

Neoliberalization and managerialization of 'education' in England and Wales – a case for reconstructing education

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Introduction

This paper argues that the neoliberalization of education in England, begun in the 1980s, is having profoundly harmful effects on the lives of individuals and society. Neoliberalism represents a shift away from the post-war social democratic notion of universal ‘citizenship’ rights/identities toward a system of individual consumer rights/identities. In education, neoliberal reforms have exposed state provision to privatization and marketization, and the ideology of the ‘new managerialism’ and its belief in ‘business’ management practices. As Whitty (2000) argues, these developments have been fostered by the belief that the private-sector approach is superior to that traditionally adopted in the public sector - requiring public-sector institutions to operate more like those in the private sector, and encouraging private (individual/family) decision making in place of political and professional judgments.

These changes have made the provision of education services more unequal and selective, intensifying ‘racial’, ‘gendered’ and class-based hierarchies as a consequence (Whitty et al. 1998). Young people have become increasingly treated as ‘human capital’ in need of training for paid work rather than a broad-based critical pedagogy. These policies have been accompanied by cuts in public spending and a discourse of antagonism to local democracy, the public sector, workers and unions. A corollary of this has been more resources being directed into the more expensive mixed economy of provision and the erosion of education workers’ conditions of service (Lewis et al. 2009). For global impacts of neoliberalism on education see Hill 2009a, b; Hill and Kumar 2009; Hill and Rosskam 2009). In sum, the English education system has been increasingly impoverished over the last 30 years with detrimental consequences for democracy, equity and workers’ rights.

In this paper we explore the dimensions of and potential resistances to this disenchanting status quo. We begin by outlining the drivers behind the privatization and marketization of education services before then detailing the impact of these changes on the education system (and, as a consequence, society) in England and Wales. This latter section largely focuses on developments within the higher education (HE) sector. We argue that changes imposed in the name of ‘efficiency’ are leading to the increasing production of uncritical thinkers compliant to the needs of the market, where people are

treated as mere ‘human capital’ prepared for ‘jobs’ and where there are increasingly fewer spaces for providing/allowing for the provision of broad-based learning and critical awareness. In setting out an appreciation of these developments we draw on the work of Stefan Sullivan (2002) and his thesis on the enduring appeal of Marxism for understanding developments in postindustrial British society – in particular, the tendency towards banality – and means of resisting these.

Setting the context – the drivers behind the privatization and marketization of education

Private sector involvement in education services now includes selling services to educational institutions (e.g. cleaning, catering and security), school inspection and student loans, and managing and owning schools and related facilities. Increasingly, schools are being taken out of local democratic control through, for instance, the privately-sponsored academies contracted to take over ‘failing schools’. Whilst public-sector unions fought to achieve a Best Value Code of Practice requiring contractors to match the protected rates of transferring staff for newly recruited staff, this does not apply to academies (nor colleges and universities) as they do not have public-sector status but rather are deemed to be publicly-funded private bodies (Lewis et al. 2009). Moreover, as Wrigley states in reference to the academies:

The sponsor has almost absolute power: appointing the headteacher and ... other staff; and determining who will be on its board of governors, the nature of the curriculum, the design of any new buildings, and which young people to include or exclude. (Wrigley 2009: 47)

Education is being de-democratised and education workers’ rights and securities eroded. The education workforce has become increasingly casualized and there has been decreased autonomy over the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. These developments have been accompanied by increases in levels of report writing, testing, accountability, monitoring and surveillance both by in-house local management and by government external agencies. Public service morale and standards of provision have declined. The

experience for students has been larger classes and a lowering of standards, such as less contact time with staff (Lewis et al. 2009).

The intensification of work (School Teachers' Review Body 2002, UNESCO 2004b, TUC 2000, Health and Safety Executive 2000) and more accountability under neoliberalization are having hugely detrimental effects on teachers and pupils/students. Since 1979 the real autonomy of state education structures in England has diminished substantially as a result of increased surveillance and control mechanisms that include: compulsory and nationally monitored externally set assessments for pupils/students and trainee teachers; publication of performance league tables; a policy emphasis on 'naming and shaming'; the closing or privatizing of 'failing' schools and local education authorities (school districts); and merit pay and performance-related pay systems for teachers, usually dependent on student performance in tests (Jeffrey and Woods 1998).

This drive toward performance improvement places enormous pressures on teachers and pupils/students. Teacher disaffection, stress-related illness and early retirement have led to a recruitment crisis. The consequences in terms of lowered morale of schoolteachers and lecturers between 1992 and today are clearly measurable. In 1992, only 10 per cent of teachers and lecturers thought that they had to 'work at high speed all or most of the time' compared to 18 per cent for other occupations. By the end of the decade, this position was reversed (33 per cent against 25 per cent) with teachers and lecturers experiencing a hefty rise in stress. Over the same period, the proportion of teachers who were 'dissatisfied with their job' more than doubled, from 6 per cent to 13 per cent (Beckmann and Cooper 2004), with 'teachers ... driven to burnout' (Whitty 1997: 305).

Since the 1988 Education Reform Act, England has worked to/ with a centralized School curriculum leading to a loss of professional autonomy which reflects, in part, the deprofessionalization of a vocation that has lost both autonomy and collegiality (Beckmann and Cooper 2004). Schools have become 'places where management authority, rather than collegial culture, establishes the ethos and purpose of the school' (Jones 2003: 161). The culture of the 'new managerialism' in education entails complementary and increasing control by management bodies. Intensified formal assessments require teachers to produce detailed and prescriptive 'learning aims and

outcomes'. This managerial approach has direct implications for the work of educators. There is no attempt here to balance issues of professional autonomy with issues of control. 'Trust' in a teacher's professionalism is displaced by a requirement to meet specified performance standards (Alexiadou 2001: 429). Alongside deprofessionalization is the loss of critical thought within a performance culture (Ball 1999, Mahoney and Hextall 2000, Boxley 2003, Hill, 2007). School principals have become increasingly focused on short-term economic objectives, failing to acknowledge the role of education in promoting a caring, cohesive, democratic society, built on notions of 'citizenship' where 'critical participation and dissent' are viewed as desirable (Bottery 2000: 79). In the curriculum, 'skills development' at universities has surged in importance, to the detriment of the development of critical thought. The rights of education workers to influence the education debate through their representative unions have also been eroded under neoliberalism by the removal of their bargaining rights (Lewis et al. 2009).

School head teachers now have unprecedented levels of authority handed down to them by a government that has weakened almost every other vestige of local democratic choice that parents or elected politicians once enjoyed. Even though there is a consensus from all mainstream political groups that head teachers need to enjoy greater freedoms to manage, it is difficult to imagine what those might be or precisely which freedoms they are lacking. The most pernicious powers in the eyes of many rank-and-file teachers are those whereby the head teacher has simultaneous control over statutory performance management systems as well as an increasingly variegated pay structure. It has become more than it could possibly be worth for an employee to challenge the status quo inside a modern school for fear of being overlooked for annual or additional pay progression. Thus, complicity in many school regimes is often bought rather than earned. Indeed, debate and discussion under certain regimes can be deemed insubordination worthy of disciplinary action (Lewis et al. 2009).

In June 2009, the six-year Nuffield review of 14-19 education was published. The report raised serious concerns about the ideology driving British education – in particular, it questioned the prominence in education policy given to a performance-management perspective drawn from business:

‘The *consumer* or *client* replaces the learner. The curriculum is *delivered*. Aims are spelt out in terms of *targets*. *Audits* (based on *performance indicators*) measure success defined in terms of hitting the *targets*. ... As the language of performance and management has advanced, so we have proportionately lost a language of education which recognises the intrinsic value of pursuing certain sorts of question ... of seeking understanding [and] of exploring through literature and the arts what it means to be human’. (Cited in Mansell 2009: 5 – emphasis in original)

Whilst preparation for work was acknowledged as an important purpose of education by the review team, they also emphasised:

... intellectual development, practical capability, community participation and a sense of social justice, self awareness, and ... a sense of ‘moral seriousness’. Education, it says, has an essentially ‘moral purpose’: to help young people to develop as human beings. (Mansell 2009: 5)

The present school system is seen to fail to achieve these ambitions because the performance management agenda reduces the school experience to narrow performance outcomes (essentially, test and exam success) rather than the means by which these are achieved (how young people engage with the learning process).

A key driver of these developments is the global neoliberalization agenda intent on freeing up trade in services, such as education and health, as goods. The main global mechanism for this is the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The GATS covers four modes of supply of services, including education:

Mode 1: provision of services from abroad - for example, through distance education via the internet (cross-border supply);

Mode 2: provision of services to foreign students (consumption abroad);

Mode 3: establishment in a country of foreign education service providers - for example, to set up schools and other institutions (commercial presence);

Mode 4: movement of workers between countries to provide educational services (movement of natural persons).

Under GATS' rules, WTO members decide which services they will open to foreign competition, under which modes of supply and subject to which limitations (if any). There is also an exclusion clause for 'services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority' which are outside the scope of the GATS. However, the GATS goes on to define such a service as one 'supplied neither on a commercial basis nor in competition with one or more service suppliers' (Lewis et al. 2009). This could imply that where public and private sectors co-exist, as they do in most countries, public services are covered by the agreement. Some argue that public institutions requiring the payment of fees could be deemed to be engaging in 'commercial activity' and would thus fall outside the GATS exception. Though the WTO and member governments say there is no intention to apply GATS to public education and health services (WTO 2003), the distinction between public and private services is becoming increasingly blurred. In strict legal terms, only when a service is provided entirely by the government does it unambiguously fall outside the rules of GATS. This could make countries vulnerable to pressure in current and future GATS' negotiations to open up areas of the state education system. Once a country commits itself to opening a service to foreign competition it is almost impossible to reverse this. Where a municipality, or a local or national government, wants to take back into public ownership a service that has been privatized and opened to competition under the GATS or a similar free trade agreement, this is almost impossible to do (Lewis et al. 2009).

Other drivers of the global neoliberal project include regional and bilateral trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and the European Union (EU). The World Bank and the OECD are also significant bodies in promoting the liberalized education agenda. They are supported by national and international business organizations such as the International Chamber of Commerce, the Confederation of British Industry, the Institute of Directors in the United Kingdom, the European Round Table of leading multinational companies and the Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas (PREAL) which comprises public and private organizations. At the same time, there is opposition to free trade in services from trade unions, political parties, civil society groups and some governments. These recently combined to force the withdrawal, at least temporarily, of

the so-called ‘Bolkestein Directive’, the EU’s draft Services Directive seeking to open up trade in services. The draft Directive sought to expose almost all services to market-based competition. Though public education services were specifically excluded, the draft Directive would have applied to ‘peripheral’ services supplied to schools and, like the GATS, was unclear where the line between public and private services would be drawn. Under the ‘country of origin’ principle, a company providing services would follow the rules and laws of the country in which it was based or ‘established’ rather than the country in which the service was provided. A US education multinational, for example, could ‘establish’ itself in, say, Latvia, simply by registering its presence there. It would then be able to trade in the rest of the EU while conforming only to Latvian law on matters such as health and safety, employees’ rights or environmental protection. Latvia, not the country where the service was provided, would be expected to send inspectors to ensure compliance with its laws. Critics say the draft Directive would encourage ‘social dumping’ since companies would have an incentive to opt for establishment in the least regulated EU member state requiring the lowest standards (Lewis et al. 2009).

In primary and secondary education, in the first three modes of supply, the EU has committed itself not to impose or maintain restrictions which are inconsistent with GATS’ rules covering participation in the market by foreign-service suppliers. In the United Kingdom, unlike some other EU members, there are no notified ‘limitations on market access’. Thus, UK primary and secondary education ‘markets’ appear to be open to foreign suppliers. WTO members committing themselves to opening up primary and secondary education through GATS (as the EU has) must actually show any limitation on access for foreign suppliers which may then be open to challenge through the WTO’s disputes procedure. The UK (via the EU) also has no limitations on the national treatment provision of the GATS regarding primary and secondary education. Under this GATS’ rule, member states must acknowledge any limitation in the treatment of foreign suppliers that puts them in a less favorable position than domestic counterparts. For example, Edison schools (based in the United States) must be alerted to any differences in the way it is treated compared with UK education services suppliers if it enters the UK schools market. Only in Mode 4 supply, the ‘presence of natural persons’ from another country, does some limitation regarding foreign primary and secondary education suppliers

possibly apply. Mode 4 is ‘unbound’ for EU primary and secondary education, meaning that the EU has made no commitment to open its market or keep it as open as it was when the GATS came into force in 1995. If Edison schools wanted to set up operations in the UK, the company would have to use UK employees, as immigration rules would still apply. It is unlikely that US teachers could just be flown to work in Edison UK schools. However, by the same token, no clear barrier to US teachers being jetted into Edison UK schools is established on the basis of the EU’s GATS’ commitments (Lewis et al. 2009).

It might appear from this account that the UK (via the EU) has a more or less open-door policy regarding the foreign supply of primary and secondary education services. This, however, is misleading. Section 5 of the EU’s Schedule of Commitments for education services under GATS indicates that, in relation to education, the EU is referring to ‘privately funded education services’. This suggests that the only education services under threat from the GATS are independent and private schools. They are in the ‘education market’ so must take the consequences and face competing foreign providers. However, once again, the GATS’ language is cleverly crafted. The Schedule does not pinpoint private education ‘institutions’ but privately-funded ‘services’. It is not the case that a whole education institution has to be a for-profit outfit for the GATS to apply. Any of its constituent services – e.g. teaching, cleaning, school meals, the school library - could fall under the GATS if private capital is involved. Furthermore, private operators in school improvement, equal opportunities and recruitment, and other school services previously supplied by the local education authority, may also fall under the GATS. One could argue that these services are still ‘publicly funded’, even though education businesses like Nord Anglia and school meals providers like Initial Services are delivering the service (Lewis et al. 2009).

Several points are relevant here. First, the argument assumes that ‘public’ money remains ‘public’, even when transferred to a for-profit private-service provider. However, it could be argued that, once the contract is signed to deliver frontline teaching, school management or improvement services, the ‘public money’ undergoes transformation into private capital. Second, in the academies, specialist schools and in some education action zones, private finance forms an element of start-up capital. The foundational significance of private capital is even clearer in the case of schools built under the Private

Finance Initiative (PFI), where money to build a school is raised at commercial rates in the money markets by private companies. In all these cases, private involvement opens up schools or, at minimum, educational services to the GATS. Third, under the Education Act 2002, school-governing bodies can set themselves up as companies. They then have the power to invest in other companies. Furthermore, school companies can merge to form ‘federations’ to gain economies of scale, thereby increasing profit-making capacity. In September 2002, David Miliband (then Schools Minister) indicated that business leaders running school federations did not need teaching qualifications (Kelly 2002).

Schools can enter into deals with private outfits and can sell educational services to other schools. Finally, under the 2002 Act, around 1000 schools are to be given the freedom to vary the curriculum and change teachers’ pay and conditions. These powers result from the new ‘earned autonomy’ status that top-performing schools can gain. This gives private sector operators some control over staff costs through manipulating teachers’ contracts of employment. Overall, the 2002 Act provides a regulatory framework for the business takeover of schools, and hence also for the application of GATS throughout the school system. Of course, the Government can still argue that the school system is ‘publicly funded’ but, in instances of outsourcing, the PFI and strategic partnerships with companies, public finance is transfigured into private capital. Sponsorship by companies involves injections of corporate cash. Through these mechanisms, schools are exposed to the GATS and school workers to a reduction in their social and economic securities (Lewis et al. 2009).

In the next section, we consider the effects of parallel developments in education on the HE sector in England and Wales and, as a corollary, on society.

Privatization, marketization and the new managerialism, and their effects on HE and social relations

In the UK over the last 30 years we have experienced the continuing displacement of critical understanding in the realm of education by managerial information. Moore (2009) states that the British government, in aiming for the ‘complete internationalization of its labour market’, is:

...deploying higher education to create an army of employable subjects/citizens who are proselytised as having the skills [to] be able to participate effectively in the increasingly privatised global chains of commodity production and services. (Moore 2009: 243)

Neither the broader concern of the perilous state of the UK's economy nor the continuing inequalities along the dividing lines of class, 'gender', 'ability' and 'race' are brought into the picture by the British government. Instead, the country's unsatisfactory productivity level is represented as a failure of training and education (Leitch Review 2006).

The insecurity and limited measurability of the globalised playing field have inspired governments to shift responsibility for workers' welfare to workers themselves, by way of the explicit creation of educational environments aimed at training workers towards a new genre of individual employability or entrepreneurialism of the self, which in effect allows ongoing retrenchment of the welfare state. (Moore 2009: 265)

Moore (2009) notes that genuine knowledge and critical thought are not the desired outcomes of the deployment of HE to generate 'employables' which would be a commendable ambition. She refers to Wrigley's (2007) observation that capitalism requires workers that are *'not wise enough to know what is really going on'* (Wrigley 2007, cited in Moore 2009: 244 – emphasis in original). This process is driven by the notion of 'employability' which is suitably kept vague and empty but is also clearly excluding groups of people (Moore 2009) and prescribes processes of 'normalisation' that adapt people's subjectivities to the shifting shapes of the mantra of 'market demands'.

One set of tools for the micro-management of this reductionist and despiriting process is the obsession with so-called 'skills'.

This myth of transferable skills lies behind the rise of managers as the new Jacobins. They promote the basic category error of conflating such fundamentally different activities as education and training and seek to reduce the status of the former to the latter. If any readers do doubt their innate difference then think about the different parental responses that would accompany a child's announcement upon returning home to announce that they had received either sex

education or sex training at school. Training is undoubtedly an important part of any advanced economy, but the overwhelming supremacy of its terms in education today is steadily eroding away any basis from which the managerial approach can be criticised. If we all accept that we're trainees rather than educated people then the path to power of the managerial cadres is unobstructed. (Taylor 2003a: 8)

Moore (2009) pointed out that in order to train people in the so-called transferable 'skills' a specifically opportune pedagogical approach was suggested by the Pedagogy for Employability Group (2006). This is an approach that operates at an even deeper level of manipulation of the individual's subjectivity towards the creation of a market-prostituting and authority-opportunistic personality. People are forced to partake actively in managing to increase their individualised and decontextualised 'human capital' in the rhetoric of the 2003 European Employment Task Force Report that allows nation states to externalise their responsibilities towards their citizens even more. As Moore (2009) correctly observes:

... it is workers, or potential workers, who are given the most responsibility in this division of labour, and their rights seem to stop at voluntary education schemes which require remuneration. Colonisation of the everyday lives of workers is clearly occurring in this scenario, as workers are expected to embrace their own alienation from their work, and are told that the project of self-employability must become part of their subjectivities and self worth. (Moore 2009: 260)

This was Nietzsche's nightmare vision, a context in which people in themselves are constituted as and come to see themselves as 'minimal values'.

[M]ankind [sic] will be able to find its best meaning as a machine in the service of this economy - as a tremendous clockwork, composed of ever smaller, ever most subtle adapted gears. (Nietzsche 1968: 463)

Neoliberalization is making provision of services more unequal and selective rather than universal. This is intensifying 'race'-, 'gender'- and class-based hierarchies, reflected in formally or informally tiered systems of schooling. In less 'developed'

countries, services are available mainly to middle-class or wealthier families. In developed countries, the quality and type of schooling is increasingly stratified.

Neoliberalization is further profoundly eroding workers' securities and their wellbeing. Hobsbawn (1994) remarked already, over fifteen years ago, that in Britain the bottom fifth of workers were even worse off in comparison to the rest of the workforce than they were 100 years before. There further occurred a problematic shift away from universal citizenship rights and identities based on the provision of services toward a system of individual consumer rights and identities:

[New] Labour's version of 'rights' thus becomes transformed to construct an outer frame of 'community' expectations and supposed needs rather than an outer frame that allows for alternative personalities/types of individuals. (Moore 2009: 253)

According to Leitner et al. (2007), neoliberalism replaces the concept of 'common good' and the state's responsibility for public welfare with the monadic vision of an 'entrepreneurial individual' whose sole mission and determination is to aim to 'succeed' within increasingly competitive markets. Therefore neoliberal policies are concerned with:

... supply-side innovation and competitiveness; decentralization, devolution, and attrition of political governance, deregulation and privatization of industry, land and public services [including schools]; and replacing welfare with 'workfarist' social policies A neoliberal subjectivity has emerged that normalizes the logic of individualism and entrepreneurialism, equating individual freedom with self-interested choices, making individuals responsible for their own well-being, and redefining citizens as consumers and clients. (Leitner et al. 2007: 1-2)

In this context, public services such as education, health and prisons are being, or have been, transformed into 'tradable commodities' (Sandel 2009). These transformations are undertaken and overseen by so-called 'new' managerialists and the implications for HE are profoundly destructive both for the workers within and their students.

British universities are succumbing to a tsunami of rampant managerialism that has already devastated morale in such other public-sector institutions as the BBC and the National Health Service which are now riddled with one-dimensional managerialist thought. (Taylor 2003b: 1)

Managerialism represents a fragmented vision of being, empty of ethical dimensions and only informed by materialism, opportunism and industrialism, thereby excluding non-countable, non-measurable qualities and other forms of relating, evaluating and being. It is a reductionist opportunism that pays for those who ‘play the game’ and as such managerialism is subserving any predominant ideology - in this context, capitalism – by complementing it on a practical level. The manager serving the banker or the fascist, depending on which regime is currently in power. Managerialism only follows instrumental rationales that lead sadly to an increasing stupidification of HE in England and Wales, generating ‘a climate where inherent banality is used as a defence against rational critique’ (Taylor 2003b: 1).

George Scialabba (in Reisz 2009) expressed concern about the threat that the tradition of the politically-engaged public intellectual is under. To him the ‘subjection of university life, and the rest of professional life, to the disciplines of the market’ (Scialabba in Reisz 2009: 48) are generating this problem.

When universities have to market themselves, their facilities and their activities, in competition with other universities, to potential funders envisioned as ‘educational investors’, and to potential students envisioned as ‘educational consumers’, then the result is going to be just what we see in the corporate world: top-heavy management structures, armed with the idiotic ideology of ‘management science’, continually fretting about ‘productivity’ and demanding measurable results from their ‘personnel’. (Scialabba in Reisz 2009: 48)

This development has been a long time coming as already, back in 1996, Davies noted:

British higher education policy now turns solely on the enforced internalisation of managerial control mechanisms. Their intention is to displace universalising intellectual comportment by task-orientated technocratic procedures through

behavioural conditioning; to make the experience of thinking and learning the sterilized aggregate of specified technical norms. (Davies 1996: 23)

Teaching and research in this context are being redefined in increasingly mechanical and representational ways.

Given this early acknowledgement and warning, one is puzzled that such tendencies and accompanying practices have not been more widely problematized and resisted. This is especially shocking when one looks at examples of managerial inefficiency and misguidedness in UK's HE sector as well as management failings in a practical sense (especially in their own terms of so-called 'auditing' - see Baker and May 2002, Charlton and Andras 2002a, 2002b in Taylor 2003a). Taylor offers one interesting answer to this wonderment and presents also some of its most dramatic consequences:

The inability of managerialism to provide demonstrable evidence of its own success leads to an attempt to make everything part of its frame. Its hitherto successful strategy seems to be that if it is in a state of constant movement no one will notice its fatal flaw (as if in a glass-topped carriage the naked emperor hurtles past too quickly for his nudity to be proved). This produces an educational variant of the economic theory known as Gresham's law which states that bad money drives out good. Thus, the number of First Class degrees awarded by universities is used as a performance measurement in university league tables, yet politicians disingenuously express indignation if anyone has the temerity to highlight the subsequently perfectly logical market-driven tendency of universities to increase their number of Firsts to improve their marketability. As A-Level students have recently found out to their cost, 'quality' becomes an actuarial category to be manipulated rather than actually achieved. (Taylor 2003a: 6)

Under the heading 'Now is the age of the discontented', Frank Furedi discusses the impact of consumer culture on HE. The 'consumer model of education' implies the generation of a 'consumerist ethos' on university campuses that has student surveys as their vanguard. However, instead of really facilitating a more democratic and quality enriched process of studying, 'what surveys tend to indicate is how well customers' expectations are managed rather than the quality of academic life' (Furedi 2009: 32). The human interaction between student and tutor has been perverted by the injection of an element of artifice into the 'learning process' - i.e. since the introduction of student fees,

attaining a degree becomes the product of a market interaction rather than creativity and critical dialogue. Increasingly, university managers strive to give the student, now reconfigured as a 'customer', 'satisfaction' rather than an intellectually challenging academic experience:

Courses ... are modified and made customer friendly [alongside] ... the promotion of a culture of complaint The internalisation of this culture by universities has created an environment where managing the expectations of students takes priority over intellectually challenging them. ... In the end, the culture of complaint undermines the unique potential for academic collaboration and dialogue and heightens the sense of conflict of interest. (Furedi 2009: 35)

Apart from integrating and transforming, managerialism survives, as already indicated, via constant shape-shifting. Fisher illustrates this obsession with the example of so-called 'restructuring':

... the school has been restructured on several occasions, pervaded by the language of 'enterprise', 'customer focus' and the 'needs of industry' and, in common with other British HE institutions, characterised by new forms of surveillance and control, exemplified by the teaching quality assessment (QAA) [now a two strikes and Hefce is in exercise papertrail - see the *Times Higher Education*, 10th September 2009, p.13] and the research assessment exercise (RAE) [now the even cruder and more opportunistic research excellence framework (REF)]. This regime of new managerialism with its emphasis upon costs, budgets and targets, its links to ideas of 'hard' Human Resource Management and its unitarist perspective on the employment relationship has been embraced by the most senior managers of the Business School and the university. (Fisher 2007: 505)

Institutions of higher education are under increasing pressure to be more 'efficient' and to do more with fewer resources. A so-called 'New Labour' slogan 'Less is more' epitomizes this state of affairs. As less staff have to work through thicker layers of audit-bureaucracies and then have to work with larger cohorts of students while also being urged to be research active, the work-load levels become excessive and, as Broadbent (2006) observed in the context of the discipline of law:

There is some evidence to suggest that, for example, law schools evidence a male macho culture (Cownie, 2004), in which it becomes difficult to admit to being unable to cope with the pressures, as this may be taken as a sign of weakness (Henkel, 2000). The observable response to the widely acknowledged (for example Henkel, 2000; Rolfe, 2002; Morley, 2003) increases in workload amongst many colleagues has been akin to that of Boxer, the shire horse, in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, whose mantra was 'I will work harder'. The trouble is, we know what happened to Boxer in the end. (Broadbent 2006: 1)

As state funding and contributions to institutions decrease, competition for sparse resources and funds increase among and within institutions. Higher education processes and practices are in response to such competitive reductionism compared with those in business (Callan and Finney 1997). In response to continuing and intensifying pressure to find their own resources, institutions of higher education frequently engage in highly problematic and often unethical partnerships with businesses, thereby transforming themselves into and being run like businesses themselves (Fairweather 1988). 'The relocation of higher education in the discourse of commerce has also been significant in bringing about shifts in the way in which universities both see [themselves] and are seen (Scott 2001)' (Broadbent 2006: 1).

Taylor observed a complete conflation of academic and business values in the language used and so-called 'qualities' searched for in job advertisements for HE positions (Taylor 2003a). This problematic shift in the language of academia turned 'students' into 'customers' or 'key-stakeholders'. This is not just a game of words but impacts on the relationship between tutors and their students profoundly: '... the customer model's implicit assumption of a conflict of interest between client and service provider inexorably erodes the relationship of trust between teacher and student on which academic enterprise is founded' (Furedi 2009: 33). The importance of the shift in language is important to emphasize and attack – note several HE institutions substituted the term 'induction-week' with 'welcome week' in 2009, while Taylor applies a similar technique by referring to *Time Higher Education* as the UK's higher education trade magazine (Taylor 2003b).

Taylor (2003a) also points to another practical consequence of the spread of managerial language – i.e. a diminution of substantive political discourse grounded in

ethical values. 'The dominant language of the Academy now disproportionately resides in management meetings replete with the cabalistic incantations of PowerPoint presentations consisting of one part alliteration to two parts bullet point' (Taylor 2003b:1). Genuine communication and critical engagement are avoided at all cost in this corporate context as:

Managerialism produces manipulative communication. Communication produced by managerialist elites is inherently one-dimensional because it is skewed in favour of whichever section of the managerialist elite is driving that communicative system. (Louw 2001: 100)

Driven by the ever present 'imperative of auditing', league tables, performance indicators and 'increasing bureaucratisation':

Academic staff are forced to devote considerable energy and time to pointless bureaucratic exercises. Many departments charged with bringing in money end up reducing the resources they devote to teaching, research and the pursuit of scholarship. (Furedi 2009: 35)

This culture of auditing and inspecting kills creativity and reflection in favour of performance targets and constructed performance indicators (McLaughlin and Muncie 2006), and they are, after all, more or less an 'institutional process of lying', a collection of paper trails that are 'legitimised' and 'sanctified' by managerial platitudes whereby 'Ultimately unjustifiable and illogical parallels between dissimilar concepts and values are sustained by mere repetition ...' (Taylor 2003b: 3).

Apart from the mind-numbing stupidity of generating paper trails (and thereby destroying many trees in turn), existing inequalities appear to be reinforced as:

Micro-level analysis of the effects of the audit and evaluative state seem to suggest that hegemonic masculinities and gendered power relations are being reinforced by the emphasis on competition, targets, audit trails and performance (Morley 2003). (Fisher 2007: 508)

Taylor (2003b) calls the working environments for HE academics in the UK ‘conditions for anti-educational behaviour by academics’ generated by ‘bureaucratic/managerial structures [that] create a distance from ethical concerns’ and in which ‘procedural answers are given to ethical questions’ (Taylor 2003b : 3). Such an unreflective, non-ethical context is especially problematic in terms of under-resourced research environments in which systematic ‘encouragements’ to engage in funded research become increasingly commonplace and ruthless, amounting often to not much more than a mere ‘pimping’ of academics and their work and resistance to such day-to-day practices is sadly very rare. It is unsurprising, given this educationally deprived and depraved environment for students, that “Students are felt to have become more vocationally and instrumentally orientated and less interested in the substance of the subject they are studying (Rolfe, 2002)’ (Broadbent 2006: 1).

While the labourers in HE are more and more forced to prostitute their ‘hearts and minds’ for external funding, students are increasingly selling their bodies in an attempt to cope with rising university tuition fees and lack of maintenance grants. Milne, writing in 2006, points out that:

University tuition fees, first introduced in 1998 at £1,000 a year, have risen to £3,000 this year at all but a few universities. The average student loan at graduation last year was £8,948, but NatWest Bank said that once private debt was factored in, students now in their first year could expect to graduate with liabilities of more than £14,700. ... Dr Ron Roberts, a health psychologist who was the lead author of the study, said: ‘Our figures represent a 50% increase in the prevalence rates for student prostitution since 2000. ... [G]iven the increasing financial problems experienced by students, this is in line with what we would predict’. (Milne 2006: 1)

This pressure to prostitute while being ‘pimped’ without consenting, and within the confines of the forthcoming REF in order to receive funding in a competitive environment, obviously runs counter to ethical values as well as any spirit of socio-political purpose towards society. In this climate of bidding and hunting for external funding, Mike Presdee, who sadly died in 2009, had expressed his fears in respect of his

discipline, criminology. He believed criminology was losing its critical edge and that criminologists were moving more and more towards uncontentious research:

Academics are witnessing a shift in emphasis from their role as critic and conscience of society to that of service provider where the state has become a client The amount of contract research academics are doing is increasing. Contract research legally binds academics to provide information to clients or stakeholders. As such it is capable of restricting academic freedom. If academic criminological research shies away from critiquing the role of the state for fear of losing future government contracts; if it becomes little more than information gathering, used to formulate government policy, then we academics are at risk of becoming co-conspirators in the policing of knowledge. (Presdee, cited in Utley 1998: 1)

An 'academic capitalist knowledge and learning regime' has emerged, replacing an ideology of a 'public good knowledge' (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). In this context of the commodification of culture, Louw (2001) refers back to the insights of the Frankfurt School whereby:

The audience is, in effect, 'cretinized'. Instead of participating in an active dialogue, commodified culture immerses people into one-dimensional, 'affirmative culture', where they are offered a pre-arranged 'false' reconciliation of social contradictions, that is reconciliations serving the interests of the hegemonically dominant. (Louw 2001: 97)

McLaren also underlined the importance of addressing commodification:

The whole process of commodification should be more central in discussions and practices of pedagogy. These commodities, these reifications, are not illusions but objective social processes. Commodification regulates our social lives. (McLaren 2006: 279)

McLaren goes on to refer to Paula Allman's work which provides a 'bodily' reading of Freire's ideas:

‘...dialogue enables us to experience the alternative or certain aspects of it for a period of time and in a specific context.’ The structure of society resides in the structure of experience. We carry this in our musculature, in our gestures, our emotions, in our dreams and desires. Our subjectivities are commodified. (McLaren 2006: 279 – emphasis in original)

In such a context, ‘intellectuals ..., including those with oppositional ideas, are forced to sell their skills to the culture industry’ (Louw 2001: 97). On a broader level, one can observe a decline in the quality of work within HE and of HE students who are, as mentioned earlier and in other work by two of the authors (Beckmann and Cooper 2004, 2005), moulded into uncritical but ‘skilled’ and ‘docile’ bodies.

Matching these developments in HE in England and Wales are the UK’s A-level assessments which also stay clear from intellectual and critical engagement. According to one think tank ‘exam modules have created a “learn and forget culture” - which it likens to using a sat-nav rather than map-reading skills’ (Sellgren 2009: 1). Unsurprisingly, the think-tank’s researchers found that ‘academics reported today’s students as having inferior reasoning skills to those who started courses in the 1990s. They complained of “high maintenance” students who sought constant advice’ (Sellgren 2009: 1)

The corporatization of universities leads to an increase in management of sparse resources which translates into an attempt to minimize the costs of an already under-resourced system. Meanwhile, management is focussed on maximizing revenue. Frequently, especially in the so-called ‘New Universities’, a genuine research environment is substituted by the pretence of a ‘research culture’ (no or rarely sabbaticals, no or limited conference funding) but there is no less pressure to publish, to bid for research funding and to attend research seminars of dubious relevance in the context of a lack of time for reflection.

Support for research is minimal and resented in some quarters. For most academics, the ‘real business’, and in fact the most relentless pressure of the academic job, is to survive heavy teaching loads and an emerging 24/7 working environment where managers and students expect them to be constantly ‘on call’. (Fisher 2007: 505)

Educational missions are sacrificed in the name of increasing efficiency (Levin 2001), very much like the steps taken to ‘rationalise’ a National Health Service that is already totally under-resourced and that runs counter to its former mission to improve health and save lives.

HE entrepreneurialism with regards to research is leading to a narrowing of academic freedom - e.g. what is regarded as fundable and what is considered permissible to be published under funding agreements (Mendoza 2007). However, given the fact that a lot of these developments are pushed through under the mantra of competing in the new information economy, these implications are totally counterproductive as ‘Any attempt to block ... creativity will undermine the information economy itself. In essence, communicative openness becomes necessary for economic growth’ (Louw 2001: 103). Yet market-conformism continues to be favoured over academic creativity:

Arguably genuine creativity has been the greatest victim of new regulation, as more rule-bound and quota-driven forms of competitiveness are superimposed on an already competitive profession. It would appear that universities have become ‘enterprises’ to be managed by business principles, not by collegiality. (Fisher 2007: 508)

The way in which research opportunities offered to workers in the HE industrial complex were structured via the RAE (and equally likely under the revamped REF) further fostered academic competitiveness and substantively reinforced patriarchal hierarchies by being a highly ‘gendered’ exercise whereby, in effect, so-called ‘females’ were in receipt of less research grants than so-called ‘males’ (Wellcome Trust 1997, cited in Fisher 2007: 506).

Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) and Slaughter and Leslie (1997) offer many additional fitting examples to illustrate and problematize the consequences and implications of ‘academic capitalism’ (e.g. the commodification of knowledge and the notion of students as consumers of knowledge whereby their tuition revenue must be maximized). ‘Students are not only consumers, they are also casualties of a perverse production process. They therefore become casualties of history’ (McLaren 2006: 278).

The intensity stakes of this ‘casualty’-status of students is, however, threatened to rise even further as:

The Confederation of British Industry said students should bear the brunt of a proposed funding overhaul to deal with a growing crisis in university finance. Under the plans, they face a triple blow of increased loan interest, fewer grants and higher tuition fees. One figure mooted is for annual tuition fees to rise to £5,000. (Curtis 2009: 1)

It is abundantly clear, therefore, that, due to its increasing exposure to neoliberalization, changes in the education system in England and Wales have had profoundly harmful implications for teachers, pupils/students and the society we live in. Education services are becoming increasingly ‘Americanized’ through policies and processes based on privatization and marketization, and the imposition of managerialism. As a consequence, education provision has become more unequal and selective, with the intensification of ‘racial’, ‘gendered’ and class-based hierarchies, reflected in tiered systems of education with differential experiences and outcomes. As Hirtt observes, contradictory elements driving the neoliberalization of education – ‘to adapt education to the needs of business and at the same time reduce state expenditure on education’ - are resolved by the polarization of the labour market. Thus, from an economic point of view, it is no longer necessary to provide high-level education and general knowledge to all future workers.

It is now possible and even highly recommendable to have a more polarized education system ... [E]ducation should not try to transmit a broad common culture to the majority of future workers, but instead it should teach them some basic, general skills. (Hirtt 2004: 446).

In other words, manual and service workers are treated as ‘human capital’ and receive cheaper, inferior, transferable-skills education and knowledge, in contrast to the elite workers, who receive more expensive, superior education. Thus, the outcome of neoliberalization is a more hierarchical school system that militates against the principles of equity and social justice. At the same time, neoliberalization is eroding workers’ pay,

rights and securities; promoting individual consumer rights and identities over solidaristic social relations; and militating against critical thought and, as a consequence, democracy.

Alongside evidence of increasing uncertainty for the many in contemporary times – in Britain, confirmed by the existence of increasingly unhappy childhoods, poverty, widening social inequalities and growing community tensions (Cooper 2008, Wilkinson and Pickett 2009) and globally, by ecological destruction, disease pandemics, ethnic genocide and war – these developments in education in England are testament to the harmful effects of neoliberalism and the inability of free-market capitalism to deliver universal wellbeing. They are also testament to the enduring appeal of Marxist thought and its utility in the 21st Century for understanding how neoliberal free-market societies continue to generate barriers to freedom by privileging individualist consumerist values over human values and, thereby, distract attention away from the need for more solidaristic forms of social relations.

The enduring appeal of Marxist thought and its relevance for contemporary times

Marxism owes much to Feuerbach's philosophical critique – something Marx considered to be the wellspring of socialism – and his belief that modernity breeds egoism and an intolerance of 'the other' (an argument that continues to be presented today by Bauman and others). Feuerbach's theory of alienation and his belief in the need for humanity to rediscover community remains a central concern today. Feuerbach argued that this rediscovery – or more specifically, the rediscovery of 'love' - was something that the modern law prevented:

The law condemns; the heart has compassion even on the sinner. Law affirms me only as an abstract being – love, as a real being. Love gives me the consciousness that I am a man, the law only the consciousness that I am a sinner, that I am worthless, the law holds the man in bondage ... love makes him free. (Cited in Sullivan 2002: 12)

For Feuerbach, love represented 'the true ontological proof of an existence of an object apart from our mind' (cited in Sullivan 2002: 13) and which could only be cultivated 'in community'.

The community of man with man [sic] is the first principle and criterion of truth and generality. The certainty of the existence of other things apart from me. That which I alone perceive I doubt; only that which the other also perceives is certain. (Cited in Sullivan 2002: 12)

Feuerbach's aim was to present a secular perspective on the meaning of life which replaced the divine notion of 'God' with the idea of 'love in community'.

Over the last 30 years in Britain, deindustrialisation, welfare retrenchment and the centralisation of political power has been responsible for a breakdown in interdependence and, with this, a decline in empathy (love) for others. This decline in empathy led to 'popular' electoral support for political projects favouring less solidaristic social policies (including competition between schools) - weakening the efficacy of the state to manage social tensions through social welfare measures. Instead, governments are increasingly turning to legalistic authoritarian sanctions – e.g. school exclusions and asbos - in response to what were previously seen as young people's welfare concerns – i.e. learning difficulties and lack of leisure opportunities (Cooper 2008).

Whilst Marx rejected Feuerbach's notion of 'love' in his own critique of capitalist social relations – he found it too vague and emotional for his purpose and focused instead on 'labour' – it can be argued that it remains pertinent to contemporary times. However, equally significant to the present – a time where *paid* work and consumption are held up as the key human virtues – is Marx's concept of alienation from our labour (which he believed should be a vehicle for our self realisation) and his ideas on the corrosive effects of materialism (where the accumulation of private belongings replaces all other sensibilities). For Marx, we had become separated from our humanity by exploitation and consumerism. 'Marx laments the collective human soul that has gone astray, a soul seduced by material wealth and the gratification of egoistic needs' (Sullivan 2002: 17-18). The task is, therefore, to rediscover our humanity. Whilst this analysis remains insightful and appealing, there remains within Marxist thinking the equally enduring conundrum about *how* we arrive at an alternative, more humane, social system.

Whilst it is absolutely crucial to acknowledge and problematise the brutal experiments of the twentieth century conducted in the name of Marxism, western

Marxists sought to retrieve crucial elements of Marx's legacy by appealing to his humanistic philosophy and critique of alienation as this helps us understand inherent immanent violences of rationalization/new managerialism. At the heart of this attempted recovery was the work of the Frankfurt school – exemplified in the ideas of Gyorgi Lukács on 'reification' (which suggests we have become distanced from meaning in our lives) and Max Horkheimer on the 'end of reason' (where reason has been used to legitimise mass destruction and systematic genocide). For the Frankfurt school, the 'Enlightenment' had become 'reduced to a paradigm of domination' (Sullivan 2002: 45).

The Frankfurt school sought to broaden the debate on alienation by focusing less on economic determinism (alienation at work) and more on the cultural consequences of capitalism (alienation at play). Our desires are increasingly being shaped by the culture industry and what Marcuse described as the production of 'false needs'. Moreover, our ability to realise this has become increasingly obscured 'by the persistent propagation of a myth, namely that liberty is synonymous with the vacuous choice between various brands and gadgets' (Sullivan 2002: 49).

For Marcuse, the culprit of advanced capitalism is no longer class antagonisms or belching smokestacks of the Industrial Revolution; it is rather the psychologically destructive illusions of freedom created by the culture industry. For the critical theorist, whose job it is to expose this illusion, it nonetheless proved difficult to problematize an exit: 'If the individuals are satisfied to the point of happiness with the goods and services handed down to them by the administration, why should they insist on different institutions for a different production of different goods and vices?' [Marcuse 1968]. ... In short, if no one feels alienated, how can one have a revolution? (Sullivan 2002: 49-50)

Sullivan addresses this impasse by focusing *inter alia* on the banality of the situation and the cultural and spiritual alienation it produces.

What's to be done? Exposing illusions of 'freedom'

Sullivan reminds us of how Marx distinguished between *having* and *being*, and the corrosive impact of materialistic desires.

‘Private property has made us stupid and partial, that an object is only ours when we have it, when it exists for us as capital or when it is directly eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., in short utilized in some way’ [Marx 1966]. Instead, we realize our true human potential not through the possession of material objects, but through productive, creative activity, through the expression of our unique individuality by which we achieve recognition and spiritual satisfaction. (Sullivan 2002: 56-57)

Exposing this reality would, Marx believed, generate the anger and outrage necessary for the oppressed to forge a plan of action for social change. Aside from its tendency to perpetuate social injustice, the dehumanising effects of capitalism also contain the seeds of social transformation (Sullivan 2002). It is essential for us to retain this fundamental tenet of Marxism – i.e. ‘the potential for self-empowerment among the masses, based on the conviction that they can bring about change’ (Sullivan 2002: 75). Key to such a transformation is education or (more specifically) an education that facilitates self-awareness of the structural determinants of oppression and social injustice, and the formation of a cohesive political strategy for social change. Through education, Marx believed that the proletariat would come to realise the way capitalism distorted ‘the communication and exchange of authentic qualities’ (Sullivan 2002: 142), and that this would lead to political action for social change and the emergence of human relationships free from the corrupting influence of ‘commodity fetishism’ (Sullivan 2002: 142).

As this paper demonstrates, commodity fetishism has increasingly infiltrated public services in Britain. For three decades, public services have been subjected to increasing deregulation and market incentives in the belief that markets are the best mechanism for achieving the public good. As Michael Sandel states, since the 1980s we have seen:

... the expansion of markets and market values into spheres of life traditionally governed by non-market norms. We’ve seen, for example, the proliferation of for profit schools, hospitals and prisons; the outsourcing of war to private military contractors. We’ve seen the eclipse of public police forces by private security firms, especially in the US and the UK where the number of private guards is more than twice the number of public police officers. (Sandel 2009: 5)

This development has led to what Sullivan (following Lukács) describes as ‘the perversion of value’ (Sullivan 2002: 143).

[T]he perversion of value is the symptom of a trend by which economic relations replace social relations, and the intrinsic value of goods is replaced by their external commodity value. Under capitalism, ‘Everything ceases to be valuable for itself or by virtue of its inner (e.g., artistic, ethical) value; a thing has value only as a ware bought and sold on the market’. (Sullivan 2002: 143)

As we have seen, this development has been evident throughout the British public sector and particularly the English education system.

As Sullivan infers, placing services which earlier defied commodification (such as education) within a business context ‘lends itself easily to the language of prostitution and debasement because the violated value of the woman, her inner sanctum, is a powerful image of the debasement of value in general’ (Sullivan 2002: 143). The intrinsic value of education – the love of learning and critical debate in a safe, mutually-respectful environment – has been debased. However, despite its contamination, education remains central to any political strategy for social transformation. More specifically, as Sullivan remarks, Marx saw possibilities for generating, through education, *creators* rather than *consumers* which would, thereby, challenge the force of consumer society.

By becoming creators rather than consumers, ... the more able we are to affirm our own identity. In that respect alone, education is the best weapon against the patronizing cynicism of the advertising industry, one that assumes that its target audience can only expand its personal identity by association with consumer products. That aspect of Marxist cultural theory is still relevant. (Sullivan 2002: 149)

As Sullivan argues, social change rests on the belief that humans can develop themselves sufficiently to create their own authentic worlds counter to the commodified extensions of their identity. It also rests on the need to resist the influence of market values over the public sphere – particularly in education for ‘education allows us to create ourselves’ (Sullivan 2002: 158). We need, therefore, to build political support for a state-

subsidised education system geared to fostering human emancipation, love and compassion rather than merely serving the interests of commerce.

Such support needs to build on the platform of successful struggles such as the campaign of non-compliance with Home Office guidance on monitoring the employment and education of non-EU nationals (initiated via the email listing of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control and later endorsed by UCU Congress) – a directive that has generated an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust in universities, including visits by anti-terror police seeking out ‘(Muslim) students whose work shows signs of “radicalisation”’ (Singleton et al. 2009: 27) – or that by students at a recent knowledge-transfer conference demanding ‘an end to the close relationship between universities and business’ (Fearn 2009: 12).

Conclusions: reconstructing education

The problematic commercialization of the cultural and public sphere alongside the increasing corporatization/managerialization of education has destroyed the very basis of democracy in Britain as spaces for dialogical communication and for the generation and articulation of alternative opinions and options are lost. The dogma of performativity borne out of managerialism only fosters opportunism and manipulation instead of genuine critical engagement, creativity and authentic communication. In response to this development, Kahn and Kellner (2007) argue the need to reconstruct education:

Education, at its best, provides the symbolic and cultural capital that empowers people to survive and prosper in an increasingly complex and changing world, and the resources to produce a more cooperative, democratic, egalitarian and just society. (Kahn and Kellner 2007: 440)

Louw (2001) refers to Garnham’s 1986 work in suggesting that the market allocation of cultural (and in effect material) resources, together with the destruction of a public service media, was threatening forms of ‘public communication’ that are fundamental to democracy.

Yet we stubbornly believe that the chants of ‘there is no alternative’ must be challenged for they offer as a *fait accompli* something about which progressive

leftists should remain defiant - namely, the triumph of capitalism and its political bedfellow, neo-liberalism, which have worked together to naturalize suffering, undermine collective struggle, and obliterate hope. (McLaren 2006: 125)

This article has demonstrated that the neoliberalization and managerialization of education reinforces inequalities within countries; reduces the quality of education; is detrimental to democracy; decreases workers' pay, rights and conditions, not least by the managerialist excesses and surveillance that result in the deprofessionalisation and intensification of education workers' work/lives, and increases stress, anxiety and alienation. From Taylor's point of view, 'non-academic managerial vandals; former academics who have crossed over to the managerial dark side, and supinely acquiescent academics' (Taylor 2003b: 1) are responsible for this disgraceful state of affairs. Taylor suggests that UK academics have been so far predominantly morally myopic and/or complicit in the 'managerial complex' and he adds:

An unwillingness to question fundamentally the intellectual credibility of both the dogma and its proponents lies behind the ability of managerialism to superimpose itself on the professional standards of not just academics, but also such groups as over-managed doctors (see Loughlin and Seedhouse, 2002). (Taylor 2003b: 2)

The dogma and practices of the new managerialism have to be seriously challenged as the framework of corporationalism is entirely inadequate for processes of pedagogy. As Furedi argues:

... one of the most distinct and significant dimensions of academic and intellectual activity is that it does not often give customers what they want. Academic dialogue and instruction does not provide the customer with a clearly defined product. It does not seek to offer what the customer wants, but attempts to provide what the student needs. That is why forcing universities to prove themselves to their customers fundamentally contradicts the ethos of academic education. (Furedi 2009: 33)

We should not therefore become complicit in this attempt, as Furedi (2009) states, to culturally transform the meaning of a university student into a customer that merely

consumes education as a commodity that has to represent 'value for money'. For, as Taylor states:

The spread of managerialism within higher education provides a particularly vivid example of the 'Emperor's got no clothes' type of collective psychosis that can be achieved by the strategic use of inherently banal but nevertheless extremely destructive concepts. The fact that professional academics, trained to deconstruct and reflect upon the ways in which power is exercised, have failed to call managerialism's bluff is particularly worrying and again cause for concern. (Taylor 2003a: 2)

One possibility to resist this 'psychosis' is, therefore, active engagement in deconstruction, thereby revealing the banalities and veiled destructiveness of managerial accounts. 'Critical revolutionary pedagogy, for me, adopts a perspective that knowledge is praxis; it is transforming action' (McLaren 2006: 125). This transformative potential of critical revolutionary pedagogy is also crucial for the future labourers in what has been left over of academia.

A whole generation of young academics has grown up aping their elders' collaborationist attitudes and averring their commitment to meaningless managerial concepts whilst potentially powerful bodies within the university sector have chosen the path of least resistance and most eventual harm. The roots of academic barbarianism lie in our own actions: so does the solution. (Taylor 2003b: 5)

For Taylor, 'Academics and former academics now in management positions need to seek common cause in the protection of education from parasitical operators' (Taylor 2003b: 5).

One strategy of resistance lies, thus, in the day-to-day practice of pointing to linguistic slippages - e.g. 'customer' instead of 'student', as well as stupidifying notions such as 'remind me to "action" this!' - and to question diverse initiatives on the basis of their own managerial/budgetary terms.

Taylor offers another set of helpful questions:

What are the qualifications of those who are redefining the professional status of academics? What is the exact meaning behind glib-sounding managerial phrases? What is the contribution of university operators to the bottom-line profitability of a university? What are the implications of standardised matrices for professional discretion and real learning? (Taylor 2003b: 6)

In contrast to mainstream opportunism and the anti-educationalist trends that have emerged, Kahn and Kellner (2007), referring to Hammer and Kellner's 2001 work, suggest that 'Teachers and students ... need to develop new pedagogies and modes of learning for new information and multimedia environments (Hammer & Kellner, 2001)' (Kahn and Kellner 2007: 442). They argue the need to democratise and reconstruct education in ways:

... envisaged by Dewey, Freire and Illich, where education is seen as a dialogical, democraticizing and experimental practice. New information technologies acting along the lines of Illich's conceptions of 'webs of learning' and 'tools for conviviality' (1971, 1973) encourage the sort of experimental and collaborative projects proposed by Dewey (1997), and can also involve the more dialogical and non-authoritarian relations between students and teachers that Freire envisaged (1972, 1998b). (Kahn and Kellner 2007: 442)

Especially important here is Taylor's warning:

For those elsewhere in Europe who have not yet felt the full effects of managerialism, failure to heed and resist the warning signs may exact a heavy cost in future. Perhaps there is ground for optimism in the fact that the demise of the 'heavy touch' QAA regime was hastened by the decision of the academic board of the London School of Economics to withdraw from it and that, significantly, 'all five of the senior academics who led the LSE revolt had non-British backgrounds' (Wolf, 2003: 13). (Taylor 2003b: 7)

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