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**Sat-Nav Education: A Means to An End or an End to Meaning?**

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***Introduction***

The significant expansion of higher education across the world, coupled with the prevailing technological consumer driven culture has had a significant impact on the role and identity of academics, but arguably the impact on students has been even more profound. For many on the left, the macroeconomics of neoliberalism, as Macrine (2009) suggests, serves to undermine universities and other public institutions and that in doing so has precipitated a crisis of democracy itself. However, advocates of neoliberalism argue that, given the pressures for an expanded higher education in a climate of huge public sector debit, the only way to go is privatisation. For them, far from representing a crisis, the mass privatisation of universities is a good thing. In releasing them the shackles of state bureaucracies and into an open market it is suggested that universities are much better placed to respond to the increasingly discerning student as customer, and that consumer driven disciplinary mechanisms will enable them to leverage more resources, offer greater choice and flexibility.

In confronting what they see as a 'romantic' notion of higher education, advocates of marketisation suggest that the hopes, aspiration and make-up of today's student is radically different to previous generations for whom university was an opportunity to 'discover themselves', a rite of passage marking their initiation into an exclusive community of graduates. Within this argument the apparent freedom that students once enjoyed is looked upon with an indulgent nostalgia, and it is seen to be only right that this now been displaced with an appropriately hardnosed utilitarian approach to education where the student's first and foremost priority is to get a job in a increasingly competitive and ruthless employment market.

This paper seeks to explore in what ways the marketization of higher education is impacting pedagogy and by implication the identities of teachers and students. In particular we want to explore the way teaching and learning in the contemporary university is increasing understood through utilitarian concerns for producing graduates that are employable. For many disciplines this has resulted in a blurring of the boundary between education and training as well as the

instrumentalisation of learning, taking the form of prescriptive competency based curriculum (Barnett [1994] and Fanghanel [2012]). More broadly, as Burawoy (2011) has argued, through the twin barrels of 'commodification' and 'regulation', 'the university is being turned into a means for someone else's end' (Para 8). Giroux is even more unequivocal in his assessment that the university is 'one of the most important spheres in which the battle for democracy is currently being waged' (2007: 6)

While contemporary pedagogical approaches are presented as benign, ideologically neutral and indeed essential in order to facilitate participation in university education, particularly of 'non-traditional' students, we see a disturbing tendency where the encounter with ideas and what Meyer and Land (2005) term '*troublesome knowledge*' as an end in itself is no longer seen as part of a university education. We are deeply concerned by the anti-intellectualism involved in the notion that ideas are 'too difficult' to teach to today's students and in any case not particularly 'relevant'. For us, the reductionism of these approaches represents yet another dimension of the new poverty of student life; which is not just about being materially poor, but about the intellectual poverty of a pedagogy which fails to give students the opportunity to be intellectually provoked, pushed and challenged. It is in this sense that we argue that a university educational experience has become synonymous to a sat-nav system whereby in a commoditised system of exchange – student as consumer, university as provider – undergraduates are increasingly guided through their studies in ways erode intellectual integrity. A common manifestation of this is found in the way students will complain about their marks, having put in minimal effort in terms of reading and research: the bread and butter of academic life.

### ***The Expansion of Higher Education: Does More Mean Worse?***

In order to enter a debate about pedagogy within the contemporary university it is first necessary to set out the context in which debates on HE have unfolded. In recent years, both broadsheets and tabloids have regularly carried reports associating the inclusion of 'non-traditional' students and/or 'non traditional academic subjects such as 'media studies' with so called 'dumbing down'. As the following headline in the right wing Daily Mail newspaper on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012 illustrates: "*'Dumbed-down' degrees: University standards under fire as 50% more students awarded a first*".

These views draw on a long tradition of concern about making education available to all but a select few. The High Tory T.S. Eliot argued in his 1948 essay Notes towards the Definition of Culture that:

There is no doubt that in our headlong rush to educate everybody, we are lowering our standards... destroying ancient edifices to make ready the ground upon which the barbarian nomads of the future will encamp in their mechanised caravans. (Eliot, 1948: 111)

While the language here might come across as a bit stiff for today's conservatives, the same essential ideas resonate in the utterances of the former Chief Inspector of Schools in the UK Chris Woodhead regarding policies of "Widening Participation":

A university ought to be an institution in which those young people who have the intellectual ability to benefit engage with the best that has been thought and written. The government's...bleakly utilitarian view of higher education is unlikely to deliver the knowledge and skill the economy needs; its commitment to social inclusion is calculated, through the manipulation of admissions procedures and the dumbing - down of academic standards, to destroy the prize it wants all to enjoy (Woodhead, 2002).

These quotes characterise the idea education should essentially be the province of the select few and that in Kingsley Amis' infamous adage 'more will mean worse'. However we would also note that this opposition is no longer confined to traditional conservatives. In the 2004 book Where Have All the Intellectuals Gone? sociologist Frank Furedi also takes up this issue of inclusivity and in his analysis, the negative impact it has on standards. He notes that cynically:

...in education...there are desperate attempts made to ensure that people achieve some kind of qualification. As a result standards are continuously reconfigured to ensure that students succeed (2004:17)

While Furedi denies that he is writing a "lament for a golden age" (2004:22), he occupies remarkably similar territory to traditional conservatives such as Eliot and Woodhead, whose views are echoed in moral panics around 'standards' which are the stock-in-trade of the right wing press in the UK. While Furedi's work incorporates a critique of instrumentalisation along similar lines to our argument, he accompanies this with uncritical praise of the 'traditional intellectual' as the well-intentioned guardian of knowledge, effacing the exclusion upon which this system was based. Hence while appearing superficially critical, we would argue that Furedi reinscribes the elitist idea that it is entry of the great unwashed into the educational system that is the source of its current problems; returning the debate once again to a zero-sum game of inclusivity versus standards.

In spite of our criticisms of the contemporary university and the concurrent commodification of knowledge that accompanies it, we therefore argue against any nostalgia for 'the good old days' – not least for the fact that these good old days were characterised by incredibly limited participation in university life. It is in this context that we return to what we see as the contemporary relevance of Paulo Freire's work on critical pedagogy and emancipatory education, both in relation to developing a critique of the contemporary zeitgeist, discussed above, and in providing the materials for a different form of pedagogical practice.

### ***Consumerist Pedagogy***

There can be little doubt that the commodification and instrumentalisation of education as a whole, has resulted in many students having different expectations of university life. For the privileged few who may end up in an 'elite' institution, expectations may still remain relatively located in what to the majority is a bygone age. However, for that vast majority of students, their expectations of university life in general, how they learn and engage with academic work, such as reading, research and critical thinking, and how they perceive the role of tutors, are very different to the Humboldtian notion that the primary purpose of going to university is to 'read' and discourse with a community of scholars.

One of the key assumptions underpinning the changes that have been introduced within the consumerist model of education that is being heavily promoted by government and some educationalists – and something that is encouraged by such things as the National Student Survey and league tables in general – is the assumption that the 'customer knows best'. Within HE, this is characterised most overtly in the ritualistic course evaluations, where students are 'empowered' to provide feedback, usually in the form of Lickert scale ratings on things as lecturer performance and curriculum content. This data is then collated and increasingly utilised by managers to discipline lecturers who are seen in students assessment to fall short of the mark. The point here is not that students should be silenced, but rather the valorisation of a particularly myopic form of consumerism into which students are co-opted. This results in the construction of antagonistic relations between students and lecturers, but also gives students an entirely false sense of 'empowerment' which usually only results in cosmetic changes, but more worrying can undermine the creativity and confidence of teaching staff (Reference needed).

The hegemony of consumerism expressed here reflects wider social and cultural shift concerning the relationship between the state and the citizenry. One key manifestation of this which is relevant to your discussion here is the fact that we are now seen as a much less 'trusting' society. In her Reith Lecture series the moral philosopher Onora O'Neill has characterised this as one in which:

Mistrust and suspicion have spread across all areas of life, and supposedly with good reason. Citizens, it is said, no longer trust governments, or politicians, or ministers, or the police, or the courts, or the prison service. Consumers, it is said, no longer trust business, especially big business, or their products. None of us, it is said, trusts banks, or insurers, or pension providers. Patients, it is said, no longer trust doctors (think of Dr Shipman!), and in particular no longer trust hospitals or hospital consultants. 'Loss of trust' is in short, a cliché of our times (Onora, 2004).

Alongside this apparent decline in trust is also a distrust of professional and/or expert knowledge. The historian Dominic Sandbrook in his work on the UK in the 1970s (Sandbrook, 2012) has noted how pervasive the culture of deference to professional and expert knowledge

was during this period. Universities, like Schools, Social Work Departments and Hospitals as they developed in the UK in the post-war period, were based on a culture in which 'professionals knew best'. It was through the radical and counter-cultural movements of the 1970s that this began to change. We have written elsewhere (Singh and Cowden, 2007) about the impact of this in Health and Social Care through the rise of the concept of "service-user involvement" in services. In particular we suggest in this piece that while the demands of the social movements were hugely important as an expression of shifts in the relationship between the state and citizenry in Britain, they were interpolated ideologically through the lens of neo-liberal dominance in the political and economic sphere. Margaret Thatcher, the then British Prime Minister articulated a powerful new common-sense discourse when she appeared to speak for the 'ordinary person' *against* the state, by which she meant public services. So are we living through a strange kind of reverse panopticon where professionals are now under the microscope? Or does the new consumerism simply offer a more sophisticated mirage of control, rather like the way a sat-nav gives you the illusion that you will never be lost.

The notion of the student as expert in education is superficially appealing as a critique of old-style elitism, but what this denies is the actual expertise that teachers and educators possess. In effacing this, the new consumerist pedagogy deprives students of the opportunity to genuinely experience learning through the encounter with a historically developed body of knowledge. As Fanghanel notes:

a narrow consumerist model potentially leads to restricting the possibility to engage students fully with the meaning of the educational enterprise, and of its relation of the wider world. These broader conceptions allow for different imaginings of learning, and of the relation between students and academics (2012:65).

The consumerist model perfectly epitomises the idea of sat-nav education, where the potential experience to be gained in attempting to navigate between two points is reduced to a mechanical act of inputting some codes into a machine that then does the thinking for you. Whilst one may manage to get to one's destination much of the time, this is achieved without any sense of *how* this process took place. This is akin to students being offered no real sense of where the course of study they are embarked upon comes from, or being unable to see why this matters. The quote from Paulo Freire which gave us the title for this book expresses this idea; that it is this encounter and engagement with new, difficult and often 'troublesome' knowledge (Meyer and Land), which allows a student to move beyond 'learning' to 'knowing'. And it is through such an experience that genuine educational processes are embodied. The predominant anti-intellectualism inherent in the new forms of instrumentalised pedagogy work alongside the commodification of knowledge, which we discussed in Chapter 1, and we argue that it is making the contemporary university a place where learning comes to be equated with a process of fulfilling assessment requirements, configured around prescribed learning objectives. In short students are being taught how to operate a 'sat-nav' system, instead of how to navigate a real terrain, and in the process to discover it anew for themselves.

### ***The Academic's Experience***

So far we have discussed the impact that consumerism is having on student identities. We now turn to focus on Universities as institutions and specifically the roles and identities of academics. In thinking about identity and pedagogy, it is important to reflect upon how one might conceptualise the university. What we see are institutions with multiple functions (political, ideological, economic), with much diversity within and between institutions (size, age, range of subjects, geographical appeal, funding etc.) and which serve many different thought related functions (research, instruction, innovation etc.). And of course the really huge change that is going to take place with the shift of the burden of funding education from the state to students is the transformation of universities from essentially public institutions to private corporate entities.

As we noted in the introduction to this book, the present climate, both politically and economically, is dominated by the crisis of the banking sector, and the capacity of governments throughout the western world to keep these institutions afloat. For the Universities this is proving to be extremely significant because these conditions expose the weaknesses and corruptibility of systems driven by the logics of unregulated markets, i.e. the logics of neoliberalism. The current crisis of capitalist economies and production also highlights the 'bankruptcy, literally and figuratively', (Cowden, 2010:24) of a political ideology and administrative practices in which Market considerations trumps all other considerations and where the 'individual' rather than collective interest would prevail. One of the most powerful effects that this ideology has had on HE is to encourage 'commodified, hyper-managed and anti-intellectual forms of knowledge production' (Canaan and Shumar:XXXX).

How do these changes impact on educators? Well, for some/many it has meant constant restructuring, reorganisation, more pressure, and for some loss of jobs and departments, such as many recent closures for University departments for so other reason that they were not bringing in enough money; the closures of the philosophy departments at Middlesex University and at Kings College in 2010 were examples of this in the UK. The consequence for academics are profound in many ways, and this has forced them to make choices; a relatively new thing for this group of professionals who historically have been insulated from neo-liberal labour market reforms (see Fanganel 2012 for a wider discussion of this). For those who respond 'pragmatically' to these changes, discomfort can be tempered by the new career opportunities which have emerged within the framework of corporatized academia. The price often paid is in the abandoning of original career aspirations as teachers and/or scholars, often accompanied by complete reskilling as managers of departments and courses. For those that choose to resist, the most basic practices of critical, ethical and politically conscious pedagogy become political acts, and many once-straightforward matters of professional/academic discretion, have become matters of political principle. This is true in other fields as well: health professionals, artists, social workers, journalists, civil servants etc all suggest that it is increasingly difficult to work within existing social institutions with any kind of personal or

professional integrity, so alienated have these institutions become from the basic principles of public service and individual autonomy that even the mainstream professions have been built around.

In a similarly utilitarian vein, the recent Research Excellence Framework in the UK contains within it a need to demonstrate the “impact” of research. This does not concern the value or impact of work amongst particular field of study, where it could be highly significant – this has been substituted by a populist market driven notion of impact. Anthony Grafton has highlighted the dangers of an approach to research and teaching that devalues academics, and which is simply driven by populist market trends. Using a the metaphor of food and cooking he talks about the need to avoid the culture of targets and the kinds of student assessment that elevated instant gratification over slow realisation or form over substance:

Accept the short term as your standard—support only what students want to study right now and outside agencies want to fund right now—and you lose the future. The subjects and methods that will matter most in twenty years are often the ones that nobody values very much right now. Slow scholarship—like Slow Food—is deeper and richer and more nourishing than the fast stuff. But it takes longer to make, and to do it properly, you have to employ eccentric people who insist on doing things their way” (Grafton, 2010)

Grafton here spells out the relationship between Managerialism and Neo-liberalism, and the extent of its influence on teaching, on funding of courses and on research. As Joyce Canaan and Wesley Shumar have noted in their work on the ‘Neo-Liberal University’, the same processes which have been used in high schools have been similarly deployed in HE, where under a populist rhetoric of participation, consumer choice and flexibility a market-driven form of managerialism dominates. For them, the process of marketisation is essentially deployed as an instrument to extract ‘more for less’, i.e. a ‘disciplinary apparatus to create greater efficiencies’ (2009:4). Commodification, is more of a process where social good and transactions, such as the delivery of teaching and learning, are turned into commodities; hence the idea that students are no longer students but customers and staff are ‘service providers’ and ‘income generators’.

### ***The Student Experience***

If these reforms create confusions for academics then equally they throw up contradictions for students. The glossy brochures, elaborate complaints mechanisms, online resources, course packs, detailed coursework guidance and endless student surveys discussed earlier may give them a sense power and influence. While the professed rationale for these measures may be about improving the quality of the learning experience, this often simply masks an insidious and often invisible process where resources are redistributed away from teaching and towards servicing the new structures which are necessitated by these new forms of student engagement (Statistics on Redist UCU). An illustration of this was what happened in the UK

following the introduction of university fees in the UK in 2004. Much of this extra income was used to develop the business and commercial arms of universities, while the contact time which teaching staff had with student actually went down.

In addition to this redistribution of resources away from teaching, we see an impoverishment of the student learning experience where critical thinking, discovery and self efficacy is often substituted for instrumentalist, standardised approaches that require universities to have good progression rates and degree classifications in order to maintain or even improve their position in league tables. One consequence for students, as has been happening in schools for many years is that parents, teachers begin to collude to focus on results and nothing else. As Cannan and Shumar suggest, this can lead to a limiting of creative and critical capacities and encouraging their “dulling down” (2009:7)

An example of this is the modular system, which has been thrust upon HE ironically in order to create flexibility with and between institutions. Maggie Savin-Baden has noted that the main effect of this is to ‘fragment and striate learning’ (2008:23). She goes on to lament emphasis on a performative curriculum design driven by the culture of learning objectives that tend to emphasise behavioural and measurable traits. This places the attention on what students are expected to learn and likewise what lecturers are expected to assess. These devices so easily become like Sat-Nav systems, providing an easy formula for teaching and learning which closes down the possibility of creative curriculum design, structures and spaces. In an approach where certainty becomes paramount, there appears to be little space for what Savin-Baden terms ‘transitional spaces’ which are characterised by ambivalence, critical reflexivity, liminality, as well as the idea of education as ‘troublesome knowledge’.

By managerialising pedagogic practices, the sense of teaching as a craft is undermined and replaced by a series of standardised and ritualised pedagogic practices. And one manifestation, as Henry Giroux (1988) has noted is the way that a profound anti-intellectualism turns the classroom into a place where students are passively trained for rote learned information – the sense that ideas could be interesting, exciting or transformative is entirely lost. Hence the language of skills and competencies in the contemporary university is, far from the ideological neutrality it claims, about a process where creative independent thinking is severely discouraged, as crucial ideas and concepts are replaced with formulas. What is lost here is the crucial idea that through encountering new ideas and concepts, that students could gain a new or a deeper understanding of their experiences.

### *Critical Pedagogy*

In the chapter so far we have sought to highlight a series of problems associated with the impact of neo-liberalism on the modern university. In concluding the chapter we now turn to the tradition of Critical Pedagogy and what it may offer in responding to these challenges. As conveners of the ‘Critical Pedagogy and Popular Education Group’ we offer the following principles that we have developed as a starting point:

1. Develop and advocate pedagogies of engagement, life and hope, aiming to break down the barriers between informal and formal education, old and new universities, research and teaching and between classes and ethnic groups.
2. Rethink the university as a radically democratic social and political institution and not a business.
3. Create learning and teaching environments in formal and informal educational spaces that facilitate dialogue, reflexivity and connection to real life needs and that enable the creation of methodologies encouraging and realising more democratic practices
4. Link activism outside and inside the academy, utilising the insights stemming from both practical engagement with the world and engagement with theory that seeks to understand the world?
5. Challenge the individualised atomisation and instrumental and fatalist thinking and discourses that neo-liberalism encourages, through in part, its assumption that 'There Is No Alternative' to neo-liberalism.

(Amsler, Canaan, Cowden, Motta and Singh (eds.), 2010)

We developed these principles because we saw it as essential to challenge the neo-liberal mantra of there being 'No Alternative' to consumerism, managerialism and privatisation. History shows us that there is always an alternative, and we look to the examples of active resistance and direct action, as in the case of the student activism at the University of California in 2010, the occupations of Middlesex University, Sussex University and Kings College, as well as the huge student demonstrations in London against the policy to raise tuition fees to £9,000 in the UK in 2010-11, as well as the ongoing struggles against fees imposed on students in Quebec in 2012. We see these part of the battleground through which Higher Education is being taken out of any sense of accountability to the public at large, where ownership of public institutions is being privatised and where any sense of education as a public good with a is being first undermined and then removed altogether from the discussion. In relation to mounting a counter attack to what Giroux (2007) represent nothing less than an attack on higher education from an 'alliance of diverse right-wing forces' (p5). Worst still, notwithstanding the kinds of examples of student resistance mentioned above, Giroux goes on to highlight the capitulation of many progressive educators who have at best become silenced and in some instances 'tacit apologists in the face of this assault' (p5).

In order to challenge these processes we argue that there needs to be a multi pronged strategy which begins with developing a critique and understanding that far from being benign and/or inevitable, the changes taking place in higher education are ideological, undemocratic, anti-intellectual and antithetical to the principles of social justice. Hence, then most important steps toward resistance are those that begins within our own minds and those of our students; through a realisation that teaching in HE at its best is about being creative, taking risks, having

passion, celebrating intellectual pursuits and the transformative power of education. Whilst recognising there will always be a need for 'technical education', we reject the kinds of abstracted and packaged forms of commodified learning, be it in the form online learning or didactic instructional learning.

Most important of all we believe that teachers and students need to see themselves as jointly collaborating to 'build networks and communities of learning' that transcends boundaries of race, class and genders. In what might seem like a somewhat paradoxical approach this will require us, as Joyce Cannan in her work has noted to be 'in, against, for and beyond the state' (REF need possibly Cannan...). Some of these alliances will be funded and others will not be. Some will be within and between subject disciplines, departments and universities, some will be outside (examples Nottingham Free School, University in the Park, Lincoln Social Science Centre) and others will transcend the two spheres.

Also, at the organisational level as many universities have a remit (both legal and policy) for internationalisation, public engagement and promoting diversity, we feel there are possibilities for developing alternative progressive interpretations. (Needs expanding with perhaps some radical examples of public engagement)

As noted earlier, part of the problem is the profound lack of confidence or will power amongst left leaning academics to challenge the hegemony of neoliberalism and in this regard there is an urgent need to help regain confidence in the relevance of radical critiques of capitalism of which Marxism is still the most powerful. In his book '*Why Marx was right*', Terry Eagleton does precisely this. In his usual wonderfully lyrical accessible style he poses a simple tantalising question '*What if all the most familiar objections to Marx's works are mistaken?*'. (2011: ix). He then identifies 10 criticisms of Marx and then proceeds to systematically and persuasively refute them. He takes on such criticisms of Marxism as being anachronistic, not having practical relevance, overly deterministic, utopian, undemocratic and bureaucratic. We feel there is a

In relation to pedagogical strategies, we see the task of building an alternative pedagogy as beginning with an understanding of the contradictory function of education in modern capitalist societies like ours, and a crucial starting point within this for us has been our engagement with the work of the Brazilian radical educationalist Paulo Freire. While the context in which Freire developed his ideas was radically different from our own, we see the insights of his seminal 1970 text Pedagogy of the Oppressed as incredibly relevant to our situation today. Freire is particularly important for the way he emphasises the fundamentally *political* nature of pedagogical processes. He argues that it is only through recognising this that we can begin to, in his phrase, "humanise the curriculum". A key issues in which we have sought to use Freire in our own pedagogical work has been to recognise the way today's students are ontologically caught between a desire for predictable and bite size learning (sat-nav learning) alongside an innate human desire to experience something that is new and aesthetically challenging. Freire is distinctive for the way he saw this paradox as not just about human ambivalence in the broadest sense, but as particularly concerned with questions of

power and powerlessness, which frame his discussion within *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. He expressed this as follows:

The oppressed suffer from a duality, which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalised. The conflict lies in the choice between...following prescription or having choices, between being spectators or actors...between speaking or remaining silent (1996:30).

For Freire pedagogy was the basis by which education produced silent domesticated students for whom 'learning' remained entirely separate to their consciousness and subjectivity, as opposed to students who were given licence to speak in their own voices and in that process discover and develop insights into both themselves as well as the world they lived in. His central distinction is between what he calls "banking education" and "problem posing education". Within banking education students are conceived of as:

..."receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher. The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are. Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor...In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those who consider they know nothing...The students, alienated like the slave in the Hegelian dialectic, accept their ignorance as justifying the teacher's existence – but unlike the slave, they never discover that they educate the teacher (1970:53)

Problem-posing education, sees the fundamental purpose of education as concerned with:

... posing the problems of human beings in their relations with the world ...[It] consists of acts of cognition, not transferrals of information...The teacher is no longer the one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach (1970:60-61)

This idea of education where the teacher and the student are both engaged in teaching each other and learning from each other reflects the deep egalitarianism and democratic impulse in Freire's philosophy. The teacher's Knowledge is not a private accumulation, but rather something that becomes efficacious through engagement with students. We see the Friirian idea of *dialogue* not just as about the inherent value of people talking with each other, but rather as a mutual engagement based on a dialectical interchange of theory and experience.

We see this model of banking as one that has been massively revived in the contexts of new instrumental pedagogies. While we noted earlier the paradox of student wants and needs, we think it is very important to note the significance of recent research in this area. The good

news is that given the choice of an instrumental learning experience or an emancipatory learning experience, most students most of the time will chose the latter. In a study of over 1000 undergraduate students from both so-called 'Russell group and Non-Russell group HEI's Ainley and Weyers (2009) revealed that the most important priorities identified by across the sector tended to be intrinsic factors associated with interest in their subject, the desire to develop as a person, whereas extrinsic motivators, namely to compete with others and getting a qualification to obtain a good job were ranked lowest. In terms of student approaches to studying, there was consensus across the groups for a preference for deep learning over surface learning (Biggs, 1999) whilst valuing equally instructive teaching and teaching that encouraged autonomy.

### **Conclusion**

Just as neoliberal banking created a mirage of ever increasing wealth, which turned out to be non-existent, the managerial formulas of neoliberal education are we believe equally empty. The instrumentalisation of universities through the conflation of education and training, commodification of knowledge and standardisation of curriculum has, we suggest, not only undermined student's capacities to think critically for themselves and to see the intrinsic value in education itself, but it has also radically altered the roles and identities of academics. From the Humboldtian conception of scholar exercising high levels of academic and institutional freedom, as Fanghanel (2012) describes, we now have the 'managed academic' characterised as a member of a 'compliant tribe' who is only able to 'operate within the parameters of instructions and regulations' (p29). If you like the academic has morphed from an explorer in his/her own right to a an embodied sat-nav system whose purpose is reduced to help students to navigate their way through university and into a job by the shortest possible route.

Some will argue that what we are seeing is benign evolutionary process, a necessary awakening and adaptation of universities to the new realities of mass globalisation higher education. Yet for others such as Henry Giroux (2007) these changes represent a cynical assault on universities and a diminishing of their historical yet unfulfilled role as democratic public spaces tasked with guaranteeing critical thinking and intellectual engagement.

And it is in this sense that it becomes so important that we as educators recover and reinvent the tradition of Critical Pedagogy, and particularly the concept of education as the capacity for nurturing critically engaged citizenship. Interestingly, one of the remedies to the banking crisis has been a call to return banks to their original purpose and mode of operation.

However, persuading students that have been nurtured on 'satnav' education or 'fast food' pedagogy, of the efficacy of self directed learning or of sustained and focussed reading appears to be the greatest challenge facing us today.

**Pedagogy is never innocent. But if it is to be understood and made problematic as a moral and political practice, educators must not only critically question and register**

**their own subjective involvement in how and what they teach, they must also resist calls to transform pedagogy into the mere application of standardized practical methods and techniques. Otherwise, teachers become indifferent to the ethical and political dimensions of their own authority and practice (Giroux, 2010 Para 24).**

In the process of responding to demands for developing new creative pedagogical approaches, we feel we have thrown out the baby with the bath water. Whilst technology can certainly enhance and expand pedagogical possibilities, it cannot be a substitute for developing the craft of teaching, which has been established over the past 3 millennia. And the key role here is to induct students into the art of critical enquiry and 'intellectual conversations', which enables them to become 'public actors' (Gouldner, 1979). In short, it is to become navigators rather than travellers

We believe the intellectual enterprise constitutes the very essence of university education and life and without it the university ceases to be a university. Therefore, it follows that with the advent of mass HE we need to extol not denigrate the virtues of intellectual life; indeed, we need to argue for mass intellectuality. As Monica Maclean in her book *Pedagogy and the University* argues:

**"university teaching is an activity for intellectuals who are educating intellectuals; and teaching essential to the integrity of universities as places of intellectual activity" (Maclean, 2006 p106)**

When we mark students work we all lament the absence of critical thinking, but it is crucial to realise that this is not just a pedagogical problem but one of a deficit of imagination that commoditised sat-nav education encourages. Moreover, we believe this deficit of imagination and intellectuality is not only a reflection of the construction of student subjectivity, as consumers, but also of our own experience as academics and the institutions that we are working in.

So before we seek to teach students how to make slow food, we need to reflect on our own experience and commitments to slow scholarship. If we become ambivalent about developing deep learning and thinking, then we can't be surprised if students do likewise. Put another way, the choice is ours; we can either behave as technicians and instructors assisting students to learn how to input data into the sat-nav system or we can help them to read maps, to go off the beaten track of certainty and to orientate them to find their way through what is often a painful, unpredictable, uncertain but ultimately extremely fulfilling terrain of learning.

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