, money, and means of violence. These material elements have important social sides, as they either are
employed directly in a social relation by the actors possessing them, or indirectly as part of the non-possessing actors’ assessments.

Likewise, the personal hub addresses the personal side of actors’ dealings in a rurality’s trial by space. Examples could be actors’ careers and/or career plans and family, as well as their follow-through of implemented strategies (e.g. threats, violence), fondness of fighting, and sense of vulnerability and/or perceptions of threat and gender. Other examples would be their attempts to secure perceived bases of existence and their desired way of life.

The three hubs are conceived as conceptual hooks, providing a Halfacreean approach with sensitivity towards entangled power’s multitude of kinds and ways. The hubs are, in correspondence with the triactic nature of Halfacree’s triad, distinct but interrelated, interacting within two dimensions. Firstly, the three hubs should conceptually be seen as interacting and mutually constituting each other. For instance, entangled power embedded within social actions projecting from personal motives, agendas, assessments, etc. (i.e. what is addressed by the personal hub) cannot be understood in isolation from that which the other two hubs address. Secondly, the three hubs interact with the processes captured by Halfacree’s threefold architecture, mutually affecting each other. Consequently, entangled power embedded within actions projecting from, for instance personal assessments, cannot be understood in isolation from the elements addressed by ‘representations of the rural’, ‘rural localities’, and ‘lives of the rural’.

3. Method and data

This study rests on two cases, the identities of which are concealed for ethical reasons (McDowell, 1998; Thagaard, 2003): a small community called ‘Codville’, located in a peripheral coastal region, and ‘Farmington’, a rapidly developing mountain town located in a peripheral interior region. The case areas were strategically chosen because they were in the midst of transformation from being places sustained by primary industries to becoming dominated by tourism. Data were collected during three periods of fieldwork in the case study areas in 2008. In addition, a fourth period of fieldwork was carried out in Farmington during the winter of 2009, with the objective of examining previously unearthed issues and interviewing informants that previously were unavailable.

The recruitment of informants was guided by the ‘strategic sampling’ method (Mason, 2002), and the purpose was to identify and acquire data on conflicting spatial narratives in the rural changes experienced by the studied communities. A total of 45 qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 50 informants, covering the positions of tourism entrepreneurs, officials, local political leaders, local residents, property developers, and other stakeholders (Table 1). The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The study data further comprised various forms of official information from public records (official documents, zoning maps, and business register) and also internal documents from Codville Ltd. (tourist company owning most of Codville) and a key regional development organisation (RDO) in Farmington. Software facilitating analysis of qualitative data (NVivo) was used when categorising and analysing the data.

4. Case presentation

Codville is a picturesque fishing village that has been turned into a tourism destination by private owners: 150 years ago it was a vibrant community based on rich fisheries off its shores, but today, fewer than 20 residents live in the community year-round, the majority are senior citizens, and only one family has children. Outside the tourist season, the village restaurant, pub, café, and shop are closed. Fewer than five locals are employed full-time, year-round by the former fishery station, now turned tourist company, while there are an additional 20–30 employees in the summer season, most of which are seasonal migrant workers and teenagers from nearby villages. Three non-local owners own the former station through Codville Ltd. Following their arrival 5–10 years ago, the industrial focus of Codville shifted, and for the first time tourism is key industry. The owners hope to realise Codville’s potential and return a profit. Apart from the café, a nature tourism operator, and an artisan, Codville Ltd controls all tourism activities in the village.

Farmington is a recently emerged town. A booming tourism-driven property development transformed the area from land used for summer farming in the 1950s into today’s year-round

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant position</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Recruitment</th>
<th>Number of informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Codville Municipality</td>
<td>Mayor, municipality planner, assistant deputy manager</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General tourism in the area Codville is located</td>
<td>Manager of the regional destination company, head of the local ‘tourism board’ (informal organisation)</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local residents</td>
<td>Strategic, drawn from phone book</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism entrepreneur (Codville Ltd.)</td>
<td>Key owner and head, personnel manager, production and maintenance manager, chef</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmington Municipality</td>
<td>Mayor, municipality planner</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General tourism in the area Farmington is located</td>
<td>Manager of the regional destination company, Region’s public museum (group interview)</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional development organisation (RDO)</td>
<td>4 project workers (one group interview with two of them - individual interviews), manager, and head of regional chamber of commerce</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local residents, Farmville (Farmington’s founding village)</td>
<td>In order to capture the rural change from pasture to resort town, “local residents” were defined as dwelling in Farmville, the village originally using Farmington for summer farming</td>
<td>Strategic, drawn from phone book</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key tourism enterprise (Farmington Ltd.)</td>
<td>Key owner and head</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other tourism entrepreneurs in the region</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders involved in a zoning conflict “Marie”: Property developer, transforming her farm’s outfields to real estate, strongly in favour of the tourism-led development; “John”: (middle position in the conflict) expanding farmer and contractor, in favour of some tourism-led development; “Lisa”: traditional farmer, strongly opposing the tourism-led development</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
resort town and commercial centre. Beyond the boundaries of the town, farming remains important, and constitutes a significant part of the lagging region’s economy. At the time when the study was carried out more than 250 residents live in Farmington on a year-round basis. In addition, the town has a significant number of privately-owned second homes. With the exception of a few summer farms on the outskirts of Farmington, summer farming practices have been superseded by tourism-led developments. A central issue is a zoning dispute arising from the clash between non-agrarian resource use and exploitation of the same resources for traditional agricultural purposes.

5. Findings and discussion

The countryside is a multitude of intersecting spatial narratives. Moreover, communities and the everyday lives of rural people are subjective, diverse, discourse-tangled, and networked (Halfacree, 2007; Liepins, 2000; Massey, 2005; Murdoch, 2003). In order to analytically pursue actors in such an empirical ‘mess’ as ‘trial by space’, a limited set of narratives and set of actors, i.e. ‘snapshots’ illustrating particular aspects of the modified model, are investigated: a zoning dispute in Farmington, and the clash between a café owner in Codville and the company that controls the town (Codville Ltd.). Other clashes, conflicts, and views than those analysed here exist in the studied communities, as might be expected. The narratives analysed are those that emerged from the data collected. The goal here is to demonstrate the analytical potential of the extended Halfacree-approach. Section 5.1 is devoted to examining the first research question, Section 5.2 the second, while Section 5.3 enlightens the third.

5.1. A structurally coherent rurality?

5.1.1. Codville

Two ‘species’ of rurality were present in the Codville data, respectively labelled Company-Codville (CC) and Resistance’s Codville (RC). CC is a conceived rurality, a type of rurality geared towards cashing in on tourism by: (1) creating a tourism product that can be consumed effortlessly; (2) manufacturing a consistent visual appearance of a destination whose product may be efficiently marketed and communicated; and (3) portraying Codville’s history and the fishery heritage as Codville Ltd. perceives it. Several traces of this conceived rurality dominated Codville’s space (see Tables 2–4, Section 5.1).

RC is the rurality of those who are opposed to CC in Codville’s trial by space. This rurality is produced discursively, as RC’s adherents related to and challenged CC. In many instances, it appears diametrical, conveying that Codville should be accessible without an admittance fee, and that tourism should be more based on a ‘real community’. It is important to note, however, that the informants voicing opposition towards CC were involved in tourism, but independently from Codville Ltd.

Three points of contradiction between the two ruralities were articulated in the data: the way the company does business, the company’s commercialised version of Codville, and owners’ moral right to a place. The RC backers argued that Codville was being made into too much of a market place, while the whole point of CC was precisely the utilisation of Codville as a market place, especially in a situation where the company remained unprofitable.

The highly controversial admittance fee played an important role in Codville’s trial by space. It substantiated Codville’s rurality as a commodity and expressed the autonomy of Codville Ltd., as it demonstrated that Codville was something to be sold by Codville Ltd. One aspect of controversy was the level of the pricing, which was considered too high. Another aspect was the fact that an admittance fee increased tourists’ expenses, leaving them with less to spend in the RC backers’ non-Codville Ltd. tourism businesses.

However, the controversy runs deeper than the impact on sales. Another important issue was clashing notions of what was acceptable in the commercialisation of Codville. For example, the prominent voice of resistance in the Codville data, ‘Hillary’, a café-owner in her 60s, felt that CC had reduced ‘her’ Codville by shameless commercialisation, and in which being veracious was cast overboard in the pursuit of tourists’ cash. The source of such sentiments seems to have been Codville’s recent shift into chiefly a place for tourism:

*It is so much of this that’s not true. It’s supposed to be the best-preserved fishery station in the country. But where’s the fish? There isn’t a fish that’s landed in Codville anymore. It’s bygone. ... To me, it seems like the history’s distorted, ‘poshed up’ and told in a way that makes it unrecognisable.* (Hillary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representations of the rural.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codville</th>
<th>Farmington</th>
<th>CRF (subdued)</th>
<th>SFF (subdued)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC (dominating)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Manual for employees</td>
<td>- Scheme for Hillary’s café:</td>
<td>- Regional Development Organisation's charter and projects on:</td>
<td>- Municipality’s mapping of grazing resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Design of the guided walk</td>
<td>- Menu</td>
<td>- Cultural heritage</td>
<td>- Municipality’s current zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Scheme underlying guides’ narration</td>
<td>- Displays</td>
<td>- Summer farm tourism</td>
<td>- Regional Development Organisation’s charter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Scheme underlying audio/visual show</td>
<td>- Scheme for supplier of nature experiences:</td>
<td>- Local food</td>
<td>- Regional Development Organisation’s formal statements in zoning conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Scheme underlying admittance fee</td>
<td>- Codville as port only</td>
<td>- Tourism entrepreneurs’ underlying reasoning on:</td>
<td>- Schemes underlying farmer’s working plans:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Company strategy for:</td>
<td>- Artist’s scheme:</td>
<td>- Commercialisation</td>
<td>- Type of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Restoration</td>
<td>- Developing his workshop into a tourism product (not realised)</td>
<td>- Design and architecture</td>
<td>- Schemes underlying farmers’ investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New buildings</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Events and offerings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Commercialisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Displays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Restaurant/pub</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Take on food traditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In contrast to the above claim, the key owner of Codville Ltd. relied on his trained architect’s eyes in his approach to Codville as a tourist attraction. For him, it was not the continuation of the fisheries that needed to play first violin in order to stage the destination as an attraction where the fishermen’s toil and the coastal heritage could be experienced. Rather, it was Codville’s built environment and its rich catalogue of artefacts that he judged to be its finest assets.

Thus, Codville’s structural coherence could not be labelled congruent and unified, although to a visitor scratching the surfaces of its front stage Codville may appear to be a space that coheres in a smooth and consistent manner. It was not a chaotic and disjointed rural space either, as Codville Ltd. and the local resistance fundamentally agreed that Codville was supposed to be about tourism. This study suggests that the battle was about the following: (1) the way Codville’s heritage was manifested, (2) who possessed the legitimacy to capitalise on and control this heritage, and (3) the manner in which Codville and its heritage was commodified. Codville thus falls into the second level of structural coherence, where space is contradictory and disjointed and, although there is tension and contradiction, an overall coherence holds (Halfacree, 2007).

5.1.2. Farmington

Three ‘species’ of rurality were recognisable in the Farmington data: Resort Farmington (RF), Culturally-Rooted Farmington (CRF), and Summer Farm Farmington (SFF). RF is an engineered rurality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
<th>Rural locality.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC (dominating)</td>
<td>RC (subdued)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism commerce:</td>
<td>- Fishery heritage:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Souvenir shop</td>
<td>- Fishers, boats and equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stream of tourists</td>
<td>- Production facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ticket booth</td>
<td>- Local families imbued with it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parking facilities</td>
<td>- Local community:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reception</td>
<td>- Local, year round inhabitants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- New “shacks”</td>
<td>- “Proper” village shop, not souvenirs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Artisan’s outlet</td>
<td>- Tourism commerce:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pricy, “posh” restaurant</td>
<td>- Codville’s café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fishery heritage:</td>
<td>- Codville Ltd.’s infrastructure for tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Production facilities</td>
<td>- Artisan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Archive of artefacts, pictures, maps, etc.</td>
<td>- Nature experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
<th>Lives of the rural.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC (dominating)</td>
<td>RC (subdued)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local employees’ chores</td>
<td>- Avoiding parts of Codville particularly closely associated with CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal immigrant workers’ chores</td>
<td>- Hillary’s badmouthing of Codville Ltd. to her guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village shop workers in “costumes”</td>
<td>- and media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggle to change company culture</td>
<td>- Opposing the admittance fee Fighting/bickering with Codville Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggle to turn company’s negative financial situation</td>
<td>- “Comparing notes” with Codville Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locals’ “condoning resignation” and “supporting participation”</td>
<td>- Comparing notes” with Codville Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting/bickering with café host</td>
<td>- “Comparing notes” with Codville Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

designed to meet the perceived needs of Farmington’s largest tourism enterprise, Farmington Ltd, a company that controls most of Farmington’s tourism activity and events. It is designed to commercialise tourists’ consumption of rural space by (1) transforming a mountain grazing landscape into a resort town, (2) creating and sustaining a tourism-driven economy, and (3) creating recreational activities and events. Evidence of this engineered rurality was present, dominating Farmington’s rural space (see Tables 2–4).

CRF is a conceived rurality that attempts to reorientate the area’s tourism from large-scale generic tourism to tourism based on a perceived, area-specific quality (agricultural heritage). The conceived rurality is equipped to commercialise agricultural heritage and activities. Although this rurality received substantial attention from public development agencies and political institutions on regional and national levels, its marks were barely noticeable in Farmington’s space (see Tables 2–4).

SFF is the rurality originally dominating the area, a rurality produced by local farming practices of exploiting mountain land as an agricultural resource. Several traces of this rurality were present in Farmington’s rural space; these were subdued in the town centre, but dominated its outskirts (see Tables 2–4).

The three ruralities each have differing abilities to harmoniously co-exist with the others. To some degree, CRF depended on the traffic generated in RF, as the latter attracted a pool of tourists into which the entrepreneurs promoting CRF could tap. At the same time, CRF was supported by the existence of SFF, as this rurality spatially underpinned the very heritage upon which CRF was conceived to capitalise. RF was to a lesser extent dependent upon its competing ruralities, although the presence of CRF widened the scope of the area’s attractions and events, making Farmington into a destination that also had something to offer tourists that preferred more culturally rooted experiences.

The presence of SFF and its adherent activities were more problematic for RF. Roaming livestock was clearly a source of irritation. The greatest source of aggravation between the two ‘species’ of rurality was SFF’s extensive land use; one ‘hot’ issue was a perceived shortage of residential housing. The municipality, a supporter of RF, intended to remedy this by zoning new areas as residential zones, but the several hundred housing units planned in an area neighbouring a cluster of summer farms created significant conflict. The sustained push for real estate raised difficult issues in Farmington’s trial by space, as the conflict conveyed that Farmington’s development was incompatible with summer farming. This was a particularly difficult issue for the municipality to which Farmington belonged. The municipality found itself at a crossroads, confronted with a choice between facilitating either RF or SFF:

With the revision of the municipality’s general plan we need to address the big question: Do we really want these summer farms? We need to begin looking for possibilities to compensate these farmers, expropriate them, so they can establish new summer farms elsewhere. (Municipality planner)

For SFF, the presence of CRF and RF were a potential threat, as they implied more traffic on pastureland, and because rising property values would create pressure to develop the land into real estate.

The results of the study suggest that the battle in Farmington was over two issues: whether tourism should take place or not, and the cultural rootedness of any tourism that did take place. Farmington, like Codville, thus falls into the second level of structural coherence. Farmington’s space may have been chaotic and disjointed, as the primary battling ruralities (RF and SFF) seem to have been mutually exclusive, but RF seemed to suppress opposing voices, thereby maintaining the structural coherence within stage two.

In order to investigate further it is necessary to turn to power in the two case communities’ production of space. How did the actors involved champion their desired rurality in the trial by space riddling their community’s space?

5.2. Engaging in the production of rural space

Since the trials by space investigated here ‘ran hot’, the stakeholders close to the core of each ‘species’ of rurality seemed quite aware of their engagement, and hence they were able to narrate in a relatively straightforward manner during their interviews. However, the engagement by normal ‘civilians’ is harder to classify, partly because they kept a low profile and consequently were hard to identify, but also because rural residents are heterogeneous.

Nonetheless, in the case of Codville the data suggest that three particular strategies for engagement in the production of space were employed by the interviewed local residents: condoning resignation, supportive participation in CC, and resistance. The first group consisted of local residents that sympathised with Codville Ltd.’s need to commercialise Codville; the company had certain responsibilities to its employees and the community and also needed to make money in order to fulfil these responsibilities. People who employed this strategy saw tourism as the lesser of two evils, the preferred alternative to dwindling into oblivion. The second group comprised locals who worked for Codville Ltd, while the actors championing RC rurality are the third group. In the case of Farmington, a comparatively larger town, the study is too limited to render a precise picture of the engagements outside the inner core of stakeholders engaged in the three identified ruralities.

Within the conceptual trial’s first corner, ‘representations of the rural’, Halfacree (2007, p. 127) places the ‘formal representations of the rural such as those expressed by capital interests, cultural arbiters, planners or politicians’. In the case of Codville, this translates to Codville Ltd.’s formal representations of their envisioned Codville. In the trial by space, formal representations surfaced in the stakeholders’ decision regarding an admittance fee, the company-certified slide show, the ideas behind the guides’ narrations, the schooling of employees, the company’s design programme, and the souvenir shop’s format. Likewise, the local opposition commanded components belonging to this corner, such as the reasoning behind their own tourism products, as in the case of Hillary’s display of artefacts in the café (Table 2).

In Farmington’s production of rural space the politicians’ and planners’ representations play a much more central role, as manifested through the town’s master plan and zoning. These actors’ ideas were also found in SFF’s rurality, as the municipality had commissioned a vegetation survey documenting grazing quality, and in CRF, as the municipality is a member of the RDO that champions this rurality. This does not shift the municipality in its standing as a champion of RF; although the actual area in question remains zoned as a summer farm zone, the informants representing the municipality voiced a desire to change this status (Table 2).

Halfacree’s (2007) second corner is ‘rural locality’, as rurality is inscribed through relatively distinctive spatial practices, linked to production and/or consumption activities (p. 127). In this corner are placed spatial practices exuding a society’s distinct space with its material expression – elements associated with what is perceived as ‘real space’ (Elden, 2004; Halfacree, 2007). In the case of Codville and Farmington, this corner translates to the materialisation of the actors’ representations from the first corner. In Codville’s case, the company’s commercialisation and the commercialisation’s infrastructure are addressed by this corner. As Table 3 indicates, this commercialisation and its infrastructure have two facets. For Codville Ltd., tourism and commerce (activities) and their material infrastructure were important. Examples of such infrastructure are the souvenir shop, the ticket booth, and the new ‘posh’ fishermen’s shacks. Tourism and commerce were found in the activities taking place in...
these concrete infrastructure elements and in the streams of tourists occupying Codville’s space. Furthermore, the fishery heritage was imperative for the company, as it was the material basis for its business, but the actual fishery activities were of marginal importance. The local opposition’s ‘rural locality’ contrasted with that of the company’s, because to them it was the fishery activities that was supposed to play centre stage in Codville’s ‘real’ space and should be continued. The tourism-driven village shop was resented too.

The schematic layout of the second corner in Farmington’s spatial production is somewhat parallel to Codville’s, with a dominating tourism company commercialising its space and a group of voices that wished to see economic development more rooted in local heritage (Table 3). The two cases diverge, however, in that RF was not based on such a heritage, and Farmington also had summer farming champions, who were keeping farming activities and their material elements discernible in the town’s surroundings.

‘Lives of the rural’ is the third and final corner in Halfacree’s (2007) triad. The lives of the rural are inevitably subjective and diverse, and reflect varying levels of coherence and in-coherence (Halfacree, 2007, p. 127). This corner of the conceptualisation refers to space as lived (Elden, 2004; Halfacree, 2007). In relation to Codville and Farmington, this translates into the execution of the strategies that stakeholders employed to champion their envisioned rurality. In Codville these were characterised by the employees’ performance of their chores for the company and visitors’ tourist behaviours (Table 4). Furthermore, it is within this conceptual corner that the conflict between the spearheads of the trial by space, Codville Ltd. and Hillary, belongs. It was in everyday life that Codville’s trial by space was manifested:

I’ve been against them from the start. I quarrel with them and take my heart medicine. … They’re furious with me, and I have no trouble understanding why. (Hillary).

The manifestation of the trial by space in his everyday life was something the owner and head of Codville Ltd. also addressed, as illustrated by the paper’s opening quote and the following:

Key owner and head, Codville Ltd.: Hillary has a tendency to badmouth us to her guests, and that’s a shame. … Next week, if she says something, I’ll claim rent for her outdoor sitting area [laughs].

Interviewer: Does this conflict run beyond friendly bickering?

Key owner and head, Codville Ltd: It hasn’t been fun at all.

In this case too, Farmington’s conceptual corner resembled Codville’s, with tourists and employees performing the performances and chores associated with a resort town’s different activities (e.g. running bars and restaurants, and large scale tourism) (Table 4). With limited exceptions, the performances of the supporters of CRF rurality were almost invisible. By contrast, the performances of the champions of SFF rurality were recognisable; their farming practices were a reminder of their rurality. Furthermore, as in the case of Codville, it was in the everyday life of Farmington’s stakeholders that trial by space was manifested:

Despite the conflict, we’re neighbours and shall live together, and that’s quite tough. … It’s draining, and the time it requires is interminable. This overshadows everything. It demands so much energy. (Lisa)

5.3. Power in the production of rural space

Indeed, power is indicated when a space’s trial by space and corresponding activities are illuminated through Halfacree’s triad. However, this power is on a systemic level, such as the relative strength of RF versus CRF and SFF, as indicated by its domination over CRF and SFF. In order to understand the trial by space riddling Farmington and Codville, I will now turn to the question of how entangled power is articulated in the case communities’ production of rural space, employing the conceptual extension to Halfacree’s model suggested in Section 2.3.

5.3.1. The immaterial hub

When the ‘immaterial hub’ is applied to the data, power becomes discernible through, but also within, the workings of formal organisational law and the two companies’ directives, and the laws and by-laws regulating municipalities and public development schemes such as Farmington’s RDO. In Farmington, the municipality’s formal zoning authority effectively checked the RDO’s attempts to advocate an SFF rurality, and the municipality disapproved of the local development organisation’s meddling in municipal affairs, as clearly revealed by the RDO leader:

I went a bit too far with my statements in a zoning case in Farmington … and we were in conflict with the municipality. They had already concluded in favour of the zoning, as had the county governor. … So I told them that next time my statement would be more clearly politically ‘moored’. (Leader, RDO)

Lisa, the key champion of SFF rurality according to the data, was grateful for the RDO’s support. However, she recognised the municipality’s use of institutional force, as the supportive statement from the RDO was removed from the zoning’s case documents:

Lisa: The RDO has summer farming as their priority. But one begins to wonder whether that’s just a pretext for something ‘cause a statement was issued by them in this concrete case. But suddenly the statement disappeared.

Interviewer: The municipality buried it?

Lisa: Yes, officially it’s said that the RDO isn’t allowed to make statements in issues such as this one. … The mayor is also on the council controlling the RDO. So this is like placing a fox to keep the geese, you know.

In Codville’s spatial production, organisational juridical aspects were also at work on social relations taking place in its trial by space. Codville Ltd.’s key owner was both majority owner and company head, with all the influence that such positions command. Naturally, such aspects were present in the company’s internal affairs. An example, is the compendium issued to employees, which made it clear that for an employee to live up to his or her responsibilities, they would have to be familiar with Codville’s history, thereby ensuring that all employees ‘sung from the same hymn sheet’ in Codville’s choir of ruralities.

Power was also at play through and within networks and/or relations in the two cases. This was particularly noticeable in the Farmington case. As the mayor admitted, the bonds were tight:

It’s a challenge that we’re such a small community. … [The] connections between people are close, often family or friendship, at least acquaintances. … If it is hard to say no to your neighbour or to someone in your family when you’re planning. (Mayor)

The relations seem perhaps particularly close between the backers of Resort Farmington, Marie, who wanted to develop her land into a residential area, had held a seat on the municipal council for a decade. Furthermore, she was a member of the municipality’s committee for planning and zoning issues, which thus placed her within the body that had developed the guiding principles for Farmington’s growth. In addition, the municipality’s deputy
manager took leave of absence from his municipal job in order to head the work with Farmington’s master plan, and later returned to his post as chief bureaucrat, where he was subsequently responsible for the preparation of the zoning. Further, the municipality’s section manager, to whom the planning department answered, had a background of working within Farmington’s business community.

The above-mentioned networks posed a significant challenge to Lisa’s desire for a dominating SFF rurality, as they were out of her reach, given that they took place behind closed doors. The following quote illustrates Lisa’s despair over this:

Marie’s on the planning committee. She’s been sitting at that table working on this scheme for many years! … We should neither have had that deputy manager nor section manager. But they’re relatively young, so I guess we’re stuck with them for a while. (Lisa)

The champions of SFF, however, were not without empowering networks of their own. According to municipal zoning documents, the smallholders association, local residents at Farmington (among them lawyers), second-home owners, and farmers were among those issuing formal statements in favour of the SFF case against the proposed residential zoning.

In the Foucauldian understanding of ‘power as entanglements’ there is a union between ‘truth’, ‘discourse’, and power. In the ‘immaterial hub’ this surfaces in normative conviction. As noted earlier, RC contained sentiments that Codville’s space should first and foremost be about the fisherman and their history. When legitimising her right to have a say in Codville, Hillary pointed to her family’s fishery background, their history related to Codville, and her own history in connection with Codville, while pointing out the owners’ lack of fishery ancestry, as well her perception of cultural and class differences:

‘Cause Codville is the fishermen’s, and nobody else’s. But that’s forgotten. My dad, born in 1904, was a fisherman here all his years. And my brother has been a fisherman. He was one of the last to leave Codville. And I’m also an aunt to four nephews that are also fishermen — ordinary people. … My sister, who doesn’t live in Codville, had to pay 4 euros to get in, ‘cause the people in the booth don’t know the locals. That makes me very upset. I don’t think it’s right. (Hillary)

For Farmington’s opposing voices, normative convictions seemed to be the chief source of empowerment, as with Lisa’s conviction in the zoning dispute over whether or not Farmington’s resources were best used for agricultural production. Lisa’s normative arguments were diverse. One reference that she made was to agriculture as a producer of man’s basic needs, with an allusion to a perceived immorality in tourism, from which man cannot be sustained. Another reference was to the natural and cultural qualities read into SFF rurality’s resource use, and there was reference to the historical supremacy agriculture held over tourism in Farmington. The implication is that, from Lisa’s perspective, Marie indulged in immoral conduct in her desire to convert her agricultural land into cash.

The opposition did not have a monopoly on channelling power through their normative convictions, though. The supporters of RF also conveyed a clear and focused normative conviction that tourism-led growth was necessary for the common welfare. An example was Marie’s linkage between the communities’ wellbeing and RF rurality:

As a politician you can’t focus on your own industry. That there are job opportunities so enough people may live here to justify the school and kindergarten is one of your responsibilities. Our goal is to avoid a population decline. You need to ensure that there are other industries than agriculture to achieve that.

5.3.2. The material hub

When applying the ‘material hub’ on the data, power becomes discernible through property, money, usufruct, and localisation. In Codville, for instance, the company’s ownership of the property was not questioned. Private owners had purchased the fishery station. Naturally, this granted certain capabilities regarding modifying the property to fit their own needs.

One example of the company’s command of their property in order to keep their control of Codville’s visual appearance was the deeds to the new ‘fishermen shacks’, which the owner was quite conscious of:

The deeds give property rights to an area that is precisely as big as the shack, 60 m squared. … and since we’re in legal control of it, I can tell them that ‘no, you can’t have a Jacuzzi outside your shack’. … It’s important to be in control. (Key owner and head, Codville Ltd.)

There is no doubt that property was important in the case of Hillary’s empowerment. Her café was one of the few buildings not owned by the company. Naturally, the implication of this was that Codville Ltd. could not evict their ‘thorn’. Instead, they resorted to removing their adversary by attempting to talk her into working for them:

This spring, one of the owners came to me with a job offer. … It was a pretty good offer, but I had to close this place. I replied [that] I would be happy to run both. No, that was out of the question. (Hillary)

Property was also important in the Farmington case. It was Marie’s landownership that empowered in her strive for the development of a residential area on her land. However, with an entangled perspective on power, property rights cannot be seen to yield absolute power.

Money was the second channel of power addressed by the material hub. Codville’s informants pointed to the owners’ wealth as significant relative to their own ordinary financial means; buying the station to realise RC rurality was not an option. For Farmington’s champions of SFF rurality, who were ordinary farmers, money was of paramount concern because it limited their options to fight for their desired rurality:

We’ve tried to get by without a lawyer so far, ‘cause they’re expensive. And we think it’s too bad that we should use our income on such a thing because we have the rights. (Lisa)

Money is an obvious channel of power, but its workings in the investigated trial by space was not straightforward. Spending money in order to make money, as the owners of Codville Ltd. had done, placed the company under pressure to earn money, especially in its pub and restaurant. This pressure constituted a disempowering force for the company in Codville’s trial by space, as Hillary, who had modest expenses, could afford to price her food and beverages well below those sold by Codville Ltd.

As in Codville, money was not a straightforward matter in Farmington. The latter is a popular area for second homes and attracts wealthy people (and companies), some of which have even made Farmington their permanent place of residence. Thus, stakeholders that could extensively draw upon their wealth and networks acquired elsewhere were present in Farmington’s trial by space. The records related to the zoning hearings indicate that these stakeholders indeed had engaged in arguing the case against the zoning of the residential area. According to Lisa, the RF campaigners were aware of the force that these stakeholders could potentially muster:
The developers have actually told us that they’re afraid of the city people, because they’ll immediately put a lawyer on it, ‘cause they can afford to. But the village people wait until the last minute, so they have more power over us. (Lisa)

Usufruct is also a means through which power was embedded in the actors’ social relations and actions in the investigated trial by space. In the Farmington case, Lisa used her farm’s usufruct, i.e. her farm’s grazing rights legitimised by common law, to empower her struggle against her neighbour and the RF supporters in her camp:

"Our summer farm is very old. It predates the formal system of parcels. ... the private parcel’s grazing right has always been a common right. No one has opposed that. That the livestock always have been grazing on other people’s land. So the grazing right is common. (Lisa)"

Clearly, free ranging cattle will not easily co-exist with the development of a residential area, and Lisa’s hope was that through legal documentation of her usufruct she would be able to stop the zoning and the development it had legalised. The power of entanglement’s dyad of domination and resistance implies that resistance is integral to domination. Lisa’s attempt to invoke usufruct was challenged by Marie. In the zoning hearings Marie presented documents allegedly signed in the 1950s by witnesses, stating that the properties in question had been fenced in and hence they were not open for common grazing.

In both cases, location seemed to be important means by which the actors’ relations and actions could become infused with power. Marie’s land was located in one of the few areas open for Farmington’s development. In Codville, Hillary was able to draw significantly on her café’s favourable location within the fishery station; tourists had to walk past the café on their way to and from the station. The auspicious location interacted with the other aspects of entangled power embedded in her performance in Codville’s trial by space, amplifying the empowering effects and rendering the café owner someone to be reckoned within Codville’s production of space.

5.3.3. The personal hub

The aspects referred to by personal hub may be hard to capture data on and thereby also to analyse systematically. Nonetheless, it is important that studies that are to employ the proposed expansion to Halfacree’s conceptualisation have the personal hub in mind when designing the fieldwork so that data covering the personal side of actors’ dealings in a rurality’s trial by space is collected: for instance on careers and/or career plans and family, as to the extent they actually implement strategies/desires into social actions, fondness of fighting, and sense of vulnerability, and whether feeling threatened etc.

Power embedded in the actors’ social relations had a personal side in both Codville and Farmington. In Codville, for instance, the personal side was tangible in the contrast between the professional investors who invested a significant amount of money, and expected not only to create a viable and successful tourism destination but also a return on their investment, and the café owner and her hobby-like aspirations for her business; Hillary’s main motivation for running the café was to fill her days with meaningful activity. In Farmington, the desire to convert the value of real estate into cash was an apparent motivation, spurring Marie into action when the chance presented itself. However, when interviewed she also revealed another motivation, namely a desire for her children to be able to settle down in Farmington after they had graduated from university:

"If it hadn’t been for Farmington, and all the jobs created here, we would have been like any other backwater location. ... That wouldn’t be anything, neither for me or my children. Without Farmington there would be nothing for them to return for. (Marie)"

Also Marie’s neighbour’s dealings in Farmington’s trial by space were embedded with power emerging from the personal side. Firstly, the basis of Lisa’s engagement lay in her assessment that without the summer farm’s recourses (as grazing for her livestock) it would be impossible to continue farming, and she was quite determined to prevent this from happening. RF and its spatial consequences, if realised, would have depleted the resources that her family farm relied on. Secondly, her veneration of her ancestors’ toil was important:

"We’re the sixth generation here. ... Of course, we want to continue running the farm, and we hope our descendants will too. ... It is precisely the thing, to maintain what your kin has cultivated and built. So we would love to continue that. (Lisa)"

5.4. Accounts of trial by space sensitive to actors, agency, and power

For Marie, the elements pointed to by the three hubs of power and Halfacree’s three facets came together in her attempt to reap the fruits of her rurality’s performance in its trial by space. Over the years, the champions of Resort Farmington had built a rural space that dominated Farmington. Marie was spurred to action because of her desire to convert land into cash, a politician’s responsibility for her constituency, and a desire for her children to be able to move back home. Conceptually belonging to the hub of immaterial power, power was embedded with her actions via her professional networks. In her position as a politician, she had ample opportunity to consort with the actors hammering out the principles and by-laws guiding Farmington’s growth. These guidelines, conceptually belonging to Halfacree’s ‘representations of the rural’, imply that the only direction open for further development was in the direction of Marie’s land, evoking power conceptually belonging to the material hub – her property. This empowered Marie to challenge her neighbours’ usufruct that resided in their farming practices. These practices and their materiality conceptually belong to Halfacree’s ‘lives of the rural’ and ‘rural localities’.

Marie’s efforts, if she were to be successful, would bear a promise of reconfiguration of the aspects addressed by Halfacree’s ‘lives of the rural’ and ‘rural localities’. If realised, the residential area would mean an end to the SFF’s practice of freely roaming cattle grazing on the area in question; according to Lisa, this would mean an end to their farming altogether. Lisa was fighting for her way of life, for the right to continue to farm. Being easily blocked by the municipality, the RDO proved to be an unsuccessful ally for Lisa in terms of countering the influence of Marie’s network in Farmington’s trial by space. Powerless against Marie’s professional network, one of the few options left to Lisa that potentially would prove to be powerful in the trial by space were her usufruct. As shown this too was fought forcefully by Marie.

For Hillary, power, analytically addressed by the immaterial hub, was embedded with her actions through her normative conviction that Codville belonged to the fishers, and this led to her engagement in taking action against CC. Furthermore, the power and agency addressed by this hub draws significantly on elements referred to by Halfacree’s ‘rural locality’ (e.g. fishery heritage and its material and cultural remnants). However, Hillary’s resistance would not have posed much more than an inconvenience for the champions of CC; had it not been for the power analytically manifested through the material hub – property, money, and location. Codville Ltd. had spent a lot of money on its tourist destination but had yet to achieve profitability. Hillary, with her modest expenses, had profited and could afford to charge lower prices for...
refreshments than the company. Furthermore, her café was in the only building that Codville Ltd. did not own, and this effectively blocked any attempts made by the company to evict their ‘thorn’. Hillary’s humble motivation interacted with the power addressed by the other hubs, as her satisfaction was rooted in her ability keep her café, not the maximisation of earnings. Given that she operated independently from Codville Ltd., Hillary escaped the laws, by-laws, and norms regulating relations between the company and its employees; she was able to get away with what the company’s key owner described as badmouthing the company to her guests and the media. Hillary thus found herself in a situation where she was in control: she could either accept the company’s offer to join them or she could continue her fight for ‘her’ Codville, and as a consequence she was a voice of rurality that was not easily silenced in Codville’s trial by space.

6. Conclusion

Without an analytical tool for power, the localised fault lines of rurality remain in the dark. In this article, Halfacree’s (2006, 2007) threefold architecture for the social production of rural space has been criticised for its infinitesimal treatment of actors and their agency. It has been argued that it is analytically insensitive to entangled power’s concretisation into something heartfelt and concerned about by those social beings performing the different constituents of a community’s trial by space. This is problematic as places are solidifying configurations of complex social relations, material practices, elements in discourse and forms of power.

From a perspective of power as entanglements I have in the paper suggested a conceptual extension that provides the original model with analytical sensitivity to actors’ social actions and power. Understanding power as entanglements provides a perspective on power as networks of unsettled social relations within a space that is more than just material, or social, or practices. Consequently, the only way power can be studied is through studying the social practices in which power is embedded within action.

The paper’s chief contribution to the analysis of power in rural studies is its call for social practices embedded with action to be examined from three perspectives: immaterial, material, and personal. In correspondence with the trialectic nature of Halfacree’s triad are the suggested hubs conceptualised as distinct but interrelated, each hub interacting with each other and with the processes captured by Halfacree’s threefold architecture. The three hubs provide a Halcreean approach with sensitivity towards entangled power’s multitude of kinds and ways. By employing this framework, actors and their agency, social relations, and social practices and struggles are brought back into the understanding of rurality, while continuing to illuminate the role of discourse and representations.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Professor Nina Gunnerud Berg, Associate professor Karoline Daugstad, Dr. Frode Flemstø and two anonymous referees for their critical reading and constructive feedback. Any shortcomings or errors remain my own. The research is funded by The Research Council of Norway. The founding source has had no active part in the research.

References