The background of the slide is a photograph of a large crowd of people at what appears to be a protest or demonstration. A sign in the upper center of the crowd reads "WE NEED A CHANGE". The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. In the top right corner, there is a solid yellow rectangular graphic element.

Career guidance and social justice

Developing emancipatory practice

TRISTRAM HOOLEY

SUNDAY 26TH JANUARY, CANNEXUS, OTTAWA

By the end
of this
workshop
you will be
able to:

Explain what social justice is and demystify key concepts like opportunity structure, neoliberalism, oppression and responsibilisation

Discuss the ethical issues involved in engaging (and not engaging) in social justice as a careers practitioner

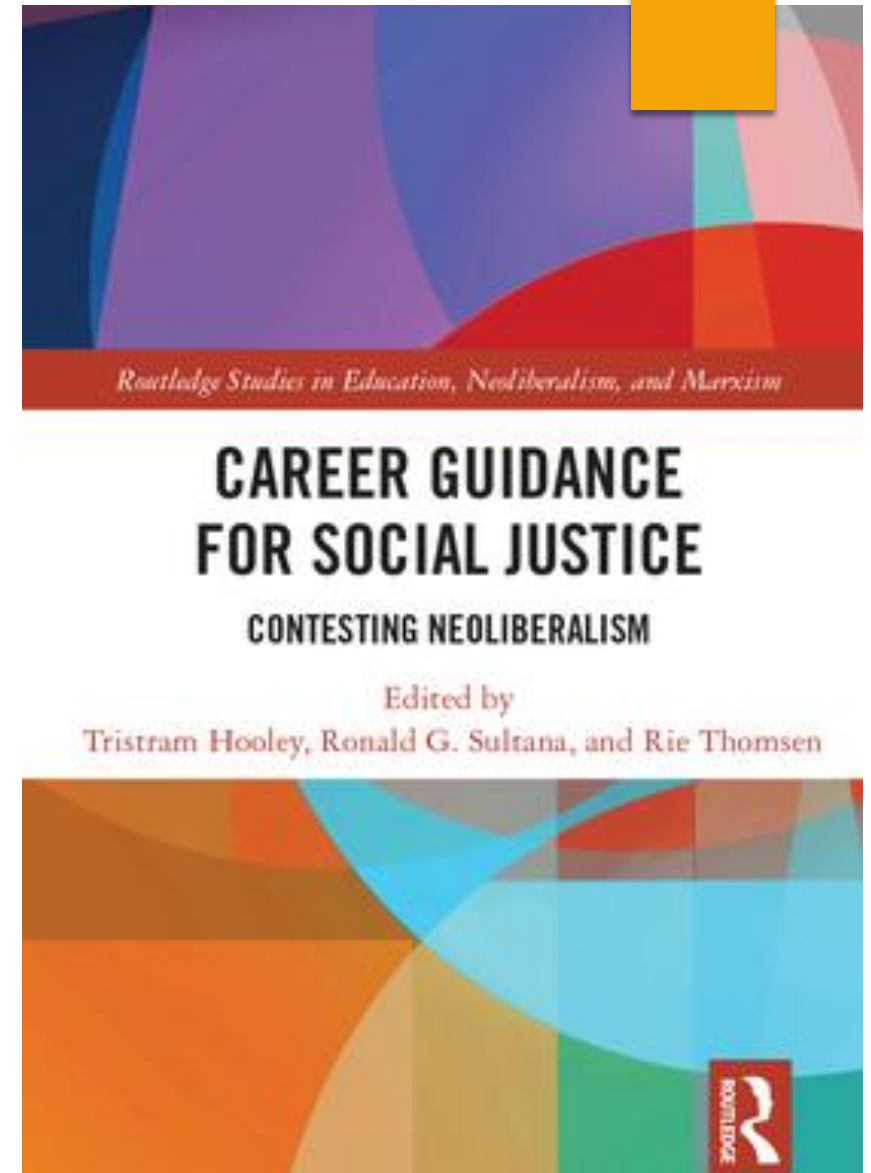
Identify the five signposts towards socially just career development (build critical consciousness; name oppression; question what is normal; encourage people to work together; and work at a range of levels) and explain their relevance to your practice

Make use of a range of resources, models and tools for delivering socially just career development

Career guidance

“Career guidance supports individuals and groups to discover more about work, leisure and learning and to consider their place in the world and plan for their futures... Career guidance can take a wide range of forms and draws on diverse theoretical traditions. But at its heart it is a purposeful learning opportunity which supports individuals and groups to consider and reconsider work, leisure and learning in the light of new information and experiences and to take both individual and collective action as a result of this.”

In other words it is a broad definition similar to how you would use the term ‘career development’.



Who are you and why are you here?

- ▶ Introduce yourself
- ▶ Where do you work and in what role?
- ▶ What are the main concerns that your students/clients have about their futures?
- ▶ What are you hoping for from today?



Background

Definitions and key concepts

Ethical dilemmas

The five signposts towards socially just career development

Conclusions and next steps



Structure of today



Background

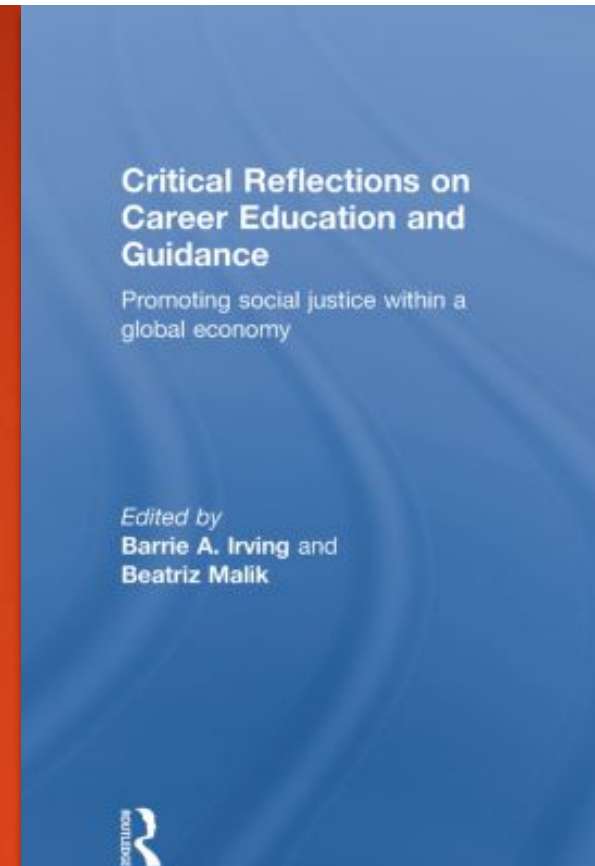
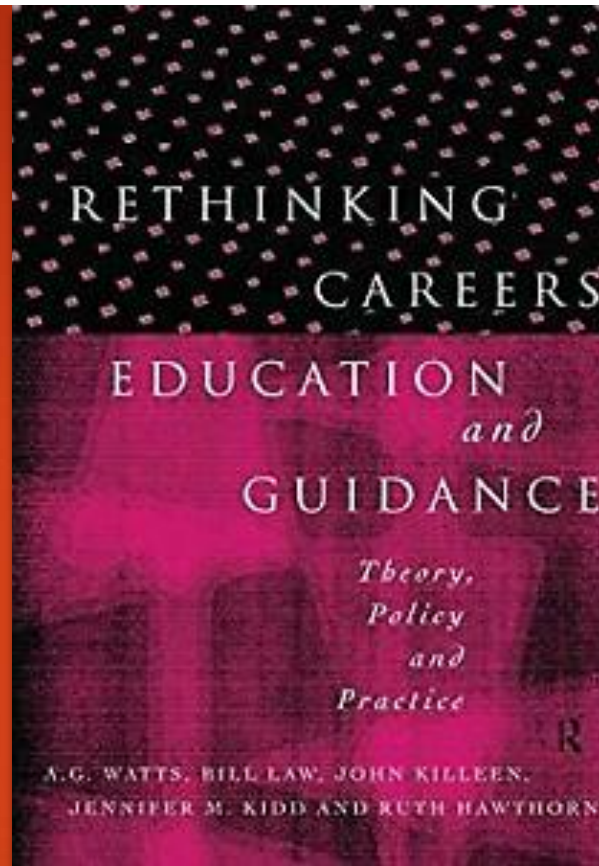
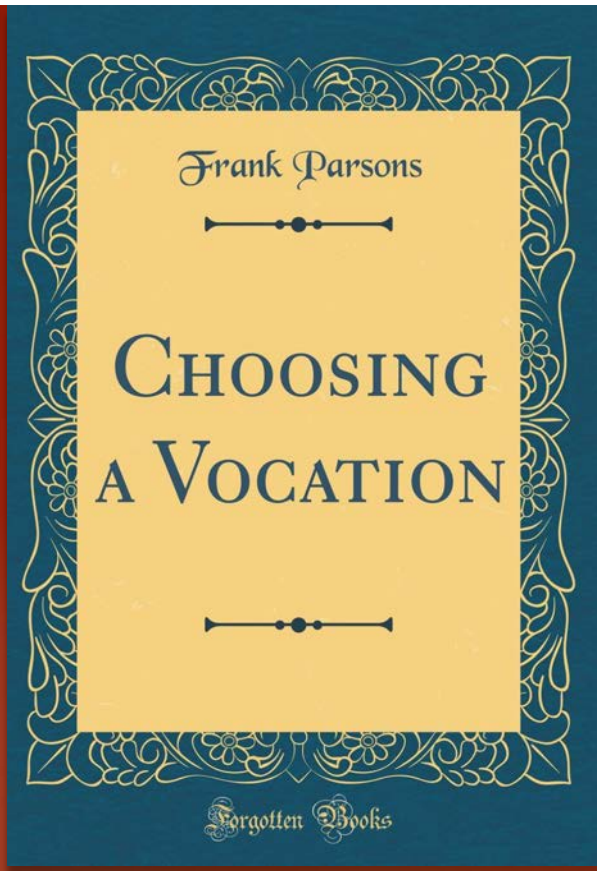
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Structure of today



There is a long tradition of thinking about career guidance and social justice...

Career guidance, social justice and neoliberalism

2 book project to create space for a different kind of discussion about career guidance.

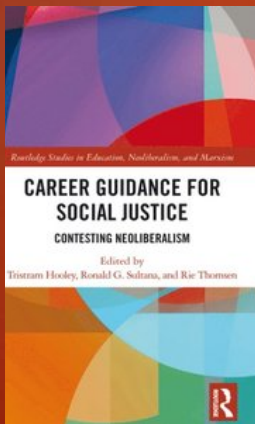
It builds on and extends a long tradition of thinking about career guidance and social justice.

Includes contributions from a wider range of countries including those in the global south.

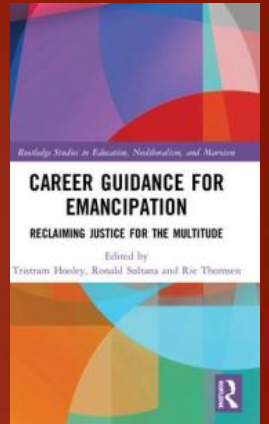
The two volumes

Career guidance for social justice – Explores context, critique and theory.

2018



2019



Career guidance for emancipation – Explores diverse experiences of neoliberalism and possibilities for challenging and changing things.

Career guidance for social justice website



Career Guidance for Social Justice

HOME • PRACTICES • RESOURCES ▼ • NEWS • BOOKS

<https://careerguidancesocialjustice.wordpress.com>



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Go to www.menti.com

- ▶ I'm going to ask you for your definitions of some key concepts.
- ▶ For each of them you can just enter the first three words that pop into your head.
- ▶ We'll then move on to look at how I'm defining them.
- ▶ www.menti.com

Career is the individual's journey through life, learning and work

- ▶ Career is where the individual interacts with organisations, structures and wider society.
- ▶ We pursue our careers in relation to others rather than alone.
- ▶ Career is not just about paid work or hierarchical progression.
- ▶ Everyone has a career. But, not everyone knows this.
- ▶ Career is often constructed as a problem which needs to be solved by the individual, by career guidance and by public policy.



Social justice

- ▶ Social justice is a contested concept with a long history.
- ▶ We have adopted it because it brings together a concern with the collective good and a recognition that there are injustices to be righted.
- ▶ Social justice is not an ideology, which offers a clear set of rules. Rather is a conversation that people can approach from a range of different perspectives.
- ▶ The fact that it is ambiguous and open to debate, whilst also seeking to focus our attention on creating a better world is one of the reasons why it appeals to us.



The faces of oppression

Exploitation	• Unfair compensation and coercion
Marginalisation	• Loss of work, power and respect
Powerlessness	• Always being on the receiving end of orders
Cultural imperialism	• Imposing 'norms' on people
Violence	• Random, unprovoked attacks

For every oppressed group there is a group that benefits from that oppression and is privileged in relation to that group (Iris Marion Young, 2004)

Neoliberalism

- ▶ A description of a global political system.
- ▶ This is not a finished and stable system, but is rather a tendency or project which is trying to move things in certain political direction.
- ▶ It can be found in all countries and has influenced the parties of the left and right.
- ▶ From 2008 many people have been contesting and arguing against it.

Neoliberal policies

- ▶ Reducing the ability of states to conduct social and economic policy on their own terms.
- ▶ Placing the state in the service of wealth and power.
- ▶ Eroding democracy: 'virtual senate' of investors and lenders
- ▶ 'Rolling back' the welfare state
- ▶ Increasing the concentration of wealth and monopolisation of profits
- ▶ Deepening national and global inequality
- ▶ Individualising structurally-induced problems and advocating that solutions must be the responsibility of the individual.



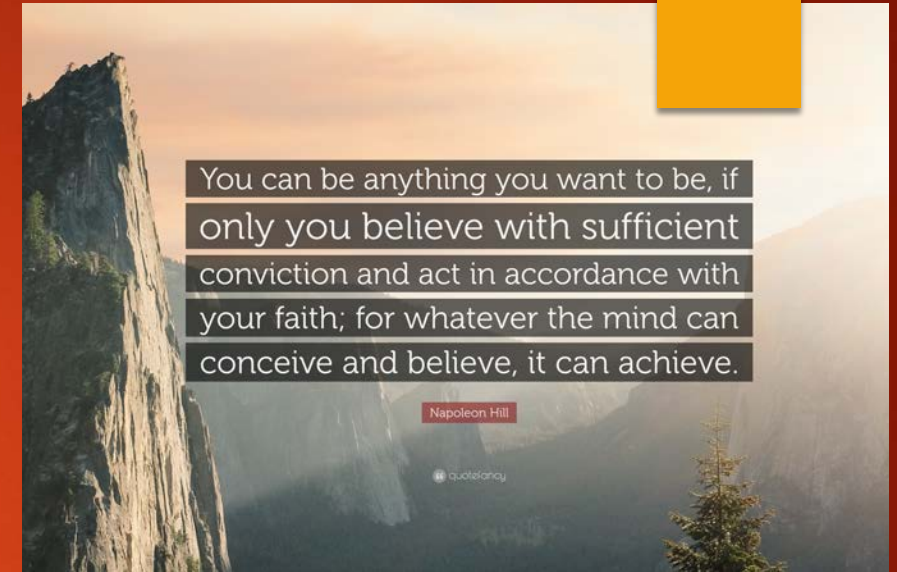
YOU MAKE YOUR OWN
CHOICES

Quotivee®

Ken Roberts and 'opportunity structure'

Responsibilisation?

Career guidance typically locates both the problem and the solution in the individual. It helps to buy us into accepting the logic of the career ladder.





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This is all very well...

But what has it got to do with career
guidance/career development?

How do you deal with life being unfair?

Discuss how you deal with when your clients/students raising concerns that life isn't fair?

Have you ever had a student who has...

- ▶ concerns about doing a job that doesn't pay well or that won't give them a good standard of living?
- ▶ been being marginalised? E.g. feeling that they aren't respected.
- ▶ been fed up with being told what to do all the time by their teachers/parents/employer?
- ▶ been forced to conform to 'norms' by others? e.g. being told how to dress, act or behave in a way that makes them uncomfortable.
- ▶ experienced aggression that makes them uncomfortable or actual physical violence?

The politics of career guidance

Careers education and guidance is a profoundly political process. It operates at the interface between the individual and society, between self and opportunity, between aspiration and realism. It facilitates the allocation of life chances. Within a society in which such life chances are unequally distributed, it faces the issue of whether it serves to reinforce such inequalities or to reduce them.

Tony Watts

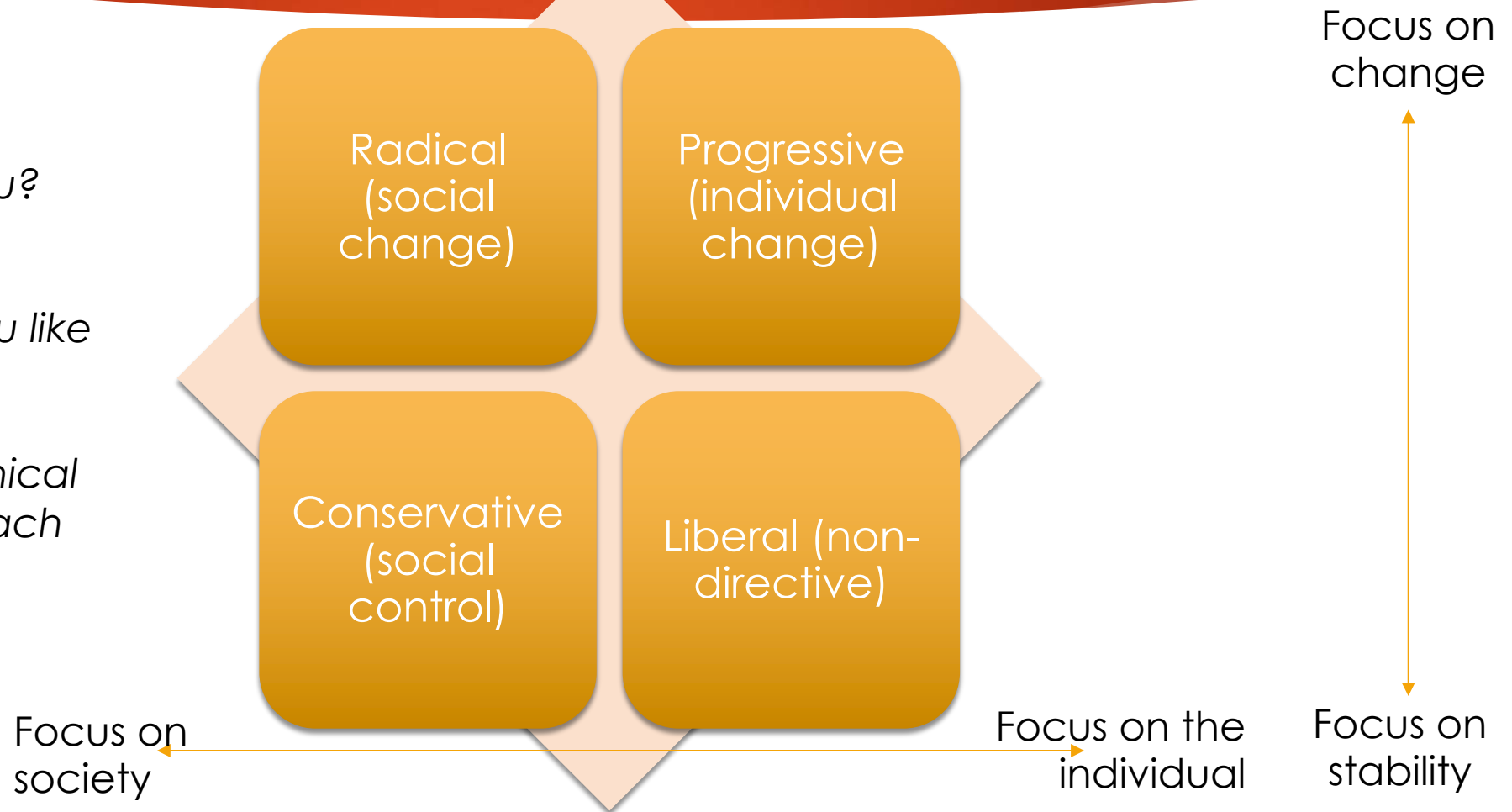


Socio-political ideologies of guidance

So where are you?

Where would you like to be?

What are the ethical problems with each position?



Key ethical issues

- ▶ How do you know that you are right?
- ▶ Consciousness raising vs. respecting difference of views
- ▶ Undermining assumptions can be difficult
- ▶ Your aims vs. the clients aims vs. the funders/government aims
- ▶ Practicing safely within neoliberalism



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graph TD; A[Background] --> B[Definitions and key concepts]; B --> C[Ethical dilemmas]; C --> D[The five signposts towards socially just career development]; D --> E[Conclusions and next steps];
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Background

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Structure of today

The five signposts towards socially justice career guidance

01

Build critical
consciousness

02

Name
oppression

03

Question what
is normal

04

Encourage
people to
work together

05

Work at a
range of levels

01

Build critical
consciousness

02

Name oppression

03

Question what is
normal

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work together

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Work at a range of
levels

Critical consciousness

- ▶ Helping people to understand the world as it is.
- ▶ Thinking about why things are organised in the way that they are. E.g. asking who benefits from the current order.
- ▶ Considering what can be changed and how we might go about changing it.

Example: I want to make a difference?



Full workshop at <https://careerguidancesocialjustice.wordpress.com/2019/06/14/i-want-to-make-a-difference-social-justice-and-your-career/>

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Naming oppression

Exploitation



- Unfair compensation and coercion

Marginalisation



- Loss of work, power and respect

Powerlessness



- Always being on the receiving end of orders

Cultural
imperialism



- Imposing 'norms' on people

Violence



- Random, unprovoked attacks

Example: In career counselling

- ▶ Help your clients to understand where their experiences are examples of oppression.
- ▶ Challenge self-blaming behaviours.
- ▶ Suggest possible names for what they have experienced and see how they feel about that.
- ▶ Use this to help them recognise that others may have experienced similar things.



How the naming of oppression works...

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Question what is normal

- ▶ Our societies define what we assume is normal and natural.
- ▶ This includes what constitutes a career, career success, a 'good education', a fulfilled life and so on.
- ▶ What is seen as normal also varies for different kinds of people.
- ▶ This doesn't mean that what is normal is always bad.
- ▶ But, by questioning what is normal and asking why it is normal we open up possibilities for people.

How do we deal with these different challenges to the norm?



Example: Norm criticism in Sweden

- ▶ Look for (and reduce/challenge) examples of stereotypes and bias in labour market information.
- ▶ Challenge assumed pathways (e.g. certain people go to university and others into vocational education).
- ▶ Encourage students and clients to reflect on what they see as normal and consider whether they are happy with this. E.g. do they aspire to have a heterosexual nuclear family, is this the only way to live your life?
- ▶ Encourage practitioners to be reflexive about their own use of norms.

See Frida Wikstrand talking at

<https://careerguidancesocialjustice.wordpress.com/2019/02/14/frida-wikstrand-norm-criticism/>

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Encourage people to work together

- ▶ Career is not an individual activity.
- ▶ We pursue our career alongside others – sometimes co-operating, sometimes competing.
- ▶ Strategies for improving your career can be collective as well as individual.
- ▶ Recognising the importance of co-operation and collective struggle opens up a lot of new opportunities for career development.

Example: Writing an open letter

Work together to write an open letter

- ▶ What makes academic employment unjust?
- ▶ What evidence do you have for this?
- ▶ What could be done about this?
- ▶ What evidence do you have that this would be a good thing?
- ▶ What are your demands? Make them clear?
- ▶ What power do you have? Why should your employers listen?



Slides are available at:

<https://careerguidancesocialjustice.wordpress.com/2019/06/14/what-kind-of-researcher-academic-do-you-want-to-be/>

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Working at a range of levels

- ▶ Our careers take place at the level of:
 - ▶ Our own psychology
 - ▶ In our families
 - ▶ In our workplaces
 - ▶ In our communities
 - ▶ In national politics
- ▶ As a career counsellor you should feel free to intervene at any of these levels.
- ▶ Sometimes people will be best helped by individual support, other times by system change (often by both at the same time).

Example: Subject choices

- ▶ Career counsellors often help young people to make subject choices.
- ▶ One told me that in his school he was regularly hearing about timetable clashes meaning that students couldn't take the subjects that they wanted.
- ▶ He continued to help students to manage the system, but started to campaign with the school leadership and administration to deal with the problem.
- ▶ This is an example of feedback and system change within one institution. Often there is a need to work across even more levels e.g. engaging in political campaigning about benefit changes whilst helping individuals to deal with them.

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Putting it into practice

Consider your own practice

Is this relevant as a way of thinking?

What are the challenges?

What opportunities would it offer?

How would you engage with the five signposts in your practice.

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In summary

- ▶ Our careers are not just an expression of our psychology or personal will, they are embedded in social structures.
- ▶ The kind of (neoliberal) society in which we currently live means that many of us experience our careers through injustice and oppression.
- ▶ Career guidance can play a variety of roles variously supporting or challenging the way that things are.
- ▶ There is a growing literature which provides us with resources to think about career guidance differently.
- ▶ The five signposts provide a basic framework within which we can develop more socially just forms of practice.
- ▶ There are a growing number of examples that we can lend and borrow to help us to develop our practice in socially just ways.

About me

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