

Reimagining The University

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Editorial

The University's future is uncertain; uncertain because we - editors, contributors, readers - intend to change its structure, practices and relationship to society. Left to the government, market, bureaucracy and hopeless academics, its future is certain: fueling the free market - a slave shoveling coal aboard a Titanic no government can steer. Our call to re-imagine the university was not an invitation to rearrange the deck furniture or write the score for the string-quartet as the ship sinks. Rather, it was a call to loot the vessel and abandon ship to whichever destinations contributors thought best or, for now, reachable.

There is a thematic narrative to the structure of this journal: Situation - where we are, Source - why we are here, Strategy - where we could go. Contributions were diverse: from personal anecdotes to poetry to practicable plans for parallel institutions and practices. Reassuringly some of these projects are already being implemented.

Michael Channan frames this edition by elucidating why education is not a commodity; treating it as such is a corruption of education and can only produce disillusioned or corrupted students. He reminds us to reassert what education ought to be for society, rather than let it languish as a market-defined commodity.

Matt Cheesman's lyrical account of his PhD experience perfectly describes the burden of academia, the social distance between the ivory tower and society, and the wrenching contradiction of being in and against the institution.

Tina Richardson gives an essay on her practice of schizocartography in the University of Leeds. Fusing Guttari's Schizoanalysis and the Situationist International's psychogeography, she explores the socio-historical atmosphere created by The Unviersity, reminding us that it is not just an academic system but a physical manifestation of capital that has impacted upon a community through history.

'Showdown at the Sausage Factory' explains how the Research Excellence Framework in the UK (with analogues abroad) facilitates the further standardisation and marketisation of the education system. Continuing the theme of Channan's essay, it insists that resistance to market led standardisation is a key struggle to defend education from irreversible commodification.

Manifestos and Rosalee Dorfman's thought piece describe the subjective disillusionment with the educational process and the student protests respectively. Theirs remind us that university is primarily a personal experience; transformative, and often disillusioning.

Mike Watson insists in his paper that the education delivered via higher education institutions, infused with market economics, should be abandoned altogether. Watson gestures towards alternative structures of learning – taking us to the closing section of the journal

The four final pieces outline alternative directions for pedagogy and higher education struggles: Mike Neary's Student as Producer project implemented at The University of Lincoln recodifies the relationship between tutor and student; Thomas Gokey's scheme for alternative accreditation undermines the university's primary market asset - the holographic crest; Richard Hall's positive account of university occupations as a locus of democratic deliberation; Sara Motta offers a Latin American perspective, where pedagogy has in some instances been un-coupled from the market.

Often your political actions and thoughts encounter the riposte 'yes, but what's the alternative?' This is the political strategy of neo-liberalism: elimination not only of structural alternatives, but the very possibility of conceiving of structural alternatives; this is reality, all else is fantasy. Burdened by debt and bludgeoned into rough shapes by bureaucracy, students and academics can rarely confidently imagine an alternative; corridors echo sympathetic complaint rather than critique. Critical theory, as published in this journal, insists that there are alternatives and they are not theoretical, but exist in the dialectical and reflexive relationship between theory and practice.

This is not a postmortem. This is an assemblage of theory, praxis and strategy to stimulate discussion and action. This is a reimagining insistent of an alternative.

Roundhouse Editors

Evan Harris

Tom Jeffries

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Henry Palmer

Andrew Walker

Why Education is not a Commodity

Michael Chanan

The arguments advanced by government ministers like David Willetts for the draconian reform of university funding are confused and specious. They would certainly fail any exam in logic. Instead of reason, they depend on various forms of mediatised rhetoric: like Orwell's Newspeak, doublespeak, or what the writer Steve Poole has called unspeak. Sometimes they amount to simple misrepresentation, derived from hasty and inadequate statistics, or denial-induced falsehood. Just read the statements and take your pick.

The confusion begins with the vagueness of the words being used--when is a debt not a debt? Actually, it seems to depend on who owes it to whom, although you can also try calling it a graduate tax. As Rafael Behr recently put it, debt is "a curse and a blight, except when incurred by students to pay university tuition fees, in which context it is an opportunity and an engine of social mobility". There is also confusion with regard to unexamined but fundamental concepts, like of the concept of a market for education. Markets deal in commodities, but what exactly is being bought and sold in the case of education?

The first clue comes in this passage from Michel Serres, quoted recently by the Social and Cultural Geography Research Group:

"To illustrate the importance of knowledge sharing, I would like to tell you a little lesson in economics: I have a block of butter, and you have three Euros. If we proceed to do a transaction, you will, in the end, have a block of butter, and I will have three Euros. We are dealing with a zero sum game: nothing happens from this exchange. But in the exchange of knowledge, during teaching, the game is not one of zero sum as more parties profit from the exchange: if you know a theorem and teach it to me, at the end of the exchange, we both know it. In this knowledge exchange there is no equilibrium at all, but a terrific growth which economics does not know. Teachings are the bearers of an unbelievable treasure - knowledge - which multiplies and is the treasure of all humanity."

(Michel Serres)

In other words, education is not a commodity like a bar of chocolate or a café latté, which is physically consumed until there's nothing left. Nor is it like a motor car or a washing machine, which are durable but eventually break down and have to be replaced: an education is never replaced but only added to, extended, and renovated. Perhaps it's a bit like a book, in constituting a store of knowledge, but it isn't a physical object and

doesn't create a second-hand market - although it seems to be something you can cash in on, because it's supposed to guarantee you a better income. However, education also happens informally, and you can also pass on bits of it for free without depriving yourself of what you've passed on (the early rabbis thought of it as like the flame of a candle). A teacher is someone who gets paid for doing this, but they're not selling an object, they are performing what Adam Smith called a service.

Education is closer to art forms like theatre, music, exhibitions and circuses, where the price of admission buys you the right to an experience, but it is not an object you can carry away with you except in your mind. Modern media have blurred the boundaries between different forms of cultural consumption, but there's still a distinction between going to the cinema and watching a film privately at home. Choosing a course of study, however, is not like deciding what to see by reading the critics or watching the trailers - the league tables are no more reliable a guide than the year's ten best lists, and corporate styles of advertising have no demonstrable effect on recruitment¹.

If education is not a regular kind of commodity, it also means that the work of the teacher is of a different kind to that of someone whose output can be measured in terms of productivity. It's more like that of doctor or nurse, where quality of attention matters just as much as quantity. In a famous passage in *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith observed that the labour of some of the most respectable, as well as some of the most frivolous orders in society are in this respect the same: churchmen, lawyers, physicians and men of letters on the one hand, and on the other, buffoons, musicians, opera-singers, opera-dancers, etc. All of them, he says, fall into the category of "perishable services", a type of activity which "does not fix or realize itself in any permanent subject, or vendible commodity, which endures after the labour is past." Discussing this passage, what this comes down to, says Marx, is that only labour that reproduces capital is economically productive: 'a singer who sings like a bird' - the kind of singer who, like the young Mozart, sits with the servants- "is an unproductive worker. When she sells her song, she is a wage earner or merchant. But the same singer, employed by someone else to give concerts and bring in money, is a productive worker because she directly produces capital."

Oddly, neither of these writers mentions teachers, but someone who does is Schiller. Coming between Smith and Marx, his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Mankind* drew a pertinent distinction between the work of the craftsman or artist and that of the teacher. When a craftsman, he said, works on his raw material he has no scruples about doing it violence. The artist has just as few scruples, but avoids showing it (which was true in Schiller's day, though not in ours). But in pedagogy things are very different, because

the material with which the educator works is not inert, but the same as the product: namely, the human being. Do violence to the material you are working with and you can no longer achieve your aims, because your ends and your means are the same.

In their time, none of these authors could have remotely imagined the specious measures of productivity devised by neoliberal managerialists and policy makers who are utterly alienated from the experience of teaching or caring, but yet insist on quantifying the outputs of such activities. In Schiller's terms, to treat the student managerially is a form of systemic violence which breaches the very principles of pedagogy. This managerialism isn't new, but goes back to the first reform of higher education by Mrs Thatcher 25 years ago. Thatcherism devised a reform of higher education based on the advice of the accountants and business consultants Coopers and Lybrand. The idea was to place higher education institutions in direct competition through a ranked assessment system based on the inspection of courses. The allocation of student numbers, and hence funding, was to be the reward (or punishment). To the question what is good and who does the ranking and the judging, the answer was built in to the system. What looked superficially like an extension of the peer-review system which guided British higher education in the past, became a systemic process in the form of a categorized audit conducted by trained assessors³. Many of these features were pioneered in the polytechnics (which Thatcher subsequently turned into universities), such as using student numbers and staff/student ratios to determine funding and thus ensure expansion in more popular courses according to the law of the market. But what do you do in domains like education where market mechanisms emerge naturally, because you're not dealing with a regular kind of commodity?

Managerialism is normative, bludgeoning people into compliance, and 'better management' is not only a euphemism for management according to market principles, but also more management (which by definition falls into the category of unproductive labour--it would be more productive to let them go and work for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.) The system relies on statistics about "course delivery" in order to monitor "student satisfaction". But what part of the experience of the student can possibly be expressed through answering the questionnaires through which such statistics are compiled? Nothing essential, because the process they're passing through is not quantifiable in this way. For example, I can imagine a situation where a good student can learn a great deal from a poor teacher, while a poor student will never learn very much even from the best teaching. I have learnt from my own students that these questionnaires are mystifying: they do not know who they're addressing, or how anything they say is received. The collected statistics become a managerial tool which suppresses the lived experience of both student and teacher (not to mention the support staff).

The student's work is quantified by the teachers in a very particular way - through examination - but in the university context, the student needs the collective experience of the class, the individual attention of the tutorial and their own private study. In each situation every student learns at their own rate, but the different modes reinforce each other. The dialogue between "teaching and learning" is therefore very fluid and rather slippery. In fact, in managerial terms, education is a highly imperfect business while from the point of view of the teacher, it is not a business at all - except for the Mr Gradgrinds of this world. Unfortunately these now include a large number of Vice Chancellors.

Pedagogy is not like the production of commodities, education is not like mass production, teachers are not like production-line workers, and students are not commodities, they are individuals. From the individual's point of view, learning is not a matter of statistics about "learning outcomes", but of the amount and quality of attention you receive. To increase the numbers of students in higher education while proportionately reducing the funds to support them does not improve the efficiency of teaching, it impairs it - and this is what happens when teachers have to lecture more with less time to prepare their lectures, and then have less time to assess the students' work and give feedback because there are more students for each lecturer to see, and staffing has not increased in proportion with the number of students.

But the costs of mismanagement are not just monetary costs. There is a deep contradiction here.

First, the entering student is defined as a customer, in the same way as a patient in a privatised health service. Then the accountants redefine the student as a product, to be fashioned according to the requirements of the end-user, or in simple old-fashioned language, the employer. This is a serious confusion of categories and a highly damaging mischief, for how can the student be both customer and product at the same time? And if the student is indeed a customer, then it only shows that customers have no real rights and they're being short-changed. But our students are not our customers, they're our students. They are not buying our services and we are not selling them. That is not the nature of the relationship - and the dialogue - which we have with them.

We Will Not Disrupt Your Education

Matt Cheeseman

In 2010 I was in Sheffield finishing off my thesis, working towards a final deadline of November 30th. I kept at it, moving from my home to the department, visiting libraries, occasionally settling in cafés and pubs - anywhere to keep my environment fresh and my work rate high. The hospital refectory was my favourite place; the staff didn't care how long you stayed and there was no internet, nothing to distract me from production. As I typed in my office that was everywhere and nowhere, the workplace that was my day-to-day life, Browne, somewhere far away, delivered his Review.

October 12th. A good six weeks before my deadline, but close enough to further twist my anxiety, I stole moments to digest news coverage, read emails from friends and keep an eye on the televisions I passed. This was not the best time to finish a thesis on Higher Education; divorced from it, watching it change through stolen glimpses. After three years of intense ethnography with students, attempting to describe student life in Sheffield, my contact time with undergraduates had been cut down to appearances in front of the Erasmus students that I taught twice a week. They were amazed that students were not protesting more at the fee rises. And yet they were also appreciative of the smaller class sizes in Sheffield, the buildings and the facilities, all of which were superior to their Universities at home. Some said they perceived the benefits of a monetised system.

Mostly, however, they talked about nightclubs. They were shocked at the clothes students wore when they went out. They were puzzled by the fancy dress and the pre-drinking.

I finished my thesis on the very last day of November, as the snow descended on Sheffield, closing the University, bathing it in white; seminars and lectures cancelled. My thesis was submitted without the signature of my supervisor, a procedure overlooked due to the weather which had stopped the trains and the buses. Sludging back home I no longer had my office on my shoulders. I was free to collapse into this new world, a weird and wired world of riots and anger, of 80% budget cuts, of insecure and collapsing knowledge economies. Budget airline rationales and heavy vibes abounded.

I had bitter coffees with fellow “early career” academics, ostensibly to celebrate my submission, but more to keen over the future. One memorably told me ‘I’ve been OK really, over the last few years, I mean I’ve been worried for most of it, but I survived, even though I’ve wasted so much energy worrying. And well... it won’t get better now.’

Because I had been divorced from the world in my final time of absorption, I didn't feel the pessimism bite. It was as if I was reading about education cuts in another time and place. Five years of studying Higher Education began to feel like a fugue state, some weird dream, climaxing not in riots and protest, but in checking references and making sure my margins were the right size. Two things managed to divert my eyes from the screen. Firstly, the fire extinguisher thrown at the riot police, and secondly the presentation of a student in one of my Erasmus seminars. She had attended the march and commented on how orderly and organised the protests were and how shocked she had been, on returning home, to see the violence presented on the television.

The red fire extinguisher, the symbol of Health & Safety, chucked from a roof by a student and narrowly missing a riot officer, the symbol of Order & Control. Health, safety, education, order, control. The flame of performance as protest. Of disorder as performance.

'None of this happened,' said the Spanish student, 'the English are so well behaved, except when you are in the nightclub.'

Sheffield was covered with snow. I was recovering. The office that followed me around was now a ghost, a haunting, as white as the snow packed onto the streets. The country was in debt, the knowledge economy had disappeared.

A lecture theatre is occupied in protest. The very lecture theatre in which I had been teaching seminars to Erasmus students on English culture. A sign goes up: Unlike the Government We Will Not Disrupt Your Education. I never see the protestors, as they hot-desking around the building, occupying a lecture theatre by avoiding lectures. An ambient protest that does not confront, a strategy, no doubt, to avoid the distorted representations of the fire extinguisher.

Christmas happens, then 2011. The snow melts, exams are done, the first semester finishes and Sheffield students return to their nightclubs. Only the messy bingeing of Carnage brings students out onto the streets. Finally, I defend my thesis, The pleasures of being a student at the University of Sheffield. My examiners advise that, were I to publish it, I should add an afterword commenting on the Browne Review and imagining the future of Higher Education. As I try to write this, I think about what the Spanish student said and about the occupation of the lecture theatre. I ask myself: what would have happened if the students had occupied a nightclub?

Using Schizocartography as a Method of Critiquing the ‘University of Excellence’

Tina Richardson

This paper offers a method of analysis for excavating the university of yesterday (and today) in order to reveal what it says about itself, and what it does not. My object of study is how the corporatized University represents itself at a time when all institutions are expected to function within the system of capital. In this article I will introduce schizocartography as a way of challenging the dominant voice of capitalism.

I have developed schizocartography from Félix Guattari's terms “schizoanalysis”¹ and “schizoanalytic cartography”. Schizocartography enables alternative existential modes for individuals seeking to challenge dominant representations and power structures. It offers a method of cartography that both questions dominant power structures while at the same time enabling subjective voices to appear from underlying postmodern topography. Schizocartography is at once the process and output of a psychogeography of particular spaces that have been co-opted by various capitalist-oriented operations, routines or procedures. It attempts to reveal the aesthetic and ideological contradictions that appear in urban space while simultaneously reclaiming the subjectivity of individuals by enabling new modes of creative expression. This provides an opportunity for multiple ways of operating in space and reading the environment; it critiques the conventional ways of viewing, interpreting and mapping space. To this extent, schizocartography challenges anti-production, the homogenizing character of overriding forms that work towards silencing heterogeneous voices.

To uncover the multiple narratives that exist within the university, I examine campus space in a number of ways. Through a psychogeographical process of urban walking I explore the campus with respect to its architecture and urban planning in order to be able to respond to it aesthetically, but also to discover the phenomena that are rarely seen on a superficial unconscious walk through space. Interrogating the topography helps to reveal how campus planning controls the movement of individuals and enables an investigation of the logic behind the decision-making that historically determined it. The topographical data that emerges from the campus space can be cross-referenced with archived data in order to reveal episodes in the history of the university. My starting point for a critique of the corporatised university is the term ‘excellence’ which, in this instance, I shall be attributing to the work of Bill Readings.

The Project of Excellence

Bill Readings' critique of the postmodern (what he calls posthistoric) university in his book *The University in Ruins* (1996), analyses the university from its historico-cultural legacy to a capital-generating, consumer-oriented, corporate entity. His investigation focuses on the quality of 'excellence', which he considers the watchword of the corporatised university. For Readings, excellence is a hollow term that permits no absolute definition: he sees it as a bureaucratic construct of the university. He explains that it is excellence in its manifest bureaucratic forms - for example, the Research Excellence Framework (REF) formed in 20072 - which is the driving force behind harnessing the university function of the past and in postmodernity placing it under the forces of the market (1999: 38): "Like the stock exchange, the University is a point of capital's self-knowledge, of capital's ability not just to manage risk or diversity but to extract a surplus value from the management." (1999: 40) "Excellence is not a fixed standard of judgement but a qualifier whose meaning is fixed in relation to something else" (1999: 24), it is "a means of relative ranking among the elements of an entirely closed system" (1999: 27). Excellence appears in its most obvious manifestation in an educational system that has been reduced to the mere measuring of inputs and outputs. Key Performance Indicators, appearing in the form of the REF, are a good example of excellence at work.

Mark Fisher makes direct reference to university bureaucracy in his 2009 book *Capitalist Realism: Is there no alternative?*, providing an extensive list of documents a module leader has to complete for each module they oversee (2009: 41). Fisher says that the constant checking, monitoring and production of figures does not provide "a direct comparison of workers' performance or output, but a comparison between the audited representation of that performance and output" (2009: 42). We no longer have a system focused on knowledge (learning and teaching), instead we have a system that concentrates on measuring performance and output and disseminating that data: "The true goal of the system, the reason it programs itself like a computer, is the optimization of the global relationship between input and output – in other words, performativity." (Lyotard 2004: 11) It is essential for the functioning of the bureaucratic university that this system is open, even if its process of self-defining — for example, in deciding what 'excellence' is – is internal and closed. The university needs to reduplicate itself internally and express that reduplication externally, in the form of representable data. Any challenge of the system, points to another set of figures, attached to which are a set of criteria that nobody seems to know the origins of³. Alternately there is just a re-framing and re-presentation of that data back to the enquirer⁴. As Fisher puts it: "our desires and preferences are returned to us, no longer ours, but as the desires of the big Other." (2009: 49). Bureaucracy, as Fisher describes it, "floats freely, independent of any external authority" (2009: 50). It produces

a style of surveillance culture for academics that is rather like an invisible postmodern semblance of the time and motion study⁵ that constantly hovers over them in the form of a bureaucratic superego. This has the effect of producing an invisible dominant observer that appears in the form of the individual's own psyche: the superego in its representative form as their conscience, or the dominant parent, or even 'the boss'.

While his examination of the university is not explicitly concerned with space, Readings often makes spatial references in relation to the geo-political, architectural, and also abstract and mental space commanded by capitalist power. His discussions of historical, philosophical, ideological and/or political spaces also use the language of the concrete: for example, here he uses the Italian city as an analogy of the university:

Dwelling in the ruins of the University thus means giving a serious attention to the present complexity of space, undertaking an endless work of détournement of the spaces willed to us by a history whose temporality we no longer inhabit. Like the inhabitants of some Italian city, we can seek neither to rebuild the Renaissance city-state nor to destroy its remnants and install rationally planned tower-blocks; we can seek only to put its angularities and winding passages to new uses, learning from and enjoying the cognitive dissonances that enclosed piazzas and non-signifying campanile induce. (1999: 129)

Readings uses the term détournement - which the Situationist International (SI) also appropriated for their purposes - to express the need for a continual re-working of the past in order to resituate it in the form of the new. Here is a definition of 'détournement' provided by the SI:

Short for: détournement of preexisting aesthetic elements. The integration of present and past artistic production into a superior milieu. In this sense there can be no situationist use of these means. In a more primitive sense, détournement within the old cultural spheres is a method of propaganda, a method which testifies to the wearing out and loss of importance of those spheres. (Situationist International 1996: 70).

I have chosen to take a literal reading of Readings and analyse the ideological function of the university through an examination of the space it occupies. How I do this is through a psychogeographical method and practice inspired by the Situationist International (SI), which I have combined with Guattari's schizoanalysis. I have called this process schizocartography: by performatively entering the territory of the university, through psychogeographical methods and a remapping of space, questions can be posed about space/time, language and the construction of meaning. Most of the urban exploration I carry out is based on the walking and psychogeography of the Situationists, known as the *dérive* (drift). According to the SI, psychogeography is: "The study of the specific effects

of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals.” (Situationist International 1996: 69).

Critiquing Dominant Structures

The relationship between détournement and Guattari’s schizoanalysis is apparent in his questioning of overriding forms and how they can be re-appropriated, enabling a reformulation (a ‘reterritorialization’) to occur, in the form of a translation of certain structures. Guattari developed the term schizoanalysis as a way of challenging the conventions of traditional psychiatric and psychoanalytical methods; it is a process that enables other forms of representation to be made available (1998: 433). He states that schizoanalysis “has the potential for reading other systems of modelization” (*ibid.*). Schizoanalysis challenges dominant powers and offers a process for remodelling their structure.

Guattari challenges the barriers of the institution: “Analysing the institutional object means channelling the action of the imagination between one structure and another” (1984: 40). In relation to the practice of schizocartography, this could be carried out through walking through and mapping the campus, producing a creative movement between the urban space of the university and the mental space of those taking part. These actions are carried out in order to question the environment’s representation of capital, as it appears in its material, corporate form. This is what Guattari has to say about capital and education:

It is impossible to separate the production of any consumer commodity from the institution that supports that production. The same can be said of teaching, training, research, etc. The State machine and the machine of repression produce anti-production, that is to say signifiers that exist to block and prevent the emergence of any subjective process [...]. (1984: 34).

In regard to the university, the “consumer commodity” would be considered the knowledge that is being sold to the student, which is produced at the end of a course by awarding a degree that can be exchanged for a job. Guattari argues that any process that is antithetical to those of the capitalist project will be prevented (as much as is possible) from emerging. The signs that capitalism creates discourage any singular processes of individuation and attempt to re-route subjective desires back into capitalist production: this is anti-production⁶. Capitalism simultaneously presents an innocuous outward face that appears in the form of the ‘natural order of things’. This naturalising aspect of capital became apparent to the SI, and it appears in what Guy Debord describes in *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967):

The spectacle presents itself as something enormously positive, indisputable and inaccessible. It says nothing more than ‘that which appears is good, that which is good appears’. The attitude which it demands in principle is passive acceptance which in fact it already obtained by its manner of appearance without reply, by its monopoly of appearance. (2005: 12)

As is the case in the psychiatric institution, the university plays a conditioning role. In the university, the ideal student is also produced in the form of a commodity: one whose skills can best be employed for the purposes of capital. Schizocartography, I maintain, is a useful tool for challenging these ossified symbols of capitalism through the act of crossing the barriers (concrete or abstract) of the terrain of the university.

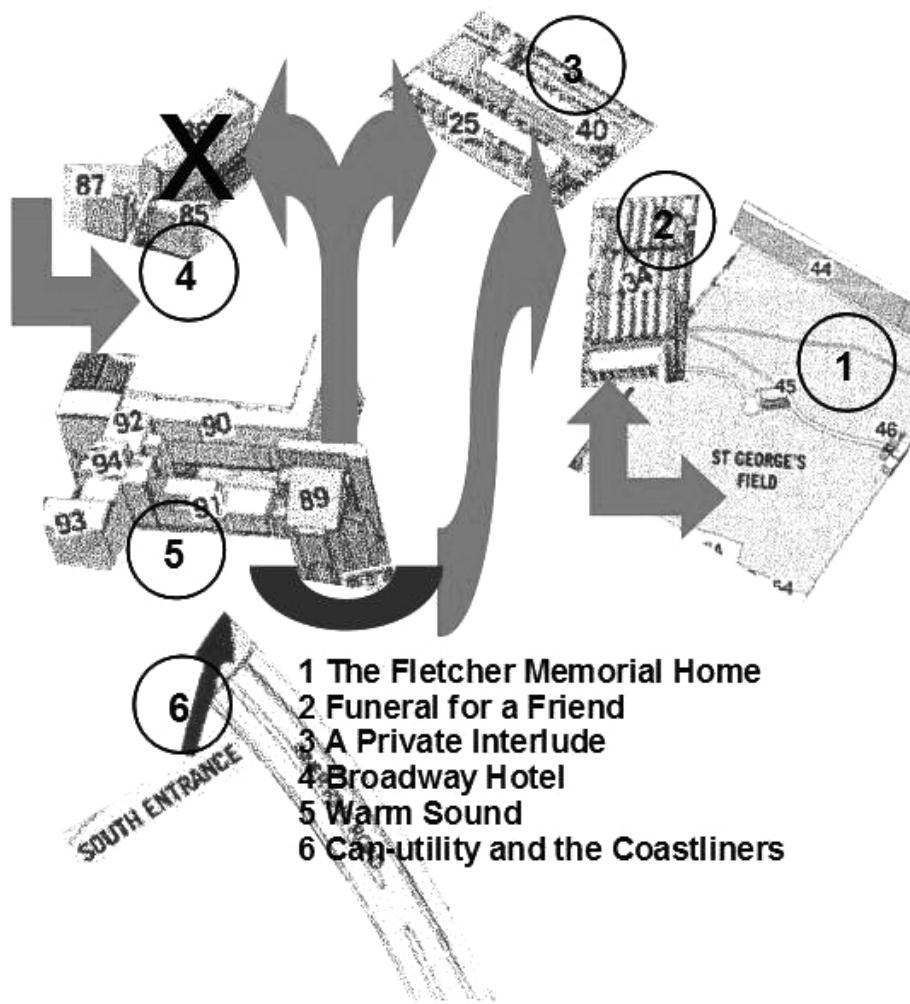
For Guattari, schizoanalysis offers alternative voices and structures that cut across controlling forms of power in order to provide multiple modes of expression. Guattari explains that dominant structures, such as oedipalisation⁷, produce narratives in order to close off avenues of escape and re-route desire back into the main system. This process of anti-production attempts to disable any subjective processes that are aberrant to the dominant system. These subjective, decoded flows are not initially recognised by the system because they use a semiotics that is outside of autocratic schemas – as is the case with the language of the schizophrenic, which appears unrecognisable to psychiatry. Nevertheless, capital’s power to reappropriate, recode and reterritorialize these break-out flows means that alternative narratives about the lived experience need to be constantly reworked. Schizocartography provides a method of examining the rationalising character of the University of Excellence from the ground upwards, thus revealing the sidelined voices hidden within the very concrete of its topography.

Remapping the University

In 1957 Guy Debord and Asger Jorn (the two main collaborators in the SI) produced a screenprint map of Paris called The Naked City. The areas highlighted in the map (and other similar maps), contained de-contextualised sections of Paris, placed together with little regard to their spatial relationship, and reformed to recontextualise them, with arrows showing a recommended path for moving between these areas. Following the SI’s urban walks around Paris, areas were assigned specific ambiances⁸ and labelled as such.

Schizocartography gives the topographical and archival features of the University of Leeds the opportunity to be mapped textually, spatially and analytically in such a way that what is hidden can be recontextualised and brought from the past into the present, thus enabling a contemporary re-examination of past university ‘events’ in a new light (*détournement*). This will at once provide a new body of knowledge on the university and also offer up a specific methodology for examining institutional histories.⁹

The image below is a map of the University of Leeds campus that is based on Debord's Guide Psychogeographique . It was developed out of a number of campus walks that were undertaken by the Leeds Psychogeography Group10 in the summer of 2009. We selected areas of the campus we were interested in, which were not necessarily those we perceived to be capitalistic: we may have been attracted by a particular sensual response, for example, a sound. I remade the map in a similar way to Debord's, but then to add an extra subjective quality, I also included a key and attached relevant song titles to the quarters. This map provides an aesthetic response to the university campus at a particular moment in time, while also re-prioritising the features that appear on ordinary campus maps (for example, teaching and administrative buildings).



This map contributes to the cartographical aspect of the aims of schizocartography, which are multiple. The output of psychogeographical practice will introduce some form of re-appropriation (*détournement*)¹: this highlights how controlling forms re-appropriate minority structures and opens up inventive avenues that may be closed off due to what could be called creative-protectionism (or indeed, anti-production). The process of schizocartography will also create a space for subjective voices to appear: those of both individuals and minority group that are usually unheard or that exist only momentarily. These voices may not necessarily be political: they could, for example, exist as an instantaneous aesthetic response. My thesis provides a critique of spaces dominated by coercion, and at the same time offers a method and practice that provides an alternative way of looking at those particular spaces.

Conclusion

All dominant powers require a particular worldview to maintain the status quo. The university presents a particular outward face, consciously structured to support its specific messages.² Like many businesses, the university does not disclose everything about itself. This practice of representation is a mediated one in which the university attempts to foster a like-minded view in the recipients of its representational medium, be it the university website, or the appearance of its campus. One of the most important aspects of this process is that the university does not appear incongruent in what it is attempting to say about itself, meaning that it must represent itself selectively. What this project will produce is a supplementary history of the University of Leeds, what could perhaps be described in Foucauldian terms as the “never-said” that appears in the discourse of the institution: something that arises out of a disruption and allows for the possibility of a questioning of an unconsciously accepted discourse.

Guattari explains that the success of capitalism is contingent on its ability to reroute any wayward desires back into the capitalist process: “There is always an arrangement ready to prevent anything that might be of a dissident nature in thought and desire.” (2008: 58). Capital’s ability to redirect aberrant flows and turn them to its advantage is part of its success, not only as an economic model, but, more importantly, as a mode of individual consciousness. However, these other voices and histories are still part of the body of the institution as it appears today, even if they might be sidelined for strategic reasons³. If the university is not conscious of its past, if it does not acknowledge the aspects of itself that are difficult to come to terms with, it would be problematic for it to think of itself as a place of community, of consensus or belonging. In order to confront its unconscious the university needs to come to terms with its past and present relationships. Schizocartography enables a process of revealing to take place through a remapping and a re-presenting of those voices that otherwise may remain hidden.

1. While the term “schizoanalysis” is derived from “schizophrenia” (as discussed in depth in the Capitalism and Schizophrenia collaborative series of Guattari and Gilles Deleuze), it does not promote mental illness; rather, “schizo” is used as a way of offering up the possibility of multiple voices, and alternative world-views, amongst other factors.
2. For example, in 2011 Reporter (the University of Leeds news magazine) includes an article entitled QAA Praises Leeds’ Teaching, which refers to the feedback from the 2008 Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) audit. Part of the text provides four bullet points which list some of the ‘positive’ feedback by the auditors. Three of the four points are praise in the area of the devices used for measuring teaching, rather than teaching itself. This highlights the degree of importance required in mapping, tracking and measuring excellence. Not only is it essential that there are mechanisms in place for measuring excellence, but these very systems and processes themselves can also be recognised as being excellent in their own right.
3. For example, in 2011 Reporter (the University of Leeds news magazine) includes an article entitled QAA Praises Leeds’ Teaching, which refers to the feedback from the 2008 Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) audit. Part of the text provides four bullet points which list some of the ‘positive’ feedback by the auditors. Three of the four points are praise in the area of the devices used for measuring teaching, rather than teaching itself. This highlights the degree of importance required in mapping, tracking and measuring excellence. Not only is it essential that there are mechanisms in place for measuring excellence, but these very systems and processes themselves can also be recognised as being excellent in their own right.
4. Developed in the the 1920s the time and motion study was a popular business management technique for many decades. It was a Taylorist strategy involving a rationalisation of processes by measuring patterns of work and time durations for specific tasks. A standard time was set for these tasks and workers were measured against them.
5. Guattari’s definition of anti-production predates the one developed with Deleuze in their Capitalism and Schizophrenia series. In their collaborative work anti-production represents a moment in production that occurs as a result of primal repression. For them, anti-production appears to be autonomous but is not: it operates alongside production but is liable to be re-routed into the dominant productive processes and become recoded into the forms of representation used by that system.
6. Guattari’s project at La Borde clinic was to challenge hierarchical structures within the mental institution. This meant questioning the dominant position of the oedipal father in psychoanalysis, but also the structure of the institution itself, for example, the dominant power in the analyst/analysand relationship.
7. Ambiances are areas with a noticeable aesthetic and psychological ‘flavour’ attached to them. For example, those suggested by Gilles Ivain in his utopian text ‘Formulary for a New Urbanism’ are: “Bizarre Quarter – Happy Quarter (specially reserved for habitation) – Noble and Tragic Quarter (for good children) – Historical Quarter (museums, schools) – Useful Quarter (hospital, tool shops) – Sinister Quarter, etc.”. (1996: 17)
8. This academic detour will also help provide a cognitive map of the posthistoric university that can be used to initiate discussions on an institution that is more open to collective decision-making, even if it might be counter to capital’s dominant mode of discourse.
9. I set up Leeds Psychogeography Group in May of 2009. It is an unfunded group run on a voluntary basis, meeting once every fortnight during term time. A programme of speakers is organised for both semesters, each academic year. Ad hoc walks are also organised, mostly in the Leeds area. People from both within and outside the university attend.
10. For the SI this involved the need for a continual re-working of the past in order to resituate it in the form of the new.
11. The following phrases were all found on a section of the University website for potential students called Why Leeds?: “we excel at what we do”, “we are one of the biggest universities in the UK”, “state-of-the-art new buildings”, “endless opportunities for shopping, eating and drinking”(University of Leeds, Why Leeds? 2011)
12. They can even literally be made ‘out-of’-bounds’ in the spatial sense, by cordoning off areas that are prohibited to certain groups.

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Showdown at the Sausage Factory

Featuring
Tom Gillespie
Andre Pusey
Bertie Russell
Leon Sealey-Huggins

“A schoolmaster is a productive labourer when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his scholars, he works like a horse to enrich the school proprietor. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of in a sausage factory, does not alter the relation”

As Karl Marx suggested in his masterwork Capital volume 1, the university is akin to a sausage factory in that it is a site of capitalist production – in this case the production of knowledge. Writing from our own experience as four doctoral researchers within the higher education system, we want to add to Marx’s analysis and argue that, since Capital was first published in 1867, academic research & teaching has been increasingly subordinate to, and reorganized in the interests of, capitalist value. Every stage of the knowledge production process – from the choice of topic, to the allocation of funding, to the criteria against which research is assessed – is becoming increasingly guided by values that guarantee the conditions for the reproduction of capitalism. Over the past two decades, this has taken the form of the introduction of metric systems into the university - under the guise of guaranteeing ‘quality’ and ‘competition’ – in order to subject teaching and research to quantitative measurement. This move to quantify the value of academic work is a key strategy in facilitating the marketisation of higher education. The financial crisis has proven the excuse for accelerating the extension and introduction of further systems for the measurement of university labour, not least in the form of ‘academic profiling’. We contend that resistance to these metric systems must be at the heart of strategies to prevent the marketization of the university.

The incoming ‘Research Excellence Framework’ (REF) (which is replacing the old Research Assessment Exercise) and the ‘National Student Survey’ (NSS) are two mechanisms applied to all university research and teaching across the UK. Their purpose is to assess the ‘quality’ of teaching and research by subjecting it to quantitative measurement, facilitating the direct comparison of qualitatively different research and teaching. Although the exact framework is currently unclear, the REF will almost certainly operate on the basis of grading the research ‘quality’ of an individual university

department according to a sample of four journal articles per academic, with premium grades awarded to articles that are published in the ‘top-ranked’ journals. The NSS meanwhile assesses universities according to student ‘satisfaction’ with the university experience. These are two of the primary measurement mechanisms that allow universities to make claims such as being a ‘top ten research university’, and to stake out management goals of ‘becoming a top 50 university worldwide’. As a result of these quantitative assessments, the theory goes, we should be able to compare universities based on the quality of their research and teaching. We believe, however, that this mechanism serves another purpose – it allows teaching and research to be subjected to the disciplinary logic of capitalist value production.

The ability to directly compare the ‘performance’ of universities is fundamental in creating a competitive market in higher education, as will become ever-more evident with the rising the ‘cap’ on tuition fees. In terms of teaching, how could one university justify charging more than another unless it could ‘objectively prove’ its superiority through a system of direct comparison? In terms of research, all funding is tied to your departments performance in the REF, with only a handful of elite universities set to receive about 80% of available funding. The primary reason for your research has therefore become to guarantee access to further funding through performing in the league tables; competition for money has ‘necessarily’ taken precedence over all other values.

According to the neoliberal ideology of market-fetishism, this competition should lead to an improvement in standards across the board, as academics are forced to work harder and teach ‘better’ so as to work their way up the league rankings, which yields the rewards of more funding and larger student numbers. In reality, rather than guaranteeing or improving the quality of universities, these quantitative assessments lead to a sort of short-circuiting, as research and teaching becomes geared towards the generation and massaging of ‘representations’ of quality rather than towards the research or teaching itself. In the context of market discipline, it matters less and less how well you teach or what you research, only that you are able to meet-or-beat your performance indicators. Managers increasingly bully researchers into abandoning any research that isn’t guaranteed to provide a short-term influx of REF-able papers; academics are coerced into publishing three or four vacuous papers before the next REF deadline instead of taking their time over one meaningful contribution (leading to a glut of substandard research); and teaching becomes a watered-down exercise in customer service.

Increasingly, as the geographer Noel Castree has observed, the ‘content of (academic) work is (not) valued for itself, but because it can be abstracted into the contentless currency that serves as the measure of academic value in Britain today’. Engagements

with research subjects that should be based on social utility and desire becomes confused with the disciplinary compulsion to secure one's livelihood by meeting externally imposed quantitative targets. Rather than a creative activity over which the producer enjoys intellectual autonomy, academic work comes to resemble all other work under capitalism (including that carried out in a sausage factory), assuming the form of abstract labour. By 'abstract labour' we mean an activity that is performed not primarily for its specific content - in this case the outcomes of teaching or research - but for its ability to be exchanged for a wage. When viewing the world from the perspective of 'abstract labour', one becomes increasingly indifferent to the specific content of the productive act itself, and increasingly concerned with for how much one is able to 'exchange' the results of production. As research and teaching becomes increasingly perceived from the perspective of abstract labour, the compulsion to hit abstract targets takes precedence over the compulsion to produce and share ideas that are potentially world changing. This has the disciplinary effect of closing down the university's potential as a space for radical and transformative thought.

Whilst the REF and NSS are central to the abstraction and qualitative devaluation of research and teaching, a series of other 'metric' systems are being introduced that will have similar effects. Most frighteningly, we are beginning to see the formalization of 'academic profiling', creating a database for the quantitative comparison of individual staff. This is nothing short of the creation of 'academic Top Trumps', as each university worker can be given a score out of 100 based on their 'teaching capacities', 'admin efficiency', and 'research production speed'. The 'best' universities can afford to buy all the highest scoring cards, whilst it is the responsibility of the underpaid and overworked academic to constantly strive to improve their Top Trump score. We work harder, faster, and longer - with no punch card to tell us when we are clocked in - in an attempt to 'trump' each other's stats, all on the false premise that we will one day be able to teach or research something that actually matters. Meanwhile, there is a complete collapse in any form of solidarity or collaborative research, as everyone feels obliged to prioritise their own statistics over any form of collective pursuit. The only collaborative projects that occur are those in which you wager on your ability to exploit the outcomes of the project more efficiently than your colleagues. Meanwhile, life gets tougher for all of us.

What scope is there for knowledge workers to resist the imposition of these metric systems? Situated, as we are, in the contemporary academy it is depressing that we see all too limited evidence of organised, collective activity to resist the restructuring of education according to the logic of capital. What's more, there is all too much complicity with the implementation of neoliberal technologies of measure such as the RAE and the NSS,

under some misled belief that it either improves the quality of teaching and research, or that you are in someway getting a ‘better deal’ as a result. Sadly, the focus of many self-styled ‘radical academics’ is often far removed from the ongoing struggles and conflicts within their own workplaces.

Any effective struggle over the academy, whether it be over working conditions, pay, the quality of teaching and research, or student fees, must necessarily identify these metric systems as fundamental in the neoliberal transformation of the university. It is untenable for us to fight against cuts when done so within the framework of these supposedly ‘objective and fair’ metric systems; political aspirations are rendered utopian, and acts of injustice are rendered unfortunate but necessary in the face of the ‘objective reality’ of our situation. What will be perhaps most rewarding in finally abolishing these metric systems will be our ability to engage with one another as humans again, rather than as cold, calculating and competitive machines. It is time for us to author a different future for the university; to do so means affirming our collective strength and consciousness.

From Manifestos Against The University (For The University)

Anon

In one of my first lectures at Dartington, our lecturer, of our group of fifteen or so, said:

“Do you think we should just give everyone who turns up a degree?”

We sat there in a kind of uncertain silence. Possibly it was a trick.

“I think it would be a good idea.”

Dartington closed in 2010, merged into a larger university, under the pressure of hostile forces, but the Higher Education cuts of late would probably have destroyed it anyway. Perhaps, if we’d let the cuts get it, rather than a larger university, things might have been more exciting. We might have been at the forefront of the movement, having the most to lose. If we’d had more widespread support, our own protests of five or so years ago might have made more difference.

But above all, we might have learned more. We might have built our experiences through sharing and occupation, through solidarity, through radical pedagogy and a fierce use of our artistic practice.

It is a strange situation in which I might say: it would have been more useful, more of a university, in its destruction than in its continuance.

When Cylon set out to destroy the Pythagoreans, he came to their building while they were meeting and set it alight. What happened in the last moments of their secret brotherhood, the profound realisations and blinding insights they encountered, we will never know.

The manifestos that follow explore what the university might be if we set it on fire. Either to burn it down and rise from the ashes, or to give our actions inside more urgency and consequence.

And if that seems dangerous, or unrealistic...

...all the better.

Manifesto Against Assessment (For Discussion)

Final exams... that's what they said last year.

— [The Kid Brother of] Loesje

We start the semester as always: inspired. A sublime idea, or glimmering possibilities. To learn, research, create, write, share.

This is how it starts. Two months pass, and everything is different. Our ideas become burdens. Because they are timed! We do not have as long as it takes, we have as long as they give us, with no regard to the nuances of our intentions. As if our projects could ever be finished!

And then, we write about what we have done. Not to teach our friends, not to share our experiences, but to submit ourselves to judgement. Assessment criteria on one side of the scales, and our work on the other, to evaluate: to find the value of.

And Lady Justice's sword is here too! Because assessment taps into all of the power of capitalist society. If you meet our standards, you will earn on average 25% more than those who don't! To say nothing of the prestige of being a first class degree-holder. Won't mother be proud!

Enough! We have had enough of being judged! We have had enough of you setting criteria, deciding what is a merit and what is a detriment! I have had enough of wondering whether if I stuffed an envelope with cash and handed it in, how much would I need to get a first? (Enough for the moderator too?)

I was told never to hand in work as a shoebox stuffed with papers. Let us hand in a shoebox filled with shoes! Van Gogh cut off his ear to silence a critic, let us cut off our hands to show them what happens when we are given a cut-off point. Let us write our work on fruit, to rot in storage, to show them how our work must grow and change as a part of our lives!

And, in the time we have left, let us share our work with our friends, our enemies, our comrades, our lecturers, even our administration. Let them discuss, and let us discuss their work, in heat and controversy. Because, while there is no bigger waste of time than making work for assessment, there is no better use of time than to share, to teach, and to be taught.

Manifesto Against Them (For Us)

From my childhood upward I have set my heart upon a certain thing. All people have their fancies; some desire horses, and others dogs; and some are fond of gold, and others of honour. Now, I have no violent desire of any of these things; but I have a passion for friends; and I would rather have a good friend than the best cock or quail in the world: I would even go further, and say the best horse or dog. But I myself, although I am now advanced in years, am so far from having made such an acquisition, that I do not even know in what way a friend is acquired.

— Socrates

Don't you hate students? For all the fuss about fees, they spend all of their loan on getting wasted! And in lectures, half of them are hung over, and the rest just browse Facebook the whole time. None of them care.

But not you, you're different. Our minds, they don't meet so often, tired as they are, but when they do it's like two gears suddenly meshing together. I learn more from you in those gentle moments of teaching than in any workshop or lecture.

And when I am explaining something, and I'm feeling either overexcited or dull, seeing the genuine interest in your eyes is such a gift. I feel nothing like the power of a teacher addressing students, but rather a generosity in sharing, joy in your understanding, and awe in the intelligence of your response.

Sometimes, anyway. Other times it is like a fight. I remark on something, and suddenly you seize upon it, and I feel a rush as our discussion escalates. There is none of the smugness of Debating Society here, and what's more I feel completely safe. We know each other's limits, just as well as we know each other's weaknesses and strengths.

I look at your sly expectant smile, knowing you have me, and my heart jolts. There is little more erotic than this. I give myself up to you, and the smile spreads across your face.

Moments pass.

Manifesto Against The Real World (Forlorn)

Under the paving stones: the beach.

— Anonymous

Some people, this year, started university, maybe wondering what would happen. What would their university experience be like? They could scarcely have imagined that in their first term, rather than getting smashed, they would be smashing the windows of Millbank Tower and the Treasury. Rather than getting tight with their floor in Halls, they would be mixing with everyone in an occupation of their university buildings. Rather than eating noodles for three months, they would be eating food donated in solidarity and cooked by their comrades.

But it wasn't real. Not in the way we understand it. For that time in occupation, a new world was forged as a bubble inside the old. Food was shared as struggle was shared, as knowledge and understanding were shared. Their oppressors, usually so insidious as to be invisible, were suddenly so corporeal as to be banging down the door.

But eventually, the door failed; the bubble popped; the ground fell out from underneath them. This new university experience they had found was fleeting, lasting only a few weeks. And now they have to go back to the real world, but this time with its illusion in tatters: incredible, beautiful things are possible (but not right now).

And that, not the cuts, is the real tragedy.

Resisting 'Resistance'

Rosalee Dorfman

This thought piece reflects on the student occupation of the Rupert Becket Lecture Theatre in Leeds University in late 2010. The spontaneous occupation occurred after a demonstration against the university tuition fee rise and the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance.

I am not your activist. I do, think and act but I defy an activist association. I am not your comrade – I do not want to act in serial solidarity with someone I fundamentally disagree with. I do not want to fight a corrupt system by entering into an even more totalitarian one, one masked by the façade of ‘activism’. If the point of politics is to stuff ideology down everyone’s throats until they spit or swallow— then I am apolitical.

How can we be liberated if our very resistance is being co-opted by our ‘enemy’? The University sells the occupation as part of ‘enhancing the student experience’ – my battle has been commodified, my struggle reified. Can I control my resistance, my own education? Everything spins uncontrollably – until I am paralysed – suddenly it’s all lost signification. I feel cornered – everything I do plays into someone else’s means. The institution I am ‘against’ patronises my ability to become and create a ‘liberated space’. I did not consent to this damaging of my self-perception, work, relationships.

No more ‘occupation’

Or social movement

Stuck in my thoughts,

Eating up my time,

Filling my brain with frustration.

I want immunisation...

... from the occupation’s cabin fever, the splintering of ‘comrades’ and feminists struggling to demonstrate why their resistance ‘counts’. Others are scowled at: ‘If you don’t live in the occupation, you’re not an activist.’ My resistance became fighting the co-option of the ‘occupational protest’ by people usurping the space and using it as a platform for their own dogma –until we can all no longer breathe.

Freedom came to signify being outside of the occupation’s chokehold.

This IS a postmortem... What's Left?

Mike Watson

In asking what the University should be, the question ought really to be ‘what should education should be?’ Yet the answer is not straightforward, for we have come to call one particular set of values and practices “education” and envisage them as a sacrosanct definition of the term. So, when Tony Blair said to rapturous applause in 1996, ‘Ask me my three main priorities for government, and I tell you: education, education, education’, he referred not to a rich diversity of options but to an emphasis on investment in the existing form. To be sure, the New Labour period of government engineered changes in the sector, the most notable being the introduction, raising and recommendation for a further raising of tuition fees. That last raise has been left to the current coalition government to implement, along with a more intense promotion of vocational qualifications, as opposed to humanities and arts subjects - a policy pursued since Thatcher.

Yet none of these changes mark a radical divergence from what we as a society have called “education” since the industrial revolution. Education generally means tuition delivered by the state to the individual over a period running now, in the UK, from the age of four to sixteen compulsorily and then commonly for a further two years. This model is replicated throughout the world. The humanities and arts were once seen as worthy subjects, whereas now they are severely marginalized for apparently political motivations and the state educational system as a whole has always aimed principally at providing an educated workforce and a pliable public not prone to pursuing extreme ideals.

“Education” is not a rigid concept, rather, the term broadly signifies the transmission and reception of information, the development of skills and the influence and expansion of the thoughts of individuals – elements crucial to the development of individual freedom of expression. However, the state system, described above, still has monopoly over educational norms. All of these things operate around the same didactic model whereby efficient use of space is assured via the tuition of the maximum number of students by the minimum number of teachers. So when threats to such a system – which is all we know - are made, the tendency is to bemoan the removal of our ability to educate and be educated, – to learn and develop skills - to think, or, more particularly today, to think in an abstract or creative way and at an affordable cost. We are now witnessing a situation where the “free thinkers” of the academy (students and tutors) are demanding that a state-business hybrid model of education, governed by bureaucracy and economic rationality,

stop making cuts to education, as if the latter were a cake from which a sizeable portion can be removed, or from which a portion can be denied to this or that group of people.

'You cannot take away our education', is the common refrain. If something seems amiss here, something in the way of a dire lack of rhetorical imagination in society, this is arguably due to the prevalent education system having dulled people's minds to the possibility of some other way of educating, and, indeed, some other way of doing politics. For the claim that the state must support humanities and arts education, apart from being one of the least enticing ways to encourage the state of the value of these subjects, signals a saddening retreat of academia to intellectual positions first outlined in the 19th century, and political positions played out in France one century earlier. These positions - communist, socialist - have long been prevalent in university faculties and outside as the principal means of the critique of capital, as all the while the latter has become further entrenched in spite of them.

For now it is enough to say to the powers that be that, indeed, 'you cannot take our education away', but not because those powers must keep supporting humanities education. On the contrary, it should be understood that the state cannot take our education away because education is not something maintained, bought and sold solely by the state-business monopoly. That system, of which the university is part, is but one form of education and, one might venture, one which should be treated with extreme distrust. For the size of that system, its worldwide prevalence and the homogeneity of the messages it teaches - even when they are anti-capitalist – have created the dangerous position in which such a system has become synonymous with learning, individual development and thinking, such that free thinkers do not have the confidence to think a world aside from it.

Critique of the state-business model is warranted, but when that critique demands support from that model, or by a solely state funded model, it becomes hypocritical. Radical critiques that ignore the role of hierarchy and the state in the production of society and education's ills are missing the point. This is a victory for the capitalist system which, in any case, relies on the state for its protection. Admix this failing with the simultaneous conflation of "education" with the state-business education system and we have a crisis for the humanities and the arts which it must be our responsibility to extricate ourselves from.

This crisis is greater than that caused by the hierarchy of, and reliance on, the state-business model; it is intrinsic to the knowledge produced within these sectors and risks a situation where arts and humanities education might cease to be possible on any meaningful scale should the state and its business partners continue to withdraw their support. That there is no sensible plan B is a woeful indictment of academics. Sure enough there are occupations, happenings, street protests, sit-ins, dropouts, in-jokes and free

courses on Marx. Many gleefully - perhaps ironically - announce that it could be 1968 again. These people should note that 1968 was not a success otherwise we would not be repeating the postures of that period. There was a spirit of genuine radical change in 1968 and it was crushed by the Trade Unions and national Communist Party of France. One should be skeptical against arguments to resurrect 1968's non hierarchical spirit because it offers false promise of a mythic age. Equally we must not accept those who will lean on the crutch of historical ideologies.

To have any chance of reclaiming education we must shun the past, we must be radically now. I suggest we do two things: we must reclaim disdain for the State, which has only ever protected the interests of the powerful; and we must reclaim the individual, which is the source of freedom. We must be unafraid to upset the prevailing ideological trend, because the monopoly that the Right has held over anti-statism and individualism has left the Left impoverished of imagination and didactic in its message.

You have nothing to lose but your accreditation.

And people will rightly ask not 'what's in it for me?', but 'how will I eat?'. Whilst the temptation is to respond that one must chew each morsel for the recommended amount of time before swallowing, to aid digestion, the answer is actually simpler. The question, so phrased, is never really one about eating, it's about maintaining a lifestyle in a society which demands that everyone be in debt. And it is precisely that situation, which is encouraged by the state and which maintains the state. This must be counteracted by an alternative means of education, for education is a form of debt which borrows against future accreditation, with the individual acceding to spend X many hours in an institution - where they can be both manipulated and monitored - as down payment against future "opportunity" (which will inevitably be characterised by further spending and debt). In any case, it is enough to say that there are possible alternative forms of funding, easily fairer than those in place, and ways of eating, though it may be necessary to innovate. What choice do we have? A society of individuals who have the confidence to leave behind such shackles should indeed be the ultimate aim of reclaiming education.

It is not possible within the limits of this paper to outline a fully working alternative model of education. And neither is it desirable, for it is less a question of what alternative we have than what alternatives do we have? And it is imperative that these alternatives are not closed down through a dogmatic envisioning of their nature from the offset. What follows is the outlining of one possibility, in part delivered online.

Online courses are no novelty. In fact the internet now comprises the principle method of delivery for the Open University, which was itself set up in 1969 to give workers a flexible cheap means of gaining a degree (and is still a viable alternative to more costly traditional options).

The internet makes independent learning very easy, whilst course management programs such as Moodle make it possible to deliver courses remotely at low cost or free of charge, with face to face meetings between people studying the same or similar subjects easily facilitated in real life via social networking (if this should be desirable - not all students benefit from the seminar setup). Yet it is clear that this is not enough, for when people bemoan cuts to education they bemoan cuts to a system of accreditation in which it is necessary to participate in order to gain employment. The state-business model continues to raise the costs of those services regularly and disproportionately. We need an alternative system of accreditation that can be delivered for a fraction of the cost of an undergraduate degree. Key to keeping these costs low is the realisation that the didactic teacher-student model is any case unnecessary. Learning networks supported by peers and established practitioners within a field could do away with the need for salaried lecturers, whilst empowering the individual who can only benefit from stepping outside a system which leads students to become dependent on lecturers and thus entrenching the idea that authority equals truth.

Problematically, many people who work within the state-business education system are understandably bound by financial constraints. Many others have built impressive careers and profited from the university inspection system to which they have spent a great deal of time pandering. For this reason it may be counterproductive to look within the university in order to find a way out of it. Those who do not work for an alternative, however, are complicit in the demise of free thinking. Courage then, is a quality that an alternative education movement needs to foster.

Student as Producer: Bringing Critical Theory to Life through the Life of Students

Mike Neary

It is worth taking the trouble to describe the contemporary significance of students and the university...as an image of the highest metaphysical state of history
(Benjamin, 1996: 37 [1914-15]).

Intellectualise Teaching and Learning

Student as Producer is a project with the avowed intention of bringing critical theory to life. Student as Producer is used as a slogan to organise teaching and learning at the University of Lincoln. The key point is that the undergraduate curriculum is saturated with research and research-like activity and that students are involved in the design and delivery of their own courses based on their own experience of what makes for effective learning. In this way the undergraduate student becomes a part of the academic project of the university, and the university becomes the model for a very different sort of university: collaborative, co-operative, democratic, participatory, open, accessible, and, above all, imbued with an attitude of criticality and intellectuality.

The underlying purpose of Student as Producer is to intellectualise teaching and learning in higher education, challenging the liberal humanist, and increasingly discredited notion of the neo-liberal university, to confront its own revolutionary intellectual culture and tradition by engaging with critical social theory (McLean 2006). In the current context this means not simply discussing education as an economic and funding crisis, but as a political crisis, within which indifference to the political implications of the neo-liberal (enterprise) university is not an option (Vygotsky 1997).

Student as Producer is a critical response to attempts by recent governments in the UK, and around the world, to create a consumerist culture among undergraduate students. The context for the new student as consumer is a system of higher education dominated by marketised and commercial imperatives (Browne 2010), involving the intensification of academic work as a key economic priority (De Anglis and Harvie 2009). The attempt to consolidate consumerism in British universities forms part of a much broader attempt by governments to reinstate the ideology of market-led social development following the near collapse of the world financial system in 2009 (Amin 2009, Bellamy Foster and Magdoff 2009, Gamble 2009).

The intellectual ideas on which the project is based are derived from the historical development of the modern university, with specific reference to Humboldt's University of Berlin, established in 1815 as the first modern European university. A central feature of Humboldt's university was linking research and teaching as the fundamental principle for progressive liberal-humanist pedagogy. It was the subsequent disconnection of research and teaching, and the problems it was causing in research intensive universities in the US, which had motivated colleagues to find ways to reinvent teaching in higher education (Boyer 1990, Boyer Report 1998). Central to the work of reinventing the undergraduate curriculum was the work of Ernest Boyer, who highlighted the imbalance between research and teaching in research intensive universities in the US. Boyer argued for a reconfiguration of teaching and research with teaching recognised as an important and fundamental part of academic life.

While Humboldt's plans form the basis for the framework of the liberal humanist university, revitalised by the work of Boyer, Student as Producer is derived from more radical and critical ideas. These more radical ideas are embedded in revolutionary social science derived from critical pedagogy. This more radical approach included an engagement with the work of Paulo Friere (1970), as well as other well known contemporary proponents of critical pedagogy and popular education (McLaren 2000, Allman 2001, Rikowski 2006, Amsler and Canaan 2008). This more radical theoretical approach was consolidated by relating pedagogic practice to critical social theory, particularly the subversive European Marxism of the early 20th century. These included the work that modernist Marxists were producing in the period between the 1920s and the 1930s, and the movement of avant-garde painters, sculptors, psychologists, educationalists, scientists and activists that emerged in Russia in the post revolutionary period in 1917. Colleagues and students at Lincoln and elsewhere are interested in the model for higher education that this theoretical work inspired, and particularly the radical alternative vision for universities dramatically made real by the events of May 1968 in Paris, France and around the world¹.

Walter Benjamin: Author as Producer

A key figure for Student as Producer is Walter Benjamin (1892 – 1940), a German-Jewish social theorist, critic and philosopher, occupying '... a unique place in the intellectual and political panorama of the twentieth century' (Lowy 2005). Benjamin's writings were a combination of modernism, the Messianic, and Marxism, making him 'probably the most peculiar Marxist every produced by this movement' (Arendt 1999: 16 – 17). In his career he wrote on a wide ranging number of topics, including art, literature, philosophy and history; and has been described as 'a resource and research tool for overpowering present political and cultural conformism' (Leslie 2009: ix).

The concept of Student as Producer was based on the title of a lecture, Author as Producer, given by Benjamin to the Society of Anti-Fascists in Paris in April 1934. The key question for the lecture was how do radical intellectuals intervene in moments of social crisis, and what form should that intervention take. The lecture was inspired by the Russian constructivists, and their recognition of the role of intellectuals at the centre of the production of a new and experimental society. Benjamin took from the constructivists the central idea that production was not simply about the making of finished works, but that the process of production should contain its own revolutionary organising principle. For Benjamin it is not enough that a progressive intellectual declares their commitment to progressive social transformation, but that their work reflects the ways in which the social relations of capitalist society might be transformed. This transformation is expressed by the way in which progressive political practice is embedded within the nature of the work itself, and most particularly the way in which the product is produced.

Benjamin is important because of the way in which he presents a revolutionary pedagogy on the basis of the reorganisation of intellectual labour. Benjamin is recasting the productive process so that the previously unremarkable object of production for bourgeoisie theory, i.e., the worker, becomes the emancipated subject of their own social world. Benjamin's work suggests that intellectual labour can be radicalised by including the student as the subject rather than the object of the teaching and learning process, i.e., the student as producer not consumer.

The Life of Students

I have written about 'Author as Producer' elsewhere (Neary and Winn 2009, Neary 2010). In this paper I want to focus on another essay, written by Benjamin earlier in his career, 'The Life of Students' (1914 -1915), during his involvement with the German Youth Movement in the years immediately preceding the First Great War.

What is striking about his writing in this period is his attempt to reconcile his adherence to the moral and ethical principals of German Idealism, in particular the work of Kant and Hegel, to the practicalities of political action – an issue that would appear throughout his intellectual life. Benjamin sought to avoid the standardisation of ethics and morals around any particular concrete institutional practice (Wolin 1994: 8), and to emancipate particular political action 'by extending the ideal at the expense of the real' (Wolin 1994: 27). For the young Benjamin political action should not be based purely on the rationality of political pragmatics, but should be grounded in the principles of the transcendent and the metaphysical, i.e. in the world of the intelligible, the intellectual and the non-empirical. The difficulty with this position is the extent to which the philosophical idealism collides with practical action in the empirical world (Wolin 1994: 9 – 10).

The relationship between the practical and the theoretical: the empirical and the non-empirical, is the issue that Benjamin is grappling with in his confrontation with German university students in 1915. Writing the ‘Life of Students’ (1914- 1915) Benjamin is using students and the university to reveal what he understands as the essence of criticality, i.e. ‘to disclose the immanent state of perfection and make it absolute, to make it visible and dominant in the present’ (37). This is not possible, he argues, by writing an empirical account of events or about institutions and their practices. It is achievable, he maintains, by grasping the life of the university and its students as a ‘metaphysical structure’ (37), as an ‘idea of the university’, understood in its entirety as a ‘system as a whole’. This is what Benjamin means when he frames the ‘idea of the university’ as ‘the highest metaphysical state of history’ (37). Benjamin understands the ‘system as a whole’ (38) as ‘the conscious unity of student life’ (38), which he explains as ‘the will to submit to a principle, to identify completely with an idea’ (38) based, in this case, on a notion of generalised scholarship and ‘community of learning’, culminating in the more expansive and non-empirical ‘unity in the idea of knowledge’. For Benjamin this ‘community of learning’ (38) and ‘unity in the idea of knowledge’ (38) can be further enhanced by students connecting with radical and progressive aesthetic movements of the period, something which they had, up until that time, avoided.

Benjamin notes that in so far as the university has become an organ of the state such idealist thinking becomes unacceptable. The German University had become overwhelmed by vocationalism, individuality, and service to the state. He writes:

The perversion of the creative spirit into the vocational spirit, which we see at work everywhere, has taken possession of the universities as a whole and has isolated them from the nonofficial, creative life of the mind (41).

So much so that for Benjamin ‘The uncritical and spineless acquiescence in this situation is an essential feature of student life’ (39). And that it is ‘The secret tyranny of vocational training... [which]... poisons the essence of creative life (43)’.

This is exemplified for Benjamin in the way that German universities operate against the Humboldtian principles on which they were established:

The most striking and painful aspect of the university is the mechanical reaction of the students as they listen to a lecture. Only a genuinely academic and sophisticated culture of conversation could compensate for this level of receptivity. And of course the seminars are worlds away from such a thing, since they too, mainly rely on the lecture format, and it makes little difference whether the speakers are teachers or students. The organisation of the university has ceased to be grounded in the productivity of its students, as its founders

had envisaged. They thought of students as teachers and learners at the same time; as teachers, because productivity implies complete autonomy, with their minds fixed on science instead of on their instructor's personality. But where office and profession are the ideas that govern student life, there can be no true learning. There can no longer be any question of a devotion to a form of knowledge that, it is feared, might lead them astray from the path of bourgeois security (42).

Benjamin's solution is for the student to become 'an active producer, philosopher, and teacher all in one, and all these things should be part of his deepest and most essential nature' (42). This should not operate by reference to any specific scientific principle, but provide the basis for 'the community of the university' (43), which for him is 'a life more deeply conceived' (43). He concludes:

This is what would prevent the degeneration of study into the heaping up of information. The task of students is to rally round the university, which itself would be in a position to impart the systematic state of knowledge, together with the cautious and precise but daring applications of new methodologies. Students who conceived their role in this way would greatly resemble the amorphous waves of the populace that surround the prince's palace, which serves as the space for an unceasing spiritual revolution – a point from which new questions would be incubated, in a more ambitious, less clear, less precise way, but perhaps with greater profundity than the traditional scientific questions. The creativity of students might then enable us to regard them as the great transformers whose task is to seize upon new ideas, which spring up sooner in art and society than in the university, and mould them into scientific shape under the guidance of their philosophical approach (43).

In his later work Benjamin grounds his metaphysical philosophy in his own version of historical materialism, but the basis for his challenge to academics and students remains for us now, as it did for academics and students then: how to design the university as a progressive political project. In what follows I will describe the very practical (empirical) and theoretical (non empirical) ways in which the University of Lincoln is engaging with Benjamin's ideas.

Student as Producer: mainstreaming the radical

Student as Producer attempts to deal with some of the issues identified by Benjamin in the 'Author as Producer' as well as 'The Life of Students', working on a number of different dimensions simultaneously. A key aspect of the project is the relationship between the empirical and the non-empirical aspects of university life and the life of students.

Empirical

The empirical project for Student as Producer is to establish research-engaged teaching and learning as an institutional priority at the University of Lincoln. This means that research-engaged teaching and learning will become the dominant paradigm for all aspects of curriculum design and delivery, and the key organisational principle that informs other aspects of the University of Lincoln's strategic planning.

Student as Producer is designed as a three year project. In the first year of the project all staff, including academics, support and service workers, will be made aware of Student as Producer through a series of debates and discussions across the university. All staff will have the opportunity to respond to this initiative with their own critical interventions. These discussions will be followed up by a series of workshops where staff from different faculties and with different professional and service roles will design teaching and learning events in the way of Student as Producer.

An important aspect of Student and Producer is redesigning the university's administrative and bureaucratic processes so that they fit the principles and protocols of Student as Producer. Student as Producer will develop organically across the University through the process of new course validations and revalidations over the next three years. The documentation that supports course validation is being redrafted in collaboration with students and academics. The validation programme includes a number of key issues with which academics are asked to include as part of their curriculum design. Academics are asked to show ways in which the courses will include research-engaged teaching; to consider issues about the politics of space and spatiality in their teaching practice; to describe how they will write up their teaching as a scholarly research project; to illustrate the ways in which they will use appropriate web technologies, in particular web 2.0; to demonstrate the extent to which students are involved in the design and delivery of programmes and courses; and to show how a course enables to students to see themselves having a role in creating their own future, not only in terms of employment, but as subjects, rather than objects of history.

These key principles are not designed as a template to be adhered to, but are presented as a set of principles designed to challenge the ways in which academics teach, and to promote an intellectual discussion about the nature and purpose of teaching at HE level. The starting point is that staff and students have much to learn from each other, as teacher-learners and learner-teachers.

The project has worked closely with the University's Students' Union, who have been consistent supporters of the project. During this first year the university's network

of Student Representatives have been important advocates for this work. Student as Producer has created its own group of students, referred to as 'The Producers' who are involved in all stages of the initial setting up of the project. Student as Producer has already had a successful launch which many staff and students attended. Staff at the event commented: 'It feels like something dynamic and important'.

Non-empirical

The non-empirical aspect of Student as Producer is to redesign the university based on the 'idea of the university' and the 'idea of the student' as a progressive political project. Student as Producer understands that not all colleagues and students at Lincoln are revolutionary Marxists. The issue becomes how to set up debate so that teachers and students can engage intellectually and academically with teaching and learning and its relationship to academic research. Student as Producer is framing this debate around the meaning and purpose of higher education in the twenty-first century.

Student as Producer is based on a version of student life promoted by Benjamin in the *Life of Students*. In the world of Student as Producer the student is restored as an ideal, i.e. to the role of creative subject within the academic enterprise. This restoration is consolidated, as Benjamin's model implies, by re-engineering the relationship between undergraduate teaching and academic research as part of a progressive political project. The purpose is to get to a point where the student recognises themselves as a key contributor to the production of knowledge and meaning within the institution. To support this idealism stress is placed on the extent to which much of this work is ongoing at the University of Lincoln and across the sector, as well as to very specific examples where undergraduate students have produced work on their own or in collaboration, which is of real academic content and value. What is distinctive about Student as Producer is that while there are many examples of research engaged teaching across the sector it is only at the University of Lincoln that the principle is being generalised, and the ideal of both student and university are being realised at the level of the institution.

All of those engaged with Student as Producer are mindful of the need for the university to survive and prosper, even in a framework for higher education which looks increasingly to be unsustainable; while, at the same time, taking on the responsibility with others in the academic community to design an alternative model for the university, as a rehearsal for an alternative model for the social world within which it might subsist. By creating alternative models for higher education Student as Producer is experimenting with the history of the idea of university, drawing on the heritage of higher learning. The purpose is to reinvent the contemporary significance of students and the university so as to provide, as Benjamin might say, a real time example of the highest metaphysical state of history.

Student as Produce : Current Movement of Resistance

In reframing the new university those of us involved with this project are made aware of the university's own radical history, not least the moment of 1968, and the extent to which critical theory was utilised to inform those struggles (Neary and Hagyard 2010). Student as Producer is aware that in a state of emergency the radical history of the university is already being rewritten, in the very moment when Student as Producer is being established. The test of Student as Producer is the extent to which it can support and enhance this movement of resistance to form a new type of higher education, as a progressive political project.

Already groups are forming that are matching Benjamin's demands, around key empirical issues². Student as Producer is working alongside this movement of resistance to keep in focus the problem that Benjamin identified: the relationship between the empirical and the non-empirical, between the real and the ideal, so that direct action is consolidated by metaphysical matters grounded in the everyday reality of academic life. In this way non-empirical critical theory can be brought back to life through a connection with the empirical life of students, and the movement of resistance can transcend its immediate practical impact to provide a real alternative vision for the life of the student and the university.

1. For an account of this moment in the development of the radical university see Neary, M. and Hagyard, A. (2010) Pedagogy of Excess: An Alternative Political Economy for Student Life, in M. Molesworth, E. Nixon and R. Scullion (eds) The Marketisation of Higher Education; The Student as Consumer, Routledge, London

2. Groups and organisation are being established to challenge the cuts to funding of higher education in the UK and around the world. These include The Really Open University - reallyopenuniversity.wordpress.com; the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts - <http://anticuts.com/>, ukuncut, the Education Activist Network - educationactivistnetwork.wordpress.com, the International Student Movement -www.emancipating-education-for-all.org, the Invisible Committee (2009), as well as the movement of student occupations and their multivarious demands, co-ordinated through the National Campaign against Fees and Cuts.

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What Does Recognition Look Like?

Thomas Gokey

This statement is based on a discussion of the same name that The Art School in the Art School (<http://www.theasintheas.org>) facilitated as a part of the I Know You Know I Know You Know I Know exhibition curated by the ACE Curatorial Collective at Hunter College's Times Square Gallery on Jan 28-29, 2011. I Know You Know... was an exhibition of artist-run schools and artist projects that engage alternative pedagogical practices. This statement also relies heavily on an e-mail exchange with Douglas Rushkoff.

We are witnessing a renaissance of pedagogical experimentation. In the last four years artist-run schools, alternative schools, and hackerspaces have cropped up all around the world. The success of these experimental schools has exposed that the teaching and learning that happens at universities is not so special or elevated or rare or inimitable. However, these experimental schools do not threaten corporate universities because these universities currently maintain a monopoly on accreditation. The next step is to innovate new ways to formally recognize the education that takes place in these alternative schools. This means either doing away with accreditation altogether or providing alternative forms of accreditation.

How does education register itself, how does it appear, and how is it recognized in our current system? A student produces work that demonstrates what they have learned. The value of this work is then evaluated and clothed in a series of appearances that allow other people – future employers or peers – to recognize the education the student has gained. Like nested matryoshka dolls, the value of education is both vouched for and concealed by grades, academic credits, transcripts, and diplomas granted by universities that are in turn accredited by agencies. Ultimately, it is the accreditation agency that, through a performative act, gives the value of education a recognizable form. The university thus becomes a system where students exchange one form of credit for another. Students in the United States graduate buried under crushing debt but that money does not make it to the other side of the student-teacher relationship. The neo-liberal university has done a remarkable job at keeping the cost of labour low by replacing tenured faculty with low-wage “contingent faculty” and grad students. At the heart of education is the student-teacher relationship, yet both sides of this relationship are being exploited. The

corporate university mediates the educational exchange between students and teachers, siphoning off the vast majority of the value produced to feed an increasingly expensive administrative system.

There have always been experimental schools, but since 2007 something seems to have shifted, as a tidal wave of self-organized spaces has emerged that allow people to teach and learn from each other outside the corporate university. Perhaps the most established and replicable model is the Public School started in LA by the Telic Arts Exchange:

The Public School is a school with no curriculum. At the moment, it operates as follows: first, classes are proposed by the public (I want to learn this or I want to teach this); then, people have the opportunity to sign up for the classes (I also want to learn that); finally, when enough people have expressed interest, the school finds a teacher and offers the class to those who signed up.¹

The Public School now has locations in eight different cities.² Their user-friendly website allows people to propose an compellingly wide variety of classes. Some of them are virtually identical to those taught in a “real” university, like a lecture series on recent French philosophy.³ But perhaps what is most interesting is that when we democratize education we see certain desires emerge that are not being satisfied by the current university system. Classes on winter bicycling, beer brewing, urban foraging or “how to be in a group” draw large crowds. It becomes clear that there is a tremendous amount of curiosity for the work of some intellectuals that gets paid too little attention by university departments.

Around the same time that the Public School was getting off the ground Joanna Spitzner started her project The Art School in the Art School, which exists as a shadow school to Syracuse University.

The school exists in relation (opposition, subversion, supplement, mimicry) to Syracuse University’s School of Art and Design, which embodies typical US art school and university educational practices. The AS in The AS is a platform for self-organization: its activities are generated through suggestions, proposals, conversations, and finding ways to make things happen.⁴

Other schools operating in similar ways, like the Experimental College of the Twin Cities⁵ or Mary Walling Blackburn’s Anhoek School⁶, started to pop up.⁷ One of the most exciting experimental schools to emerge in recent months is the University for Strategic Optimism in the UK, which reclaims private spaces by staging flash-mob style lectures, effectively turning banks and supermarkets into temporary public schools.⁸

Again in 2007, around the same time that this latest wave of artist-run schools was getting started in the US, the Chaos Computer Club held a hacker camp in Germany. Several Americans who attended this camp and toured active hackerspaces in Europe returned to the US to start hackerspaces of their own. The Chaos hacker camp spawned NYC Resistor in Brooklyn,⁹ the Hacktory in Philadelphia,¹⁰ Hack DC in Washington DC¹¹ and Noisebridge in San Francisco.¹² This first wave of hackerspaces in turn spawned others in cities large and small across the US. There are currently 199 active hackerspaces in the United States with more on the way.¹³ The artist-run experimental schools discussed above are really just hackerspaces under a different name, and these hackerspaces are entirely legitimate schools, where people gather to teach and learn.

What these experimental schools and hackerspaces demonstrate is that we can create and exchange knowledge without the mediation of a corporate university. Yet these alternatives have so far failed to truly challenge or replace the corporate university for one simple reason: accreditation. Corporate universities still have a monopoly on the ability to notarise our brains. It is for this reason that corporate universities don't feel threatened at all by releasing their classroom content for free online. They don't mind that anyone can go on iTunes U or Academic Earth and teach themselves, so long as this education doesn't count and the only kind that does is the kind they provide.

The education that takes place in hackerspaces and alternative schools is every bit as real as the education that takes place in corporate universities; what is different is the symbolic recognition this education attracts. For example, in the spring of 2011 the University for Strategic Optimism (UfSO) is holding a semester-length course on Cultural Studies and Capitalism.¹⁴ This class is identical to the one taught at Goldsmiths. The only difference is that the UfSO course is free and you cannot get credit for it.

What I am proposing is that we create an above-the-board alternative accrediting agency in recognition of the very real education that the UfSO students are receiving. I support the idea of education for its own sake, but I would also like to find a way to challenge and replace the corporatist university. This means finding a way to get people real jobs in their field through alternative educational routes, so we recognize the need to accredit these alternative routes, or must work towards doing away with accreditation.

Accreditation is similar to another form of credit: money. Both bear weight because they are socially recognized. Alternative local currencies like Ithaca Hours¹⁵ work because people agree to treat them like money. Likewise, accreditation has value only because we agree to accept it as proof of education. "Accreditation is the only thing 'worth' paying for. The education we can get anywhere."¹⁶ I propose that we create above-board, legal and rigorous alternative accrediting agencies to offer formal recognition when appropriate for some of the classes that take place in these alternative schools or hackerspaces.

While in most countries accreditation is managed by the central government, in the United States there are six regional accrediting agencies for universities, approved by the Department of Education. In addition, there are a number of independent accrediting agencies that specialize in certain disciplines and have nothing to back them up but their own reputations. Although located in the United States, these agencies often accredit institutions in other countries. The alternative accrediting agency I'm proposing would have to distinguish itself from the many accreditation mills that exist in the US. These accreditation or diploma mills are scams that offer diplomas for a price without requiring actual learning and are not recognized by real universities. But people want to teach and learn legitimately, and we are increasingly forced to find innovative ways to distinguish between high-quality education, low-quality education, and mis-education. I propose that the Art School in the Art School, the experimental school that I am most actively involved with, serve as an accrediting agency for any other experimental schools and hackerspaces that wish to offer formal credit for a class. Such an undertaking is daunting and faces many obstacles, and I would like to address some of them in what follows. I propose that we create such an agency in stages. First, we need a proof of concept to demonstrate that it is possible. Second, we can accredit a limited number of courses at experimental schools on a case-by-case basis. Lastly, such an alternative accrediting agency could play an important role in restructuring the larger problems facing higher education and the economy as a whole.

The Proof of Concept

As a proof of concept, the AS^AS Accrediting Agency will host a formal dissertation defense for the media theorist Douglas Rushkoff. As part of this project Rushkoff has written a cover letter and submitted his book *Media Virus* which will serve as his dissertation for our review.¹⁷ This manuscript will serve as a particularly good case to establish our bona fides for two reasons. First, is it an obviously high-quality work of scholarship and if anyone doubts that it is worthy of a PhD they can read it and judge for themselves. Second, *Media Virus* has already produced differences within the field of media theory. The AS^AS Accrediting Agency will maintain the highest standards, assembling an international panel of respected scholars to participate in the review process. If successfully defended, the Art School in the Art School will grant a PhD. This is really just the first step in the process: the more important stage is to ensure that this PhD is recognized by a larger community. This process of contesting recognition will involve setting up a secondary review process amongst people and institutions who will publicly recognize this PhD. This would happen, for example, when an institution accepts this PhD as a teaching credential.

Limited Application

This first project is just a proof of concept. Once established the AS^AS Accrediting Agency will be able to start offering formal credit in select cases for people who are learning outside of traditional universities. This will allow people to, for example, transfer credit from a class they took at The Public School to a traditional university. We would still want alternative schools to hold classes that exist just for their own sake, but on occasion when a class at the Experimental College of the Twin Cities or the UfSO wants to be able to offer credit, an alternative accrediting agency will be in place to ensure high standards are being met. At this stage we are not replacing the corporate university outright; rather we are giving alternative schools legitimacy on the level of individual classes. The student would still ultimately be transferring the credit to an already recognized university.

An accrediting agency is a series of necessary bureaucratic redundancies. These redundancies would open up the discussion on how quality is assured. This involves checking, double-checking and checking up on the checkers in order to maintain high standards. With this comes expense. One of the challenges of an alternative accrediting agency is that we do not want to recreate the same expensive system that we are trying to contest. At this stage of implementation we will be relying on a network of dedicated volunteers with the requisite academic credentials to audit the courses, preferably the whole course, to evaluate its quality. There is a precedent for such a network of volunteers. The University of the People,¹⁸ a new experimental school with significant funding and support from places like the United Nations and the Clinton Foundation, has created the kind of network we need but for a different purpose. Although they are seeking accreditation through standard methods, they rely on a vast network of educators to carry out the normal functioning of the school. They asked for university professors to volunteer as proctors and tutors and the response was significant. Instead of relying on a network of volunteers to operate a school we would rely on it for the purpose of evaluation.

Here is how the process would work at this stage: if the students in a class at an experimental school express interest in taking the class for credit they could initiate the accreditation process. This would work best for 1-3 credit classes that clearly fit established norms for classes currently offered in regular universities. Students would be required to produce something – writing, projects or satisfactory performance on exams – depending on the nature of the class. The teacher of the class would have to be an expert in the field with the proper academic credentials to teach it. In addition we would have a volunteer auditor, also with full academic credentials to audit the class and act as an evaluator. They would review the students' work as well as the teacher's course material. To begin with,

this auditor would attend every class along with the students. Other volunteers would also review these materials from afar as well as the auditor's evaluations. Since such an accrediting agency is only as good as its reputation we will have to be rigorous and strict. We will guard our reputation and deny credit when it is unearned. This is not an option for people to get credit without having to put in the effort or produce the kind results required by the best universities. Instead this is a way to validate the very real learning that otherwise would not count. It is a way to help crack the monopoly of credit and allow people to focus on their education. If the coursework is deemed worthy credit would be offered and the AS^AS Accrediting Agency would print up transcripts together with the participating school. Again this initial coursework would only be the first step. The real challenge would be to work with sympathetic administrators at regular universities to accept the transfer of credit.

Towards Transforming the University

Ultimately, the goal is not just to supplement existing university systems, but to transform them or replace them all together. Education should be free to the student and open to all. These alternative schools already offer free high-quality education, but it does not count as education. Finding a way to accredit these efforts is just one piece of a much more difficult task of transforming the university. One obvious problem with an alternative university is finding a way to pay researchers and teachers adequately while still offering classes for free to the student. Corporate universities hold a monopoly on accreditation in part because we fund research and education to a significant degree through tuition. Offering a free, accredited alternative would require all educators to become volunteers, like those who teach at classes at the Art School in the Art School. This is unacceptable. We need to offer wages that not only meet the minimum cost of living but that are truly liberating, allowing professors to pursue their research without the fear that comes with economic precarity. At present the corporate university does not provide much better. Roughly half of all professors in the United States are practically volunteers, being paid poverty wages to teach. The problem of gaining recognized alternative forms of education is a real but solvable one. This solution, however, cannot take place without a fundamental re-ordering of that other form of credit, our banking system and public funding. These alternative schools show us a different way to share what we know: we now need a different way to share our other forms of value.. It is beyond the scope of this proposal to address these larger issues other than to point out that solving accreditation is one piece of solving this larger dynamic.

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<http://telic.info/the-public-school>

Berlin, Brussels, Durham, Helsinki, LA, New York, Philadelphia and San Juan, see <http://all.thepublicschool.org/>

<http://nyc.thepublicschool.org/class/2706>, video of these lectures can be found at <http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/teaching.html>

<http://www.theasinthreas.org/>

<http://www.excotc.org/>

<http://www.anhoekschool.org/>

I've started to collect an ever-expanding list of current experimental schools on my personal blog. See http://www.publicpraxis.com/youwillsuffermylove/?page_id=138. For a list of artist-run schools past and present see http://justseeds.org/blog/2010/02/school_as_art_1.html

<http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.nycresistor.com/>

<http://thehacktory.org/>

<http://hacdc.org/>

<https://www.noisebridge.net/wiki/Noisebridge>

For a master list of hackerspaces around the globe see http://hackerspaces.org/wiki/List_of_Hacker_Spaces

<http://universityforstrategicoptimism.wordpress.com/2010/12/20/ufso-vs-goldsmiths-cultural-studies-and-capitalism/>

Ithaca Hours is the largest local currency in the United States. It is recognized as money only within the city of Ithaca New York and helps increase the multiplier effect of local commerce. See <http://www.ithacahours.com/> for more information.

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Occupation: a place to deliberate the socio-history of re-production

Richard Hall

Neary (2010) highlights the possibilities for fusing the production of shared futures through an engagement with or critique of the past. In the quest for progress, too often we dismiss any attempt at critique of our present moment as historically situated. Too often the academy makes claims for progressive education, which we believe enhances engagement, participation, or the value of the student as a knowledge worker. Too often this tends to be elided into a discourse of employability, value-for-money and economic growth, and then collapsed into an agenda for ‘sustainability’.

However, a more critical, democratic reappraisal of our shared positions in the academy, underpinned by socio-historical narratives, rather than socio-technical ones, is being focused by activist students and staff. They are working on projects that are in the institution, against neoliberal views of the curriculum-as-consumption, and moving beyond prescribed social relations. These projects reveal Holloway’s (2002) anti-capitalist prescription of In. Against. Beyond. within the centre of the university’s physical and psychological space. As a result they offer the possibility for contextualised alternatives to emerge from inside hegemonic spaces, thus enabling common intellectual scripts to be re-written (Gramsci, 1971).

In relating alternatives to the extant protests, the duality of the historical moment of critique emerges. Firstly, the student occupations and protests about the ideological attack on higher education (anticuts, 2010) are being led by those who will not feel the cold wind of raised fees. These activists are standing up for something deeper that is embedded in, and revealed by, our shared social relations: that higher learning might be a public good that enriches, against the immiserating principles of economic sustainability. Higher learning is deliberately placed here against the physical spaces of higher education – represented by the university as factory for the knowledge economy – in order to highlight what might be, rather than what is. Secondly, this political moment offers an opportunity to move beyond the promise of a debt-fuelled future that chains generations to the treadmill of capital (Williams, 2011). The insight that education and the ways in which the spaces for education recalibrate our social relations in the face of externally-imposed, economic necessity reminds us ‘how the power of money has so overwhelmed human sociability that it now seems like a natural phenomena, rather than the outcome of an oppressive social process. And, as such, it appears impossible to resist’ (Neary, 2010).

Therefore, one of the critical outcomes from our protests has been the importance of re-politicising those who benefit from the multiple forms of HE around the idea of what higher learning is for. In addressing this idea we need to reveal what can be recovered or salvaged from the University as a physical form or as an idea. Moreover, we need to describe how the ideas of the University can be open-sourced for society, in order both to move away from the University-as-fetish, and to support the proliferation of self-organised open ‘schools’. These open schools are powerful because they are connected within and beyond the university, and seek to be reabsorbed into society. This dissolution-from-within of the academy is an important moment in radicalising and re-imagining what our concrete, living experiences of higher learning might be, and how they might be organised rather than institutionalised. Given that this is being achieved in the academy itself, an emergent question is whether the experience of occupation offers a model for purposive re-imagining of the places of higher learning, and whether the internal logic of occupation enables alternatives to be deliberated, prototyped and revealed. Is occupation more than a sanctuary within the factory?

Places of deliberation and association

Purposive re-imagining demands a shared process of deliberation between peers, underpinned by a sense of validity. Hirst (1993: 59) has argued that “Validity is as much a political issue as it is an intellectual one, for what beliefs are taken as valid determines the whole tenor of the social order”. Whilst issues of power impact this view of order, organisation and governance (Neocleous 2000), the contexts for political action are framed by who can take part and how they are enabled so to do. Thus, Halpin (2003: 89) argues for “extending to ever-increasing numbers of people opportunities to deliberate the ends of education and the means for providing for them”. Support for these types of engagement can also be seen in the work of Dewey (1963), who framed democratic experience through socially defined interests and actions. Contextual engagement of the type represented by the active, organic diversity of occupation and protest is participative where those who experience it cannot afford to act exclusively or in an inflexible way and must actively relate to others. Thus the Really Free School (2011) offers ‘an autonomous space to find each other, to gain momentum, to cross-pollinate ideas and actions’.

This type of ‘dialogic democracy’ enables us to build communities of common interest that are underpinned by ‘active trust’ (Giddens 1994), arrived at in spaces that are shaped by their members. The move from membership to participation is emphasised by the ability to deploy approaches that are democratic or consensual, in a trustful manner. Trust is itself based upon perceptions of legitimacy and solidarity, which are forged through dialogue (Friere 1972; Rorty 1999). Haber (1994 43), argues that without solidarity we

are powerless, not only to effect change, but even to have a critical sense of ourselves as beings constructed within matrices of power. It can therefore be argued that in a trusting place, where rules and guidelines are deliberated and agreed, contexts for action can be recreated and transformed associatively.

Belonging to a community and active participation within it do not necessarily correlate. Therefore, Rorty (1989: 60) encourages us to seek places where “ideals can be fulfilled by persuasion rather than by force, by reform rather than by revolution, by free and open encounters... which has no purpose except freedom, no goal except a willingness to see how such encounters go and to abide by the outcome”. The centrality of occupation is that as a space for association it enables individuals to recognise the contingency of the language that they use, the identities that they forge, and the communities in which they engage (Rorty 1989). Occupation for association, within a diverse, socially-specific space like a University, then enables us to ask ‘what kinds of things and people might learners want to be in contact with in order to learn?’ (Illich 1971: p. 78) This kind of occupation further highlights the value of places in which interaction can be based upon conciliatory and caring greetings, rhetoric which situates, and storytelling that focuses on experiences, values and meanings (Young, 1996). As a result we might ask, how do ‘really free schools’ enable us to organise or associate or demonstrate a new form of social wealth?

Occupations, deliberations and cracks

In focusing upon deliberation and associations, occupations of established spaces appear as cracks in the dominant form of resourcing, sharing and delivering higher learning. In the dominant moment of higher education specifically, occupation forces other students, academic and professional services staff, workers, and the state to grapple with alternatives, or at least to defend their orthodoxies. This is important because, as Holloway (2010) argues, this is a disruption in the dominant logic of our social determination. He quotes: “We shall not accept an alien, external determination of our activity, we shall determine ourselves what we do”. For Holloway, moving away from imposition and alienation, towards autonomies of doing is a critical, radical moment. In this way, occupations are important because of the places they prescribe for autonomous activity.

The value of actual, living experiences, where fellowship can be described and re-formed through direct action in the world, shines through this crack. These cracks are opened up further by the use of social media as associational tools, for reporting by activists (as others have done in a range of spaces before (BBC 2009)), to disseminate information, or to re-publish live information. Afterwards, they provide a way for activists to re-interpret lived events (using for instance, the hashtag #demo2010) and to correlate that re-interpretation

with those of others. However, social media only describes a representation of our power to recast the world: it illuminates a possibility or a space where radical moments might be opened-up. It is never, of itself, that re-presentation without taking the form of concrete action in the world (noted later through the emergence of the hashtag #solidarity).

In the shadow of Žižek's (2009) analysis of the anaesthetic of our dominant liberal-bourgeois culture, one wonders if shared narratives of occupation act as cracks in the dominant logic of education-for-business, and also offer hope that we might deliberate and test alternative ideas of the university (edufactory 2011; Vieta 2010). Thus, autonomous movements in Popular Education (Popular Education News 2011; Really Open University (ROU) 2011; Uniriot 2011), are associated with planned and actual student occupations based on teach-ins (University College London Occupation 2010), and the historical, educational experiences of radical communities (Christiania 2011). It is this socio-historical association that is central, and technology in-and-for education is at once an external portrayal of a living reality, and a means of re-enforcing the ways in which hegemonic cultures are being challenged. The use of open source, non-institutionalised software from within the very heart of the physical academy, by students-as-producers of radicalised or occupied spaces, is energising and offers safety. Social value is sought by keying technology into negotiated social relations and relationships with occupied environments; the negotiated production and governance processes of those places; emergent conceptions of the world; and the conduct of daily life that underpins the social reproduction of occupation (Harvey 2010; Marx 1992).

As a result, one of the things that might be reclaimed from within the academy is the socio-historical moment of students-as-producers of a radicalised set of occupied spaces. This reclamation – based on trust, association and deliberation – acts as a brake on the dominant logic of the economy and its reductive/hostile positioning of higher learning and the academy. This braking mechanism disrupts both established power and the normative function of education in re-producing human, social and financial capital. It forces us towards a necessary public discourse on the nature of the university as a public good. Student occupations focus upon a move away from a form of deliberation framed by the power that the state assumes in the name of the taxpayer, to force a reconsideration of how we produce our educational and socially-mediated wealth. In the struggle for higher education, by moving away from formulae of impact, excellence and assurance, student occupations urge us to engage with issues of trust and contestation. Thus, students-as-occupiers-as-producers hint at ways in which we can address the contested meaning of constructed positions, especially the socio-historical positions taken by an education system subordinated to coercive capitalism. Where better to organise this than in the heart of the academy?

Occupations as sanctuary from the shock doctrine?

This process of deliberating and testing alternatives needs the shelter of safe places. Shelter is crucial because student activism against the state has been, and continues to be, met with state-sanctioned violence (Freedom 2009; Neocleous 2000). In the accelerated implementation of neoliberalism within the UK, opposition is outlawed or brutalised in the police kettle. As societies are disrupted by climate change, debt, food production and energy availability, there is a quickening of the transformation of the state towards an iron cage of control (Weber 1969), in the name of business-as-usual, growth and capital. And all this is a world where, as Žižek (2011) argues, our liberal aim is “to democratise capitalism, to extend democratic control to the economy by means of media pressure, parliamentary inquiries, harsher laws, honest police investigations and so on.” He queries whether it is enough that “the institutional set-up of the (bourgeois) democratic state is never questioned.”

In light of higher education’s move to the frontline of what Klein (2008) calls the ‘shock doctrine’, it may be that radicalisation through occupation is a critical way in which spaces can be legitimised and made safe for deliberative re-imagining. The shock doctrine is designed ‘to achieve control by imposing economic shock therapy’. In education, it includes coercive competition and the lock-down of state subsidies for ‘inefficient’ work, like Band C and D funded subjects; a quickening of the dominant ideology of student-as-consumer, HE-as-commodity, and accelerated engagement with private enterprises; and the extension of the financialisation of capital and the growth of consumer debt, through increased fees. Thus, the commodification of higher learning might be read as an attempt to enforce the shock doctrine as part of a response to economic crisis. It might be read as an attempt to increase the market for neoliberal values, delivered in part through formalised higher education. At issue then is firstly, where shared values/stories might take place, and secondly, how they might enable oppositional, alternative, meaningful social transformation to be realised.

The occupation by students of the Michael Sadler lecture theatre at the University of Leeds, and the ROU’s reimagining event (2010), revealed possibilities for the development of autonomous, student movements in the face of the Coalition’s cuts agenda. The meaningful and productive work of occupation demonstrates how students are re-defining and re-producing their social roles, in light of a questioning of the structures higher education and their connection to higher learning. This is not to suggest that a counter-hegemonic position appeared or that occupation was without issues of power and control, but that alternatives located in the heart of the University are possible.

Within the occupation, the use of place, its liberation from a normalised utility, and its

position as a sanctuary was revealed. This was reinforced by the fact that spaces were customised as living and lived-in places that made contextual sense, combining education with shelter, and with food, and with belonging. It recalled the ways in which people in other institutionalised shelters (Birmingham Christmas Shelter 2011; Crisis 2011) fight to assert themselves and to colonise the space. The power of this experience of occupation underpins questions about whether education is both occupation and shelter; or whether in some form education can offer moments of occupational shelter, in order for students and academics to transform the world.

The focus on spaces-of-sanctuary from hegemony, in order to deliberate transformational opportunities, has been shown in the levels of solidarity from across the globe within and between student movements, which are increasingly being revealed as attempts at non-hierarchical, co-operative organisation. Thus, the University for Strategic Optimism (2011) argues for “A university based on the principle of free and open education, a return of politics to the public, and the politicisation of public space”. This reclamation, whilst negating claims to ownership or property rights, highlights the drive towards personal and co-operative autonomy in a living and commonly-owned space. As a result, these occupations-as-education force us to examine the safety of the contexts in which roles like academics, managers, administrators and students are created, and the powers that they represent/realise/reproduce. This non-hierarchical, co-operative approach to social relationships makes monitoring and controlling the use of institutionalised spaces uncomfortable, and has ramifications for the creation of oppositional alternatives.

Occupation as alternative

From the experience of occupation, we might ask: what should be salvaged from the university system? Furthermore, we might ask: how might this salvage be usefully repurposed? In this crisis, deliberating in/formal education’s place in the totality of our lived experiences is central in defining a movement beyond the present state of things. This does not replicate a curriculum-as-consumption, or a curriculum-for-business-as-usual. This views the curriculum critically through the lens of social theory and through the processes by which the curriculum is re-produced. The relationships between students and academics, entwined in praxis, and developing and defining an active, socio-historical curriculum are central to meaningful transformation. This is central to our salvage operation. In the current crisis, students are defining radical moments through which the academy might re-imagine the university, and its place in society.

Thus, occupation uncovers mechanisms and moments for resistance and the re-imaging or re-production of society, in the face of the contradictions and barriers of capital (Clarke 1994). This has huge social value in the face of massive disruptions like resource

availability and costs, financial crises and lower living standards, and climate change. Within the totality described dialectically (Marx 1973; 1992) and historicised within the dynamics of capital (Postone 2009), sites for the production of alternatives must be nurtured. This means that hegemonic discourses of power, production and relationships have to be revealed and questioned (Gramsci 1971), and that the development of theoretically developed, counter-hegemonic positions is vital. The social, co-operative structures rendered possible within universities as sites of potential knowing are pivotal in re-producing a shared set of educational and societal alternatives.

These possibilities highlight the interconnections between organisation and technology, environmental demands and human needs, congealed in specific places like occupations in the academy. Marx (1973) was clear that the many-sided needs of the social human being can be met through co-operation and co-production of meaningful and authentic use-values and social relations. However, this would require the radical transformation of society away from capitalism, which demands a theorising of education that is not framed by business continuity (i.e. ensuring ‘business-as-usual’). It demands a critical social theory that engages with wider societal changes (Greer 2011). There is then a balance to be struck between access to and power over the means to produce our life-world and the resources embedded in its production (Habermas, 1987), and the uses to which education can be put for social struggle and against politically-motivated determinism, in the hopeful search for change (Giroux 2010).

In overcoming the alienation of capitalist work, debating and fighting for the idea and the form of the University, drawing upon a culture of open critique, is vital. Such resistance might usefully be centred on refocusing the intellectual labour of learners and tutors on societal and environmental disruption, rather than situating education within neoliberal business models. Such resistance-through-occupation demands a critical, theoretical stance be taken that incorporates and reveals the place of educational opportunities within society. Occupation as a form of totalising critique of formal, higher education is pivotal. As Lukács (1972: 27) noted, ‘The primacy of the category of totality is the bearer of the principle of revolution in science.’ Moreover, it is in the creation of spaces for deliberation and association that revolutionary science might take root. As Marx (quoted in Bottomore and Rubel 1974: 63-4) argues:

only in association with others has each individual the means of cultivating his talents in all directions. Only in a community therefore is personal freedom possible... In a genuine community individuals gain their freedom in and through their association.

In the face of socio-environmental disruption, occupation offers sanctuaries for discourses of the idea of HE, against capitalist work, which otherwise uses it to mediate production

and consumption, and creates an inauthentic reality. In the face of global disruption and the shock doctrine, a radical critique of capitalist social relations holds the possibility of revolutionary transformation through the process of self-creation and praxis within the commune as a situated, transformative space (Marx 1973). This is a final challenge for a critique of what might be salvaged from the idea of the university for higher learning: how can the individual nature of educational production, accreditation and experience be socially negotiated? How can social wealth accrue to freely associating individuals for communal ends? In engaging theoretically with these questions, it may be possible for us to use occupations to produce spatially-situated, practical alternatives.

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Pedagogies of resistance and anti-capitalist creation in Latin America

Sara C Motta

The role of education is increasingly important in the construction of new forms of anti-capitalist politics in Latin America. This is evidenced by the centrality of popular education and other forms of struggle influenced by radical education philosophy and pedagogy, and by social movements in their construction of new forms of participatory politics and mass intellectuality. It is also evidenced in the creation of formal and informal educational programmes, practices and projects that develop varieties of critical pedagogy, and popular education with both organised and non-organised, marginalised and excluded communities.

Such a multiplicity and plurality of practices challenge many of the taken for granted assumptions about the nature of revolutionary struggle and revolutionary subjects, and the meaning and objectives of such struggle (De Sousa Santos, 2009; Motta, 2009). They push for the need to reflect about the resonances and differences between 20th century anti-capitalism and 21st century anti-capitalism.

In this contribution I address such problematics with a view to mapping these new forms of anti-capitalist praxis in relation to heterodox traditions of Marxism, and the experiences of popular struggle in social movements in Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina and Mexico(¹). I hope in this way to facilitate the opening of spaces of dialogue, mutual learning and reflection between these struggles and our struggles to reinvent the university and education in the British context.

The dominant articulation of 20th Century revolutionary praxis tended to theorise the revolutionary subject as the organised working class (Holloway, 2005; Federici, 2004; Bonefeld, 2007). This tended to imply in reality a privileging of the 'white' male manufacturer, resulting in a strong culture of labourism. This was justified by a theorisation of the capital relation in which it was conceptualised as occurring at the point of production, in the relationship of exploitation of labourer by owner and premised on the extraction of surplus value. There were increasing contestations of this conceptualisation of revolutionary subjectivity that emerged from the realities of peasant revolutionary politics, indigenous struggle (paradigmatic of this is the work of Mariategui) and of Marxist feminist movements across the global South, particularly visible in the Nicaraguan revolution of 1979. These experiences and struggles tended to expand our

understanding and conceptualisation of the capital to relation to: i) include the realm of social reproduction in our understanding of the extraction of surplus labour ii) re-think our conceptualisation of the capital-relation to an expanded understanding of alienation that viewed the state as a form of that relation, and capital as a social relation in constant need of reproduction, and therefore iii) re-conceptualise primitive accumulation as not merely a historical moment in the formation of capitalism, but as a constant process of reproducing abstract labour which constitutes the subjects of the capital relation. Such practical theoretical expansion also impacted upon the theorisation of the strategies and objectives of revolutionary transformation, particularly our conceptualisation of the role of the state in social and political transformation.

The expansion of our conceptualisation of the capital relation to include social reproduction and focus on the concept of alienation had implications upon, and was often derived from experiences with, the state and its role in revolutionary transformation. For those Marxists who theorised the state as a form of capital, reproducing social relations of alienation the state was not a site of contradiction with relative autonomy from capital but rather an essential form of reproduction of the capital relation (Holloway and Picciotti, 1978; Bonefeld, 2007)2. The experiences of subaltern defeat³ and disarticulation when their struggles were channelled into the state, either in reformist or revolutionary struggles, and the reproduction of relations of power-over also contributed to this theoretical expansion (discussions with Alberto and Neka (MTD Solano), April and August 2002; discussions with Roland and Nora (CTUs), August 2007; interview with Alfredo (Universidad de la Tierra), January 2010). This led to a number of practical theoretical questions about both the possibilities and the limits of using state power to change the world, suggesting that 21st century anti-capitalism would involve a re-thinking of power and authority away from an idea of a centralised state and towards either its abolition or its re-formation into a networked form of state.

These practical theorisations also raised questions about the vanguardism institutionally articulated in the party-form that had dominated revolutionary strategy and struggle. This is because they suggested that in the local and concrete experiences of communities was the articulation of the global - of the capital relation in all its forms. Therefore access to structural understandings of processes that create domination, exploitation and alienation was immanent in the concrete experience rather than in higher levels of structural articulation (discussions Nora, ibid.; discussion Neka, ibid.; discussion Sandra and Ernandi (MST), April 2010). This problematised the legitimisation of a revolutionary vanguard, as it suggested that the process of revolutionary construction and consciousness forming could come from a critical interrogation and unpacking of the concrete experiences of the subaltern (shanty town dwellers, peasants, workers etc). Again

the concrete experiences of the hierarchies, power-over and reproduction of divisions of labour characteristic of capitalism that had become manifest in revolutionary vanguard parties were the grounds from which such practical theoretical movements would emerge. This pushed towards arguments about the need for horizontal and participatory organising and strategising and a questioning of the relevance and desirability of political parties as the institutional form of revolutionary struggle. They shifted practical theorising towards questions of mass organic intellectuality and gave equal importance to the means and ends of revolutionary change. It was neither feasible nor desirable to justify means that were anti-revolutionary for revolutionary ends. It also opened up the possibility of a multiplicity of voices and experiences being the basis for re-imagining a multiplicity of anti capitalist constructions combined in a networked form of worlds beyond capitalism

This created a context in which traditions of liberation theology and popular education, already prevalent in some revolutionary experiences, but not theoretically or politically dominant in 20th century revolutionary articulations would come to the fore in the multiple manifestations of subaltern anti-capitalist struggle across Latin America (discussions with Alberto, *ibid.*; discussions with Mariela (CTUs), April and August 2007). They pointed towards practices which developed mass intellectuality, as opposed to a vanguard of organic intellectuals creating fertile terrain for the traditions and experiences of popular education and critical pedagogy to flourish in these new experiments in anti-capitalist organising. Questions of indigeneity, religion, environment, territorialised struggle, and social reproduction increasingly became central to the praxis of revolutionary change and transformation, not as separate struggles but as fundamentally intertwined in the concrete forms of the capital relation and processes of primitive accumulation in particular communities across the region. The processes via which the immanent knowledges and understanding of subaltern communities developed into anti-capitalist being, doing, and thinking are therefore often heavily shaped by these traditions of collective knowledge making and procedural forms of theorisation and strategising.

It is from this context that we can highlight some noticeable tendencies in the role of critical pedagogy and popular education in the experiences of social movements and organised communities in Argentina, sections of the autonomous piquetero movement, Brazil, the Movimento Sem Terra, Venezuela, the Comites de Tierra Urbana and Mexico in the Universidad de la Tierra, Oaxaca.

Negative dialectics

The complex conceptualisations and theorisations of power and resistance to power developed on the underside of 20th century revolutionary praxis have flourished in the

period from the late 1990s in which we can detect the formation of new articulations of anti-capitalist praxis. As revolutionary critique moved away from structuralist conceptualisations and narrow understandings of the capital relation the question of the subject became central to revolutionary praxis in both form and content. One of the ways of thinking about this is through an understanding of negative dialectics (Holloway, 2010; Holloway, Matamoros and Tishler, 2009)4. Negative dialectics is premised upon a negation of the alienating social relations and subjectivities through which abstract labour and the capital relation are produced. This negation does not posit a positive subject of transformation, but rather is premised upon the negative critique of capitalism as presenting a possibility of re-capturing and reinforcing our dignity, creativity and abilities which resist their enclosure as a form of capital. This overflowing of our being, or good sense, can only be found in the particular and is mediated by collective and individual experiences, histories and beliefs. Yet at the heart of this critique is an openness; an openness to the unknown. It is undergird by a belief in humanity which seeks to break pre-formed categories of the subject. The transformation of subjectivity into non-alienated social flows of being, doing, living and loving that this begets seems to resonate with the openness that is at the heart of collective practices of knowledge construction which characterise many of the new forms of subaltern politics that seek to create worlds beyond capitalism.

Collective processes of knowledge construction

Thus we find urban social movements such as autonomous piquetero groups in Buenos Aires, Universidad de la Tierra, Oaxaca and the Comites de Tierra Urbana in Caracas share with rural movements such as the MST of Brazil a focus on the importance of participatory democracy and the construction of utopias in the present (MTD Solano and Situaciones Colectivas; CTUs, 2004; Universidad de la Tierra, 2009). This emphasises the practices and processes of constructing social and political change as much as the ends of these processes. At the heart of these understandings is a questioning of the need for intellectual vanguards and an engagement with ideas of mass intellectuality, in which all developing their creativity and intellectuality is a central building block of the construction of revolutionary change. Thus all these movements use and develop popular education as a key to the creation of intellectual and political autonomy.

Some such as the CTUs seek to develop their theorisation and strategisation of a CTU project (s) by the development of a methodology of democratic practise, in which it is understood that immanent within the concrete experiences of communities are the global practices of capital and the state. Therefore popular education is used as a tool of challenging common sense by building on the good sense of communities but

collectivising and thereby systematising such knowledges (discussions with Andres (CTUs) August 2007, Motta 2011). In the process the content of such knowledge is qualitatively transformed. Other movements such as the MST have less of an immanent post-representational articulation of popular education. Rather they seek to use popular education to combine different knowledges- those of the academy, those of popular culture and philosophy, and those of community experience - to build an ideological coherence within the campamientos to be the basis for the strategy and political development of the movement and realisation of its objectives (discussions Sandra and Ernandi, *ibid.*).

Despite the different emphases and assumptions within different movements' articulation of popular education they share a commitment to collective knowledge processes that break down the division between thinkers and doers and validate the histories, experiences, cultures and knowledges of subaltern communities.

Place and the particular

As the movements are not formed on the basis of a revolutionary vanguard that externally implants an ideology in particular subaltern communities, they therefore stress an organic connection with good sense- those fragments of experience, history, culture and dignity that confront and escape the contradictions of capitalist social relations and their inability to totally enclose and capture the autonomy and desires of such communities. Thus all the movements do not patronise their base. Rather they stress the rationality, political agency and dignity of communities' struggles. This implies both a different form of constructing intellectual and political autonomy as suggested above, which inevitably results in a different content, sometimes plurality of contents, of revolutionary identity, strategy and objectives. Some movements such as the MTD Solano, the Universidad de la Tierra and the CTUs embrace the building from the particular and the idea that anti-capitalist struggles and objectives are necessarily plural (*ibid.*). Others such as the MST exist in an uneasy relationship with a desire for ideological coherence at a movement level yet embrace of particularity at a place based level. Nevertheless the embrace of the concrete and the particular has meant the intertwining of cultural and religious heritages into the praxis of such movements (discussions Sandra and Ernandi, *ibid.*).

Thus many of the movements have been heavily influenced in their origins and their current praxis by traditions of liberation theology; this politically leftist articulation of Catholicism stressed that paradise must be created on earth, that true Catholics would choose the option of the poor as a manifestation of their godliness, and that the word of god was open to all and needn't be mediated by a caste of priests. Such articulations resulted in place based politicisation in conjuncture with bible study but with a focus upon the knowledges and godliness of ordinary Catholics and the ability and desirability of

developing all as agents in the struggle for paradise on earth (Alberto, *ibid.*; Mariela, *ibid.*; Sandra and Ernandi, *ibid.*). This has coloured both the structures of feeling and the ways of organising in many urban shanty town and rural peasant movements combining anti-imperialist and capitalist concepts and articulations with biblical language and Christian beliefs.

It has also meant that the spiritual and the cultural become inherent elements to be intertwined in the form and content of revolutionary transformation, integral elements in the struggle for social and political change. Thus the MST has developed ‘mistica’ as a means constructing equal and participatory communities. A mistica is an artistic/cultural event to open and close any MST event, whether that be a workshop, a meeting, an occupation, a march. It can take the form of poetry, a re-action of popular struggle and history, dance, song and often ends with all participants touching each other either by holding hands or a collective embrace. Mistica combines elements of liberation theology with other spiritual beliefs and builds upon them as integral parts of what it means to construct a new man and women and a new culture. In the case of Universidad de la Tierra the spiritual articulation is often intertwined with indigenous heritages recovered and reconstructed to shape the construction of a radically different present from that of periphery capitalism. They are considered knowledges that are not mere instruments in social transformation but inherent elements of what it means to construct self-governing and autonomous anti-capitalist communities. Thus the role of education and popular education is constructed through the cultural and spiritual bringing the symbolic and the affective to the heart of processes of social transformation.

Politica Afactiva

As we have discussed, many subaltern processes of social and political transformation are premised upon a politicisation of knowledge in both its form and content. This means that pedagogies of resistance and transformation have become embedded in the good sense of subaltern place based communities. Thus the affective and the subjective have been brought to the heart of the praxis of subaltern resistance. Pedagogies and methodologies based in popular education do not therefore merely engage with intellectual and theoretical production as if these were disembodied and objective processes. There is a questioning of the alienation of human experience and development through which capitalist social relations are reproduced and an attempt (sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit) to unite and de-alienate our capacities and creativity. Thus the process of collective knowledge construction also seeks to overcome the dualisms between intellect and emotion, mind and body, and thought and action that characterise capitalist one dimensional man.

This embrace of communities and individuals in their totality also means that the affective and new affective relationships are part of the form and content of social transformation. This process of overcoming alienation and uniting the social flow of doing is perhaps most explicitly discussed in the ideas of some of the autonomous piquetero movements, particularly the MTD Solano and their reflections on how new forms of solidarity and love not premised upon ownership, competition and power-over others are formed and how this is a process of constructing other subjectivities and social relations. However they are also articulated in the praxis of Universidad de la Tierra, in which the affective and the emotional are central elements to the collective processes of knowledge construction, the development of urban food production systems that are sustainable, or the recapturing and reinventing of cultures of resistance and creation with youth through song, dance, theatre. All involve different ways of being and relating to each other and to the earth. They develop and are premised upon another way of seeing and feeling each other and oneself. The overcoming of alienation, the embrace of the totality of community and individual experience and potentiality brings the subject (in all its complexity) to the heart of processes of social transformation through the construction of mass intellectuality.

Conclusion

Whilst inevitably a simplification of complex and multiple processes of Latin American subaltern anti-capitalist praxis, I hope to have contributed to the praxis of such change and its use for practical theorising in the UK by systematising some of its key tendencies. These tendencies, with different intensities of articulation, bring popular education and mass intellectuality to the centre of our imagining, living and making of worlds beyond capitalism. This attempt at systematisation is framed by an understanding of revolutionary praxis as a living project with a multiplicity of manifestations. It has therefore traced the underside of revolutionary articulations in the 20th century and hoped to demonstrate how these articulations, of and from the margins that escape many of the limits and conceptualisations of traditional revolutionary praxis, are constructing worlds beyond capitalism in the 21st Century. These experiences and struggles aim in their content and their form to enable us to determine our lives in all their complexity and in so doing create new forms of subjectivity and being beyond alienation. By offering a window onto these practices I hope to strengthen processes of dialogue both between different places but also between ourselves in our struggle in the UK to re-imagine the university as a space for the development and satisfaction of our needs, expression and enrichment of our desires, liberation of our subjectivities and therefore opening of spaces of imagining and living against and beyond capitalism.

1. I focus on the former three countries and particular movements as they are movements that I have worked with. I include Mexican movements as I have worked closely with collectives and individuals who work/have worked in the movements referred to. However, I do not of course imply, that these tendencies only exist in these experiences and countries but rather make the broader claim that we can find them right across the continent with different articulations and different levels of intensity and visibility.
2. Of course within dominant Marxian traditions in Latin America there was a problematisation of the bourgeois state which often took the form of a strategic notion of dual power which focused on the construction of autonomous popular power parallel to that of state power as a step before taking state power. However, the way in which this dual power was organised also often fell into the trap of subordinating the construction of alternatives to the immediate strategic logics of the state and conceiving of the construction of such power as necessarily led by a vanguard leadership which arguably reproduced divisions of labour characteristic of capitalist social relationships.
3. These experiences in a broad sweep include the experiences of the populist alliance of ISI and its crisis, the subsequent authoritarian shift and crisis in representation in the democratic period.
4. Remembering that this is a suggestion, an attempt to capture that it in its closure makes visible as well as invisibilising some of these processes that are ‘out of place’ in the frames and tools that traditional Marxism has developed to understand and contribute to them.

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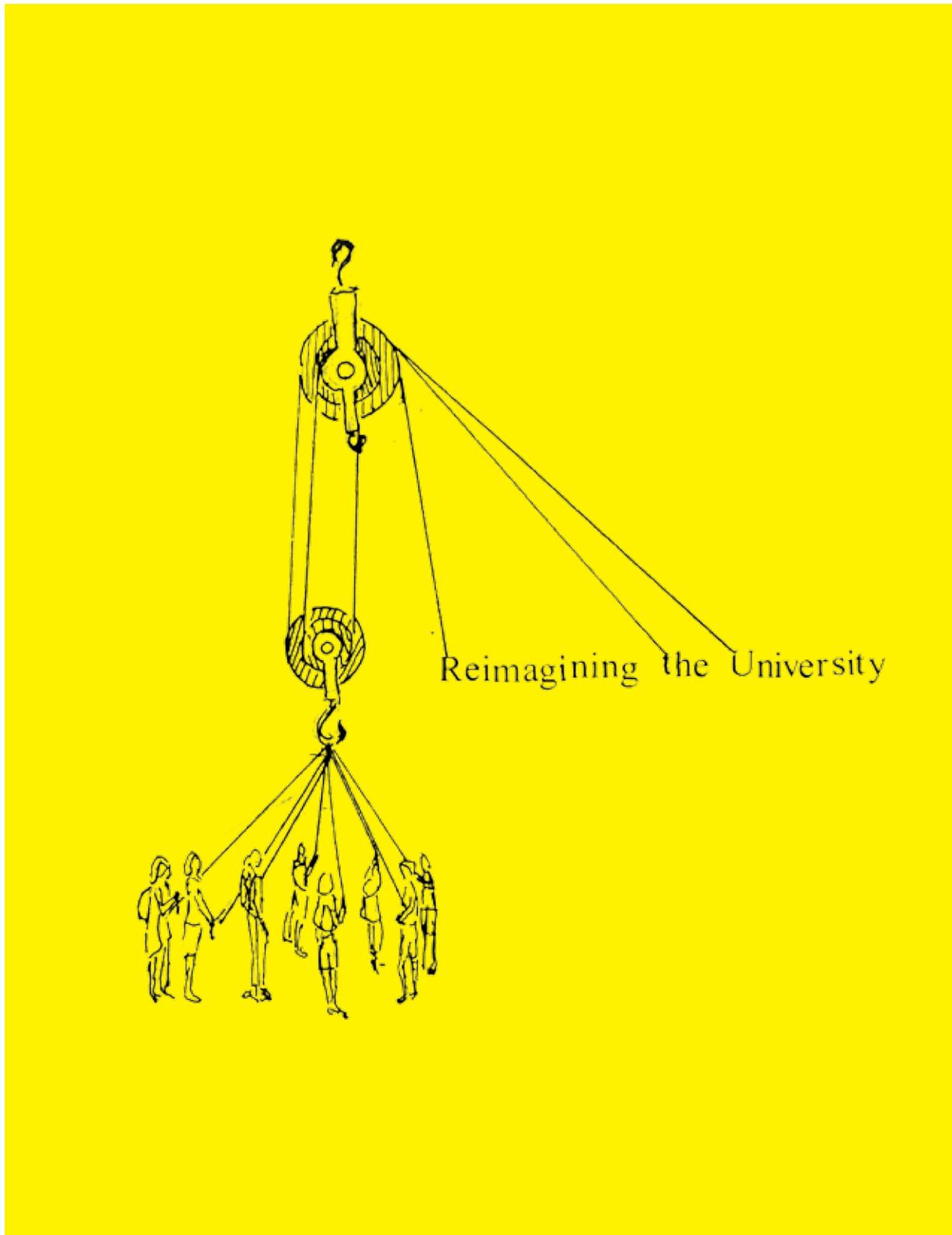
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