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THE WILEY HANDBOOK OF
GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Edited by
KENNETH J. SALTMAN
ALEXANDER J. MEANS

WILEY Blackwell

The Wiley Handbook of Global Educational Reform

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Notes on Contributors

Chris Arthur is a teacher in the Toronto District School Board, Canada. His research interests include philosophy and sociology of education, political economy, ethics, and critical policy analysis. Dr. Arthur's work appears in a number of education journals and his book, *Financial Literacy Education: Neoliberalism, the Consumer and the Citizen* (2012), is published by Sense Publishers.

Stephen J. Ball is Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology of Education at the University College London, Institute of Education, UK. He was elected Fellow of the British Academy in 2006; and is also Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and Society of Educational Studies, and a Laureate of Kappa Delta Phi; he has honorary doctorates from the Universities of Turku (Finland), and Leicester. He is co-founder and Managing Editor of the *Journal of Education Policy*. His main areas of interest are in sociologically informed education policy analysis and the relationships between education, education policy, and social class. He has written 20 books and had published over 140 journal articles. Recent books: *Edu.Net* (Routledge, 2017) and *Foucault as Educator* (Springer, 2017).

Larry Bencze is an Associate Professor in Science Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada, where he teaches in the graduate studies program. In addition to his PhD from the Universityof Toronto, 1995 and BEd from Queen's University in 1977 in education, he holds a BSc from Queen's University in 1974 and an MSc Queen's University in 1977 in biology. Prior to his work as a professor, he worked as a teacher of science in elementary and secondary schools and as a science education consultant in Ontario, Canada. His teaching and research emphasize the history, philosophy, and sociology of science and technology, along with student-led research-informed and negotiated socio-political actions to address personal, social, and environmental harms associated with fields of science and technology. He has recently edited (or co-edited) two books about activism and is co-editor of the open-source, non-refereed, journal on activism at: goo.gl/cvO2TA.

Xavier Bonal is Professor of Sociology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain, and Special Professor of Education and International Development at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He is the director of the research

group, Globalisation, Education and Social Policies (GEPS) at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and Coordinator of the GLOBED Project, an Erasmus Mundus Master on Education Policies for Global Development. He has been member of the EU Network of Experts in Social Sciences and Education (NESSE) and is member of the Editorial Board of several international journals of education policies and educational development. Professor Bonal has published widely in national and international journals and is the author of several books on the sociology of education, education policy and globalization, education and development. He has worked as a consultant for international organizations, such as UNESCO, UNICEF, the European Commission, and the Council of Europe. Between 2006 and 2010, he was Deputy Ombudsman for Children's Rights at the Office of the Catalan Ombudsman.

Lyn Carter is a science educator at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, Australia, where she also teaches in the higher degrees programs. The overall aim of her research seeks new articulations of science education valuing cultural diversity, ecological sustainability, and social justice in a globalized world. More specifically, she specializes in science educational policy and curriculum studies, with a particular emphasis on the effects and consequences of globalization and neoliberalism as it reshapes science education for the twenty-first century. All of these areas are reflected in the titles of her manuscripts published extensively in prominent international science education journals including *JRST*, *RISE*, *Science Education* and *CSSE* as well as many book chapters.

Steven J. Courtney is a Lecturer in Management and Leadership in the Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester, UK. His work critically explores school leaders' identities and agency in the context of regimes of power, and how these interplay with education policy. Dr Courtney was awarded the AERA Division A 2016 Outstanding Dissertation Award, the BELMAS Thesis Award 2016, and the BERA Doctoral Thesis Award 2016 for his doctoral research, which focused on the relationship between the structural reform of education and school leaders' identity construction and practice.

Noah De Lissovoy is Associate Professor of Cultural Studies in Education at the University of Texas at Austin, USA. His research centers on emancipatory approaches to education policy, curriculum, and cultural studies, with a special focus on the intersecting effects of race, class, and capital. He is the author of *Power, Crisis, and Education for Liberation* (Palgrave), *Education and Emancipation in the Neoliberal Era* (Palgrave), and co-author (with Alexander Means and Kenneth Saltman) of *Toward a New Common School Movement* (Paradigm). His work has appeared in many journals, including *Harvard Educational Review*, *Curriculum Inquiry*, *Critical Sociology*, *Discourse*, and *Educational Philosophy and Theory*.

Clara Fontdevila holds a degree in Sociology from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology of the same university, with a thesis research project on the settlement of the post-2015 global education agenda through network analysis.

She has collaborated with Education International on different investigations, including a research project on the role of the World Bank in the global promotion of teacher reforms, and a study on the political economy of education privatization. Previously, she also participated in the 2012 evaluation report of the Global and Regional Civil Society Education Funds (CSEF), supported by the Global Partnership of Education. Her areas of interest are private-sector engagement in education policy, education and international development, and the global governance of education.

Mark J. Garrison holds both a BA and an MA in Sociology and a PhD in the Social Foundations of Education, with a concentration in the Sociology of Education. Since 1995, he has worked in various higher education institutions, serving in a variety of research, administrative, and faculty roles. He is currently Professor of Education Policy & Research in the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at D'Youville College, Buffalo, New York. Mark is a recognized education policy analyst and public intellectual focusing on the political, sociological, and philosophical significance of education policy. His scholarship has won him national acclaim, including the 2011 American Education Studies Association Critic's Choice Award and the 2010 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title for his book, *A Measure of Failure: The Political Origins of Standardized Testing* (SUNY Press, 2009).

Henry A. Giroux currently holds the McMaster University Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest in the English and Cultural Studies Department and a Distinguished Visiting Professorship at Ryerson University,Toronto, Canada. His most recent books are *America's Education Deficit and the War on Youth* (Monthly Review Press, 2013) and *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education* (Haymarket Press, 2014).

Helen M. Gunter is Professor of Educational Policy and Sarah Fielden Professor of Education in the Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester, UK, and is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. She co-edits the *Journal of Educational Administration and History*. Her work focuses on the politics of education policy and knowledge production in the field of school leadership. Her most recent books are: *An Intellectual History of School Leadership Practice and Research* (Bloomsbury, 2016) and with Colin Mills, *Consultants and Consultancy: The Case of Education* (Springer, 2017).

David Hall is Professor of Education at the Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester, UK. His research has focused upon education professionals and their experiences of and responses to large-scale reforms intended to transform their practices. This research has been funded by organizations including the UK Economic and Social Research Council, the Department for Education and the EU, and his work has been published in a range of international journals and books. David is the Founding Head of the Manchester Institute of Education.

Sarah Hayes has taught across Sociology, Education and Computing at Aston University and University of Worcester, UK. Sarah is interested in ways that the role of humans and their academic labor are frequently diminished within

educational policy language. Through her teaching and research, Sarah is exploring forms of resistance, via creative approaches toward restoring the presence of human bodies and emotion. Sarah recently became a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, co-edited a Special Issue of *Knowledge Cultures*, was commissioned by the UK Quality Assurance Agency to write a literature review on MOOCs and Quality, achieved a SEDA/Jisc Institutional Change Leader Award for student partnership, and has published articles through *European Political Science*, *Open Review of Educational Research*, Libri, and Springer.

David Hursh is Professor in the Warner Graduate School of Education at the University of Rochester, USA. His primary area of research and political activism focuses on neoliberalism, the politics of high-stakes testing and the corporate reform movement. A second area of research is environmental health and sustainability. His research has resulted in numerous publications and presentations across the globe, including six books and one hundred journal articles and book chapters. His two most recent single-authored books are *The End of Public Schools: The Corporate Reform Agenda to Privatize Education* (2016) and *High-Stakes Testing and the Decline of Teaching and Learning: The Real Crisis in Education* (2008). He is associate editor for the Americas for the *Journal of Education Policy* and editor of the section on current issues and debates for the journal *Policy Futures in Education*.

Marcea Ingersoll is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at St. Thomas University, New Brunswick, Canada. She has been a teacher and learner alongside colleagues, students, and pre-service teachers in Canada, Malaysia, and Morocco. Emerging from her experiences as an international teacher and a teacher-educator, her scholarly work explores pedagogical practices and identity around the globe.

Petar Jandrić is an educator, researcher, and activist. He is Professor and Director of BSc (Informatics) program at the Zagreb University of Applied Sciences, and Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Zagreb, Croatia. Petar has worked at the Croatian Academic and Research Network, the University of Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art, and the University of East London. He has published three books, several dozens of scholarly articles and chapters, and numerous popular articles. Petar's books have been published in Croatian, English, Ukrainian, Spanish, and Serbian. He regularly participates in national and international educational projects and policy initiatives. His background is in physics, education, and information science, and his research interests are situated at the post-disciplinary intersections between technologies, pedagogies. and society.

Alice Jowett is the Education Policy Manager at The ONE Campaign. Prior to joining ONE, Alice worked as an International Visiting Scholar at the University of Redlands, California. Alice holds a PhD in Global Development and Education from the University of Leeds, UK. Her practical and scholarly work over the past decade has focused particularly on lifelong learning and agency, with an emphasis on South and South-East Asia.

Sangeeta Kamat is Professor of International Education at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, USA. Her work focuses on globalization, education, and inequality. She is currently working on a book on "Globalization, Higher Education and Uneven Development," based on research in the Andhra and Telangana region. She is also working on issues of inclusion, equity, and excellence in higher education in collaboration with Pune University and on "Right to Education, Right to the City." Dr. Kamat received her PhD in Comparative and International Education from the University of Pittsburgh.

Steven J. Klees is Professor of International Education Policy at the University of Maryland, USA. He completed his PhD at Stanford University and has taught at Cornell University, Stanford University, Florida State University, and the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte in Brazil. He was a Fulbright Scholar on two occasions at the Federal University of Bahia in Brazil. Professor Klees' work examines the political economy of education and development with specific research interests in globalization, neoliberalism, and education; the role of aid agencies; education, human rights, and social justice; the education of disadvantaged populations; the role of class, gender, and race in reproducing and challenging educational and social inequality; and alternative approaches to education and development. He is the co-editor of the book, *The World Bank and Education: Critiques and Alternatives* (Sense, 2012). He is the former president of the Comparative and International Education Society.

Ravi Kumar teaches at the Department of Sociology, South Asian University, Delhi, India. His works include *Neoliberalism, Critical Pedagogy and Education* (ed. Routledge, 2016); *Contemporary Readings in Marxism: A Critical Introduction* (ed. Aakar Books, 2016); *Education, State and Market: Anatomy of Neoliberal Impact* (ed. Aakar Books, 2014); *Social Movements: Transformative Shifts and Turning Points* (co-ed. Routledge, 2014); *Education and the Reproduction of Capital: Neoliberal Knowledge and Counterstrategies* (ed. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); *Global Neoliberalism and Education and its Consequences* (co-ed. Routledge, 2009). He co-edits the book series on Social Movements, Dissent and Transformative Action (Routledge); Conversations on/for South Asia (Aakar Books); and Sociology/Anthropology Across Borders (Primus Books). His area of research includes the political economy of identity politics, social movements, the neoliberal impact on education and processes, and the politics of knowledge production. He is an Associate Editor of the journal, *Society and Culture in South Asia*.

Ralph Levinson is Reader in Education at University College London, Institute of Education, UK. As well as supervising doctoral students, he teaches on Masters courses and has many years experience teaching pre-service practitioners. Before working in higher education, he taught for 12 years in state schools in London. His research interests include socio-political education, chemistry education, and creativity in science teaching. He is a Principal Investigator in two European Union projects dealing with politically contentious issues in science education.

Ruth McGinity is a Lecturer in Educational Leadership and Policy at the Manchester Institute of Education, UK. Her main research interest is the rela-

tionship between localized policy enactment and national and international educational reform processes. She uses socially critical theories in order to illuminate ways in which power works in and between such relationships and the associated inequities that emerge as a result of social, political, and economic relations.

Alexander J. Means is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Hawai'i at Manoa. His research examines educational policy and governance in relation to political economy and social change. He is the author of *Learning to Save the Future: Rethinking Education and Work in the Era of Digital Capitalism* (Routledge, 2018), *Schooling in the Age of Austerity: Urban Education and the Struggle for Democratic Life* (Palgrave, 2013), and *Toward a New Common School Movement* (with Noah De Lissovoy and Kenneth Saltman, Routledge, 2015).

Francine Menashy is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership in Education at the University of Massachusetts Boston, USA. Her research focuses on international aid to education, global education policy, and non-state engagement in educational funding and policy-making. Francine's projects have been funded by such sources as the Open Society Foundation, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and Education International. She was selected as a 2013 National Academy of Education/ Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow and received the 2015 George Z. Bereday Award from the Comparative and International Education Society. Francine holds a PhD from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto.

Mauro Moschetti is an Associate Professor and PhD candidate in the Department of Systematic and Social Pedagogy of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. He has been an assistant researcher and Professor in the Department of Administration of the Universidad de San Andrés and at the School of Government of the Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, Argentina. He has worked in R&D&I projects for the Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation in Argentina, and has collaborated with Education International, UNESCO, and the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS). His main areas of interest are education policy analysis, education privatization policies, school choice, and segregation.

Antonio Olmedo is Reader in Education Policy Sociology at the University of Bristol and Honorary Reader at UCL Institute of Education, UK. His research rests within the fields of education policy analysis and the sociology of education, with a specific focus on the role of the private sector in education; neoliberal policies and the creation of quasi-markets; and global networks, international organizations, policy advocacy, philanthropy and edu-businesses. He has recently completed a research project funded by the British Academy, entitled "Philanthropy, Business and Education: Market-Based Solutions to Educational Problems in Developing Countries." He is currently developing a research project on philanthrocapitalism and the role of edu-businesses in global education policy funded by Education International.

Chantal Pouliot is Full Professor of Science Education at Laval University in Quebec (Canada). Her research focuses on the teaching and learning of socio-technical controversies and the documentation of ongoing environmental controversies. Her latest book is entitled: Quand les citoyen.ne.s soulèvent la poussière [When citizen raise dust] (Carte blanche).

Susan Lee Robertson is Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Cambridge, UK. Prior to this, Susan has held academic posts in New Zealand and Australia. Susan has published widely on transformations of the state, education, and teachers' work in the context of changing world orders. Her recent books include *Global Regionalisms and Higher Education*, and *Public Private Partnerships in Education*. Susan is also the founding editor of the journal, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*.

Kenneth J. Saltman is Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, USA. His research examines the political economy and cultural politics of public school privatization. He is the author and editor of numerous books on educational policy and politics, including *Capitalizing on Disaster: Taking and Breaking Public Schools*; *The Gift of Education: Public Education and Venture Philanthropy*; *The Edison Schools*; *Education as Enforcement: The Militarization and Corporatization of Schools*; *The Failure of Corporate School Reform*; *The Politics of Education: A Critical Introduction*; and *Toward a New Common School Movement* (with Noah De Lissovoy and Alexander J. Means).

Eugenie A. Samier is a Reader in the School of Education at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. Her research concentrates on administrative philosophy and theory, interdisciplinary foundations of administration, theories and models of educational leadership, and comparative educational administration. She has been a visitor to Humboldt University of Berlin, the University of Tartu, Estonia, and Oxford Brookes University and has been a guest lecturer at universities in the USA, Germany, Estonia, Russia, Norway, Lithuania, Finland, Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE. Her publications are on organizational culture and values, the New Public Management, ethics, the role of history and biography in educational administration, the role of humanities, aesthetics and literary analysis, Weberian foundations of administrative theory, comparative administration and Islamic educational administration and leadership in a number of international book collections and many leading journals in the field. She is the editor of seven book collections with Routledge on ethics, aesthetics, politics, emotions, trust and betrayal, ideologies, and maladministration in educational administration, and the author of *Secrecy and Tradecraft in Educational Administration* (Routledge, 2014). She also worked as a management consultant to the public sector for a number of years on a broad variety of projects, including legislation development, organizational reviews, board development, and government department restructuring and redesign.

Gardner Seawright is a doctoral candidate in the Education, Culture, and Society Department at the University of Utah, USA. where he studies the way that normative power structures are articulated within the everyday lives of

students and teachers. Deploying critical, colonial, gender and race theory as a point of departure, Gardner engages the relationality and phenomenology of social hierarchies to illustrate how hierarchies unfold within quotidian, often overlooked, aspects of teaching and learning.

Graham B. Slater is Marriner S. Eccles Fellow in Political Economy at the University of Utah, USA. His research has appeared in the *Journal of Education Policy*, *Educational Studies*, *Policy Futures in Education*, and *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*. He recently co-edited *Educational Commons in Theory and Practice: Global Pedagogy and Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan).

John Smyth is Visiting Professor of Education and Social Justice, University of Huddersfield, UK. He is Emeritus Research Professor of Education, Federation University Australia, Emeritus Professor, Flinders University, author/editor of 35 books, a former Senior Fulbright Research Scholar, the recipient of several awards from the American Educational Research Association, and an elected Fellow of the Academy for Social Science in Australia. He is series editor for the Palgrave Critical University Studies. Among his most recent books are *Critical Educational Research: A Conversation with the Research of John Smyth* (with Down, McInerney & Hatttam, Peter Lang, 2014); *The Socially Just School: Making Space for Youth to Speak Back* (with Down & McInerney, Springer, 2014); *Becoming Educated: Young People's Narratives of Disadvantage, Class, Place and Identity* (with McInerney, Peter Lang, 2014); *Living on the Edge: Rethinking Poverty, Class and Schooling* (with Wrigley, Peter Lang, 2013). Current books in press include: *The Toxic University: Zombie Leadership, Academic Rockstars, and Neoliberal Ideology* (Palgrave Macmillan); (with Simmons, Palgrave Macmillan) *Education and Working Class Youth: Untangling the Politics of Inclusion*; (with Down & Robinson, Springer) *Rethinking School to Work Transitions: Young People Have Something to Say*. His research interests include policy sociology, policy ethnography, social justice, social class, and the sociology of education.

Tore Bernt Sørensen is doctoral researcher at the Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, United Kingdom. His project concerns the mechanisms, outcomes, and contexts in the global educational policy field, focusing on the political construction of the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). Tore graduated as a teacher in Aarhus, Denmark, in 2000. In 2001–2004 he taught young migrants and refugees, and 2004–2009 he worked with professional development for school teachers at University College UCC in Copenhagen and contributed to R&D projects on language-across-the-curriculum and intercultural education. Tore completed a MA in Educational Sociology at the Danish School of Education, Aarhus University. His MA dissertation, "The bias of markets: A comparative study of the market form and identity politics in English and Danish compulsory education" was published in 2011. Before starting as doctoral researcher in Bristol in 2013, Tore worked in the Analysis and Studies Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture in Brussels, Belgium.

Carol Anne Spreen is a Professor of International Education at New York University, USA, and the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa. Her scholarship and policy work focus on issues of school quality and education reform. For the last 20 years she has worked on issues of poverty, inequality, and human rights in education both domestically and internationally, and equity-based reforms in the US, Southern Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Her current research focuses on teachers' lives and work, the impact of privatization and standardized testing on public education. Dr. Spreen received her PhD in Comparative and International Education from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Shelina Thawer is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Education, University College London. Her thesis is on "The Role of Business in Higher Education Policy in India." Her academic interests include global education policy and forms of its mobilization; the participation of business in policy formulation and higher education provision and delivery in lower- and middle income countries; and concerns of equity and access to higher education by vulnerable communities in the emerging economies.

Jurjo Torres-Santomé is Full Professor of Curriculum, Instruction and School Organization, Chair of the Department of Pedagogy, Curriculum and Instruction at the University of A Coruña, Spain, and Coordinator of the Research in Educational Innovation Group, at the same university. He is author of books such as *El curriculum oculto* (1991); *Globalización e interdisciplinariedad: el curriculum integrado* (1994); *Un currículo optimista frente a la desmemoria y el fatalismo* (2001); *Educación en tiempos de Neoliberalismo* (2001); *La desmotivación del profesorado* (2006); *La justicia curricular* (2011); *Políticas educativas y construcción de personalidades neoliberales y neocolonialistas* (2017, in press), and *Globalisms and Power* (co-editor with João M. Paraskeva, 2012).

Salim Vally is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, and Director of the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation and a Visiting Professor at the Nelson Mandela University, South Africa.

Antoni Verger is Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. A former post-doctoral fellow at the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (University of Amsterdam), Dr. Verger's research analyses the relationship between global governance institutions and education policy. He has specialized in the study of public-private partnerships, quasi-market mechanisms and accountability policies in education, and has published extensively on these themes. Currently, he is coordinating the research project REFORMED – Reforming Schools Globally: A Multiscalar Analysis of Autonomy and Accountability Policies in the Education Sector (ERC StG, 2016–2021).

Matthew Weinstein coordinates the Secondary Science Education Program at the University of Washington-Tacoma. He is the author of *Robot World: Education,*

Popular Culture, Science and more recently (with Dr. Nidaa Makki) of *Bodies Out of Control: Rethinking Science Texts*. His work draws on anthropology, cultural studies and political economy to analyze science education in and out of schools as forms of contested public culture. His recent work has analyzed the politics of human subjects, the nationalist discourse of the anthrax attacks of 2001, and the framing of disease and illness in school textbooks. His current research explores the history and culture of the street medics movement.

Ben Williamson is Lecturer in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Stirling, UK, where he focuses on digital technologies and data systems in the governance of education. This work has involved researching the use of digital "big data" analytics and visualization from policy-making to pedagogic practice, tracing the development of new "psycho-informatic" techniques of mood-monitoring to support "social-emotional learning," and examining how brain-based technologies inspired by neuroscience are designed as cognitive enhancement techniques for use in educational settings. He has also researched how education is being reimagined by Silicon Valley tech-entrepreneurs and venture philanthropists and in the future visions of "smart cities." Recent research articles have appeared in *Journal of Education Policy*, *Big Data and Society*, and *Information, Communication and Society*, and he is the author of *Big Data in Education: The Digital Future of Learning, Policy and Practice*.

Zeena Zakharia is Assistant Professor of International and Comparative Education at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Her publications examine the interplay of language, conflict, and peacebuilding in education. These interests stem from over two decades of educational research and leadership in war-affected contexts, most recently in relation to the Syrian crisis. She was a Tueni Fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Middle Eastern Studies Postdoctoral Fellow at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Majd Zouda is a PhD candidate in Science Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on STEM programs in secondary schools in Ontario, Canada. Majd holds a BSc in Microbiology and an MSc in Medical Microbiology. Prior to pursuing a PhD degree, she worked as a high-school science teacher and the head of junior science department in an international school in Damascus, Syria. Recently, she has received the SSHRC doctoral fellowship (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council), and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) awards for her doctoral research. Majd has been actively involved in publications on socioscientific issues, STEM education, and student activism.

Introduction

Toward a Transformational Agenda for Global Education Reform

Kenneth J. Saltman and Alexander J. Means

This edited volume examines educational reform from a global perspective. Currently, a number of trends are converging to fundamentally reshape the thinking, policy, and practice of educational development globally. Transnational institutions, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and powerful transnational corporations, such as Pearson, are promoting an interconnected set of global educational reforms that seek to align national systems of education with the demands of transnational capitalism and elite economic and political interests. Foremost, neoliberal rationalities and policy prescriptions that take economic growth, human capital development, and market exchange as the dominant organizing principles of social and institutional affairs have rapidly expanded. This has functioned to promote privatization and standardization across national educational systems and private sector and market-based models of educational policy. In developing parts of the world, such as in parts of Africa and Asia, private fee-for-service educational franchises (many of them owned by transnational corporate actors) are being promoted and replicated, while in wealthy societies like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, public education systems are being defunded, privatized, commercialized, and subject to corporate restructuring, including an emerging trend to transform education through digital technologies.

   Global educational reform is inextricably linked to broader economic, political, and cultural conflicts over public policy and struggles over educational value and purpose in an era of rapid global change. The chapters in this volume suggest that the dominance of neoliberal frameworks in public policy over the last three decades has tended to reshape educational systems and values in ways that undermine the idea of education as a public good, and has more generally eroded democratic relationships, institutions, and public spheres that foster cultures of dialogue, critical inquiry, and collaboration necessary for democratic life inside

and outside of schools. Education is a vital component in imagining and realizing global futures, precisely at a moment when the future appears ever more precarious due to rising inequality, ecological destruction, weapons proliferation, and reassertion of right-wing nationalism and authoritarianism. Importantly, situating global education reform in terms of the political and ideological contests animating global educational policy and governance, this volume is concerned with examining educational reform without being "reformist." That is, we do not see reform of existing institutional arrangements as being the only, or even the central aim of engagement. Rather, this volume situates reform in the service of broad-based social and democratic transformation. In short, what is at stake in comprehending educational reform today is setting the agenda for educational and social development that serves the interests of civil society and that promotes cultures of intellectuality, self-governance, and egalitarian and sustainable forms of living and being.

Global Education Reform: Trends, Ideology, and Crisis

Scholars in international and comparative education now often refer to a *global education reform movement* to signify a set of clearly identifiable global education reform trends. The Finnish education policy scholar, Pasi Sahlberg (2011) has outlined six features of this movement:

1) *A global trend toward standardization of educational systems and an emphasis of setting prescriptive benchmarks with which to measure educational success and outcomes.* Standardization has gone hand-in-hand with the institution of high-stakes testing and accountability initiatives that have sought to create international, national and regional systems for measuring, comparing, and evaluating educational systems and outcomes.
2) *A global trend toward the teaching of core subjects and basic skills.* International testing comparisons, such as PISA, TIMSS, and PIRLS, have encouraged nations to narrow standards and curriculum to math, science, and basic literacy often at the expense of broader forms of liberal arts and progressive forms of curriculum, teaching, and learning.
3) *A global trend toward finding streamlined ways of reaching standardized learning objectives.* With the emphasis on quantifiable and measurable results through testing and accountability, experimental and creative forms of teaching and learning are being sidelined and marginalized. As opposed to problem posing, collaboration, and dialogical forms of knowledge construction in classrooms, teaching is imagined increasingly a scripted and deliverable service for producing standardized and predetermined ends.
4) *A global trend toward transforming education based on corporate managerial models imported from the business sector.* These models are part of broader projects of educational privatization and are driven by market-based approaches that privilege the maximization of efficiency, profit, and national economic competition as opposed to the goals of full human development and enhancement of democratic social relations.

5) *A global trend toward the adoption of test-based accountability policies in schools.* The adoption of high-stakes testing regimes has been closely associated with a drive toward monitoring, rewarding, and punishing teachers and schools, based on student outcomes measured by standardized and prescriptive test-based performance benchmarks.

These trends form the general outline of a global educational reform movement that has emerged over the last four decades. This reform consensus is being driven by what Stephen J. Ball (2012) has called "policy networks," new hybrid policy configurations of educational decision-making within and across the institutional platforms of nation-states, non-governmental organizations, philanthropies linked to transnational corporate actors like the Gates and Walton Foundations, private companies claiming to be philanthropies yet building education conglomerates, such as Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, the Omidyar Network, and the Emerson Collective, supra-national governance organizations, such as the OECD and the World Bank, transnational business associations and educorporations. Across these spheres and networks of policy actors, global education reform has increasingly coalesced around a set of ideas that situate schooling in the service of economic growth and innovation. The assumptions informing global reform promote private and for-profit education around the world and they facilitate the rise of corporate monopolies in global education and modes of philanthrocapitalism involved in nearly all aspects of global education from administration, to curriculum, to teaching and learning.

The global educational reform "common sense" informing these new transnational "policy networks" has been deeply informed by neoliberal ideology and policy prescriptions that reject a prior Keynesian, or social democratic model of political economy and governance, that prevailed in the developed Western nations in the post-World War II period (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neil, 2004; Saltman, 2007). With the election of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States in the 1980s, and the subsequent emergence of the Washington Consensus and Francis Fukuyama's declaration of the "end of history" in the 1990s, neoliberal ideas that were once relegated to obscure conservative think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, economics departments like the Chicago School at the University of Chicago, and elite organizations like the Mont Pèlerin Society, emerged from the ideological sidelines and have since come to dominate mainstream policy-making institutions (Harvey, 2005; Mirowski, 2013).

Notions of self-regulating markets, deregulation, privatization, supply-side growth, the "rolling back" of the public sector, "fiscal consolidation" of the state, individualization of risk, and the primacy of economics over sociality and politics, have broadly informed public policy, state restructuring, and transnational governance over the last four decades, including in education (Peck, 2010; Spring, 2014; Streeck, 2017). In terms of *educational purpose*, education has increasingly been conceived as a vehicle for human capital and the development of twenty-first-century workforce skills, national competitiveness in a global "knowledge" economy, and promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic contributions to productivity and growth. In terms of *educational*

structure, market-based strategies such as privatization, business involvement in education, and corporate managerial models have proliferated in order to standardize schooling through accountability, auditing, and testing. Fazal Rizvi and Bob Lingard observe:

> With the rejection of ideas associated with Keynesian welfare state, governments increasingly preached a minimalist role for the state in education, with greater reliance on market mechanisms. As educational systems around the world have become larger and more complex, governments have been either unable or unwilling to pay for educational expansion, and have therefore looked to market solutions. This has led to an almost universal shift from social democratic to neoliberal orientations in thinking about educational purposes and governance, resulting in policies of corporatization, privatization and commercialization on the one hand, and demand for greater accountability on the other … educational purposes have been redefined in terms of a narrower set of concerns about human capital development, and the role education must play to meet the needs of the global economy and to ensure competitiveness of the national economy. (2009, pp. 2–3)

This drive to reform education systems globally to reflect and serve the imperatives of market expansion, transnational business interests, entrepreneurship, and economic growth is based on a number of key neoliberal thinkers and theoretical assumptions. This includes:

- *Friedrich von Hayek* (1945); capitalism is a superior information processing machine capable of efficient coordination of decentralized spontaneous market activity.
- *James Buchanan* (1975); the public sector is inherently inefficient and corrupt, while the private sector is inherently efficient, virtuous, and subject to market discipline.
- *Paul Romer* (1990); economic growth is the overarching mechanism of social progress fueled by "endogenous" factors of human capitalization and technological innovation.
- *Gary Becker (*1994); national competitiveness and prosperity are derived from educational investments that boost human capital and the marginal productivity of labor.
- *Milton Friedman* (2009); markets should be created in traditionally non-market spheres that enable the proliferation of choice and competition among competing service providers, such as in education.

These thinkers and their ideas have provided the basic ideological scaffolding for the global educational reform movement to privatize education and reorient its purpose to serving human capital ideology and market expansion globally. Importantly, these ideas have to be understood within a broader understanding of the relationship between education and twenty-first-century political economy. The neoliberal economization of education is centrally positioned by the global education reform movement as a mechanism to solve various structural

crises emerging from the contradictions and negative externalities of global capitalism. First, in terms of *global economic performance*, the OECD projects that, without major structural reforms, economic growth will decline over the next five decades to 2.7%, with a grinding recessionary rate of 0.54% in OECD nations and 1.86% in non-OECD nations (OECD, 2014). Second, *in terms of inequality*, Oxfam International reports that as of 2017, eight human beings now control more wealth than the bottom half of humanity, 3.6 billion people combined, while the global top 1% controls more wealth than the bottom 99% of humanity (Oxfam, 2017). Third, *in terms of employment*, studies indicate that 50–80% of jobs within "advanced" economies like the United States are at "high risk" of automation over the next two decades in areas like transportation, legal research, and financial consulting (Frey and Osbourne, 2013; Elliot, 2015). The World Bank reports that of the additional one billion young people expected to enter the global labor market by 2026, only 40% are expected to acquire jobs that currently exist, presumably due to the reorganization of labor markets in relation to new technology (World Bank, 2015). Fourth, *in terms of the environment*, the OECD projects that by 2060, 40% of the world's population will live in areas of high water scarcity, deaths linked to air pollution will double, biodiversity will decline, while climate change disruptions will rapidly accelerate (OECD, 2014).

The global education reform movement positions education as a means of resolving economic stagnation, inequality, erosion of livelihoods, and ecological rifts. The idea is that through neoliberal prescriptions of privatization, standardization, and human capital, education can translate into endless economic growth and innovation, which will supposedly resolve all other global problems. Global education reform is here narrowly construed as a means to serve capitalism and the interests of elites rather than a means of fostering democratic social relations, the expansion of civil society and intellectuality, and collective responses to global crises rooted deeply in our economic, social, and political systems. At an historical moment when education as a means to address public problems could not be more urgent, dominant strains of education reform around the globe promote schooling in corporate, commercial. and instrumental forms. For instance, despite the pervasive rhetoric of opportunity and uplift, the global reform movement views education as a lucrative source of profit-making within a stagnant global capitalism facing multiple crises and limits. Collapsing the public and private purposes of schooling, the World Bank's leading educational development scholar, James Tooley (2009) insists on private fee for service educational development rather than free universal schooling in poor countries. He likens school systems to the fast food industry: McDonald's is the model. Similarly, Chris Whittle, the CEO of Edison Learning and Avenues, has remarked that he sees a not-too-distant future in which a handful of edu-corporations control global education entirely. He likens this to the construction of branded corporate educational service providers that replace public systems worldwide:

> Walk through any high-end mall in Hong Kong, Dubai, or London and the names are all the same: Hermés, Polo, Calvin Klein, Yves St. Laurent, Armani, and dozens more. These global brands transcend all national

> boundaries and are in high demand by consumers the world over. Though many in the educational community would view brands as superficial and even meaningless, consumers don't see it that way. Brand is just another way of saying reputation, and that is something hard earned. Not only in fashion and cars but increasingly in schools and colleges as well, consumers trust brands and trust is a form of demand not to be underestimated. In the world of education, that used to be a local phenomenon. No more. (Whittle, 2009. pp. 4–5)

Currently, the global education marketplace has been valued at approximately $5 trillion a year. This is a vast arena of potential profit-making for global edu-corporations, such as Pearson and Edison Learning, Silicon Valley giants such as Facebook and Microsoft, and financial institutions such as Goldman Sachs, through contracts for for-profit schooling, packaged curriculum, textbooks and classroom materials, testing services, technology platforms, loan programs and financial speculation, and the transfer of public wealth that would go to public systems to private actors. The corporate management of public schools, corporate standardized curriculum, corporate standardized testing, corporate "personalized" learning software and data platforms, are part of a broader ideological reimagining of schooling as a global commercial industry. Within this emerging view of education as a private service, knowledge is conceived as a deliverable private commodity rather than a public good – something that can be standardized, mass-produced, measured, transmitted, and delivered in an efficient and profitable manner.

Importantly, global education reform is not only promoting the privatization and commercialization of education across the world, but also a particular vision of global culture in line with neoliberal values and objectives. With its economistic framing, the global education reform consensus tends to diminish the value and significance of the humanities, arts, and social sciences as well as socially-engaged forms of curriculum, teaching and learning in favor of standardized and scripted curricula aimed at developing compliant workers. The problem here is not merely as liberal educators have contended, that this "narrows the curriculum." These subjects place analytical thinking, creativity, interpretation, and judgment at their core and are important because of their centrality to producing culture, intellectuality, and the dispositions for dialogue, debate, and curiosity necessary for democratic life. The global education reform movement favors science, engineering, math and other STEM fields that are portrayed as universal and neutral beyond the realm of interpretation, social context, and judgment. Unlike such technocratic and instrumental approaches to the teaching of science and mathematics, progressive, critical, and democratic educational traditions relate science, design, engineering, and math teaching and learning to questions of ethics, values, context, student cultures and subjectivities (Bazzul, 2012). This not only makes the learning of these subjects meaningful for students in relation to lived experience, but also allows them to be understood in terms of their contested meanings and purposes as well as their capacity for expanding collective agency to shape the future.

As Stuart Hall, Pierre Bourdieu, Henry Giroux, and many others have contended, culture is produced within systems of unequal exchange. Education is inevitably implicated in the process of producing meanings and interpretations of the world, self, and others. Teachers, through their meaning-making practices, are inevitably in a position to affirm or contest dominant discourses or sets of meanings. It is through dialogue between teachers and students that meanings are affirmed or contested, knowledge is produced, and cultures are made, remade, liberated, or oppressed. Culture and knowledge in this view are dynamic and contested and are therefore never neutral or objective. As the global education reform movement embraces a positivist and transmissional view of knowledge in line with neoliberal assumptions, it participates in propagating the values and ideologies of corporate culture while cleansing indigenous culture. By promoting knowledge as a commodity, the global education reform movement promotes a form of cultural imperialism that approximates dogmatism, fundamentalism, and a prohibition on thinking rather than cultures of dialogue, debate, and investigation. Such a culture of "knowledge transfer" rather than knowledge co-construction has profound implications, particularly for indigenous cultures and forms of intellectuality necessary for addressing numerous overlapping global crises in the twenty-first century.

A Transformational Agenda for Global Education Reform

Authentic democracy is not a model, an ideology, or a system of voting and representation. It is rather a contingent process, defined by competing interests and visions of the social, whereby power is vested in people's capacity for collective self-determination (Balibar, 2014). Education is a prerequisite for democracy in that it provides the critical intellectual capacities, knowledge, and modes of analysis required for meaningful sociopolitical intervention and engagement. As numerous nations such as the USA, Russia, Turkey, and Hungary have embraced right-wing nationalism, xenophobia, and militarism they have also become increasingly hostile to press freedom, academic freedom, and freedom of speech. The rise of market fundamentalism, religious fundamentalism, and political fundamentalism and scapegoating depends in part on ignorance, anti-intellectualism, and the absence of a commitment to a robust intellectual and educative culture. In such a context, conspiracy theories, irrationalism, war and racism proliferate, particularly through the new social media networks. The global education reform movement with its instrumental and technocratic view of knowledge and culture prohibits students from developing the intellectual tools for self-governance and realization of democratic social relations. As Chantal Mouffe (2005) has observed, the post-Cold War world has seen the proliferation of a post-political and post-ideological form of neoliberal politics in which social antagonisms have been buried under the guise of "Third Way" managerialism and practicalism. Yet, education allows individuals and societies not merely to come to consensus with others over contested public problems and solutions, but to engage in politics as means of productive conflict and historical future-making.

   This volume suggests that global education reform needs to be comprehended not merely as an efficient or inefficient means of educating students or achieving national educational objectives. Rather, the chapters assembled here situate global education reform movement in terms of broader economic, political, and cultural trends and forces. Situating it in terms of deeper socio-historical realities reveals the extent to which global education reform undermines the role of education as a crucial component of developing economic, political, and cultural democracy. It also reveals the extent to which the global education reform movement, while claiming the mantle of progress and development, is implicated in the promotion of anti-democratic social relations. The chapters presented here analyze global education reform from a variety of methodological and theoretical perspectives. They offer groundbreaking insights into the historical, ideological, organizational, and institutional foundations of global education reform trends, including emergent educational policies, networks, movements, actors, institutions, and agendas across diverse international and regional contexts, including North America, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia. Importantly, the chapters not only examine global education reform in its current articulations but also offer perspectives for promoting and imagining forms of education conducive to democratic transformation of social relations and achieving equitable and sustainable futures.

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1

Capitalism and Global Education Reform

Steven J. Klees

Introduction

Capitalism and education have been intertwined for a long time. Mass schooling developed within a capitalist world system. While the dominant discourse saw mass schooling mainly as a force for progress and development, revisionist historians pointed to how education served capitalist ends by maintaining stratification and inequality (Katz, 2001; Spring, 1973). The 1970s saw a slew of studies that elaborated and documented how education was too often reproductive of a very unequal social order (Bowles & Gintis, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Carnoy, 1974). With the onset of neoliberal capitalism in the 1980s and subsequent years, many studies have examined the problematic nature of associated educational reforms (Apple, 2006; Bale & Knopp, 2012; Hill & Kumar, 2009).

In the modern post-World War II era with increasing forces of globalization, educational reforms have traveled around the world. There is a large research literature on policy borrowing in education (Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2012). In the 1960s and 1970s, the flow of reforms was characterized by considerable diversity and idiosyncratic and local differences. Starting in the 1980s, however, global education reform has become much more uniform. The Global Education Reform Movement, or GERM, as Pasi Sahlberg has called it, has given us a one-size-fits-all set of education policies for the world – narrow versions of accountability, excessive testing, an ideology of competition and choice, and increased reliance on business and the private sector (Sahlberg, 2015; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2012).

This chapter reflects on some aspects of this history, focusing mainly on the neoliberal era. It begins by looking at an earlier period which established two underlying refrains of the neoliberal era: schools are failures and it is the fault of the teachers. This is followed by looking at the dominant discourses used to support these and other capitalist themes. Next, it examines two of the chief

purveyors of these discourses and reforms: US foundations and the World Bank. Then, one of the main neoliberal reforms posed is considered: the privatization of education and other social services. This leads to the fundamental issue of what is wrong with capitalism. To conclude, we look briefly at what might be done, both about capitalism and about education.

Schools Are Failures and Teachers Are to Blame

Immediately following World War II, in the US and elsewhere, there was often a sense of optimism about modernization and development in general and about the role of schools in particular. War-torn countries could recover and newly independent nations could progress without having to repeat the long, slow transformation of the industrialized world. Education would be a great contributor to rapid progress everywhere.

As early as the 1960s, there was already disillusionment with the lack of rapid progress in both developed and developing nations.[1] In education, in the US this was reinforced by the Coleman Report (Coleman et al., 1966), which collected and analyzed nationwide data, concluding that student achievement was primarily determined by family background, not school resources. In the 1970s, this was seconded by another major study by Jencks et al. (1975), which reported the lack of impact of education on income and employment as well as on student achievement. Despite significant criticisms of both studies and their conclusions, they have been used to this day to support a more tempered and pessimistic view of the potential of schooling to effect change.

This tempered view of the impact of schooling has co-existed with a call for sweeping reform of education as a way to improve both the achievement and life chances of children. This was very much evident in the 1983 US federal government-sponsored report, *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report ushered in the attack on teachers and schools that has characterized the neoliberal era, and not just in the US. *A Nation at Risk* argued that the US was lagging behind other economies in the early 1980s, most notably Japan, and that the culprit was our educational system. The opening lines of the report said:

> Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world ... If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. (1983, p. 9)

As one wag said at the time, it was a repeat of Sputnik's instigation of educational reform in the 1950s to compete with the Soviet Union – but, instead, it was as if Japan had launched a Toyota into orbit and the US schools once again were blamed for falling short. Of course, if the US educational system was in any way to blame for poor economic performance, perhaps the focus should have been on

the nation's business schools where short-run profits were emphasized over long-run performance.

This mixture of critique of public schools and attack on teachers has been characteristic of the neoliberal era, not just in the US, but worldwide. I do not mean to single out the Coleman Report and *A Nation at Risk* as the cause of this critique and attack, although they were influential. More accurately, I see them as harbingers of changing times. Globally, they were reflections of a number of underlying dominant discourses.

Dominant Discourses

Even in today's neoliberal era, it is recognized that capitalism is faced with significant problems, what some have called the "triple challenge": job creation, poverty elimination, and inequality reduction (Motala & Vally, 2014).[2] The dominant response to these problems has given us *one* principal answer to all three problems: *the lack of individual skills*. This response has been embedded in a number of intersecting and overlapping global discourses.

The *mismatch discourse* goes back at least to the 1950s, and probably long before that. In it, education has been blamed for not supplying the skills business needs, that is, education is blamed for the mismatch between what education produces and what business wants. Unemployment, in general, is put at education's door, more broadly arguing that education is not teaching what the economy needs. It is, unfortunately, true that many children and youth around the world leave school without the basic skills necessary for life and work. But the mismatch discourse is usually less about basic skills and more about vocational skills. The argument, while superficially plausible, is not true for at least two reasons. First, vocational skills, which are often context-specific, are generally best taught on the job. Second and, fundamentally, unemployment is not a worker supply problem but a structural problem of capitalism. There are three or more billion un- or under-employed people on this planet, not because they don't have the right skills but because full employment is neither a feature nor a goal of capitalism.

Underlying this mismatch/skills discourse is the *human capital discourse* (Klees, 2016a). In the 1950s and earlier, the neoclassical economics framework that underpins capitalist ideology and practice could not explain labor. While the overall neoclassical framework was embodied in mathematical models of a fictitious story of supply and demand by small producers and consumers, it was not clear how to apply that to issues of labor, work, and employment. Instead, in that era, labor economics was more sociological and based on the real world, trying to understand institutions like unions and large companies, and phenomena like strikes, collective bargaining, and public policy. The advent of human capital theory in the 1960s offered a way to deal with labor in terms of supply and demand (mostly supply), as a commodity like any other. This took the sociology out of labor economics. Education was seen as investment in individual skills that made one more productive and employable. While this supply-side focus is sometimes true, it is very partial, at best. That is, abilities such as literacy,

numeracy, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, etc., can have a payoff in the job market, but *only* in a context where such skills are valued. The more useful and important question is the demand-side one, usually ignored by human capital theorists, regarding how we can create good jobs that require valuable skills. The human capital discourse also ignores the value of education outside of work. *In fact, contrary to the hype, the human capital discourse, and offshoots of it, like the "Knowledge Economy," have been, at least in one way, some of the most destructive ideas of the modern era.* Solving the triple challenge of poverty, inequality, and jobs has been unproductively directed to lack of individual skills and education instead of to capitalist and other world system structures whose very logic makes poverty, inequality, and lack of employment commonplace.

Underlying the human capital discourse, most directly since the 1980s, has been the *neoliberal discourse.* This is tied to neoclassical economics. From the 1930s to the 1970s, in various countries, a liberal neoclassical economics discourse predominated which recognized some of the inefficiencies and inequalities inherent in capitalism and argued the need for substantial government interventions as a corrective. With political shifts exemplified by Reagan in the US, Thatcher in the UK, and Kohl in Germany, a neoliberal neoclassical economics discourse took over, which argued that capitalism was both efficient and equitable, that problems were generally minor, and that the culprit of any problems was too much government interference. In fact, government failure was seen as fundamental, so that even if there were significant problems, government would not be able to remedy them. Neoliberal economics has led to "structural adjustment programs" that promote cuts in government spending and taxes, the privatization of public services, the deregulation of business, the liberalization of markets, and the lessening of protection for workers. This discourse has gone beyond economics and has political, social, and cultural dimensions (Harvey, 2005).

In education, neoliberalism has led to a sea change in discourse and policy. During the 1960s and 1970s, attention was focused on the inequities and inequalities of education, the marginalization of many people around the world, and the need for substantially more resources to be devoted to all levels of education. Starting in the 1980s, the emphasis was on narrow views of efficiency more than equity, implemented through narrow versions of accountability focused on testing and measurement. Basic problems of public schools have been ignored; instead, policies promoted market solutions through private schools, vouchers, charters, and the like (Klees, 2008a, 2008b).

When attention was paid to public schools, almost every reform was focused on governance – reorganization, restructuring, re-engineering, knowledge management, merit pay, reform civil service laws, community involvement, decentralization, increase testing, vouchers, privatization, output-based aid, results-based finance, etc. For decades, there was almost never an educational reform recommended that would cost much money. Often, the explicit objective of the reform was to cut costs – cut teacher salaries, cut back on teacher pre-service education, substitute distance education, privatize, charge user fees. Occasionally, there was a recommendation to spend a little more money – for textbooks, for girls' education – but resource shortfalls remained enormous.

While the left is often criticized, falsely, for an economic determinism, the right, in the discourses above, practices its own version of economic determinism: education leads to skills, skills lead to employment, employment leads to economic growth, economic growth creates jobs and is the way out of poverty and inequality. Decades of unsuccessful neoliberal reforms have shown this to be untrue.

Who Are the Purveyors?

Who translates these discourses into education policy? There are a lot of players – governments, multilateral and bilateral donors, foundations, universities, think tanks, NGOs, the private sector, and others. We live in a world system that increasingly sings one tune: neoliberalism. So it is difficult to separate who has the power to significantly influence policy. Moreover, neoliberal discourses have become the new common sense; they pervade the policy air we breathe and so dominate the policy agenda worldwide. Here, I wish to highlight the work of private foundations in the US and the World Bank in developing countries.

Billionaire Boys Club

Private foundations like Carnegie, Ford, and Rockefeller have long been influential in education in the US and elsewhere (Arnove, 2007). In recent years, in education in the U.S. a different group of foundations seems to be actually setting policy, as what Ravitch (2010) called the Billionaire Boys Club – the troika of three foundations – Broad, Gates, and Walton – developed and followed a neoliberal education policy agenda (also see Barkan, 2011; Saltman, 2010).

The three foundations come from very successful private enterprises: Broad from homebuilding and insurance, Gates from Microsoft, and Walton from Walmart. These venture philanthropists or philanthrocapitalists, as they are sometimes called, favored competition, choice, charters, incentive pay for teachers, measurable outcomes, etc. All three were extraordinarily influential in the Obama administration, and many people associated with these foundations received high-level policy positions, including Arne Duncan as US Secretary of Education. They also have influenced many school districts by offering a little sorely needed discretionary money to the districts' over-stretched budgets.

Broad's philosophy is that "schools should be redesigned to function like corporate enterprises" and that "neither school superintendents nor principals need be educators" (Ravitch, 2010, p. 217). Barkan (2011) concludes: "Certainly, ideology – in this case, faith in the superiority of the private business model – drives [all three] … But so does the blinding hubris that comes from power."

These foundations are rarely challenged or criticized. Frederick Hess (2005, pp. 9–11), of the right-wing American Enterprise Institute argues that "academics, activists, and the policy community live in a world where philanthropists are royalty," leading to a "conspiracy of silence" about their faults. Ravitch (2013, pp. 317–318) concludes that these and other foundations have essentially "hijacked" US education policy.

The World Bank

To the extent that the GERM (Global Education Reform Movement) is today's policy reality, no one has been more responsible for spreading it to developing countries than the World Bank (Klees, Samoff, & Stromquist, 2012). The Bank, as they call themselves, began lending for education in the 1960s, becoming the single largest international aid agency funder for education by the 1980s. While the vast bulk of educational costs are borne by country governments themselves, the Bank provides countries with some of the little discretionary finance they have and so has become enormously influential.

The World Bank is a monopoly. There is no other institution like it. UNESCO used to have a more dominant role in education, but the withdrawal of the US and UK contributions for a number of years forced it to play a much more minor role, and the World Bank became the true director of the Education for All (EFA) processes and more (Jones, 2007; Mundy, 2002). While the World Bank pretends everyone – countries, bilaterals, multilaterals, civil society, and more – is in partnership with it, it is the World Bank which takes the lead on education policy. With its periodic strategy reports and a virtual juggernaut of research done internal to the World Bank or financed by it, it decides on the global directions for education policy, backed by conditional grant and loan money that ensures countries follow those directions (Klees et al, 2012).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Bank took a more liberal view of education policy. It routinely argued that there were vast inequalities in education and that public education needed substantial additional resources which should be provided through expanded progressive taxes. Starting in the 1980s, the Bank ideology was rapidly transformed to a neoliberal perspective. While the lack of sufficient resources was occasionally mentioned as an issue, it was always with a "yes, but" – where the "but" was that the main issue was seen as inefficient use of existing resources and neoliberal remedies would make resource use more efficient.

For decades, the Bank has downplayed its role in lending money, trying to position itself as the "Knowledge Bank," the repository of best practice. This is arrogant and frightening. The Bank basically only looks at its own research and that of its adherents, basing its one-size-fits-all recommendations on ideology, not evidence (Klees et al., 2012). Even the idea of a central repository of "best practice" is frightening in a world where best practice is always contested. The World Bank as that repository is more frightening still.

The World Bank selects and interprets the research that fits with its ideology. In this sense, it resembles right-wing ideological think tank institutions like the Cato Institute or the Heritage Foundation in the US. However, it differs in two important ways. First, everyone realizes Cato and Heritage are partisan. The World Bank, on the other hand, makes a pretense of objectivity and inclusiveness. Second, Cato and Heritage are private institutions with limited influence. The World Bank is a public institution, financed by taxes, which gives grants, loans, and advice around the world, yielding a vast global influence.

There is no "Knowledge Bank," only an "Opinion Bank," and, worse still, an opinion bank with monopoly power. This Monopoly Opinion Bank (I cannot resist – it should be known as The MOB) may not be the only source of knowledge

in education in developing countries, but it is the predominant producer and arbiter of what counts as knowledge. If there were applicable anti-trust legislation, The MOB's research enterprise would be broken up. The MOB's defense is that they try to incorporate all knowledge from all their partners, including countries, other aid agencies, NGOs, other civil society organizations, indigenous people, the poor of the world, etc. This is neither possible nor sensible, nor true in a world where knowledge is contested within and among all these groups. The MOB distills and disseminates the knowledge it wants to promulgate.

While loan officers in the Bank are more pragmatic than the policy and research staff, internally and externally Bank ideology pervades practice. Even some Bank staff complain of the (neoliberal) "thought police" in the Bank that force ideological conformity (Broad, 2006). And like the philanthropists in the US, Bank staff in the world of international aid agencies are royalty. They rarely have to face serious criticism or challenges. Again, I do not see the Bank as responsible for neoliberalism, but they have taken it as gospel and have become its chief purveyor in education in developing countries.

What Is Being Sold: Privatization

As above, there are a number of education reform features to the neoliberal GERM. Here I want to focus on one of the most significant and disturbing: the privatization of education (Verger, Fontdevila, & Zancajo, 2016). We have seen more than three decades of a continually increasing effort to promote the privatization of education. By privatization, I mean efforts to diminish public control and finance of education, thus including user fees, charters, vouchers, private schooling, public-private partnerships (PPPs), reliance on business know-how, and the like (Klees, 2008a).

Privatization is based on two things: (1) ideology, not evidence; and (2) greed. What is behind this ideology and greed? The answer for me is neoliberal capitalism – or perhaps capitalism in any form.

Let me start with a story. Some years ago, I attended a meeting about health policy at the World Bank. The World Bank presenter pointed out how, in many poor countries, poor people chose to be treated at private health clinics for a fee instead of going to free public clinics. This "voting with their feet" – as economists like to call it – was touted as evidence of the success and value of privatization. To the contrary, I pointed out that this is simply evidence of the success of 30+ years of neoliberal ideology in which public health clinics had been systematically decimated, ending up without doctors, nurses, or medicine. The same has happened in education, most especially in developing countries. Thirty + years of neoliberal policies have often left public schools over-crowded, with poorly trained teachers, few learning materials, dilapidated facilities, and often not close by. It is no wonder that some parents opt out. However, while it is rational for disadvantaged individuals to sometimes send their children to private schools, it is poor public policy – it serves only a few, it increases inequality, it ignores the public interest, and it devalues teachers. Privatization is said to meet the growing education gap (which resulted from years of attack on the public sector), but all

it does is replace an attempt to develop good public policy with the vagaries of charity or the narrow-mindedness of profit-making.

Let me turn to greed.

Privatization, and especially PPPs, represent a huge business opportunity. Globally, private education is perhaps a $50–$100 billion business right now. Education as a whole, public and private, is a $4+ trillion industry. Business' eyes light up with these dollar signs. Even the market for the poorest people in the world is seen as a huge business opportunity – referred to as the "bottom billions" market (Ball, 2012).

In the latest phase of neoliberal capitalism, the world is being turned into one big PPP, and this is especially evident in the plans for infrastructure megaprojects (Alexander, 2015; Bretton Woods Project, 2016). The biggest expense for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be infrastructure megaprojects for pipelines, dams, water and electricity systems, and roads. It is estimated that an additional *$70 trillion* in infrastructure will be needed by 2030 – what has been called the "biggest investment boom in human history." The *modus operandi*, according to the United Nations, for these megaprojects will be PPPs. The SDGs can easily turn into a welfare program for business "privatizing gains and social-izing losses on a massive scale" – as critics of these PPPs point out.

The long-run goals of business are sobering. The grandiose Global Redesign Initiative proposed by the World Economic Forum (2010) at Davos in 2010 essentially wants to turn the UN itself into a giant PPP, with business being formal partners in global governance along with states and other stakeholders (Hickel, 2015; see also Olmedo, 2016). This is the frightening context in which PPPs in education are being promoted.

This broader context of privatization is important for our struggles in education:

- This broader ideology and reality of PPPs legitimize their spread in education.
- PPPs in infrastructure megaprojects will likely absorb funds that should be destined to social services like education and health.
- The struggle against PPPs in other sectors offers an opportunity for those of us in education to join with others in common cause.

In a past life, I went to Stanford Business School. There, I had a professor who wrote a paper entitled, "The Social Responsibility of Business and Other Pollutants of the Air." He was very pro-business; his point was that the business of business was business, and we shouldn't want or expect them to help solve problems that are fundamentally government's. Business should not be a partner, should not be at the advice or governance table, should not be a part of the Global Partnership for Education, for instance. There is also a moral bottom line – the provision of education (and health) should not be oriented toward making money.

Privatization used to be a hard sell in education since everyone knew that private schooling catered to the well-to-do. Nowadays, the neoliberal education establishment is touting so-called "low-fee private schools" (LFPS) for the poor (Tooley, 2009, 2016). Given the decimation of public schooling under neoliberalism, as above, LFPS have sprung up to take advantage of parents' dissatisfaction. While some of these are started by parents, teachers, and communities, more

and more we are seeing big business enter the market of trying to make a profit off the "bottom billions." Studies have shown that these private schools are often of very low quality. And the fees are not so low; many poor families cannot afford them, and those that do make invidious choices about which child to send to school, often favoring boys, or about choosing between feeding their family and schooling (Macpherson, 2014; Srivastava, 2013). LFPS further stratify education and violate many international treaties and conventions that guarantee free basic schooling. What kind of world is it where we consider it legitimate to charge the poorest people in the world for basic education? Answer: A capitalist world!

What's Wrong with Capitalism?

While the answer to this question could fill and has filled many books, I wish to make a few points here. Capitalism diverts attention from structural issues by casting the blame for education and development problems elsewhere. Mismatch, human capital, and neoliberal discourses first and foremost blame individuals for their lack of "investment" in human capital, for their not attending school, for their dropping out of school, for their not studying the "right" fields, for their lack of entrepreneurship (Klees, 2016a). Educational policymakers in developing countries are likewise often blamed for their "poor" decisions, meaning decisions that run counter to neoliberal dogma, such as investing in higher education. Often policymakers in developing countries who make economic and social policy are also blamed for either being corrupt or not following neoliberal pre-scriptions: labor is seen as receiving too much protection, government interferes too much in the market, and business does not receive the support it needs. Education itself is also a wonderful *scapegoat* for politicians, researchers, World Bank staff, and others because education can't be expected to fix the problem for many years, so they will never be held accountable for their advice.

   Nowhere, of course, does the right see the inherent problems in the nature of capitalism, nor does it even recognize neoliberalism. After the fall of the Soviet Union, right-wing books proclaimed the end of history, the end of ideology (Fukuyama, 2006): Margaret Thatcher's famous TINA answer – There Is No Alternative to capitalism! We now have the one best system, and we just have to tinker with it and wait for prosperity to sweep the globe. Well, how long are we willing to wait? While millions are suffering and dying and the rich get obscenely rich at the expense of the rest of us (Klees, 2016b; Piketty, 2014)? In my view, there's reason to believe that even if we wait 100 years, we will still be facing the same problems because the "one best system" is turning out to be the one worst system. It has become commonplace to recognize that capitalism has increased material production and wealth, even Marx did, but production for whom? Wealth for whom? The most obscene statistic I've heard is that the 62 richest individuals on the planet have the same total wealth as the poorest 3.5 billion people on the planet (Oxfam, 2016).

   Has capitalism been useful? For whom? At what cost? Ecological insanity? Pervasive inhumanity? As the late South African activist and intellectual, Neville Alexander, said: "Once the commodity value of people displaces their intrinsic

human worth or dignity, we are well on the way to a state of barbarism" (quoted in Motala & Vally, 2014, p. 1). Motala and Vally (2014, p. 16) talk of the "searing tribulations … of extreme inhumanity" – such as slavery, colonialism, Nazism, Apartheid. Will capitalism be seen as another example? If things do not change radically, I think so. I think that one day the capitalist system of wage labor will be seen as evil, only one step removed from slavery.[3] The severely unequal distribution, the fact that the most difficult labor on earth, for example, cutting sugar cane, is paid only $2–$3 a day while others get millions, will be seen as criminal, a labor market system for which no one takes responsibility and which is disguised by the rhetoric of freedom.[4]

We need to be very cognizant of the forces arrayed against progressive change. The left has long been criticized by the right as conspiracy theorists. The response of the left has been there is no need to posit a conspiracy; neoliberalism and capitalism are promoted and enforced by structures that operate at the world-system level (Wallerstein, 2004). This is quite true, and I don't see these structures as the result of some secret cabal. Nevertheless, while reference to the "ruling class" may be anachronistic, many of today's global business and political elite know each other well and meet regularly through organizations like the World Economic Forum and the Trilateral Commission. How many have even heard of the latter? In it are the most influential politicians and industrialists in the world, and it has been meeting in secret for decades. Neoliberal capitalist policies are promoted and even coordinated by an elite class of like-minded individuals who think that governments are overvalued and business solutions undervalued, and they act in concert. We must not underestimate our opponents. As Warren Buffet has said: "It's class warfare" and "My class is winning." I don't think of all this as a conspiracy to do harm. I believe that most of these people are well-intentioned. They are simply wrong, believing in a neoliberal economics that makes them better off but leaves the majority of humanity in dire straits.

Can capitalism be improved, be fair and just? I am not clairvoyant, I can't see the future. I have some progressive colleagues who believe that capitalism can be tamed in the broader social interest, like, some would say, in some places, it began to be tamed in the 1960s and 1970s. I wish it were so, but I don't think so. The greed, inequality, and environmental destruction promoted by capitalism, the racism and sexism that capitalism takes advantage of, are all extraordinarily resistant to change. Governments today, captured by elites and by the unequal logic inherent in our world system, can only with great difficulty offer significant challenges. So taming and humanizing capitalism, in my view, is not likely. Therefore, I see transforming capitalism as the name of the game. Nothing will be easy, but I see very real possibilities.

What to Do?

The future of income and wealth inequality, indeed, the future of capitalism, will be determined by on-going struggles.[5] I am optimistic because I see those struggles everywhere. I see scholars and activists who write convincingly

of alternatives to capitalism (e.g., Alperovitz, 2013; Daly, 1996; Hahnel, 2005; MacEwan, 1999). I see others who recognize the need to tackle the intersection of capitalism with other oppressive structures like patriarchy, racism, heterosexism, and ableism (Adams et al., 2013; Andersen & Hill Collins, 2012; hooks, 2000; Saunders, 2002). I see past and current very active social movements that challenge world-system structures: the anti/alter-globalization movement, the women's movement around the world, the landless movement in Brazil, the Dalit movement in India, labor movements, the Arab Spring, Occupy around the globe, the Indignados in Spain, anti-austerity in Europe, and the civil rights movement in the US. I see struggle in electoral politics that has brought a progressive left to power in half-a-dozen or more Latin American countries. I am also optimistic because I was fortunate enough to twice attend the World Social Forum (WSF) in Brazil and march with 100,000 activists from all over the world and meet some of them who were struggling to change the world in areas like education, health, food, water, environment, or development generally. They go home from the Forum and interact with millions, building a global network. I am also optimistic because I have been fortunate to work in dozens of countries, and *everywhere* I found people who believed what is the slogan of the WSF – another world is possible – and who were struggling for it.[6]

To conclude, I don't mean to romanticize any of this. This is a struggle over the long haul and the outcome is uncertain. However, education has an important role to play. Education is not only reproductive – it can definitely be a force for progressive social change, and there are countless examples from around the world. In Brazil, for example, where I have spent much time, the Citizen School movement has built a sizeable democratic, participatory, Freirean-based education system (Fischman & Gandin, 2007). In Brazil also, there are the Landless Movement schools, founded by some of the poorest people in all the world, often living off agricultural labor, now organized and politically influential, with a large system of very participatory, democratic, Freirean-based schools (McCowan, 2003; Tarlau, 2015). These schools teach – and exemplify by their very structure – the role of education in preparing people for a much more participatory and democratic economy and society (Edwards & Klees, 2012). So do countless examples of alternative education practices from the United States and other countries (Apple & Beane, 2007; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007; Picower, 2012).

While we can and should focus on education, we have to be attuned to the broader battles – find allies cross-sector (e.g., in health, environment), go after PPPs more generally, confront neoliberalism and capitalism. I know we don't all agree on capitalism as THE problem, but many of us do and we need to ally ourselves with others who do (e.g., check out http://thenextsystem.org/). And the fight against capitalism needs to join with those confronting other structures like patriarchy, racism, heterosexism, ableism. As I said, this is a struggle for the long haul, and it has to be fought on multiple fronts. This doesn't mean you have to lose a focus on education, but we have to join in these broader struggles.

Finally, I want to close by mentioning some of what critical scholars/analysts need to do based on Michael Apple's tasks (2013, pp. 41–44), set out in his recent book, *Can Education Change Society?*

- Document exploitation, marginalization, reproduction.
- Document progressive struggles.
- Help identify spaces and possibilities for counter-hegemonic action.
- Speak to non-academic audiences.
- Work in concert with critical activists and social movements in education and cross-sectors.
- Confront the intersection of oppressive structures, as above.

Despite current hegemony, I believe we may be able to avoid making the planet uninhabitable and that we can create a fairer world.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1 The terms "developed" and "developing" are very problematic. I still use them for a lack of good alternatives.
2 These three challenges, of course, do not exhaust the significant problems faced around the globe which include environmental destruction, widespread conflict, and appeal to greed as a motivating force, all of which have significant connections to all forms of capitalism that so dominate our world system, as I consider below.
3 Ellerman (2015) argues that the capitalist system of wage labor, embodied in the employer-employee contract, is, like slavery, based on coercion, and calls for a neo-abolitionist movement.
4 While markets are a convenience that future, saner, societies may continue to rely on for some purposes, they have at least two fundamental flaws that render them problematic. First, they contribute to an abrogation of social responsibility, as today, when market outcomes of horrendous income inequality, spiraling food prices and hunger, or environmental destruction are seen as natural, not anyone's fault. Second, markets are fragile. For example, millions of small decisions can contribute to economic or environmental crises. Albritton adds:

> Markets are often thought to be highly efficient, but in the future they will be seen as highly inefficient and costly. Markets not only fail to take account of social and environmental costs, but they also generate instability, insecurity, inequality, anti-social egotism, frenetic lifestyles, cultural impoverishment, beggar-thy-neighbor greed and oppression of difference. (quoted in Wall, 2015, p. 1)

See Hahnel (2005) for a discussion of alternatives to competitive markets.

5 For an extended discussion of alternatives to capitalism and education, see Klees (forthcoming).

6 While dismaying, I am still optimistic despite the election of Donald Trump and other global advances by the far right and populist fringe. I am not a Pollyanna, but I do believe that their successes bring systemic contradictions into even sharper relief and I hope that will generate even greater resistance and search for alternatives. And, let us remember that Bernie Sanders, a self-avowed Democratic socialist, actually got 13 million votes in the US primaries and polls showed him neck and neck with Trump if he had been the Democratic nominee.

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2

The Business Sector in Global Education Reform

The Case of the Global Business Coalition for Education
Francine Menashy, Zeena Zakharia, and Sheetal Gowda

Introduction

While non-state actors have long played significant roles in education, the direct participation of the for-profit business sector in global education policy and programming is a more recent development. This chapter examines the growing role of businesses in global education reform, paying particular attention to educational interventions in contexts of humanitarian crisis. Focusing on the Global Business Coalition for Education (GBC-E) – a forum for companies to contribute to and advocate for education – and its multifaceted role in supporting education for Syrian refugees (2012–present), this case study highlights some of the ethical tensions that arise in business participation in contexts of crisis. The chapter draws on the concepts of philanthrocapitalism (McGoey, 2012), shared value (Porter & Kramer, 2011), and disaster capitalism (Klein, 2007) to illuminate some of the central debates regarding the rising presence of businesses in global educational reform.

This case study derives from a larger research project that examined private participation in the education of Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey (Menashy & Zakharia, 2017). The study was conducted in 2016–2017 and involved: (1) a broad mapping, indexing, and analysis of 144 private actors, with special attention to the nature of their involvement in the education of Syrian refugees; (2) 30 key informant interviews with representatives of businesses and their partners, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, and traditional (state) donors; and (3) document analysis of key reports, websites, and social media pertaining to business involvement in the education of Syrian refugees. Of particular relevance to this case study, the research included analysis and coding of GBC-E print and web materials and

reports, as well as interviews with representatives from the GBC-E and their corporate members.

In discussing the GBC-E's role in garnering corporate support for the education of Syrian refugees, this chapter considers the ways in which businesses have assumed positions of legitimacy and authority to steer major policy decisions in sectors that have been historically the responsibility of the state. Notably, businesses are increasingly seen as having a pivotal role to play in education in humanitarian crises, where traditional donor funding has fallen short and states have struggled to ensure education as a right for all children within their borders.

Business Participation in Global Education Reform

Business involvement in education in the Global South manifests in two main forms. The first form is via corporate philanthropies, also termed foundations, which are established by successful business leaders to operate independently of their associated corporations. The second form of engagement, termed corporate social responsibility (CSR), is integral to a corporation's functions.

Corporate philanthropies are generally presented as separate from their associated corporation, where oftentimes the only overlaps can be seen in the sharing of a name or leadership. For instance, the CEO of a corporation may be head of the board of the foundation. Although considered non-profit entities, philanthropies are founded using the profits of corporate endeavors, and many have risen to high prominence in global development, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the MasterCard Foundation, and the Hewlett Foundation (Bhanji, 2008; Colvin, 2005; van Fleet, 2011, 2012).

CSR activities operate via a branch or department of a company. These departments develop and implement projects in social sectors. CSR programs are often funded through a corporation's general operating budget and promote a variety of activities, including cash contributions to support a specific cause, in-kind contributions towards, for instance, school supplies or classroom technology, direct support to school provision and wrap-around services, or more leadership-oriented policy engagement, including participation in educational forums or playing advocacy roles concerning educational causes (Bhanji, 2016; van Fleet, 2012; Verger, Fontdevila, & Zancajo, 2016).

Businesses are now regular contributors to conversations about global education and have contributed to oftentimes-normative debates on major issues. For example, Pearson Education publishes a report entitled *The Learning Curve* that has focused on cross-national data on performance, school choice, and accountability (Pearson, 2012); actors from corporations and foundations are common faces at events on school provision in developing countries (Brookings, 2015; Devex, 2017); and the World Economic Forum's Global Education Initiative includes a range of business actors and has addressed such themes as public-private partnerships, girls' education, and technology in education (WEF, 2012). Corporate actors are envisaged as key stakeholders in achieving Sustainable Development Goal #4, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, where

"strong leadership by business can help unlock the necessary investments to ensure quality learning opportunities for all children and adults" (SDG Compass, 2017).

Businesses have been embraced as stakeholders in global education by a range of state-funded multilateral actors. A joint report from UNESCO, UNICEF, the UN Global Compact, and the UN Special Envoy for Global Education was released in 2013, entitled *The Smartest Investment: A Framework for Business Engagement in Education*. As an introduction to the report, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was quoted urging increased business engagement in global education: "We need more companies to think about how their business policies and practices can impact education priorities. You understand investment. You focus on the bottom-line. You know the dividends of education for all" (Ban, cited in UNESCO et al., 2013, p. 4). Alongside multilateral organizations and governments, corporate leaders were prominent participants at education-related events at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, and as will be described, businesses have begun to play significant roles in education policy-making and funding in contexts of humanitarian crisis (Whole of Syria Education Focal Point, 2016).

Motivations behind corporate social responsibility programs in global education are often claimed to be grounded in a moral impetus, but concurrently, and explicitly, aim to serve business interests via profit-making (Bhanji, 2016; van Fleet, 2012). As Bhanji (2016) explains, businesses employ a narrative which suggests that, "corporate responsibility and commercial priorities are not in conflict with each other, but rather are in alignment … legitimizing the strategic action in education politics of a range of companies around the world" (p. 430). Similarly, Verger et al. (2016) argue that "CSR has become a new global norm that legitimizes the increasing presence of the business sector in education networks globally, and especially in the Global South" (p. 150).

While scholarship on business activities in education in the American context is robust (see Au & Ferrare, 2015; Bulkley & Burch, 2011; Reckhow, 2013; Scott & Jabbar, 2014), literature on corporate engagement in global education and corporate social responsibility programs in the Global South is nascent. Recent research into corporate actors includes analysis of the education-related corporate social investments of *Fortune 500* companies (van Fleet, 2011). Other studies have examined individual CSR programs in education, such as Microsoft's Partners in Learning initiative (Bhanji, 2008, 2016). Research providing overviews of corporate involvement in international educational policy-making and governance are also on the rise, for instance targeting the World Economic Forum's Global Education Initiative and its joint program with UNESCO, Partnerships for Education (Cassidy, 2007; van Fleet, 2012). Scholars have examined the work of individual companies, such as Pearson Education, and the roles of private for-profit actors in establishing or supporting school chains in South Asia, South America, and the Middle East (Bhanji, 2008; Hogan et al., 2016; Martins & Krawczyk, 2016; Nambissan & Ball, 2010). Recent studies have explored business participation in multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank's International Financial Corporation and the Global Partnership for Education (Menashy, 2016; Mundy & Menashy, 2012).

Few have examined the ways in which corporate actors work in collaboration, and the pivotal role of the Global Business Coalition in enabling private sector engagement in global education remains unexplored. The specific role of businesses as key stakeholders in addressing education in humanitarian crises via CSR is a new area of study.

Conceptualizing the Role of Business in Education in Contexts of Humanitarian Crisis

Business participation in education is a highly contentious issue in international humanitarian, development, and academic circles. For instance, the roles of businesses in policy design have been the target of a wider debate concerning the legitimacy and qualifications of private actors to lead and oftentimes dictate social policy. Critics have suggested that business leaders, including Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg, are representative of the rise of "philanthrocapitalism," or "the tendency for a new breed of donors to conflate business aims with charitable endeavors, making philanthropy more cost-effective, impact-oriented, and financially profitable" (McGoey, 2012, p. 185). Philanthrocapitalism has been depicted as a "movement" that promotes major shifts in the nature of traditional philanthropic support. As McGoey describes:

> Championed by entrepreneurs, who had often made fortunes in the finance and tech industries, philanthrocapitalism is driven by the desire to bring "hard-nosed" strategy, performance metrics, innovative financing models and increased control of grantee decision making to philanthropy. The movement encompasses dozens of foundations and advisory groups advocating a new, aggressive, muscular philanthropy that aims to (1) make philanthropy more effective; and (2) make it a more lucrative industry in itself. (2014, p. 111)

A key component to the philanthrocapitalist project is "the increased visibility of individual philanthropists as policy drivers" where corporate actors assume positions of legitimacy and authority to steer major policy decisions on sectors that have historically been the responsibility of the public sector (p. 110). In this way, business actors are now widely considered to be prominent global development players, embodying a new form of authority. As described by Hall and Biersteker (2002):

> While these new actors are not states, are not state-based, and do not rely exclusively on the actions or explicit support of states in the international arena, they often convey and/or appear to have been accorded some form of legitimate authority. (p. 4)

The new trend of philanthrocapitalism has enabled a growth in private authority to drive the trajectory of global education funding policies and programs.

Yet critics question the pervasive influence of unelected corporate representatives in public policy circles, occupying their positions of authority solely due to their economic clout (Bhanji, 2016; Birn, 2014; McGoey, 2012), and argue that "the philanthrocapitalist project is irreducibly undemocratic" allowing private actors to "skirt the essential issue of accountability in the name of efficiency" and spurring a democratic deficit in policy-making (Rieff, 2015).

Philanthrocapitalism moreover embraces the notion that both philanthropic and CSR efforts can be profitable. Through strategic investing, business actors can enable "shared value," where their activities create "economic value in a way that also creates value for society by addressing its needs and challenges," and where business contributions to social causes can be "a new way to achieve economic success" (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 4). Proponents of shared value envisage humanitarian and profit-based aims as not only compatible, but also desirable for all involved.

Critics, however, see a problematic tension between these differing motivations. The very concept of "shared value," where profit-maximization can concurrently address social challenges (Porter & Kramer, 2011), arguably holds inherent contradictions. Critics of shared value beliefs and business participation in social causes have proposed that

> Corporations might tend to invest more resources in promoting the impression that complex problems have been transformed into win-win situations for all affected parties, while in reality problems of systemic injustice have not been solved and the poverty of marginalized stakeholders might even have increased because of the engagement of the corporation. (Crane et al., 2014, p. 137)

The philanthrocapitalist movement in settings of humanitarian crisis, such as the Syrian refugee context (2011–present), elicits particular critiques concerning exploitation. Journalist Naomi Klein coined the term "disaster capitalism" to capture when catastrophic events are seen as an occasion to enact market-based, neoliberal reforms, or as she puts it: "the treatment of disasters as exciting market opportunities" (Klein, 2007, p. 6). In education, disaster capitalism has been argued to have emerged in a range of contexts, including post-hurricane Katrina New Orleans, post-earthquake Haiti, and more recently in Liberia (Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2016; Saltman, 2007; Verger et al., 2016). In such cases, crisis hit, and actors saw an opportunity to enact policies and programs, which while addressing educational needs, concurrently promoted private sector interests.

The Global Business Coalition for Education, in promoting and coordinating business efforts to address the education of Syrian refugees via funding and policy-making, plays a key role in advancing global education reform and philanthrocapitalism. The following sections describe and discuss the GBC-E's positioning to illuminate some of the central debates and critiques regarding the presence of businesses in the education sector, and in particular, in humanitarian crises.

The Global Business Coalition for Education (GBC-E)

Established in 2012, the Global Business Coalition for Education (GBC-E) is a partnership-based convening body, which acts as an umbrella organization that unites and offers a voice for businesses involved in global education: "As an organization we believe that education is a right, and it's the role of the private sector to support the government in the delivery of education" (Interview #7, Business, July 2016). Through coordination, communication, showcasing the value of business initiatives in education, and facilitating research into global education, the GBC-E allows "companies to become part of a global movement of businesses committed to changing children's lives through education" (GBC-E, 2016c). Thus, the GBC-E serves as a forum for businesses to contribute to and advocate for their role in advancing quality education in the Global South, including in crises-affected regions and countries lacking political and economic stability.

> The Global Business Coalition mission was founded by Sarah Brown, the wife of Gordon Brown, the UN Education Envoy. The purpose of the GBC is to bring companies together and create a common platform for corporations to advocate and support global education issues. (Interview #5, Business, June 2016)

Starting with 20 of the world's most influential companies in their first year of operation, the GBC-E has expanded significantly to its current membership of over 200 companies.

The GBC-E has a hierarchical membership structure, with members categorized as: (1) Founding members, or companies that have made significant contributions in the form of resources, expertise, and leadership starting in 2012. Some of these companies are Accenture, Chevron Corporation, Dangote Industries, Discovery Communications, Inc., Intel Corporation, Lenovo Group Limited, McKinsey & Co, Inc., Pearson Inc., Tata Sons Limited, and Western Union. (2) Platinum members are similar to Founding members, Platinum members seek to invest in education by offering their leadership, thought, and expertise to GBC-E. Members include companies such as Hewlett Packard, Reed Smith, Standard Chartered, and Econet Wireless. (3) Gold members contribute toward scaling delivery of education services. Members include GUCCI, Microsoft, Sabis, Western Union, and Oando. (4) Silver members are companies interested in investing in global education. Silver members include ITWORX Education, RELX Group, KANO, Global Learning, and Sumitomo Chemical (GBC-E, n.d.c).

By way of using their core business expertise, influence and leadership, strategic investing capacities, corporate social responsibility, and philanthropy, GBC-E members seek to impact the delivery and quality of educational services by forging partnerships with other businesses, governments, and educational service providers – both non-profit and for-profit. The organization does this through four key action areas:

1) *Connect* – by creating "members-only" spaces, GBC-E harnesses the expertise of companies' leaders to identify and collaborate on novel opportunities and innovations.
2) *Cooperate* – GBC-E uses its connections with businesses, policy-makers, bilateral and multilateral agencies to create the essential pathways for greater cooperation between various actors involved in the delivery of a quality education.
3) *Showcase* – using their global appeal and name-recognition, businesses intend to influence citizens and governments alike regarding the role and relevance of private for-profit engagement in education provision.
4) *Discover* – GBC-E facilitates research projects that help the coalition identify and invest in targeted interventions. (Global Business Coalition for Education Report, 2016a; GBC, n.d.a)

Thus, the GBC-E seeks to coordinate efforts among members, facilitate research, and engage in global education advocacy and reform. The main thrusts are to make the business case for engagement in education; to identify activities that benefit businesses while simultaneously resolving education challenges; and to ensure that activities are sustainable, scalable and in alignment with government regulations (GBC-E, 2014, 2016d).

The GBC-E identifies four main arguments for the engagement of businesses in education. First, the future "global talent pool" currently resides in low-income countries with emerging market economies. Second, the strategic growth and bottom-line of business are directly affected by the quality of education to which youth have access. Third, investing in education is valuable as the return-on-investments is significantly high. And, fourth, innovative market-based ideas, solutions and resources should be used to alleviate the burden on public education systems (GBC-E Report, 2013a, 2015a). By purporting to deliver a high-quality education, GBC-E envisions building a global education network that develops students' capacities across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. However, it acknowledges its inability to afford the extensive services provided by public educational systems, and that the GBC-E role is only supplemental.

Irrespective of the type of engagement or rationale, philanthropic and/or profit-oriented, GBC-E proposes that corporate entities have the potential to create shared value and advance education goals when done well (GBC-E Report, 2013b). Using a three-pronged strategy – making the business case, identifying activities that improve education and benefit businesses, and employing smart strategies – the coalition aims to realize business benefits while advancing education goals. These three components are said to be the cornerstones to effective engagement in the field. Furthermore, it is the appropriate time for businesses to move beyond corporate social responsibility and invest strategically in issues related to global education policy formulation and implementation (GBC-E Report, 2013a, p. 4).

GBC-E claims its members are uniquely poised to harness the capabilities of businesses as knowledge providers. The aim is to share knowledge and ideas, targeting and scaling innovations, and move from corporate social responsibility

to "corporate social results" (GBC Blogs, 2016a). Since companies are equipped with expertise in knowledge management and human-resource development, GBC-E believes businesses can therefore extend their "in-house" skills and technological expertise to facilitate best practices in all areas of engagement. By building partnerships and collaborations with local stakeholders, GBC-E proposes to share existing knowledge of the specific challenges in access to education and develop solutions that best suit the local context. Furthermore, it proposes to use the knowledge of regional experts to develop targeted interventions and solutions (GBC Blogs, 2014).

Thus, the GBC-E acknowledges the importance of leading coordinated efforts between the various businesses, international organizations, and NGOs engaged in the education sector. To avoid duplication of efforts and programs, it is important for business to coordinate with governments, multilateral agencies, and local actors. Increased coordination among funders and stakeholders improves measurable learning outcomes, data collection and analysis, and accountability. However, GBC-E cites shortage of data as a reason behind their delayed formulation and implementation of some programs and initiatives. Availability of and accessibility to data greatly improve relief work on the ground in the event of an emergency or prolonged crises. And so GBC-E calls on businesses to invest more resources in research to build up the knowledge base to initiate and implement programs that are appropriate and successful. GBC-E has established several research initiatives with the Brookings Institution, FHI 360, and the LEGO Foundation to collect data from various field operations (GBC Report, 2016e).

The GBC-E has initiated several programs in collaboration with IOs, governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, and private for-profit providers to mitigate shortcomings in the provision of public education by national governments. These programs include:

1) *The Education Cannot Wait Fund* – in the event of a natural disaster such as the earthquake in Nepal, or in the case of conflict in Syria, or the breakout of the Ebola epidemic in Liberia, the GBC-E through its extensive networks and connections, helps connect donors with vetted local actors who in turn channel the funds and resources to needy populations (GBC-E Report, 2016a). (This initiative will be examined in more detail later in this chapter.)
2) *The REACT Database* – the Rapid Education Action (REACT) database is an extensive record of the various assets and resources held by the private sector which can be deployed in the event of an emergency arising in any region of the world. It is a response model that mobilizes the assets of private enterprise, governments, IOs, NGOs, and individuals in a collaborative manner to deliver innovative and meaningful outcomes (GBC-E Report, 2016b).
3) *GBC Education Middle East* – providing education for children in conflict and emergency settings poses several challenges. With the Syrian conflict entering its fifth year, and more than 7.5 million children affected by it, GBC-E has expanded its operations in the Middle East with the intent of equipping local schools and educational service providers with the required skills, expertise, and materials. Currently GBC-E's operations are targeted towards Syrian refugees accessing services in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, claiming to create safe places where children can learn and play (GBC-E Report, 2015b).

4) *The Safe Schools Initiative* – the Safe Schools Initiative launched in Pakistan, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Syria, and Ebola-affected countries aims to create safe places for children to effectively learn and play (GBC-E, n.d.a).

5) *TECH4ED* – this initiative uses low-cost smartphones to deliver pre-programmed curriculum and lesson plans. Through accelerated technological interventions, GBC-E claims to empower individuals from marginalized populations with twenty-first-century knowledge and technical knowhow (GBC-E Report, 2014).

6) *Girls Education Task Force* – this initiative, led by the Dangote Foundation and Standard Chartered, focuses on reducing the gender gap in education worldwide. By aligning learning outcomes with workforce requirement, GBC-E aspires to influence policy initiatives, school pedagogy and curriculum, and policy appropriation to achieve desired results. As noted in the GBC Gender Report (2015a), investing in girls' education in the developing world provides the highest return on investment (Larry Summers, cited in GBC Report, 2015a). For example, a company investing $1 in a girl's education in India, will return $53 to that company by the time she joins the workforce (GBC-E, n.d.b).

7) *Early Childhood Development* – established in 2014 in collaboration with the Brookings Institution, aims to create early childhood programs so as to develop the full potential of children, thereby helping them to become productive members of the workforce, and responsible citizens in society. Arguing that maximum development happens during the first 1000 days of a child's life, GBC-E articulates the importance of investing in maternal and early childhood care. Through cognitive, physical, emotional and psychological stimulation, GBC-E proposes to nurture a generation of smart and creative learners (GBC-E Report, 2016b).

8) *India and Pakistan Country Work* – led by Intel and Western Union, GBC-E India proposes to develop "soft skills," such as adaptive thinking and social intelligence that are suggested to be lacking in Indian students. Similar initiatives have been led in Pakistan in collaboration with Habib Bank. In India and Pakistan, GBC-E sees an excellent opportunity for private enterprise to take advantage of the economic boom, and establish a clientele for their services and products (GBC-E Report, 2015a; Simone, n.d.).

The profit motives of GBC-E donors and stakeholders are stated clearly in a GBC-E Blog of 2013, which states that, "There is a strong case, therefore, for businesses to 'backward integrate' and invest in education themselves in order to ensure supply of adequately skilled talent for future growth and profitability." CEOs and advisory members at the GBC-E argue that business investments that align with social needs are worth pursuing as they yield "sustainable, scalable and significant" long-term returns. Additionally, the private sector needs a workforce that is equipped with the literacy, numeracy, and social skills required to improve their profitability, hence the justification for investing in primary and secondary education. As noted by Rananjoy Basu of Reed Smith, "This is good news for investors too since it enables the private sector to use their power to wear two hats. The first being profit and the second being social responsibility" (GBC-E Blog, 2015a). In referring to CSR, business leaders have their eyes on the value

that these investments in education can bring about, such as revenues generated per employee; the aversion of management costs due to talent acquisition; calculation of return-on-investments; and the opportunity cost of lost talent to the economy. Thus, the GBC-E articulates the dual role businesses can play – profiting while playing the social responsibility card.

GBC-E Participation in the Syrian Refugee Crisis

A Call to Action

The GBC-E has recently articulated the need for a stronger focus on education in humanitarian contexts, most notably in response to the Syrian refugee crisis. The GBC-E has hosted a series of convening sessions on education in conflict settings and education for refugees. As a respondent from the GBC-E describes: "It became quite clear very early on that the Syrian refugee crisis was one that couldn't be ignored" (Interview #7, Business, June 2016).

At an event in Dubai and then in Davos at the World Economic Forum in January 2016, the GBC-E made concerted calls to action for its members to support Syrian refugee education, several of whom then pledged $75 million in response to the crisis (WEF, 2016). The GBC-E played a key role at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul in May 2016, highlighting that "Business will play a major role in addressing these issues as the international community looks to the private sector's ingenuity and experience in delivering solutions at scale" (GBC-E, 2016a). Prior to the summit, the GBC-E touted its members' presence at the event: "GBC-E-Education members NRS International, Pearson, and Western Union will add to the Summit's private sector presence through special side events, exhibits, and virtual advocacy alongside the summit" (GBC-E, 2016a). The GBC-E and others hosted a special session breakfast meeting that brought together corporate leaders alongside high-level political actors to discuss global initiatives to support education in contexts of crisis (WHS, 2016). As one research participant described:

> It was very high level. You had the heads of all the UN agencies. Ban Ki-moon came to this breakfast and spoke … I find it quite interesting to go to the GBC Ed breakfast and the room is packed with people lined up trying to be there … listening and hearing these really senior-level [representatives] from the UN side and so forth, and then the CEOs of these major corporations talking about education in emergencies. (Interview #4, NGO, June 2016)

The GBC-E has made explicit calls for the business community to "lead" in alleviating the impact of emergencies on education: "Natural disasters, conflict and emergencies increasingly impact regions which have traditionally driven economic growth, disrupting the education of millions of young people. Be part of the business community's solution to restoring education and rebuilding societies" (GBC-E, n.d.a).

And in response to the GBC-E's calls to action, its business members have participated in a wide range of activities relating to education in emergencies, and Syrian refugee education in particular. A respondent from the GBC-E explains the breadth of activities its members have adopted:

> We're seeing investments in vocational training, in technology, a lot of online digital platforms, like learning platforms … We're seeing organizations investing in skills for employability … a lot of companies focus on connectivity; making sure that there's the infrastructure available for internet connectivity as a lot of the kinds of solutions that we're seeing from the private sector relate to technology. The structure, not just the building of schools but also advising the ministries on maintenance and development of infrastructure … Some companies that are looking at the actual curriculum and content development and this is also across the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, I would say. Teacher training; logistics support, so actually moving things; and, in general, just job opportunities. Either providing scholarships, or internship, apprenticeship opportunities, that sort of thing. (Interview #7, Business, June 2016)

The Education Cannot Wait Fund

In 2016, many of the high-level meetings convened by the GBC-E have revolved around the theme of establishing a global fund to support education in humanitarian crises, widely known now as the Education Cannot Wait Fund (ECW), described as

> a new global fund to transform the delivery of education in emergencies – one that joins up governments, humanitarian actors and development efforts to deliver a more collaborative and rapid response to the educational needs of children and youth affected by crisis. (ECW, 2016a)

UNICEF, which provided an initial analysis that led to the formation of the ECW, is now the Secretariat of the Fund, and will be managing operations and distribution related to it (ECW, 2016b). And "GBC-Education members have played a key role in ensuring that the fund is inclusive of private sector contributions and expertise" (GBC-E, 2016a).

Alongside governments and aid agencies, the ECW is vocally supported by the Global Business Coalition for Education, which was a pivotal player in its initial establishment. Respondents trace the ECW to efforts as far back as the formation of the Millennium Development Goals in the early 2000s, when the education community stressed that multi-year funding was needed in fragile contexts and that traditional aid was not flexible nor innovative enough to address sudden crises: "cultivating greater interest from those states and then the private sector to be able to prompt a fund like this was very important" (Interview #19, UN agency, October 2016). In May 2015, the GBC-E was commissioned to coordinate a consultation with business actors on funding education in contexts of crisis and emergency: "The consultation findings were clear: The business

community supports the creation of a fund or financing mechanism to mobilize increased resources to address the crisis of education in emergencies" (GBC-E, 2015). As a respondent confirms: "The Global Business Coalition was highly involved in the development of that platform" (Interview #3, NGO, July 2016). The GBC-E's role in ECW development has been "to explore the demand and need for the creation of the fund and make the business case for it" (Interview #8, Business, June 2016). A core architect and advocate for the ECW is Gordon Brown, the UN Special Envoy on Education, and the husband of Sarah Brown, who initiated the GBC-E (Brown, 2016; UN, 2016). Since its establishment, the ECW has had a clear and important relationship to the GBC-E.

In the context of diminishing bilateral aid to education, the GBC-E presents its members as non-traditional funders, necessary contributors to schooling in emergency settings. The private sector is widely envisaged as central to the ECW efforts: "If successful, the ECW mechanism could do for the education of children facing emergencies what the global funds in health have done – namely, mobilise private sector engagement and facilitate high impact, value-for-money interventions through effective pooling of resources" (Watkins, 2016, pp. 21–22). A respondent explains: "It's been stated from the beginning that one of the reasons to establish the Fund is to provide a platform for private funding to be channeled, so that's an underlying key factor for establishing the Fund" (Interview #28, UN agency, February 2017). In a Huffington Post op-ed, Gordon Brown made clear the importance of the private sector in supporting the Fund: "Inside the humanitarian tent we need charities, philanthropists, businesses and social enterprises as well as governments and international agencies – not just one sector determining who gets to set the pace of progress. Not dogmatic dismissals writing off creative thinkers" (Brown, 2016).

Those from the non-governmental sector moreover view the participation of business actors as an indirect way to elicit more political attention to the cause on refugee education. In referencing a high-level meeting at the World Humanitarian Summit, an NGO representative explained:

> I think for the sector, it's quite important, that at this political level, and that includes the private sector in a sense, that folks are standing up for education emergencies. I think it's connected to also why the political levels are taking notice as well. Those converge in a sense, and I think we needed that. (Interview #4, NGO, June 2016)

The private sector has the capacity to garner attention from politicians who are central in decision-making on education in emergencies, and in turn opening the door to the voices of NGOs. The GBC-E as a central player in the initiation and support of the ECW is viewed as an enabler for high-level political actors to become more engaged in the Fund.

Some respondents, however, voiced caution about whether the private sector is able to coordinate with state actors and agree to commit to tangible and significant contributions. For example, one donor agency representative described feeling "cautiously optimistic" about private sector engagement and the nascent ECW Fund:

It's my greatest hope that it is early, and that it is something that people are going to stick with, and they're going to figure out how to do better and move away from the fancy meetings in Europe and elsewhere and figure out more stuff to hang your hat on a little bit. [But] sometimes I feel, like, are we being really naïve? How much money could the private sector possibly even have for something like this, right? … The scale is never going to tilt such that there's more money for corporate social responsibility than for actually running a business. (Interview #1, Bilateral Donor, July 2016)

Moreover, questions remain whether the resources committed will be directed to areas of most need, and how business actors will feel about putting funds into a pool that will be distributed perhaps without their direct consultation: "Those commitments of funding, is that writing a blank check, or is that a check with specific types of tasks?" (Interview #4, NGO, June 2016). A respondent explained that the role of the private sector in the ECW's Board remains unclear: "It's in the documents that there would be representation of the private sector also on the board of the Education Cannot Wait, and I question that … what kind of role the private sector would have" (Interview #28, UN Agency, February 2017). As well, the ECW is viewed as a work in progress and respondents voice concern that the Fund will incur large amounts of overhead and be costly to run, leaving some to question "what percentage of these funds are actually going to reach children?" (Interview #3, NGO, July 2016).

A Shared Value Impetus

While the interventions promoted by the GBC-E and its members all aim to support refugee education in some way, they are also said to serve the bottom-line interests of companies, under a shared value umbrella. The GBC-E discourse concerning education in emergencies often relates member participation in contexts of crisis to the benefit of business interests. In a policy brief, the GBC-E explains that:

In times of emergency and protracted crisis, investment in education is even more critical for rebuilding in ways that impact the business operating environment, enabling business to proactively strengthen their longer-term operations; improve brand visibility, reputation, and customer loyalty; strengthen trust amongst customers, political leaders and communities; manage operational risks; and develop goodwill with local communities. (GBC-E, 2015c, p. 5)

The ECW is presented as a means for business to get involved in global education in a meaningful way:

Many business leaders were saying "It's one of the worst humanitarian crises that we have ever faced, and no one has done anything … It's time for business leaders to really step up and say we can change this. We must do something. We absolutely need this Fund." (Interview #5, Business, June 2016)

Yet at the same time, business actors involved in the establishment of the ECW – mainly members of the GBC-E – appear to seek positions of respected global policy actors, leading others to desire involvement: "You know, it's like a club in a way" (Interview #1, Bilateral Donor, July 2016).

While the GBC-E has actively worked to solicit support for Syrian refugee education via participation in the ECW and also initiating more direct activities in the region, this engagement is framed to companies through a clear shared-value lens, where a business case must be made for participation. A respondent explains:

> In order to get businesses to understand why they should invest, you have to put it in their language … we need to translate that language into one that speaks to them … some of it is because they care and they realize not only that they're a social impact because they understood the implications of children being out of school, but for a business impact, it's a good business decision for them to invest. (Interview #7, Business, June 2016)

Conclusion

In the context of education in emergencies, members of the Global Business Coalition for Education have been embraced as core policy-makers as well as funders, most notably in light of the Education Cannot Wait Fund and their participation in high-level forums at major convening events on refugee education. Education in contexts of humanitarian crisis is without doubt in need of substantial resources, and both traditional donors and non-traditional private funders have an important role to play in fiscally supporting refugee education. Moreover, high-profile business representatives have the potential to raise awareness of the crisis and elicit attention from both political actors and the wider public.

However, given critiques of corporate actors and their potential to wield authority in global policy, the roles occupied by the business sector in the establishment of such new policies and large-scale programs as the ECW are critical to understand as the Fund evolves. Business actors have been enabled with a degree of legitimate authority at the global policy level via membership to the GBC-E, with access to global leaders and forums that produce mandates on education. Yet this participation reflects a democratic deficit in global education policy-making, where unelected actors are occupying core decision-making spaces on education and potentially steering discussions.

A further key concern rests on certain private actors' profit-oriented goals, sometimes framed alongside a claim to humanitarian goals, or shared value. The GBC-E consistently frames business participation in education, including in contexts of humanitarian crises, as a good "investment" through making a business case for involvement. When a business case is made to support the education of refugee children, in the context of a humanitarian emergency, a crisis is framed as an "exciting market opportunity," or what could be described as disaster capitalism. Moreover, given the bottom-line motivation for involvement,

respondents from UN organization, bilateral aid agencies, and NGOs question the amount and type of contributions GBC-E members are able to make to the ECW and global education more generally, and their commitments more long term. The democratic deficit resulting from private participation in global education policy, combined with the profit motivations of members, presents a potential case of philanthrocapitalism.

Although the GBC-E articulates clear humanitarian-oriented motivations in the education of Syrian refugees, certain businesses are focused also on the "bottom line" (Interview #5, Business, June 2016; Interview #9, NGO, July 2016). Yet the very concept of shared value, where profit-maximization is argued to concurrently address social challenges (Porter & Kramer, 2011), arguably holds inherent contradictions. While the private sector has a role to play in addressing the education of Syrian refugees, this research also prompts educational actors to question the ethics of making a "business case" for involvement and "investing in the crisis" (Interview #7, Business, June 2016).

This chapter highlights some of the tensions that arise in considering the growing role of businesses in global education reform, particularly in the context of humanitarian crisis. Focusing on the work of the Global Business Coalition for Education in coordinating and advocating efforts towards the education of Syrian refugees, the chapter demonstrates how such interventions might be critiqued as potentially enabling disaster capitalism, or a democratic deficit via philanthrocapitalism. While the GBC-E has brought much attention and a commitment of resources to the cause of educating Syrian refugees, the tensions and contradictions inherent in making the business case and identifying shared value remain. Thus, this case study serves to illuminate some of the central debates regarding the rising presence of businesses in global educational reform

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3

Venture Philanthropy and Education Policy-Making

Charity, Profit, and the So-Called "Democratic State"
Antonio Olmedo

Introduction

> As Bishop and Green clearly demonstrate, the 21st century has given people with wealth unprecedented opportunities, and commensurate responsibilities, to advance the public good.
>
> (Bill Clinton, Foreword to *Philanthrocapitalism*)

Back in 2008, right after the "latest" global collapse of the capitalist system, Bishop and Green published their *Ode to* (what they baptized as) *the philanthrocapitalist.* Their book preaches the "renaissance of giving and philanthropy." It portrays how a group of *new* philanthropists "give, by applying business techniques and ways of thinking to their philanthropy" and also "describes the growing recognition by the leaders of capitalism that giving back much of their fortune to improve society is as much a part of the system as making the money in the first place" (Bishop & Green, 2010, p. xii). In the Preface of the second edition of their book, the authors celebrate the fact that the global economic crisis does not seem to have endangered, but rather has fortified, the wealth of the wealthiest on Earth:

> The world has changed since the financial meltdown of September 2009, but in ways that make the ideas in *Philanthrocapitalism* more relevant than ever. According to the annual rich list compiled by *Forbes* magazine, the collapse of the stock and other asset prices reduced the global number of billionaires by over 300, nearly one-third, from 2008 to 2009. The average charitable foundation saw its assets shrink by at least one-quarter. *Yet the world still has plenty of super-rich people. Indeed, overall, the super rich are likely to emerge from the crisis in better financial shape than anyone else. The reservoir of wealth to fund Philanthrocapitalism is still there.* (Bishop & Green, 2010, p. xii; emphasis added)

But, in fairness, charitable giving and philanthropy are certainly not new, dating back to, at least, Ancient Greece. It is not the aim of this chapter to analyse the historical evolution of the concept and practices of charitable and philanthropic individuals and organizations (see Reich, Cordelli, & Bernholz, 2016). Suffice to say, the history of philanthropy, since its origins in ancient Greece and Rome, passing by the Christian reconceptualization of giving into the divinely recognized *caritas*, and its later institutionalization (through the control of the Church and also the rise of a number of non-religious foundations) from the Middle Ages onwards, is a history of legal disputes over economic and political control (Sievers, 2010). However, it is important to point out that charity and philanthropy are not synonyms. As Beer synthesizes, "the most important difference between philanthropy and charity—the truly revolutionary difference—is that the logic of philanthropy invites us to see voluntary giving within a primarily technological and global rather than theological and local framework" (2015, p. 15). In fact, according to Sievers (2010), philanthropy can be considered one of the seven pillars that constitute contemporary civil society. Together with *the common good*, *the rule of law*, *non-profit and voluntary organizations*, *individual rights*, *free expression*, and *tolerance*, philanthropy is a key element in the configuration of civil society as an "enabling framework for democracy," while encompassing "an intrinsic tension, a fragile balance between private and public interests" (p. 2).

So, if philanthropy is not "new," then why should we pay special interest to it? Is there anything different in the way in which philanthropy operates in the present day? Will we experience any changes in our everyday lives? And, more importantly, will society's long-standing, even inherent, social and economic problems be solved by the rise of this new group of philanthrocapitalists? According to its advocates, new philanthropy, understood as "effective altruism," surpasses the basic assumptions of traditional strategic giving by assigning a double moral obligation to donors. On the one hand, it should be *performative* (that is, able to identify the areas where their operations will do the most good) and, on the other hand, it should be *effective* (or, in other words, be able to "do more with less"). One of the reasons that justifies the need to pay attention to philanthropy in the beginning of the twenty-first century is the exponential growth and volume that charitable activity has experienced in recent decades. Just as an example

> American voluntary giving is approximately equal to the entire gross domestic product (GDP) of Denmark. The $715 billion in assets controlled by US foundations—money that is of course invested in the US economy in various ways—is larger than the Swiss economy, which is the twentieth largest in the world. (Beer, 2015, p. 13)

Undoubtedly, the most important question among those above is the latter one. Back to the numbers game, coinciding with the 2016 World Social Forum in Davos, Oxfam released a report based on Credit Suisse's "Global Wealth Databook,"[1] denouncing that the top 1% richest people have gained more income than the poorest 50% altogether. The tendency seems to be worsening

as in 2010 the assets of the 43 richest people in the world had to be combined in order to equal the wealth of the 50% at the bottom. This data reinforces, almost a decade later, Bishop and Green's guess, allowing us to assert that truly the super-rich emerged from the crisis in better financial shape than anyone else. The counter-narrative claims that, while the richest become richer, the average well-being of the population increases correspondingly. Even the friendliest statistics (i.e. the Brookings Institution has recalibrated poverty indicators according to new data available on prices for goods and services (Purchasing Power Parities) in every country in the world) show that while in some regions the new calculations seem to suggest an improvement in the percentage of people living in extreme poverty, that is not the case in other areas, where such proportions seem to aggravate.[2] Moreover, the think tank signals that there is a large concentration of people whose living standards are virtually similar to the global poverty line, which epitomizes the fragility of such estimates. All in all, the situation seems far from resolved and the number of deadlines missed by international declarations, multilateral agreements, development goals, etc. continues to amass.

In what follows, this chapter focuses on the role of philanthropic actors in processes of education policy enactment. It rests on previous work (Ball & Olmedo, 2012; Olmedo, 2016, 2017) and contributes to the efforts of other scholars in the field who develop both theoretical and empirical approaches to similar questions (Ball & Junemann, 2012; Klonsky, 2011; Saltman, 2010, 2011). Here, I concentrate on one specific form of philanthropic organization that has received less attention in the field of education policy, the so-called venture philanthropy, although, as suggested below, it takes a number of appellatives and shades. More concretely, the chapter analyses the profiles, agendas, and portfolios of three "new" philanthropic organizations:

- The *Omidyar Network* was co-founded by Pierre (founder of eBay) and Pam Omidyar. The fund has offices in the Silicon Valley and Washington, DC, Johannesburg, London, and Mumbai.
- *Reach Capital* spun off from NewSchools Venture Fund in 2015 as a for-profit social impact fund focused on education technology. With over $53 million raised, to date, they have supported over 50 early-stage companies.
- *LGT Venture Philanthropy* represent the philanthropic arm of the Princely Family of Liechtenstein and LGT (the world's largest privately owned private banking and asset management group). Founded by H.S.H. Prince Max von und zu Liechtenstein in 2007, they have invested over $15 million and their portfolio currently covers four regions (Africa, Asia, India, Latin America).

The findings presented here are part of an ongoing research project and therefore are not all-encompassing and exhaustive. They are the result of painstaking and meticulous reading and searches through multiple channels (organizations' websites, promotional pamphlets, newspaper articles, etc.). As this is work in progress, in future publications, a more detailed analysis, with an ethnographic perspective, based on cases and operations "on the ground," would be performed to take further the provisional conclusions presented here.

From the Rear Guard to the Frontline: A New Role for Philanthropy

With a yearly periodicity, since its foundation in 1971, the World Economic Forum (a not-for-profit foundation based in Geneva) has gathered together a number of business, government and civil society leaders across different fields, with one forthright aim: "to shape global, regional and industry agendas."[3] Back in 2008, Bill Gates, founder and then chairman of Microsoft Corporation, was invited to speak at the Forum. His speech was entitled "A New Approach to Capitalism in the 21st Century"[4] and unveiled Gates' thoughts on the new directions of contemporary capitalist societies. "Creative capitalism," as he called his new vision, represents a new model of economic and political governance extending capitalist principles into places and spaces where they had not previously had access.[5] In his words:

> The genius of capitalism lies in its ability to make self-interest serve the wider interest.[6] … But to harness this power so it benefits everyone, we need to refine the system … Such a system would have a twin mission: making profits and also improving lives for those who don't fully benefit from market forces. To make the system sustainable, we need to use profit incentives whenever you can … The challenge is to design a system where market incentives, including profits and recognition, drive the change.

Market incentives and motivations (and, subsequently, penalties and deterrents) become the new *balm of life*, that should fuel the exchanges, decision-making processes, and approaches to solving the world's problems. To do so, there is a need for a new system of relationships and institutional configurations: "where governments, businesses, and nonprofits work together to stretch the reach of market forces so that more people can make a profit, or gain recognition, doing work that eases the world's inequities."

There are multiple fronts and potential sources of friction that creative capitalism opens in terms of its impacts on public policy-making. First, a repopulation of the state, which is now composed of networks of local, regional, national, and supra-national organizations from the economic, social, and political fields. Such networks are expected to assemble the efforts of capitalist and non-capitalists organizations in the construction of a supposedly "socio/neoliberal" project. Second, the resulting landscape is a new amalgamation of actors and relations that entails a change and redefinition of the relationship between the domains of the economy and the social, and obfuscates the tensions between public and private interests, the social and economic spheres, the state/government and the marketplace, collective welfare and individual wealth. Third, it assigns new roles to the state and, within it, to government, whose organization moves toward less hierarchical and less centralized forms. Among the new roles, two are particularly relevant. On the one hand, given the need to re-inscribe every logic and mechanism of governance in terms of competition, profit, and recognition, governments are expected to reconfigure their political institutions, methods, and political

rationales, and develop what Ball (2007) identifies as processes of "market-making." On the other hand, given the new "polycentric" shape of the state (Jessop, 1998), governments are expected to encourage and steer the necessary connections and transactions that guarantee the correct functioning and reproduction of policy networks, what Jessop (2002) calls processes of metagovernance.

Governments around the world have embraced the underlying logics of creative capitalism and began to develop new policy solutions accordingly. In Uganda, for instance, in 2010, the government announced a new strategic framework, the National Development Plan (NDP), with a clear vision: "a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years."[7] To do so, the government is openly committed to allowing private investment and participation to play a more significant role in the modernization of the country. In the Foreword of the NDP document, President Museveni stated: "I urge the private sector, civil society and academia to work together with Government and to align their development efforts towards achieving the NDP objectives and the country's Vision."[8] In the same vein, a review of the Ugandan NDP prepared by the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) highlights:

> The NDP broadens the strategic focus of the authorities from "poverty reduction" to "structural transformation" in order to raise growth and living standards. In recent years, the authorities' policies have increasingly targeted a rise in potential growth and reduction in income poverty. Building on the achievements under the PEAP, the NDP aims at fostering skilled employment growth and a sectoral shift to higher value-added activities. It gives the government a strategic role in this process by eliminating remaining, persistent barriers to growth and promoting private sector involvement in selected priority areas. The NDP identifies four priority targets: human resources development through health, education and skills building; boosting up physical infrastructure, particularly in the energy and transportation areas; supporting science, technology and innovation; and facilitating private access to critical production inputs, particularly in agriculture.[9]

In the United Kingdom (though only applicable to England), in his inaugural speech back in 2010,[10] David Cameron, the then UK Conservative Prime Minister, revealed his new vision of "the Big Society." Based on a rhetoric empowerment of local communities, businesses, and individuals, the Big Society implies a devolution of power from central government to local associations, charities, non-profit and for-profit social enterprises, which from now on will be the main actors of local and national policy-making and policy accountability. In a second speech in the House of Commons a year later, David Cameron openly defended this new "duty" of the government within an increasingly plural "networked-state":

> [W]hat we are talking about here is a whole stream of things that need to be done. First of all, we have got to devolve more power to local government, and beyond local government, so people can actually do more and take more power. Secondly, we have got to open up public services, make

> them less monolithic, say to people: if you want to start up new schools, you can; if you want to set up a co-op or a mutual within the health service, if you're part of the health service, you can … I don't believe that you just sort of roll back the state and the Big Society springs up miraculously. There are amazing people in our country, who are establishing great community organisations and social enterprises, but we, the government, should also be catalysing and agitating and trying to help build the Big Society.[11]

To develop the model, the UK government launched the Big Society Network,[12] which, as stated on their website:

> exists to support and develop talent, innovation and enterprise to deliver social impact. By working with business, philanthropists, charities and social ventures we believe we can unleash the social energy that exists in the UK to help build a better, healthier society.[13]

Both examples show the willingness of government to open up new spaces within the public policy arena to the participation of new actors, which would bring with them new ways of understanding the world. It also implies new relationships (away from the top-down operations of centralized politics) and the need for new policy techniques (where conciliation, redistribution, and welfare give way to bargaining, rationing, and "economicism" at the core of the new form of governmentality). Such changes expected on the part of the state are also required for the new players that aim to enter or remain in the game. At least discursively, businesses are asked to balance their insatiable thirst for economic profit and introduce social change and social equality in their diets. Reciprocally, philanthropic organizations must modify their *modus operandi* and move away from traditional distant, donation-based, hands-off and altruist ways of promoting welfare, turning themselves into catalysers of (individual) economic profit and (communal) social development.

New/Effective/Impact/Strategic/Engaged/Venture Philanthropy

As a result of the processes highlighted above, a new form of philanthropic organization was born:

> We also believe that businesses can be a powerful force for good. Pierre Omidyar experienced this firsthand as the founder of eBay. Just as eBay created the opportunity for millions of people to start their own businesses, we believe market forces can be a potent driver for positive social change. That's why we invest in both for-profit businesses and nonprofit organizations, whose complementary roles can advance entire sectors.
>   Omidyar Network invests in entrepreneurs who share our commitment to advancing social good at the pace and scale the world needs today. We

are focused on five key areas we believe are building blocks for prosperous, stable, and open societies: Consumer Internet and Mobile, Education, Financial Inclusion, Governance & Citizen Engagement, and Property Rights. (Omidyar Network)

The new approach to philanthropy that emerged at the end of the twentieth century has been rebranded with different labels highlighting its multiple attributes (i.e. impact, strategic, engaged, venture) but all share a common denominator: profit. The *new* philanthropy is therefore different in shape and essence from traditional approaches to charitable activity. Just after Melinda and Bill Gates and Warren Buffett initiated the Giving Pledge in June 2010,[14] a call to the world's wealthiest individuals and families to dedicate the majority of their wealth to philanthropy, Charles Bronfman (Seagram liquor empire) and Jeffrey Solomon (president of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies) convened a roundtable with eight like-minded philanthropists with the aim of discussing the future of their foundations. At the event, Bronfman quoted the term *philanthropy 3.0*, stressing the new character and idiosyncrasy of their philanthropic activities. As suggested elsewhere (see Ball & Olmedo, 2012), this is the next stage of an already in motion move from palliative (*philanthropy 1.0*) to developmental (*philanthropy 2.0*), and, finally, to "profitable" giving (*philanthropy 3.0*). Taking Bronfman's ideas further, in a recent presentation at the 2015 Grantmakers in Health (GIH) conference, Antony Chiang, president of Empire Health Foundation, summarized the main differences (Chiang, 2015). He defined *philanthropy 1.0* as a "shotgun approach" with poor specific staff qualifications based on "just writing a cheque." In turn, *philanthropy 2.0* implies a move driven by an "academic theory of change" where the philanthropists still write the cheque and then "hope that the grantees will move the needle." The staff qualifications here are defined, as he puts it, by an "alphabet soup after their names." Finally, *philanthropy 3.0* is about realizing that the job of the philanthropists is focused on "moving the needle" themselves. It is defined as "adaptive and entrepreneurial" based metrics and the qualifications of founders of successful start-up organizations or social enterprises.

Venture philanthropy is a *"hybrid" charitable venture* that breathes in two worlds. In short, venture philanthropy (VP) applies the principles and methods of venture and investment capital to philanthropic decision-making and activities. As the Omidyar Network highlights on its website, their approach is "more than funding." As Kozol (1992, p. 277) puts it, "when business enters education ... it sells something more than the brand names of its products." It could be argued that such new ontology is what VP has brought to traditional philanthropy. VP implies a new way of understanding the world and the public sphere, of solving problems and "improving lives." Within this new configuration, the boundaries between charity and business are hazed to the extent that in order to fulfill its new roles, the new philanthropic ventures are set-up as cross-breed organizations:

We are structured to support the notion that philanthropy is more than a type of funding. In its truest sense, philanthropy is about improving the

lives of others, independent of the mechanism. Consequently, we work
across the social and business sectors, operating both a Limited Liability
Company (LLC) and a 501(c)(3) foundation.[15](Omidyar Network)

In the UK, for instance, such hybrids are known as "charitable companies." As
such, they are entitled to own property and generate profits. However, the eco-
nomic surplus generated from the provision of the services that they provide
should be "reinvested" within the organization. That does not exclude the alter-
native possibility of using their economic assets to trade and purchase services
and goods with other public and private providers. Once again, within these
novel philanthropic enterprises, the already thin line between profit and social
altruism becomes even more blurred. Their ethos and methods are attuned to
the corporate roots and organigrams of their founders' original corporate organ-
izations. They operate by using their own capital as well as funnelling the addi-
tional charitable donations that they receive. They work as "charity brokers,"
gathering sums of capital and scouting for the best edu-businesses, social entre-
preneurs, and products in the edu-market to invest in: "As a non-profit venture
philanthropy firm, we use the charitable donations we receive to support educa-
tion entrepreneurs who are transforming public education to create great results
for all students" (NewSchools Venture Fund).[16]

One of the key characteristics that differentiates new philanthropy from more
traditional approaches is the *high level of involvement* that the investor plays in
the organization and the activities of the investee. As Davis et al. (2005, p. 4) put
it, "Engaged philanthropists get involved as volunteers, providing their intellec-
tual capital, coaching, mentoring, introductions to personal and professional
contacts, or sometimes by serving as a board trustee to assist with overall organi-
zational development." By creating a tighter relationship, the founder not only
provides financial support but contributes to their investees with further sources
of capital (see Figure 3.1). Alongside the economic investments, that usually
takes the shape of smaller portfolios of bigger grants and over a longer period
of time than traditional philanthropic organizations, venture philanthropists
bring with them an array of other resources, such us mentoring, consulting, and
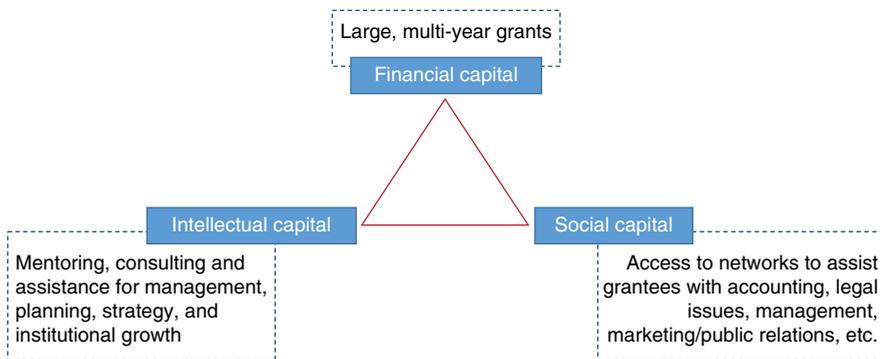
Figure 3.1 Sources of capital in philanthropic investment. *Source*: Adapted from Davis et al.
(2005).

assistance for management, planning, strategy and institutional growth, and also the possibility of entering broad networks and new connections that could provide further assistance to their investees in multiple ways.

> Reach supports the most promising entrepreneurs developing technology solutions for challenges in K-12 education. We invest in early stage tech tools, applications, content, and services to improve education opportunities for all children. The Fund also acts as a catalyst, inspiring and enabling traditional and non-traditional investors to provide capital to the fast-growing ed tech market.
> [...]
> Our job is to support education entrepreneurs and we want them to be in the spotlight. We have built a community of hardy, mission-driven ed tech entrepreneurs who we support with our collective network, experiences and market knowledge. We value community and support our founders' efforts to convene and connect. Most importantly we seek to learn from them. (Reach NewSchools Capital)[17]

This is the way in which the neoliberal subjectivity is spread and instilled into the operations of the new investees, though such a process is not always as swift and straightforward as the philanthropic funds had wished. As Pieter Oostlander and Kurt Peleman from the European Venture Philanthropy Association (EVPA) recognize:

> What we have learned over the years is that bringing these into the collaboration with SPOs [Social Purpose Organisations] demands both a change in mindset and a change in skills: one needs to be patient and empathetic, and to recognize that it is a learning process for all involved.
> The latest EVPA survey confirms that it takes time before you can offer the full package – but as the sector is maturing every year, these best practices are put into effect in more and more sophisticated ways.[18]

In short, this new high-engagement and more hands-on role of venture philanthropy is developed through three core practices: (1) tailored financing; (2) organizational support; and (3) impact measurement and management (see EVPN, 2016). The first involves determining on a case-by-case basis the most appropriate financing mechanisms. According to a number of variables (geographic location, market niche, size and scope, etc.), each potential investee is evaluated and a bespoke business plan is developed. As a result, the financial investment could vary from non-returnable grants to loans or equity hybrid financing: "At LGT Venture Philanthropy we support the growth of innovative social organizations by providing a tailored combination of philanthropic capital, access to business skills, management know-how and strategic advice" (LGT Venture Philanthropy).[19]

Second, venture philanthropists concentrate on developing the operational capacity and long-term viability of the projects that they engage with. In this sense, they offer alternative services in order to develop and maximize the activities of their investees. Such value-added services range from strategic planning,

marketing and communications, executive coaching, human resource advice, and access to other networks and potential funders.

> We take calculated risks in the earliest stages of innovation, helping to transform promising ideas into successful ventures. As an active impact investor, we offer more than just financial support. We provide vital human capital capabilities, from serving on boards to consulting on strategy, coaching executives to recruiting new talent. We connect promising investees to entrepreneurial visionaries with business know-how. We also leverage the tremendous capacity of Web and mobile technologies to go beyond incremental improvement and make a significant, widespread impact.
>
> Understanding the scale and importance of this work, we don't undertake the challenge alone. The most powerful force for change lies in our connection with others: business, government, nonprofits, and individual partners. Together, we can use our resources to transform scarcity into abundance and put enduring opportunity within reach of more people worldwide. (Omidyar Network)[20]

Finally, given the performance-based character of VP, there is a stress on developing processes and tools to measure and manage the levels of social impact generated by their investees (see below). New projects from the moment of negotiation and inception to their final stages and completion are designed in a way that allows the investor to constantly monitor and evaluate the programs in which they are involved. In a sense, venture philanthropists are determined to disprove Peter Frumkin when he claimed that:

> [W]hile it never has existed in practice, imagine what a fully functional performance measurement system in philanthropy might look like. A donor could look up any nonprofit organization and find a detailed report on the programs carried out by the group, with their impact on the community measured with sensible indicators, and a series of scores that would allow the donor to assess the quality of one group's work compared to that of other organizations working in the same field. Such a system has never existed and likely will never be seen by donors. It is a fiction because so many of the dimensions of charitable activity cannot be clearly measured, because results are almost always incommensurable across organizations and across fields, and because the cost of developing and maintaining such a system would be too high. (Frumkin, 2006, p. 332)

Indeed, there is a strong emphasis on the need to develop such a system of performance indicators that accounts both for the current activities of potential investees and also the stretch, in terms of replicability and efficiency, of their solutions. VP funds are following the quest to find the holy grail, a silver-bullet solution that would remediate the problems of the most disadvantaged in record time, across different geographies while, and foremost, not renouncing profit generation at the end of the journey. All that has a direct effect on the profile of potential investees. For them to be rendered as *worth the risk*, new ventures need to be fully open to permanent and detailed scrutiny from the founder:

Organizations admitted to the LGT Venture Philanthropy portfolio must undergo a detailed audit process and achieve jointly defined objectives. They need to have developed innovative and replicable models designed to make sustainable improvements to the quality of life of disadvantaged people. The use of proven investment, management and controlling processes is intended to ensure that the funds entrusted to the parties concerned are deployed in an objective-driven, efficient and transparent manner. This is the only way of achieving a sustainable positive impact for disadvantaged people.[21]

General selection criteria:

[…]

We and our clients only support organizations that have:

- A service or product that serves less advantaged people
- The willingness to undergo detailed due diligence
- The willingness to report on the progress of their activities on a regular basis
- A strong management and financial discipline
- Effective methods to evaluate results.[22] (LGT Venture Philanthropy)

They also need to align their objectives and *modus operandi* with those of their investors, participating in their general vision and in their grand challenges (see Ball & Olmedo, 2012). The focus of assessment is not only guiding the decision-making process around which program to fund but also translates into the nature of the programs themselves. Data and evaluation are part of the *neo-philanthropic habitus*, their way of looking at the educational system, and, consequently, they favor enterprises that would enable politicians, managers, inspectors, head teachers, teachers, parents, and students, to measure their progress in every instance:

Making informed decisions

A key focus of Reach is data. We seek companies bringing data to bear at all levels of educational decision-making, from the classroom to district operations. Examples of data companies include Schoolzilla, Brightbytes and Decison Science. (Reach NewSchool Capital)[23]

Change in the Nature of Investments: Both For-Profit and Not-For-Profit

In this new approach to philanthropy, the ends have won the battle to the means. Here, in another mixture of adjectives, the ends are defined as sustainable, large-scale, long-lasting, fast-paced, catalytic, innovative, scalable, replicable social impact; and, as the Omidyar Network clearly puts it:

The impact investing industry has long debated whether there is a necessary trade-off between financial returns and social impact. While many impact investors are eager to answer definitively one way or the other,

> Omidyar Network's 12 years of experience and $1BN in investments have led us to a different answer: It depends.[24]

And:

> As a philanthropic investment firm, we support market-based approaches with the potential for large-scale, catalytic impact. Toward that end, our investing style transcends typical boundaries that separate for-profit investing and traditional philanthropy. Because we believe that each sector has a role, we make investments in for-profit companies as well as grants to nonprofit organizations. Regardless of the sector, we invest in organizations that have the potential to embody innovation, scale, and sustainability or help bring them about within their industry.
>
> We focus our investments where we have direct experience and can have the greatest impact. In emerging markets, we create economic opportunity for the base of the pyramid through access to capital. In the developed world, we encourage individual participation in media, markets, and government. In either case, we focus on what we believe are the most significant drivers of overall well-being and quality of life.
>
> Each of our initiatives is united by the principles of individual access, connection, and ownership. Across everything we do, we look for solutions that enable people to access credible information and resources, connect with others over shared interests, and take constructive action on the issues that matter to them. The ultimate outcome we strive for is individual participation that can catalyze economic and social advancement on a global scale.[25]

Moreover, the Omidyar Network has recently published a report on the Stanford Social Innovation Review outlining their new framework, what they call the "returns continuum." The approach remains the same: creating a complementary grant and commercial venture capital portfolio that delivers a high level of social impact. The novelty resides in the need to acknowledge that the return expectations of both commercial and non-commercial investments should be adjusted, especially from those ventures that target less advantaged populations in emerging markets. In fact, potential "market-level impact" is a new measure created to complement the traditional "expected financial-return." The former is a key variable that allows them to evaluate their "subcommercial" investments.

There are three different areas in which any venture can create "market-level impact": (1) new models for new markets; (2) creating industry infrastructure; and (3) policy impact (Bannick, Goldman, Kubzansky, & Saltuk, 2017). The first implies the recognition that when developing businesses strategies that target low-income consumers, there is a need to develop alternative models that might require either more time or a different approach. If successful, the expectation is that the new model will inspire others, generating competition, which, according to capitalist economic theory, will in turn drive down prices, increase quality, and spark innovation. Microfinance is a good example of this first new form of market-level impact. In this case, Omidyar invests in microfinance institutions

like Elevar Equity (which has a strong portfolio of investees in different fields, including education) or Varthana (a microloan company that specializes in the creation of private schools in India). The second refers to the required infrastructure to enable market creation. Higher costs, prior to the generation of economic return, and the risk of paving the road for potential competitors that may arise in the future are the main deterrents that prevent individual companies from investing in such ventures. An example of these forms of market-level impact is the creation of accessible and affordable currency-hedge funds that facilitate the need for microfinance institutions to exchange the currency received from their investors (usually in dollars, euros and pounds) into local currencies that usually have a very low liquidity and, therefore, represent a higher risk. Through their investment in subcompanies, such as MFX Solutions (whose main focus is to help microfinance institutions analyze, manage, and mitigate currency risks in emerging markets), Omidyar is facilitating the creation of an environment where new business opportunities (e.g. microfinance) may flourish. Finally, market-level impact also entails the activities of companies in lobbying and engaging governments in introducing changes on the policy framework that affects one specific area, facilitating the conditions for the creation of new markets. In the field of education, Omidyar Network's investees such as Bridge International Academies, the Education Alliance (a non-profit organization working toward facilitating public-private partnerships (PPPs) in education in India), Teach for All (a network of national organizations that operate in the field of teachers/leaders training across the world), or IMCO (the Mexican Institute for Competitiveness, which produces research and public policy analysis to improve Mexico's standing in the global economy), among many others, are good examples of such types of market-level impact.

Omidyar's portfolio (see Annex Table 3.1) in education spreads across the world. They fund 33 ventures covering a broad set of areas, from school delivery to curriculum development, teacher training, online pedagogical resources, etc. One of their latest investments is Reach (NewSchools) Capital. Reach is a spin-off of NewSchools Venture Fund's "Seed Fund." Created in 2015, they operate within the field of ed-tech market, investing in early-stage companies that offer "solutions that are scalable, sustainable and effective."[26] Reach Capital's portfolio comprises 23 for-profit enterprises (see Annex Table 3.2). They also range across different areas, sharing their focus on the application of technology to educational problems. An analysis of their portfolio shows an emphasis on those solutions designed to gather data and perform evaluation at different levels. Abl, for example, is a piece of software that "helps educators use data to understand how they spend their time and resources." The company offers "a new kind of software for school leaders. We meet schools where they are to visualize the impact of their administrative decisions, implement changes to the master schedule, and rapidly try new models that reflect their priorities."[27] Similarly, Schoolzilla is another edu-company that offers a platform to gather, organize, and present data to facilitate decision-making processes:

> We believe that data done right is a game changer for district and school leaders, teachers, parents, and students.

> With accurate, timely, visual data, you can better understand your stu-
> dents' needs, see if your strategies are working, have constructive conver-
> sations, save time, and get laser-focused on growth. (Schoolzilla)[28]

Also in Omidyar's portfolio is Bridge International Academies (BIA). Bridge, a
for-profit chain of low-fee private schools that currently operates in India, Kenya,
Nigeria, and Uganda, has already been analysed substantially in recent years (see,
e.g. Ball, Junemann, & Santori, 2017; Junemann, Ball, & Santori, 2015; Riep &
Machacek, 2016). What is of interest here is that they account among their most
substantial investors private investment companies (such as Novastar, Koshla
Ventures, Pan African Investment Co.), foundations (such as the Zuckerberg
Education Ventures and the Pershing Square Foundation) and national (such as
DfID, the UK government's Department for International Development; CDC,
the UK's development finance institution and wholly owned by the UK
Government; and OPIC, the US Government's development finance institution)
and international public organizations (such as the International Finance
Corporation, a part of the World Bank Group).

   One of Bridge's current investors is LGT Impact Ventures. As mentioned ear-
lier, they are a part of the LGT Group Foundation, LGT Group Foundation, the
largest private banking and asset management group in the world that is wholly
owned by the Royal Family of Liechtenstein. Within their asset management
division, LGT has created two venture funds: LGT Venture Philanthropy and
LGT Impact Ventures. Both funds operate at different ends of Omidyar's Return
Continuum. The former, LGT VP, concentrates on market-impact, or, as they call
it, "value creation" and "positive societal return,"[29] while the focus of the latter,
LGT IV, is to "generate attractive financial returns for investors and at the same
time positively impact upon the lives of millions of underserved people."[30] The
education portfolio of LGT is not as extensive as the previous cases but it follows
a similar way of managing operations. If we take Bridge International Academies
as an example, it was the first equity venture of LGT Venture Philanthropy in
Africa made back in 2009. However, with the launch of LGT Impact Ventures in
2016, the investment in the chain of low-fee private schools was moved from the
portfolio of the former into that of the latter (see Figure 3.2).

   The first fund would work mainly through the offering of grants and smaller
equity ventures mainly with non-profit organizations and subcommercial firms;
while the impact fund would take on those ventures that have matured through-
out the first phase and are able to generate financial returns in a more sustainable
basis, generating profits that would revert back to their investing organizations.
There is a thin line between philanthropic and commercial activity here. Such a
boundary is purposefully blurred and presented as part of a new paradigm, what
Shamir calls "the moralisation of the economic action," which facilitates the
creation of a hypothetical "corporate conscience" (2008, p. 9). The processes
involved here go beyond what is understood as "social-corporate responsibility,"
as it implies the need to allow corporations to have a central role in the provision
of public services. That is what Shamir identifies as "governance-through-
responsibilization" where "the restructuring of authority as a market of
authorities also facilitates the responsibilization of market entities to assume
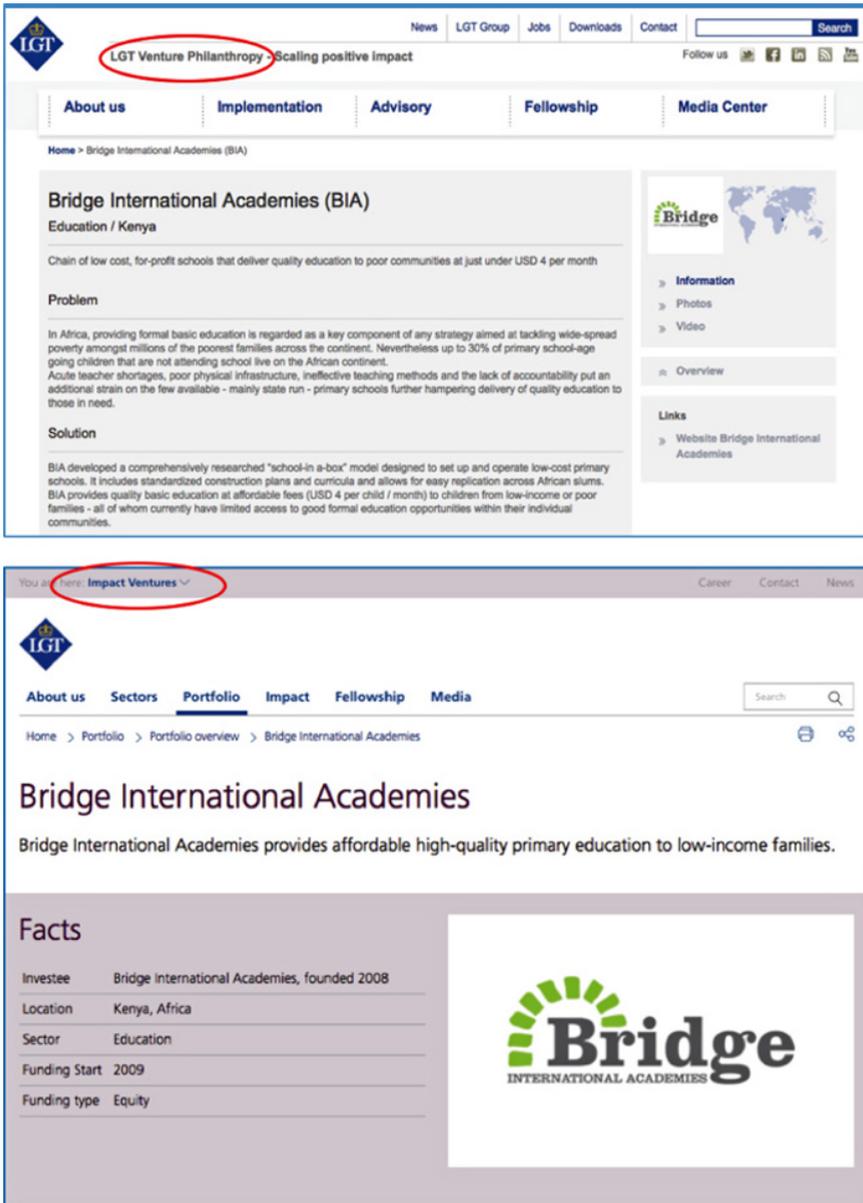
Figure 3.2 Bridge International Academies in LGT Venture Philanthropy (2009) and LGT Impact Ventures (2016).

the caring and welfare moral duties that were once assigned to civil society and governmental entities" (p. 10).

However, more than merely opening the door for for-profit firms to operate within the public sphere, governments are already adopting such logic themselves, both at home and abroad. As already mentioned above, the CDC Group

plc is the UK Government's development finance institution (DFI). As stated on their website, their "job is to provide scarce and patient capital to businesses and entrepreneurs in Africa and South Asia, where more than 70 per cent of the world's poorest people live."[31] The public company's investment portfolio includes almost 1300 companies and is valued at over £3 billion.[32] In 2016, they invested £712.9 million and during the last five years they have made an annual return on their assets of 7.8%. In education, the CDC group funds a number of companies, from multinational schools chains (both in the low-fee sector, like Bridge International Academies, or highly selective like GEMS Education), to single private and academically selective boarding schools (like Brookhouse International School, one of Kenya's most expensive private schools, or Flipper International School in Ethiopia, part of Flipper Kindergarten Plc) and higher education providers (like i-Nurture). They also fund 89 microfinance ventures across Africa and South Asia, a number of which operate in the education sector (like Varthana, see above). Similarly, its American counterpart, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the US Government's DFI, works both within the US and abroad with US companies to facilitate access for them into emerging markets by "providing investors with financing, political risk insurance, and support for private equity funds."[33] OPIC also invests in multiple ventures in education across six regions: Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The operations of both the CDC and OPIC are not the central concern of the present chapter and will be developed in further publications, however, it is worthwhile noting here how public and private actors sing not only the same tune, but at the same tempo and in the same key.

When brought together, their portfolios configure a full "neoliberal ecosystem." From chains of private schools (operating within public-private partnerships or fully independent), teacher training programs and countless tools for evaluation and school management, to curriculum development, electronic materials, new funding channels for both school providers and students and families, the options are all-encompassing. It would not be an overstatement to say that the sum of investments of the philanthropic ventures analysed above offers the possibility of running a complete educational system through the services that their investees offer. What is more, though most of those tools and models and programs have been designed for specific countries or continental regions, it is also clear that they are ready to be scalable. As the case of Bridge International Academies shows:

> The first Bridge International Academy opened in the Mukuru slum in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2009. Today there are hundreds and Bridge continues to expand across Africa and Asia. With a mission of Knowledge for all, Bridge plans to educate 10,000,000 children across a dozen countries by 2025.[34]

As a result of the detailed selection processes of their scrupulous funders, the majority of the companies in their portfolios are prepared to follow similar pathways. Varthana, for instance, started as a microcredit venture operating in India,

but they are already examining the possibilities of going beyond their current field of operations reaching new markets:

> We see the loan as the starting point of a long association and believe in working with those school owners who are committed to quality. In the future, we plan to hold seminars and workshops for the school owners; get people in the field of teacher training to engage with the schools and connect them with vendors and solution providers who have innovative, state-of-the-art solutions for schools. By nurturing a long-term relationship with our clients and working with the school entrepreneurs and teachers as a team, Varthana believes we can create value and make a difference.[35]

There are multiple examples of companies that are looking into expanding their operations, either by moving into new geographies, venturing into new markets, or targeting new populations. They are the icebreakers at the forefront of privatization dynamics, paving the way for deeper and more significant changes. In a clinical exploratory way, they are testing the temperature of national and local governments, of politicians and civil society groups, of individual citizens and consumers. They bring new ways of doing things into the public policy arena, new solutions and techniques, but more importantly a new vocabulary based on new forms of knowledge.

Back to the Future…

As a result of contemporary attempts to economize public domains and methods of government, we are witnessing a moralization of markets and business initiatives (Shamir, 2008). For more than a couple of decades, academics have been questioning the shape and composition of government and the state (Jessop, 1998; Mayntz, 1993; Rhodes, 1994; Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). This chapter has laid the foundations for further and more empirical attempts to grasp the political roles and economic and social relationships facilitated and legitimized by a new group of policy actors, the self-denominated "new" philanthropists, in the field of education policy. This is part of a broader research agenda that aims to understand changes in current forms of governmentality by focusing on developments on the ground (regardless of how material and tangible such a "ground" might be). It is an inductive approach to researching education policy-making, which pursues an understanding of what we have previously called new ways of "doing neoliberalism" (Ball & Olmedo, 2012).

Philanthropy has been a contradictory actor since its genesis back in Ancient Greek societies. More recently, it has been criticized for self-assuming the role and acting as "miniature, undemocratic, and personal governments" (Frumkin, 2006, p. 2). As suggested above, both through their own initiative and/or urged by governments, philanthropists have taken on a more relevant role in the public realm. Either by promoting their own ideas on how to achieve social and political change or by supporting existing initiatives, a growing number of businessmen

and women are self-assuming responsibilities and duties while bypassing the need to design political campaigns and memorandums, globetrotting national geographies in order to gain votes and elections, facing treacherous parliaments, and making sure that after a specific term they will need to start the same process all over again. As they get more and more involved in political frameworks (Olmedo, 2017), we are witnessing a reorganization of power that implies a new social and political contract away from, at least discursively, obsolete structures of democratic consultation and accountability.

As Frumkin suggests, "Philanthropy has some of the features of government but it lacks anything closely resembling democratic controls. All of which creates challenges for donors while also opening up some unique opportunities" (2006, p. 1). On the one hand, it is claimed that the lack of restrictions and labyrinthic institutional structures confers a sense of freedom. "New" philanthropy has become a key player in the processes of what Peck and Theodore (2015) call "fast policy." They are able to take risks and act at speeds that would be unimaginable for those operating in traditional public institutions. On the other hand, as well as new institutional infrastructures, the new political landscape requires new forms of subjectivities, that is, new individuals with new ways of understanding the world, new beliefs, perspectives, desires, etc. The new subjects and spaces (that is, new teachers, students, school-family relations, new arenas where schools can compete and be scrutinized and ranked, inspectors and evaluators, etc., and, also, a new civil society composed, among others, by new philanthropists), will be the result of combinations of a new socio-genetic material, with a common chromosome: competition (and its multiple minions: choice, profit, recognition). Given the apparently righteous and magnanimous character of philanthropic ventures, there is a risk of misjudging and underestimating the effects of the activities and programs in which these charitable actors are involved (Zeichner, 2013). As suggested throughout the chapter, "new" philanthropy plays a central role in the redefinition of subjectivities, in creating and cementing new "common senses" and logics of action, and in steering the direction of "'advanced' liberal democracies" (Rose, 1996). But, while Rose seemed to question the adjective ("advanced" appears in quotation marks in the original), I would do so with the noun: "democracies." This chapter, therefore, is part of an ongoing attempt to analyse the origins of "advanced liberal 'philantocracies.'"

Notes

1 https://www.credit-suisse.com/uk/en/about-us/research/research-institute/global-wealth-report.html
2 https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2014/05/05/what-do-new-price-data-mean-for-the-goal-of-ending-extreme-poverty/
3 https://www.weforum.org/about/world-economic-forum
4 Full transcript available on: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/media-center/speeches/2008/01/bill-gates-2008-world-economic-forum
5 We have developed these ideas further elsewhere (Ball & Olmedo, 2012; Olmedo, 2013, 2017).

6 This reminisces about Adam Smith's well-known postulate, who back in 1776 stated: 'It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest' (Smith, 1970, p. 119).

7 http://npa.ug/development-plans/ndp-201011-201415/

8 http://npa.ug/development-plans/ndp-201011-201415/

9 https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2010/cr10142.pdf

10 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/big-society-speech

11 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-big-society

12 http://www.thebigsociety.co.uk/

13 http://www.thebigsociety.co.uk/about-us/

14 https://givingpledge.org

15 https://www.omidyar.com

16 http://www.newschools.org/about-us/investment-areas/

17 http://reachcap.com/mission

18 http://www.alliancemagazine.org/analysis/building-a-catalytic-network/

19 https://www.lgtvp.com/en/#

20 https://www.omidyar.com/who-we-are

21 https://www.lgt.com/en/commitment/venture-philanthropy/

22 http://www.lgtvp.com/Uber-uns/Wen-wir-unterstutzen.aspx

23 http://reachcap.com

24 https://www.omidyar.com/spotlight/how-do-we-invest-across-returns-continuum#content

25 https://www.omidyar.com/investment-approach

26 http://reachcap.com/about/

27 http://www.ablschools.com

28 https://schoolzilla.com/why-schoolzilla/

29 https://www.lgtvp.com/en/what-we-do/

30 https://www.lgtiv.com/en/

31 http://cdcgroup.com/Who-we-are/Key-Facts/#sthash.kxgkvtIw.dpuf

32 Year end 2015.

33 https://www.opic.gov

34 http://www.bridgeinternationalacademies.com/company/about/

35 http://varthana.com/beyond-loans/

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Annexes

Table 3.1 Omidyar Network's investment portfolio in education

Investees	Area	Financial Model	Region
African Leadership Academy	Academy – Young Adults	Non-Profit	Africa
Akshara Foundation	Curriculum	Non-Profit	Asia
AltSchool	School Provider	For-Profit	United States
Andela	Edu Software	Not stated	Africa
Anudip Foundation	Training	Non-Profit	Asia
Artemisia	Training	Non-Profit	Latin America
Aspiring Minds	Recruitment	For-Profit	Asia
Bridge International Academies	School Provider	For-Profit	Africa
EdSurge	Educational Tech	For-Profit	Global
Ellevation	Edu Software – Teaching English	For-Profit	Global
English Helper	Edu Software – Teaching English	For-Profit	Asia
FunDza	Book Distribution	Non-Profit	Africa
Geekie	Edu Software	For-Profit	Latin America
Guten News	Edu Software	For-Profit	Latin America
Ikamva Youth	Extra-School Education	Non-Profit	Africa
Ilifa Labantwana	Early Years Education	Not Stated	Africa
IMCO	School Assessment	Non-Profit	Latin America
Innovations for Poverty Action	Research	Non-Profit	Africa, Asia, Latin America
Kalibrr	Recruitment	For-Profit	Asia
LearnZillion	Curriculum	For-Profit	United States
Lively Minds	Teacher Training	Non-Profit	Africa
Numeric	Teacher Training and Extra-School Education	Non-Profit	Africa
Platzi	Extra-School Education	For-Profit	Global
Reach Capital	Edu Software	For-Profit	United States
RLabs	Edu Software	Non-Profit	Global
Siyavula Education	Curriculum	For-Profit	Africa
Socratic	Online Educational Resource	Not Stated	Global
Teach for All	Teacher Training	Non-Profit	Global
Teach for India	Teacher Training	Non-Profit	Asia
The Education Alliance	PPPs	Non-Profit	Asia
Tinkergarten	Early Years School Provider	For-Profit	United States
Tree House	School Provider	For-Profit	Asia
Varthana	Funding	For-Profit	Asia

Table 3.2 LGT Venture Fund's investment portfolio in education

Investees	Area	Financial model	Region	Amount
Aangan Trust	Child Protection Services	Non-Profit	India	467000 + 1260000
Bridge International Academies (BIA)	School Provider	For-Profit	Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria	(equity investment) 200000
Educate Girls	Education Advocacy, Curriculum, Teacher Training	Non-Profit	India	500000 + Client Grants of 1300000
Enseña Chile	Teacher Placement, Education Reform	Non-Profit	Chile	200000 + 23000
Lumni	Student Funding	For-Profit	Chile, Columbia, Mexico, Peru, USA	Equity Investment 1500000 + Client Equity Investment 50000 + client funding investment 100000
New Heaven Partnership (NHP)	Nature Conservation and Education	For-Profit	Thailand	14000 (Loan)
Tòhe	Art Classes	For-Profit	Vietnam	40000 (Convertible Loan) + 33000 (Grant)
Varthana	School Development Loans	For-Profit	India	US$ 200000 equity in April 2013 (US$ 1.2 million Seed round) followed by US$ 1.5 million equity in July 2014 (US$ 5.3 million Series A round)

4

Nodes, Pipelines, and Policy Mobility

The Assembling of an Education Shadow State in India

Stephen J. Ball and Shelina Thawer

Introduction

Social Networks Analysis (SNA) has become increasingly popular with education policy researchers over the last 10 years. This popularity, we would suggest, is an appropriate methodological response to changing modalities of governance and forms of the state. That is, the network as a device for both researching and representing policy enables policy researchers to model their methods and analytic practices in direct relation to the global shift from government to governance – or to what is sometimes called *network governance*. This shift involves a move away from administrative, bureaucratic, and hierarchical forms of state organization and the emergence of new "reflexive, self-regulatory and horizontal" spaces of governance – *heterarchies*. The heterogeneous array of organizations and practices (see below) that make up these heterarchies contributes to, reflects, enables, and necessitates the semiotic and technical re-articulation of education and educational governance. One of the consequences of this is that the field of governance and education policy is becoming increasingly difficult to research and conceptualize. Keast, Mandell, and Brown (2006, p. 27) argue that:

> This situation leads to governance complexity and what is contended to be a "crowded" policy domain in which differing governance arrangements, policy prescriptions, participants and processes bump up against and even compete with each other to cause overlap and confusion.

Concomitantly, the frame of policy analysis is of necessity also changing: the nation state is no longer a sensible or viable limit to the analysis of policy and governance. New relations and spaces of governance are under construction that exist and operate above, beyond, and between national state systems. This involves a significant shift in the center of gravity around which policy cycles move (Jessop, 1998, p. 32).

Network analysis responds to the need for "new methods, concepts and new research sensibilities" (Ball, 2012, p. 4) to better understand the "new actors, organisations, forms of participation and relationships" engaging in education policy and, more generally, in the "global expansion of neoliberal ideas" (p. 2). Network analysis is appropriate here both as a method for the analysis of educational reform and governance, *and* a representation of actual social relations and sites of activity within which the work of governing is done. However, in some respects the work of education policy network analysis has become stuck – many policy networks are now being researched and drawn but in many instances what is on offer is no more than a description of network membership and adumbration of network relations.

There are relatively few examples of direct research on the effort and labor of networking, or attempts to "follow" policy through networks, or to address the roles and relationships of key actors (see Hogan, 2015; Nambissan & Ball, 2010) or to attend to network evolution. "There is a considerable leap involved in the shift from mapping network relations to analysing network dynamics" (Ball, 2016a, p. 4).

In this chapter we seek to address some of these omissions and to extend a research series (see Ball 2008, 2013, 2016b, etc.), which has sought to identify and explore a global education policy network, which is actively engaged with the reform of school systems, educational methods, and forms of educational governance and specifically the construction of a policy ecosystem – practices, organizations, infrastructure, and incentives – that enables a market in state services and state work in diverse settings around the world. All of which involves a re-working, or perhaps even an erasure, of the boundaries of state, economy, and civil society. Our general aim here is to understand something of the process of *neoliberalization* – the ways in which "neoliberalism as a governing rationality comes to saturate the practices of ordinary institutions and discourses of everyday life" (Brown, 2015, p. 35) – through some examples of "actually existing" neoliberalism. In other words, we want to join up policy network activities with a more general reshaping of economic and social values.

In this case, we will start with India, and with one "glocal" nodal actor, Ashish Dhawan, and focus on one global organization, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF), which is active in the USA, South Africa, and India, and attempt to trace, through some of their network relations (see Figure 4.1), the movement of policy ideas, forms, and discourses between India, the USA, the UK, and elsewhere, concentrating on two network events. That is, we will "follow" some examples of what Cook and Ward (2012, p. 148) call:

> trans-urban policy pipelines as a means of conceiving of the movement of policy models from one locality to another. The notion of trans-urban policy pipelines emphasizes the mutating infrastructure that exists in support of the movement or mobilization of policy models, the (often) self-styled 'experts' whose involvement in policy model mobility reinforces its embodied nature, and the place of conferences as sites of comparison, education, exchange and learning.
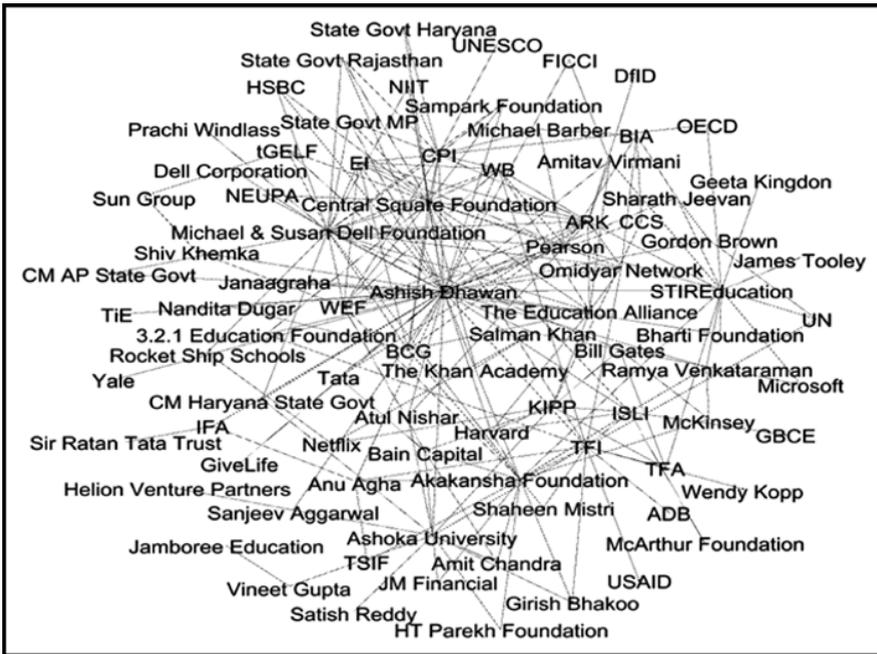
Figure 4.1 A global/local education policy network.

That is to say, we will identify a series of policy moments – "wheres of policy," the relations they indicate, and the forms and ideas that are articulated in and that flow between them. This is intended, as Cook and Ward go on to say 'as a contribution to a more critical, grounded and reflexive approach to policy-making, one that differs fundamentally from more traditional accounts that understand it as apolitical, formulaic, neutral and technocratic' (pp. 148–149). Given the scale, reach, and levels of network activity of Ashish Dhawan and MSDF, our analysis here, given the space available, cannot be exhaustive and will be indicative only – some starting points for further research. Thus, some of the relationships indicated in Figure 4.1 will be explained, but others will be mentioned only in passing.

Network Ethnography

A few words about our method. The task/aim of network methodology "must be to identify the actors in these networks, their power and capacities, and the ways through which they exercise their power through association within networks of relationships" (Dicken, Kelly, Olds, & Wai-Chung Yeung, 2001, p. 93). The chapter draws on research which uses a version of SNA as "an analytic technique for looking at the structure of policy communities and their social relationships"; and as a "conceptual device … used to represent a set of 'real changes' in the forms of governance of education, both nationally and globally" (Ball, 2012, p. 6).

SNA has a dual interest, both in the "structure" of social relations and the interactional "processes" which generate these structures, that requires an exploration of the "content" and perception of the network – what is considered the "insider" view of the network (Edwards, 2010, p. 2), the "construction, reproduction, variability and dynamics of complex and intricate social ties." This is not to suggest that networks can explain all aspects of the policy process; network relations do not totally displace other forms of policy formation and policy action. However, what social network research enables is the visual mapping of a large number of relationships and associations from multiple sites in near/far-flung, diverse geographical locations – and any corresponding patterns. In this respect, social network research serves to capture and illustrate the more fluid aspects of networks and, more importantly, their potential capacity for evolution and transformation.

More specifically here, *network ethnography* (see Ball, 2012) is made up of a set of techniques that directly engage with the new policy topography. It involves *mapping, visiting, and questioning* and as Marcus (1995) argues – *following* policy. That is, following people, "things," stories, lives and conflicts, and "money" (Junemann, Ball, & Santori, 2015). It involves what Peck and Theodore (2012, p. 24) describe as "judicious combinations of ethnographic observation and depth interviewing," which are essential to "any adequate understanding of the inescapably social nature of those continuous processes of translation, intermediation, and contextualization/decontextualization/recontextualization, through which various forms of policy mobility are realized." Network ethnography involves close attention to organizations and actors, and their relations, activities, and histories, within the global education policy field, to the paths and connections that join up these actors, and to "situations" and events in which policy knowledge is mobilized and assembled. That is, the "whos" and "whats" but also the "wheres" and "hows" of policy – the places and events in which the "past, present and potential futures of education co-exist" (McCann & Ward, 2012, p. 48). This involves an ethnography of "awkward scale" (Roy, 2012). We need to ask: What spaces do policies travel through on the way from place to another? Who is it that is active in those spaces and who moves between them? How is space/are spaces reconfigured as policies move through it/them and how are policies changed as they move? As McCann and Ward (2012, p. 42) explain, this means both "following policies and 'studying through' the sites and situations of policy-making." All of this means "staying close to practice" and "tracing the travels of policies and actors" (p. 45).

Pipelines, Conduits, and Nodes

In the space available we are going to explore some of the relationships, connections, activities, movements, sites, and events within a small part of what Pasi Sahlberg (2006) calls the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM), focusing on Ashish Dhawan, as a nodal actor, and the MSDF as an agency of advocacy and policy mobility (Figure 4.1).

Our nodal actor, Ashish Dhawan, is a graduate of Yale and pursued his MBA at Harvard and has maintained these links by serving on Yale's Development Council and Harvard Business School's India Advisory Board. Following 20 years in investment management which included stints at Goldman Sachs, GP Investments and MDC Partners, he co-founded and headed India's leading private equity fund, ChrysCapital. In 2012, Ashish Dhawan founded Central Square Foundation (CSF) to pursue his goal of creating social impact via philanthropic investments in the education sector and is currently CSF's Chairman.

As we will show and describe in greater detail below, he serves on the board of numerous non-profits with particular leanings toward education, including Akanksha Foundation, 3.2.1 Education Foundation, Teach For India, Centre for Civil Society, Janaagraha, Give Life, India School Leadership Institute (ISLI), and Bharti Foundation. He is also a founding member of Ashoka University.

He has been recognized as the NextGen Leader in Philanthropy by Forbes India for "quitting a lucrative career in private equity to make India's primary and secondary schooling system more equitable," with the stated mission of wanting "to focus on systemic change as policy reform," where the focus includes "affordable schools, teacher and school leader training, education technology and accountability/community engagement," entailing "multiple experiments with education technology for schools."[1]

Our advocacy agency, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF), was created as a charitable foundation in 1999 by Michael Dell, founder and CEO of Dell Computers, and his wife Susan, which sought to improve the lives of under-privileged children living in urban poverty primarily, though not exclusively, through education. The foundation's work in education on issues of student and teacher performance (and implicit in this assessment) in the classroom, had its origins in central Texas, USA, but in its efforts to bring about adoption and replication of its learning from this earlier experience and work to improve education quality to bear in other urban cities of its geographical interests and focus, MSDF's work gradually expanded both nationally and globally. Headquartered in Texas, and with offices in New Delhi and Cape Town, MSDF partners with governments, established and connected international and non-governmental organizations, entrepreneurs, UN bodies, global management consultancy firms, among others, in its efforts to improve the lives of under-privileged children living in urban poverty through education and, in doing so, systematically seeks to transform the education systems in the cities and countries of operation, as we will show below.

MSDF's urban education programs in India include Academic Support, Integrated School Excellence Programs, Data Assessment and Evaluation with a particular emphasis on improving student performance and increasing access to high-quality education. The foundation's international managing director in the annual report for the period 2011–2012, notes on their work in India:

> In education alone, we had opportunities to help transform successful not-for-profit models into for-profit enterprises; to participate in Mumbai's government-driven citywide school excellence program; and to

support the development of a standards and accreditation organization to begin to address quality issues in the poorly regulated, affordable private schools sector.[2]

MSDF is committed to "a hands-on approach, close relationships with partner organizations, and data-driven mindset" and the foundation is "driven by pragmatism, which means that every investment decision is based on sound, business-minded factors, hard data and realities on the ground."[3]

Since its inception, MSDF has committed $1.23 billion to non-profits and social enterprises in the US, India, and South Africa; and, since 2006, has invested over INR 745 crores ($120 million) in India.[4]

Thought Leadership

Ashish Dhawan's biography briefly outlined above and which appears on websites and conference flyers, positions him as a reform guru, someone who can translate business success and acumen into educational solutions. His experience and relationships bring gravitas to the events at which he speaks and his presentations through "PowerPoints, reports, speeches, sometimes videos … and scribbled notes by listeners can all take on lives of their own, being passed around and circulated, uploaded and downloaded" (Cook & Ward, 2012, p. 141). Ashish Dhawan has what Castells (2011) calls "network-making power." He is both a programmer and switcher. He is able to constitute a network or at least parts of it, in relation to particular goals (the reform of the Indian education system by business methods – see Ball, 2016a) and to ensure the cooperation between different networks – government, business and philanthropy.

In their positioning within the policy network, occupying and speaking from multiple positions and platforms, nodal actors like Ashish Dhawan are able to speak to and for education reform – publicly and privately. The network relations in which he is engaged is a means to an end, constantly evolving, expanding and mutating, but it is also an architecture of social relations (see Ball, 2016a), "girders" and "pipes" and "circulatory systems that connect and interpenetrate" the local and the national (Peck, 2003, p. 229). These relations are animated and joined up by public and private activities, diverse social interactions, and much purposeful effort. It is the product of *interrelations* "constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny" (Massey, 2005, p. 9). Let us look at some examples.

In 2015, Ashish Dhawan was among the speakers at Roundtable held in New Delhi "with senior leaders in education,"[5] hosted by MSDF and the Centre for Public Impact (CPI),[6] a philanthropic foundation of the Boston Consulting Group (BCG); Sir Michael Barber, Chief Education Adviser at Pearson is co-chair of CPI (see Junemann & Ball, 2015); Andreas Schleicher of the OECD (see Sellar, 2013, on the OECD), Dr Silvia Montoya of UNESCO, and Melanie Walker, Senior Advisor to World Bank President Jim Yong Kim are on the advisory board. Both organizations, MSDF and BCG, are active in education reform practices in India, at different levels, in different forms, in different locations, in different roles,

both as donors and animators, and as business participants (see Ball, 2016a). Of the 30 attendees only four were from public sector organizations, three from state governments and one from the national government planning commission. Others in attendance included representatives from CSF, HSBC, ARK, Pearson, and the World Economic Forum. The roundtable was described as: "Driven by a common belief that a more systematic top-down approach is needed to help schools attain better outcomes at scale" and as a forum "to provide practitioners and thought leaders with a platform to discuss the potential approaches to improve student learning outcomes" (https://vimeo.com/1222758667 (accessed March 13, 2016). The notion of who are the "thought leaders" here is interesting.

MSDF through venture philanthropy and BCG through business engagements (see Ball, 2016a) have been involved, with other like-minded actors (like ARK and the Omidyar Network), in the introduction of forms of "contracting out" of state schools in India (in Mumbai, Pune, and South Delhi, for example) modeled on US charter schools, and English academies. MSDF is a supporter and funder of Rocketship schools in the US and Akanksha schools in India – the latter operate in partnership with local municipalities in Mumbai and Pune, providing education to children from low-income communities. Taking over low-performing government schools with low student enrolment, Akanksha staff (drawn from Teach For India fellows and ISLI, whose leadership program is heavily influenced by the KIPP competency framework) oversees the overall management of these schools, and assumes responsibility both for skills-based pedagogy and student performance. By using and sharing practices, adapted "from … high-performing schools in India and around the world" (and including independent student learning and student assessments), Akanksha seeks to reform the education sector from within the government school system by creating "model schools" that can serve as templates. Operating 15 English-medium schools in Mumbai and Pune, Akanksha's school project is the "largest urban network of schools managed under a PPP in India today."[7] MSDF is also a partner with CSF (a venture philanthropy created by Ashish Dhawan), ARK (an English academy chain) and the Omidyar Network in creating The Education Alliance (TEA), which is a non-profit organization that seeks to help governments in India provide and deliver "quality education" by way of forming Government Partnership schools. The first such partnership with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), begun in July 2015, also involved ARK setting up its first school outside of England as a pilot for a broader scheme. Subsequent discussions with the SDMC have resulted in the approval to replicate this pilot model in six more government schools with five additional partners.[8]

CSF also supports Teach For India (TFI), whose founder trustees include Deepak Satwalekara, former consultant to the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); Nandita Dugar, formerly with BCG – in India and the UK – who is also on the board of the Akanksha Foundation; Wendy Kopp, CEO and co-founder of Teach For All and Teach For America; Shaheen Mistri, CEO and founder of TFI, is also founder of the Akanksha Foundation, and a former Global Leader for Tomorrow at the World Economic Forum (2002); and Omidyar Network is one of its Platinum supporters.[9] TFI is an affiliate of TFA (see Olmedo, Bailey, & Ball,

2013) and ISLI (whose supporters include: Ashish Dhawan – CSF; Shaheen Mistri – TFI; Vandana Goyal – Akanksha Foundation; McArthur Foundation; Global Business Coalition for Education).

There is a claim to expertise rehearsed on websites, in interviews and in events and meetings, expertise based on models and stories of reform success, based on reform drawn from elsewhere and "established" as "good practice," set over and against the failures of the governmental state – as in the roundtable meeting. Mobile policy entrepreneurs like Chester Finn and Mike Feinberg – CEO of KIPP schools – bring "stories" of reform successes that are re-circulated in education policy thinking in India. The roundtable report stresses the "monumental challenge" confronting India's public school system with its "low and declining student learning outcomes," which potentially serve to endanger India's economic growth and future, and maintains that "genuine and sustainable improvement in the quality of school education in India can only be achieved through comprehensive education system reform that addresses critical areas in order to improve student learning outcomes" with a view to "making space for inventive, futuristic solutions that can help deliver results in specific areas in the short run."[10]

This is one of numerous sites of policy that are established outside of traditional governmental structures of policy-making. It is an example of what McCann and Ward (2012, p. 48) call a *situation* – which is made up of various constitutive relationships that exist beyond its physical extent: "assemblages of the near and far, the fixed and the mobile." In part, the legitimacy of such situations rests on the fact that they are not the state. The events are self-referential, they are platforms created by reform participants, actors in the global reform network, as opportunities for collaboration and elaboration of their shared epistemic commitments. Such events and other "unexpected" sites also join up fleetingly a disparate global community of reformers. They are mobile or transient "wheres" of policy activity, "where the past, present and potential future of a policy can coexist" (p. 48). They join up fleetingly a disparate global community of reformers in face-to-face interaction. They mobilize and assemble disparate sources of knowledge, showcase innovation, rehearse criticism, reiterate expertise, and celebrate solutions and "successes." Persuasion is important. This involves speaking, explaining, justifying policy ideas, the work of "framing and selling" (Verger & Curran, 2014), discursively reworking policy agendas, joining up previous policy ideas to new ones, and recognizing or opening up new policy opportunities.

Nodal actors (like Ashish Dhawan) within the network are key to the evolution and maintenance of the network – like the founding of TEA. Boundary spanners and policy brokers like Ashish Dhawan have a command over space and are able to move the discourse of the network into new arenas, making the principles, practices, and forms of reform obvious and necessary. Several key epistemic principles of the policy network discourse are rehearsed and re-iterated here (see Figure 4.2).

On the other hand, the network and its relationships and events are conduits for the movement of policy forms – methods of practice, at different levels, which involve the reconfiguration of the relations between governance and

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3. Create a quality assessment framework and aid in the performance management and assessment of Government-Partnership Schools on an ongoing basis

4. Identify service providers who can partner with Government-Partnership Schools to provide teacher and school leader training, assessment, teaching learning materials, etc.

5. Assist in conducting research and evaluation to measure the impact of the program

Figure 4.2 *Source*: http://www.theeducationalalliance.org/government-bodies/ (accessed June 5, 2016).

practice, and practice itself. This is particular evident in the role of measurement and the concomitant deployment and dissemination of educational technologies.

The workshop report also argues for the need for "institutionalizing rigorous measurement methods" and "the group also agreed that focusing on classroom transactions or teacher capacity building will not be enough to deliver transformative student learning outcomes gains."[11] In effect, it is argued that investment in measurement is a more effective use of resources than investment in teachers (teacher education, continuing professional development, etc.). This again begins from the critique of existing levels of "quality" in state schools and rests on the argument for a move from input- to output-driven policy methods – that is, from universal funding to performance-related funding. This also portends a change of method at classroom level. MSDF is in particular, not surprisingly, given the origins of the foundation and its funding, an advocate of blended learning,[12] a form of pedagogy that has been developed in US charter schools, like Rocketship Education, that has been supported financially by MSDF and that has spun off profit-generating learning software. Broadly speaking, blended learning involves the use of technology in the delivery of learning content and instruction in traditional classroom settings and independent study on the part of the student at a place/time/pace which the student can, to an extent, choose/determine. In the US, blended learning employs teaching and learning software in combination with continuous assessment (self-paced and adaptive programs like DreamBox Learning, ST Math, and Istation used by charter schools have in-built assessment systems which can be additionally supplemented by independent assessment tools – such as NWEA MAP – to test the rigor of their content providers' built-in assessments, e.g. KIPP and Rocketship both do this), both to relate teaching practice directly to performance outcomes and drive down costs by reducing teacher numbers.

Technology in the Classroom

Akanksha's School Project, supported by MSDF and Thermax Social Initiatives Foundation (TSIF), uses a form of locally adapted blended learning, "ASSET." This is India's largest third party skills-based assessment test favored by a small pool of elite private schools, which reminds that "the movement of policies … through the trans-urban policy pipeline is not resistance free and rarely leads to serial reproduction" (Cook & Ward, 2012, p. 142). Rather, policies morph and mutate along the way, often taking on lives of their own (Peck & Theodore, 2010). Nonetheless, "mobile policies…are not simply travelling across a landscape – they are remaking this landscape, and they are contributing to the interpenetration of distant policymaking sites" (p. 170).

Artefacts, schemes, programs, ideas, propositions, and "programmatic" ideas (Verger, 2012) move through these network relations, at some speed, gaining credibility, support, and funding as they move, mutating and adapting to local conditions at the same time – often treated separately and re-assembled on-site. "[N]ew ideas, fads, and fashions … New policy ideas, especially 'ideas that work,' are now able to find not only a worldwide audience but also transnational salience in remarkably short order" (Peck & Theodore, 2015, back cover).

The roundtable, as a heterarchical moment, brings together local and national government, philanthropy, business (banks, investment houses, edu-businesses), think tanks, national and multi-lateral agencies and policy entrepreneurs. It is a policy microspace, a new kind of policy space, in which new kinds of policy ideas and modalities are rehearsed. Other events have a more immediate relation to policy decision-making.

In February 2016, Ashish Dhawan, representatives from Dell and others met with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh (CMAP) "to assist the state to introduce grass-root reforms in school education" and discuss technology-embedded smart class-rooms. With the CM's stated aim of "making Andhra Pradesh an education hub and a knowledge state," the Dell Delegation, led by Ashish Dhawan, gave a presentation on "rejuvenating the education system in the state schools," assisting the state government "in providing quality education with international standards" and making "Andhra Pradesh among the top three states for education." Citing similar efforts to increase the level of education in Brazil and Pakistan, the delegation recounted these past experiences as the basis on which to advance their claims of success in educational reform. In relation to their previous experiences and "success," the delegation also made reference to MSDF's work in the Indian state of Haryana where, in 2014, MSDF committed US$2.7 million over three years to BCG to provide management support to Haryana state government's Quality Improvement Programme (QIP). In a MoU, both parties made a commitment to "make Haryana a leading state in quality education." Ms Prachi Windlass, Education Director, India, MSDF, said at the time,

> QIP is the only one of its kind state-wide education reform program in India, focusing sharply on improving the learning outcomes of children. The government of Haryana should be commended for its leadership and we are honored to be a partner in a program which has the potential to become a model for the rest of India.[13]

As we argue here, these claims and advocacy are self-referential and form the bases on which further reforms are advanced and replicated. It would appear that in much the same way as the New Delhi Roundtable report in its conclusions sought to highlight the "systematic, large-scale transformation as evidenced by Haryana's [government-led] Quality Improvement Programme (QIP)" as being "the best potential opportunity for improving student learning outcomes" (SLOs) and the important role of non-state key stakeholders in "complementing Government macro-initiatives with innovative interventions,"[14] the delegation here, in its meeting with the CMAP, lays emphasis on their practices and interventions elsewhere (the state of Haryana being but one example, their efforts in Brazil and Pakistan being others), which serve as a model to replicate efforts in other states in India, as in the state of AP. Here again quality and improvement are co-collated with technology as a reform package which changes practice at all levels. As reform is embedded and enacted in the India system, IT, the business of Dell, is also embedded in diverse ways in both pedagogy and performance measurement.

Following the presentation, the CMAP was reported as informing the delegation "there is no dearth of schools, educational infrastructure or funds" and sought "the help of Dell to infuse technology in schools for better student-teacher interaction."[15] Further, "Dell should devise technologies which can give information about every teacher and student in schools across the State" and "Dell could also take the responsibility of devising new system for the private and government schools … The government is ready to delegate the responsibilities …"[16]

CSF, in their efforts to realize CMAP's vision of developing AP as a knowledge hub, co-organized an "EdTech vision workshop" with the Department of School Education (Govt. AP), which emphasized building: "devices for personalised and virtual learning for students" with "the capacity of teachers to use technology as a pedagogical tool"; and "developing management information systems for data-driven decision making and enhanced accountability."

Additionally, the "vision workshop also laid out the need for setting an autonomous agency for implementation of the vision, as well as monitoring and evaluation to track adoption of EdTech across schools." CSF's website statement is shown in Figure 4.3.

'By informing stakeholders in the government system about the opportunity for technology induction for improving student learning and teacher capacity, best practices in integration of technology in school education, and implementation of EdTech models at scale, this vision workshop has taken a step towards improving the quality of education in 46,137 government schools with 4.18 million students and 180,000 teachers.'

Figure 4.3 *Source*: http://wwwl.centralsquarefoundation.org/advocacy/andhra-pradesh-edtech-vision-workshop/ (accessed June 5, 2016).

Discussion

In these examples, and they are treated fairly superficially here, we glimpse something of the labor of policy mobility and the work of networking. What network actors do and how the network works as a set of social relations and interactions. These relations and interactions, focused, at least initially, around key nodes (people and organizations) provide conduits and openings. Conduits in creating possibilities for movement– of ideas, forms, and practices – and openings in creating opportunities for action, such as PPPs, blended learning, and performance management. Thus, TEA works to create and facilitate the conditions for the development of PPPs and in doing so "invites" models of schooling based on English academies and US charter schools into the Indian system. MSDF operates in both respects – and "fills in" the space produced by PPP arrangements with pedagogical/technological innovations like blended learning – and at the same time produces new opportunities, in terms of demand, for business – selling Dell computers. The interplay and inter-reliance here between philanthropy, support and advice, and business interests, as in the example from Andhra Pradesh, are very unclear. As Bhanji (2012, p. 315) has argued, in the cases of Microsoft in Jordan and South Africa, these *localization* processes enable MSDF/DELL "to shape policy goals, directives, and decisions in favour of the use of commercial software and services in schools" and "public policymaking is being enmeshed in private sector activities in education" (p. 315). In a 2014 document, the OECD suggests that in most countries the relationships between IT businesses and education system are too informal and ruled by a sort of "'wild west' of commercial practice" (OECD, 2014, p. 3).

The reforms brought to bear operate at different levels but at the same time constitute a package; as re-arrangements of the state (PPP), as new organizational forms (contracted schools/assessment-led practice/leadership) and new kinds of pedagogy (blended learning), which also have implications for the work and conditions of teachers and their training (TFI) and for school leadership (ISLI). Again, there are various business opportunities opened up here (for assessment, technology, learning materials), and a new landscape of policy relations is established, an infrastructure which makes further reform moves possible. Through the work of these organizations and the new arrangements put in place, we see aspects of the assembly and assembling of a *shadow state.* The term coined by Wolch (1989), is used here to describe an increasing shouldering of the provision of public services and responsibilities by the assembled players described here – business, non-profits, entrepreneurs, etc. – which were formerly catered for by the state. The actors here through this outsourcing of the provision of education services operate alongside remaining government bureaucracies and administrative structures while simultaneously weakening/restructuring them. We also see something of the exchanges, of various kinds, that "make things happen," and the "social" aspects of these social relations. These networks are circuits of knowledge, capital, and truth (Roy, 2010) through which the commodity called "education reform" is moved.

As in Larner and Laurie's (2010) work on engineers and privatization, this account indicates the "centrality of multiple and shifting forms of expertise in the reconfiguring of political-economic institutions, ideas and techniques" (p. 224). "Transfer agents" (Stone, 2004) like Ashish Dhawan and MSDF are "policy experts and consultants whose travels spread 'best practice' models are not only members of a growing 'consultocracy'" (Saint-Martin, cited in Temenos & McCann, 2013, p. 350), who act as mediators of policy knowledge, but they are also political actors. These are "sociologically complex actors…whose identities and professional trajectories are often bound up with the policy positions and fixes they espouse" (Peck & Theodore, 2010, p. 170). They labor in the interstices of networks to "assemble" political rationalities, spatial imaginaries, calculative practices, and subjectivities (see Au & Ferrare, 2015; Ball & Junemann, 2012). That is to say, policies are made up of "embodied geographies" and their analysis addresses the ways in which ideas travel and orthodoxies become consolidated. New kinds of careers, identities, and human mobilities are forged within these processes of education policy and education reform. At the same time as policies move, and as new sites, new possibilities, and sensibilities are established, policy is "talked" and thought and enacted differently, and within new limits.

Here the space of policy analysis is not defined by geographical entities, but by the space configured through the labor of policy actors at the intersection of global and situated elements. Global, regional, national, state and city, local and institutional levels of policy intersect and diverge. The flows and spaces and recontextualizations that link and intertwine local with global, give substance to what Appadurai (1996), through his concept of "scapes," describes as "a new global cultural economy … a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order" (p. 32) which involves "interactions of a new order and intensity" (p. 27) or what Lingard and Sellar (2014) call new *topologies of policy*. Policy "space is configured through the intersection of global and situated elements" (Ong, 2007, p. 5), TFA, ARK, Dell, DfID, McKinsey, Omidyar, Boston Consulting, etc., in India and elsewhere, are new intersectional agents and spaces of policy, and they establish multifaceted, interactive relationships with local actors and reconfigure the processes of policy.

Notes

1 http://forbesindia.com/article/philanthropy-awards-2012/ashish-dhawan-next-gen-leader-in-philanthropy/34241/1 (accessed May 23, 2016).
2 https://www.msdf.org/other-reports/2013-giving-report/ (p. 15) (accessed May 22, 2016).
3 https://www.msdf.org/about/foundation-team/ (accessed May 13, 2016).
4 https://www.msdf.org/press-releases/michael-susan-dell-foundation-funds-landmark-state-wide-school-quality-improvement-program/, 17/06/14 (accessed May 13. 2016).
5 https://www.msdf.org/app/uploads/2016/01/MSDF_India_Conference_Report.pdf (accessed March 18, 2016).
6 The CPI website states:

Our events and roundtables promote debate and draw out the experiences that lead to a greater understanding of how public impact can be achieved. Our global networks of experts – practitioners, specialists and leading thinkers – bring fresh insights and ideas to help governments deliver the outcomes that citizens expect.

We **connect** governments with leading impact thinkers from around the world. We **collaborate** and work in partnership with governments, not-for-profits, the private sector and academics to share thinking on public impact. Ours is a global forum where leaders can **learn**, share ideas and inspire each other to achieve better outcomes for citizens.

Our upcoming activities will further deepen our networks and convene leading thinkers and practitioners to explore the most pressing aspects of public impact. This includes, amongst others, our Global Delivery Leaders' Network and roundtable discussions on innovation in government, data-driven governance and public finance.

(CPI website: http://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/what-we-do/; accessed March 13, 2016)

 7 http://www.akanksha.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Annual-Report-14-15.pdf (accessed May 26, 2016).
 8 http://www.theeducationalliance.org/ (accessed May 23, 2016).
 9 http://www.teachforindia.org/people (accessed May 22, 2016).
10 https://www.msdf.org/app/uploads/2016/01/MSDF_India_Conference_Report.pdf (p. 2) (accessed March 18, 2016).
11 https://www.msdf.org/app/uploads/2016/01/MSDF_India_Conference_Report.pdf (accessed March 18, 2016).
12 For a formal definition of blended learning employed by MSDF, see: https://www.msdf.org/app/uploads/2016/01/MSDF-Blended-Learning-Report-May-2014.pdf; and http://5a03f68e230384a218e0938ec019df699e606c950a561 4b999bd.r33.cf2.rackcdn.com/Blended_Learning_Intro_083012.pdf (accessed May 22, 2016).
13 https://www.msdf.org/press-releases/haryana-department-of-school-education-launches-learning-enhancement-programme-lep-in-over-3200-primary-schools/, Sept. 16, 2015 (accessed April 27, 2016).
14 https://www.msdf.org/app/uploads/2016/01/MSDF_India_Conference_Report.pdf (p. 2) (accessed March 18, 2016).
15 http://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra_pradesh/New-Edu-Policy-from-Next-Year/2016/02/18/article3283357.ece (accessed March 17, 2016).
16 http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Vijayawada/reforms-in-school-education-from-next-year-naidu/article8251466.ece (accessed March 17, 2016).

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5

Reframing Teachers' Work for Global Competitiveness*

New Global Hierarchies in the Governing of Education

Tore Bernt Sørensen and Susan Lee Robertson

Introduction

Over the past decades the political attention directed toward teachers has intensified at the global level (Caena, 2014; Connell, 2009; MacBeath, 2012; Robertson, 2012a), as education systems have been placed under increased pressure to develop "human capital," create knowledge-based economies, and deliver on global competitiveness.

A raft of international and non-governmental organizations, foundations, and corporations have moved into this increasingly global policy space, arguing that it is high quality teachers who make a decisive difference in the learning of students. In short, they argue, teachers matter (cf. the OECD report (2005)). That teachers matter has been welcomed by teachers' professional organizations and unions – largely as they have often found themselves on the sharp end of public debates over standards, quality, and accountability. Merely stating that teachers matter is one thing; whether teachers agree with what needs to be done, is another.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has taken on the mantle of key advocate and master framer of debates on teachers. They argue that the evidential base around effective teachers and teaching is thin, and that this needs to be mapped, measured, and articulated to launch a global conversation about teaching and learning (OECD, 2011; Schleicher, 2015). The OECD has developed and implemented a Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) as one of its responses to this policy issue.

TALIS is part of the OECD's family of indicator-based data-sets – along with the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) launched in the early 2000s. TALIS has now been conducted twice, with 24 and 34 countries

or subnational political entities taking part in 2008 and 2013, respectively. Preparations for TALIS 2018 are ongoing with more than 40 political entities scheduled to take part.

The TALIS study focuses on teachers' work and school leadership and represents some of the most ambitious efforts so far to generate knowledge about teachers. In doing so, the TALIS program puts the teaching profession and the quality of teaching at the crux of education reform and economic growth. TALIS is based on the argument that teachers as "the front-line workers" play a crucial role in the modernization of education systems because, within schools, "teacher- and teaching-related factors are the most important factors that influence student learning" (OECD, 2014a, p. 32).

Equally as important is that it is the global institutions promoting TALIS, and most particularly the OECD, who are setting the terms of the debate globally around teachers and their work. The OECD has developed TALIS with the support of two major agencies: the European Commission, on the one hand, and Education International (EI), the global federation of teacher unions, on the other. Both the European Commission and EI have headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. The international agencies who have historically occupied the global policy space around teachers, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) – two agencies who have tended to focus on the development of dialogues between teachers, unions, and ministries at the national and subnational levels – appear to have been moved to the periphery in terms of influence (see Robertson, 2012a, for a fuller discussion).

The questions we address in this chapter surround the politics of this reframing of how teachers are governed globally and the implications of the reconfiguring of power. For this purpose, we unpack the institutional arrangements of TALIS. Drawing on an empirical enquiry, we analyse the complex modalities of power between organizations involved in what we are calling a "TALIS ensemble." By "ensemble," we mean a combination of actors, political projects, and instruments which gives particular meaning to the nature of the policy problem – in this case, teachers and education reform – what to do about it, and what this means for the politics of the space concerned with governing teachers (Robertson & Dale, 2015). This ensemble, we will argue, destabilizes the meanings and systems governing teachers' work at the national level by reframing and aligning meanings and systems in ways that correspond with the master narrative of the knowledge-based economy and the associated claim of harnessing education systems for economic competitiveness, globally and nationally.

Theoretically, this process is captured by Sassen's (2003, 2006, 2013) elaboration of globalization; as a dual dynamic involving the formation of explicitly global institutions and processes at a global scale, *and* a "denationalization" dynamic that seeks to reframe, recode, and rescale, processes located deep inside the national territorial space. We develop these ideas further in the chapter when we show that TALIS, in addition to a major research effort, also constitutes a product of political contestation arising out of these dual global dynamics.

Subsequently, we explore both the substance and assumptions built into the TALIS model of development, particularly around the policy preferences for constructivist pedagogy and increased flexibilization of teachers' labor. We

conclude by arguing that the TALIS program puts the teaching profession in a peculiar and ambiguous position: teachers are simultaneously recognized as a key workforce but criticized for not living up to their responsibilities; teachers are also promoted as autonomous professionals, while the mandate for education, along with the terms and conditions of their teaching, are increasingly tightly prescribed by global agencies whose deliberations do not necessarily include teachers.

Methods and Data

The arguments we put forward in the chapter are underpinned by theory-laden empirical work on TALIS and the associated "education ensemble" (Robertson & Dale, 2015). In this sense, we aspire to be *critical* by being attentive to discursive and material power; *processual* in considering the trajectories of institutional arrangements; and *relational* in our understanding of policy as strategic actions that are advanced by policy actors, and whose outcomes tends to promote particular interests over others (Robertson, 2012b).

Part of a larger study on the political construction of the TALIS program (Sorensen, 2017), the study presented in this chapter is focused on the trajectory of the program since its launch in the mid-2000s, over the two initial rounds, TALIS 2008 and TALIS 2013, and most recent developments in spring 2015. In particular, we focus on three of the numerous organizations making up the TALIS ensemble: the OECD, EI, and the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission (DG EAC). These three organizations were all directly involved in the conception and design of TALIS 2008 and 2013.

Our analysis of the TALIS ensemble and the model of development underpinning the program draws on a corpus of empirical material consisting of:

1) Policy, research, and administrative documents referred to in the analytic sections: reports, policy conclusions, press releases, meeting materials, a webinar, websites, and the TALIS 2008 and 2013 questionnaire items.

2) Eleven qualitative semi-structured research interviews conducted between July 2014 and September 2015. The interviewees included OECD personnel (two interviews), policy officers from DG EAC (four interviews), a long-term government representative for an OECD member country in the TALIS Board of Participating Countries (one interview), a private sector enterprise (one interview), and Education International (three interviews).[1] The interviewees were selected on the basis of desk research and snowballing. They had all, at the time of interview or previously, been directly involved in the conception, design, negotiation, and/or implementation of the OECD TALIS program. Each of them was thus able to shed light on particular dimensions of TALIS that were pursued in this study.

The interviews were theory-laden (Pawson, 1996). In practice, this meant that interviews took place on the basis of individually tailored interview guides, formulated as circa ten assumptions drawing on our review of academic literature, preliminary analysis of documents, and previously conducted interviews. The interviewees were invited to discuss these assumptions critically and thereby contribute with factual details, knowledge, and interpretations not obtainable elsewhere.

We should point out the limitations of the empirical material and this chapter. Due to our focus on the OECD, DG EAC, and EI, we are not able here to address in more detail the important issue concerning how denationalization plays out in federal political entities such as the USA and Australia, where education issues remain largely devolved to state level. Furthermore, we would like to call for research that inquires into another dimension not addressed in this chapter, namely, the varying influence of various governments in the OECD, the European Union (EU), and other international organizations.

Bringing Teachers into View as Policy Problem and Solution

Teachers have been the object of global governing during most of the post-World War II period. This has tended to take the form of "standard setting" guided by UNESCO and the ILO (Robertson, 2012a). Both organizations helped to structure a normative understanding of the rights and responsibilities of teachers as professionals (ILO & UNESCO, 1966). Although these organizations have remained active on the global stage today (ILO & UNESCO, 2012; International Taskforce on Teachers for Education For All, 2014), their capacity to shape teachers' work to meet the needs of the twenty-first century have been questioned, and their power largely usurped by new global players with rather different views (Schleicher, 2015).

Arguably it is the OECD that has advanced the global governing agenda in education the furthest, driven by its expanding collection of data on education systems, students, teachers, and adults, aimed at influencing education policies and practices in both developed and developing countries (cf. Grek, 2014; Henry, Rizvi, Lingard, & Taylor, 2001; Mahon & McBride, 2009). To some observers, this is hardly surprising in that the OECD has become a premier forum and think-tank for the richest countries around the globe aimed at addressing what they describe as the economic, social, and governance challenges of globalization. Usurping the role of UNESCO, as "the premier supplier of educational statistics and sculptor of education policy agendas worldwide" (Woodward, 2009, p. 99), the OECD has built its indicators and statistics division to advance economic competitiveness through education. According to a former OECD Director for Education, the very *raison d'être* for building the strong quantitative base in statistics and indicators is to influence policy (McGaw, 2008), and the very foci of research and the choice of researchers are thus deemed aspects of policy (Papadopoulos, 1994, p. 16).

In 2000, the OECD launched PISA, internationally comparing 15-year-old students' competences on literacy, mathematics literacy, and science literacy. PISA now reports every three years, with new competences and countries added each time. Around 2000, the OECD also began to draw attention to what they claimed were concerns over the effectiveness of teachers, arguing that there was a need to review trends across OECD member and associate countries so as to identify policy options for attracting, developing, and retaining effective teachers. One goal to be pursued by the OECD from this was the development of indicators

on teachers and teaching that might parallel that of students. In combination, the hope was that these complex sets of global indicators could drive education policy decision-making globally (OECD, 2005).

The World Bank too has recently promoted its own global governing tool SABER – a *Systems Approach for Better Education Results* – not just in low-income but also medium- and high-income countries (World Bank, 2011, 2012).

The European Commission, the executive arm of the EU, has also begun to expand its interest in the governing of teachers across Europe. Its reach is not confined to Europe though, since the Commission has turned to funding selective projects of the OECD (on which we elaborate below). Attempting to balance leadership, consensus-building and administration, the European Commission has engaged and intervened increasingly in the educational affairs of national governments since the late 1990s. The European Commission has argued that modernizing national education systems and teachers' work is critical if it is to deliver on global competitiveness, the good global citizen, and flexible learners and workers. A range of projects have been funded by the Commission to this end, including an array of working groups and tools to develop learner and teacher competences, and standardized architectures for education systems particularly in the higher education sector (Caena, 2014).

We should note that the relations between global policy actors with transnational horizons of action have been increasingly institutionalized over the past decade. The numerous formal agreements of cooperation (ILO & OECD, 2011; OECD, 2006; UNESCO & European Union, 2012) indicate that these organizations are not merely competing, but also collaborating to a very high extent (see Cusso & D'Amico, 2005; OECD, 2005, p. 4).

Moreover, the OECD, the World Bank, and the European Commission, are not the only prominent policy actors on the global stage; they have been joined by an eager set of corporations and foundations keen to open up new education markets around the globe. Pearson Education, McKinsey & Co, KPMG, Deloitte, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, the Brookings Institution, GEMs, Education Fast Forward, Promethean, Laureate, Kaplan, Navitas – the list goes on (Ball, 2012; Robertson, 2012a) – are all active in shaping education policy. Many of these actors are also active in high-profile economic policy spaces such as the World Economic Forum and in setting agendas for the post-2015 goals for education. Building on the earlier period that might be described as "thin" global governance, focused on advancing nation-building, it is possible to see a "thickening" of global governance over the past decade, with an intense focus on learning for global economic competitiveness. This raises the issue of quality teaching and the performance of teachers which thus is presented as policy problem as well as solution in the global educational policy field (Robertson, 2016).

The TALIS Program: A Brief Introduction

TALIS was developed as part of the OECD's Indicators of Education Systems (INES) Project. Over the past 20 years, the INES project has developed a set of indicators meant to "provide a reliable basis for the quantitative comparison of

the functioning and performance of education systems in the OECD and partner countries" (OECD, 2009, p. 19). A major OECD review (2002–2004) of teacher policy in 25 countries provided the immediate background for TALIS. The main outcome of this policy review, the report *Teachers Matter* (OECD, 2005) highlighted two particular concerns: (1) the recruitment of large numbers of qualified teachers to replace the retiring and very large generation of teachers who had been recruited in the 1960s and 1970s; and (2) concerns about teacher effectiveness. In short, the major issues were related to the *quantity* of teachers as well as their *quality*. On this basis, *Teachers Matter* argued that there was a once-in-a-generation opportunity in many countries to shape and benefit from substantial changes in the teacher workforce (OECD, 2005, pp. 3, 8, 9, 29).

Two rounds of TALIS have been completed, TALIS 2008 and 2013, and the third round, TALIS 2018, is currently being conducted at the time of writing. The cycle was recently changed so as to run every six years so as to coincide with every second round of PISA's three-year cycle. TALIS consists of two questionnaires, to be filled in by teachers and principals. The primary sample group are those working in ISCED level 2 schools (equivalent to middle education/grades 7–9 in the US), yet participating countries or regions were also offered the "international options" to include samples of teachers and school leaders from ISCED levels 1 and 3 as well.[2] Twenty-four countries or regions took part in the first round of TALIS, with 34 in the second round. The EU is well represented, with 16 and 19 member states or regions taking part in the two rounds, respectively. Participants in TALIS 2013 from outside the EU include, for example, Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), Alberta (Canada), Brazil, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, and the USA. Like PISA, TALIS has succeeded in attracting non-OECD members as participants. Ten non-OECD members thus took part in TALIS 2013.

The main objective of TALIS is stated as follows:

> The overall objective of TALIS is to provide robust international indicators and policy-relevant analysis on teachers and teaching in a timely and cost-effective manner. These indicators help countries review and develop policies in their efforts to promote conditions for high-quality teaching and learning. Cross-country analyses provide the opportunity to compare countries facing similar challenges to learn about different policy approaches and their impact on the learning environment in schools. (OECD, 2014a, p. 27; nearly identical to OECD, 2009, p. 19)

Table 5.1 provides a overview of the main features of the TALIS program so far. On this basis, we can identify four general features of TALIS: (1) TALIS aspires to be wide-ranging in its coverage of key issues in relation to teachers' labor and training; (2) there is a large degree of continuity in the coverage of policy themes, based on the incremental development of statistics and indicators; (3) the EU has had a voice in the selection of these themes; and (4) the scope of TALIS is increasing, in terms of the number of political entities taking part in the main ISCED level 2 study and the "international options" on offer, including the TALIS-PISA link to which we will return later.

Table 5.1 Main features of the TALIS program

	TALIS 2008	**TALIS 2013**
Main study sample group	Teachers and principals in ISCED level 2 schools	Teachers and principals in ISCED level 2 schools
Number of questions in main study questionnaire	Teachers: 43 Principals: 37	Teachers: 49 Principals: 39
Themes	Three main themes: • School leadership • Appraisal of and feedback to teachers • Teaching practices, beliefs and attitudes + Professional development of teachers as "an important theme" due to synergies with three main themes and EU interests + Aspects of other themes: School climate, division of working time, and job satisfaction	Five main themes: • School leadership, including new indicators on distributed/team leadership • Appraisal of and feedback to teachers • Teachers' pedagogical beliefs, attitudes and teaching practices, including new indicators on the profile of student assessment practices • Teacher training, including professional development and new indicators on initial teacher education • Teachers' reported feelings of self-efficacy, their job satisfaction and the climate in the schools and classrooms in which they work
Number of participating entities in main study	24	34
"International options" (number of participating entities)	ISCED level 1 (1) ISCED level 3 (0) TALIS-PISA link (0)	ISCED level 1 (6) ISCED level 3 (10) TALIS-PISA link (8)

Sources: OECD (2009, pp. 21, 268–275; 2014a, pp. 28, 214–221; 2014d, pp. 32–33).

The TALIS ensemble

The general point made in the literature, with various emphasis and terminology, is that TALIS contributes to a thickening of the global policy space (Connell, 2009; Rinne & Ozga, 2013; Robertson, 2012a, 2013, 2016; Sassen, 2013; Sobe, 2013). In this section we elaborate on this point by unpacking the institutional arrangements of TALIS and the numerous organizations engaged in the survey program.

   As the object of analysis, we have conceived of the range of organizations and bodies involved in the conception, design, and implementation of TALIS as "the TALIS ensemble." Here we draw on ongoing work (see Robertson & Dale, 2015) to develop the concept of an "education ensemble" as:

> a topic of enquiry whose shifting authoritative, allocative, ideational and feeling structures, properties and practices, emerge from and frame global, economic and cultural processes … the concept of 'ensemble' reflects the

fact that education reflects and is reflected in a complex and variegated agency of social reproduction, broadly conceived. (Robertson & Dale, 2015, pp. 149–50)

We thus understand the TALIS program as a product of the cooperation and contestation of the various organizations, political projects, and technologies making up what we call "the TALIS ensemble." Since these all have their particular agendas and strategies, we are interested in the workings out of a set of complex modalities of power at play during all stages of the TALIS program.

First of all, this brief overview should be helpful in clarifying the basic institutional arrangements of the TALIS program within the OECD:

- The OECD TALIS Secretariat is responsible for managing the program.
- In principle, TALIS should be financed through government authorities, typically the education ministries, of participating political entities. However, for the first two rounds, the European Commission has subsidized participating EU Member States with 75% of their fees.
- The TALIS Board of Participating Countries (TALIS BPC) is the most important OECD body for multilateral decision-making on the TALIS program.
- The TALIS Consortium manages the survey implementation at the international level. The appointed contractor for TALIS 2013 was the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), with Statistics Canada as a subcontractor of the IEA.
- Finally, National TALIS Centres implemented TALIS in participating political entities (OECD, 2014a, p. 29).

In the following sections, we will focus on three substantial relationships constitutive of the TALIS ensemble and explore the nature of the dual globalization dynamics at play (scale/denationalization), which we outlined earlier, in relation to teachers' work. These relationships concern those between: (1) the OECD, the European Commission, and national governments; (2) Educational International and the TALIS BPC; and (3) private sector policy actors and the TALIS program overall.

The OECD, the European Commission, and National Governments

In many ways the TALIS BPC, the key decision-making body concerning TALIS within the OECD, encapsulates the dialectics of the global denationalization dynamic since it provides a forum for multilateral intergovernmental negotiations centered on TALIS, and thus on teacher policy. Major issues were for the first two rounds of TALIS to be approved in the OECD Education Policy Committee, and in some cases the OECD Council. But it is in the TALIS BPC that decisions are being made concerning policy objectives for the survey, and where the standards for data collection and reporting are established.

The TALIS BPC for the first round was formally created on January 1, 2007, and the general features of the body in terms of responsibilities and constituents remained stable also for the 2013 round. However, from TALIS 2018, the program has been "upgraded" to a so-called Part II program in the OECD

institutional hierarchy. From TALIS 2018, the program thus formally enjoys a similar status to PISA. The new program status should entail more stable long-term commitment in terms of participation and funding from countries and that the re-constituted TALIS Governing Board (Governing Board is the label for the key OECD body with Part II status) enjoys further independence in its decision-making.

The TALIS BPC (now Governing Board) mainly consists of government representatives from each participating political entity. The European Commission is also represented by policy officers from DG EAC, and UNESCO has the status as a permanent observer. Moreover, the Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC, the OECD formal mechanism for social dialogue with trade unions) have participated in BPC meetings (OECD, 2009, pp. 303–305; 2012a; 2014a, pp. 434–436; interviews with OECD personnel, DG EAC policy officers, and representatives from EI and a private enterprise).

The OECD and the European Commission, represented by DG EAC, have arguably been the two single most important organizations in taking the TALIS program forward so far. Personnel from both organizations interviewed for this study were keen to emphasize that their organizations are first of all – bottom-up – intergovernmental fora for cooperation. Yet, our analyses show that the two organizations also are strategic policy actors capable of shaping political agendas, and that this is indeed reflected in the mandates given to them by their respective member states.

An OECD senior analyst we interviewed pointed out that the OECD to some extent is expected by governments to show leadership:

> I do really stand by that the agenda is set by countries. It happens from time to time that certain directions need a push. Going back to 2004 or 2005, yes, we had calls for more quantitative data on teachers, but it needed the OECD come up with how to conceptualize this, how could we come up with something that could be operational? The secretariat does not have an agenda, but we come up with what we think will work. [...] All I'm saying is that there's always an element of OECD showing some leadership in order to provide governments with what they need. It's also true to say that governments look for that. Politically, some things are more critical for them to do nationally than to see them happening internationally. That plays into the agenda-setting as well.

We might see the OECD as a master "framer" in the TALIS ensemble since the program was conceived within the organization, and the groundwork for potential TALIS themes and indicators were decisively shaped from the outset by the *Teachers Matter* report (OECD, 2005).

TALIS continues to be framed by other OECD activities in education. The OECD has thus since the launch of TALIS continuously explored potential "synergies" between TALIS and the highly profiled PISA program and encouraged participant countries to sign up for the TALIS-PISA link (interviews with OECD analyst and EI senior official; OECD, 2012b). The link entails that TALIS sample

populations in participant countries are aligned with those of PISA. In TALIS 2013, eight countries incorporated the TALIS-PISA link: Australia, Finland, Latvia, Mexico, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, and Spain (OECD, 2014a, p. 27).

More specifically, TALIS feeds into related OECD activities on teachers, such as the *International Summits on the Teaching Profession*. The initiative for the first summit were taken in the wake of TALIS 2008, and it was convened in New York in 2011 by the United States Department of Education, the OECD, and EI.[3] Subsequently, the Summits have become established as annual events, with the OECD always providing the background report drawing on data from TALIS and other OECD programs (see e.g. OECD, 2011).

TALIS is one of the first projects where the OECD and the European Commission have worked closely together in the field of education. DG EAC played a pivotal role in getting the TALIS program off the ground. This commitment to teacher policy should be understood within the context of the EU Lisbon Strategy 2000–2010 in which education and training were re-framed and represented as one of the major factors in "making Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (Council of the European Union, 2000).

For this objective, DG EAC around 2003 set up 13 Working Groups of experts from the EU member states to gather and discuss the evidence basis to be used for policy initiatives. In the Working Group on teachers' work, one of the experts told of the OECD's plan to launch a survey, and the group decided to pursue the idea that it would be sensible to join forces with the OECD to gather more evidence about teachers. Followed up by the work of policy officers in DG EAC, this strategy would eventually become official EU policy. Council Conclusions in 2005 and 2007 (Council of the European Union, 2005, 2007) thus gave the Commission and DG EAC the mandate to pursue cooperation with the OECD on TALIS, and to encourage member states to take part to help cover data needs in the monitoring of progress towards the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. In this respect, the 2007 Council Conclusions had also provided DG EAC with the mandate to subsidize member states for their participation in TALIS.

We should note here that the overriding interest for the EU concerning the teaching profession during the 2000s was in deploying indicators and data on teachers' professional development to measure progress toward the objectives set out in the Lisbon Strategy. DG EAC pursued this mandate successfully since professional development has been covered in the first rounds of TALIS, and EU member states have made up the bulk of participants. DG EAC's offer to subsidize them with 75% of the TALIS participation fees was likely to be very important in this respect.

Yet, the subsidies came with certain conditions attached, corresponding with the EU and DG EAC focus on life-long learning and professional development. Since it only enjoyed observer status in the TALIS BPC, DG EAC made clear to the participating EU member states that their participation in TALIS would only be subsidized by the DG EAC if teachers' professional development was covered in the survey as a policy theme. At the same time, the OECD embraced the European Commission interest and sought to accommodate TALIS as much as possible to the organization's specific objectives and preferences (interview with

DG EAC senior official). The close working partnership was also reflected in the fact that the initial results from TALIS 2008 were launched in the European Commission Berlaymont building in Brussels.

While the international organizations the OECD and the European Commission with their specific preferences and mandates have carried the TALIS program forward, the institutional arrangements of TALIS are also designed to enable state authorities to extend their horizon of influence well beyond their own jurisdiction. Decision-making in the TALIS Board formally happens on the basis of votes from participating countries yet decisions are usually consensus-based; not a single vote was conducted during BPC meetings in the TALIS 2013 round.

We should note that it is those participating countries that have signed up for a TALIS round at an early stage who are invited to select policy themes and indicators through a priority-rating exercise. For TALIS 2013, there were 20 potential themes and 94 indicators to choose from. The priority-rating exercises are meant to provide a focused survey that is reflective of policy priorities in participating political entities (OECD, 2013, pp. 9–13).

It is remarkable that the exercise for the 2008 and 2013 rounds, which effectively determined the outputs of deliverables and analysis, only involved OECD members. Non-OECD members participating in TALIS were not involved in the selection of what should be addressed in the survey (OECD, 2010, pp. 26–27; 2013, pp. 9–10). However, this has now been changed. The priority-rating exercise conducted in spring 2015 for TALIS 2018 included all countries who had signed up at this point, as well as the EC (interview with national government representative on TALIS Board).

Finally, while the OECD as an organization has a strong interest in tightening the links between TALIS and PISA, it serves as a further indication of the agency of national government representatives in steering and constraining the direction of the TALIS program that they have since the launch of TALIS tended to insist on treating them as separate programs with distinctive identities on political as well as methodological grounds (interviews with OECD analyst and DG EAC senior official).

The Representation of the Teaching Profession in TALIS

The focus of TALIS calls for examining the ways representatives of the teaching profession have been engaged in the construction of TALIS. One of the most intriguing aspects of the TALIS program is the peculiar and ambiguous position that the program puts the teaching profession in, simultaneously recognizing teachers as a key workforce and criticizing them for not living up to their responsibilities. On the one hand, the OECD has – since the *Teachers Matter* report – emphasized the importance of involving the teaching profession in policy formation (OECD, 2005, pp. 15, 214), and asserted its commitment to give "teachers and school leaders around the world a voice to speak about their experiences" (OECD, 2014a, p. 3). Whilst this clearly marks a departure from neoliberal derision discourses (Robertson, 2013), the exclusion of teachers from the political debates continues, with the OECD confident it has the answers; for

example, when the OECD Secretary-General, Angel Gurría, asserts that "TALIS 2013 results show that we need to put teachers on a path to success immediately" (OECD, 2014a, p. 3).

The TALIS program is very much in line with the trajectory of the OECD since its foundation in 1961, and the strategy by which the organization over the decades has tried to inform and influence policy. Since the 1960s, the target groups have been decision-makers, government officials, and civil society organizations (Mundy, 2007).

Since OECD publications targeting teachers and other school professionals are very rare, it is remarkable that the OECD has sought to target teachers and school leaders directly by publishing *A Teacher's Guide* (OECD, 2014b) as part of TALIS 2013.

The 28-pages guide is branded as "a global 'selfie' by teachers" (OECD, 2014b, p. 7) and presents recommendations as to how TALIS data can be used by teachers and school leaders. According to an OECD analyst we interviewed, the guide is part of a broader OECD strategy to reach out to teachers and school leaders directly, since they are not likely to read the main TALIS reports. Raising their awareness about TALIS and OECD activities in this way is meant to increase the support from them – and hence response rates – in future rounds of TALIS and other OECD activities.

The guide was only made available in three languages, (English, French, and Spanish), yet the guide shows that the OECD seeks to reach deep into local micro-spaces and in so doing may bypass nationally located governments and teacher unions. The same phenomenon is indicated by the recent launch of *OECD PISA-based Test for Schools*, which is targeting individual schools eager to engage in international benchmarking serves to (OECD, 2018; Lewis, Sellar, & Lindgard, 2016).

These unfolding developments raises the question as to the mechanisms through which the teaching profession is represented in TALIS, and the reframing and recoding of the vertical relationship between EI, the global federation of teacher unions, and its member affiliates. By winding in, and advancing an evolving engagement of EI in the two rounds of TALIS through TUAC, the OECD is also reorienting EI toward the agendas that are being advanced in this thickening global policy space.

EI has taken part in TALIS BPC meetings since they were initiated in 2006. As the primary organization working for teachers' interests in TALIS, EI was given a broad mandate by its member affiliates to negotiate on their behalf in the TALIS BPC. The TUAC representatives participating at TALIS Board meetings reported to a sub-group of EI affiliate member organizations that was set up by EI through the TUAC Education, Training and Employment Policy Working Group. Accordingly, EI affiliates were encouraged to mobilize support for TALIS among their members (Education International, 2012). It should be noted that EI affiliates finance and decide policy priorities for EI and TUAC activities (see also Carter, Stevenson, & Passy, 2010). However, EI was only granted permanent observer status in the Board (as well as the PISA Governing Board) in 2009. Attaining this status, EI has been consulted on draft chapters and enjoyed enhanced opportunities for submitting comments and ideas. In interviews,

OECD, DG EAC, and EI personnel all characterized their cooperation in TALIS as productive and constructive.

According to a senior official in EI, the organization's engagement with TALIS began in the aftermath of the report *Teachers Matter* (OECD, 2005), as the organization was concerned about some of the policies advocated by the OECD. In particular, the issue of performance-based pay for teachers stood out as a "red line" not to be crossed for EI and its affiliates. EI thus sought to become engaged in the TALIS BPC to influence the construction of knowledge generated in the program, and more generally to contest the evidence presented by increasingly powerful actors, such as the OECD, the European Commission, Pearson Education, and McKinsey & Company (see also Education International, 2007, 2012). We might say that EI sees TALIS as an essentially political construction through which the prioritization of certain policy themes, indicators, and phrasing of questions, is bound to contain a bias toward particular notions of education and the role and working conditions of teachers. Accordingly, a focal point for EI in the TALIS BPC so far has been the phrasing of TALIS questionnaire items.

Whilst EI have opted for the strategy to engage directly with TALIS, our interviews with EI staff suggest that they seek to find a delicate balance and not become too entangled with the evidence-based policy agenda due to the associated risk of de-politicization of teachers' work. In the words of an EI senior official, "we perceive as a general danger that evidence somehow hijacks social dialogue," thereby undermining the development of frameworks for collective bargaining.

And indeed a few of the developments in TALIS and OECD discourses on teachers' work could be interpreted as victories for EI, showing that power relations in global education governance should not always be conceived of as a zero-sum game. First of all, there was a reinforced focus on teacher self-efficacy as a theme in TALIS 2013, which corresponds with the organization's own work (Bangs & Frost, 2012) and TUAC Chair John Bangs' endorsement of the theme in a TALIS 2013 media event (Education Fast Forward, 2014). Moreover, whereas the OECD used to advocate performance-based pay for teachers, this preference is less explicit today and have been replaced by the emphasis on giving voice to teachers and the societal value of teaching. While the *Teachers Matter* report (OECD, 2005, pp. 184–186) thus discussed the pros and cons for performance-based pay, the main TALIS reports were reluctant in making any recommendations on the issue. Still, weak evaluation structures for teacher appraisal and feedback continue to be lamented (OECD, 2009, pp. 138–139, 155, 158, 161, 169–171; 2014a, pp. 20, 32, 120, 124, 137, 140), and there remains a deep interest in teacher salary differentiation (see especially OECD, 2014a, pp. 142–143).

However, OECD as well as EI staff emphasize that the influence of the teacher unions on the conception and direction of TALIS remains limited. The formal mandate to the OECD comes from member governments, and the role for EI as a permanent observer in the TALIS BPC can therefore not be compared to that of governments, formally and informally. It is thus illustrative that EI representatives do not take part in the TALIS priority-ranking exercise of policy themes and indicators.

What then do the dual dynamics of globalization – scale and denationalization – mean for the representation of teachers' interest in education governance? In the context of TALIS, we see that global scalar cooperation on teacher policy has resulted in a complex ensemble of dynamics whose work proceeds from the assumption that common issues and "best practices" can be identified with regard to teachers' work at the global scale. This also applies to professional autonomy, and the way teachers are able to put their ideas forward and exercise control over their work. In this respect, EI remains vulnerable to the critique also directed toward the OECD and the EU, namely, that of "democratic deficits" in terms of representing the interests of their members. EI is attempting to make its voice heard on the global scale, but the vertical structure that should enable EI to consult member affiliates as part of the ongoing work of TALIS appears ambiguous and opaque. For EI it might seem that this is inherent to the mandate given to it by its affiliates, but in reality it serves as a mechanism through which denationalization dynamics are enabled and driven. For the time being, it appears to be the price that must be paid for having any agency with a mandate to represent teachers' interests actively engaged in the political construction of TALIS.

Private Sector Policy Actors and TALIS

We argued earlier that the OECD as a global policy actor is increasingly being joined by private consultancies and corporate philanthropists who operate beyond national spaces of representation and democratic accountability (Ball, 2012; Robertson & Verger, 2012). This is also the case with TALIS, yet private sector organizations do not appear to have been much involved in the conception or design of TALIS.

According to our interview data, BIAC involvement in TALIS was fragmented. The Paris-based BIAC officials do not see education as one of their key areas – in contrast to TUAC – and did not take any initiative to create a strategy or coordinate responses from business. BIAC's two places in the TALIS BPC for the 2013 round were hence filled somewhat by coincidence by a representative from the Confederation of Danish Industry, and a director from Microsoft in Education. The latter were encouraged by the OECD to become involved in TALIS through the BIAC mechanism after having introduced a Microsoft-sponsored research project on 21st-century skills (see SRI International, 2011) to them. It is indicative of the strong engagement of Microsoft in education policy that the OECD project lead for TALIS 2013 had been employed in Microsoft Partners in Learning – and involved in the same research project – prior to joining the OECD.

More generally, private sector organizations have engaged with TALIS in two distinctive ways. A few of the National TALIS Centres implementing the survey have included private companies (as was the case in England for TALIS 2013). Due to the strict research design, these contractors have very limited possibilities for influencing the objectives and contents of the survey. In addition, numerous private sector organizations are clearly engaging with TALIS in the use of data and interpreting results (see, e.g. Education Fast Forward, 2014).

In summary, private consultancies and corporate philanthropists mainly appear to operate on the periphery of the TALIS ensemble as policy entrepreneurs and

data brokers. While they have very different profiles in terms of policy prefer-ences, strategies, capacities, and horizons of action, they share the feature that their activities, whether for-profit business or venture philanthropy, produce policy recommendations on the basis of TALIS data with a view to offer products and services. In this sense, private sector policy actors engage in a symbiotic rela-tionship with the OECD; they simultaneously rely on research programs such as TALIS and help to legitimate these very programs by further raising their profile toward decision-makers and the general public.

The recent OECD proposal for an annual summit of the global education industry (OECD, 2014c), meant to complement the annual International Summits on the Teaching Profession, confirms this development, whether the OECD itself is perceived as driving the agenda forward, or merely reacting to it and trying to contain and structure the "Wild West" of current commercial practices in global educational governance.

Tensions and Contradictions in the TALIS Program

In this section, we provide a critique of the mechanisms for improvement under-lying the TALIS program. We draw on the unpacking of the TALIS ensemble above and show that the program involves tensions and contradictions regarding the reform of the teaching profession and teaching. Our critique follows two steps. First, we show that there is a tension running through the entire TALIS program in that the "subjective" survey responses of teachers are framed as sub-ordinate to the "objective" data on student performance as assessed by PISA. Second, on the basis of our examination of the indices and items in the TALIS questionnaires, we contend that TALIS involves a bias toward constructivist pedagogy and flexibilization of teachers' work. Each of these gives rise to contra-dictions. We noted earlier that TALIS aspires to be wide-ranging in its coverage of issues related to teachers' labor. Yet, our analysis suggests that TALIS does not live up to that intention.

"Subjective" TALIS Results as a Secondary Form of Evidence

Since the 2000s, intergovernmental organizations, such as the OECD (1996, 2007) and the European Commission (2001), have endorsed the notion of evi-dence-based policy which is theoretically influenced by the bio-medical agenda (Clegg, 2005). Evidence-based policy proceeds from the argument that knowledge-based economies rely on the growing codification and transmission of knowledge, centered on the identification of best practices (OECD, 1996, p. 3).

TALIS and related OECD activities on teachers are also underpinned by the notion of evidence-based policy, with multiple references to the importance of making evidence- and knowledge-driven innovation a central feature of teachers' labor (see OECD, 2005, p. 14; 2009, p.3; 2014a).

This puts the TALIS program in a delicate position, as it is based on teachers' and principals' self-reports which are impossible to translate into "best practices" in terms of improving those student performances that are ultimately held by

the OECD to be vital for economic competitiveness. In other words, the status of the very codifications of knowledge or "evidence" enabled through TALIS is ambiguous:

> TALIS results are based on self-reports from teachers and school leaders and therefore represent their opinions, perceptions, beliefs and accounts of their activities. This is powerful information because it provides insight into how teachers perceive the learning environments in which they work, what motivates teachers and how policies that are put in place are carried out in practice. But, as with any self-reported data, this information is subjective and therefore differs from objectively collected data. (OECD, 2014a, p. 29)

The nature of TALIS as a self-reported survey has rendered it a lower-profiled program compared with the harder, more "objective" results of PISA which relate directly to the main policy problem of student performance. In this context, the continuous efforts by the OECD to forge closer links between the TALIS and PISA programs can only be understood as attempts to further subordinate the "subjective" TALIS results to the "objective" PISA results. In other words, the quality of the teaching profession has become a high-profile problem and solution to economic growth due to teachers' role in raising student achievement. In the race for global competitiveness, the labor force of teachers is ultimately a means in the service of a higher purpose.

This point is also reflected in the fact that a video study of teaching practices has been promoted to participating political entities as part of the TALIS 2018 package. The video study will gather evidence from math lessons in classrooms and incorporate pre- and post-tests of learning outcomes using PISA items, teacher and student surveys, and the TALIS questionnaires for teachers and school leaders (OECD, 2016). An OECD senior analyst explains the initiative:

> During the second round of TALIS, we also asked how TALIS could evolve to say something about effectiveness. Self-reported surveys have its weaknesses in telling you anything about effectiveness, you can't get objective measures for teaching practice. That's why the TALIS video study was launched. Again, that's a quite long step from capturing some practices and say that they're effective, but the TALIS video study takes you to this next stage of looking at, objectively, what is going on in classrooms.

The challenges of how to identify and codify effective teaching practices lead us to the next contradiction which concerns the OECD preference for constructivist beliefs in relation to the nature of teaching and learning.

The Preference for Constructivism

The OECD's pedagogical project would appear to be anchored by constructivism, which, in its more radical versions, is based on the view that there is no independent, pre-existing world; reality does not exist independently of

the subjects acknowledging it (Olssen, 1996). The appeal of constructivism for an organization like the OECD is that such an ontology of social reality is highly compatible with the OECD Convention's commitment to preserving individual liberties through economic development, and more particularly expanding world trade and liberalization of capital movements on a non-discriminatory basis (OECD, 1960). With their emphasis on individual agency, constructivism links the wider project of neoliberalism to the emerging social base of production and the competitive knowledge economy (see Robertson, 2012a).

However, in the context of TALIS, the emphasis on the need for constructivist pedagogy proves self-defeating due to the limited conception of teaching and learning underpinning the relevant questionnaire indices and items. These are based on the simplistic juxtaposition of "constructivist" beliefs ("characterised by a view of the teacher as the facilitator of learning with more autonomy given to students") and "direct transmission" views (seeing "the teacher as the instructor, providing information and demonstrating solutions") (OECD, 2009, p. 269; 2014a, p. 217).

As a result, the findings on teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and their reported classroom practices stand out as rather vague (OECD, 2009, Chapter 4; 2014a, Chapter 6; Rinne & Ozga, 2013; Robertson, 2012a). Furthermore, the reduction of indices in TALIS 2013 to merely include an index on constructivist beliefs to capture teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning (OECD, 2014a, p. 217; compare OECD, 2009, p. 69) epitomizes the bias toward constructivist pedagogy.

The OECD preference for constructivism leads to a contradiction because in the light of the current drive toward a standards- and market-based 'bi-dimensional pattern of educational control' combining central authority with self-managing institutions (Moutsios, 2000, pp. 50–59), we see that there are very real limits to the agency and freedoms of the individualized learner. In this respect, Sahlberg (2011) puts forward the convincing argument that the Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM) advocated by the OECD, the World Bank, and many governments across the globe frames the scope for individual agency with standardized performance measures which tends to result in narrowing concepts of learning due to the excessive emphasis on assessment and testing frameworks. Moreover, GERM therefore circumscribes teachers' professional autonomy, undermines job satisfaction, and ultimately system innovation. The ambition of maximizing student performance in select literacy areas, as a simplistic indicator of "human capital," is therefore likely to lead to the opposite effect.

With regard to student outcomes, another point that must be addressed concerns the implications of constructivist pedagogies for educational equality. Constructivism operates best for those whose cultural, economic, and political resources can be mobilized from within the environment (Moss, 2001). It thus tends to be selective of middle- and upper-class capabilities and resources, rather than those less privileged in terms of home background and parents' educational background. This dynamic creates even further fractures in opportunities and relations between social classes, in turn undermining one of the conditions for ongoing capital accumulation – social cohesion.

Teachers and the Flexible Work Regime

This leads us to another contradiction inherent to the TALIS model of development: TALIS was allegedly launched to give "voice" to teachers yet over time the program could contribute to teachers losing their collective voice. We would thus contend that the above-mentioned concern of the senior official in EI that evidence might "hijack" social dialogue is very real: teachers' hard-won collective rights to negotiate working conditions, employment status, and wage levels, are likely to be overruled by the weight of "evidence" generated in large-scale comparative research programs like TALIS that are conceived and designed in education ensembles in which the representation of teachers' professional interests can be acknowledged when convenient and ignored if deemed necessary.

In its discussion on collective bargaining, the *Teachers Matter* report articulates the contradictory stance of teachers' voice versus student outcomes which is held to be the gold standard of economic competitiveness: "contrasting findings reinforce the basic point that collective bargaining agreements, like any other mechanism for determining school resource levels and their uses, ultimately need to be assessed in terms of their impact on student outcomes" (OECD 2005, p. 146).

In this respect, it is imperative to point out that the employment relations and status of teachers continue to vary across the globe. In Europe, for instance, teachers follow widely different career and employment pathways and might be distinguished either as civil servants, career civil servants, or employees with contractual status, depending on national or sub-national arrangements (European Commission and EACEA/Eurydice, 2013, p. 50).

The OECD claims that the TALIS program in its design acknowledges such institutional differences and identifies cross-culturally valid and comparable information about the working conditions of teachers and the learning environment in schools (OECD, 2014a, p. 26). Yet, because TALIS draws on a positivist methodology in the school effectiveness tradition, centered on the creation of "effective teaching and learning conditions" (OECD, 2013), the program tends to isolate schools as teaching and learning sites from the communities and wider societies they are embedded in. It is thus characteristic for the OECD model of improvement that the functionalist belief in harnessing all forces for the single goal of student performance renders context-specific institutional trajectories potentially subject to be found inefficient, depending on the accumulated data and their interpretation. So, along with the OECD claim that TALIS acknowledges that education systems reflect societal and cultural contexts, follows the key message that such differences in institutional arrangements are to be overruled in the maximization of student performance as conceived and reframed by the OECD.

The *Teachers Matter* report provides further insights into the OECD's model of development. In descriptive terms, the report distinguishes between two types of employment status: (1) "career-based" (oriented toward specialized qualifications and selecting the best-suited candidate for each position); and (2) "position-based" systems (more civil or public servant-like, usually with an early entry into tenured positions, based on demanding academic credentials or examinations) (OECD,

2005, pp. 143–145). Yet, in its recommendations, the report clearly opts for the career-based type. For example, we recognize the neoliberal project in the call for "using more flexible terms of employment" (OECD, 2005, p. 162) as a policy priority and the preference for non-tenure in teachers' employment status.

We mentioned above that the TALIS program addresses policy themes such as teacher evaluation, feedback, and salary differentiation. Against this background, it is remarkable and appears like omission by design that the main TALIS reports do not address the issue whether national or subnational differences in employment status and relations might be related to the institutional arrangements concerning these themes. The only remaining trace is that "a career-based wage system" (OECD, 2014a, p. 79) is conceived as a potential barrier to a principal's effectiveness.

The TALIS Model of Development and its Wider Politics

This chapter set out to examine the changing nature of the global governing of teachers' work by breaking open the TALIS ensemble. We argued that the constitution and processes in this ensemble reflect a major transformation under way aimed at reframing and rescaling where and how decisions are made regarding teachers, their labor, qualifications, careers, and working environments.

We showed that the TALIS program is both a major research exercise and a political construction, predicated on incremental institutional developments reflecting the multilateral negotiation of policy preferences by the OECD and the range of organizations and authorities involved in the TALIS ensemble. As Pawson (2006, pp. 1–4) reminds us, we all expect political calculation to form the basis of policy choices and strategies. Under the veneer of alleged objectivity, the TALIS program is driven by complex modalities of power.

We contend that TALIS is a political construct which sets in train political processes, and as such constitutes a global policy instrument.

- As a *political construct*, TALIS frames and aligns the work of teachers explicitly to the putative demands of creating more competitive knowledge-based economies, and in doing so, is a concerted yet negotiated push on the part of the TALIS ensemble to advance particular ideas of education, teaching, and learning as a means of resolving the ongoing crisis of capitalism for many of the developed economies.
- As a *political process*, the program is dependent on, and gives further momentum to the globalization of the education policy space and its articulation of a model of teacher competence and development. This occurs in two ways: first, by thickening the global policy space through the promotion of the TALIS ensemble; and, second, by drawing down, into and up, a range of micro-environments in the sub/national policy space in ways that will advance the work of the TALIS ensemble, in turn, denationalizing these framings and encodings.
- As a *global policy instrument*, TALIS goes beyond simply governing by numbers. On the basis of indicators and standards, TALIS serves as a lever in the

global and national policy spaces through the ways in which it strategically reframes policy problems. The TALIS model of development is embedded in the same paradigm as the OECD program PISA, with student performance assessed according to the OECD brand of literacies and the associated claim that these are valuable proxies for the development of globally-competitive knowledge-based economies. Accordingly, the driving mechanisms of the TALIS model of development is oriented toward shaping a learner for the twenty-first-century economy in which teachers are to prioritize constructivist pedagogy and work under flexible terms of employment.

Dale (2005, pp. 132–133) makes the important point that recent developments in governance are not to be understood as a zero sum game, and suggests the notion of *pluri-scalar governance* to capture a developing functional, scalar, and sectoral division of the labor of educational governance, which in turn transforms the nature of the relations within and between actors, scales, and strategies. The re-scaling of education governance is thus selective in addressing the core problems of the capitalist state regarding on-going economic growth and development, and the role that education should play in managing and resolving these challenges. This sets in play rescaling dynamics that move upward and downward away from the sub/national which is where the governing of teachers have historically been located.

Our argument that teachers' work is currently being reframed for global competitiveness should be understood in this light. The teaching profession is on the policy agenda internationally because it has become directly associated with the support of capitalist accumulation, one of the core problems of education. However, we would expect – supported by the analyses of the TALIS program presented in this chapter – that national states and governments to remain very much involved in "interpreting and translating into nationally appropriate forms and priorities the consequences of the shaping 'rules' of the international organisations" (Dale, 2005, p. 133).

Contemporary transformations in the global educational policy field are tied to fundamental questions around democratic representation and the viability of national institutional arrangements. While the focus on teachers might look as if teachers are now being made visible in ways in which they have not been in the past, our analysis shows that representatives of the teaching profession have not been invited into the spaces for engagement as equal partners. On behalf of its affiliate member organizations, the global federation of teacher unions EI can react and attempt to negotiate proposals and decisions taken in international fora. Yet, the very complexity of global educational governance means that the representatives and voice of the teaching profession risk being reduced to a simple vehicle for advancing the interests and agendas of competitive global capital and realigned national and regional agendas.

The OECD's embrace of a particular construction of "evidence-based policy" might be used as a lever to subvert the hold – or undermine the development – of sub/national institutional arrangements to improve and protect teachers' working conditions across the world. At the same time, teachers are now constituted as direct targets for policy by the OECD so as to reduce those scales in the middle

between the global and the located individual, with the overall intention of limiting the space for frictions that in turn slow down the pace of change. Never before have the efforts to connect global education policy agendas with local practices been this sharply focused.

Notes

1 Potential interviewees were contacted on email, with a letter about the aims, knowledge interests, and methods of the research project. If the individual agreed to participate, an interview guide was provided before the interviews took place. Eight interviews were conducted face-to-face, three via Skype. An interview transcription was subsequently sent to the relevant interviewee for approval. The interviewee would have the opportunity to comment and make edits before approving the final version of transcription for use in research.

2 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) was launched by UNESCO in 1976 to facilitate comparisons of education statistics and indicators across countries on the basis of uniform and internationally agreed definitions. ISCED has since been revised twice.

3 Subsequent summits have since taken place in New York (2012), Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2013), Wellington, New Zealand (2014), Banff, Canada (2015), Berlin, Germany (2016), Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2017), and Lisbon, Portugal (2018).

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6

School Principals in Neoliberal Times

A Case of Luxury Leadership?

Helen M. Gunter, Steven J. Courtney, David Hall, and Ruth McGinity

Introduction

Reforms to public education systems in western-style democracies have sought to make major interventions into the identities and practices of serving and aspiring school principals.[1] Neoliberal transformation strategies continue to construct the school as a corporate business, and the school principal as entrepreneur. Drawing on empirical evidence and conceptual analysis from four ESRC-funded projects,[2] we site our analysis in England as a "laboratory" for radical changes, where we explore globalizing trends in the promotion, adoption, and evolution of the school principal as leader, who does leading and exercises leadership. The idea and opportunities afforded by the status of corporatized leaders, leading and leadership have been presented to the education profession as an inspiring and motivational approach to school principalship, with claims about improvements to pupil outcomes, through a change-imperative-induced lexicon of modernization with moral purpose.

While critical education policy studies has sought to describe and understand the changes taking place (Grace, 1995), to locate within policy reform strategies and enactments (Ball et al., 2012), and to conceptualize change (Thomson, 2005), we present an approach that provides significant new insights. Specifically, we read our data through "luxury leadership" in order to examine the construction of school principals as change agents in ways that tempt educational professionals to mimic and enact identities and practices that are associated with corporate elites. Our data show that neoliberal ideas and practices are being promoted and shared in ways that create the conditions in which school principals can read their agency in alignment with those who are the forefront of capital accumulation.

Luxury leadership is a novel way of thinking about what it means to be and do "leader," "leading," and "leadership" in public-service education. In drawing on debates from critical luxury studies (Adams, 2012; Armitage & Roberts, 2016;

Berry, 1994; Faiers, 2015), we intend examining key features: first, as an elite project designed to segregate the leader from the led; second, as an elite practice that requires recognition and consent from "others" as the led; third, as dynamic and contextually located, and so while the "on the pedestal" location of the elite leader remains intact, it is open to reimaging and rebranding.

Luxury Leadership: An Elite Project

Contemporary understandings of luxury are located in definitions that capture the consumption of material and experiential products, hence luxury is about: "elite objects and services available only to a privileged few" (Faiers, 2014, p. 5). Language is focused on the "exotic" (Faiers, 2014) and "sumptuous" (Wilson, 2014), where objects and services are imbued with something extraordinary regarding the finest raw materials and the deployment of rare craft skills, with branding through logos attached to trusted names of people, companies, and places. Luxury is visible to, accessible by, and known about within elite networks, in ways that are structured through the complexities of class, family, race, and status. There are luxury branded goods (clothes, shoes, bags, food) and experiences (travel, hotels, leisure, service), where "the power of luxury goods is not just their social exclusiveness and the visibility as status symbols, but the image they have of providing sensory fulfillment: the prospect of experiencing new sensations and pleasures" (Featherstone, 2014, p. 48). The luxury of personal service matters, where Wilson (2014) argues that such assistance goes beyond the idea of having the resources to employ staff (PA, housekeeper, butler, driver, valet, image consultant) toward building a team that is integrated in ways that suggest simulated family connections through emotional links of devotion. It seems that in a busy world, the ultimate luxury is time, particularly being idle or at least not having to do the ordinary things.

Luxury leadership is an object *to desire* and *of desire*. The objectification of the person and the top job means that status, activities, and experiences are presented as desirable – it is about holding and exercising power, and the associated trappings and deference that create distance with material conditions, whether that is the design/location of the office, support staff, and/or remuneration. It is structured by power relations that enable a person as a luxury leader to be advantaged through class, race, gender, and sexuality. The rationalities of organizational control can mask complex forms of inter-dependencies which may be paternalistic, and/or forms of "desired eroticized relationship between leader and follower" which is homoerotic (Harding et al., 2011, p. 929).

A person is enabled *to desire* through imagining what it would be like, what they would do, and how it would feel and bring tangible gains through name, reputation, and success. We are therefore tapping into Armitage and Roberts' (2016) deployment of the "spirit" of luxury that means "the enlivening or fundamental wellspring of humankind that imparts life to physical organisms, contrary to their purely material components" (p. 18). Job titles and descriptions, office furniture, and electronic presentations, are animated in ways that connect emotions, motivations, and well-being. The division of labor within an

organization means that such desire can be about rising up the ranks in ways where such mobility is "against the odds," while for others it is about taking their rightful place that family, education, and wealth have guaranteed.

Leadership is exclusive, and not everyone is able to reach the dizzy heights of the top job, and even those who feel entitled could be disappointed. What we mean here is that while leadership is an object to desire, it is about an object *of desire* through how those who are permanent followers have beliefs and imaginings about the person and role, and admire (or not) those who are above them in the organizational rank order. The recognition of talent, attributes, and skills enables leadership to be based on the assumed passive consent of non-leaders, who imbue the person as leader with especial powers. Much is demanded of those in leader roles, where expectations within context shape what is thought, said, and done as leading. The creation of a team with and for the person in charge is integral to this process, whereby the closeness-distance of executive powers softened by personal connections and notions of shared goals and fidelities, enables the opportunity to bask in achievements. The risks can be huge, as failure by the leader may impact on the occupational survival of individuals and whole teams, but the way desire works is to invest emotional commitment into the rationality of choice in taking up a post and by those who give various support or acquiesce to such moves.

What new insights does this provide for leaders, leading, and leadership in schools?

School leadership has been created as an *object to desire* through the exhortations in reform texts and investment. There are now 70–90 differentiated school types in England (Courtney, 2015a), and where data sets from student and school outcomes (examination results, budget efficiencies and effectiveness, inspection judgments, and reports) are causally linked to principal leadership. Rewards are based on performance-related pay, acclaim in the media, and taking over other schools, often with recognition through a Knighthood or Dame of the British Empire. A codified evidence base and normative claims for improvement are used to create a pipeline of aspiring school leaders (who may or may not be trained and qualified teachers) with a ladder of accreditation and licensing. The plural nature of the field and the option of alternative approaches to the conceptualization and practice of school leadership are marginalized (see Gunter, 2012, 2016). Furthermore, the discriminatory effects of this approach are recognized but this has not yet impacted on the corporatized model of transformational leadership that dominates training and approves of practice (e.g. Courtney, 2014; Fuller, 2015).

For example, the New Labour governments (1997–2010) had a reform program that required principals to be "top dog":

> All the evidence shows that heads are the key to a school's success. All schools need a leader who creates a sense of purpose and direction, sets high expectations of staff and pupils, focuses on improving teaching and learning, monitors performance and motivates the staff to give of their

best. The best heads are as good at leadership as the best leaders in any other sector, including business. The challenge is to create the rewards, training and support to attract, retain and develop many more heads of this calibre. (DfEE, 1998, p. 22)

Such an approach is evident in our data:

You know, the vision for this school is in every cell in my body, and I can stand in a church hall, or in a primary school assembly room or in the home of a local resident who's thinking of sending their kid here, and I can talk to them with absolute passion about what this school is about. I don't think every head has that commitment and passion for their school, and I think that is the defining feature of a true leader in a school. (06)

I've got a vision, I need to bring staff along with that vision. And for the school, when you walk around the school, there's an ethos in the school which has to be created, not just by myself, but by my staff. (19)

The *object to desire* equates being and doing as a principal with running a business where status and recognition are vital, and this is "an inducement to consumption" (Berry, 1994, p. 5). Policy texts are in no doubt that this is challenging, but the creation of school leadership as the means by which to raise standards is officially regarded as attractive for the profession (Gunter, 2012). Our data demonstrate how principals have clarity about the required positioning: "I like the authority. to be perfectly honest. and I like to know that if I have an idea, I can see it come to fruition by guiding it on its way" (13).

Official recognition of approved of practice can be important:

I was invited four years ago to a meeting in London by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) … there were about 200 of us … and that was because we had been identified as being transformational leaders. And it had come through a variety of Ofsted reports, knowledge from the DfES of you, Local Education Authority recommendations and so on. (14)

While principals talk about children and learning, they have learned to focus on delivering standards, and so this head states:

[I]ndeed, this school when I started was second to the bottom of the league table. This year we have beaten every other inner city school, but we also came above six other middle-of-the-road schools. Now I would say those schools are vastly under performing. (14)

Principals have been required to shift their identities from professional matters to data-driven comparisons in a competitive national and local context. In addition, principals have to think about product placement in the market: "I want the school to look different, I want it to look like something you can't buy anywhere else" (28). Another principal talks about strategy, asking:

> If we were a car, what kind of car would we be? And when you walk into a Mercedes garage, you don't see lots of banners about this week's special offers, you just see a Mercedes sign and you see Mercedes and you know exactly what you're getting. (08)

Integral to this is the title:

> As soon as you use the word "Headteacher", people just think you're a school. And we're not. We are an academy … (20)
>   Some of the sorts of things I have to do is beyond what headteachers used to do … and … is more about being a Chief Executive Officer rather than a headteacher. (08)

And a sense of communicating excellence to the market:

> My personal Twitter stream is followed by in excess of three thousand followers around the world, so, yes, when I tweet, either personally or on behalf of the school, it is [saying] that we as a school are something that has depth.(06)
>   So all the purple, the umbrellas, with our branding on, the coats, everything, all the marketing, all the, everything that we did was about showing we are around and about. (05)

Branding is important, and how this is located within the status of the named role and organization.

The focus on the top job enables the luxurious *object of desire* to be created through a stratified hierarchy in which people work day-to-day, and over the longer term there is a career structure that combines personal aims with a linear process of experience, recognition, and accreditation. Principals reflect on their own careers, where they realize that they could and wanted to "make a difference" in ways related to personal agency:

> I'd got fed up of doing the dogsbody work underneath. I suppose when you get through that it might be down to a more deep feeling that maybe I could have more effect on student life and on students generally than I was. (10)

One respondent provided a biographical narrative in which they stated "I just felt that I really wanted to have a school of my own" and how through official recognition they are able to develop beyond this:

> at the moment my role as headteacher has also diversified into that of a Primary Strategy Consultant Leader, so I am able to go out and support other schools with the work and the vision of the school, so I have been very lucky I feel in my job to date. (18)

There is a sense of exceptionalism here, as not everyone can reach the top job. Professional luxury goods can be luxuriated in – a personal assistant who acts as

gatekeeper on time and demands. Principal time is precious, is enabled through discretion, and must be invested in ways that have a strategic focus on the relentless delivery of national standards. Though there is time for the principal to luxuriate:

> Between you and me, there are times when, during the day, … sometimes you're sat there thinking, 'I should be doing something.' You have to sit there and think, 'Well, everything's going as it should be, I'll just leave this.' (08)

The focus on the school as a product, the generation of income, and the winning of projects are exciting, and while grounded with a focus on children's learning and working with colleagues, segregation works through how school principals who are teachers do not normally teach.

Luxury headship is an *object of desire* through the creation of sustained follow-ership, whereby the principal is the causal location of leadership distribution to their senior team and to other performance-controlled roles in the division of labor. There is a tendency to use "we" when speaking about vision and mission: "we wanted to make use of this opportunity to create something completely unique and completely revolutionary" (06).

As two principals stated:

> If I believe something's right, I do it. I try to do it in a way that brings others along, and I think you can, you can do that, I think my own view of leadership is that people actually quite, like, like it if there's a clear sense of where you're going. (09)
>
> I think what they [the staff] also want is somebody to make decisions. You know, ultimately, they want somebody to lead. So you can't dither all the time. You can do as much inclusion as you want and get a staff voice, but at some point in time they all go, 'Stop discussing it and just tell me!' (19)

Agency is located in the construction of "we are in this together" combined with distance and difference in regard to those who are led, steered, and motivated through the especial attributes and skills of the principal. Once the organizational brand is internally established, then forms of delegation that are currently labeled "distributed leadership" can be used:

> [Y]ou're not an expert in everything so you've got to be able to delegate leadership. (19)
>
> And I think the ability to step back and allow other people to take forward the agenda at the right time, once you've modelled it, once you've given it direction, once you've given birth to it, as it were, is key to it. (05)

The principal has to make sure that senior leaders are "on message": "If you [Senior Leadership Team members] don't agree with it, in this meeting, I don't care what you say, you can say what you want; when you go out there, it's one message" (19).

Questions and ideas can be framed as disruptive, where senior and middle leaders as followers comment that:

> We get very little negativity. It's wonderful to see the staff response to negativity. If you get somebody who is not of the culture, negativity does not go down well at all. (O1)
>   There has been a time when people have passed comment and it's got back and they've got into trouble about it. (O3)

There is a "veneer of glamour" (Featherstone, 2014) covering organizational unity, and evident in the position of the school in the league table, in winning a bid for major funds for a school project, and in the principal being called to London to be "consulted," and there is reflected glory for followers who plan, teach, and grade children's work.

Luxury Leadership: An Elite Practice

Integral to objectification are exchange relationships. When people think, say, and do in their encounters, they do objectification through how they position the self and others. Hence luxury leadership as an object to and of desire is created and recreated through how power is recognized and engaged with: in this instance, it is about asymmetry, where leader, leading, and leadership are given meaning that shapes practice as "leader-follower." This can take place in private, but can also be fueled through public rituals of recognition and cultural endorsements as celebrity. Consumption of the object is never satiated, where in the "contemporary brandscape" (Faiers, 2014, p. 10) there is an ever-present normalization that rarity and exclusivity are located in distinctive roles and people who inhabit them. Western-style democracies may speak the rhetoric of access and participation, but they tend to be leader-centric. Normalized assumptions abound, that order and organization are premised on exceptionality, and where occupational positions are inhabited by people with unique knowledge and attributes. People and *their* leadership are identified within politics, business, academia, the arts, and sport, where names are attached to activity in ways that create a state of "luxurious delirium" (p. 8). What we therefore need to give attention to is how luxury is "traditionally defined by rarity and connoisseurship" (p. 5).

Luxury leadership is therefore premised on followers learning about distinctiveness and what it means to take the ultimate responsibility. Connoisseurship is embodied and "can range from simply knowing where to shop to knowing the identity of specialist makers and which is claimed by luxury brands anxious to reflect their price points by an equally elevated declaration of expertise" (p. 11). The purchase of leadership as an object for the self, or the buying into leadership by and of others as an object to control the self, requires investment within and through exchange relationships. Following Bourdieu (1990), we draw on his recognition of how position-taking is related to the investment of symbolic capital, along with economic, social, and cultural capitals, in order to stake a claim for recognition. The objective relations between people in a field (exemplified within

an organization, a meeting, a document) illuminate how a person knows which capitals to invest and where, and knows how power works through a structured sense of taste. A person knows, and they know how and why, regarding what to wear, what to say, and how to relate to others with ease and deportment: "these processes are central to connoisseurship, which involves both training the senses and the accumulation of knowledge" (Featherstone, 2014, p. 54). Family, school, and life in general enable dispositions to be structured within rituals, the meeting of expectations through what is said, how it is said, and how accent is used, where the architecture with the room and seating layout symbolizes differentiation, and how there are understandings about the work that someone does and does not do, and what is other people's work. The interplay between agency and structure is not just about access to being and doing leader, leading, and leadership but about thinking and feeling, and how to respond to it, and the importance of how learning takes place through recollection, that "draws the user towards more distanced modes of aesthetic evaluation" (p. 49).

What new insights does this provide for leaders, leading, and leadership in schools?

The complex modes of thinking, talking, and doing involved in the objectification processes within and for luxury leadership draw attention to a complex range of exchange relationships. There is the symbolic capital of association with corporate leaders through new forms of schooling as autonomous businesses, and how their expertise is important:

> One of my governors, for example, works for [large IT company]. You don't work for [them] and know everything there is to do about the IT world and be on the HR side of it and so on without having a really useful and very forceful presence. (23)

The image of tough hard-nosed decision-making is evident: where one principal states: "If it works, it works, if it doesn't, kick it out" (02). Another head is ebullient about the pleasures of team building:

> I get a lot of pleasure and a lot of job satisfaction, I suppose, out of the collective effort. The colleagues I've got are really excellent. We're different in lots of ways but we share common core values so that means that we have interesting times. (12)

Training and support mentoring/networking are based on functional knowledge that enables standards to be delivered and evidenced, and where troubling issues within the community that affect educational engagement are not allowed to interrupt the standards agenda. The structuring of discretion means that a particular form of connoisseurship has been developed, where challenges are confronted based on corporate thinking and values. In a sense, there is a strong sense of the person's own position, which is enjoyed: "I think whatever happens, you're king in your own school, aren't you?" (08); "The decision-making that was all mine, I just loved it" (05).

Illustrative of this espoused agency is how school principals talk in binaries in regard to staff: whether they are good or bad at their job, and how they can use their powerful position and the standards imperative to control the appointment process. For example, principals who take over established schools talk about taking responsibility for teacher performance:

> It's all about the type of people, the right people and chucking out what wasn't needed and getting in what was … And it's like football … if you buy the best players, you get some success. And if you don't get some success, the manager gets sacked. And I think a lot of what happens in schools is a bit like that. (08)
>
> Within our performance management structures, staff have three performance management meetings with my Deputy, where targets are agreed, monitored, assessed and then evaluated over the year. That then influences a discussion with governors about pay, but also their position within the school as a whole … Staff who in their first year have shown that they are not engaged with the school and they are not working with us and are not taking advice and guidance on how to improve, will be asked to … as I say, not return in September. (06)

Principals of new schools such as academies talk about the quality of staff from the closed "failing" local authority schools, and how in designing the new school they exercised judgment about whether those teachers are suitable:

> I absolutely 100% knew that I was not taking all of them shit people out of the predecessor schools. (04)
>
> There were so many people who were inadequate, the Local Authority knew they were inadequate, they were never gonna change; they'd been inadequate for years. And some people who should never have been allowed near children, let alone inadequate teachers. And they should never have been allowed to transfer to the Academy. And I spent 18 months, two years in one case, having to take remedial action. (05)

What is important about these extracts is how the research process enables post-hoc reflections and articulations of such key events and the leadership processes that are demanded. Research is revealing how the principal can luxuriate in how they take control and ensure, following Collins' (2001) corporate maxim, that the wrong people are off the bus, and the right people are on the bus and in the right seats (see Courtney & Gunter, 2015).

Luxury Leadership: Dynamic and Contextually Located

Leaders, leading, and leadership as an objectification process within and of exchange relationships are historically and culturally located and are subject to ongoing reconstruction (Armitage & Roberts, 2016; Featherstone, 2016). Codifying definitions can be testing, where determining what "it" actually is or

means faces slippage, as new forms of goods and experiences actually trouble the meaning of luxury, and seek to redefine it through new technologies (Faiers, 2016).

There are a number of key points to make about the contextual location of use and meaning-making. Kovesi (2015) shows how the development of the word and the conceptual underpinnings of luxury are linked to the emergence of new money through trade and the capacity to purchase rather than to inherit:

> It was in early modern Italy that luxury emerged as a core idea in the conceptualization of consumption for the first time since antiquity. In early modern Italy … things happened in the longer history of the concept of Luxury. First the word itself was both revived in its classical Latin usage, with the full weight of classical and Christian moral censure upon it. Second, for the first time in Western Europe, a vernacular word was invented for this same concept – *lusso*, again with pejorative connotations. (p. 38; original emphasis)

Consequently we need to recognize that the word luxury has historically been used in disapproving ways, but also how luxury has itself been rebranded from condemnation to congratulation, particularly through how "positive associations of magnificence had started to be overlaid upon classical conceptions of luxury" (p. 38). In this sense, luxury leadership is dynamic through how what is and is not accepted is open to disapproval and acclaim where the logic of practice is linked to the exercise of power, which itself is subject to complex processes of challenge and genuflection.

Faiers (2014) has noted that while luxury is now used mainly to signify approval of exclusive splendor, there has been a shift from goods to experiences. Hence the objectification of leaders, leading, and leadership is increasingly premised on access by those who demonstrate merit and who take up the opportunities that social mobility affords them. Indeed, one person, one vote means that access to power is more widely shared now than it was in medieval Italy, and the ordinary population are enabled to desire by nationally approved of forms of gambling (e.g. playing the lottery) where people win extraordinary amounts of money, and where talent shows catapult people into fame and potential wealth. Such dynamics impact on how we might think about luxury leadership, and we can learn more about this from Kovesi's (2015) analysis:

> But if luxury is one of the key words of our time, it is also one of the most elusive to define, with paradoxes at its core. Luxury at its most elemental is defined by the non-essential; goods or even simply experiences that are superfluous to need. And yet the engine of luxury that fuels its associated industries requires that superfluous desires are transformed into pressing needs. Moreover, luxury is a concept which requires *objective* expression, but which depends upon *subjective* perception. However, due to its subjective perception, luxury's objective expression is in constant flux. This year's luxury soon becomes last year's necessity, or even base commodity. (p. 26; original emphasis)

How people are invited into and respond to the objectification process is therefore key to how luxury leadership is constructed and engaged with. For example, Nickel (2016) engages in thinking about "the Starbucks Card Mobile App" where the customer can order and pay for their coffee (or other products) in advance, and then arrive and collect without getting into line. Precious time can be saved, through the customer's proactive approach and the barista's responsive service delivery. Following Kovesi (2015), it seems that the "app" is the "objective expression," and this is linked to what it means for the busy person through their "subjective perception" of the impact on their busy lives. There is more to it than this. For Nickel (2016), the "app" illuminates the luxury of time segregation of those who do and do not have a mobile phone, and it is an expression of power "to" and "over," where some people are enabled to put themselves above and beyond others because they don't have to get in line. Space and places are hierarchized through how "the luxury line of priority selves gives formation to the ways in which luxury today involves regard and disregard in the practice of time and concomitant relations of order" (p. 56). Hence the egalitarian notions of "queuing up" and "first come, first served" are rendered unnecessary through how someone can buy themselves out of the line, particularly since waiting in line is increasingly seen as a practice undertaken by poor or homeless people (at food banks, for welfare claims, and for night hostels). Moreover, the use of "queuing tape" shifts the public from the self-organization of position-taking to externally managed forms of social control where a person's location is determined by someone who controls objective relations through distant private decisions: "the self-forming queue is transformed from a democratic practice into a deeply governed practice" (p. 56). Luxury leaders not only have segregated advantages but can be responsive to new tools that generate new advantages; certainly the adoption of distributed forms of leadership can enable the leader at a distance to interrupt the work of others, and potentially displace that work and person through delegating work down the line and so use their "extreme and random discretion" to affirm their status as the leader and their right to undertake work that they consider to be more important (Nickel, 2016, p. 58).

What new insights does this provide for leaders, leading, and leadership in schools?

The form of luxury leadership that we have revealed within our data has been constructed within and for the privatization of public education in England from the 1980s onwards. As Faiers (2014) shows, even though there continues to be economic dislocation for many, the actual spending on luxury "has never been greater" (p. 5), where symbolic as well as financial investment in luxury leadership in public education remains high. It seems that while the rhetoric is about raising standards in schools in areas of disadvantage: "the reality of austerity lurches alongside widespread awareness of luxurious excess as an international class of the super-rich floats above the landscape like the angels depicted in Renaissance paintings" (Wilson, 2014, p. 18). Accounts by those who have recognized and embraced luxury leadership as an *object to desire*, and are beneficiaries of how it is an *object of desire* by the followers they lead, outline the adoption of

corporate elite ideas, dispositions, and practices (e.g. Astle & Ryan, 2008). What Gronn (2003) describes as "designer leadership" in England is enabling the suturing of privatized aspirations with corporate gains, and so investment in leadership training is not so much about the technicalities of the job as learning to play the game.

Our data provide interesting insights into how this actually works. For example, the Chair of Governors of a successful school that was at the time converting to academy status under the 2010 Act, outlines how this decision meant that they had been able to enter and work within the top echelons of government:

> We had a very positive meeting thanks to [name of local MP and member of the government] facilitating it to get hold of some actual capital funds to do some stuff on the site because we didn't seem to fit into any particular current category … I suppose what [name if local MP] has enabled us to do ultimately is get in front of [name of the parliamentary undersecretary for education] as we did this week and get him to say 'OK, what you are doing is absolutely what we want, we will find a way of fitting you into a funding stream.' If I am being perfectly honest, probably that would have been quite difficult to get that without [name of MP] opening the doors in the first instance. But we always know, it's not necessarily what you know, it's who you know, sometimes … but I don't think he would have done us any favours unless he was, he was personally convinced that this was actually going to deliver real positive outcomes. I think he is very sensitive to the fact that he can't be seen doing something in his constituency unless he can stand up and say this is going to deliver results. (24)

A second example is from a principal who outlines how private funds are being used to keep the school open:

> We haven't had enough money. So, our current predicament is being supported by our Chairman … Because of who he is, he's in a position whereby he's got a charitable foundation and … he's in a position to turn round, and if we needed a six-figure donation, he could quite easily do that, a seven-figure donation if he had to. (20)

In this sense, agency is based on knowing how to network, jostle for position, and pull levers to obtain funding, rather than be in receipt of funding based on transparent and equitable formulas. Following Nickel's (2016) analysis of "the Starbucks Card Mobile App," what is emerging is how some principals (with their governors) can skip the queue in order to gain advantages.

The provision of public education in England is shifting from a universal service free at the point of delivery toward stratified private provision based on the savviness of those who are in the principal post, in alliance with those who are interested in supporting the school (local politicians, local entrepreneurs). Hence luxury leadership may speak more to those who head up "successful" and "top of the league table" schools, and/or who are networked with powerful and wealthy people. But it also speaks to those who are required to aspire to luxury

leadership but who are troubled by those demands, and where it seems that authentic luxury leadership is out of reach. It seems that some schools and communities mean that principals have to accept "affordable" forms of luxury, where they are required to speak and do corporate practices even though they do not enable them to do the job. We have data where principals speak about such challenges:

> [M]ost of the largest proportion of schools to fail Ofsted is special schools like ours, in a sense, understandable, isn't it? … you read Ofsted reports and when it comes to talking about how well schools are doing, they are doing hunky dory, apart from special schools … I think I would like a little more recognition nationally of this issue. (26)
>
> And I feel it gets worse and worse, that no matter what you do and no matter what progress you make, it's always not good enough … I know of one headteacher's post that came up recently in a local school, very popular school, leafy suburb, just the sort of place that you would expect people to want to go to work, and there were three applicants. (17)
>
> If they [the government] really want a school like this to remain secure and on the right track, they've also got to recognize that it's got second and third generation unemployment out there, and it will take more than four years of funding … to make a difference to the community. (14)

The literatures on luxury are helpful in interrogating this data, particularly in regard to how an object of and to desire is a relational process based on needs and wants. Practices within and for objective relations are constructed within a particular context, and so the transient nature of luxury – what was novel and exclusive today is basic and widespread tomorrow – means there is a sense of permanent change. The extracts indicate that what principals are actually saying is that this change is not authentic. It seems that what principals "want" or desire is to work on teaching and learning within a social justice and inclusive context – not all children are perfect or come from perfect homes. But they are told they "need" a model of school leadership that will enable them to get ahead in the business game, and compete with other principals and other schools. The experience of principals is producing stratification – those in schools that are officially graded as excellent can luxuriate in their leadership, but those who are not, find that luxury leadership not only does not give them what they want, but also it does not actually give them what they are deemed to need (see Berry, 1994).

Our data suggest a shift over the past decade. The narratives from the KPEL project (interviews with principals that took place 2006–2007) illuminate strong public-service values, where principals head up local authority schools and are concerned at how the changes are impacting on who they are:

> I think headship has become much more a managerial system in which the forces of accountability are the ones that hit you large rather than the forces of restructuring and re-culturing. (27)

> Lots and lots of concerns … the big one was having to implement govern-ment policy when you didn't agree with it … I had the responsibility of motivating staff to do the work, but convincing them that it was a good thing do anyway … And then a little bit further down the line, the govern-ment policy would change again and I felt quite, not stupid, as if I'd been a pawn in the game really (29)
>
> Yes, I've given up many a weekend for this place. I take it as part of the job but it shouldn't be really. The added pressures are Ofsted and if your SATs results dip, you know we are driven by data. It's a cold data-led profession and I don't like that particularly. (30)

While luxury leadership is the mantra of success, it does not feel like that to many of those in the job.

The type and phrasing of concerns by principals seem to reach back into classical and Christian notions of indulgence associated with luxury:

> Luxury can cause harm. Excess or straying into immorality through 'lust' and 'desire' and 'temptation' has generated counter-claims of 'sacrifice' and 'doing without', or 'a form of renunciation that can become associated with alternative life orders, based on the asceticism of curbing excessive sensations and pleasures, as we find in certain religious and political movements'. (Featherstone, 2014, p. 48)

Indeed, one of our respondents raises other purposes for schools: "and I do think that leadership in a Catholic school is about service, not just about leadership, and sometimes they're in conflict with one another" (25). Residual attitudes of doing your best for the children through inclusion, and collaboration, are evident in our data, and connect with civic welfare values and identities within the research tradition in England (e.g. Ribbins, 1997). While the profession have found the investment in "headship" to be productive, and have a strong commit-ment to autonomy (see Thomson, 2010), the self-promotion involved in "desire" can be seen as alien, if not a little vulgar.

By the time of Courtney's Leadership and School-Type Diversification (LASTD) project (from 2011), the principals interviewed are from the new types of schools such as academies and free schools, where their narratives illuminate how forms of luxury leadership are based on a break with public education and local systems of democracy, with strong trends in the adoption of corporate leadership (Courtney, 2015b). Indeed, McGinity's (2014) three-year ethnographic study of Kingswood Academy shows how the change from a successful local authority school to an academy is based on the principal's reading of the situation in regard to the construction and funding of schools as local businesses, and how as chief executive, there was a need to draw on corporate and political resources and networks in order to stay ahead in the game. While principals have been told and trained in the need to be corporate, they learn through doing the job that what they actually need are political skills.

Conclusion

Our reading of our data from four ESRC-funded projects about schools in England has enabled the power dimensions of leader, leading, and leadership to be interrogated. Luxury leadership is evident in policy strategies and texts, where for serving and aspiring principals it is an *object to desire* – an elite especial role – and it is an *object of desire* – a role where the majority cannot aspire to hold and so are required to be followers. The construction and reconstruction of luxury leadership within context enable the contribution to the corporatization of schools as independent businesses during the past 40 years to be revealed. Importantly our focus on the luxurification of leadership, speaks to what Berry (1994) identifies as "the nature of social order" (p. xi). There are at least two issues from this: first, hierarchy based on exclusion and imbued with power-over status lifts the principal out of and above the "workforce," in ways that limit professional discourses and decisions to organizational efficiencies and effectiveness; and, second, how priorities are identified and ranked impacts on how our professional assets are invested in: "public resources – financial, administrative and legal – should be devoted to upholding what is socially necessary and letting the unnecessary look after itself" (p. 241). The borderline between what is and is not necessary is at the heart of our analysis, where our data collected over a decade of major reforms show how principals have been positioned to deem professional and organizational branding, competition, and rank ordering to be normal and necessary. The stratification of schools within the market means that there are principals who can and do luxuriate, though even principals who desire, secure, and win at leadership, can find that it can be taken away – where contracts can be terminated, and the rapid movement of principals from one post to another. Others struggle to engage with a form of leadership that does not enable them to focus on the curriculum and pedagogy, and challenges deeply held notions of care and inclusion. Significantly, data from other studies show how the recruitment of principals in England is problematic, particularly in areas of disadvantage, and how serving principals are planning to retire (Weale, 2016).

Our contribution for the field is therefore both conceptual through the development and deployment of luxury leadership, but it is also empirical in putting on record the voices of those who have experienced this major change to their professional identities and practices. This is not just about the nature and demands of the job, but the moral issues involved in the potential harm to the person (and staff and children) through exaggerated forms of excess, particularly the emphasis on high-stakes data production. Luxury leadership is enabling some principals to play and win in the game, but as Adams (2012) argues:

> When the wealthiest elites in any society usurp a disproportionate chunk of that society's resources and power to support their exclusive lifestyle and supremacy, they then persuade everyone else that they too might some day reach such meaningless heights of limitless extravagance, however absurd the delusion.

And he goes on to say "as a result, the charade takes the entire society hostage to the hubris of the benighted few" (p. 174). Luxury leadership has enabled us to reveal how too much emphasis has been put on one role, the impact this is having on the identity and practice of those who currently or may inhabit that role, and how those who by virtue of these exclusionary processes cannot take up that role are rendered complicit in their own limited contribution.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1 We are using 'principal' in this chapter for the role of headteacher. This is consistent with the international usage and also increasingly this is used in England. However, if our interview respondents use "headteacher" or "head," we have retained that.
2 The Economic and Social Science Research Council (ESRC) funds projects in the UK on the basis of research quality. We are drawing on data from four projects – see Acknowledgments – based on six ethnographic projects in schools and from a database of over 40 school principals from the mid-2000s to 2015.

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7

The Expansion of Private Schooling in Latin America

Multiple Manifestations and Trajectories of a Global Education Reform Movement

Antoni Verger, Mauro Moschetti, and Clara Fontdevila

Introduction

Pro-privatization policies are at the center of global debates on educational reform, and are very present in the educational reform processes of an increasing number of countries and regions (Mundy, Green, Lingard, & Verger, 2016; Sahlberg, 2006). Latin America is the world region where educational privatization, understood as the number of students enrolled in private institutions, has grown more constantly in the last two decades (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2).[1] At the primary education level, the region stands out not only as leading the ranking of regions with greater private educational participation, but also as being the region in which such growth has been more sustained. At the secondary level, Latin America is also among the world regions with the greatest levels of private enrollment, topping the ranking along with Sub-Saharan Africa.

However, despite the huge expansion of educational privatization in Latin America, the literature focusing on the phenomenon is still limited, and research that takes a regional perspective is even scarcer (see some exceptions in Bellei & Orellana, 2014, and CLADE, 2014). Adopting a regional perspective in the study of educational reform in Latin America is particularly difficult given the great internal diversity of this region. In fact, a thorough understanding of the nature of privatization in Latin America requires a detailed analysis of the socio-political, institutional, demographic, and historical determinants of educational reform in a multiplicity of national and sub-national education systems.

In order to capture the heterogeneity of policies and processes through which educational privatization advances, as well as the multiplicity of contexts in which the phenomenon develops, our study adopts a cultural political economy perspective (see Verger, Fontdevila, & Zancajo, 2016). The main objectives of this chapter are, first, to disassemble the nature, constraints, and variants of educational privatization in the different countries and territories in the Latin American region and, second, to establish a typology of trajectories of education privatization that
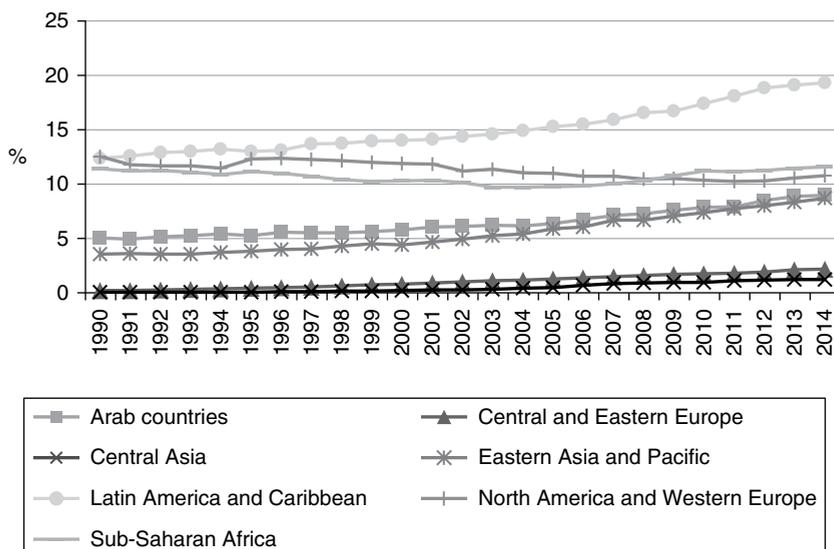
Figure 7.1 Percentage of enrollment in private institutions by regions – primary education, 1990–2014.
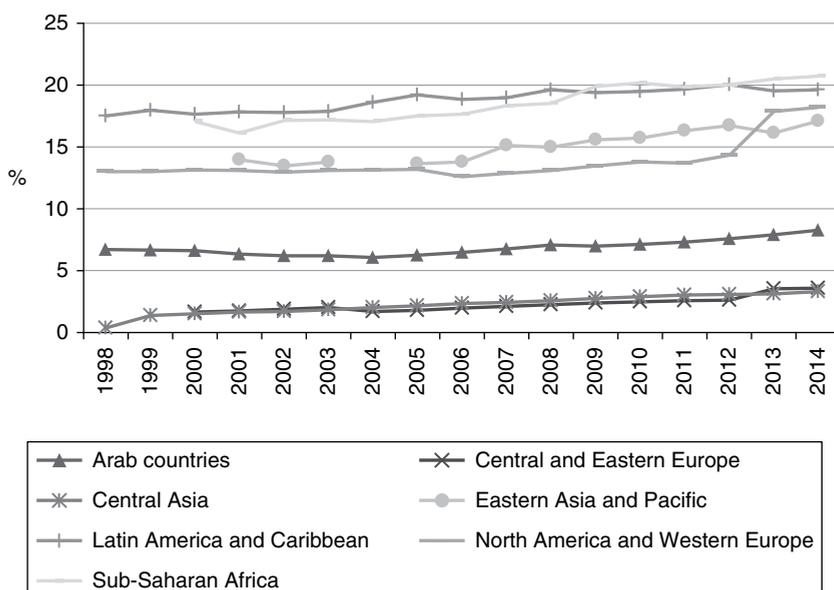
Figure 7.2 Percentage of enrollment in private institutions by regions – secondary education, 1998–2014. *Source*: Data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016). *Note*: according to UIS, an institution is classified as private when it is not operated by a public education authority or agency but is controlled and managed by a non-governmental organization (e.g. churches, unions, enterprises, or foreign agencies) or when its governing board consists mostly of members not selected by a public agency.

is able to capture not only the formal processes of educational privatization, but also the contextual character in which these processes develop in the region.

The chapter is organized as follows. In the first section, we present the conceptual framework and the methodology adopted in the study, both for data collection and for analysis purposes. In the second section, we systematize and present the six different trajectories toward educational privatization that we have identified in Latin America. In the third and last section, we discuss the results of our review and present the main conclusions.

Conceptual Framework and Methodology

Defining Education Privatization

Originally, proponents of pro-market policies aimed at converting state school systems into private supply systems strongly subject to incentives and competitive pressures (Friedman, 1955). However, the processes of privatization and destatalization of education systems (Jessop, 2002) have not in practice responded to a single path and have rather been characterized as "complex, multifaceted and interrelated" processes (Ball, 2009, p. 83). Thus, privatization has typically manifested itself in the constitution of hybrid education systems in which the public and the private sectors interact and distribute responsibilities in a complex and often contradictory manner (Maroy, 2004).

In a widely circulated publication, Ball and Youdell (2008) capture this heterogeneity by distinguishing between two major types of educational privatization: on the one hand, exogenous privatization, which occurs when states open the public sector to private participation (including different schemes of public-private partnerships, vouchers in education or charter schools programs) and, on the other, endogenous privatization, consisting of importing into the public education system private sector techniques and practices, such as business-like school leadership policies or performance-driven financial incentives (Coupland, Currie, & Boyett, 2008). Nonetheless, although this conceptualization succeeds in overcoming excessively linear and rigid distinctions between the public and the private categories in education (Burch, 2009), in practice, exogenous and endogenous forms of privatization usually develop in an interconnected way (Verger et al., 2016).

Strictly speaking, the complexity of the privatization phenomenon requires a rethink of the public-private dichotomy and conceiving educational privatization as a gradual and contextualized process of institutional transformation. For feasibility and conceptual clarity purposes, this study focuses mainly on the analysis of exogenous privatization processes, independently of their possible connection with other processes of privatization of a more endogenous nature.

A Systematic Review Approach

In order to map the situation of educational privatization in Latin America, this chapter triangulates three methods of data collection. First, our research is based on a systematic review of the literature focusing on the processes of educational

privatization in Latin America (see Gough, Thomas, & Oliver, 2012). Specifically, we have reviewed the scientific production on privatization at the primary and secondary education levels contained in academic sources (from the SCOPUS and Google Scholar databases) and in gray literature published between the years 1990 and 2016 (see Appendix B).

Second, these data have been combined with statistical information on rates of enrollment, percentages of participation of the private sector in student enrollment, among others. The sources of data under consideration come primarily from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and World Bank Educational Statistics.

Third, we conducted interviews with key informants and experts in specific educational contexts and countries (n = 16) in order to triangulate the statistical information and data obtained from the academic literature, prioritizing those countries where less updated research on education privatization is available.

Main Results: Different Trajectories toward Education Privatization in Latin America

For the synthesis of the retrieved data via the literature review, statistical sources and interviews, we relied on the categorization of trajectories toward educational privatization on a global scale previously systematized by Verger et al. (2016). According to these authors, educational privatization can be manifested in at least six different trajectories: (1) as part of the structural reform of the State; (2) as an incremental reform; (3) educational privatization in Nordic welfare states; (4) historical public-private partnerships; (5) privatization by "default"; and (6) privatization by way of disaster. These global trajectories have been adapted and redefined for the Latin American context. Specifically, the so-called "Nordic way" to education privatization, which occurs eminently in countries with well-developed welfare states, does not apply to the Latin American context. In Latin America, in contrast, we identify a trajectory toward education privatization that has not been sufficiently studied at a global level, which we call "latent privatization."

Table 7.1 shows, schematically, the main components of the trajectories toward educational privatization that we have identified in Latin America. In the following lines, we present in more detail the main characteristics of each of these trajectories; we illustrate them on the basis of the most representative national cases, and by focusing on the main contextual contingencies, agents, and drivers of education privatization.

Education Privatization as Part of the Structural Reform of the State

Educational privatization might take on a structural character and entail a profound redefinition of the role of the State in the financing, provision, and regulation of education. As a result of this drastic redefinition of roles and functions, the State moves from providing education directly to focus on the evaluation of educational outcomes and on the distribution of incentives.

Table 7.1 Summary of results

Path (countries)	Drivers of educational privatization	Origins	Actors	Policy outputs
Privatization as a structural state reform (Chile)	• Neo-liberal orientation of the military dictatorship • Authoritarianism • 'Public education in crisis' discourse • Mechanisms explaining continuity: – Difficult reversibility for institutional/legal framework – Political pressure from parents and private providers – Ideological evolution of center-left political parties – Negotiation with conservative parties – Aid conditionality from the World Bank	1980s	Military Junta; technocratic governments Center-left governments Families Private providers	Per capita funding scheme and other mechanisms of school competition Private sector liberalization Extended school choice Endo-privatization reforms
Scaling up privatization (Colombia, Brazil)	• New public management paradigm • Resistance to pro-market proposals. Charter model as second best (Colombia). • Administrative decentralization (federalism) • Strong inequalities • Legal framework defines education as a 'service'	1990s–2000s	Local and state governments Private providers Teacher unions	Public-private partnerships Charter schools Small-scale voucher programs
Default privatization (Peru, Dominican Republic)	• Increasing educational demand inadequately addressed by the state • Overcrowding of public schools, especially in urban areas. • State ambiguity regarding the private sector (regulation/deregulation) • Legitimating effect provided by the increase in school coverage	2000s	Small local entrepreneurs International agencies Transnational corporations	LFPSs (sole proprietors and chains) Integration of LFPSs in PPPs

Table 7.1 (Continued)

Path (countries)	Drivers of educational privatization	Origins	Actors	Policy outputs
Historical public-private partnerships (Dominican Republic, Argentina)	• Historical centrality of faith-based institutions in educational provision • Increasing educational demand in contexts of fiscal crisis • Choice and freedom of education as legitimating frames • Pressures to expand PPPs to non-religious providers • Difficult reversibility from a financial perspective	1940s–1960s	Religious institutions Private non-religious providers	Long-term public subsidies for private schools Deregulation and autonomy for private schools
Privatization by way of disaster (El Salvador; Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua)	• Triggering effect of natural disasters or armed conflicts; crises as opportunities for privatization advocates • Lack of democratic debate as a result of a situation of exception • Emphasis on emergency legitimate controversial reforms • State vulnerability and strong presence of external agencies (especially, multilateral development banks)	1990s–2010s	International agencies (especially the World Bank and the IDB) Market-oriented think tanks	School-based management reforms (SBM) Consolidation and expansion of the central role of subsidized private education via vouchers
Latent privatization (Uruguay)	• Loss of prestige of public education • Historical tax exemptions for religious institutions despite strong secular tradition • Establishment of partial tax exemptions for private donations to educational institutions • Promotion of infrastructure public-private partnerships in the context of budgetary constraints. • Support for public subsidy formulas by social-democratic forces (ideological evolution; impact of global trends)	2000s–2010s	Private providers acting as interest group Think tanks NGOs Political parties	Infrastructure PPPs Indirect funding for private providers via tax exemptions

The process of privatization undertaken by Chile is one of the most paradigmatic exponents of this trajectory toward privatization. A profound reform of primary and secondary education implemented during the military dictatorship (1973–1990), led by General Augusto Pinochet in the beginning of the 1980s, turned this country into a pioneering case of orthodox application of the neo-liberal doctrine in the field of education. This reform was fundamentally articulated through a voucher system that aimed at promoting school choice and school competition dynamics. Over time, the voucher scheme adopted a quasi-universal character, reaching 90% of primary and secondary school enrollment in the country (Paredes & Ugarte, 2009). Other key elements of the reform were the decentralization of public school management to municipalities and the deregulation of teaching work (Bellei, 2007).

The first element to aid understanding of the adoption of this reform in Chile is the strong influence that neoliberal monetarist economic theories, developed under the influence of the Chicago School and especially the economist Milton Friedman, exerted over Pinochet and his cabinet. The ideological commitment of the *Junta Militar* to the neoliberal doctrine explains the early adoption, the rapid advance, and the marked political origin of the reforms – in education and other policy fields – through which this doctrine was implemented (Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002).

Nonetheless, beyond factors of an eminently ideological nature, there are other elements that also led to the implementation of such an ambitious reform agenda. On the one hand, the relatively low economic growth experienced by Chile during the 1960s and 1970s, together with high levels of inflation, contributed to generate social tension and unrest that ultimately legitimized the radical nature of the reforms undertaken (Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002). On the other hand, the context of hard political repression of the dictatorship made the articulation of an effective opposition to such drastic reforms impossible (Delannoy, 2000; Gauri, 1998).

The return to democracy in 1990 raised many expectations about a possible reversal of the pro-market reforms in education. However, the market system did survive to the new democratic regime (Carnoy, 2003). The center-left coalition that emerged in the first democratic elections kept unchanged the main characteristics of the market model during the almost two decades in which it remained in power. Although an attempt was made to address the quality and equity deficiencies of the education system, these objectives were followed in practice from a compensatory perspective, without challenging and altering the centrality acquired by market mechanisms and logics within the system (Mizala, 2007).

The continuity of the market regime in the Chilean education system is explained by a complex combination of factors and circumstances. First, the high level of participation of private actors in the education system had resulted in the articulation of a series of interest groups (including private providers and families) with the capacity to exert strong political pressure to maintain the pro-market rules (Carnoy, 2003). Second, the Constitutional Organic Law on Education approved in the final stage of the dictatorship protected the market rules of the game in education. Due to its organic character, it was very difficult to have a sufficient majority in the Parliament to modify this law. Third, internal tensions

within the successive center-left coalition governments prevented the return to a national system of public education, since not all factions within the government were politically committed to advancing a pro-public education reform (Bellei & Vanni, 2015; Gauri, 1998). Fourth, and finally, the aid conditionalities of the World Bank also contributed to the continuity of the educational market scheme. In some of the lending procedures approved in the 1990s, the World Bank made explicit that Chile had to maintain both the voucher scheme and the high level of decentralization of the system (Cox & Ávalos, 1999).

Finally, the approval of the educational copayment policy in 1993, as a result of the pressures of the conservative opposition (Mizala, 2007), represents a turning point in the increase of educational privatization. This policy, which enabled private schools that were publicly subsidized via vouchers to collect additional fees from families meant the consolidation and expansion of private provision by making education a potentially lucrative economic sector (Carnoy, 2003).

Since 2014, the center-left government has been promoting an educational reform process aiming at expanding public education and reducing the centrality of market dynamics within the system. However, the high level of educational privatization and the structural character that privatization has acquired are making the reversal of privatization in Chilean education very challenging. As Bellei (2016) points out, recent governmental initiatives to deprivatize education face strong resistance, which is both pragmatic (due to the strong reliance of the system on private provision) and ideological (due to the prevalence of a conception of education as a private good) in nature.

Privatization as an Incremental Reform

In some countries, education privatization has advanced not as a result of drastic or structural reforms, but rather as a consequence of the accumulation of gradual measures and changes. These changes are frequently adopted at a sub-national level and, to some extent, appear disconnected from one another. However, the sum of these partial changes ends up significantly altering the structure and governance of the public education system. In Latin America, these processes can be most clearly observed in Colombia and in Brazil. Both cases have in common a number of characteristics, which are as follows.

First, both countries are characterized by high levels of decentralization and by the existence of important inequalities between regions – so that the adoption of profound education reforms at a national level is particularly difficult. Furthermore, the decentralization of public administration has not always ensured a clear distribution of education responsibilities between national, state, and local-level authorities. Frequently, governments have the capacity to stimulate the provision and consumption of private education through fiscal incentives (see Rezende Pinto, 2016, for the Brazilian case) but do not have the power to determine and enact reforms with a direct impact on the governance of the education system.

Second, a series of legal arrangements in both countries formally recognizes the role of the private sector in the provision of education and, most importantly, accommodates and encourages the outsourcing of education services to private

providers. In Colombia, although the 1991 Constitution establishes the right to free education up to the age of 14, the 1994 General Education Act opens the possibility of charging fees to those who can afford them, and establishes the obligation for the State to contract private education providers where the public offer is not sufficient (Termes, Bonal, Verger, & Zancajo, 2015). In Brazil, the 1988 Constitution guarantees the freedom of teaching and protects private education provision – provided it conforms to general regulations and it is formally recognized by public authorities (Reis de Figuereido, 2016). Moreover, the education reform promoted in 1996 by the first Cardoso administration, aimed at the modernization of the public system, endowed local governments with further levels of competence and financial responsibility, and allowed non-profit schools to benefit from public subsidies (Bellei & Orellana, 2014).

Third, several factors have fostered a middle-class flight to private schools. This process has been the consequence of a combination of factors including high levels of social inequality, the stringent regulation of school choice within the public sector, and the chronic under-funding of public education (although the public education investment in Brazil rebounded significantly during the Workers' Party's last terms in office).[2]

Finally, the difficult advance of pro-market reforms at the national level is not solely the consequence of institutional contingencies (i.e. high levels of administrative decentralization), but also of the result of a range of political specificities among which teacher unions' resistance features prominently. In Brazil, government action is unlikely to prosper without the support from labor organizations – including teachers' unions, openly opposed to market-oriented reforms (Brooke, 2006). In Colombia, the possibility of adopting a voucher program was finally dismissed in anticipation of the (predictably fierce) opposition from left-wing parties and from the national teachers' union – the influential Colombian Federation of Educators[3] (Termes et al., 2015).

In both countries, the combination of manifest and latent forms or resistance has resulted in the selective advance of market policies perceived as moderate – including charter schools programs (Termes et al., 2015), and measures of endogenous privatization such as pay-for-performance and results-based budgeting schemes (Da Silva & Alves, 2012). The implementation of this kind of policy tends to be limited in scope, so that their impact in the long run is uncertain – they can be extended to other areas (as was the case of the charter schools program in Colombia), but also eventually discontinued once the pilot stage is over.

Privatization "By Default": The Emergence of Low-Fee Private Schools

In most low-income countries, the private sector has expanded substantially in the last decades – even in the absence of policies deliberately aimed at promoting privatization. In these countries, a combination of factors has created a window of economic opportunity for the emergence of private education providers, including an increase in education demand, limited access to (quality) education, and the restrictions faced by the State in addressing these challenges (De, Noronha, & Samson, 2002; Phillipson, 2008; Tooley & Dixon, 2006). Privatization

in these contexts can thus be considered to advance "by default." The main privatization modality expanding in these contexts is the emergence of so-called low-fee private schools (LFPSs). LFPSs are defined as private schools that have been set up and are managed by an individual or small group of individuals, have generally a for-profit motive and offer basic education to low-income families in exchange for relatively low fees (Phillipson, 2008; Walford, 2011).

Some researchers argue that the advance of this model is related to the almost inherent "quality advantage" of private schools over government schools, which would presumably have a determining impact on families' school choice decisions (Tooley & Dixon, 2006). However, a number of studies explain the population migration to private schooling by pointing to the governmental neglect of public education (which has resulted in the lack of resources and/or massification of public schools, or in the absence of free alternatives located in close proximity), and also to the specific linguistic and religious preferences of certain social groups that are not satisfied by the public sector (Härmä, 2013; Sarangapani & Winch, 2010; Srivastava, 2008). From an equity perspective, the alleged affordability of LFPSs is also a controversial question. In most of the cases, fees are not sufficiently low so as to avoid excluding the poorest sectors (Day Ashley et al., 2014).

In Latin America, similar factors are behind the recent expansion of LFPSs in countries like Peru and the Dominican Republic. First, in both countries, the expansion of the LFPS sector has been particularly sharp in urban and peri-urban areas that have recently experienced high levels of population growth – coupled with a major rise in education demand. In the city of Lima, enrollment in private basic education rose from 29% in 2004 to 50% in 2014, which is a period of rapid LFPSs proliferation (Balarin, 2016). In the Dominican Republic, comparable trends have been documented in Santo Domingo in connection with an unprecedented demographic growth experienced by the city during the last decades of the twentieth century (Flores, 1997; Guzmán & Cruz, 2009).

Second, the lack of public investment in education has given rise to severe shortages of school places in a public sector that is under great pressure due to increasing levels of educational demand. In the Dominican Republic, for instance, public investment in education hardly ever exceeded 2% of the GDP in the 1970–1995 period. The cumulative deficit of public school places led to the over-enrollment of state schools – a trend only partially reversed between 1993 and 2005 through the Education Decennial Plan initiated in 1993 (Guzmán & Cruz, 2009; UIS, 2016).

Third, educational authorities in these countries often adopt a tolerant, lax or ambiguous attitude when it comes to the supervision and regulation of the LFPS sector – and in fact many LFPSs are not formally recognized or authorized by the administration. In Peru, for instance, their regulation falls partially under the jurisdiction of the Consumer Protection Office instead of the Ministry of Education (Balarin, 2016). Consequently, the sector frequently operates in a highly deregulated environment, in which quality standards are often neglected as a means to keep costs down. Most of them, for instance, turn to the use of non-qualified teachers, and teacher salaries are frequently lower than those of their unionized counterparts in the public sector. However, and in spite of these

irregularities, the increase in education access associated with LFPSs has a crucial legitimation effect. In the Dominican Republic, for example, Flores (1997) notes that "a high dose of tolerance has been required in order to avoid a massive closure of schools that, although precariously, offer education services which the State is unable to provide" (p. 10, authors' translation).

Historical Public-Private Partnerships

In some countries, the heavy reliance on private provision is the result of a long-standing tradition of collaboration between the State and religious organizations in the educational field. These countries rely on dual systems that combine public and private schooling, whose institutionalization is disconnected from (and in fact pre-dates) the emergence of neoliberal policies and discourses of the 1980s. In their attempt to establish or expand their education systems, these countries opted for the instauration of stable partnerships with religious entities – establishing alliances that would be subsequently extended to other types of providers. In Latin America, these kind of public-private partnerships (PPPs) are particularly well established in the Dominican Republic and Argentina.

In the Dominican Republic, the religious sector has played an important role in the provision of education since the middle of the last century, typically in partnership with the State (Guzmán & Cruz, 2009). The agreement signed in 1954 between the Vatican and the Dominican Republic government resulted in the institutionalization of a regime of public subsidies to Catholic schools, modeled on the Dutch PPP system. As a consequence of this treaty, which remains in force to this day, and the low levels of State investment in public school infrastructure, the Dominican education system includes a high number of "publicly owned and privately managed schools" and "semi-official schools" (Flores, 1997). The former are owned by the State, but are generally run by the Catholic Church, whereas the latter are privately owned, mostly by Catholic congregations, and supported by the State through the transfer of funds earmarked for the payment of up to 90% of teacher salaries. In addition, the Ministry of Education and the Dominican Episcopate signed in 2015 a contested agreement that contributes decisively to the consolidation of the system by expanding the number of Catholic schools entirely subsidized by the State (Tejada, 2015).

In the Argentinian case, the configuration of a large-scale education PPP is the result of a different combination of factors. In this country, the period between the establishment of the nation state in the 1860s and the early 1950s was characterized by the progressive contraction of the private sector and the expansion of public education. Around 1945–1950, the private sector accounted only for 7% of enrollment in primary education (Morduchowicz & Iglesias, 2011). However, from the 1950s to the present, there has been a steady increase in private enrollment (Morduchowicz, 2001; Narodowski & Moschetti, 2015).

The origins of this privatization process in the country can be found in the institutionalization in 1947 of a system of public subsidies to private education. The system was initially envisaged as limited in scope, as it was essentially aimed at tackling the job instability affecting the teachers of a (then shrinking) private

sector, which contrasted with the improvements in the public sector secured by unions (Cucuzza, 1997). However, between the 1950s and the 1990s this arrangement was progressively extended, enabling a greater participation of the State in the private education sub-system. The expansion of the system was accompanied by a process of deregulation of the private sector, which gained also significant levels of autonomy (Morduchowicz, 2001; Narodowski & Andrada, 2001). This evolution, in turn, was paralleled by a process of legitimation of private provision – based on the principle of "freedom of education" and on criticism of State interventionism (Vior & Rodríguez, 2012). This way, the subsidy system ended up acquiring a structural character so that, currently between 40–100% of teacher salaries are directly funded by provincial governments in as much as in 65% of the total number of private schools in the country (Mezzadra & Rivas, 2010; Moschetti, 2015).

Recently, the expansion of the private sector has benefited from the economic growth experienced by the country during the post-crisis period (2001–2002) (Bottinelli, 2013), and especially from a relative redistribution in favor of an emerging lower-middle and middle class (Gamallo, 2011; Judzik & Moschetti, 2016). Currently, the private sector accounts for nearly 30% of the total enrollment in compulsory education, and for over 40% in major urban centers.

Fundamentally, the Argentinian PPP results from the sedimentation of a series of decisions made by different governments and ruling parties (during both democratic and non-democratic periods). Either by act or omission, successive administrations have supported and consolidated a dual system of education provision (Gamallo, 2015; Narodowski, Moschetti, & Gottau, 2017; Vior & Rodríguez, 2012). This partnership has long been perceived as a cost-efficient means to expand education coverage in a context characterized by increasingly frequent periods of budgetary constraint (Narodowski, 2008). Such a perception, together with other factors such as the country dependency on private provision,[4] the lobbying power of particular associations of private providers, and the presence of private sector representatives within the organizations in charge of monitoring the non-State sector, makes the reversion of this hybrid system particularly difficult (de Luca, 2008; Puiggrós, 2003).

Privatization by Way of Catastrophe

In some countries, educational privatization occurs in the context of catastrophes or deep humanitarian or political crises. Emergency situations, natural disasters, or armed conflicts often provide a fertile ground for drastic educational reforms that would face greater difficulties advancing under conditions of normality or stability (Saltman, 2007). In Latin America, the cases of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and Haiti well illustrate this path toward education privatization.

In spite of their great diversity, these different cases share a series of elements that give consistency to this path. First, episodes of humanitarian crisis lead to a significant presence and influence of external agents who conceive the affected territories as "testing grounds" for innovative policies and solutions. Second, in post-disaster contexts, the democratic debate is often overshadowed by the

prevailing sense of urgency. This ultimately facilitates the adoption of drastic reforms that would otherwise generate more debate and controversy. Finally, catastrophe episodes offer a considerable amplification potential so that reforms adopted in these contexts are frequently replicated beyond the initial geographical and time boundaries (Verger et al., 2016).

During the 1990s, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras adopted similar educational reforms that were introduced under very adverse social and political conditions with the support of international aid agencies. These reforms mainly focused on the adoption of educational decentralization policies and school-based management programs (SBM), paradoxically, in a time when pro-decentralization reforms faced strong opposition in the region (Edwards, 2015; Ganimian, 2016).

With some differences, the various SBM programs implemented in Central America were characterized by their managerial approach, seeking to expand access to education with significant savings derived from the unpaid labor of parent associations, the use of existing infrastructures and, fundamentally, the reliance on lower teacher salaries than in the public sector. As forms of endogenous privatization, these programs contributed to delegitimize state provision and weakened teachers' unions (Cuéllar-Marchelli, 2003).

Significantly, SBM programs implemented in the region were adopted in a context of suspension of the democratic debate. In El Salvador, the civil war (1980–1992) served as the basis for the implementation of the EDUCO program (*Educación con Participación de la Comunidad*) during the final stage of the conflict. The first World Bank loan used to implement the program was agreed upon in 1991, before the peace agreements of January 1992, in a political context that was not yet conducive to an open and democratic policy debate (Guzmán, Mesa, & De Varela, 2004).

Similarly, in Nicaragua, the PEA (*Programa de Escuelas Autónomas*) was launched in 1993 after two decades of armed conflict and in a context of severe economic constraints. In this case as well, external influence played a key role in the reform process. The program benefited from assistance coming from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and was implemented by a government coalition with the explicit support of the US government (Castillo & Martínez, 2015).

In Guatemala, PRONADE (*Programa Nacional de Autogestión para el Desarrollo Educativo*) also originated in the final phase of the country's 36-year-long conflict, and received technical and financial support from the German Development Bank, the French government, and the World Bank. However, it should be noted that this assistance was never as significant as the one received by other Central American countries for the implementation of SBM programs (Ganimian, 2016).

In Honduras, PROHECO (*Proyecto Hondureño de Educación Comunitaria*) was adopted later in 1999 and was fully financed by the World Bank. With teachers' unions engaged at the time in a struggle to meet wage increases, and in a context of crisis triggered by Hurricane Mitch, the World Bank faced little resistance and was able to openly promote SBM as means of recomposing the educational system (Yitzack Pavón, 2008).

Finally, in Haiti, the devastation resulting from the earthquake that struck the country in 2010 was key in the consolidation and integration of public-private partnership schemes rather than in the expansion of the private sector, which already accounted for 80% of the total enrollment in the 2000s (Demombynes, Holland, & León, 2010; Vallas & Pankovits, 2010). The earthquake and the consequent need to rebuild the education system transformed what had been until then a *de facto* privatization trend into a set of deliberate pro-privatization policies. Specifically, the reconstruction programs implemented in Haiti focused on remodeling and integrating the private sector through a system of public subsidies for private providers. This funding system was essentially channeled through a reform plan announced in March 2010 by the IDB, which became the main government partner in the reconstruction of the educational system (McNulty, 2011; O'Keefe, 2013; Vallas & Pankovits, 2010).

Latent Privatization

The last path to education privatization describes countries where private education has historically had a very limited development, but where privatization policy discourses and practices more recently have been emerging. In these countries, pro-market discourses and logics are gaining centrality within both policy circles and public debates, something that denotes an incipient penetration of a privatization agenda that is already widespread in other parts of the region. This latent privatization path is well represented by recent developments in Uruguay. In this country, the public sector retains a central role in educational provision and private education has had a relatively small weight throughout most of the twentieth century, ranging from 10–15% of the total enrollment (Bellei & Orellana, 2014; Betancur, 2008; INEED, 2015; Mancebo, 2008). To a great extent, the limited development of the private sector in the Uruguayan education system is due to the country's strong secular tradition, linked to the early separation of the Church and the State (see Da Costa, 2009).

However, the reasons for the limited growth of the private sector and the lack of penetration of the neoliberal agenda in education during the 1980s and 1990s remain more uncertain. The reviewed literature points to explanations of a different nature, including: (1) the "personal" ideological preferences of the promoters of the educational reforms of the 1990s, who opted for a "cushioned neoliberal reform," despite the conservative sign of the government of the time (Betancur, 2008); (2) the key role of public schooling in the establishment of the modern Uruguayan state and its association with a democratizing political project (Betancur, 2008; Bordoli & Conde, 2016); (3) certain specificities of the country's institutional tradition and the architecture of its political-administrative system (especially its gradualism, pluralism, and centralism) (Betancur, 2012; Bordoli & Conde, 2016; Lanzaro, 2004); (4) the opposition to the neoliberal agenda led by social organizations (Moreira, 2001); and (5) the limited influence of the IDB and the World Bank in the country.

In recent years, however, a significant change in the discursive order can be appreciated. Different political and civil society actors have started to associate private provision with higher levels of efficiency, while dissociating public

education from quality education and questioning the link between public education and social mobility. These discourses have proliferated under a growing perception of an "educational crisis" (Betancur, 2008; Bordoli & Conde, 2016).

While these discursive changes have not translated into an immediate growth of the private sector, they have contributed to creating a propitious climate for pro-privatization proposals by setting new priorities in the political agenda and infusing a new "common sense" regarding public education among the political class. Accordingly, voices in favor of freedom of choice, private provision, and public funding schemes have been growing since the 2000s (Betancur, 2012; D'Avenia, 2013). Although such proposals are more clearly associated with the center-right party (*Partido Colorado*) and with groups linked to the Catholic Church, this agenda has permeated almost the entire political spectrum, being gradually assumed by factions of the current center-left government coalition (*Frente Amplio*) (Bordoli & Conde, 2016).

Finally, it should be noted that, beyond the current absence of pro-market policies in education, some recent legislative changes have sought to create a private initiative-friendly environment for the provision of social services. Specifically, the 2007 tax reform established a tax exemption of 82.5% for business donations to educational and social entities. This law has not translated into a clear increase of private educational initiatives, but has had a consolidation effect of preexisting dynamics. At the same time, the law has encouraged the establishment of a small group of experimental privately-run, free-access secondary schools, targeted at economically disadvantaged students (Bordoli & Conde, 2016). Likewise, the new budget law of 2015 establishes a remarkably favorable framework for public-private partnerships in the field of infrastructure, which is potentially susceptible to being extended to the management of educational centers.

Conclusion

Education privatization is a global phenomenon that is particularly pronounced in Latin America. Despite the global dimension that education privatization has acquired, the growth of the private sector in the region does not respond to a monolithic reality and rather advances through a wide range of different trajectories. International aid organizations have been very active in the promotion of pro-private sector reforms in relation to some of the trajectories identified, but education privatization processes in Latin America do not necessarily correspond to the penetration of global neoliberal agents and the expansion of neoliberal discourses in national policy settings. In fact, as our research shows, the increase in private schooling in the region needs to be understood in the light of a series of markedly endogenous specificities and contingencies of a political, economic and institutional nature.

The literature on educational privatization in Latin America is not equitably distributed in territorial terms. Some national cases, such as Argentina, Colombia, and especially Chile, are well documented and studied from a great variety of approaches. On the contrary, some cases of expanding educational

privatization, which would be of great interest from a political economy perspective, are particularly under-documented. Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela are clear examples of this. In these cases, the available literature is usually scant or comes basically from non-academic sources. In any case, the relative scarcity of literature for certain geographic areas certainly does not reflect a lack of relevance of the issue of educational privatization but rather the existence of central and peripheral areas in the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Although we have drawn the paths toward educational privatization on the basis of national cases, it should be noted that, in some countries of the region, educational privatization results from the convergence of elements, mechanisms, and actors pertaining to more than one path, as in the case of the Dominican Republic, where both historic PPPs and the rapid emergence of LFPSs are happening simultaneously. In addition, in most educational systems in the region different pro-privatization policies overlap and sediment in complex ways. The governments' lack of institutional capacity to impose and sustain reforms over time gives Latin American educational systems a fragmented appearance that reflects the coexistence of different and, at times contradictory, educational policies.

Finally, this study suggests that against the general trend in the region, in some cases private enrollment has been on a downward trend in recent decades. This is particularly the case of Bolivia, where the recent decrease in private enrollment indicates that we could be facing a possible path toward education de-privatization. While in this Andean country educational de-privatization could be the result of a series of policies favoring public schooling (higher levels of investment, broader teacher training programs, conditional cash transfers, and greater government oversight of the private sector) (see Marco Navarro, 2012; Mogrovejo, 2010; Schipper, 2014), more evidence is necessary to identify the main causes and drivers of educational de-privatization, as well as, more generally, the circumstances under which this process could be effectively promoted and encouraged through public policy.

Notes

1 See also Appendix A for a country-by-country overview of the evolution of enrollment in private institutions.
2 In Portuguese, *Partido dos Trabalhadores.*
3 In Spanish, *Federación Colombiana de Educadores.*
4 Private education may account for up to 50% of the total enrollment in certain urban areas.

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Appendix A   Evolution of Enrollment in Private Institutions by Country: Primary and Secondary Education

Table A.1 Percentage of enrollment in private institutions by regions: primary education. Selected countries, 1990, 2000, 2014.

Country	% private enrollment 1990*	% private enrollment 2000**	% private enrollment 2014***	% Variation	Level in 1990 ****	Level in 2014 ****
Peru	12.6	13.0	27.2	116.2	L	M
Brazil	8.5	8.3	16.2	91.1	L	M
Costa Rica	4.7	6.9	8.8	88.0	L	L
Jamaica	4.8	5.2	8.5	78.5	L	L
Panamá	7.8	9.9	13.8	76.1	L	L
Honduras	5.8	6.1	9.8	71.1	L	L
Ecuador	15.9	21.8	24.3	52.6	M	M
Chile	41.9	46.5	60.2	43.6	H	H
México	6.0	7.4	8.5	42.8	L	L
Argentina	18.9	20.6	25.3	34.2	M	M
Paraguay	15.0	15.0	18.9	26.4	L	M
Venezuela	15.0	14.4	18.7	24.4	M	M
Nicaragua	12.6	16.0	15.6	23.2	L	M
Colombia	15.2	18.8	18.7	22.5	M	M
Haiti	67.0	76.7	77.2	15.3	I	I
Dominican Republic	21.2	15.8	23.6	10.9	M	M
Uruguay	16.2	14.0	16.1	−0.3	M	M
El Salvador	11.0	11.2	10.8	−1.7	L	L
Guatemala	16.2	12.8	11.1	−31.2	M	L
Bolivia	20.7	20.7	9.2	−55.5	M	L

Source: Adapted from data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016) and the World Bank Data (2016).
Notes:
*Argentina (1988); Bolivia (2000); Brazil (1999); Chile (1997); Dominican Republic (1991); Ecuador (1993); El Salvador (1998); Guatemala (1991); Haiti (1992); Venezuela (1999).
**Honduras (1999); Chile (2002); Paraguay (2001); Haiti (1998); Dominican Republic (1999).
***Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, El Salvador, México, Panamá (2013); Chile (2012); Paraguay (2011); Uruguay (2010).
****Levels: Low (lower than 15%); Medium (15–30%); High (30–65%); Integral (higher than 65%).

Table A.2 Percentage of enrollment in private institutions by regions: secondary education. Selected countries, 1999, 2007, 2014

Country	% private enrollment 1990*	% private enrollment 2000**	% private enrollment 2014***	% Variation	Level in 1990 ****	Level in 2014 ****
Peru	16.0	22.7	30.1	88.1	M	H
Chile	45.9	54.5	60.4	31.5	H	H
Ecuador	24.3	32.0	29.8	22.9	M	M
Jamaica	2.4	4.5	2.8	16.8	L	L
Brazil	11.0	11.4	12.9	16.6	L	L
Uruguay	12.7	12.5	14.5	14.5	L	L
Venezuela	30.0	26.2	32.8	9.4	M	H
Panamá	16.3	15.8	16.5	0.8	M	M
Argentina	26.3	28.2	26.2	−0.1	M	M
Honduras	27.4	26.3	26.0	−5.0	M	M
México	15.1	15.2	13.1	−13.5	M	L
Guatemala	73.5	74.0	62.3	−15.2	I	H
Dominican Republic	23.1	22.1	19.5	−15.9	M	M
Paraguay	29.4	21.5	21.8	−25.9	M	M
Costa Rica	12.4	10.0	9.1	−26.2	L	L
Nicaragua	32.1	23.7	21.8	−31.9	H	M
El Salvador	24.9	18.5	16.9	−32.2	M	M
Colombia	32.4	24.1	20.3	−37.3	H	M
Bolivia	29.2	13.5	12.9	−55.7	M	B
Haiti	–	–	–	–	–	–

Source: Adapted from data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016) and the World Bank Data (2016).

Notes:

*Bolivia (2000); Brazil, Dominican Republic, Guatemala (2002); Chile, El Salvador (1998); Honduras (2006); Jamaica (2001); Uruguay (1998).

**Jamaica, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Paraguay (2008).

***Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, El Salvador, México, Panamá (2013); Chile, Paraguay (2012); Nicaragua, Uruguay (2010).

****Levels: Low (lower than 15%); Medium (15–30%); High (30–65%); Integral (higher than 65%). – No data available

Appendix B Primary Studies Included in the Revision

Table A.3 Distribution of primary studies by country or geographical area.

Country	Reviewed studies
Argentina	18
Bolivia	9
Brazil	18
Chile	17
Colombia	12
Costa Rica	1
Cuba	2
Dominican Republic	5
Ecuador	4
El Salvador	6
Guatemala	2
Haiti	11
Honduras	2
Jamaica	3
México	7
Nicaragua	3
Paraguay	1
Peru	2
Uruguay	9
Venezuela	1
Comparative studies	38
Total	**169**

8

Global Education Policies and Taken-For-Granted Rationalities

Do the Poor Respond to Policy Incentives in the Same Way?[1]

Xavier Bonal

Introduction: The Globalization of Demand-Side Education Policies for Poverty Reduction

There is little doubt that in the last few decades, the mission of poverty reduction has become the most important objective of the global agenda for development. Any review of the public goals of international organizations such as the World Bank shows the centrality that the fight against poverty has acquired. UN international summits from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have consolidated poverty reduction as the most salient feature of sustainable development (Sachs, 2012). There is also no doubt that education has played an important role in the agenda for development and, particularly, in the means for global poverty reduction. The absolute dominance of human capital theory as the main paradigm of educational development has put education in the front line of the necessary investments not just in the struggle against poverty but also to reduce poverty in a sustainable form (Bonal, 2016). Investing in education opens up the possibility of breaking the intergenerational cycle of the reproduction of poverty and guarantees a long-term strategy to reduce poverty.

However, the uncontestable presence of education on the agenda for poverty reduction has not led to a single education policy agenda. After all, agreeing on targets such as the ones established in Jomtien and Dakar with the *Education for All* program, or the ones shared in the MDGs or the SDGs, does not imply which policy means are necessary to achieve these goals. The terrain for influencing the best policy strategies to combat poverty is much more open to disputes and debates and subject to power relations. While the World Bank has clearly dominated the scene of education policy strategies for development for decades, in the last few years we are witnessing a complex set of organizations with the ability and desire to influence global national education policies in developing

countries, including international organizations, aid agencies, global NGOs and private companies (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2012). Interestingly enough, while the multiplicity of actors has produced debates and divergences, their unequal power capacity and, in some cases, their ideological alignment, have not impeded the emergence of convergent discourses and policy strategies. Neoliberalism has certainly impinged on the conceptualization of the anti-poverty agenda, especially via making markets work for the poor (World Bank, 2004), and has consolidated the main options (and omissions) in education policies (Bonal, 2007; Tarabini, 2010). But the specific shape of neoliberalism in education has not remained the same. From simple formulas based on direct privatization of education, liberalization of education services or cost recovery, mainstream education policies have evolved into sophisticated forms of accountability, public-private partnerships or enterprise-like systems of school management (Ball, 2012).

One of the observable trends in education policy reforms is represented by the shift from supply-side to more demand-side interventions. The World Bank has mainly directed this change, especially to expand secondary schooling and to overcome the financial barriers that poor sectors face after completing primary education (World Bank, 2005; Scott et al., 2016). Investing in education facilities, infrastructure, school curriculum or school organization appears limited to increasing access and improving the learning conditions of the poorest. By assuming the limitations of educational expansion as a means to combat poverty, mainstream education policies turn their focus to demand-side policy reforms, which are seen as much more powerful in improving access and even learning outcomes. Policies such as conditional cash transfers (CCT) (Bonal, Tarabini, & Rambla, 2012; Fiszbein et al., 2009) or demand-side financing of education (Patrinos, 2007) certainly have become the preferred policy options for the World Bank and one of the most recommended systemic reforms that education systems should undertake (World Bank, 2011). The success of a fast track social policy has resulted in an attractive process of transnationalization of policies that have traveled even South-North (Peck & Theodore, 2010).

There are several "virtues" associated with demand-side interventions, among them the capacity to transfer funding to families and students themselves and the possibility of avoiding political ineffectiveness, bureaucratic administrations, and even economic corruption. Moreover, demand-side interventions are a strategic means to empower people and to help them to make those decisions they know are better for them (World Bank, 2005). Instead of considering the poor as a social group to be served through unaccountable public services, demand-side interventions consider the poor as people who have the power to decide on their own future investments. The role of the public sphere is therefore to make markets work for the poor (World Bank, 2006) and avoiding any attempt to simply deliver services to which poor people might feel unattached or even alienated from. Needless to say, by transferring power to parents and students (clients), education systems may become much more dependent on their demands. School choice and the privatization of education agendas evolve in parallel into a set of reforms that want to empower people by giving them the necessary resources to decide on the type of services they can claim (Verger &

Bonal, 2012). Hence, the rise of demand-side interventions in education runs in parallel to an agenda of privatization of education services, mainly through the consolidation and expansion of public-private partnerships (Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio, & Guáqueta, 2009).

In a context of financial constraints, the emergence of demand-side interventions also appears as a strategically less expensive social policy. Generally speaking, transferring economic resources to families is always less expensive than direct service provision. Creating vouchers for students to attend private schools, as is currently expanding in several developing countries after the Chilean reference model, or transferring cash to poor families, may be significantly less expensive than directly expanding public services. In Brazil, for example, the *Bolsa Familia* program, which is the largest CCT program in the world, accounts only for 0.5% of the GDP or less than 3% of the total social spending (Pereira, 2015). The smaller cost of demand-side interventions does not translate necessarily into a higher cost-effectiveness, and more analysis is needed to scale up these interventions (EFA-GMR, 2015, p. 91).

In summary, many attractive virtues have boosted the expansion of demand-side interventions in the last few decades. Recently, the last World Bank education strategy *Learning for All* underlines the potentialities of demand-side interventions for education equity, a group of policies that are seen as part of the necessary strategic systemic reform that states must undertake to improve their education systems (World Bank, 2011).

Instrumental Rationality and Theory of Change in Demand-Side Interventions

Beyond the economic and political reasons for the globalization of demand-side interventions, the transnationalization of these policies also carries a process of globalization of the assumed responses of actors to policy incentives. That is, the theory of change underlying these policy programs understands that beneficiaries respond to incentives in a single manner, independently of actors' values or the cultural contexts in which they live. Demand-side interventions basically assume an instrumental rationality of educational demand that will constantly act as utility maximizers of their choices and decisions.

Vouchers or CCTs are incentives powerful enough to make all citizens (no matter their socio-economic status) react positively. If people are correctly informed and empowered, there is no reason to expect an irrational reaction from them. Incentives therefore are potent devices of social transformation. Of course, instrumental rationality is especially visible and expected in market situations. Parents act as rational choosers of schools once they have all the supposedly necessary information to make their choice. School choice then becomes the key mechanism to boost school competition and therefore is the best instrument to increase the quality of education. Parents, considered to be well-informed consumers, will look for the best school for their children. Good schools will receive demand and bad schools will be forced to close because of lack of demand or because educational demand will have the "power to switch"

(Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hoxby, 2003; Levinson, 1999). State models tend to maintain bad schools based only on the vested interest of the teachers' unions and other bureaucrats whose only objective is to keep their power positions and not to respond to their clients' needs. Against the state model of provision, the market ensures a system of incentives and prizes that guarantees a more efficient education system. Rational choice is therefore the *motto* that makes the system work and facilitates the necessary school competition to ensure educational efficiency.

The position opposed to the market advocates is visible in those critics of school choice who underline the fact that the real possibilities of choice available to different segments of the population are highly varied. There is a large amount of evidence on the different patterns of choice used by different social segments of the population (Ball 2003; Waslander, Pater, & van der Weide, 2010). Well-educated parents have more choice possibilities and tend to be better informed than less-educated parents, who, it is assumed, manage less information and are confronted with more choice restrictions due to price or cultural barriers. School choice may almost be ranked between "skilled, semi-skilled or disconnected parents" (Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995, p. 24).

In fact, the reaction of market advocates against these criticisms underlines the fact that critics of choice actually undermine the choice capacity of those who are the worst off. So, critics of school choice consider that some actors cannot act as utility maximizers. By pointing out the limits in their ability to choose "correctly," market advocates maintain that critics disregard the capacity of the poor and treat them as less able consumers (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Ryan & Heise, 2002; Tooley, 1993). In fact, market advocates even see a better structure of equality of opportunities in a scenario with more private provision and competition. This is one of the arguments of James Tooley, one of the champions of education markets. For him, allowing for *genuine* markets in education can actually overcome the persistent inequalities present in state education.

> We do have evidence of inequality in state education, and evidence and a logical argument (above) to show how inequality, perhaps even increasing inequality, could be the result of recent educational reforms. But this is not evidence about markets, because the relevant reforms do not bring in aspects of genuine markets. Indeed, we have no evidence about the impact of markets on educational equality, because nowhere is there a market in education operating. (Tooley, 1996, p. 54)

This understanding of the rational behavior of the actor is not restricted to the market. Many education policies assume a theory of change that takes for granted responses to incentives restricted to an instrumental rationality. In fact, important policy decisions were made (and occasionally are still made) taking into account the full instrumental behavior of the actors. To offer some examples, we can think of the school fees policy in basic education undertaken by many national governments (and often with the acquiescence of some institutions, such as the World Bank in the 1980s), provided that the benefits of investing in education outweighed the costs. The rational behavior of an actor

capable of evaluating costs and benefits of education would ensure that the introduction of school fees should not be an obstacle to guarantee school access. However, fees did have an impact on the behavior of poor households, especially during the Structural Adjustment programmes implemented in the 1980s (Colclough, 1996).

Likewise, one of the assumptions linked to conditional cash transfers is the reduction, or even the elimination, of child labor. By compensating the opportunity cost of schooling, the CCT is assumed to impact on the bad characteristics and effects of child labor. However, reality tells us that people attribute several meanings to child labor, beyond its economic importance. Children's socialization or children's security may be powerful reasons for families to maintain the child at work despite accepting the transfer (Bonal & Tarabini, 2016; Gee, 2010).

Interestingly enough, one of the criticisms made by conservative sectors of cash transfers for the poor focuses on the lack of conditionality regarding how the transferred funds are to be spent. Conditionality applies to school attendance (as well as to other requirements related to health or job training courses) but does not apply to the type of investment families must make after receiving the transfer. Some critics of CCT programs have emphasized that poor people may be unable to make the necessary coherent and rational investments in education, because of lack of culture or lack of proper moral behavior. The way rational and, in this case, moral behavior is conceived by wealthy conservatives, or even by some teachers, questions whether poor people can act "rationally" and make the "appropriate" use of the social assistance (Morley & Coady, 2003).

Going back to market mechanisms, one of the assumed consequences of implementing a voucher system is the prominent role that educational demand will play in selecting good schools, and the fact that "bad" schools will be forced to close. However, this theory of change ignores the fact that for a high number of families many obstacles exist when choosing good schools, with geographical factors among the most important ones (Elacqua, Schneider, & Buckley, 2006), or even the fact that governments might be willing to keep some of those "bad" schools open in order to concentrate those students whom schools that compete in the market are not willing to enrol (Zancajo, Bonal, & Verger, 2014). The second-order competition that guides processes of selection of students, meaning the competition to attract students with certain characteristics (van Zanten, 2009), may alter how actors react to policy incentives, which can be different from what the theory of change expects.

A final example is given by the assumed relationship between public information on educational performance and school choice. This is one of the strongest taken-for-granted assumptions of the theory of change of markets in education. If governments make public the information on school performance, families will have a basis on which to make their decisions, and again only attractive and good schools will be chosen. In fact, many families may ignore educational performance as relevant information to make their decisions, or may consider it only as a secondary source of information. Choice may be influenced by less tangible aspects, such as child's security, school familial atmosphere, a specific child's needs or other reasons (Raczynski et al., 2010).

The examples provided illustrate how actors' responses to incentives may not be based on what the theory of change of different educational policy measures assumes is instrumental rational behavior. Of course, the temptation to interpret these responses as non-rational or irrational is high for those who assume that *best practices* exist in education policy and that systems of incentives can have universal effects if they are properly designed. Demand-side interventions in education reforms, mainly addressed to the poor, are based on the assumptions that the theory of change works for everyone and under any circumstance. Even when there is evidence that responses to incentives may not be as the theory predicts, these are problems that can be solved by providing better and adequate information to beneficiaries and correcting the possible asymmetries in the distribution of this information. That is, what is not questioned is whether the basis of the theory of change may be wrong because actors' responses to incentives have a *different* rationality. It is to this question that we turn in the next section.

What Is the Rationality of the Poor? Three Alternatives to Instrumental Rationality

> Listen, honey, if you want to see how people spend their money on things they don't need, and don't know much about what they are getting, and buy it even so without thinking ahead, you'd better go study rich folks. If I wasted money like that, I'd be dead. (an ADC mother of eight, personal communication). (Newton, 1977, p. 50)

Debates on the rationality of agents, and particularly, on the rationality of the poor, have been at the center of disciplines such as economics, philosophy, sociology or psychology for a long time. Interestingly, positions have evolved from a simple understanding of the irrational behavior of the poor, who behave quite differently from the neoclassical *homo economicus*, to a recognition that the poor's behavior might be explained by the specific circumstances under which they live. Highly significant is Schultz's (1964) expression, "poor but efficient," which underlined the fact that the poor's behavior had nothing particular, but was adapted to their economic circumstances, as the mother interviewed by Newton clearly shows in the initial quote of this section. As Ester Duflo states, from Schultz's assertion:

> [A] new paradigm "poor but neoclassical", helped define an empirical agenda and structure a vision of the world, even though it often remained implicit in empirical work. While the poor (and the rich) are all perfectly rational, the markets, left to themselves, may not produce an efficient outcome. *(Duflo, 2006, p. 367)*

Thus, the recognition of inefficient markets and other institutions concentrated the attention of neoclassical economists who did not question the perfect rationality of the poor. However, other interpretative alternatives give us tools to

understand why the poor might behave (and respond to incentives) differently than other sectors of society. In the education domain, three main approaches can be identified: (1) the *cultural deficit* approach; (2) the *bounded rationality* theory; and (3) the social class *habitus* included in the theory of reproduction of Pierre Bourdieu. These three perspectives provide us with different visions of the rationality of the poor that can explain different responses to policy incentives.

Cultural Deprivation and the Rational Deficit

When James Coleman et al. published the famous report *Equality of Educational Opportunity* in 1966, commissioned by the US Department of Education, the main conclusion that emerged from it was the fact that differences in funding and resources did not explain the unequal results between segregated black and white schools. Some of the immediate reactions to this report were offered by politicians and intellectuals, who focused on the cultural deprivation of the poor (or the blacks) as the main reason for their underachievement. Lack of access to culture explained why people became poor (and not the other way around), and why poor students became underachievers. A "culture of poverty," from this point of view, explained the disorganization and deficits that poor people faced, and therefore could also be a powerful explanation to understand their wrong or irrational behavior when making choices. In education, the "deficit thinking" approach has been advanced to explain school failure and the bad socialization of children in poor environments (Valencia, 1997).

Compared to market inefficiencies identified by neoclassical economics, the cultural deprivation model blames the victims themselves for their inability to act rationally. They are simply unable to do it since their whole socialization generates a "culture of poverty" that goes beyond material aspects and limits their rational capacity. Besides the large amount of psychological literature embedded in this paradigm that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, it is noteworthy that some of the critiques of school choice policies and market mechanisms in education construct their arguments in an ambiguous position regarding the capacity of the most deprived sectors of society to choose rationally. As we have mentioned before, the category of "disconnected parents" (Gewirtz et al., 1995) reflects some kind of implicit socialization that detaches parents from being able to choose rationally.

Somewhat paradoxically, the debate about the most extreme positions on the virtues of the education market and their critiques may carry a simplistic understanding of the rationality of choosers. On the one hand, market advocates assume a form of rational behavior limited to instrumental behavior and utility maximization. It is assumed that the chooser can manage appropriate information and make subsequent informed choices because he/she is able to calculate the costs and benefits of his/her choices. Consequently, if the system guarantees that access to information is perfectly available to citizens, we must assume that all actors behave rationally and make informed decisions. Market advocates therefore react to their critics by accusing them of treating some sectors of the population as irrational actors, unable to evaluate properly the costs and benefits of their decisions and making biased choices.

On the other hand, it is certainly the case that some of the most radical positions against school choice construct their criticisms simply assuming less choice possibilities among the lower SES groups, because of less access to information or because they find a number of barriers (economic, cultural) to attend the same schools than those who are better off. So some critiques of school choice assume that the reason for some parents not choosing the best schools is due not to their "irrational behavior" (as market advocates state that market critics assume) but to the *impossibility* of behaving rationally because of the many barriers they face. Of course, the poorer the people who aim to *choose* a school, the higher the barriers that impede them from exercising real choice. Education inequalities are then the result of the *fallacy* of school choice. The system sets a number of rules which are supposed to apply to all potential choosers but which actually don't (Dwyer, 2012). This applies especially to sound educational reforms such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) launched by the Bush Administration, based on simple notions of the rational behavior of parents when choosing schools and selecting the best schools available (Hursh, 2007).

While critical positions of school choice cannot be accused (as the market advocates do) of morally devaluing the poor, the weight they give to barriers and external circumstances seems to exclude any possibility of considering alternative rationalities of the poor. The more the economic barriers there are, the higher the disconnection from any form of decision-making, seems to be the axiom that attaches these positions to a sort of cultural deficit.

Bounded Rationality

From a different perspective, a recent critique of liberal positions of school choice and the parent as a rational agent has come from authors who have used the concept of bounded rationality as an alternative to a narrow and too simplistic understanding of rationality (Ben-Porath, 2009, 2012; De Jarnatt, 2008; Jones, 1999). Building on behavioral sociology and economics, Ben-Porath (2009) criticizes the understanding of freedom and autonomy embedded in normative liberal theories and advocates for a social policy that takes into account the *real* ways in which people makes their choices. By observing several ethnographic studies, Ben-Porath states: "The introduction of empirical research to the liberal democratic conceptualisations of freedom and choice suggests that the conditions of choice should be reconsidered if they are to satisfy the requirements of freedom" (p. 531). Thus, Ben-Porath invites some form of choice policies that take into account the actual "limitations and challenges parents and families have in making these choices" (p. 538). This position helps us to set aside a narrow understanding of the rational actor in making choices, and claims for an analysis of the conditions under which choice is made. This author provides several examples of ethnographic research that shows how gender, race, or class condition the process of searching information or accessing different social networks, or how risk aversion highly conditions immobility from bad schools, even when parents have the opportunity to change, as in the No Child Left Behind program launched by the Bush administration.

The idea of bounded rationality goes beyond the basic division between *choice as a free process* of utility maximization and *choice as almost a denial* for those who have no opportunity to access certain schools because of cultural or economic barriers. Bounded rationality recognizes some forms of hierarchy in the conditions of choice that different parents face, depending on their class status. However, this does not make them necessarily "disconnected" or detached parents from the process of choice. Considering that there is a bounded rationality implies the need to observe empirically social behavior in the processes of school choice and understand the conditions that limit and challenge the act of choosing. It is precisely the existence of constraints on the act of choosing that produces a *bounded* rationality, which does not necessarily evidence lack of skills or "disconnection." By observing empirically how parents respond *rationally* to the limits they face, the politics of choice may become more democratic and socially fair (Ben-Porath, 2009, 2012).

Bounded rationality, therefore, gives a prominent role to external circumstances and their impact on the decision-making processes. From that perspective, the poor's behavior is not irrational, but rationally adapted to their circumstances. Indeed, there is a difference between Schultz's position of "poor but efficient" and bounded rationality. While the former implicitly understands that the poor's behavior could respond to an undifferentiated instrumental rationality if the barriers that impede them were removed, the bounded rationality theory assumes that barriers and external circumstances generate a different rationality, which would remain qualitatively different even if market imperfections were eliminated. As Duflo (2006) states, in any circumstance the poor would act as the poor and the rich would act as the rich.

Yet, the question that is still unsolved is whether any form of bounded rationality is exclusively the result of those limits that parents face when making choices or whether these limits interact with specific preferences or values of the actor –in Weber's axiological rationality sense (Weber, 1978). In other word, assuming the existence of a bounded rationality resulting from boundaries and constraints, does it imply that all parents facing the same limitations will respond to incentives in a similar way? And if they don't, which other aspects shape their specific rationalities? For example, the concept of bounded rationality applied to school choice cannot be understood only as the result of objective constraints, because they include values and preferences that evidence diversity of choices, even under the same type of constraints. Choices may rather be a result of an interaction between objective constraints and specific dispositions that parents have when choosing (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007).

Social Class *Habitus* and Rationality

The above reflections apply specifically to a common simplistic understanding of how poor families choose a school for their children. While most research on school choice and actors' rationalities focuses on the middle class (Ball, 2003; Power et al., 2004; Swift, 2003; Van Zanten, 2013), the poor as a group are rarely unpacked as a category of analysis, and are usually treated as a "disconnected," "detached," or "alienated" category of choosers. For market advocates, as we have

seen, poor people are perfectly aware of what is and what is not quality education, so we must assume they have the same skills as any other middle-class chooser. In addition, understanding choice as a reaction to limits or boundaries (whether economic, geographic, or cultural) may not grasp the richness of different rationalities that poor parents may develop in the educational marketplace.

How can we then understand the different responses of the poor to policy incentives beyond instrumental rationality and even beyond a bounded rationality? How can we interpret that the condition of being poor affects responses to incentives taking into account objective constraints and specific preferences, yet without understanding that rationality is necessarily bounded? A possible explanation may be identified in Bourdieu's concept of class *habitus*. The concept of *habitus* grasps a logic of action that relates conditions of existence to a disposition to act in a certain manner, while at the same time these dispositions have the capacity to act as the *motto* of practices and representations. In Bourdieu's words:

> The conditions associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at aims or an express mastery of operations necessary in order to attain them. (1990, p. 53)

From Bourdieu's perspective, we could interpret that the conditions of poverty provide a certain *habitus*, that is, a system of dispositions to think, feel, and make decisions in a particular manner. Applied to our discussion of the poor's rationality, the *habitus* of the poor should inform us about their structured dispositions and therefore should help us to understand why and how the poverty condition leads to specific reactions to policy incentives.

The recognition of a structure (class position) that conditions action, however, does not mean that all people sharing the same conditions of existence will react in the same way. Actually, the *habitus*, as a concept, tries to overcome the structure-agency dualism. Since it is a dynamic concept, the *habitus* is reflected in every specific field, and each field may have different positions and practices that project the *habitus* in a certain way. Diane Reay clearly stresses this point:

> In relation to the charge of determinism, Bourdieu (1990: 116) argues that habitus becomes active in relation to a field, and the same habitus can lead to very different practices and stances depending on the state of the field. (Reay, 2004, p. 432)

Therefore, the poor's rationality as a response to policy incentives may then differ and not be identical, but they may not respond uniquely to boundaries and limitations (as the bounded rationality theory would predict), but to a set of specific dispositions emanating from the *habitus* that results from the condition

of being poor. From this point of view, *habitus* does not eliminate choice at all. The *habitus* gives space for

> the 'art of inventing' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 55), but at the same time the choices inscribed in the habitus are limited … Choices are bounded by the framework of opportunities and constraints the person finds himself/herself in, her external circumstances. (Reay, 2004, p. 435)

If we understand responses to incentives as framed and emanating from the *habitus*, we can understand that the reactions of the poor to policies such as school choice or CCT programs combine personal options or preferences (which in turn are framed by the *habitus*) within specific constraints that limit people's options. In that sense, the concept of *habitus* overcomes the limits of the bounded rationality theory, because by using the former concept, we can interpret responses not exclusively as a product of the limitations and challenges that the poor must face. From this perspective, interpreting human behavior goes beyond the limits imposed by the objective condition of being poor, though the condition of being poor certainly leads to a behavior that would not take place under different objective circumstances.

This difference is significant, for example, in interpreting school choice in contexts of poverty. While there are objective barriers (price, selection by the schools) that impose and limit the capacity to choose of poor families, the ways in which poor families understand "quality education" or the kind of aspects they have as a priority when choosing can be interpreted as a result of their specific *habitus*. Their reactions are not a simple product of instrumental rationality (even under market imperfections) or a product of the constraints. Choice exists within a specific field personally and collectively experienced.

Policy Implications

Why are all these discussions relevant for the study of global education reforms? Are conceptions of rationality significant for the design, implementation, and evaluation of education policies? In this last section I will provide arguments to justify the positive answer to the above questions.

In the policy domain, rationality debates are especially relevant because policies always convey an explicit or implicit understanding of human behavior. Of course, in the specific area of policy incentives, assumptions about human reactions to external inducements are at the heart of their design. Assuming how actors will react to external inputs may be a key issue in policy success or failure.

As we have discussed in the first part of the chapter, the globalization of educational reforms has imposed a convergence and universalization of the understanding of human responses to policy incentives. Instrumental rationality has been assumed as the only possible rationality of the poor, and their expected and predictable reactions to policy incentives are at the heart of the theory of change of demand-side education policies. Neoclassical economics understands that all individuals are in a position to efficiently calculate costs and benefits and make decisions based on them. Interestingly, by defending universal instrumental

rationality, market advocates censure other positions because they undermine the poor's capacity to be rational. From this perspective, they consider themselves in a morally superior position because they do value the poor's full capacity to act naturally like any non-poor individual.

Neoclassical economists have also been able to adapt their understanding of the rationality of the poor to non-perfect situations. It is well known that the theory of perfect competition has certainly considered a number of market imperfections that produce suboptimal distributions of goods or services and justify the need of state intervention. The education market is therefore exposed to "systemic failure" (Williamson, 1975), which is evidenced in the existence of positive or negative externalities, imperfect information, asymmetric information, adverse selection (or cream skimming) or imperfect competition. These are sufficient reasons for the public sector to intervene and introduce corrections in a system of market provision. However, even if we accept the systemic market failure, this approach keeps assuming that individual choices respond basically to instrumental rationality. In other words, the theory of choice assumes that market failure can be compensated for by an adequate state intervention. And this compensation, among other things, overcomes the obstacles that prevent families from making rational (instrumental) choices.

Obviously, neoclassical economics is not blind to the diversity of consumers' preferences. That is, acting rationally means a response not to a single objective, but to a proper evaluation of costs and benefits associated with specific preferences. However, the recognition of the diversity of preferences is never reflected in policy design. Policies to regulate school choice, norms to have access to a CCT, incentives to be eligible for certain grants, eligibility for specific programs, never consider alternative systems of preferences than those that maximize the instrumental benefits within a specific program. Policy incentives are exclusively conceived from this perspective. Indeed, any needed correction in the policy design is rarely made as a consequence of a change in the expected behavior of the beneficiaries. Policy-makers usually ignore that agents' behaviour are not exclusively shaped by what the theory of change predicts. In fact, policy-makers may introduce changes in design *as if* people's behavior would keep being instrumental.

If policy-makers develop policies and programs *as if* …, then we should ask, what are the social consequences of applying policies based on erratic assumptions? The fact that market rules are not followed as their advocates would assume, for example, does not make them harmless. These rules do really alter, although in a different way to public choice theory predictions, education agents' responses: their strategies, logics of action, and responses to incentives do not take place in a vacuum, but rather in social and institutional settings strongly shaped, precisely, by market rules or by other systems of the generation of incentives (Verger et al. 2016).

Alternative frameworks such as the bounded rationality theory or Bourdieu's theory of reproduction (through the acquisition and projection of class *habitus*) certainly go beyond reductionist understandings of the poor's rationality, and open a new door to comprehend why and how the poor's responses to policy incentives may be different. Restrictions, in the former case, and socialization, in the latter, may conform to other logics of action, which do not necessarily have to operate at a conscious level. The inclusion of ways of reasoning that are not

simply the product of an instrumental rationality, the inclusion of barriers that go beyond market imperfections, the attention to *habitus* as the *motto* of a logic of practice, open a space to understand differently why people do what they do and how the most disadvantaged groups in society respond to incentives in a variety of ways.

Considering alternative rationalities, which are neither single nor uniform, is an invitation to profoundly review policy design, implementation, and evaluation of demand-side interventions and, in particular, to introduce the necessary flexibility in policy development to grasp the richness of people's responses to incentives. Systems of conditionality, conditions of eligibility, or public information delivered might not work in the same way or have the same impact on different beneficiaries. The same living conditions do not have necessarily to lead to uniform policies, which in turn do not have to lead to similar responses from the beneficiaries. Globalization might generate convergence in certain economic, political, and cultural processes, but might certainly generate the wrong responses if we keep thinking that globalization brings with it global and unique solutions for poverty reduction.

Note

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9

The Politics of Educational Change in the Middle East and North Africa

Nation-Building, Postcolonial Reconstruction, Destabilized States, Societal Disintegration, and the Dispossessed

Eugenie A. Samier

Introduction

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is one of the most complex regions of the world, diverse in its ethnic and cultural make-up, composed of very poor and very wealthy states with nations ranging across the national development scale (UNDP, 2015), containing large populations of dispossessed and refugee peoples, and consisting of countries with a multiplicity of societal arrangements and national conditions. The sectarian differences that cause conflict extend far beyond religious schisms to include long-standing national, tribal, ethnic, class, generational, and urban differences which were exacerbated by colonial governments with little understanding of the region and following a pursuit of their own interests (Zdanowski, 2014). After a 500-year domination by the Ottoman Empire and European colonization, the region came under bi-polar American and Soviet influence after World War II as one of the regions subject to Cold War maneuvering (Salem, 2015). Many of its countries have emerged recently from colonization by Britain, France, and Italy that reflected a range of foreign interests from trade and oil resources to "civilizing" programs, although economic, political, military, and cultural ties to former imperial powers still exist or have been transferred to the US (Angrist, 2013). According to Brown (1984), the region has been subject to more power politics for 200 years than any other region, leaving a distinctive mark on its politics that continues to the present day, and the use of the educational system in nurturing nationalism in the region, for example, in Palestinian "university nationalism" aimed at survival of the Palestinians as a nation and in the use of the university by authoritarian regimes as a form of policing (Romani, 2009).

MENA countries have a broad range of political systems and regimes due to their historical cultures and to the differing policies of the colonial powers that shaped the social institutions: the Eastern countries under British rule that did

not impose language and culture aggressively (e.g., Egypt, Palestine, Iraq); and the Western countries under French rule that experienced a systematic assimilationist linguistic and cultural campaign (e.g., Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco). The political order that existed up to the mid-twentieth century has broken down in many parts of the region, beginning with Egypt's decline after 1967 (Salem, 2015). Since then, a number of political changes have implications for educational systems. The al-Assad regime in Syria took control and established an authoritarian government. Iran went through a revolution that installed an authoritarian Islamic state that also caused recent political disruption in the region due to its nuclear program, support for forces in Yemen, and its involvement in Syria through its support of the al-Assad regime, as it has contributed to destabilization and collapse of some other states (Salem, 2015).

MENA countries are in various stages of nation-building, and others, due to the "Arab Spring" have either weathered the political challenges, like Algeria, are on the brink of instability, like Egypt, or have disintegrated, like Syria. Cultural ties are predominantly educational in nature where the former colonizer is either a destination for higher education or, under globalization, provides branch organizations, curricular programs, and teaching staff. Beginning in the 1970s, Islamist movements of various kinds, like the Muslim Brotherhood, have criticized Western influences on Middle East societies, aiming at returning them to a more pious life partly through an Islamic-grounded education (Angrist, 2013), although considerable controversy in the Islamic world exists over how and to what degree this should be done (Zollner, 2009). At the same time, surveys conducted on equal higher educational rights for women in a number of Arab states have shown a high level of support, even among many democratic Islamists (Tessler & Robbins, 2014).

The Middle East is also a region with the longest history of human civilization and accomplishments with currently some of the most devastating destruction in human history. Its location now, as throughout history, has been what Attar (2009) calls "the land bridge of civilization" and "a major artery for contact" between continental regions, making it a strategic location for empires from the beginning of recorded history subject to invasion, occupation, and colonization. But it is also the region in which the first schools and universities were established, contributing a critically important intellectual heritage in all fields internationally (Makdisi, 1981). Much of its territory in the twentieth century has suffered from a "backward administrative system in the Arab world" (Attar, 2009, p. 16) – despite the development of a sophisticated and humane administrative tradition during the Medieval period – and the disruptions of European colonizers. Its economic character is distinctively different, consisting in its early periods of "a conquestal mode of production," a "military mode of production," and the "nomadic, kin-ordered mode of production," that rests upon an "absolute internal solidarity" and loyalty (p. 17), all of which still have influence. Many conflicts in the last few decades and high levels of security spending have drawn heavily on resources, causing low levels of expenditures in investment in other social institutions (Attar, 2009) and, for many countries, conflict and devastation have depleted the infrastructure necessary for social programs. The rise of ISIS has threatened the stability directly and indirectly of many Middle East states.

Many Middle East states have rapidly increasing population levels; the region has the highest unemployment rate globally at 11.1% (UNHDP, 2013), while water is becoming more scarce throughout the entire MENA region, having only 1% of global renewable water (World Bank ME Risk Report, n.d.a) and only 4.3% of the land is arable (World Bank Arable Land, n.d.b), that could lead eventually to social and health crises. It is also a highly valued strategic geopolitical location for a number of foreign powers due to vast oil reserves, and under globalization also represents a large market for Western products and services, including education.

Some states have developed quickly and with considerable success considering the short time period that modern state-building has taken place, such as in the Arabian Gulf where government expenditures on education, while varying, are at its highest in the UAE with 27% of total government expenditures (El Jaouhari & Hasan, 2012) prior to the drop in oil prices. Two countries from the Gulf rated "very high" with eight others from the region in the high category of the UN Human Development Report of 2013 – indicating the gains made in education, quality of life, and improved women's equality in parts of the region. The development of communications technologies has provided improvements in education in the region and also a medium through which social action was organized in producing the uprisings of the Arab Spring (Khondker, 2011). The region is also populated by large and powerful non-state actors, some with state backing, like Hezbollah with support from Iran, dominating Lebanese politics and involvement in the Syrian civil war, others like the Yemeni Houthi movement with the ambition to create a state, and the many Shi'i and Sunni militias challenging state authority. The Arab Spring brought a number of presidencies down, although the conditions following regime change vary greatly, from the relative stability of Tunisia, to the fragile state in Egypt, the disintegration of the government in Yemen and Libya to the current struggle to maintain power in Syria (Angrist, 2013) with the added incursion of ISIS forces.

All of these factors combine to place enormous pressures on social institutions. It is against this background that educational systems have to be examined, as contextual factors including the political system, cultural traditions, levels of stability and development, population diversity, environmental conditions, and globalization play influential roles in how social institutions are shaped and how education can serve as a site for socio-economic, political, and cultural struggle and the construction of local and national identities (Abi-Mershed, 2010). While rapid change is taking place in many MENA states in positive and negative directions, few can be classified as going through "reform" in the Western sense of substantial structural changes or redesign in the substance, structure, or functioning of an existing and established social institution (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011) with functional labor laws and professional unions affecting practices, programs, or administration.

This chapter examines system-level developments in education in the MENA, focusing primarily on the relationship of education to its regional and international contexts. The argument made here is that, given the political and economic instability throughout much of the Middle East (Aman & Aman, 2016), the social institution of education is a function of local and foreign contextual

factors undergoing other forms of development than "reform" as it is generally understood in the West. The Middle East is still affected by ongoing influence of world wars, colonization, the Cold War, the Gulf Wars, and disruptively high levels of modernization and globalization influences. Barakat (1993) has approached this combination of internal and external factors as those that fall into a set of diversity and integration polarities that create the tensions that Middle East states are coping with: unity vs fragmentation, tradition vs modernity, sacred vs secular, East vs West, and local vs national –all of which have a profound impact on educational systems and their curriculum, teaching, and administration as well as the ends it is conceived to serve (e.g., Kaplan, 2006).

The politics of education in the Middle East for many countries is not a matter of reform, but of other kinds of political processes in combination with international and regional forces and the legacy of history that shaped their political structures, social norms, and social institutions. There are five major country patterns, each of which has a corresponding structure and condition of educational system: (1) those countries undergoing rapid modernization and multiculturalism that are relatively stable, in which nation-building is well under way, characteristic of the Arabian Gulf states like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (Davidson & Smith, 2008); (2) postcolonial or post-war reconstruction characteristic of Morocco, Algeria, Jordan (Alon, 2007), and Turkey (Abdel-Moneim, 2015; Kaplan, 2006; Nohl, Akkoyunlu-Wigley, & Wigley, 2008); (3) destabilized states experiencing varying degrees of transformation and tension, such as a number of the "Arab Spring" states (Danahar, 2013), like Egypt (Abdel-Moneim, 2015; Lacroix & Rougier, 2016) and Lebanon (Shuayb, 2012); (4) states that are disintegrating and suffer human devastation, like Syria, Iraq (Al-Ali, 2014), and Yemen (Brehony, 2013); and (5) the dispossessed, like the Palestinians (Knudsen & Hanafi, 2011), the Kurds (Allsopp, 2015; Aziz, 2011), and Syrians (Abi-Mershed, 2010).

General Educational Trends in the Middle East and North Africa

Understanding the developments and changes in educational systems requires an historical perspective that extends in its most immediate effects in the Middle East to late nineteenth-century European imperialism and post-Ottoman Empire influences, primarily from France and Britain (Fieldhouse, 2006; Owen, 1992) and Cold War activities (Halliday, 2005) that positively and negatively affected state- and nation-building. Current globalization influences, therefore, can be seen as a continuation of foreign influences, currently mostly from the US, the UK and Russia, in combination with regional and local dynamics that create a complex regional and international assembly of factors that Jreisat (1997) refers to as "converging obstacles" due to the inextricable interplay of internal and external factors.

The US has been a major influence in the region on educational development for a number of decades aimed at creating allies that are more democratically oriented in order to maintain access to waterways, provide locations for military bases, and diplomatic support in peace processes and more recently in anti-terrorist

activities. According to Pease (2011), this has required not only improving access to education, increasing literacy rates and better preparing students for the workplace, but also curriculum content that is important for US interests, a clear goal in the US State Department's administration of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, whose objectives are: "efforts to expand political participation, strengthen civil society and the rule of law, empower women and youth, create educational opportunities, and foster economic reform throughout MENA" (cited on p. 7). This program is complemented by USAID's work in preparing curricular materials and programs and a US Department of Agriculture program that provides teacher training and school meals for malnourished children in a number of countries, like Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pease notes of US involvement in Egypt an aim "to promote civil and secular education reform" (p. 11). The main efforts in Egypt, similar to those in other countries, are directed at improving access and parental involvement, improving the quality of teaching – away from conventional rote methods toward critical inquiry – building schools, building and stocking libraries, providing scholarships at the higher education level.

Many efforts to improve education have been made regionally, in addition to those of international organizations like the UNDP, UNESCO, and the World Bank, such as the Arab League for Educational and Cultural Scientific Organization (ALECSO), which has organized a number of summits – Algiers in 2005, Khartoum in 2006, Riyadh in 2007, and Tunis in 2008 and 2011 – aimed at triggering initiatives in a unified direction to promote the Arabic language, strengthen core religious and humanitarian values, and build human capacity to support economic and social development (Akkary, 2014). As Akkary notes, there are three main goals: (1) aligning with international standards and modernization; (2) regional collaboration among Arab states to safeguard Arab culture and identity; and (3) responding to individual countries' social, political, and economic conditions and requirements. However, the aim for many states in achieving a "knowledge economy" creates dependencies on English and foreign curricula (Abi-Mershed, 2010).

If one defines colonization as not only the imposition of political and military power, but also the cultural shaping of ideas and imagination (Said, 1993; Thiong'o, 1986), then globalization through education carries with it a recolonizing effect. According to Sayigh (1991), education's role in colonizing Middle East territories provided the intellectual framing of colonized and postcolonial states as dependent and underdeveloped, which colonized the mind by dispossessing people of their own (intellectual) history, providing a foreign ideology of development that was disadvantageous to them, and has continued to conflate a positivistic approach to growth with national development that effectively alienated Middle East peoples from a societal development that preserved the integrity of indigenous social institutions. One example of this are universities in some Western nations, like the UK, competing in the creation of new educational markets to sell their expertise aided by "international development" offices (Beech, 2009). This is one concern expressed by Abusulayman (2007) in his critique of education in Muslim countries – an imitation and replication of Western education that does not take into account the values, cultural goals, and conditions of Muslim

societies and a "distortion" of the Islamic vision that affects mentality, knowledge, and educational methods (p. 11).

Under globalization, transnational companies operating in the Middle East also bring with them informal and non-formal forms of education through management expertise and training programs (Ehteshami, 2007), reflecting foreign practices such as the GEMS educational company, operating in the UAE, Qatar, and Jordan (Beech, 2009). The major international organizations responsible for knowledge transfer are UNESCO, the OECD and the World Bank, although, as Beech (2009) points out, they are operating with different concepts of development – UNESCO using a humanist perspective aimed at strengthening human rights and freedoms, the OECD with balancing economic development with social development, and the World Bank, an exclusively economic model based on human capital theory and cost-effectiveness – but all oriented toward the "information age" and a "universal" educational discourse grounded in Western assumptions.

Education cannot be separated from religion in the MENA, although practices vary considerably across public and private schools throughout the region. Religion is both a subject of study and a practice. Islamic religious education is a subject that varies from a low of 2 hours per week in Egypt to 9 hours in Saudi, and also plays a strong role in Arabic language and social studies classes in public and some private schools. As a practice, it is evident in codes of behavior, including dress, and practicing all the Islamic rituals of praying, fasting, etc., integrated into the very culture of schools. However, as Faour (2012) demonstrates in his study of teaching and curriculum in Egypt and Tunisia, approaches can vary significantly: in Egypt, the schools use a more exclusive Islamic approach with a more rote learning aim, whereas in Tunisia, beginning in 1989, the curriculum took a broader and liberal Islamic view of the world by including topics like Darwinian evolution in science, promoting the tolerance tradition in Islam, and removing intolerance of non-Islamic content. Tunisia's approach to curriculum and pedagogy is also more consistent with many Western approaches that aim for critical thinking and philosophical analysis. In many countries there are also Islamist parties and movements, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, that take a more conservative view of education, believing that it should be brought into line with an exclusionary practice that is strictly Islamic in its content in countries like Egypt and Tunisia where "they would like to introduce a comprehensive education reform that creates an integrated curriculum across all subjects with explicit Islamic themes" (p. 12).

Equally significant are security concerns that directly and indirectly have an impact on education, originating during World War I, and continuing up to the present time since the Gulf is a strategic location with vast oil reserves. Halliday (2005) identifies three main influences on Middle East societies that frame or shape an investigation into any aspect of society: (1) security issues, both internal and inter-nation, largely due to "political Islam" – radicalized groups, the most serious by 2016 being the Islamic State movement that has captured large parts of Iraq and Syria; (2) overall economic decline with a rising population and high unemployment rates creating greater labor demands; and (3) an increasingly disruptive ideological atmosphere affecting internal and external relations. Evidence

of this can be seen in the use of educational systems in maintaining social control (with a few exceptions), but inhibiting the transformation of education toward progressive and critical thinking that is occurring in other global regions (Baytiyeh & Naja, 2014).

Educational curricula are still commonly based on rote teaching in the region (Neill, 2006; Rugh, 2002) and have a large percentage of the curriculum devoted to religious instruction, often where schools are supported by Muslim and Christian religious institutions. While reducing the amount of time available for more progressive curriculum, they do provide a strong sense of community and national identity (Leirvik, 2004; Rugh, 2002). This has begun to change in countries like the UAE, Bahrain, and Qatar where foreign curriculum schools have been established, many with an International Baccalaureate, American, British or Australian curricula (Buzan & Gonzalez-Pelaez, 2009; Willoughby, 2008) and often heavily staffed with expatriate teachers (Heard-Bey, 2004). At the higher education level as well, Western university branches dominate the landscape in the UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, accompanied by foreign educational consultants (Akkary, 2014), although local universities are slowly developing academic status. One concern with this form of globalized education is its impact on indigenous social institutions.

Complicating the development of education are also many waves of migration from Western expatriates moving into the Arabian Gulf for employment opportunities, Eastern European migration due to perceived life improvements, and Arab expatriates who have either moved for employment opportunities or as refugees. This produces a great cross-cultural complexity that can lead to conflicts and tensions over ideas and practices about how organizations should be structured and function.

Despite the various political and educational conditions, some educational development in the region is quite literally astounding. The numbers of universities has expanded at a very high rate since the 1940s when there were only 10 universities in the MENA region, rising to 13 by 1953 (5 of which were in Egypt and 3 in Lebanon), 140 by 2000, but mushrooming since then to 260 in 2007, and by 2012 more than 500, the majority of which are private, although some are non-profit. If one includes community colleges, teacher training institutes, and similar special focus organisations, the total is 1139, with non-public organizations exceeding public ones by 80% in Bahrain, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, and the UAE (Wilkens, 2011, p. 2), many of which are branches of foreign universities from the USA, the UK, Australia, and India. For example, the number of universities in Saudi Arabia increased from 8 in 2003 to over 60 by 2015. Part of this expansion is caused by the globalization of Western universities into the region with 40 branches established in Qatar and the UAE during the 2003–2009 period (Romani, 2009).

Access to education has dramatically increased through expansion in school systems over the last five decades, resulting in high primary school enrollment with increasing, but still low rates at the secondary level (UNDP, 2011), for example, from 25000 to over 4 million students in Saudi Arabia and from 907 in 1970 to 600000 in Oman by 2002, reflected in government spending among Arab states at an equal level to that of North America (Rugh, 2002). From 1970 to

2000, education for women aged 15–24 improved considerably, with many countries like Oman, Algeria, and Egypt increasing literacies rates among women two- to three-fold (UNESCO, 2003) with equality in high school achieved in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Palestine, and Tunisia (AbouZeid, 2011) and more girls in secondary school than boys in Lebanon and the UAE (Rugh, 2002) with accompanying increases in literacy rates. For example, the rate among women in Middle East countries ranges from a low 45% in Yemen, to 65% in Algeria, and to very high levels in countries like Qatar at 93% (Angrist, 2013).

Many Middle East countries still have large agricultural sectors, such as Egypt, Iran, Syria, and Yemen, reducing demand for education generally, particularly higher education, and many have high unemployment rates that disadvantage women having to compete with men for scarce jobs. The main challenges that exist, though, are top-down political agendas that are not informed by educational practitioners, initiatives that are driven by external state and NGO actors whose own interests overshadow those of the recipient states and are often disconnected from the social, cultural, and educational realities accompanied by an "uncritical" adoption of Western, mostly US and UK, (pre-packaged) materials and practices. The top-down approach, conventional in the Middle East where initiatives are viewed as the responsibility of national government, contributes to teacher passivity, where innovations at an individual level may bring retaliation, according to Akkary (2014), but is an even more critical problem at the higher education level where scholars have to demonstrate expertise in teaching and research. Accompanying this is a common lack of adequate implementation planning for overly ambitious, large-scale projects, which are expected to be adopted in unreasonably short time periods with a cultural barrier to critical reflection and acknowledging mistakes.

At an organizational level there are many other challenges. At the school level, many teachers lack sufficient training (World Bank, 2008) and are at the bottom of a hierarchy in which they are implementers and "uncritical followers" (Romani, 2009). Despite the many advances made, there are a number of problems that must be addressed to meet international standards: poor quality school systems with inadequate curricula and teaching practices that do not prepare students sufficiently for higher education; poor pay; a lack of financial resources; inadequate public policy, accreditation, regulation and assessment; and rigid, authoritarian governance and a lack of administration that is more "enlightened," transparent and accountable (Wilkens, 2011, pp. 3, 4). Ehteshami (2007) reports many of the same problems, initially reported in the Arab Human Development Report of 2003: 'the deteriorating quality of education in many countries in the region, [and] curricula in schools that encourage submission, obedience, subordination and compliance rather than free critical thinking' (p. 155). Akkary (2014) also reports a lack of development in classroom practices, school climate, and student achievement, confirmed in TIMMS and PISA results for Arab countries generally (UNDP, 2011).

Higher education also faces many problems. Academics are often expected to simply follow direction, and by contract, have their hours filled with assigned duties leaving little time for research; an overvaluation of the quality of university teaching, poor research, and the unavailability of vocational

education accompanied by a "brain drain" from the region (Romani, 2009). There are also low levels of academic freedom, university autonomy, and "obstacles to publication" in higher education; a lack of financial resources (Wilkens, 2011); and libraries reported to be in a poor state (Ehteshami, 2007).

El-Baz (2009) identifies a number of problems with scholarship from the 2003 Arab Human Development report. He highlights, as do many, poor training and lack of preparation of teachers as well as the need for them to also have a greater measure of professional autonomy. The Middle East generally lags behind developed nations in scholarly production, in 1995 with an average of 26 research papers compared with France at 840 and at a high of 1878 in Switzerland, although ahead of China at 11 and India at 19, mostly in applied fields like medicine, health, life sciences, agriculture, and engineering (UNDP, 2003). Another indicator of research success is the citation rate, which in 1987 saw only one paper each from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Algeria quoted more than 40 times, compared with 10481 papers in the USA and 523 papers in Switzerland (UNDP, 2003). Other important indicators are the low number of full-time researchers at 3–10% of developed country rates, and only 50 technicians per million population compared with 1000 in developed countries (UNDP, 2003). A major cause of the low rates is the very low expenditures in relation to developed countries, with Arab countries investing up to 0.2% of GNP compared with developed countries at 2.5–5.0%, the former mostly from government sources whereas around 50% in developed countries up to 1995, with low levels of transforming research into investment projects (UNDP, 2002). Another deficiency in humanities and social science research is a focus on topics that are only relevant to an Arab context, with little study of other traditions or parts of the world and few scientific societies or professional associations. Improvements in these areas have been steady but slow, and still not at international levels (UNDP, 2009).

Al-Rashdan (2010) more recently identified several similar challenges and problems: a soaring demand given the rapidly increasing population in the region; insufficient funding that also affects faculty and staff's living standards with a high export of wealth by Arab students studying abroad; little or no academic freedom granted by government and university administration; poor quality research with unclear goals; administrators appointed by government aimed more at serving officials than building and supporting an academic organization; weak relationships among universities in their systems; poor preparation of academics through rote teaching and enforcing submissiveness and suppression of opinions; and a lack of good governance. Yamani (2006) reports that 25% of university graduates emigrate from the Arab world contributing a "brain drain" to the problems of educational development, a pattern that has existed for some time due mostly to work overload (with as many as 35% of instructional resources used in remedial education for students not prepared for higher education) and top-down research management that is overly bureaucratic (Rugh, 2002).

Not all issues for education are part of economic and human capital development – globalization and postcolonial critiques also focus on national identity, religious, and cultural issues related to the heavy use of foreign languages in many Middle East countries where the English and French have

dominated education since the late Ottoman period, when European and American missionaries became involved in formal education in countries like Lebanon, that since has reinstated Arabic as the common educational language as part of postcolonial national identity development (Zakharia, 2009). The educational system has been used both by colonizers to 'Westernize' Middle East states and by postcolonial governments to instill an independent national identity, as well as a later instrument of modernization in countries like Egypt, Lebanon, and Turkey by expanding primary schooling, creating national curricula, and including Islamic learning (Ashkenazi, 2009). The language issue is a complex one, particularly for English, promoted for its preparing people to study abroad and manage globalized conditions, while others see education through the foreign languages of French and English as a "cultural invasion," like Suleiman (2004) and a carrier of a body of values, like Shakib (2011).

Sub-Regional Conditions

Stable Nation-Building

The oil and gas resources of the Arabian Gulf States (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain), as well as economic diversification, public investment in infrastructure, including education, and national employment and security policies have produced relatively stable states, although Saudi Arabia and Bahrain have experienced ISIS radicalism and internal tensions. Despite similarities in religion, history, and culture, it is important to stress the differences in countries in the region and even in the Arabian Gulf, where political and legal systems and levels of wealth vary, institutional arrangements are different and where philosophies and policies of education differ, as Badry and Willoughby (2016) demonstrate in their collection on the changes in higher education in the Gulf States. Yamani conducts a more detailed comparison of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, showing the differences that exist in the societies that education serves and their socio-political roles that have maintained a high level of conservatism in Saudi and a high level of openness to women's participation, curricular content, higher resources levels and a more developed integrated system of agencies for teaching, research, and quality enhancement (Yamani, 2006). Models differ greatly, with Qatar using mostly government funding through the Qatar Foundation, the UAE using a combination of governmental universities and foreign branches using co-investment that is mostly market-driven, and in Saudi Arabia, a significant portion of funding coming from the King's office in a state-driven development (Romani, 2009), the overall budget for which had tripled from 2008 to 2013.

The Gulf States have had a heavy reliance on expatriate labor ranging from 25–75% (Romani, 2009), although nationalization policies have been instituted in Oman, the UAE, and Saudi as the educational levels of locals increase (Mashood, Verhoeven, & Chansarkar, 2009). Initially teachers from Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, and Syria were brought to staff newly established modern school systems (Willoughy, 2008), although in the last two decades this has been

supplemented, especially in higher education by faculty from the US, the UK, Canada, and Australia teaching mostly US and UK derived curricula.

The current educational system is relatively new in Gulf States, especially higher education, consisting of government colleges and universities as well as those established by private organizations and individuals, and foreign universities establishing branches with a heavy involvement of women, particularly in higher education in a number of countries (Kirdar, 2007). The demand, in part, comes from large numbers of expatriate professional labor who demand a Western-style higher education and local families who want their children to be able to go abroad for graduate degrees, requiring university certificates that are recognized or who wish to remain at home to complete a high quality education (Willoughby, 2008), but also from many locals who wish to study at home or are unable to travel, especially women with families. For example, in the UAE, founded in 1971, there was only one university by 1977, the United Arab Emirates University with 502 students and 54 faculty members, but by 2007 there were 55 higher education organizations accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research with 77426 students and 10000 faculty members (Yousef, 2009).

This large expansion of foreign universities has caused debate, though, with negative effects reported of "cloning" Western educational models which have de-emphasized Arabic as a language of instruction, carried a "secular" hidden curriculum, and replaced the foundations of knowledge with a transplanted tradition (Abi-Mershed, 2010), however, the Arabization of the curriculum in disciplines like medicine and engineering took place in the immediate post-colonial period in Syria and Algeria (Rugh, 2002) and some Arabization has been taking place in Qatar and the UAE. The greatest pressure under globalization, particularly for students in business-related subjects, has been the adoption of the American semester system and mostly using English-medium curriculum, as in Lebanon, some Saudi Arabian and Egyptian universities, and in the UAE (Rugh, 2002). The degree to which education affects the culture of local populations is still a matter of debate, depending upon the strength and continuity of family, tradition, collectivist, and Islamic values in countries like the Gulf States, which can modify modernization influences (Fox, Mourtada-Sabbah, & Al-Mutawa, 2006). There are other problems such as those that are relatively minor like the "borrowing" of what Donn and Al Manthri (2010) refer to as the "off-loading" of failed educational experiments (or reforms) from the West to full-scale destruction and devastation in states where education has all but disintegrated. A rapid and extensive attendance and investment in schooling and higher education that began in the 1950s and carried through to the present day, however, carries limitations in contributing to nation-building if modeled on external sources (Badry & Willoughby, 2016).

Postcolonial or Post-war Reconstruction

A number of postcolonial and post-war states in the region have constructed fairly stable, although politically active, nations, such as Morocco with a power-sharing system between its monarchy and a moderate Islamic government,

Algeria that weathered the Arab Spring movements in part because of a reluctance to return to recent civil war, and Tunisia that successfully held parliamentary elections and passed a new Constitution. One role of colonization through education is the importation of colonial education, producing co-existing foreign and local systems that affected social class, religious affiliation and culture, shaping identity and citizenship roles (Abi-Mershed, 2010), a process that is still underway in the region under globalization.

Turkey, for example, despite its recent coup attempt, has also been a relatively stable state following a Westernization and secularization path beginning modestly in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century to prepare young men for the civil service. A more comprehensive nationalization of education was carried out in the early twentieth century under Atatürk with a Western-oriented education system disengaged from Islam and Islamic elites and organizations, bringing it under state control. This produced a pattern of schooling following a Western model of primary, secondary, and post-secondary schools with state and private universities and vocational schools (Ashkenazi, 2009; Kaplan, 2006). Following the rise of political Islam in the 1970s and the rise to political power of Özul as Prime Minister in the 1980s, Turkey strengthened Islam in the national system by opening Qur'anic schools and making religious courses compulsory and established the Turkish Islamic Synthesis that integrated religious values and traditions with Western-style laws and secular structures (Ashkenazi, 2009). However, tensions between secularization and Islamic interests increased during the 1990s when 10% of the student population were enrolled in Islamic schools (after completing mandatory years in public schools), and a new center-right political party with Islamic affiliations came to power, sparking demonstrations and the recent coup attempt in July 2016 in Turkey during which over 1000 private schools, 1200 foundations and associations, 35 medical organizations, and 15 universities associated with the Gulenist Islamic movement were closed and many hundreds of teachers and university heads were dismissed or suspended (BBC News, 2016).

Jordan has also remained relatively stable in the region due largely to the admired leadership of King Hussein and subsequently by his son. Because the country has few natural resources, it has followed a development strategy of focusing on its human capital. In the twentieth century Jordan spent a high percentage of its budget on phases of educational reform that began with making primary education compulsory, diversifying secondary education, and finally, instituting reforms to improve the quality of the curriculum, teaching, and facilities (Abbas, 2012). The last major reform in education has been a restructuring since 1998 to develop more problem-solving and critical thinking abilities, modified in 2002 to aim for a knowledge economy involving the introduction of more technology, the study of global cultures and partnerships with international agencies, and the adoption of an educational philosophy grounded in Islam, Arab culture, national identity, and an international perspective and principles of social justice (Abbas, 2012).

The main balance being struck in stable postcolonial states is between the Islamic and Arab heritage, language, and values necessary for nation-building

with international standards of education to engage in the global economy, international political participation, and regional relationships for stability.

Destabilized and Fragile States

A number of states like Egypt and Lebanon have experienced unrest and changes in government, both prior to the Arab Spring and since, that compromise the stability of the state. However, educational development has still been taking place. Egypt, like most Middle East countries, increased expenditure on education in the post-World War II period to support its rapidly expanding population and increased levels of school registration from 1900000 in 1954 to 5900000 in 1973, with many graduates staffing a growing civil service, however, the authoritarian governments in Egypt have kept a strict control over education and the media to a large extent hindering modernization of the educational system (Owen, 1992, pp. 35–36). Educational organizations can also fulfill state and political roles, for example, the Egyptian state used the al-Azhar University to promote governmental secularization policies under Nasser, which, however, undermined its standards and credibility as a religious institution (Abi-Mershed, 2010), and it has used the curriculum since the 1950s in an expanded free and compulsory public system to support patriotism and religion although it failed to contribute to economic and social development or to overcome sectarian conflict (Ashkenazi, 2009).

Egypt's 2011 mass uprising against Mubarak's authoritarian rule, and the 2013 military ousting of the elected president Morsi, and ISIS activity in the country have caused significant destabilization due in part to the economic and educational conditions. The Mubarak regime, while increasing investments in Egypt's economy, produced a widening wealth gap, increasingly became corrupt, experienced frequent strikes, and saw the collapse of the public sector, including education, which has continued to degrade through the Arab Spring due to operational interruptions and cuts in funding (Wafa, 2015), reflected in the country's drop by 13 positions on the World Economic Forum's Competitiveness scale (Schwab & Xavier, 2013). Wafa (2015) reports on the reactionary responsiveness that occurs in social institutions in periods of revolutionary regime change, but also on a more proactive response by the American University in Cairo which immediately began revising its curriculum and teaching methods once it resumed operations after the initial 18 days of protests and disruptions, focusing on current events with revolutionary themes and critiques and public dialogues. While the political change provides an opportunity for capacity-building in institutions both to respond to public demand and modernize the curriculum, such as fitting into current trends, incorporating marginalized groups, teaching more courses in Arabic, increasing both theoretical content and practical application, and incorporating more international experience (Wafa, 2015), it is far too soon to evaluate the final impact political unrest and regime change will have.

Lebanon has become a weakened state where many non-state actors that are political movements or paramilitary religiously-aligned organizations are more powerful than governmental institutions, producing what is generally called a

"consociational regime" attempting to maintain a balance, and over the last five years there has been intense fighting between pro- and anti-Syrian government supporters and sympathizers on both sides (Watenpaugh, Fricke, & King, 2014, pp. 6, 14). Contributing to Lebanon's weak political status are 450000 Palestinian refugees who receive few civil rights, in part due to their disruption of the political balance in the country leading to the 1975–1990 civil war.

The Lebanese higher education system has been highly developed with 44 institutions ranging in size from 2000 to 70000 students and a curriculum based either on the American liberal arts model or the French university model, most of which use English or French as the medium of instruction. Some were established in the nineteenth century, but most emerged after the civil war, and most are for-profit organizations associated with a religious group or political party, and attract many foreign students, who numbered 30000 of the country's 180000 students before the current conflict (Watenpaugh, Frickem & King, 2014, p. 20). The politics of language colonization is evident clearly in Lebanon where Arabic and foreign languages compete in the school system, with Arabic carrying a symbolic status of cultural and religious identity (Abi-Mershed, 2010).

Disintegrating States

There are a number of disintegrating states experiencing human devastation such as Syria (Glass, 2016), Iraq (Al-Ali, 2014) and Yemen (Brehony, 2013; Mohamed, Gerber, & Aboulkacem, 2016) due to legacies of authoritarian government, subsequent foreign mismanagement, and the rise of the Islamic State (Isakhan, 2015), producing a breakdown in state institutions with a lack of central legitimate authority. Some of these states have been in war-torn conditions for some time, where millions of children and their teachers are experiencing the conflict at first hand. UNICEF (2015) estimates that in 2014 there were 214 attacks on schools in the MENA region, with "killing, abduction and arbitrary arrest of students, teachers and education personnel" (p. 6) occurring with regularity, and education buildings being used for military purposes. During this period about 13 million children are not attending school and an estimated 8850 schools in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya have been lost or reassigned for other use.

It is sometimes hard to remember that some fractured states in the Middle East had excellent educational systems with high rates of enrollment and high standards. Iraq, prior to the First Gulf War, had been commended in the early 1980s by the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for having produced "one of the best education systems in the Arab world" (cited in UNESCO, 2011) which was provided free through to the tertiary level. This is an educational world that no longer exists – through wars, sanctions placed on Iraq, and a failed rebuilding program since the second Iraq War, school years have been disrupted for many students, buildings have been destroyed, looted or reassigned for ammunition storage, and frequent small-scale attacks. By 2010, 20% of people had no formal education. The effects will last a very long time – rebuilding a viable, secure and functional educational system will be necessary in the rebuilding of the state, when it emerges from its current disintegration. Syria, also, had a relatively well-developed educational system with 93% of children in primary

education and 67% in secondary school, with literacy rates at 95% for 15–24-year-olds (Ndaruhutse & West, 2015). The Syrian government policy on higher education was to heavily subsidize universities and provide equal access for women, which by 2009 had achieved a 50% enrollment rate (Watenpaugh, Fricke, & King, 2014, p. 13).

The situation in Iraq has been disintegrating since the first Gulf War when sanctions were imposed in the early 2000s, creating extreme hardship with no funds going to education and infrastructure, and foreign administration of the country following the second Gulf War led to a complete breakdown in education. It is generally considered to be one of the most corrupt countries in the world, with basic services spotty or non-existent, such as electricity, and basic social institutions like education disintegrating, while the vast majority of the budget by 2012 went to the military. The education system has been in steady decline for decades, partly due to teachers and thinkers leaving the country (Al-Ali, 2014). The effects of sequential wars have also had a negative effect on ethics that have degenerated into alienation and patron-client relationships (Jabar, 2004).

Yemen has experienced civil wars and unrest throughout the twentieth century, causing socio-economic issues, basic services, security and the rule of law to deteriorate up to the present escalation of violence (Alwazir, 2016). On a scale of fragile state types, Yemen has been classified as being in a "fragility trap" meaning that it has been fragile for a long period of time, largely due to internal conflict, with little evidence of a stable or robust state structure and is volatile for a number of reasons including regional and tribal divisions, patronage regimes, and a continuing deterioration in state authority and legitimacy (Carment et al., 2015). Since 2011, the Houthi movement, with support from Iran, has taken over large parts of the country causing in turn Al-Qaeda activity that has destroyed much of its civil infrastructure and produced a sufficient threat in the region that Saudi-led coalition of forces have waged war.

Yemen is still largely rural with two-thirds of its 24 million population living in rural areas where tribal affiliation is the primary structuring force in its communities, and the political system is dominated by power bargaining, patron-client relationships and extended family systems. It is the poorest country in the Arab world and is ranked 154th out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index, reflecting among other factors low average years of schooling (Al-Iryani, de Janvry, & Sadoulet, 2015). Education has been underfunded over the long term, with a significant portion of schooling provided by religious organizations with highly variable standards. Oil and gas revenues under the recent Saleh regime were not used for general infrastructure, leaving these areas lacking basic services of electricity, schools, hospitals, and roads (Van Veen, 2014), a primary factor in the current unrest in the country.

During the late 1990s when Yemen was experiencing hyperinflation and a political crisis resulting in civil war in 1994, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, with US financial aid, assisted the government in establishing a reform package that was administered through the Social Fund for Development, aimed at working at the community level to combat poverty and build up a social safety net that included education, initially the largest share of expenditures and reaching 25% of villages, although tensions have existed politically since its

operations threaten the political patronage system (Al-Iryani, de Janvry, & Sadoulet, 2015). Despite localized civil wars, a separatist movement in the south and the increasing presence of Al-Qaeda, the Fund had appreciable successes in increasing school enrollment especially for girls, and during the crises beginning in 2011 was one of the few national institutions continuing to operate. With the recent escalation in violence and no prospects of end in sight, the future for education remains bleak.

Alwazir (2016) has investigated the political role of youth and students in Yemen's domestic strife, composed of students, unemployed graduates, and joined by other non-partisan older participants aiming at equal citizenship and a civil society, distancing themselves from all political forces and parties which they consider corrupt and which constitute the intra-elite conflict in the country (Mahdi & Al-Hattami, 2016). Because of their non-alliance, they have been regarded as "repositories" of legitimacy and social actors who potentially could perform the role of consensus builders. Educational centers, like the university in the capital, Sanaa, serve as sites for protest and government counter-action by using snipers to fire on unarmed protesters as it did in January of 2011.

Since the bombing campaign by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition in early 2015, Amnesty International (2015) has reported that strikes have included schools, killing a small number of children and disrupting the education system even more with 34% (1.8 million) of children by late 2015 have not gone to school since the strikes began, and 600,000 high school students not being able to sit final examinations. By October 2015, 1000 schools had either been totally destroyed, partially damaged, or are being used to shelter displaced people.

Syria is a quickly disintegrating state, in the last few decades initially subject to the Assad – father and son – regime, then state war against its own citizens during the Arab Spring period, now complicated by the establishment of ISIS on former Syrian and Iraqi territory. By 2014, there were 6.5 million internally displaced people in Syria and another 2.8 million refugees in other countries like Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, and Egypt, a number that rose to 7.6 million displaced people in Syria and 3.9 million refugees outside Syria by March of 2015 (Ndaruhutse & West, 2015). For most Syrians, life has stopped, reducing most of the population to survival status and effectively ending their education – the economy, health, and education sectors have collapsed or even disappeared completely. Buildings and campuses have sustained severe damage, and travel for students, teachers, and professors is dangerous – for those who try to attend, they can be targets of violence by the Ba'ath Party-affiliated student union and student paramilitary student group (Watenpaugh, Fricke, & King, 2014, pp. 9–10). As in many other states experiencing war and invasion, school buildings are converted to other uses such as detention and torture centers or as storage centers for equipment or to house military or intelligence personnel (GCPEA, 2014). According to UNICEF (2015), by 2014, 52500 teachers and 523 school counsellors had left the schools, many now refugees in other countries. In Islamic State-controlled areas of Syria, the curriculum has been changed to remove a number of subjects and introduce additional rules for girls. In effect, education has stopped as a consequence of

destruction or danger to life and is part of a humanitarian disaster, a wide-spread violation of human rights and loss of dignity (Watenpaugh, Fricke & Siegel, 2013).

The Dispossessed

The dispossessed in the Middle East include refugee groups like Palestinians and Syrians, but also groups like the Kurds in Syria who have been marginalized and oppressed, including about one million deprived of the health, educational services, and career opportunities provided to other citizens, their language banned in schools and the media, and many of whom were considered stateless immigrants from Turkey (Allsopp, 2015). In Iraq Kurds were displaced and many of their villages destroyed from the 1970s to 2001, although since Saddam Hussein fell from power, the Kurdish population has benefited from the UN oil program to build its economic system and an expansion in higher education to 17 public and private universities (Aziz, 2011).

A large number of Palestinians still reside in the West Bank and the Gaza, and politically ranged between the Islamists of Hamas and Fatah nationalists who are, effectively caught between strategies of negotiation and armed resistance (Salem, 2015). Approximately 4.5 million were still registered in UN camps as of 2008 in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with almost half in Jordan (Chatty, 2010, p. 205) with varying rights to education, from full rights in Syria to severely restricted in Lebanon and lack of rights in the Gaza Strip. Much of the debate about Palestinian education is centered on its curriculum which detractors argue incites politicized activity rather than contributing to peace, democracy, or cultural and economic development. However, a UNESCO report (2006), reviewing the available studies, refutes this claim, demonstrating that for the most part the texts remain silent on controversial issues like Palestinian national identity. The most recent crisis was the bombing campaign in Gaza in 2014, after which UNICEF (2015) launched a "Back to School Campaign" with the Ministry of Education & Higher Education safely returning 260000 children to government schools, providing teaching kits to 395 schools and psychosocial support for 11000 teachers.

The situation in Syria is much more dire. Watenpaugh, Fricke, and Siegel (2013) summarize the conditions of higher education in Syria prior to the beginning of hostilities that followed the "Arab Spring" uprisings in 2011, with university students playing a significant role. They report that for two generations, there was a rapid growth in higher education due in part to the ruling Ba'athist Party support for literacy and science and technology development, as well as women's education, with more than half of students being women. During this period a number of large universities and community colleges were established in Damascus and other major cities, with over 100000 Syrians attending university by 2000. At this point, a number of educational reforms were under way to improve quality and the capacity of the system: the creation of private universities that paid much higher salaries, however, access to and success in universities were also tied to a reward and discipline function for the Assad regime (p. 8). At the time of the uprisings, the regime's reaction was swift and brutal, and included targeting

university students at the university and at home with searches, arrests, interrogations, seizure of computers and papers, and deaths, and with the harassment of academics, largely by Shabiha, or "ghosts," secret police and military personnel. University buildings were surrounded by checkpoints which placed students and academics at risk or were situated next to a battle front line (pp. 8–9).

By 2014, there were 1000000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, of whom approximately 70000 were displaced university students with comparable numbers in Jordan and Turkey. Only about 40% of refugee Syrian children are enrolled in schools (Culbertson & Constant, 2015). In all three countries higher education has continued for a few although the impact on these countries is already straining resources and public services, and in Lebanon there are "unwritten discriminatory policies" (Watenpaugh, Fricke, & King, 2014, p. 6), excluding Syrian university students and academics. Many of them receive financial assistance from NGOs although the Lebanese Association for Scientific Research has established a scholarship program that had provided 250 scholarships in its first year of operation in 2013, and many of the male students are motivated to study in order to avoid military service in Syria (p. 21). They are generally barred from studying due to entrance exams that are in English or French, in which they cannot compete well. A large number work in order to support themselves and their families who have fled to Lebanon with them, mostly in lower-skilled jobs that are predominantly illegal and are paid less than Lebanese workers, and they are barred from a number of professional syndicates in higher professions (p. 24).

This situation is exacerbated by Lebanese education officials not establishing education programs for displaced Syrians, a legacy partly of not creating permanent institutions or programs for the large refugee Palestinian population residing in the country. A contributory factor is the Syrian al-Assad regime's occupation of Lebanon from 1976 to 2005, maintaining a force of almost 30000 soldiers and secret police, and fears among at least some university students that Syrian secret police have continued to operate in Lebanon, sometimes posing as students (p. 16). Other aspects of life are also difficult – problems crossing border points, going through checkpoints, threats to personal security by Syrian Embassy staff if not pro-regime, and harassment and detention by Lebanese officials.

In Lebanon, Syrian academic refugees experience the same general problems in legal impediments, high competition for positions, sectarian bias, weaker English and French, hurdles in obtaining work permits and residency, and fears of Syrian regime activity in the country detrimental for those who are not pro-regime. For many, international organizations and donors make work possible in universities. They face much the same situation in Jordan. However, two higher education exile organizations have been formed among Syrians: the Union of Free Syrian Academics and the Union of Free Syrian Students refugees to represent their interests outside of Syria and to prepare for an eventual return to Syria (Watenpaugh, Fricke & Siegel, 2013).

The situation in Jordan is not much different – the influx of refugees has placed enormous economic, social, and institutional pressures on the country and a place for Syrians that has a much higher cost of tuition, fees, and cost of living than Syria. In additional, students often do not have travel documents, academic records or certificates, with little possibility of getting assistance from a pro-Assad

regime Embassy. However, Jordan has relaxed documentation requirements for many university students, but the incompatibility of the French-modeled Syrian system and the American-modeled Jordanian system creates difficulties with credit transfer. By January of 2013, there were an estimated 470000–500000 Syrian refugees, that rose to 657203 by August, 2016 (UNHCR, 2016). By 2014, UNICEF (2015) reported that Syrian children have greatly burdened already taxed schools systems in Lebanon and Jordan, and where bullying and violence rates have been reported.

For those Syrian children in Turkey, a new language of instruction has to be learned, although a revised Syrian curriculum was approved by the government. The situation has been somewhat mitigated through non-formal educational activities and additional formal education support through the 2013 launching of a "No Lost Generation" initiative of the UN, NGOs, and international donors. The size of the school-age refugee population from Syria has what Ndaruhutse and West (2015) call the "butterfly effect" placing excessive burdens on the schools systems of Lebanon and Turkey, lowering the effectiveness and quality of their systems. Lebanon, for example, had spent US$29 million supplemented with a further $24 million from UN agencies in 2013 for the 40000 Syrian children in their schools in 2013, with an estimate that in 2014 and 2015 they would need $348–434 million to stabilize their educational system as more refugees arrived (Ndaruhutse & West, 2015).

Conclusion

Educational development in the MENA is a highly fractious, complex and variable topic, ranging from institution-building and modernization to sectarian and political stresses and to war and disintegration. Research is complicated by many states that do not provide information to international agencies or researchers collecting data, and events in many countries are moving so rapidly that adequate scholarly information is not available. Research also cannot treat education as a stand-alone institution – it is interpenetrated by a complex array of sovereignties, socio-economic conditions, cultural factors, and regional dynamics. In addition, there are postcolonial issues arising in the role of Western curriculum, teaching, and research. One of the strategic questions relevant to this topic is one asked by Bashshur (2005), "How [can one] benefit from the West without crushing under its weight and losing one's soul and heart in the process?"

Akkary (2014) sees two major requirements that have to be met to improve educational provision and achievement that is grounded in empirical research in the Middle East: first, an understanding of what improved schooling requires; and, second, policy strategies for implementation and change that can produce higher levels of participation and achievement. In addition, he notes a number of practices in a transformative rather than top-down bureaucratic approach to educational change that are needed: abandoning pre-packaged programs for indigenous development and modified or adapted educational material and practices suitable to their contexts, and using a system view to bring about coordinated and multi-organization and agency change. Wilkens (2011), also, makes

a number of recommendations for improvement in higher education, such as changing governance and administrative structures to allow for more independence from government and owners of private universities, with accountability systems for senior positions, improving the quality of faculty for teaching and research, exploring cost-sharing and private sector partnerships to increase funding and making better linkages between education and the workplace, and improving the quality and status of vocational and technical education, however, these measures are only possible in stable countries where the mind set has changed from top-down, authoritarian practices.

The field of educational administration itself has a developmental challenge requiring capacity-building to theoretically and empirically deal with conditions that are not only politically and culturally different from Western nations and an understanding and strategies to respond to nations operating under different values systems, like that of Islam and Arab culture and/or are in distress (see Samier, 2013). While the literature in comparative, international and Middle East and Islamic education is expanding, it has to be more closely aligned with the local values and conditions of the Middle East and with the postcolonial and decolonizing literature and globalization critiques to adequately provide a professional repository of knowledge and skills that can actually be used effectively in Middle East contexts.

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10

Profiting from the Poor

The Emergence of Multinational Edu-Businesses in Hyderabad, India[1]
Carol Anne Spreen and Sangeeta Kamat

Introduction

> Private for-profit multinational corporations are making billions of dollars by charging poor families around the world to send their children to school. At the same time, governments have been shirking their obligations to provide quality public schooling by diverting significant funds to private sector actors and inviting them in to run large segments of the education system. If education is a fundamental human right, why should the world's poor be paying billions to multinational corporations for their education?
>
> (EI Report Launch Brief, July 2016)

This chapter describes the broad neoliberal underpinnings and the corporate interests in for-profit education and shows how these efforts undermine public education as a fundamental human right. It demonstrates how the privatization and commercialization of education through scalable chains of low-fee schools and selling educational products and services unfolded and evolved in Hyderabad, India. Through in-depth qualitative research conducted over several months, the study reveals a complex assemblage of global actors that are invested in the business of private education and who stand to make a considerable profit from it. Our findings challenge the global education industry's claims that private schooling for the poor can be profitable while simultaneously promising a quality education. We argue that, despite the promises of these profiteers, low-fee private schools have not delivered anything close to a quality education, and we show that privatization leads to increasing inequalities based on gender discrimination and social exclusion, as well as the de-professionalization of teachers. We explain that user fees, in particular, undermine the right to education, exacerbating inequality, and contributing to social stratification.

We conclude this chapter by asserting that all children have the right to a free quality public education and draw attention to several compounding factors that have led to the decimation of public education in India. In the last few decades,

government-funded schools have suffered from disinvestment and neglect, creating a mass exodus of working poor and the middle class from public schools, leaving the poorest and most vulnerable behind. While tremendous gains have been made throughout India in terms of access and enrollment, this is clearly not enough. We point out that due to government neglect, public schools have not been adequately resourced to handle the increasing demands – there is a teacher shortage, 47% of schools do nt have functional girls' toilets, and 26% do not have access to drinking water. These conditions have fueled the exodus out of public schools and into that private sector that has been marketed and sold as a "better option." The lack of political will to adequately finance, support, and monitor the public education system has legitimated corporate "solutions" to the education crisis. The massive growth of low-fee, private schools and the commercialization of education are directly related to the government's failure to meet its Constitutional responsibilities under the Right to Education Act as well as its international obligations to provide free education as a fundamental human right.

Examining the North-South Impact of the Global Education Industry

Over the last decade, education for the poor in the developing world has become an increasingly attractive market for global investors and multinational corporations. This movement, known as the Global Education Industry (GEI), is vested in setting up schools for profit. It presents private schools as the best alternative to public schooling and possibly the only alternative to universalizing access to education in developing and emerging economies.

Among developing countries, India is almost always underscored as a vast education market ripe with potential and profits. With nearly 200 million pupils in the school sector, the Indian education sector is estimated to be worth US$110 billion by global investors.[2] Multinational corporations like Pearson, along with international chains like Bridge International Academies, have encouraged privatization of the school sector in India through the promotion of private school chains, vouchers, public-private partnerships and education products and services, especially targeting schools in low-income and working-class communities. In his research detailing the reach of the Global Education Industry, Verger (2016) describes the range and activities of the economic actors that are increasingly involved in providing education and the production of educational goods and services.

> While the privatisation of education is not a new phenomenon, the increasingly prominent role of profit-oriented private organisations in education across the globe is more recent. Now, more than ever before, a broader range of educational services are produced, exchanged, and consumed on a for-profit basis and through supra-national interactions. This phenomenon is evident with services that go beyond traditional private schools and universities and include, to name a few, alternative forms

of educational provision (including e-learning), test preparation services, edu-marketing, the provision of curriculum packages, private tutoring and other supplemental education services, certification services, teacher training, recruitment of university students, and school improvement services. All these services — and the actors that provide them — constitute what we call the Global Education Industry (GEI).

Verger outlines several features of the GEI that are becoming commonplace in countries globally that are also common to India. Among these are "chains of private schools (such as … Bridge International Academies), which are contributing to the diversification of the private schooling sector that has been traditionally in hands of religious or NGO-based providers." He also points to "big education corporations and conglomerates, with companies such as Pearson, which provide a broad range of publishing and educational services, and IT/ software companies, such as Microsoft, Intel, Hewlett Packard or Blackboard standing out." The list of players also includes:

consultancy firms, ranging from big transnational corporations such as Pricewaterhouse Coopers or McKinsey that have broad portfolios, and apply business logic to education, and to a wide but dispersed constellation of individual consultants, some of which focus more exclusively on education.

And other non-state actors such as philanthropic foundations (e.g. the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation or the Hewlett Foundation), which are formally autonomous from the corporate sponsorships, but are usually implicitly aligned with neoliberal strategies of their funders, board members and founders. Lastly, Verger points to the rising role for advocacy networks, which emerge when edu-businesses and other types of private corporations come together in a more or less formal or more or less stable way to advocate for educational changes, often in the public policy realm (Verger, 2016).

   Our research reveals that the education sector in India, much like those in other emerging economies, has incorporated most of these dimensions of the global education industry and is perhaps its biggest market. We found all of these aspects of the GEI in the Indian sector, including linkages with global corporations like Pearson, the emergence of international chains such as Bridge International Academies, and the engagement with corporate foundations like Dell and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation along with a variety of international consultants. Many of the investments and financing of the private sector in India are drawn from venture capital firms such as Gray Matters Capital and private equity firms such as Kaizen Management,[3] who are all active in encouraging and investing in for-profit commercial ventures in India's growing education technology sector, especially targeting schools in low-income and working-class communities. A new and evolving phenomenon in India is the emergence of homegrown private foundations investing in the commercialization of education, such as Azim Premji Foundation, Naam Foundation, Central Square Foundation, and the Naandi Foundation. These Indian foundations have varying perspectives on the

importance of public education and a range of dealings with for-profit investments in education (see, for instance, Dhankar, 2016). These relatively new actors have begun to join up with traditional neoliberal institutions that have long been influential in promoting the privatization of education, including the World Bank, DFID and the IFC (the private investment arm of the World Bank).

The following sections of this chapter detail how private sector market-making in India has unfolded over the last two decades. Going beyond merely mapping the financial ties of global capital, this is a detailed case study of local actors and institutions in Hyderabad, set against the backdrop of global patterns, such as the rise of neoliberal ideology (including the financialization, branding, and philanthropic interests in education) that have changed the education system and the policy landscape. We illustrate some of the strategic and predatory approaches that were deployed by multinational corporations, edu-preneurs, and philanthropists, as they combined forces with India's growing technology industry to create and build new education products and services to become what is increasingly referred to as the "educational ecosystem." Finally, we map this complex well-networked assemblage of global actors and show how they are also in the business of policy advocacy and lobbying to support educational privatization, and stand to make a considerable profit from it.

The Emergence of the Global Education Industry in India

Several dimensions of the GEI and the marketization of education that Verger (2016) laid out were amply evident in our research. In this section we describe four related domains and activities that have contributed to building or scaling up the privatization and commercialization of education in India: (1) the growth and evolution of low-fee private schools; (2) multinational market-making through Hyderbad's growing technology industry; (3) the growing interest in public-private partnerships (PPPs) between global actors and the Indian government; and (4) an ecosystem for school privatization – revealing the heterogeneity of actors (funders, incubators, think tanks, solution providers, consultants, rating agencies, and connectors), who have considerable influence in promoting market-based education programs and policies.

The Growth of Low-Fee Private Schooling in India: Tooley and Pearson

India is no exception to the world-wide neoliberal trend of commercialization of education, its history can be traced through the origins and growth of low-fee private schools sectors and the subsequent rise in corporate involvement in a range of educational provisioning through the technology industry.

The decline of public education in India and the concomitant growth of private education can be traced to three main factors. First, the meager education budget that does not match demand. India has the largest youth demographic in the world, with half the country's population of 1.2 billion under the age of 25, but the

education budget hovers at around 3.8% of gross national product (GNP)[4] (Government of India, 2016). Moreover, in 1968, the Indian state had committed to 6% of GNP for its education budget, a target unfulfilled to this day (Tilak, 2009, 2006). A lack of political will to adequately finance and support public education has legitimated the corporate sector "solution" to and involvement in education.

Second, as early as in 1991, the Indian state launched far-reaching reforms to liberalize, deregulate, and privatize the public sector, including social sectors such as health and education (Nayyar, 2008; Venkatnarayanan, 2015). As a result, state governments divested themselves of government schools, shrinking the size of the sector and adversely impacting quality. Studies show that "the government's reduced priority toward providing sufficient resources to elementary education has indirectly increased the privatization of schools at elementary level" (Venkatnarayanan, 2015). Third, these reforms opened the door to closer integration with the global economy and expanded the service sector, especially in the information technology (IT) field that has intensified the demand for English language education. At the same time teachers in government schools were required to teach in the students' native languages,[5] especially at the primary level. As a result, in a context of changed global aspirations and declining quality, government schools have been increasingly perceived as an impediment to success in the new economy (Faust & Nagar, 2001; Jeffrey et al., 2008; Lukose, 2009). Thus, these economic, social, and political transformations of the last two decades have led to the proliferation of private (English-medium) schools in the country.

Since 2001, the number of schools in the private sector has grown rapidly across India. According to District Information System for Education (DISE) 2011–2012 Report, out of the total schools in India about 21.20% are private schools, which means that out of over 1.41 million total schools in India around 0.3 million are in the private sector. Other estimates show that student enrollment in private schools grew rapidly from about 10% in 2006 to 29% in 2013. And, due to the historical and contextual factors described above, a range of schools have emerged that cater to different income households, exacerbating inequality and creating a vastly unequal tiered educational system. At the top are elite international schools affiliated to the IB Board (International Baccalaureate), based in Geneva, Switzerland, or to the Indian General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), based in Cambridge, United Kingdom (UK). For the affluent, these schools provide pathways to undergraduate education in the United States (US) or the UK. For professional and middle-class households, there are well-resourced mid-level private schools where admission is restricted and access highly competitive. At the bottom end are low-fee private schools (LFPS), sometimes also known as "budget" schools or "affordable private schools,"[6] that cater to working-class and poor households.

Origins of Low-Fee Private Schooling in India

These third-tier low-cost private schools of Hyderabad came to global prominence through the work of James Tooley from the University of Newcastle, UK, a leading advocate of low-fee schooling throughout the world who "discovered"

them while exploring the by-lanes of Hyderabad's Old City as a consultant to the World Bank in January 2000.

> Everywhere among the little stores and workshops were little private schools! I could see handwritten signs pointing to them even here on the edge of the slums. I was amazed, but also confused: Why had no one I worked with in India told me about them? (Tooley, 2009)

The Old City is an area of 19 square miles with a population of just over 1 million, most of whom are working-class and poor and identify as Muslim. In his book, *The Beautiful Tree: How the World's Poorest People Are Educating Themselves*, Tooley describes the "grassroots privatisation" of education as an act of self-determination. In this book, published by the right-wing, conservative Cato Institute, Tooley's position is unambiguous: the state is irrelevant and ineffective, and should be forced out of the education sector. Removing the state from education means delinking education from the public good and placing it in the service of the market and individual interest. He saw this "grassroots privatisation" in India as a ready market in need of restructuring and rationalizing to make it a far more profitable enterprise than it was. Tooley's writings caught the attention of a powerful group of international policy elites and influential non-state actors (including the global publishing and education profiteer, Pearson) that began to promote privatization and low-fee private schooling as "the poor's best chance" (Tooley, 2000).

The presence of over 1000 low-fee private schools in Hyderabad offered a rich opportunity for Tooley to start touting "budget schools," "private schools for the poor," "teaching shops," or "affordable schools" as the remedy to the poor quality and/or limited availability of state education provisioning in most developing countries. As in other parts of the country, Hyderabad saw a massive growth of private schools in the late 1990s. *Today, 82% of the school-going population in Hyderabad city is in private schools* (ASER, 2014).

Proponents of affordable or low-fee private schools promote these as a cost-effective, profitable, and economically viable way to universalize basic educational services, presenting it as a win-win formula for companies seeking a profit and for poor families wanting an education (Jain & Dholakia, 2009; Pearson, 2012a; Tooley, Dixon, & Gomathi, 2007). Importantly, the vast majority of the research that makes a case for private schooling as an optimal solution for the poor is authored by Tooley and his associates, using data from schools in Hyderabad that are clients or affiliates of Tooley's company, Empathy Learning Systems, and/or are commissioned by Pearson and other pro-market international firms and think tanks (Tooley, 1999, 2007; Tooley & Dixon, 2003; Tooley et al., 2007; Tooley et al., 2009; Tulloch et al., 2014). Our study critically assesses these multinational actors' evidence and claims to make schooling for the poor profitable while simultaneously promising quality education.

The first claim we debunk is that these schools provide "affordable" schooling for the poor. Our evidence, also supported by numerous other peer-reviewed studies, found that the LFPS in Hyderabad do not serve the very poor and most marginalized children (Government of India, 2009; Nambissan, 2012; Tilak,

2009). Our research interviews indicated that the monthly fee for LFPS schools are in the range of Rs. 250–1000 (US$6–US$20). An estimated 37% of the country's population live well below the poverty line and thus cannot afford even the cheapest low-fee schools, that is if they need to also provide food and shelter for their families (Government of India, 2009; Nambissan, 2012; Tilak, 2009). Parents who are able to send their children to LFPS are the working poor with steady incomes such as rickshaw drivers or domestic workers. Monthly incomes in these households are about US$300 (Rs. 18000–20000) and parents spend about 20–30% of that income per child on school fees. These "low-fee" schools cater to a certain stratum of the "urban poor" with relatively steady incomes. They remain unaffordable to the households dependent on daily wages, recent migrants, and generally to female-headed households in the community.

Even for children who attend supposed "low-fee schools," 30% of household expenditure (across different income categories) spent on private schooling is significant for their families, with the highest costs paid at the primary level (Tilak, 2009). Studies by Tilak and Mehrotra identify a range of inequalities in household expenditure on education – by gender, rural-urban, household expenditure quintiles, and even by type of education – indicating that primary education being offered by different types of private and public schools across the country tends to accentuate inequalities (Mehrotra, 2005; Tilak, 2009).

Several education researchers have long argued that the role of LFPS in reaching the underserved is overstated (Kelly et al., 2016; Woodhead et al., 2013) and that the increasing role of the private sector will increase inequality (Colclough, 1996). These findings corroborate other studies that examine the socio-economic profile of families in LFPS to show that a significant proportion of rural and urban poor are unable to access LFPS (Goyal & Pandey, 2009; Härmä, 2011; Juneja, 2010). Kelly et al. (2016) cite several recent research studies in India that suggest that the dramatic rise in LFPS is indeed exacerbating gender and class-based inequalities within and outside of families, forcing many into debt, while the poorest of the poor remain excluded from the system (Azam & Kingdon, 2013; Goyal & Pandey, 2009; Härmä, 2009, 2011; Singh & Bangay, 2014; Woodhead et al., 2013). Kelly et al. (2016, p. 182) found "caste to be the most significant predictor of school type, demonstrating consistent associations with the type of school attended across different schooling levels." More specifically, they found "those from traditionally marginalized groups (e.g. those identified as coming from a particular tribe) were ten times more likely to attend government schools" than those from the general caste, and those whose mothers had no education were also more likely to attend government schools. They also found an association with parental occupation and private school enrollment, specifically that students whose "fathers had regular salaried employment were more likely to be enrolled in private schools," which points to an "underlying social hierarchy beyond income level" that plays a role in LFPS enrolment. James and Woodhead (2014) also found that caregivers select schools based on what they deem appropriate for their class. This social selection based on class interests (even if aspirational) leads to increased hierarchies, inequality, and social exclusion. Other disadvantaged groups, e.g. children with disabilities or those who speak minority languages, are also likely be excluded or discriminated against in LFPS.

Our full report demonstrates that privatization of education disproportionately affects the poorest and most vulnerable. The cost of private education also has a negative impact on the enjoyment of other rights, and may affect a family's ability to meet other needs related to health, food, housing, etc. These effects undoubtedly affect women and girls more negatively, as they are likely to suffer disproportionately when resources are scarce. In India, young women from disadvantaged backgrounds in particular still face challenges in their effort to realize their to right to quality education, even when issues of access are resolved (Kelly et al., 2016; Tiwari & Ghadially, 2009). Kelly et al. (2016, p. 184) found girls who attended LFPS paid "ten times the fees at the secondary level as those in government schools" and attending private schooling had other significant implications, such as losing out on "educational incentive schemes including free school supplies and meals, and secondary scholarships and stipends." In many ways, educational experiences of girls in private schools differ in terms of access to sanitation and exposure to teacher and peer violence (Kelly et al., 2016). The role of the state in monitoring private institutions to redress peer and teacher gender-related violence has been weak; if and where it exists, it has been susceptible to corruption (Day Ashly et al., 2014).

The second claim we address is that LFPS are of better quality than the public schools. Increasingly researchers of Indian education are gathering research to challenge the assertions of the global education industry providers or the validity of their claims of producing better learning outcomes (Chudgar & Quin, 2012; Singh, 2015). In relation to Andhra Pradesh, Singh (2015) in particular found "no evidence of a significant private school effect" on student outcomes in urban areas, and Kingdon and Theopold (2008) challenged the ability of researchers hired by low-fee school promoters to control for factors affecting school choice, such as difference in intrinsic ability and motivation between the students in public versus private schools. The data on learning outcomes is mixed with few studies that are rigorous and well-designed and control for socio-economic differences between students that affect learning outcomes (Kingdon & Theopold, 2008; Singh, 2015; Woodhead et al., 2013). In addition, these scholars are increasingly finding that LFPS fail to meet universal norms that define quality education, such as adequate structures and facilities, qualified and trained teachers, classroom resources, libraries, labs, playgrounds (Chudgar & Quin, 2012; Kelly et al., 2016; Singh, 2015). They suggest that LFPS in India use the same cost-cutting approaches as elsewhere, such as "standardized and replicable processes to achieve economies of scale and allow rapid development" and "leverage low-cost, high-impact technology" (Riep, 2015).

Classrooms and overall facilities of the 12 schools visited in the Old City for this report were extremely crowded with about 40 students in a 12×12 ft room with little or no ventilation. Most LFPS are located in rented substandard residential buildings and in neighborhoods with significant space constraints. Most buildings were not built to house several hundred (and often up to 1000 students) so toilets were inadequate, compounding the heavy odors in the hot, airless, and overcrowded classrooms. Minimizing costs and maximizing efficiency means that, to keep enrollment at target rates, every space was used for classrooms, leaving no space for laboratories, gyms, or libraries. Teachers met

and had lunch in small and cramped staff rooms (if available). The schools do not have playgrounds, libraries, or science labs. They do not offer quality education or fulfill the minimum norms of the RTE legislation (see also Chudgar & Quin, 2012; Kelly et al., 2016; Kingdon & Theopold, 2008; Singh, 2015; Woodhead et al., 2013).

Lack of accountability of private schools and their staff is also a problem. There is growing alarm that the LFPS is eroding the employment protections and training requirements for teachers (Azam & Kingdon, 2013). The key determinant that sets low-cost private schools apart from other types of schools is their practice of hiring untrained teachers. This practice allows the schools to keep fees low and hire a larger number of teachers. Teacher salaries are about US$54 per month with no pension or benefits. According to law (and to proponents of LFPS), schools spend about 55% of their expenses on teachers. Only 14% of teachers have post-graduate qualifications (ASER, 2014) and rote learning is prevalent. One of the most distinguishing characteristics is big differences in teachers' wages between government and low-cost private schools (less than one-quarter of public schools teachers' salaries).[7]

There are several aspects of this market-driven practice that research and politics must continue to engage with. Although some have a sympathetic stance toward the low-cost private schools for running community-based schools and providing some source of income for unemployed young women, it is certainly the case that the feminization of the teaching profession in India has legitimated such an under-valuation of the teaching profession. The gender dynamic is acutely noticeable, with most proprietors being men and all of the teaching staff being young women. Ironically our interviewees pointed to the positive effects of "providing many young women from slum communities and lower middle-class backgrounds with pocket change" or a source of income with which they could supplement the household income. However, we argue that the negative effect on the provision of quality education is the fact that schools are staffed with poorly trained and unqualified teachers. This is also a violation of national and international labor laws, particularly the UNESCO regulations governing the status of teachers (UNESCO/ILO Guidelines, 2008).[8]

In analysing these market forces, the rhetoric of "providing quality education for the poor" is deconstructed to expose the predatory and socially regulated transactions that constitute the market in particular ways with particular effects. Thus, the precarious and vulnerable positioning of casualized and low-waged work for a predominantly female teaching force as a "benefit to women in a developmental state" ought instead be read as constituting gender discrimination. In most cases, female private school teachers are expected to only supplement the household income and their tenure is seen to be temporary because of possible migration after marriage or resignation following pregnancy or childbirth. As a result, LFPS are plagued with constant teacher turnover, and demands and measures for quality underscore the need for more training and support in content and teaching methods for this revolving door of teachers. (But not to worry, the edu-solutions market has already invested heavily in online teacher training so young women can now spend their weekends and evenings being training and tested – without pay for their time – in order to meet their employers' demands!)

Due to lack of resources for training and the high turnover of staff, schools increasingly turned to Teach For India (TFI) Fellows, who hail predominantly from the English-speaking urban elite, to implement new instructional techniques. For instance, one school we visited currently has eight TFA teachers who earn Rs. 25000–30000/month (compared with the local LFPS teachers who are paid Rs. 7000–8000/month). The school has a six-year contract to hire TFI teachers and the TFI Foundation pays the difference. In our interviews, several TFI teachers at LFPS confirmed that their positions are better paid than local private school teachers, and that they are subsidized by the national TFI organization. (For further analysis and discussion of TFI, visit the full report.) Therefore, it is deeply worrying that in the literature that promotes low-cost private schools, not only is the low wage of untrained teachers unproblematically excused, but it is also indicated as the solution to make school expenditure more efficient and make the goal of universal education financially feasible (Jain & Dholakia, 2009).[9]

Despite clear research evidence of poor quality, lack of qualified teachers and adequate resources, and inequitable access for marginalized groups, Tooley's global influence has grown significantly over the last two decades.[10] He is Chairman of, and investor in, Empathy Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd. in India, and of Omega Schools in Ghana, in which Pearson's Affordable Learning Fund has extensively invested. *Empathy Learning Systems* (ELS) is the for-profit company that is linked to a chain of LFPS known as, *M.A. Ideal Schools*, run by a native of Hyderabad, Mohammed Anwar Khan. Today *M.A. Ideal* serves approximately 4000 children (about 500 students per school) in the Muslim-majority working-class neighborhoods of Hyderabad. Khan rents residential buildings and makes improvements on the buildings using high interest loans (of about 24%) from US-based venture capitalist group Gray Ghost (which we describe elsewhere in this chapter). ELS works with schools to provide teacher training, and supplies worksheets, lesson plans, and other materials (e.g. phonics lessons to teach English), and offers student assessments for English, mathematics, and science. Importantly, ELS is a for-profit venture that offers education services developed with affiliated IT software companies that set out to make significant profits. For example, ELS provides online training and curriculum software solutions such as new teaching methods (phonics), database management, and other technologies to numerous public and private schools for a fee with a significant profit margin. These for-profit entities are linked to extensive networks of edu-preneurs in the GEI, including loan providers, data management services, digital learning services. In this way, poor parents are putting money into the pockets of multinational corporations, rather than contributing to the support and growth of the public sector, further contributing to the declining quality of public education and exacerbating educational inequality.[11]

We anticipate that the impending arrival of multinational school chains, like Bridge International Academies (BIA), which offer economies of scale through massification, standardization, and tablet-based technology, enabled by sizeable global investments, are likely to be the new model for the LFPS sector in India. If this happens, a number of local school proprietors that have been active in this sector will probably lose out and eventually be forced to close, given the growing push of multinational school chains eager to exploit the Indian market.

In contrast to other countries (for instance, Uganda, Ghana, and Liberia), the GEI is shifting attention from directly funding LFPS in India and instead working to create new markets in education products and services. These are new unregulated and virtually untapped markets, of which pre-school education and tutoring services for low-income youth are two growing and highly profitable target areas. As our next section explores, investment by the GEI in technology-based education products and services (including curricula and classroom resources, assessment and testing systems, training for teachers and education industry leaders, and even virtual or online schooling) is evolving into what is now being referred to as the "edu-solutions industry." This industry, with its links to multinational corporations and investors and use of technology, has immediate global scalability that can potentially redefine education in previously unimaginable ways. The serious question is: whose interests are being served by edu-solutions providers – kids or corporations?

Hyderabad: Hi-Tech City and the Edu-Solutions Industry

The location of a very strong information technology (IT) industry in Hyderabad offered the ideal conditions for the development of a vast edu-solutions industry that could provide products and services to both the private and public school sectors. Pearson, the world's largest multinational education corporation, has been at the forefront in creating this market in Hyderabad. Instead of improving education, providing much-needed capital or investing in education for the poor, edu-solutions providers sell their products and services, offer high-interest loans, and advise local entrepreneurs on how to become more profitable and scale up. Hyderabad is fast emerging as a laboratory for the GEI to incubate and develop commercially profitable education products and services that will be bought and sold outside India.

Hyderabad, famously referred to as the Silicon Valley of the East,[12] has made a name for itself as the destination of choice for the global IT economy. In 1997, the then Chief Minister of the state, Chandrababu Naidu, built HiTech city, a "software park" to provide state-of-the-art facilities and cheap labor for the global IT and outsourcing economy. HiTech city has attracted leading software companies and multinational firms and has become a hub for both high-skilled labor such as software design and manufacturing and the relatively less-skilled business processing call centers (Biao, 2006; Upadhyay & Vasavi, 2008). Hyderabad is also known for its extensive network of for-profit post-secondary institutions that specialize in engineering and computer science, and that form the supply chain for HiTech city (Biao, 2006; Kamat, 2011; Kamat et al., 2004; Upadhyay & Vasavi, 2008). Global multinationals such as Google and Microsoft have their country headquarters in the city, making it an attractive destination for global edu-businesses looking for commercially viable technology-based solutions in education.

Other parts of Hyderabad city are remarkably different from HiTech city and its surroundings. The rest of Hyderabad has poorly maintained infrastructure, inadequate housing, water supply, and electricity, and poor sewage and sanitation services. The streets are dotted with signs that advertise "coaching centers"

for Math and Science, spoken English tutorials, and corporate colleges that promise entry into a career in HiTech city (Kamat, 2011). Hyderabad has a sizable Muslim population of 41%, considerably higher than elsewhere in the country.[13] Most of these are poor and concentrated in the south-west part of Hyderabad, in and around the "Old City," where Tooley first discovered the LFPS that he promotes globally as the new model of schooling for the poor (Tooley, 2000, 2007).

The distance from the "Old City" to HiTech city is 11 miles but there are centuries between them. For the Pearson Affordable Learning Fund (PALF) and other edu-investors, the proximity to HiTech city is of strategic importance with its hundreds of thousands of computer engineers and software workers from which to recruit prospective entrepreneurs and professionals to build the edu-solutions market. In an interview, PALF CEO Katelyn Donnelly confirmed that India is their "first market before they expand to other countries."[14] A key member of the GEI, India will serve as the "test market" for PALF before they scale to other developing countries. For Donnelly, India is the right market to test products for the low-income segment because "parents have shown a willingness to pay."[15] In India, Hyderabad's importance is also underscored. A loan officer interviewed for this study at the Indian School Finance Corporation (ISFC) that gives loans to LFPS expressed a similar sentiment: "Hyderabad … is a very welcoming market for innovations in education. So everything that we launch and develop, this is the right place for us to test and get its results and response." The large number of low-fee schools and nearby HiTech city make Hyderabad the default choice for multinational corporations like Pearson to incubate and test "scalable profitable ventures"[16] for the global expansion of for-profit education. Estimates from private equity firms and rating agencies place the potential value of India's education market at US$110 billion (Chatterjee, 2010; IBEF, 2016; Shinde, 2013). The pre-school market is valued at US$2 billion with an annual growth rate of 40–45% (Chatterjee, 2010).

Pearson PLC

Pearson Plc, the largest multinational education corporation in the world, has become an increasingly influential, yet unaccountable, actor, partner, entrepreneur, and enabler of processes connected to a growing market for LFPS. Pearson is the world's largest multinational education corporation with operations in 70 countries worldwide and an extensive business portfolio that positions it as "the world's education service provider." As a member of several global policy forums in education such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Global Business Coalition for Education that it helped found, Pearson is able to influence and shape policy that complement its commercial interests and private investments. In 2012, Pearson established the Pearson Affordable Learning Fund (PALF) for the purposes of making private equity investments into for-profit education companies that provide "affordable" education services in developing countries. (Excellent detailed research on and historical analysis of Pearson and PALF are provided by Hogan, Sellar, & Lingard, 2015; Junemann & Ball, 2015, and Riep, 2015). The long-term objective of PALF

is to "help provide millions of the poorest children in the world with a quality education, in a profitable and sustainable manner." However, while PALF is advertised as an altruistic venture intended to universalize access to basic education for the world's poor, critical observers have questioned the for-profit nature and intent of PALF (Hogan, Sellar, & Lingard, 2015; Junemann and Ball, 2015; Olmedo, 2013; Verger, 2016).

A self-proclaimed "edu-solutions" company, Pearson is active in emerging economies through PALF, which is run as a venture capital investment fund that "makes significant minority equity investments in for-profit companies to meet the growing demand for affordable education across the developing world."[17] PALF has been a key investor in Omega Schools (a chain of LFPS in Ghana that Tooley co-founded and where he is Chairman of the Board, indicative of the aggregation of actors and interests in this growing industry). Omega Schools is regarded as a pioneer in the "pay-as-you-go" model that has attracted many investors in different countries but is deeply problematic in terms of access and equity in education, often excluding learners and not paying teachers (see Riep, 2015).

PALF investments in the international for-profit school chain sector have grown considerably in the last five years, generating global ideas about content, the role of teachers, and instructional approaches through international links and networks (Ball, 2015). In a single year, Pearson expanded its stake in Omega Schools, allowing it to expand throughout Ghana from 40 schools and 20000 students in 2013 to a predicted 100 schools with 50000 students in 2014 (Wilby, 2013). eAdvance, a company that manages Spark schools, the first South African blended learning low-fee school chain, is another PALF-backed for-profit chain of private schools in Johannesburg (although their annual school fees place them within the middle-fee school bracket) (Ball, 2015). Interestingly, the inspiration for Spark schools also came from James Tooley, as a result of a series of stakeholder visits between South Africa and India where Tooley had been urging private education for the poor over the previous decade.

In recent years, PALF has invested in 10 companies spanning five countries, and allocated its first fund of US$15 million, with plans to invest a further US$50 million in edu-solutions companies in the next few years. According to their website, these companies are on "an upward trajectory toward growth, profitability and better learning outcomes." And with the new global emphasis on technicist "social efficiency measures" and "global learning metrics," PALF's investment arm has also capitalized on developing new data impact products and software for tracking school accountability and measuring learning outcomes, which they "apply rigorously to every investment" (see Pearson's website: http://www.pearsoned.com/). PALF has also recently cultivated more major mainstream international supporters and donors such as Save the Children and large impact investors like Omidyar Network and the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation.

It is important to underscore that PALF was specifically established to expand Pearson's private equity investments into for-profit education companies that could provide education services in the growing markets in developing countries. According to Junemann and Ball (2015, pp. 15–16), PALF uses three different

types of investment approaches: (1) *venture capital*, which focuses on financial sustainability, financial metrics, profit maximization, scalability based on standardization, and competitive market returns; (2) *impact investing*, which involves long-term investments in products and services that claim to demonstrate improved learning outcomes; and (3) *emerging markets investing*, which focuses on creating and developing an enterprise- and market-oriented ecosystem in regions that are underserved. All of these approaches and investment activities were amply evident in the Hyderabad education sector as illustrated in Figure 10.1, which maps the PALF network. The map depicts the actors interviewed related to PALF and illustrates the inter-relationships of this expanded network.

Our research shows that when the LFPS in Hyderabad were not generating the level of revenue and profits as expected, PALF expeditiously changed course to invest in numerous other education markets, including, for example, a Delhi-based coaching institute, the Avanti Coaching Centre (renamed Avanti Learning Solutions when PALF invested in 2013) and Sudiksha, pre-K schools, known as nursery schools in India. These new sectors were ripe for-profit markets because they are unregulated segments of the education sector and seen as virtually untapped markets.[18] Among those products and services aimed at schools in India are home-grown brands such as Next Education, as well as international brands set up by large global venture capitalists, such as Gray Matters (described in more detail below). Another extension of non-state actors in the education sector exhibiting great success has been the market for private coaching classes for competitive exams. In addition, education tech solutions providers have developed teaching and learning aids, digital expertise, and training services and offer e-learning tools targeting both students and teachers. This has also generated a huge market for vocational education, spoken English, and other courses, as well as a range of non-formal education services. These ventures have been funded in part by the growing trend of "social enterprise industry" (including tax incentives for corporations) in India, which has encouraged the emergence of a number of IT and data-solutions providers for schools and other educational institutes.

Edu-solutions approaches involve the incorporation of technology into education in a variety of ways (e.g. training, curricula, assessment, monitoring) that allow scaling-up, which is essential to profit-making. Zaya, MyPedia, Esolutions, SEED, Experifun, Avanti, and other edu-businesses that we explored in this study are part of what is now referred to by the industry as "edu-solutions ecosystem." This sector relies on standardization (e.g. developing large-scale assessment systems, creating online curricula and training software); replacing qualified teachers with untrained instructors who work for very low wages using a scripted tablet-based curriculum; and predatory product and school placement, along with aggressive marketing strategies. Many of these edu-solutions models are based in the digital education industry and touted as teaching children IT skills and assisting teachers with new modes of learning. For example, MyPedia describes itself as an "integrated learning solution for Grades 1–5" launched by Pearson to "transform education delivery in school classrooms across India." MyPedia claims to help teachers to "teach better as it connects students with
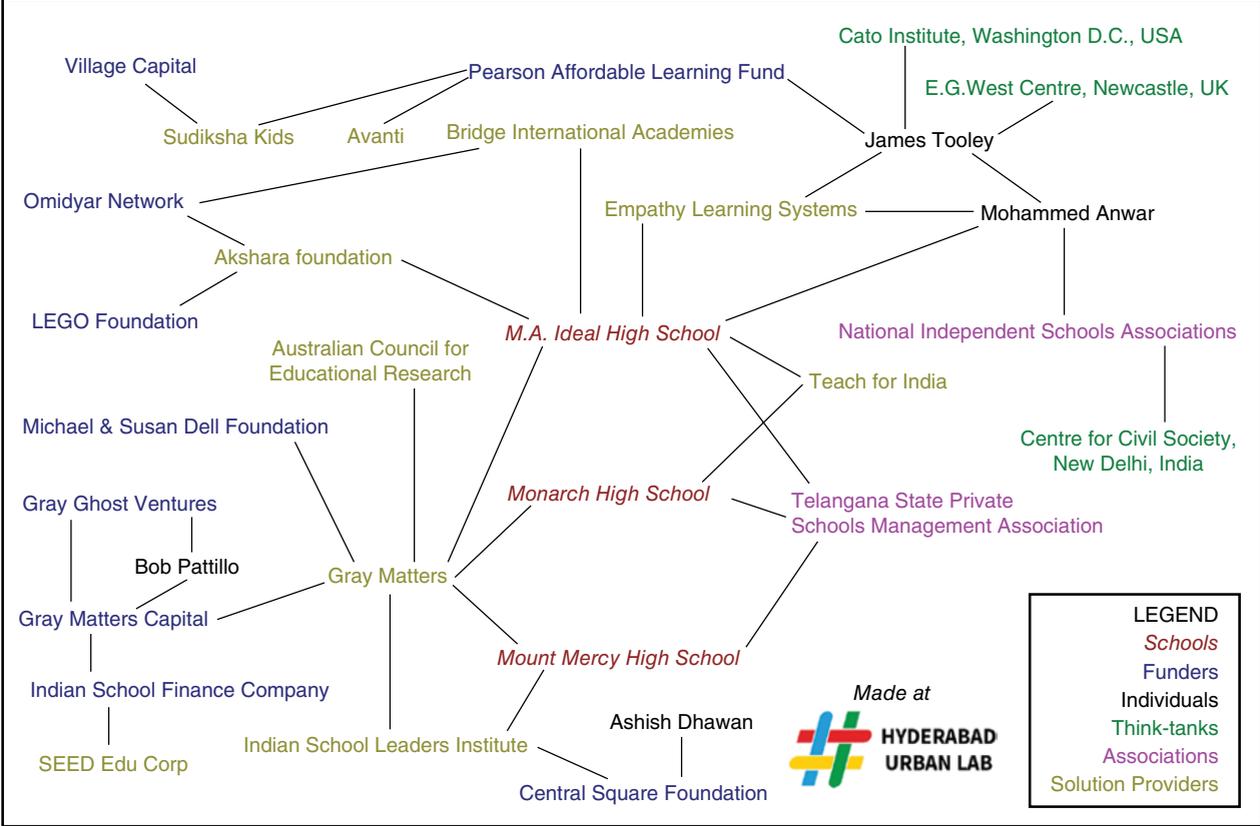
Figure 10.1 Pearson/PALF: Hyderabad edu-solutions networks.

active textbooks, practice workbook, digital resources and assessment reports." Echoing the jargon commonly used by advocates of virtual learning in the US (who promote the virtues of personalized learning and virtual schools), promotional materials for MyPedia further suggest that it "ensures that every class is facilitated according to a scientific process of teaching and learning to enable all kinds of leaders to be active participants in their own learning instead of being passive recipients of information," where "teams of experts work round the year to equip teachers to lead this new way of learning within classrooms." MyPedia also claims to actively measure and track the "development of cognitive skills in learners" through continuous assessment and monitoring systems.

Another PALF-affiliated edu-solutions provider is *Experifun* which provides "low-cost, interactive science learning products" to both public and private schools at the 6–10 grade level. "*In-Class*" is Experifun's curriculum-based suite of innovative science gadgets and products designed to bring interactive and exploratory learning to classrooms "without needing any infrastructure or additional set up." To date, it has developed a patent-ready product and was recently selected for the Indian Entrepreneurs 2014 Award.

Another very prominent PALF-sponsored edu-solutions company is Avanti Learning Centres (see http://avanti.in/). Avanti is a provider of college entrance exam preparation for students of low-income families through an approach based on peer-to-peer learning and self-study, and the use of pre-recorded test practice videos and volunteer mentoring, focusing on the highly competitive career paths of engineering and medicine. This science education company enrolls about 600 students in 9 learning centers and 4 schools across India annually. In 2014, Avanti tested over 10000 students (for a fee of about US$100 per test) to fill 300 spots in their program – an acceptance rate of .03%. Students who are accepted spend up to 20 hours a week at a center for a two-year period and are charged US$20 per month for services. Aspirational Indian families see this as a ticket out of poverty and typically pay considerable sums for the education of their children to ensure higher test scores that provide access to an engineering college. However, the stakes are increasingly high and the anxiety over failure after making this big investment is considerable. In 2015, in Kota, Rajasthan, a town known as a hub for coaching centers, 30 students who had paid for tutoring services committed suicide due to the intense pressure to get a high rank in the competitive exam (Goswami, 2016; *Indian Express*, 2016).

Of additional concern are the ways in which the shift toward digital education and volunteer teaching is indicative of the for-profit sector's concomitant reduction of cost and rejection of teachers as the primary mode of instruction. According to their website, Avanti focuses on "teaching students how to learn from books and their peers – resources that are more abundant, accessible and consistent in quality." Rather than pay teachers or instructors, Avanti students are "taught" by the largest volunteer organization in India – over 300 student volunteers from India's top schools who, for over a two-year period, give advice to students as they prepare for college. With profits going to the investors and not students.

PALF's other investments in India are in edu-solutions providers such as Mumbai-based Zaya Learning Labs, a service provider delivering blended

learning experiences to both government and private schools. According to Ball (2015, p. 22):

> Zaya Labs flagship product is the LabKit, which comprises "low-cost tablets, a projector, curated digital content and ClassCloud, an adaptive learning platform that can store and deliver digital content in both online and offline environments". Key to Zaya's scalability is the LabKit – a one-off purchase that includes tablets pre-loaded with curriculum content, a classroom projector, a WiFi router, and a classroom management tool for the teacher to track student progress. This combination – of ease and low cost – is critical when working within the Indian school market, where there are often infrastructure and connectivity challenges. Zaya's LabKit solution includes ClassCloud, an adaptive learning platform that can store and deliver digital content in both online and offline environments.

PALF's website describes Zaya as having:

> developed an affordable blended learning model for the Indian market. Unlike traditional classroom settings, where a teacher delivers core content to students, the company has created a blended learning model where students divide their time between content engagement via tablets, time with a teacher, and peer-to-peer group work. (PALF website; as cited by Ball, 2015, p. 22)

A new burgeoning area has been the private pre-school sector, where social entrepreneurship principles of the market are combined with neoliberal ideas about women's empowerment programs. Sudiksha is a network of low-fee pre-schools started in Hyderabad, with plans for expansion to other parts of the country. Sudiksha now owns and manages 21 pre-schools in and around Hyderabad and has about 100 staff members. The pre-schools are operated in underprivileged urban neighborhoods where they claim there is a shortfall of education provision (although our research showed that many of the schools were within a few blocks of public and free pre-school programs and there was a plethora of for-profit/fee-based pre-schools in the surrounding neighborhoods).

Sudiksha's target audience is the working parents of urban, poor, children aged 2–6 years old but not, as the school proprietor, noted,

> [the] poorest of the poor. We did some research and found there was a market for skilled workers or vendors – those who earn about 8,000 rupees a month. We wanted to be self-sustaining, so we must be able to charge 500–600 rupees per month.

To set up a Sudiksha pre-school franchise costs Rs. 70000–80000. The cost per child is Rs. 6000–7000, which supports a ratio of 50 children, one head teacher, two classroom teachers, and one cleaner and/or staff. Parents can pay monthly but get a discount if they pay annually in advance. The franchise agreement means the school head gets to keep 10% of the profits. The school director

explained: "I'm not a manager or a teacher, I am an entrepreneur … we starting by setting up a few schools to show the impact." Then they brought the model to social investors and crowd-sourcing funding events and sites like "Innovent" to get capital investments.

In its true market-oriented approach, Sudiksha launches the schools at a relatively low cost to the organization and provides some furniture, toys, games, learning aids, library books, and a computer to each school. The schools are seemingly run efficiently but are often in inappropriate facilities like purchased homes and appear overcrowded with classes taking place in cramped small rooms with sometimes more than 30 children. Schools are managed through monthly training programs and field visits by the Sudiksha directors. According to our interviews, the methodology used in the classrooms is drawn from Montessori and Waldorf schools, and includes a strong element of "hands-on" learning. However, given what we observed, children mostly remained in their classrooms where there was little room to move at all and limited classroom supplies.

The company touts itself as a "women's empowerment and social entrepreneurship program." Yet, even when women do run schools, they are still at the mercy (and hierarchy) of the market. For example, rather than calling them school heads or teachers, Sudiksha directors have reconceptualized school staff as "women entrepreneurs," who rent and run the schools. According to their promotional materials, they recruit local women to run branches

> [under an] incentivised profit-sharing scheme. Women entrepreneurs local to the community are found and lead the school's growth. This provides accountability and investment within the local community and has been successful in attracting lower middle class women with some English education with an aptitude for business.

A Sudiksha Director explained, "We wanted to identify women from 25–35 years old who want to do something – like start a preschool." These women are usually educated, married, and unemployed women who "left their careers for families, but once their kids go to school, they are looking for something to do." Additionally, to incentivize growth and expansion, Sudiksha shares (a mere) 10% of its profits with the women entrepreneurs for running the school. They use a franchise approach where the women must raise the funds to pay their staff and their own salaries and the rest of the profits go to the company, with 10% coming back to the school for future investment and expansion. The Sudiksha Director explains to the women, "We will invest in the school, but you will manage the school, recruit the children and bring in the money. We will support the training and provide the curriculum."

Sudiksha's voluntary approach to starting and running a school is based on a very small investment from the company, and is instead run on the labor, altruism (and boredom!) of local women. The Director explained, "It is not a salary that we pay them but it's being responsible for something." He added: "They want to come out of the house" and Sudiksha wants people with "good values, support and respect."[19] Sudiksha "invests in the female entrepreneurs," sending them to

coaching, English, and computer classes, and helps them negotiate with owners on renting the school buildings. Such an argument for efficiency that erases the dignity of the teaching profession, and makes financial feasibility the determining parameter for education policy, undermines the very basic principles upon which the quality of education can be judged. In that sense, the academic proponents of low-cost private schools have a questionable argument to support gender equity or women's empowerment.

Internationally, Pearson's attempts at "multinational market making" have been built around establishing global networks for mobilizing business, corporate, and philanthropic actors to harness funds and push governments towards pro-privatization policy changes. In India, DFID, the World Bank, the GPE, the Global Business Coalition for Education, the Business Backs Education campaign, and the Center for Educational Innovations are among the examples of international development partners that have influenced the government and local organizations to develop and promote new education markets and pro-privatization policies. These so-called development partners are also increasingly seen as a source of funds for the Indian government, as it seeks to raise additional revenue for education. They often provide guaranteed funds or work with local banks to build lending capacity, so they are given considerable leeway and support. The following section elaborate more fully on the partnership approach of the actors in the GEI.

Private-Public Partnerships: Philanthrocapitalism and Private Foundations

The Government in India's expenditure of about 3–4% of its GDP on education (a relatively low percentage compared to similar countries, given India's much higher rates of economic growth and level of political stability)[20] offers vast, untapped opportunities for non-state actors to get involved in the education sector. As one of the largest emerging economies, India receives limited formal overseas development assistance (ODA). This gap creates an open marketplace where private sector interests have been fueled by pressures from a burgeoning middle and elite expatriate class, particularly in relation to the education sector. Instead of receiving development assistance, philanthropic and private foundation activity in India identified the education sector as the most popular donor target. In addition, recent legislation promoting public-private partnerships (PPPS) provides the foundation for spreading and advancing market ideology in education. In 2013, the Indian government fully embraced a more active private sector through PPP, as outlined in the national five-year plan:

> Private providers (including NGOS and non-profits) can play an important role in elementary education. Their legitimate role in expanding elementary education needs to be recognized and a flexible approach needs to be adopted to encourage them to invest in the sector. (p. 64)[21]

Most of the growth of secondary schools in the private sector in the last two decades has occurred among unaided schools (25 per cent of schools). About

60 per cent of schools are now aided or unaided. It is essential therefore that the private sector's capabilities and potential are tapped through innovative public-private partnerships ... (p. 68)

The growth of and interest in PPPs are not only a consequence of weak rule of law or inadequate government resources, but are also the outcome of government plans and policies in support of PPPs with laws that clearly stipulate the promotion of private education.

The increasing involvement of non-state actors in the education sector through PPPs has enabled the government to shift their financial resources away from public education and channel it through the private sector. This approach also incentivizes government investment away from schools and directly into the private sector through purchasing services and technology solutions for all aspects of schooling (e.g. not only curriculum and training materials but also data-based management systems that drive assessment, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms). The decades of low levels of government funding for education have compounded the need for new strategies and services and have also led to widespread public discontent with the government's disengagement and lack of political will to support public education, opening the door for PPPs.

Much of the PPP engagement has been with philanthropic organizations and corporate-backed foundations, particularly in relation to efforts aimed at universalizing education beyond basic levels (Fengler & Kharas, 2010; Srivastava & Oh, 2010). Srivastava (2016) provides an extensive overview of several foundations and corporate philanthropy in education operating across India, where domestic foundations were operating alongside international ones (e.g. Hewlett, MasterCard) with different regulatory and reporting requirements. She noted significant differences among these with, for example, organizations like the Azim Premji Foundation, a relatively new player, alongside older more established organizations like the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. Some philanthropic organizations operate as funders seeing a return on their investments, while others operate in the traditional mode of a charitable trust. The philanthrocapitalist activities in particular have also been spurred by the new Companies Act 2013, which mandates corporate expenditures of 2% on corporate social responsibility (CSR) for companies above a certain income threshold (Section 135, GoI, 2013). According to Ernst & Young, the CSR covers about 2500 companies and has generated US$2 billion in funds, much of it targeting the education sector (Kordant Philanthropy Advisors, 2013).

Among these companies are also numerous international actors with significant interest in promoting private sector approaches in education. For instance, data from the US-based Foundation Center reveals that India ranked sixth in receiving grants from the top 1000 US private corporate-sponsored foundations, having attracted over US$831 million between 2001 and 2011. The big picture setting within which the growing philanthro-capitalism is emerging can be traced through PPPs with links and connections between corporations, venture capitalists, private foundations and, increasingly, governments. Extending Ball's (2015) conceptualization of "philanthropic governance," Srivastava (2016, p. 8) suggests:

> The primacy of market-based solutions in education espoused by the new global philanthropy (e.g. competition, choice and narrowly defined assessment metrics) and the simultaneous use of complex multi-stakeholder partnerships and PPPs, open up and create formal and non-formal spaces for constellations of philanthropic and other non-state private actors. These fundamentally alter education governance by surreptitiously embedding forms of privatization in education systems, though this may not be the intention of all actors involved.

This hugely profitable market of edu-solutions funding through philanthropic governance has been well documented elsewhere (see, for instance, Hogan, Sellar, & Lingard, 2015; Junemann & Ball, 2015; Olmedo, 2013; Verger, 2016), but to briefly reiterate, the worldwide spending on the education sector currently tops US$4 trillion, a figure that is expected to rise dramatically. For example, in India, the mobile education market is ripe for expansion, particularly in rural or urban slum areas where access to reliable internet service or computers is limited. This market is predicted to be worth $75 billion worldwide by 2020. The market for devices like tablets is set to be worth $32 billion. Companies poised to benefit from these opportunities – content and assessment corporations like Pearson, firms like mobile networks, and companies that provide the toolkits, like tablets – have been focusing on these products for years, with the Indian tech industry a key developer and recipient (Cave & Rowell, 2014).

Multinational technology giants are also positioned to exploit these PPP opportunities. Global tech giants (many with large operations in India) provide the same services that a national government would: data management, assessment systems, curricula, teacher training, online courses, and virtual schools. Early adopters receive benefits and incentives to use these inter-linking products on a trial basis at a lower cost. As these products become institutionalized in the management and governance of schools (e.g. school accreditation and certification requirements), the prices for products and services move to a market basis. Among the global tech giants in India are Microsoft, Google, and, more recently, News Corp's Amplify. Importantly, these multinational corporations are not merely benignly selling products and services to open markets; they are also actively engaged in lobbying for policies that benefit their bottom line, with considerable money and effort invested that are scaled to the market sector.

While the World Bank and others have lauded the positive effects of PPPs in education (particularly through LFPS),[22] international education researchers and civil society groups have raised concerns about equity, especially from the standpoint of girls' education.[23] For example, Oxfam International has highlighted:

> In recent years, donors have also increased support to 'low fee private education', in other words private schools that charge fees to families – in the poorest countries. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has invested in low-fee schools … user fees for girls … have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, excluding them from education …[24]

Lack of transparency with respect to the actions of PPP and the regulation of private schools makes it more difficult to hold them accountable. Moreover, in India, as LFPS schools vary considerably in quality and price, many are not even "recognized" by the government, so they can operate freely without any accountability or oversight. According to Kingdon and Theopold (2008), recognition is arbitrary:

> Government 'recognition' is an official stamp of approval and for this a private school is required to fulfill a number of conditions, though hardly any private schools that get 'recognition' actually fulfill all the conditions of recognition. (p. 183)

Lack of transparency and oversight has also resulted in many private providers not having adequate facilities including safe, clean, and separate toilets and other facilities for girls and boys, and not using gender-sensitive teaching and learning materials. In order to reduce costs, proprietors lease school facilities rather than owning them, which means most do not meet state regulations and RTE Act requirements. Due to the inadequate facilities and inability to meet other requirements, many of these schools prefer not to be recognized by the government, and are instead trying to organize under umbrella organizations such as the National Independent Schools Association (NISA)[25] to advocate for deregulation or exemptions from these regulations or requirements.

These issues highlight the severe problems of inadequate state regulation combined with lack of oversight and enforcement over private education providers and institutions. These are compounded and exacerbated by the lack of transparency within the GEI and its affiliated educational institutions, and the government's willingness to turn a blind eye to their regulatory violations.

India's Education Policy Entrepreneurs

Within and across India, an extensive network of multinational corporations, private foundations, consultants, non-government organizations (NGOs), and local entrepreneurs are building what they term an "educational ecosystem" to support the commercialization of all aspects of education. These new globally networked corporations and philanthropic foundations are increasingly governing education policy. Through hiring and promoting "policy entrepreneurs," they have created policies to serve their interests with tremendous financial and political leverage, and use their bargaining power to set the rules (see Robertson, 2008). Within this eco-system, the GEI builds neoliberal market logic locally in India through powerful rhetoric and promises that are heavily backed by philanthro-capitalists and venture funds. This ideology is fostered by teaching school proprietors to "think like an entrepreneur" through corporate training camps, overseas fellowships, crowd-sourcing ventures, and edu-preneur meet-up events. As part of this discourse, local school leaders are renamed: instead of being the school head or teacher, they are "edu-preneurs" creating knowledge solutions, developing educational ecosystems, offering customized/personalized or individualized learning environments, as advocates of parental choice/vouchers, or as pioneers uncovering hidden markets.

According to Nambissan and Ball (2010), policy entrepreneurs are "deeply embedded" in the infrastructure of neoliberal organizations internationally and locally with access to transnational advocacy networks with large financial resources. These social links form powerful and influential ties, for example, Pearson's chief education adviser, Sir Michael Barber, was a former top aide to former UK prime minister Tony Blair and "an old friend of Tooley from when they taught in Zimbabwe together years ago" (Srivastava, & Noronha, 2014). What has emerged in India and elsewhere are new ways of framing education and new categories for understanding policy change within these market-making institutions. More traditional understandings of how education policies and decisions are made by the state no longer hold in the global educational ecosystem. New global networks and relationships between local entrepreneurs, corporate philanthropists and global business executives circulate and promote ideas and educational solutions within and across global multilateral and financial institutions, rather than through domestic planning and with civil society input.

Hyderabad's new pro-privatization education policy networks are "facilitated by international and multilateral agency discourse and a broader discourse of the knowledge economy and the 'global Silicon Valley', often valorised as pathways to 'quick' economic development" (Srivastava, & Noronha, 2014, p. 9; see also Biao, 2009; Kamat et al., 2004). This ideology is based on the "magic of the market" and increasingly influences the current global policy landscape (driven primarily by US and UK companies and interests). In the education sector, this has led to the prioritization of narrow technical solutions for education, including decontextualized and impetuous policy borrowing as well as the transfer of a limited set of policy options. The GEI has also been influential in shaping education policy in India. To the edu-solutions providers, "results are important" – and their success lies in generating data to show that students are learning (and at a higher rate than their competitors, the public schools). To do this, they increasingly rely on the tech-solutions to create their own assessments, ratings systems, and other measures that show how well they are keeping up their market demands. The GEI is also increasingly involved in writing its own rules about school standards and regulations, determining and certifying teacher quality, and defining what learning should take place in schools.

Conclusion: For-Profit Education Undermines the Right to Education

Despite all the evidence indicating that the application of market principles to the provision of education has a negative impact on students by deepening segregation and inequality, and undermining quality, many governments are complicit in what amounts to a de facto dismantling of public education (Härmä, 2009, 2011; Spreen & Vally 2012). For-profit education is based on standardized teaching and learning, undermining teacher knowledge and autonomy, and turning students into passive consumers rather than empowered learners. Privatization also undermines the right to education, diverting much-needed

government funding to the private sector instead of the better provisioning of public schools by improving facilities, resources, and support for schools and teachers.[26] Through the GEI, multinational corporations are not only beginning to control the content of the curriculum and testing in countries, they also make decisions about who teaches and under what conditions, and have begun to replace qualified teachers with untrained (and underpaid) teachers,[27] using tablets or mobile-based scripted curricula.

Children have the right not only to a free public education, but also to a quality education, in schools that are adequately resourced and with teachers who are professionally trained. The Indian Right to Education Act (2010) underscores the right to free and compulsory education for children aged between 6 and 14, and lays out key principles and standards for education provisioning, including for private schooling. Yet, only 10% of schools are in compliance with the Act. Adequate funding and better provisioning of the public education sector are desperately needed.

Children who attend private schools already have a wide social advantage over their pubic school peers, further discriminating against the poor whose only option is to go to under-funded and poorly maintained government schools. The low-fee private school explosion is rightly criticized for creating a multi-layered, inferior school system exacerbating inequality in a country where nearly 40% of the population live below the poverty line and could not afford even the cheapest low-fee private schools.

The assumption that low-fee private schools are "better" must also be called into question. Most low-fee private schools fail to meet most universal standards of quality education. They use cost-cutting approaches, such as low-paid and unqualified teachers; they operate in sub-standard and inadequate facilities in rented buildings; they rely on narrow, standardized and replicable scripted learning materials that are not linguistically or culturally appropriate; and, they rely heavily on technology for teaching, learning and staff training, encouraging rapid reach and leveraging costs over deep learning. Research on learning outcomes is also mixed –few studies of low-fee schools control for socio-economic differences between students that can greatly affect learning outcomes. Understanding and defining education quality must go beyond narrow measures (e.g. corporate-designed tests and standards). Rigorous and externally reviewed research and outside monitoring of the private sector are needed.

Finally, this research (along with numerous cited studies of for-profit schooling in India) provided ample research highlighting the urgent need for the revitalization of and reinvestment in government schools in India. There is an equally urgent need to stop the rampant commercialization of Indian education and profit-seeking of multinational corporations. A key reason why for-profit schools are on the rise and receiving billions annually from governments and poor families, is that international power players, local politicians, lawyers, business leaders, and celebrities have been willing to vouch for these companies, serving as their paid lobbyists, board members, investors, and endorsers. While India is looking for solutions to provide high-quality learning for all students, a primary question should be *whose interests are being served by these private actors*? *Why should the world's poorest families pay for what should be a free, fundamental*

human right? Why should their money go into the pockets of profit-seeking multi-national corporations? Where 68.7% of the population earn below US$2 a day and 41.6% of the population earn below US$1.25 a day, the push toward private schools for the poor, forsaking public education is a matter of serious concern. There are serious consequences to letting governments off the hook from providing a free quality public education system for all children.

This research should serve as a serious reminder of the reasons why schools should not be for sale and a warning that multinational corporations should not make profits from governments' largesse and the meager earnings of poor families. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations from this report will be useful for government leaders, teachers, unionists, scholars, and education activists who are concerned by the rapid privatization in and of education in India and across the world. The authors hope this study will be used to mobilize public opinion and advocacy to raise concerns about private schooling for the poor, especially as it relates to possibilities and protections in India's RTE Act. They encourage continued dialogue among advocates and organized resistance to the GEI's damaging march across the globe.

Ensuring the right to education and that all students have access to a quality education in India will take more than promises or a legal mandate. It requires a clear and concerted global response from education advocates, teachers unions, and scholars to fight against private interests of this most critical public good. The rampant commercialization and profit-seeking in education are in flagrant violation of the Right to Education Act, and will deepen inequality and cripple an already ailing education system. This research is a serious reminder of the reasons why schools should not be for sale and corporations should not be permitted to make profits from governments and poor communities.

Notes

1 This chapter is an excerpt from a broader study on the expansive and growing private education sector in India. The report entitled "Profiting from the Poor" was made possible through funding provided by Education International (EI) and can be accessed at: https://educationincrisis.net/resources/ei-publications/item/1368-profiting-from-the-poor-the-emergence-of-multinational-edu-businesses-in-hyderabad-india. The study is based on a review of literature, extensive online research, and interviews with school proprietors, teachers, teacher union leaders, technology industry entrepreneurs, journalists, and government officials. It also included site visits to various technology companies and schools, and classroom observations in both government and private schools. The research was conducted in Hyderabad from August–December 2015. The research team included the two authors above along with Indivar Jonnalagadda, a researcher with locally-based, Hyderabad Urban Labs (http://hydlab.in/).
2 See estimates provided by Chatterjee (2010); IBEF (2016); and Shinde (2013).
3 Some of the prominent additional global actors are the Global Partnership for Education, Global Business Coalition for Education, the Business Backs Education campaign, and the Centre for Educational Innovations.

4   The 2016 union budget has allocated 4.9% of GNP to education, but if one considers inflation and the GDP growth rate, the new budget is less than previous years. This does not meet the government's own target of 6% of GNP for education (Tilak, 2009, 2006).

5   India is divided into linguistic states, hence the medium of instruction varies by state. In a cosmopolitan city like Mumbai, government schools offer instruction in as many as nine languages. In Telangana and AP, the medium of instruction in government schools is either Urdu or Telugu, the two dominant language groups in the region, though there is legal provision to offer instruction in Marathi and Gujarati as well. We believe no other country offers such linguistic diversity in its school system and affirms the importance of "mother tongue" education especially in the early years of schooling.

6   This study found that these terms reflect a deeper level of market segmentation. "Budget schools" (fees Rs. 1000+) appear to be more expensive than "affordable schools" (Rs. 600–1000), and affordable schools cost more than "low-fee" schools (Rs. 200–600). Thus, within the "affordable sector," there is further stratification and market differentiation. This report uses the term "affordable private schools" (APS) to refer to all three types of schools, while low-fee private schools (LFPS) is used to refer to schools that are at the lowest end of the tuition scale.

7   Availability of teachers in schools is an important variable for quality education. In 2011, there were about 6.7 million teachers engaged in teaching in schools imparting elementary education in the country. All the schools in the country now have an average of three or more teachers. The percentage of teachers in Government schools was 64.13% in 2011–2012 as compared to 65.55 in 2010–2011, making the total of teachers in Government schools over 430000. The percentage of teachers in government-aided schools is 8.06, showing a decline since 2006–2007, when it was 11.25 per cent. The total number of private teachers in India is above 200000 while the total number of teachers in madrasas is over 180000. The total number of primary school teachers is over 250000 (Center for Education Innovations, 2015. *Results for Development Report.* Retrieved from: educationinnovations.org)

8   http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001604/160495e.pdf

9   For more information, see blog post by Susan Robertson on Panama Papers, Public Education and Democracy, at https://www.unite4education.org/uncategorized/the-panama-papers-public-education-and-democracy/

10 Tooley is also the founding President of the *Education Fund* set up by the Singapore-based private equity firm, Orient Global. This fund invests in private education services and commissioned research on LFPS primarily in India and Ghana, but also other emerging economies.

11 A significant finding from our broader study describes how efforts to scale up LFPS and generate higher revenues from these schools in Hyderabad have not been successful. Tooley's original plan to make LFPS attractive for global capital was met with resistance from local proprietors due to market constraints and the locally embedded nature of these schools. This proved to be an obstacle to the exclusively profit-seeking motives of large multinational corporations. The corporations realized that they could not alter the business model of the existing low-fee schools, and therefore opportunistically changed their strategy by

creating an ancillary market of new products and services for the education sector that could be sold to both public and private schools. The authors found that the multinational corporations had no direct investment in the schools themselves, but rather were making investments in developing a profitable "edu-solutions" market (see full report for a more detailed discussion of the edu-solutions market).

12 HiTech city is also an acronym for Hyderabad Information Technology Engineering and Consultancy.

13 The city was the capital of the princely state of Hyderabad ruled by Muslim nobility for over two centuries and was never under direct British colonial rule.

14 Donnelly, quoted in Moses (2013).

15 Donnelly, quoted in Moses (2013).

16 Donnelly, quoted in Moses (2013).

17 https://www.affordable-learning.com (accessed May 5, 2016).

18 Avanti prepares students for competitive college entrance exams through tutoring and volunteer coaching and Sudiksha's preschools are a virtually unknown market with the potential of serving nearly 800 million children in India.

19 The reproduction of caste prejudice and discrimination needs special attention to understand whether women and men from middle castes, i.e. small business families, are entering this sector as a remunerative family-run business opportunity. Words such as "good values," "decent," and "respect" are often subtle references to a person's caste.

20 UNESCO's Incheon Framework for Action recommends that governments spend "at least 4–6% of GDP" and "at least 15%–20% of public expenditure on education," with a recognition that developing countries "need to reach or exceed the upper end of these benchmarks if they are to achieve the targets" (UNESCO, 2015).

21 Government of India (2013) Five Year Plans.

22 See, for example, Goyal and Pandey (2009).

23 Critiques of the WB and RTE, see Lewin (2001) and Spreen and Vally (2010).

24 Oxfam International (2014). *Working for the Many: Public Services Fight Inequality*.

25 At this time, facing the antagonism of the state, a large number of low-cost private schools, both unrecognized and recognized, united under a national platform known as the National Independent Schools Association (NISA) to resist the closing down of unrecognized schools and lobby for concessions regarding the new regulations. The NISA was assembled by Mohammed Anwar, correspondent of the M.A. Ideal Schools in Hyderabad, and was supported by pro-market think tanks such as the Centre for Civil Society in New Delhi. Faced with a strong lobby, the government relented and a number of erstwhile LFS schools were then granted recognition in spite of non-adherence to norms. Of course, this political negotiation is not purely rhetorical, there is very likely a system of bribes that has been put into place, by which the private schools periodically safeguard their interests and the government earns some revenue. This legitimate, but messy relationship has resulted in a strained relationship between governments and LFPS.

26 See reports from The United National Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). *Global Section: the School Fee Abolition Initiative (SFAI).* Retrieved from: http://

www.ungei.org/infobycountry/247_712; The Right to Education Project (RTE) (2014) *Privatisation in Education: Global Trends and Human Rights Impact*; and Oxfam International (2014) *Working for the Many: Public Services Fight Inequality*.

27 Similar trends have been identified in other emerging economies such as the Philippines, Ghana and South Africa. See Riep (2015, 2016); Spreen and Vally (2014) for details of the GEI in these countries.

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11

The Bait-and-Switch and Echo Chamber of School Privatization in South Africa

Salim Vally

Introduction

Just over 23 years since the first democratic elections in South Africa, the combined weight of apartheid's legacy exacerbated by neoliberal policies in the post-apartheid period has meant that the promise of a quality public education system remains a chimera. While a mélange of new official policies on every conceivable aspect of education exists and racially based discriminatory laws have been removed from the statutes, the education system as a whole reflects and reproduces wider inequalities in society.[1] The severe weaknesses and inequalities in South Africa's education system are undeniable. This, however, is largely a result of history and context, a complex function of exogenous and endogenous factors, curriculum and pedagogy, poverty, inequality, and the choices made by a self-serving policy-making and economic elite (Vally, 2015). Since the apartheid system formally ended, access to schooling has increased and there is gender parity but quality education for the vast majority of the population remains elusive. Although a minority of schools in South Africa can favorably compare with the best in the world, quality education remains unequally distributed along social class, racial, and spatial lines.

In this atmosphere, calls for the privatization of schools in all their permutations are receiving greater resonance. Advocates of right-wing reform in South Africa stridently demand a variety of responses ranging from outright privatization of education and the withdrawal of the state, to various versions of market-friendly policies. Thandika Mkandawire, adapting Gramsci's famous aphorism, refers to this predatory maneuvering as, "The pessimism of the diagnosis and the optimism of the prescription" (Muller, 2012).

Policy-makers and analysts in countries like South Africa are wont to borrow policies and their prescriptions largely from Europe and North America, regardless of the vastly differing histories, contexts, and circumstances. These imitative approaches are adopted uncritically. In effect, although many of the

borrowed policies have been shown to be ineffective in the very countries of their origin, they continue to be purveyed as policies and "best practice" useful to development elsewhere. Such policy borrowing is fostered, regrettably, not only through the work of "expert" consultants (often from developed economies) but also by "native" researchers who have little regard for the critical literature on this issue. They are intent on providing "solutions" based on these ostensible "best practices" – some of which have been severely criticized by researchers in the very countries of their provenance.

The upshot of neoliberal discourse concerning education in South Africa, as elsewhere, has been to ignore the problems faced by public schools and to promote market solutions through private schools, public-private partnerships, vouchers, charters, and the like. It is falsely argued that privatization provides choices to parents, makes schools more responsive, and produces greater cost efficiencies and even better quality education. This approach is derived from the idea that the state should have as little as possible to do with the delivery of education and other services which are best left to market mechanisms for their resolution. This proposed "market solution" to our education crisis, even with state regulation, is less a case of a pragmatic attempt at resolving the problem than a case of ideological wishful thinking and a justification for profiteering.

This chapter will first outline the size and shape of school privatization in South Africa and the companies and agencies that profit and promote privatization of education.

An Overview of the Size and Shape of School Privatization

Of the 25000 schools in South Africa with a total enrollment of over 12 million learners, private schools relative to many countries remain numerically few. Official statistics, however, are inconsistent and contested, most often setting private schools at roughly 6% of all schools although many observers believe that they are much higher. All agree though that the private sector in education has continued to grow exponentially since the first democratic elections in 1994. The sector is far from homogeneous and includes unregistered "fly-by-night" schools, non-profit religious schools, and for-profit schools.

Over the past few years the numbers of what is called "low-cost" private schools have grown unmistakably and the recent entry of the UK-based transnational behemoth, Pearson, in the "low-cost, technology-driven" schooling market will increase this trend. South Africa's premier business daily gushed (*BDlive*, May 22, 2014), "The Pearson pitch seems well-timed as the private education sector has become a darling of the JSE [Johannesburg Stock Exchange] with well-established Advtech and fast-growing Curro Holdings attracting strong market ratings."

South Africa has seen a mushrooming of private schools in recent years. Curro Holdings – the biggest for-profit school group in South Africa – has 127 schools today and projects that it will have a student enrollment of 90000 by 2020.[2] The World Bank's IFC participated in the development of the Curro group and in 2010 approved a 10-year loan of $9.7 million to support Curro's

strategic expansion (World Bank Group, 2012). In 2016, the IFC invested about $22 million in the AdvTech group to "support expansion into new African markets" (International Finance Corporation 2018:25). Ominously, the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) via their asset manager, the Public Investment Corporation (PIC), together with the corporate, Old Mutual Life Assurance Company, has invested R440 million in Curro Holdings (*Moneyweb*, 2014). The latter's revenue in 2017 amounted to R1051 million.[3]

Old Mutual and the GEPF formed the R1.2 billion Schools and Education Investment Impact Fund in 2011 to which GEPF contributed R1 billion and Old Mutual R200 million.[4] The latter fund has invested in the following "low cost schools": Prestige Schools, Royal Schools, BASA Educational Institute Trust and Meridian Schools, a subsidiary of Curro Holdings.

Spark Schools are managed by the company eAdvance, established in 2012. In 2014, Pearson invested R28 million in Sparks Schools through its Affordable Learning Fund (PALF).[5] Spark Schools has ambitions to run 64 schools in the next decade and to launch schools in Rwanda, Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, and India. In 2015, Spark Schools charged fees of about R15750 (or roughly $1000) a year, excluding the non-refundable registration fee and other levies. In a country where 40% of the working-age population is unemployed (using the more accurate broader definition of unemployment) and where 78% of the adult working population earns a personal monthly income of R2000, attending Spark Schools, one of a chain deemed "low cost," is not an option for the vast majority of the population. It is clear that "low cost" schools are attempting to find a market among the growing black middle class in the post-apartheid period.

There are other South African companies with huge profits in the education sector including Pioneer Academies, founded by Chimezi Chijioke, a former head of McKinsey's African education network. Revealingly, one of the founders of the fast-growing Future Nations School (Pty) Ltd, Sizwe Nxasana, is also the state-appointed chairperson of the tertiary National Student Financial Aid Scheme. The Future Nations School is a subsidiary of the Sifiso Learning Group and has ambitions to "build a string of affordable, independent schools in the country and the rest of Africa" (*Mail and Guardian*, June 30, 2016). The group operates a portfolio of companies that include: Future Nation Pre-Schools, Sifiso EdTech, Sifiso Publishing, and Sifiso Education Properties.[6] Nxasana, a former chief executive of the FirstRand Bank and his wife Judy Dlamini, chairperson of the pharmaceutical company Aspen, are the founders and sole shareholders of the company.

The Echo Chamber

As in the US, privatization advocates found a home with free market bodies such as the Heritage Foundation, the CATO Institute and others. These think tanks incubated a generation of academics and journalists who promoted privatization as "common sense" to the general public.

In South Africa, the key evangelizing organization promoting market fundamentalism in education and other social sectors in South Africa is the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE). The likes of Pauline Dixon, Michael Barber,

the John Templeton Foundation and James Tooley are their main sources of inspiration. The CDE's efforts are replicated by some academics and pro-business, "independent" think tanks. Their research is reflected eclectically in a wide range of policy documents, strategies, public events, and pronouncements, all of which have in the main adopted an aggressive approach supporting privatization and promoting "low-fee" schools (Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2015).

A recent editorial in *The Economist* (2017) on South Africa's schooling system provides a useful example of the functioning of the echo chamber. The editorial recycles tired arguments but more insidiously, its shallow causal narrative feeds into proposals for the privatization of education. In essence, it is a classic bait-and-switch maneuver applied to schooling. *The Economist*, as well as other pro-business media outlets, form the "echo chamber" of business philanthropies and ignore these fundamental issues in their haste to promote privatization, in all its permutations, as the proffered solution.

For *The Economist*, teachers and teacher unions are primarily responsible for the dismal situation and that we are not getting "bang for our buck":

> [M]oney is not the reason for the malaise. Few countries spend as much to so little effect. In South Africa public spending on education is 6.4% of GDP; the average share in EU countries is 4.8%. More important than money are a lack of accountability and the abysmal quality of most teachers. Central to both failures is the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) …

Yet three decades into our democracy, 90% of our public schools do not have libraries, 42% of our schools are overcrowded and there is a huge backlog for buildings, capital expenditure, and school maintenance – a result of the apartheid history of racially skewed resource allocation and the political choices made in the past 20 years. Consider the view of an OECD report (OECD, 2013) concerning expenditure on education in South Africa relative to other countries:

> Expenditure as a share of GDP was slightly higher than in Mexico and about the same as in Brazil or an average OECD country (World Bank, 2012). These figures are often quoted to make the point that there is no apparent under-funding of the education system. However, this view is inaccurate as the proportion of the population aged 0–14 years in South Africa (29.9% in 2011) is much higher than in OECD countries (e.g. 18.4% in France and 20.1% in the United States). This share is somewhat higher than even some other emerging countries, such as Brazil (25.0%). Even more strikingly, half of the South African population is less than 24 years old, many of whom should be attending an educational institution. Public resources spent per pupil would need to be increased by 30% at the primary level and by 20% at the secondary level to match the OECD average level of resources per pupil.

It is true, however, that much of the money from our fiscus does not reach the intended beneficiaries and it is not simply a question of "throwing money at the

problem" – wastage and corruption must be addressed. Impropriety, malfeasance, and the quality of teachers are severe problems but it is sophistry to propose privatization as a solution for these egregious issues and it is rich to blame teachers and teacher unions alone.

The Economist uncritically promotes "low-cost" private schools, specifically Spark Schools and public-private partnerships known as "Collaboration" schools, as the solution to South Africa's desultory schooling system.

Late in 2017, the Western Cape Education Department approved a public-private-partnership policy inspired by charter schools in the US and academies in the UK to be piloted in up to 50 schools over five years. Presently, seven schools in poor communities have been enrolled. Private entities known as "operating partners" will manage the schools, largely funded by donors such as DG Murray Trust, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, the Zenex Foundation, the Millennium Trust, First Rand Empowerment, ELMA Philanthropies, the Omidyar Network, and ARK.

School governing bodies run by these operating partners will make decisions about admission policies, school contracts, and the dismissal of teachers instead of the state. Initially at least, private funders are expected to supplement state funding by a huge amount. Given the dismal state of schools in impoverished areas, this injection of capital has seduced many school communities.

All teacher unions in South Africa have rejected this model and education social movements such as Equal Education have posed many critical questions including the outsourcing of school governance, admission policies, and sustainability (Motsepe, 2016).

The Adverse Consequences of Privatization

Public education has developed over more than a century to become a core part of the work of governments especially because it is very much an aspect of their democratizing mandate in providing a basic human right to all members of society. Nowhere is there an example of a country with high educational outcomes where the provision of basic education has been in private hands. Yet there is now an increasingly insistent view suggesting that the privatization of education, whether through high-cost or low-cost private schooling, charter schools or the voucher system, is the solution to the problems of education systems. However, the purveyors of these ideas do not speak to the adverse consequences of privatization.

Of these perhaps the most troublesome relates to the value systems inculcated by the privatization of education and the power it vests in unaccountable and undemocratic corporate interests already hugely dominant in the world (Spreen & Vally, 2014). Corporations and their "experts" have a large part to play in the development of the curriculum, in shaping the orientation and outcomes of education, and determining the "suitability" of teachers and administrators. Of necessity, this is associated with the rationalization of costs and the determination of what is "relevant" and what is not. In effect, it converts education into a commodity to be purchased and sold in a highly commercialized

and competitive market. These characteristics of privatization are further augmented by:

- the absence of a national curriculum or forms of assessment which engender wider social outcomes and goals necessary for social cohesion and consistency;
- the effects on the (already parlous) state of the public system, which ends up catering to only students from the most deprived communities;
- the removal of especially middle-class children from the public schooling system based on the criterion of affordability and ostensible "choice" and their separation from a wider network of social engagements and interactions;
- the obvious effects on deepening social inequality and stratification among the citizenry, whatever the putative "gains" of private education;
- the frequently continued use of public infrastructure and almost invariable reliance on the best publicly trained teachers. There is little or no training of teachers in the private sector and consequently the privatization of education plays a parasitic role by depending on the public provision of qualified teachers.
- the stimulation of perhaps the greatest outbreak of corruption in the public service as the empires of many billionaires will attest, through textbook provision, standardized tests, school meals, and other outsourcing measures;
- most importantly, the engendering of competitiveness and individualism as the overarching values in society.

Steven Klees' caution is apposite:

> Thirty + years of neoliberal policies have often left public schools overcrowded, with poorly trained teachers, few learning materials, dilapidated facilities, and often not close by. It is no wonder that some parents opt out. However, while it is rational for disadvantaged individuals to sometimes send their children to private schools, it is poor public policy—it serves only a few, it increases inequality, it ignores the public interest, it neglects public schools, and it devalues teachers. Privatization is said to meet the growing education gap (which resulted from years of attack on the public sector), but all it does is replace an attempt to develop good public policy with the vagaries of charity or the narrow-mindedness of profit-making. (2017, p. 7)

The private market for education is now estimated to be $50 billion–$100 billion worldwide (Klees, 2017). Organizations like the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the investment arm of the World Bank, have grown exponentially and in 2012, had more than $850 million in commitments to private initiatives in education. Direct foreign investment in education has also been promoted by the World Trade Organization's (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which encourages countries to open their economies to education (and other services), raising questions of accountability, control, and sovereignty.

Earlier we (Spreen & Vally, 2014) mentioned, following the analyses of among others Saltman (2007) and Apple (2010), that the corporate education reform movement needs to be unpacked and understood in relation to the broader

political, ideological and cultural landscape namely, neoliberalism and neo-conservatism promoted and exported across the world.

South Africans subjected to the echo chamber promoting "low-fee" schools would find the critique by Keith Lewin (2013) useful. He poses a number of largely rhetorical questions to the "Acolytes of Low Price Private Schools." These include:

- Will the engagement of the private sector guarantee the equitable delivery of the right to education to every child?
- Since publicly funded and managed education systems have delivered massive increases in access to education and are now working on improved quality, why change a successful strategy and privatize services?
- If private provision does not increase access, if fee-paying choices are rationed by price, and if some public schools perform better than some private schools, then why should educational services be privatized?
- Why should public subsidies be directed at profitable businesses and what are the opportunity costs to public investment of the transfer of resources to private providers?

Lewin shows why arguments in favor of continuing to invest in the development of publicly financed school systems are compelling, including the fact that public systems are guarantors of the right to basic education, can reach children in communities where there is scant commercial interest, and where political will can more easily be translated into public financing. He also makes the vital point that dependence on private sector delivery of public services involves real risks, particularly since self-regulation is fragile, lacking in transparency, and may be subject to elite capture.

An important case study of the "low-fee" private school model was recently conducted by Curtis B. Riep of the Omega Schools Franchise in Ghana – a joint venture between Pearson and Omega Schools. This model has been called the "McDonaldization" of education. Riep (2014, p. 266) explains:

> This is because large-scale chains of low-cost private-school franchises like Omega are based on market-oriented principles of: 1. Efficiency (serving the largest amount of students at the lowest possible cost); 2. The standardization of services; 3. Brand reliability (as a form of quality control); and 4 consumerism ("pay-as-you-learn" and the commodification of basic educational services).

Based on the findings of a 437-student sample across the Omega Schools chain, Riep finds that the "pay-as-you learn" scheme touted by Omega as "innovative" where families pay 75 cents U.S. a day per child for classroom services has been less than impressive. At any given day it results in an absenteeism rate of 20% of the student body. Riep explains:

> One Omega School student expressed her experiences … 'I sell water on the streets one day so I can go to school the next.' This is indicative of the commodification of social relations inherent in Omega Schools' system of education, whereby students are transformed into consumers and the opportunity to 'get an education' is dependent upon one's ability to pay.

The study also found that the main source of cost and efficiency savings came from the super-exploitation of teachers' labor by hiring non-unionized labor and paying them 15–20% (p. 267) of what Ghanian teachers in the public sector take home. The "standardization of services" comes in the form of standardized lesson plans delivered by high-school graduates supported by a two-week teacher-training program to prepare unqualified teachers

> for their part in the production of uniform outcomes … Thus, the "McDonaldization" model of education demonstrated by Omega schools is related to … uniform products (i.e. the standardization of services), replication of settings (i.e. "school-in-a-box"), scripting employee behaviours and interaction with customers (i.e. controlled pedagogical processes). (p. 269)

Curtis Riep concludes his study by critiquing the high-sounding proclamation of Ken Donkoh (one of the founders of Omega Schools) that education is the first bridge out of poverty. Riep argues "the ironic and harmful failure is that the Omega bridge levies a high toll for all those who wish to pass, which is more likely to reproduce poverty, than it can be expected to alleviate it" (p. 275).

Neoliberal globalization's narrow focus on business and the market system continues to undermine and distort the purposes of good quality public education. It has the potential to negate the struggles for a fair, just, and humane society, substituting these for unaccountable and avaricious global autocracies based on the power of money. We simply cannot abandon the public mandate of the state if we are to have any hope of achieving the goal of a democratic and humane society, free of corruption, accountable public services promoting decent employment and socially useful work, the provision of "public goods" and the development of a genuinely democratic society for all citizens. And for public education to work, we need motivated, professional, and happy educators, competent managers and state officials, adequate resources and infrastructure, a conducive community environment, addressing the social context and consequences of poverty, and proper enforcement of standards. For many communities in South Africa, there is a realization that the struggle against apartheid education is not over – this time against class apartheid.

In reality, then, the privatization of education is the pursuit of a global ideological agenda rationalized on the ostensible (and often real) failure of governments to supply good quality public education to the majority of its citizenry. This ideological agenda is uncaring about any idea of the "public good" purposes of education, and of its role in producing social cohesion and social equity through the provision of education that is of high quality for all members of society.

Resistance

South Africa has a proud history of resistance in and through education. This resistance has generated popular epistemologies and pedagogies against racial capitalism. The "peoples' education movement," "worker education movement,"

and "popular adult and/or community education movement" are examples. This praxis, relative to the struggle against apartheid, has diminished but still exists, and its center of gravity today has shifted to the new independent social movements as they resist the impact of neoliberalism and increasing poverty and inequality in post-apartheid South Africa. Since the massacre of 34 striking mineworkers at the Lonmin mine in Marikana in 2012, South Africa has witnessed daily community protests for democratic accountability and what is called "service delivery" protests. There have also been protests at the beginning of every year for more than a decade against the high costs of higher education and financial exclusions at many universities in South Africa. In 2015 and 2016, these sporadic protests culminated into a movement against the commodification of education throughout the country where students demanded free education from pre-school to higher education.

At the end of 2015, the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation held a conference to reflect on the tumultuous events at South African tertiary institutions. Student, academic and worker participants from 22 universities attended and engaged in vibrant discussions centered around the #FeesMustFall campaign. It was the first such gathering with delegates from almost all universities since the #RhodesMustFall initiative at UCT in early 2015. Many of the participants were at the epicenter of the recent struggles for education and other rights, and together brought the considerably valuable experience they had accumulated in the course of the debates, discussions, and actions over the last period from many parts of the country. Events in the recent past among youth and students are certainly suggestive of a new generation in the now very popular epigram of Fanon, attempting to fulfill its mission. It does signal a new consciousness among important layers of youth, students, and workers, but also exasperation with the sophistry of the ruling party, frustration at thwarted hopes, the everyday injuries of mere survival under racial capitalism, the failure of an economic system which increases inequality and unemployment, the venality of politicians, and the brazen excesses of cronyism. The conference provided them the opportunity not only to share their experiences but also to contest the issues that arose in the course of the campaigns, including the political, ideological and social orientations they brought to them, the issues these raised and the complexities they had to deal with. Most of all it provided them with the opportunity to forge and renew relations.

Developments since the #RhodesMustFall and other student movements have opened up critical debates at a number of institutions – not just universities – about the purpose of education in relation to the idea of transformation and decolonization in a situation of the global marketization and corporatization of education. These debates are not just about colonial and apartheid-era statues since they relate to a raft of other issues, all of which go to the root not only of education but also of society (symbolic representation, structural racism and interpersonal prejudice, demographic issues, hetero-normativity, patriarchy, "whiteness," culture of institutions, language, culture and knowledge, power and history). The national #FeesMustFall student movement promoted solidarity between students and workers in and between universities and challenged the corporatization of the academy. They called for an education system that speaks to the needs

of citizens and not to the business of profit. For this cause, students were prepared to close their institutions, occupy their campus buildings, challenge authority and power, and courageously put their bodies on the line. In their mass marches to the ruling party headquarters in Johannesburg, Luthuli House, on October 22, 2015 and the Union Buildings and Parliament on October 23, 2015, tens of thousands of students and workers expressed their support for the movement and through it, their vital desire for an education that promotes a dignified and fulfilled life for all. The concrete gains and victories in a short space of time at universities should also not be under-estimated. Some of these include the removal of symbols of colonialism, the re-naming of buildings, stopping fee increments and registration fees, the ending of the practice of "outsourcing" of workers at universities and serious attempts at changing the curricula. These gains bode well for maintaining the momentum toward the achievement of free quality public education from pre-primary to higher education.

Notes

1 According to Statistics South Africa, the Gini coefficient measuring relative wealth reached 0.65 in 2014 based on expenditure data (excluding taxes), and 0.69 based on income data (including salaries, wages, and social grants), making South Africa one of the most unequal countries in the world. The poorest 20% of the South African population consume less than 3% of total expenditure, while the wealthiest 20% consume 65% (http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southafrica/overview). In August 2017, South Africa's Statistician-General revealed that 30.4 million of South Africa's 55 million citizens in 2015 lived in poverty, or below the upper poverty line of R992 per person per month (R13 equaled $1 in August 2017). One in three South Africans lived on less than R797 per month, or half of the country's 2015 mean annual household income of R19120 (http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=10334).
2 https://www.curro.co.za/corporate/information/core-business/
3 https://www.curro.co.za/media/201425/curro-interim-results-30-june-2017-presentation.pdf
4 http://ww2.oldmutual.co.za/old-mutual-investment-group/insights/insights-details/more-than-r60-million-investment-set-aside-for-quality-education
5 https://medium.com/pearson-affordable-learning-fund/spark-schools-flies-onto-series-b-d9464b4ce255
6 http://futurenationschools.com/about-us/who-we-are/

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12

The Violence of Compassion

Education Reform, Race, and Neoliberalism's Elite Rationale
Noah De Lissovoy

Introduction

In the present, neoliberal reform in education and beyond is often presented as an expression of care for the less fortunate, rather than simply a way to increase efficiency or improve results. This neoliberal "compassion" is expressed both in foundation-driven philanthropic efforts and in official government initiatives (as well as in the considerable gray area in between). The reorganization of public education through choice and accountability systems as well as the expansion of the influence of the private sector are increasingly framed in the US and globally in the language of human and civil rights. Evidence shows that the claims of improvement made by neoliberal reformers are often dubious, and that their efforts are self-serving, aiming as they do at increasing the potential for profit and influence for business. However, even as critical scholars have debunked the rhetoric of reformers, not enough attention has been paid to the philosophical and ideological structure of contemporary neoliberal care. A consideration of this structure, I argue, suggests that underneath the effort to rethink society in market terms is a basic commitment to the notion of the virtue of elites and elite perspectives. Forms of inequality that shore up elite privilege are covertly valorized even within educational reforms and reform discourse that ostensibly aim at decreasing gaps in opportunity. At the same time, I argue that the elite rationale that governs neoliberal philanthropy and policy draws on, and is inflected by, a long history of racist paternalism toward communities of color. Neoliberal care in this context works to refuse and erase the agency of the students and communities it ostensibly targets. In short, a complex symbolic economy works through contemporary reform; I believe that a deeper understanding of this economy and its foundational commitments can help us to formulate more useful responses and alternatives.

This chapter begins with an investigation of the philosophical roots of neoliberalism's elite rationale through a consideration of the philosopher F.A. Hayek's ([1960] 2011) defense of social privilege and inequality. As I describe, Hayek considered inequality to be an indispensable engine of civilizational advance. Reading Hayek critically, I aim to uncover elements that persist in the philosophical architecture of contemporary reform. The next section explores the racial organization of White gestures of empathy toward people of color, via the work of Saidiya Hartman (1997) and related race-critical scholarship. I then apply this compound framework to an analysis of key instances of contemporary educational reform in the US and globally. I show that the contradiction between the putative focus on improving educational conditions and the process of antidemocratic appropriation that the reforms actually enact can be made sense of with reference to Hayek's argument that privilege bestows on elites the right and duty to *experiment* with social conditions; this operates as a central rationale within contemporary neoliberalism's "good works." At the same time, Hartman's framework for analyzing the structure of racism within liberal projects of racial solidarity allows us to understand the aura of contemporary reforms for White elites. I argue that these efforts assume the abjectness of communities of color, and that the circulation of representations of Black and Brown beneficiaries serves ultimately to exalt elites themselves. I conclude by considering the implications of my analysis for understanding the stubborn persistence of neoliberalism's elite rationale and for efforts to challenge it.

F.A. Hayek and the Defense of Privilege

The philosophical roots of neoliberalism include a defense of elite reason that continues to work through reform in the present, often below the surface of public debate. The central assumption that concerns me here is the notion that the advancement of some, against others, constitutes progress for the whole of society, and can thus be presented as both desirable and ethical. Starting from a faith in the virtue of competition, the "compassion" that motivates neoliberal philanthropic and policy initiatives ultimately envisions the access of all to a field of high-risk opportunity, in which the opportunity to succeed must always be simultaneously the opportunity to fail. Examining the original defense of this vision – which I consider here in the work of F.A. Hayek – allows us to surface founding commitments of what became the neoliberal program at a time when they were idiosyncratic rather than dominant. Hayek was a transitional figure between the older liberal tradition in politics and economics and the later fully-fledged neoliberalism of disciples like Milton Friedman. His work was a decisive influence on the architects of neoliberal policies globally, but precisely the germinal character of his arguments – articulated against the prevailing social democratic regime of the time – exposes key determinants of neoliberal theory and practice that are often obscured in the present.

For Hayek ([1960] 2011), inequality is both the result (and proof) of a free society as well as the condition of civilizational and material progress. Given basic differences in capacity between individuals, a society that grants to all the

freedom to develop and be rewarded for their skills will necessarily be unequal in terms of outcomes. Indeed, equality of outcomes in terms of wealth and status from this perspective can only indicate the pernicious interference of the state. More importantly, inequality acts as the essential condition of progress (for both individuals and the collective), since the privileges of wealth and education allow for experimentation and innovation by elites (with regard to technology and lifestyle) which can then diffuse to the rest of society once these innovations are perfected and made affordable. Thus, this position grounds trickle-down economics in a larger argument about the mechanism of accelerating techno-logical and cultural advance. Hayek argues that this advance "seems in a large measure to be the result of this inequality and to be impossible without it. Progress at such a fast rate cannot proceed on a uniform front but must take place in echelon fashion, with some far ahead of the rest" (p. 96). In fact, according to Hayek, there is no degree of inequality that should in principle be considered unacceptable, since the gain of some has to be reckoned as the gain of all.

Hayek's defense of privilege is aggressive, going so far as to oppose the argument that social rewards should correspond to individual merit (understood as a measurement of effort). Instead, what matters is the product or performance: "What determines our responsibility is the advantage we derive from what others offer us, not their merit in providing it" (p. 161). For this reason, not only should the terrain of necessarily unequal individual capacities not be tampered with; in addition, unequal conditions (in terms of inherited wealth, family status, and education, etc.) cannot be objected to, since they provide the necessary foundation for even greater advance (pp. 152–155). Hayek's argument here has two moments: the first is that a "better elite" is an index of the level of society as a whole; the second is that the elevation of this elite above the mass works as the ground for innovation, and thus is the condition for the material and cultural development of all. Hayek argues, paradoxically, that society benefits most when we renounce the idea of social responsibility. Hayek thus repudiates the progressive tradition in education and beyond in one fell swoop. Not only can there be no social responsibility in fact, but only responsibility to those who concern us; in addition, the refusal of a "general altruism" actually benefits everyone, since it makes possible the accumulation, by some, of material and symbolic capital that is the foundation for the advancement of all.

If progress takes place for Hayek as a result of the uncontrolled experiments allowed for by the accumulation of capital and privilege, and not through any grand social designs which would interfere with the freedom of elites, the corollary of this principle is that actually existing institutions and norms in capitalist society represent the sedimentation of previous collective experience and experimentation, and so we should submit to them, "whether or not we can see that anything important depends on their being observed in the particular instance" (p. 128). Hayek contrasts this submission to the norm to coercion by the state, which he points to as the unacceptable alternative means for achieving social cohesion. In this way, *obedience* – not to a despot, but rather to custom and convention – works as an essential moderating principle supplying consistency of social conditions. For Hayek, the most important moral principle that we must obey is the principle of individual freedom – which he defines not

as a right of access but rather in negative terms as a lack of coercion (p. 57). In submitting to this formal rather than substantive definition of liberty, it follows that we must obey those rules and institutions that in practice organize very unequal conditions, for different groups, for the exercise of freedom. This argument is echoed in contemporary neoliberal denunciations of state "monopolies" in education, and in calls for submission to the overarching principle of competition.

The principles of inequality and obedience explicated here set the stage for a defense of the market and entrepreneurialism. The submission that Hayek demands in moral terms becomes in fact submission to the market, and to its pricing of our capacities and potentials. Likewise, the form itself of the market can be seen in Hayek to set the terms for his perspectives on politics and morality. But I want to highlight the way that these principles also cohere as a pedagogy that supports a set of material and immaterial privileges and that justifies an aggressive elitism that operates not just as a class instinct but as a philosophical formation. From Hayek's perspective, not only are (even brutal) disparities in conditions for different groups productive for society as a whole, but by the same token the moral authority of elites is thereby justified.

In spite of transformations in the ideological structure and field of neoliberalism in the present, I argue that this elitism persists as a kind of philosophical and moral kernel. Of course, the most striking difference between the discourse of contemporary neoliberals and Hayek's own language is that neoliberal reform in the present more often than not presents itself in the form of disinterested philanthropy, or in the language of civil rights. (The rhetoric that surrounded the No Child Left Behind Act is an exemplary case.) In short, neoliberalism in the present putatively aims to remedy precisely those inequalities that it has not only contributed decisively to producing but *upon which it continues to depend at the level of its philosophical rationale*. This discursive shift has occurred at the same time as neoliberalism has moved from the margins to the center of public policy and government. The cruelty of Hayek's apology for inequality and exploitation has been transformed, in the age of mature neoliberalism, into an extended "objective violence" (Žižek, 2008) in which the ravaging of the masses becomes the very premise of economic and social production. In this context, neoliberalism's current moral discourse, framed in terms of compassion, rights, and even equality, works as a kind of obscene supplement to the violence that neoliberal reform in fact everywhere produces.

Neoliberalism's Racial Fantasies and the Whiteness of Empathy

Freire (1996) described the invidious effects of a "false generosity" on the part of the oppressors that immobilizes and pathologizes the oppressed even as it softens the hard edges of domination. False generosity thereby defuses resistance and reroutes it into a psychology of self-blame. This concept remains useful in making sense of the structure of contemporary neoliberal "compassion." Nevertheless, in two respects, it seems less than adequate in relation to a contemporary education

policy context that is deeply inflected by race. First, rather than working to ameliorate the effects of the injuries that capitalism produces, neoliberalism's good works are very often the form itself that this injury takes. This can be seen clearly in the field of education, in which damaging reforms often arrive in the first place by way of elite philanthropic efforts. Second, rather than seeking only to colonize the minds of those it injures, these initiatives arguably seek to efface the very presence and agency of the communities of color that are disproportionately affected by reform. Thus, school reform projects are often conceptualized and planned in closed-door meetings among officials and foundation representatives, and implemented without a considered effort to consult with community members or even to convince them of the necessity of reform (Dixson, Buras, & Jeffers, 2015; Hursh, 2015). In this regard the familiar critical analysis needs to be more finely tuned. Specifically, in order to grasp the logic at work in neoliberal reform, I believe that we have to consider more closely the dimension of racism, a dimension that is symptomatically excluded from neoliberalism's own discourse.

Racism structures the political economy of neoliberal education reform writ large, as scholars have pointed out (Lipman, 2011; Stovall, 2015), but I argue that it also organizes the structure of neoliberal ideology and desire: in this structure, understandings of who needs to be reformed and who is competent to organize reform are deeply racially coded. In this regard, neoliberalism harnesses and also rearticulates dynamics of whiteness that have motivated capitalism from the beginning. Race-critical work on processes of identification and subjection is very helpful here. In particular, Saidiya Hartman (1997) shows that racism in the context of slavery determined expressions of White protest as much as it did the institution of slavery itself. Her close analysis exposes the way that whiteness organized expressions of disgust at the cruelty of slavery, in such a way that Whites' very expressions of empathy performed an erasure of Black being and agency. Considering the flights of imagination in which White observers sought to empathize with the suffering of slaves, Hartman points out that this empathic identification was "as much due to [their] good intentions … as to the fungibility of the captive body" (1997, p. 19). Describing the way that revulsion against the cruelty of slavery worked via Whites' imaginary substitution of themselves as the targets of terror, Hartman points out how, at the same time, "by virtue of this substitution the object of identification [Black people] threaten[ed] to disappear" (p. 19). This racial logic, central to the history of capitalism, is a key register of neoliberal projects of control and subjection.

Neoliberal generosity arguably depends upon precisely this effacement of its object, such that the White elite reoccupies the center of symbolic investment in the very moment of supposed extension toward the Other. For instance, urban "redevelopment" projects emphasize the cultural history and identity of neighborhoods; this history then works as a marketing tool to entice affluent Whites to move in (Lipman, 2011). In education, accountability is presented as a means of exposing the inadequacies in the schooling that is offered to students of color; however, the resulting metrics celebrate the performance of the privileged. Rather than appearing as actors and agents in their own histories, communities of color show up in the narrative of neoliberal reform as the backdrop or occasion for initiatives that are supposed to help them. We can see in this way how a

colonial "necropolitics" (Mbembe, 2003) underwrites neoliberalism, such that the lives of people of color constitute a mute field of experimentation for White social engineers, even as their experiments are couched in terms of uplift and empowerment. Recalling Hayek's apology for privilege, neoliberal reform imagines White reason as the seat of virtue, and its mere attention to the lives of the "disadvantaged" as a proof of magnanimity.

We might say that in this new *mission civilisatrice*, the purpose is not the conversion of the heathen but rather their disappearance. The speculative alchemy of neoliberalism launders appropriation and dispossession into the highest virtues. Thus, as people of color disappear from historic urban communities and schools, they reappear spectrally on the homepages of philanthropic foundations, universities, and hip urban entertainment establishments. In this logic of symbolic invasion, "there [is] no relation to blackness outside the terms of this use of, entitlement to, and occupation of the captive body" (Hartman, 1997, p. 25). In the "compassion" of neoliberal reform, a cold-blooded responsibilization of the marginalized is sutured to the potent fantasies of the White philanthropic imagination. Forced into these fantasies by elites' pet policy initiatives, Brown and Black children serve as the raw material in a process of "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2003) that proceeds symbolically as much as materially. Thus, as communities and their schools are appropriated, Whites capture both material educational resources as well as credit for rescuing historic urban neighborhoods from decay.

If neoliberal generosity in education ultimately points back to Hayek's cherished principles of inequality and obedience, a race-critical perspective allows us to see how racial fantasies work as the indispensable setting for these ideological commitments. Recent neoliberal educational policy initiatives have been deeply racial projects, imagined from the outset in relation to presumed gaps between Whites and people of color (see, for instance, Leonardo's (2007) analysis of No Child Left Behind). To this extent, the symbolic economy that has historically characterized projects of elite White assistance to people of color is at work in these contemporary initiatives as well. Furthermore, far from softening the rough edges of neoliberalism's tough love, the framing of neoliberal education reform in terms of a commitment to racial progress has only served to sharpen its cruelties and ironies. This neoliberal care, expressed in choice, charter, and redevelopment initiatives, repeats on an expanded policy terrain the eliminative logic of a White empathy that has always sought to occupy the experiences and identities of people of color (Hartman, 1997). In the sections that follow, I consider how the violence of neoliberal compassion, whose rough outlines I have outlined up to this point, is expressed in specific instances of educational reform in the US and globally.

Epistemology of Elitism: Social Engineering and the New Educational Philanthropy

Neoliberalism has reoriented philanthropy in society and education in business terms. The new venture philanthropy seeks to measure the effects of its contributions in terms of a return on investment, and to produce a series of specific

policy changes beyond merely contributing to the public good (Ball, 2012). While there is no doubt an important role played by cold calculation in neoliberal philanthropic projects in education, we also need to consider the force of basic ideological commitments at the heart of neoliberalism's elite rationale. Recent experiences of neoliberal education reform show that the market logic expressed in philanthropic initiatives cannot be separated from a deep Hayekian faith in the virtue of the elites who command and benefit from it. This faith justifies a sense of care as imposition and appropriation, in which those who are thought to know best take responsibility for organizing society as a whole.

In the US, elites have taken advantage of crisis conditions to reorganize school systems in urban areas across the country, including New Orleans, Chicago, and Newark, among others. Wealthy individuals and their foundations have been major contributors to these projects, which have been framed not simply in terms of improvement or redevelopment, but also as projects of compassion. This so-called "conscious capitalism" converts the arrogance of imposition into a virtue. The reforms it has led to have resulted in the displacement of communities and the deterioration of already difficult educational conditions (Buras, 2011; Lipman, 2011). For elites, however, these results prove their power to make change and to up-end the barriers to a process of social experimentation that is inherently desirable. A political option in favor of business models of organization is at work here, but these experiments in social engineering – even where they are framed as efforts at "closing gaps" in opportunity – cannot be fully explained without recognizing the grounding of these efforts in an (un)conscious belief, defended and illuminated by Hayek, in the *positive virtue of inequality itself*.

Recent educational reforms in Newark, New Jersey, set in motion by the foundation of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, exemplify these dynamics. What stands out in this case is the framing of the difficult conditions in the Newark schools as a crucial opportunity for investment and experimentation by wealthy philanthropists. As Russakoff (2015) has narrated in detail, Newark mayor Cory Booker and New Jersey governor Chris Christie worked secretly with Zuckerberg in 2010 to plan a series of dramatic changes to the school system in Newark, which was at the time under the control of the state board of education as a result of a record of poor performance. This triad was convinced that progress for the schools could only come through a business-model restructuring (involving removal of seniority protections for teachers, implementation of performance-based pay systems, and expansion of the charter school sector), and that this restructuring process in Newark could serve as a laboratory for reforms to be generalized to the nation as a whole. It is clear from this history that the undemocratic nature of this process, in which community members did not have a voice, was not conceived of as a problem, but rather as *the crucial condition for reform.* An imposition of the market model as the inner logic for organizing teaching and learning was at the heart of this experiment, but this imposition at the same time expressed a more fundamental faith in the absolute wisdom of elites.

In fact, the actual disaster produced by the Newark reforms neither halted the political ascension of the protagonists involved nor dampened the resolve of neoliberal reformers in other school systems (Russakoff, 2015). The restructuring of

the Newark schools failed to achieve even the narrowly framed goals of the reformers themselves, at the same time that they destabilized and alienated the community. Similar efforts, with similar results, have taken place across the country as elites and wealthy donors have moved aggressively to influence policy at both the local and national levels (Reckhow & Tompkins-Strange, 2015). The evidence of these failed projects reveals the paternalism of neoliberal compassion; the power of these initiatives is greatest where democracy and community voice have been most marginalized (Stovall, 2015).

It is important to note that "conscious capitalism" in education has been touted not only as a more determined effort to improve school conditions against a status quo supported by bureaucrats and teacher unions but also as a crucial form of *social engineering* that seeks to innovate in local contexts in order to refine "transformational" (i.e. business-oriented) reform models. This was the case in Newark as in other locations, and perhaps most importantly in post-Katrina New Orleans (Buras, 2011; Saltman, 2007). Echoing Hayek's defense of privilege as the necessary condition for material progress and civilizational advance, reform advocates like the Heritage Foundation in this case justified their end run around the rules and norms of democratic engagement as necessary in order to liberate the space of social experimentation. In New Orleans, emergency legislation gave elites the right to label public schools as "failing" and to place them in a new state-run district; at the same time, an executive order from Louisiana's governor made it possible to force the conversion of public schools to charters (Buras, 2011). These measures crucially enabled the evasion of democratic control and a radical restructuring of the school system, a pattern that is evident across different sites of neoliberal school reform.

As I have described, Hayek argues that the wealthy enjoy both the privilege and the responsibility to experiment in the economic and social spheres. The inequalities that shore up this privilege cannot be condemned, he argues, because they make possible social innovation that ultimately benefits all: "A large part of the expenditure of the rich … thus serves to defray the cost of the experimentation with the new things that, as a result, can later be made available to the poor" ([1960] 2011, p. 97). The moral charge of this elite "burden" can be felt in the statements of neoliberal reformers, who frame the exercise of their power to remake conditions on the ground for regular people as a kind of categorical imperative. Thus, according to the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, "That's why we start each day by asking ourselves: How can we help our partners and grantees create better conditions in America's public schools to prepare all students for a productive life?" – a commitment that the foundation understands, of course, in the context of "entrepreneurship for the public good" (Broad Foundation, 2016). While the virtues of this exercise of power may often be difficult to see (especially for those who suffer from them), Hayek tells us that we must nevertheless all hold on tight and give ourselves over to this ride, however rough. Obedience to the market, and to its lucky commanders, is a basic ideological commitment, which cannot be controverted by any unhappy consequences. If experiments often fail, with negative effects for many (Hayek, [1960] 2011, p. 81), this cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the freedom of the privileged to remake reality.

This elite prerogative to experiment and innovate, a kind of common sense for neoliberal reformers, casts the public at large – whom reforms are nominally intended to serve – as either obstacles or mute targets. For instance, in the case of Newark, Zuckerberg's top priority was reorganizing the system of teacher compensation on a competitive business model. He wanted to replace a pay system for teachers based on years of service with one based on student performance (as measured by test scores), and to make it easier to remove teachers with the lowest evaluations. This restructured contract would then serve as a model for compensating teachers across the country (Davis, 2014). While the reformers ultimately did not succeed in removing seniority rights for teachers in Newark, they did manage to tie raises to a new merit-based evaluation system. Importantly, teachers were framed as adversaries in this process, and their objections were considered irrelevant. In this epistemology of elitism, teachers, students, and community members became the *objects* of knowledge and action, the *subjects* of which looked down on them from the air-conditioned upper floors of power and policy.

Recalling Hayek's argument allows us to make sense of the arrogance that works through contemporary educational reform and philanthropy. His defense of privilege is echoed in the tacit claim by elite reformers to a unique access to the truth. Russakoff (2015) reports that Christopher Cerf, the Christie-appointed New Jersey education commissioner, commented, in reference to the Newark reforms, that "change has casualties. You can't make real change through least-common-denominator, consensus solutions. One reason school reform has failed is the tremendous emphasis on consensus" (p. 77). While neoliberal reforms putatively aim to combat the inequalities that plague public schooling and society, the imagined authority of reformers is grounded in a sense of their own superior understanding, a superiority that is seemingly supported in fact by these same disparities of wealth and access. In this way, within the political unconscious of neoliberal philanthropy, inequality is ultimately the essential condition of social advance. And as Hayek would have it for ordinary people the proper response is not to question the decisions, the virtue of which they are not in a position to judge, but rather to obey, trusting their fates to those who must know better than they do.

Race, Neoliberal Care, and Global Education Reform

The "good works" of contemporary neoliberal education reform are grounded in a deep sense of the virtue of elite privilege, as I have described. But they are also organized through particular economies of racism (Brown & De Lissovoy, 2011). On one hand, race works as a system that neoliberalism exploits to effect its reorganization of society; on the other hand, the logic of racial imposition itself works to determine the meaning and experience of neoliberalism – especially in the form of the neoliberal care that is projected by philanthropic initiatives. In this way, neoliberalism can be seen as perfecting historical processes of racial violation that have always organized capitalist society (De Lissovoy, 2013). In the case of contemporary education reform, both in the US and globally, elites at

once rationalize their interventions in terms of a challenge to race-based inequalities while also refusing to consider the racial politics that actually frame reform projects. In both contexts, the enactment of neoliberal reform proceeds on the basis of a process of a substitution in which White elites appropriate the spaces of action and decision-making that belong to communities of color, refusing the latter's agency. At the same time, the aura of virtue that surrounds these initiatives works through a rescue fantasy in relation to a racialized and abject Other, a fantasy that has roots in the long history of White imagination of Black suffering (Hartman, 1997).

In the US, the case that perhaps best illustrates these dynamics is that of New Orleans. After Katrina, the epochal flood of 2005 that devastated the city, White reformers moved aggressively to reorganize the school system, seizing the opportunity of the crisis created by the flood to close historic schools, convert the public system to a network of charter schools, and to replace the (majority African-American) teaching force with a new group of young (mainly White) recruits. This process was put in motion by a network of think tanks, foundations, businesspeople, and politicians set on reorganizing the schools on the basis of neoliberal principles of choice and flexibility and in accordance with the interests of the White middle class (Buras, 2011). In the process, established rules and procedures for school reorganization, termination of teachers, and communication with the public were violated and/or rewritten. Black teachers, parents, and students were not meaningfully consulted and their objections were ignored or overruled (Dixson, Buras, & Jeffers, 2015). Importantly, at the same time these reforms were framed as an act of care for the community, ostensibly rescuing students from a failing and inefficient public school system, improving the teaching force, streamlining governance, and inviting generous contributions from wealthy foundations.

As Dixson et al. (2015) describe, White elite projects for reform in New Orleans went forward without regard to the history of the schools they aimed to reorganize, without consideration of longstanding work by teachers in these schools to support African-American students, and without serious engagement with student and community groups that formed to protect their schools against closure. In this regard, the New Orleans case resembles restructuring that has taken place in many other US cities, such as Chicago, which has recently seen the gutting of the public school system, as historic schools serving communities of color have been replaced by turnaround and charter schools under cover of a market-based discourse that frames choice as the route to improvement – over the objections of the communities actually affected by this restructuring (Lipman, 2011), and without attention to the actual experiences of students and teachers in the city (Means, 2013). In these cases of urban educational reform, not only are space and resources taken within the school system and through the process of neighborhood gentrification that accompanies it, but also the framing of reform as an act of care – often via the appropriation of civil rights and equity discourses (Scott, 2009) – serves at the symbolic level to substitute a White elite agency and understanding for the actual desires and perspectives of people of color.

This act of substitution depends on an underlying refusal of humanity to people of color, and on a "constancy of Black subjection" (Hartman, 1997, p. 171) from

the past to the present. If the denial of humanity to Black people has always conditioned White subjectivity (Wilderson, 2010), this relationship is visible in the lack of hesitation with which elites remake the lives of Black communities and other communities of color. In addition, it is important to see that the logic of neoliberal care, as expressed in educational reform projects, involves not only the annexation of resources but also, in a second moment, an exaltation of the White agent of reform. For instance, a crucial moment in the narrative of Newark's ill-fated reform effort was the spectacular celebration – delivered in 2010 to a mass audience via *The Oprah Winfrey Show* – of Mark Zuckerberg's $100 million gift to underwrite the restructuring of the city's schools. As Russakoff (2015) reports, Winfrey was overwhelmed by the news and the studio audience gave Zuckerberg a standing ovation. Here the elite privilege lauded by Hayek comes together with the specific symbolic structure of White paternalism. As Hartman describes, within a "selective acknowledgment of [Black] sentience that only reinforces the tethers of subjection" (1997, p. 35), Whites produce both the material reality of subjection and a fantasy of Black acquiescence that sustains domination. This process of symbolic substitution permits the racist and undemocratic roll-out of reform, as in Newark, New Orleans, and Chicago, since in place of the community's actual response Whiteness can only see the imaginary reflection of its own triumphalism.

New philanthropy and neoliberal educational reform at the global level are likewise crucially framed in the context of a specific racial politics and racial project. International financial institutions for decades have structured economic support to the Global South in such a way as to discourage self-determination and self-sufficiency on the part of recipient nations, continuing a colonial legacy that reproduces a relationship of dependency on the West (Petras &Veltmeyer, 2002). However, in the present, wealthy private and corporate foundations are responsible for an increasing share of support, as they participate in a broad international shift in education policy from government to public-private governance (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). This support is framed in terms of developing senses of civil society in target societies that foreground entrepreneurialism and market orientations (Vogel, 2006) – that is, in a decidedly neoliberal frame. At the same time that such projects promote a market-based discourse for development, they also importantly work to burnish the images of wealthy funders and foundations. Both aspects of this ideological work are inflected by and accomplished within a racial frame. The excitement that surrounds philanthropic efforts in this context, which Ball describes as being driven by "a particular mix of caring and calculation" (2012, p. 70), often serves to distract attention from the actual effects of education reform (Srivastava & Oh, 2010). As in the US, in the international arena elites find permission, in their own wealth and privilege, for projects designed from afar and premised on the presumed incapacity of regular people to understand their own conditions and needs. The insistence on the abjectness of poor populations outside the West works at once as an invitation for intervention and as the occasion for an aggrandizement of White elite reformers.

One player that has emerged as increasingly important in this arena is the Clinton Foundation, founded by former president Bill Clinton after he left office

in 2001, which is involved in a diverse range of projects around the globe. In 2014, the foundation raised approximately $338 million for projects related to health, education, and agriculture (Clinton Foundation, 2016b). In education, it is involved in global literacy projects, leadership development, youth mentoring, and other initiatives. This global work is organized in an entrepreneurial frame, oriented around notions of "empowerment," "change," and "commitment," and starting from such basic principles as: "There is always a way to be faster, leaner, and better" (Clinton Foundation, 2016a). An example of this orientation in the educational arena is the foundation's Banking on Education initiative, which provides loans through Opportunity International (a microfinance organization) to entrepreneurs to open private schools in poor regions of the world, tying philanthropy to so-called social enterprise (Ball, 2012). As the Clinton Foundation (and its signature Clinton Global Initiative program) have rapidly expanded over the last decade, it has been pointed out that Bill and Hillary Clinton have personally benefited from generous speaking fees (totaling many millions of dollars) – even as they are invited to address audiences on the foundation's charitable work (Farenthold, Hamburger, & Helderman, 2015).

The Clinton Foundation has a strong focus on work in Africa and Latin America. Its website prominently features images of the smiling Clintons next to Brown and Black faces from all over the world. Cheerful beneficiaries of the foundation's good work from Haiti, Peru, Kenya, El Salvador, and elsewhere appear in its many photos and videos. However, this imagery and the accompanying narratives do less to educate us about the social context of communities than to advertise the achievements of the foundation and the Clintons themselves. Much of the glow that emanates from these carefully produced materials depends precisely on the racial "optics" that operate barely below the surface: The *brightness* of global philanthropy's good work is magnified here precisely by the *darkness* of the global communities that are its beneficiaries. Thomas Frank (2016) describes a presentation of the Clinton Foundation's microfinance initiative for female entrepreneurs, which paraded select Third World beneficiaries as a backdrop for a celebration of the accomplishments of wealthy First World women, including Hillary Clinton herself. The thrill of assistance that is felt in such initiatives is proportional to the presumed abjectness of the recipients of aid – an abjectness that is crucially signified by race. There is a double circuit of excitement that works through these new global projects of generosity: on one hand, the same promise of hard *results* and *return* that one finds in investment fund prospectuses, and, on the other hand, the enjoyment of a transaction with the distant and destitute, a transaction that promises to redeem the sin of privilege while at the same time reinforcing Whiteness' global position of mastery.

This dynamic is reproduced across the literature and online presences of wealthy foundations. Thus, Goldman Sachs introduces its 10,000 Women educational initiative, which provides training in management and funding to aspiring businesswomen around the world, with the smiling faces and heartwarming stories of recipients from Nigeria, Kenya, and India, and the observation that "Entrepreneurship is all about perseverance, about believing enough to withstand anything and everything that comes your way" (Goldman Sachs, 2016).

In the life narratives of the beneficiaries, Goldman Sachs' initiative is figured as the singular turning point. Extrapolating from Hartman (1997), we ought to look past the surface of such carefully crafted communications to observe the way that "these scenes of enjoyment provide an opportunity for white self-reflection" (p. 34) while working to transform struggle "into a conspicuous, and apparently convincing, display of contentment" (p. 35). Furthermore, in such contemporary displays, elites seek audaciously to symbolically appropriate the resilience itself of communities who are injured by the very global systems of exploitation and marginalization that these elites command.

In this way, neoliberal gestures of care and aid, as much as systems of domination, serve to exalt the powerful and insist on the incapacity of the disadvantaged. Likewise, the celebration of the good works that neoliberal reform and philanthropy accomplish covertly affirms Hayek's apology for global inequality: "There can be little doubt that the prospect of the poorer, 'undeveloped' countries reaching the present level of the West is very much better than it would have been, had the West not pulled so far ahead" [1960] 2011, p. 100). This "so far ahead" is not only a judgment on material conditions but also on racial and civilizational progress. This judgment reappears in the present in the discursive presentation of the Global South as culturally paralyzed and perpetually waiting on aid. The smiling faces that look out from the brochures and websites of global philanthropic foundations indicate an ideological system in which Black and Brown people can only be imagined as forever grateful to be rescued from the inescapable "death-in-life" that Whiteness understands as defining existence outside of the West (Mbembe, 2003).

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter that the emphasis on privatization and marketization in neoliberal education reform is connected to a basic commitment to privilege. Privilege, in the deep structure of the neoliberal ethos, is identified with virtue. In Hayek ([1960] 2011), this is an explicit philosophical position; in contemporary neoliberalism, it works generally as a covert premise of reform. In neoliberalism, the elites who possess and command privilege, in both its material and symbolic forms, are understood to have a natural authority or epistemic advantage in questions of public policy. The virtue of this authority, when it is expressed in the philanthropic work of wealthy foundations, is amplified even further. The "good works" of such foundations, even as they ultimately pursue the interests of business rather than ordinary people, acquire a powerful aura in the media and in official narratives – an aura that serves to exalt these foundations and the elite individuals who run them. This is perhaps especially the case in education, in which the targets for reform are young people, whose vulnerability constitutes the perfect backdrop for the spectacular initiatives of neoliberal compassion.

In fact, neoliberal educational reform disregards and injures local communities. The specific structure of this injury, I have argued, has to be understood in terms of racial politics – and in particular through a consideration of the historic erasure of the subjectivity and agency of people of color by White elites (Hartman,

1997; Wilderson, 2010). This foundational racism works in the neoliberal era as a crucial condition for reform, giving it its specific shape and character in both the US and global contexts. Privatization, charterization, and marketization in education start from assumptions about the abjectness and incapacity of students, parents, and communities of color (Dixson et al., 2015). Furthermore, as I have described, the racial gradient of the landscape of neoliberal care, in which White foundations, agencies, and individuals explicitly target communities of color, operates as the essential platform of reform narratives. In the racial logic of neoliberal care, both the whiteness of the benefactors and the blackness of the beneficiaries certify reform efforts as genuine and worthy.

My analysis of the ideological structure of neoliberal faith in elite reform explains why a supposedly "results-oriented" system is unfazed by its own persistent failures. Even as neoliberal efforts in education fail to improve school conditions, opportunities, and even narrowly-measured student achievement (De Lissovoy, Means, & Saltman, 2014), policymakers and philanthropists are unshaken in their commitment to competitive market models of teaching and learning. Even as challenges rise up from the grassroots, as students and parents protest against school closures, test-based accountability, and attacks on teachers, though elites may recalibrate their messaging, they do not abandon their faith in their own incontrovertible good sense. The champions of disastrous reform efforts generally move forward along their political trajectories untainted by a reckoning with the destruction they have caused. Similar patterns are visible outside of education: as the Black Lives Matter movement in the US has aggressively pressed a reckoning with racist police violence to the center of the public conversation, (neo)liberal elite politicians have maneuvered to place themselves next to the parents of those who have been killed while still refusing any fundamental rethinking of policies around law enforcement and criminal justice. In education and beyond, as the neoliberal vision increasingly diverges from reality, the glossiness of new initiatives in entrepreneurship, new public-private partnerships, and new journalistic and academic discourses that repackage familiar assumptions serve to distract attention from the deterioration of conditions on the ground and the increasing anger of communities.

My analysis suggests that neoliberalism's elite rationale needs to be interrupted rather than just interrogated, and that the violence of its putative compassion needs to be denounced. We should encourage and support the many on-going efforts by community members, activists, and scholars to do just that. In addition, the argument I have elaborated here suggests that the symbolic economy of neoliberal reform is just as important to attend to as the material one. The material disruption and degradation of public schooling that contemporary reform produces are premised on a set of understandings, discourses, and images that works powerfully to demonstrate, in the public mind, the superiority of the standpoint of the elite. In this system, the principles of acquiescence to inequality and submission to Whiteness are unspoken touchstones – if it is a scandal to speak them out loud, they nevertheless silently secure the validity of the rationality of neoliberal care. Against this system's condescension, we need true community control of education; against its market fantasies, we need a process of engagement in schools that starts from the actual needs of people. And in all of these

efforts we need to think from the bottom up, against elite reason, even if that sounds like impudence and unreason to those whose unreflective intuition currently rules the day.

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13

Uncommon Knowledge

International Schools as Elite Educational Enclosures
Marcea Ingersoll

Introduction

The increased mobility of human, intellectual, and material capital has impacted the global educational arena. The intensity of global interconnectedness – of people, resources, and ideas – has been accompanied by responsive forms of access and enclosure. The global educational reform movement (GERM) emerged within these conditions, and national policy commitments to enabling greater educational access and improved outcomes became implicated in creating conditions for privatization. With access to education promoted as a human right for all in the global educational commons, societal tiers whose privilege has depended on educational distinction have responded with new forms of enclosure. This chapter highlights dimensions of educational privilege and exclusion in the global commons by examining one sector of the global education market: international schools. The global education reform movement and its embedded neoliberal discourses of quality, competition, and choice run parallel to the growth of the billion-dollar international school industry. As publicly funded education becomes more accessible for those previously without access, there has been a concomitant rise in privatized enrollments at both the global pre-tertiary and tertiary levels. Through the privatization of educational credentials financially inaccessible to the majority of the global educational commons, international schools can be perceived as exclusionary spaces within tiers of elitism, as educational enclosures that mirror inequalities being perpetuated on a global educational scale. To support these claims, I first outline how global education reform policies are underpinned by neoliberal principles. Then, I situate the growth of the international school sector globally, then Malaysia specifically, within a GERM context. To illuminate how the ideologies and infrastructures underlying reform are revealed in practice, specific examples of policy implementation are analyzed. Neoliberal notions of educational quality present in the

language around international schools serve as a focal point for the analysis of how advantageous social capital is sought within GERM. Tiered elitism is introduced as a heuristic for conceptualizing how increased access to higher levels of education for the global commons incentivizes global elites to seek higher levels of distinction through social and academic capital. The new global and regional flows of educational choice-seekers are described to show how tiers of elites, and aspirational elites, seek affordable and advantageous educational capital for their children within international educational enclosures.

Global Education Reform: Quality, Competition, and Choice

The global education reform movement has been traced to Milton Friedman's *The Role of Government in Education* (Loeb, Valant, & Kasman, 2011) and the public sector policies of the Thatcher government's 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (Sahlberg, 2011). Both regarded choice and competition as drivers for quality educational improvement, and became models for global governments, international development organizations, consultants, and other educational actors. Education policies derived from these movements have incorporated parental choice as a keystone, and featured open enrollment and deregulated admission to encourage competition among schools. In such policies, parents are configured as consumers, and good parenting is reflected in the carefully considered selection of the "best education" for their children. The seemingly innocuous features of choice and quality struck a chord with both governments and citizens; uptake was swift as similar policies emerged in other countries (Forsey, Davies, & Walford, 2008).

The attraction of GERM lies in its promise of better educational offerings, improved outcomes, and high achievement for all students. According to Sahlberg (2016), GERM uses inherently corporate mechanisms to govern education, grounded in the following assumptions:

- standardized testing in combination with school choice will ensure better literacy, mathematics and science outcomes;
- corporate models of training and recruitment can effect educational system improvements;
- quality is predicated on notions of standardization, competition, and autonomy';
- parents should be able to choose the best schools through access to information about the accountability and performance of students and teachers.

These market-oriented corporate reform principles reflect the "neo-liberal social imaginary" (Rizvi, 2007, 2015) in which global capitalism and corporatization (Saltman, 2009) have come to dominate educational policy and practice. Privatization, accountability, entrepreneurialism, and decentralization are neo-liberal trends that have "redrawn the limits between private and public spaces" and "reoriented educational institutions" (McCarthy, Pitton, Kim, & Monje, 2009, p. 38). Globalization scholars have pointed to the relationship between

business and education, and noted how this relationship has become pervasive in determining what constitutes a *quality* education globally (Forsey et al., 2008; Stromquist, 2005; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). Under neoliberalism, individuals are "rational optimizers" and the best judges of their own interests and needs (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004, p. 138). Proponents of neoliberal reforms argue that by introducing standardized, competitive market forces into the realm of education, quality can be measured and assured and parents can choose the best education for their children. Critics assert that quality "has become a powerful metaphor for new forms of managerial control" (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 191), choice is a mere marketplace slogan (Forsey et al., 2008), and quality education cannot easily be standardized or measured, as it is defined differently according to varying parental priorities, experiences, and culture (Bulman, 2004; Levine-Rasky, 2007; Reay & Ball, 1997, 1998). Multiple nation-states have implemented school choice policies (Forsey et al., 2008) that promote privatization as a means for individuals to make the best choices.

This increase in choice policies has occurred within a context of increased global quality-ranking instruments, both at the pre-tertiary (primary and secondary) and higher education levels. The global expansion of higher education has witnessed a competitive ranking phenomenon: the Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities, The Times Higher Education rankings, Maclean's University Rankings, and the more recent U-Multirank reflect a competitively ranked higher education industry. Rankings are a response to increased standardization across sectors, and distinction is necessary in order to garner market-share in an increasingly competitive global education arena. The most recent generation of the higher education market has shifted to a commercial and competitiveness model (Knight, 2014) that is present in the pre-tertiary levels of education (Sahlberg, 2016). Large-scale assessment, international performance indicators, and educational benchmarks pervade the discourse of pre-tertiary education. Quality is increasingly associated with provincial assessments such as the EQAO in Ontario, national testing regimes in the United States, the league tables in the United Kingdom, and global indicators such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Transnationally recognized credentials have surged, with parents looking to privatized, supra-national educational credentials associated with greater quality associations (Lowe, 1999) or levels of privilege in the competitive global educational market. Privatized credentials such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) have seen vast increases in enrollments as a result of globalization and internationalization, and this growth has been tied to new distinctions of elitism (Lee & Wright, 2015). Other fee-for-credential examinations, such as the Cambridge International Examinations have gained traction, and the former University of London General Certificate of Education examinations became rebranded as Edexcel and subsumed by Pearson Education, a growing global education force. Standardized assessments, transnationally recognized credentials, and global rankings are increasingly the metrics of educational quality within a global reform context. Within these frames of competition, quality, and choice, international schools are poised to market themselves as preparatory grounds for entering the gateways of the world's most

prestigious and highest ranking institutions. The next section introduces the growth of the international school sector within the context of GERM.

International Schools

Research on *international schools* is one of six distinct research approaches that characterize the emerging field of international education. Scholarship on international schools has been preoccupied by three main agendas: (1) the definition of international schools; (2) the identities of globally mobile children; and (3) the place of international schools within national and global contexts (Dolby & Rahman, 2008). Generally, international schools provide an English-language education or globally recognized educational credential in a host nation where neither of those provisions is available in public schools (Hayden & Thompson, 2008). International schools grew out of the educational needs of the following groups: (1) military personnel or other overseas departments of national governments; (2) employees of multinational concerns in remote locations; (3) missionaries; (4) host country nationals (often run by missionaries); (5) diplomats (often run by embassies); (6) the international business community in large cities; and (7) local national elites who want their children to attend college in the United States or Europe (Willis & Enloe, 1990). Research on the growth of the industry has been conducted primarily by ISC Research, a division of the International School Consultancy Group (ISC) (Brummit & Keeling, 2013). The origins of international schools in military, government, religious, and corporate institutions situate the industry solidly within spheres of symbolic and enacted power and influence.

The international school sector has experienced phenomenal growth over the decades associated with the rise of GERM policies and the conjoining of education with economic interests and social capital. In local contexts, school choice is enacted primarily by privileged or skilled choosers seeking to gain or sustain social or cultural capital (Ball, Bowe, & Gewirtz, 1996; Weenink, 2008). Within international education, choosers are located within the emerging new rich, those "highly professional or skilled people seeking out employment abroad and the upper-class national actively maintaining and advancing their social class distinction in light of the financial, academic, and cultural capital attached to Anglo-western education and global markets" (Tarc & Mishra Tarc, 2015, p. 36). Between 2000 and 2015, the number of English-medium K-12 international schools grew from approximately 1,700 to 8,331 (Glass, 2016; TIE, 2008). The projected figures for the year 2020 suggest that over 10,000 international schools will enroll over 5 million students worldwide (Brummit & Keeling, 2013) and possibly up to 8.7 million students by 2026 (Glass, 2016). Hiring in the realm of English language education has prioritized Western-educated, native English-speaking teachers (Grimshaw, 2015; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). International school curricula are frequently delivered in English, and teachers from Anglo-Western nations dominate staff numbers at many international schools (Garton, 2002a, Hayden et al., 2007). A corporatized para-industry of international recruiting agencies has emerged, and annual recruitment fairs occur in the United States,

the United Kingdom, Canada (Hayden & Thompson, 2008) and regional locations accessible to high concentrations of international educators. As employees of private institutions, teachers at international schools are autonomous agents not tied to or protected by agencies or unions.

Autonomy and accountability are key features of GERM policies and private international schools. There is no specific governing body responsible for overseeing what MacDonald (2006) asserts is a multi-billion dollar international school industry, but corporatized accreditation mechanisms for establishing standards are prevalent. A recent IB-funded review of accreditation processes provides insight into the intensification of this relationship between economic interests and quality across sectors:

> The increase in the financial relationship between educational institutions and those they are educating, an issue prevalent within the international schools sphere for decades and now a growing issue even with the public sector, has encouraged a demand for a more open and transparent description and analysis of the activities of those institutions. Such issues have already had an impact upon the accreditation and inspection processes within international schools, and it is increasingly likely that these developments will continue and, perhaps, accelerate as emerging economies seek more and more quality education for their citizens. (Fertig, 2015, p. 461)

Corporatized acceleration of students pursuing higher education in English-language institutions around the world (Knight, 2014; Streitwieser, 2014), runs parallel with pre-tertiary credential-seeking that will facilitate access to and distinction within global higher education.

Transnationally Recognized Educational Credentials

An early examination of credentialism in English-medium international education pointed to the global intensification of individual competition for prestigious educational credentials (Lowe, 2000). An international school leadership website notes that "In the absence of a single curriculum for international schools, leaders must select from a number of options, while ensuring accreditation and worldwide recognition" (ISL, 2016). What marks qualifications as prestigious is scarcity: credentials that are common are less desirable, while those that are uncommon or inaccessible have heightened levels of prestige and are imbued with uncommon advantages. As institutions attempt to elevate their status and market competitiveness, accreditation models provide the benchmarks and standards by which quality is measured and assured. By conforming to standards which separate them as exceptional, or uncommon, and simultaneously distancing themselves from what is readily available, or common, international schools are able to establish a niche for themselves in an expanding and competitive market. International school qualifications are prized because they are globally recognized, and facilitate the global credentialism which grants access to the world's elite universities (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Lee & Wright, 2015).

Accreditation is a necessary feature of systems that are underpinned by standardized notions of quality. The growth of educational accreditation agencies runs parallel to the growth of international schools, since in the race to the top, criteria to determine what the top is must be established. The relationship between privatized international schools and accreditation bodies is corporatized and client-oriented. The risk of accreditation becomes greater homogenization within and across systems, as diversity potentially becomes tamped out in the name of quality. The requirements of standardization may exclude schools, organizations, or systems that are not aligned. The limiting effects of standardization are potentially experienced most harshly in environments where scarce educational resources are separated into multiple levels of accessibility, with the cheapest or most common devalued by their lack of accreditation and concomitant delineation as below the mark, or sub-standard. In an environment where traditionally prestigious education destinations must protect their market share from emergent alternatives, standards and accreditation become mechanisms for sustaining symbolic and actual prestige beyond national borders. The global reach of the UK standards movement can be found in the voluntary inspection scheme available for British Overseas Schools. Their standards are outlined in a Department for Education document providing advice for overseas schools, staff, parents, and prospective parents (BSO, 2014). Within a GERM context, conjoining parents and schools underscores the neoliberal configuration of parents as rational optimizers and critical choosers in the new global education market.

Competing Concerns? Commodities and Dispositions

In the highly competitive global education market, both countries and companies are competing to engage the educational consumer (Lowe, 2000; MacDonald, 2006). Within the context of international schools, two areas of focus serve to attract consumers: commodities and dispositions. Both are situated within a reform paradigm, as they connect to issues of competition, choice, and quality. International schools use a variety of marketing strategies to strategically and symbolically place themselves within a choice hierarchy. The range of schools presents a variety of options via fees, facilities, and credentials. Exclusionary fees attached to globally recognized credentials separate the most prestigious products within this tiered educational commodification.

The dispositional, ideological intentions of international schools have been an important feature of the sector. Many international schools claim to provide a global perspective, to promote international mindedness, and to create global citizens (Tamatea, 2008). These mindset aims are foundational to the intentions of many international schools, and are all aims of the International Baccalaureate (IB, 2012; Hill, 2015). The internationally-minded dispositions international schools strive to foster have become co-opted as a "jet-set commodity" (Haywood, 2015) and used as slogans in the marketing and branding of education as a product (Cambridge, 2002). With the growth of international education as part of the neoliberal "enterprise culture" (Apple et al., 2005, p. 11), which turns spheres of life into a business, and social services into products (Olssen et al., 2004),

international schools are a potentially exclusionary commodity where students become global consumers under the guise of global citizenship.

The privatized separation and promotion of global versus national citizenships may suggest a simultaneous semantic devaluing of the local. Accessibility to global citizenship depends on the financial, geographic, and educational histories and locations of families. For those without economic access, or for whom marginalized linguistic or cultural frames would be destabilized by entry, the global international school becomes an enclosure. Consider the following marketing quote:

> English-medium international schools are a vital education provision in most major cities today. The best international schools are among the most successful in the world, with exceptional examination results and a high proportion of students going on to the universities across the globe. (Barnes, 2016, p. 11)

These words underscore the exclusionary dimension of international schools in three ways. First, the reference to major cities points to geographical exclusion. International schools are frequently located within proximity to the customers that sustain them: upmarket areas of urban centers. In addition to demarcating the rural-urban divide, the reference to students moving on to universities around the globe underscores the elite nature of that mobility. Higher education is a privileged pursuit for the majority of the world population, much less study abroad at prestigious institutions. Even within the top exporters of students to higher education institutions abroad the numbers reveal the scarcity: only two of the top ten countries have participation rates over 4% (Henze, 2014). Finally, the conflation of success with examination results supports a competitive privileging of skills over dispositions. This is consistent with neoliberal reform policies which are driven by profit, encourage production, consumption and commodification, and envision success and development in purely economic terms (Berry, 2008). Contemporary education runs the risk of being what Rizvi (2015) has articulated as "trapped within a neo-liberal social imaginary that privileges economic considerations over other concerns equally important in education" (p. 343). Discourses of commodification and international-mindedness reveal how these economic and ideological concerns run counter to and over one another within the international school sector.

Tiered Elitism and Mobility in Global Education

The role of social networks and class in positioning for educational advantage and distinction has been examined in national school choice and higher education contexts (Ball, 2003; Ball et al., 1996; Ball & Vincent, 1998; Levine-Rasky, 2007; Reay & Ball, 1997, 1998; Reay, David, & Ball, 2005). On a global scale, educational reform and policy-borrowing have proliferated neoliberal ideologies, intensified the school choice imperative, and increased the need for greater distinction across offerings as the market expands (Ball, 2010; Forsey et al., 2008).

Greater distinction is attained through the differentiation of the educational market into what I call here *tiered elitism*. It is a useful heuristic for thinking about how once predominantly national tiers have expanded transnationally, across sectors, resulting from and causing global educational mobility flows across sectors.

Inequality is systemically linked between sectors (Wells, 2006), and the international school sector has expanded and layered in parallel with school choice policies and the growth of higher education systems globally. Cynthia Levine-Rasky's (2007) work on school choice extends our understanding of how power relations affect choice, and how middle-class desires for the "right" education converge with state policies which "position schools as the place to form young citizens prepared to compete (and win) in the global marketplace" (p. 407). Higher education is implicated within GERM as increasingly competitive, standardized, and homogenizing notions of knowledge are propagated to serve the interests of elites in higher education (Carnoy, 2016). Furthermore, in countries with "inadequate higher education infrastructure," outwardly mobile students "seeking placements overseas have tended to come from the most prosperous families or the most prestigious universities. This may contribute to exacerbating the already inequitable outcomes of stratified education systems" (Hickling-Hudson & Arnove, 2014, p. 211). Outwardly mobile higher education students are few: only 1.8% of the globe's tertiary students travel outside their own country for higher education (UNESCO, 2016).

Standardization, notably through UNESCO, the World Bank, and the OECD, has been connected to the creation of new forms of global social disparity (Waters, 2006). As upper-middle-class populations seek to attain or reproduce social status through a Western education, new geographies of social exclusion are produced. A competitive hierarchy marked by increasing realms of exclusion is created, wherein greater numbers of lower classes are gaining access to education, so credentials must become increasingly inaccessible in order for elites to maintain their advantage. International education is one mechanism for maintaining the relative scarcity of qualifications (Waters, 2006).

A growing body of research on global elitism in relation to international education is emerging, (Bunnell, 2008; Kenway & Fahey, 2014; Kenway & Koh, 2013; Lee & Wright, 2015; Lee, Wright, & Walker, 2016; Waters, 2006). Elite Western boarding schools are the traditional, preferred avenue, or the top of the tier. The growth of satellite colleges and international schools has provided lower tier or "second-choice" alternatives that represent an expansion of elite options that are hierarchically arranged according to elements of scarcity and accessibility. These elements include but are not limited to: geography, affordability, and the presence of "suitable" teachers.

> While Western countries remain the preferred choice, Southeast Asian cities are increasingly considered a desirable second-choice destination because of the lower cost of living and educational expenses, the availability of suitable schools (e.g. international schools with teachers from Western countries) and incentives from host countries (such as a more relaxed visa policy) aimed at attracting foreign students. (Kim & Thang, 2016, p. 55)

The ranking, marketing, and branding of transnational credentials are prevalent across the higher education and pre-university sectors. Bunnell (2008) examines how local and global elites at elite English-style schools benefit from exported elite English private school brands. Dulwich, Harrow, Brighton, Epsom, Wellington, and Marlborough College all have branches across Asia, including Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, mainland China, and Hong Kong.

Cautions have been raised regarding elite satellite colleges and international schools, and their potential to undermine national systems globally (Bunnell, 2008). The rise of international schools that serve the socio-economic global elite and the intensification of for-profit franchises have incurred shifting patterns of elitism (Lee & Wright, 2015). Within Asia, movements out of national systems include the flow of children and their mothers to Southeast Asia for study at international schools (Kim & Thang, 2016). Middle-class families in South Korea and China are increasingly looking to Southeast Asia for secondary and post-secondary educational offerings previously sought in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, representing newer forms of transnational flows. The tiered nature of elite credential-accumulation, as represented through layers of financial accessibility and inaccessibility, is indicated by the geographic repositioning of families exercising options of school choice within competitive economic constraints.

With fees frequently out of reach for most families in the global commons, and variable policies regarding foreign and host national enrolments, international schools are prestigious options in an expanding and competitive pre-university market in many countries. One of the South east Asian regions strategically positioning itself as a financially accessible international education hub is Malaysia. The next section outlines Malaysia's emergence as a regional education provider within the context of global education reform.

Malaysia in the Global Education Reform Context: Quality, Choice, and Competition

In striving for fully industrialized nation status by 2020, Malaysia has strategically positioned itself as a regional educational hub. The nation has successfully branded "Malaysia education" (Tan, 2008), marketed its programs abroad, and situated itself as a competitive provider of quality education in Asia and the Islamic world (Hickling-Hudson & Arnove, 2014; Jaramillo & de Wit, 2011; Kim & Thang, 2016; Welch, 2014). In this section, I expand on two previously identified GERM features – quality and choice – as they relate to competition and the growth of the international school sector in Malaysia.

Quality

When considering educational quality, connections can be drawn among neoliberal global rankings, global economic forces, national aspirations, and policy-making.

> Developed and carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), PISA focuses primarily on the output of education systems and seeks to assess how students are capable of applying knowledge and skills learned in school in their future working life and thus contribute to the prosperity of the national economy. (Niemann & Martens, 2015, p. 489)

The influential power of the OECD and PISA rankings is evident in the reform-based reactions of several nation states (Niemann & Martens, 2015). The economic entanglements are apparent: an internet search for global school rankings links (not to education) but to the business section of the BBC News. According to the OECD's Director of Education, "a truly global scale of the quality of education" can be derived from analysis of amalgamated PISA, TIMSS, and TERCE test scores of mathematics and science (Coughlan, 2015). In this paradigm, quality is evaluated on standardized skills perceived to be valuable to economic growth. In these global results, Malaysia's southern neighbor, Singapore, ranks first. Competition on the regional and global scale has been central to Malaysian education reforms and aspirations, with a projected goal of ranking in the top third of countries on PISA and TIMMS (Malaysia Education Blueprint, 2012). The animation of this aspiration was evident in the 2002 *Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik dalam Bahasa Inggeris* policy (PPSMI), which required mathematics and science to be taught in English.

Competition

National education decisions are responsive to global influences. Two such influences – the post-colonial growth of English as a global lingua franca and the global education reform movement – shaped Malaysian educational policy-making. Global education reforms have been implicated in reproductive forms of imperialism (Tikly, 2004) particularly in regions with historically asymmetrical power relationships between colony and colonizer. In Malaysia's British colonial education system, English-medium schools were available to a minority, with the goal of providing clerks for the colonial bureaucracy (Hirschman, 1972) and to groom Malay elites for privileged entry into colonial administrative roles (Kandasamy & Santhiram, 1999). Independence in 1957 brought energetic nationalism, and Malay was made the national language. National schools were converted to Malay-medium, with Malay as a compulsory subject at the minority English, Chinese, and Tamil national-type schools. Public examinations at secondary schools were conducted only in Malay or English, with English as a medium of instruction phased out by 1980 (Hashim, 2009). With globalization came increased pressure for English language competency, and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad declared that educational changes were needed. To improve the English language skills that Malaysians required to compete in the global economy, the Prime Minister implemented the PPSMI (Brown, Ali, & Muda, 2004; Marshall, 2002).

The PPSMI policy invoked considerable upheaval and debate. Privatization in the form of English language schools, centers, and courses flourished as

students (and teachers) previously educated in Malay, or Bahasa Malaysia (BM) struggled to meet the new expectation. The PPSMI amplified Malaysian parents' concerns about their children's future nationally and globally. A return to English, 40 years after the post-colonial implementation of BM, can be interpreted as a reflection of a new global educational imperative in which: (1) English is key to global knowledge acquisition and economic participation; (2) global knowledge is defined as mathematical and scientific skills; and (3) global competitiveness is incompatible with national languages. The sociopolitical response to the PPSMI reflected the demographic divides between the lower income and rural opponents and the urbanite middle-upper classes to whom the policy appealed. Within the nation, the PPSMI fueled debates over the ability of the national school system to adequately prepare Malaysian youth for the English-dominated economic marketplace. While the controversy over the PPSMI policy provoked significant divisions, another neoliberal government reform served to further shape those divides: the liberalization of international school restrictions.

Choice and the Growth of the International School Sector

> The best way to ensure quality education is by ensuring parental choice and school competition.
>
> (Malaysia Think Tank London, Wan Saiful, 2006)

In 2006, the Malaysian government decided to liberalize the restrictions for Malaysian enrollments at international schools. This decision echoes GERM features of greater quality through choice, competition, and autonomy. The justification for these liberalized restrictions was twofold: to promote Malaysia's positioning as a regional education hub, and to prevent the "brain drain" caused by the exit of several thousand young Malaysians to countries such as Singapore, Australia, and Britain for their primary and secondary education (Subanayagam, 2006).

Prior to the liberalization of enrollment at international schools, stringent criteria restricted access for Malaysians. Ministry of Education (MOE) approval would only be granted if one parent was a foreigner or if the child had previously studied overseas for three consecutive years. These criteria were enforced by the MOE, and international schools could be subject to "raids" by officials tasked with ensuring that all host nationals had approvals.

The liberalized criteria were announced by Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, and included children of:

1) parents who have worked overseas for at least two years;
2) parents who have business overseas and are able to attract foreign direct investment;
3) parents who are professionals who have returned from positions overseas under the government incentive scheme;
4) parents whose children have a diagnosed learning disorder;
5) parents who have children currently studying in an international school;

6) parents who have children born overseas and hold the nationality of the birth country;

7) parents who submit supporting documents that they are due for an overseas posting either from the government or private sector.

In addition to the liberalized criteria, international schools were informed up to 40% of their enrollment capacity could be comprised of Malaysian citizens. At the time of the announcement, only 0.05% of the international school enrollments in the country were Malaysians (Subanayagam, 2006). Post-liberalization, there was intensive growth in the international schools sector. Existing schools expanded, opened new branch campuses, and found themselves in competition with a vast influx of new operators keen to address the heightened demand in the new environment of eased restrictions. By 2009, three years after the policy shift, the number of international schools in the country had grown from 32 to 47, and Malaysian enrollments had jumped from 0.05% to 26%. International school enrollment was also influenced by continued debates over the PPSMI. Pressure to return Mathematics and Science to BM mounted. Media articles reported that the liberalization of international school enrollments meant that pro-PPSMI parents were likely to consider an international education for their children if BM was reinstated for mathematics and science. Anti-PPSMI demonstrations by 5000 Malay protesters put pressure on the Malay-majority government, and by 2012, mathematics and science returned to being taught in BM in national schools. The message to parents was clear: fluency in English may be a skill Malaysians would need, but national schools would not be responsible for preparing them for the global competition.

In 2012, the 40% cap on Malaysians was lifted, with the Education Minister noting that Singapore and Thailand had already removed restrictions for its citizens. By 2015, there were 113 international schools listed on the MOE website and over 20000 Malaysians enrolled (Teh, 2015). Climbing Malaysian registrations, combined with the increased number of international schools in the country, support MacDonald's (2006) prediction and recent numbers from the International Schools Consultancy (ISC, 2016) that the growth of the global international school industry is likely to be led by local rather than expatriate enrollments.

Malaysia's return to BM as the language instruction highlights three key points directly connected to GERM. First, that pressure from the national commons can be successful in asserting what is valued in a local context: as the result of political pressure, the language of instruction in the national public education system reverted to BM, the mother tongue of the majority of the country. Second, within the neoliberal context of GERM, grounded in notions of competition in the global educational marketplace, the definition of a quality education is increasingly distanced from and perhaps even incompatible with local, indigenous languages and knowledges. Third, through reform policies underpinned by a discourse of choice and competition as drivers of quality, governments can shift the burden of quality educational provision to a consumer base with greater access to the resources which enable globally advantageous choices.

Educational Enclosures: Discourses of Exclusivity and Privilege

> Discover the best kept secret in education – International Teaching.
> (Principals, 2016)

Within the context of global educational reform, the common knowledge of public education is set apart from the uncommon, and therefore prestigious knowledge of international schools. A phrase taken from international educators, many of whom are Anglo-western, also suggests that international schools are uncommon, separate (Allen, 2002), and "education's best kept secret" (Ingersoll, 2014). This discourse of the best kept secret is echoed in the promotional and marketing materials aimed at recruiting and training educators for the international school market (Principals, 2016). In this section the phrase "best kept secret" becomes a metaphor for the discourses of exclusivity and privilege that symbolically position international schools as *enclosures.*

Consider the connotations enclosure can engender: places of entrapment, or places of protection. They can represent restriction for those without privilege, such as prisons, or protection for those who wish to sustain their privilege, such as clubs with elite memberships. In this instance, international schools are akin to the latter. They are enclosures that protect and foster the mobility of elites who have the resources to gain access, or membership to the club. Through the circulation of transnationally recognized credentials, the tiered arrangements of transnational elitism work to sustain a privileged global mobility. Access to international school enclosures is granted based on scarcity and privilege: privileged (Willis, Enloe, & Minoura 1994), transnational (Hayden, 2011), and expatriate elite (Tarc & Mishra Tarc, 2015) parents exchange economic capital for their children's access.

Within the tiers of elitism, Anglo-western working-class (Ingersoll, 2014) and middle-class (Tarc & Mishra Tarc, 2015) educators are also positioning and re-positioning themselves. The enabling dimensions of privilege for becoming an international teacher are nuanced. As the educational stakes rise, the rings of privilege tighten and exclusivity means higher fees and more highly educated teachers. Complex factors have positioned Anglo-western teachers as available and desirable hires in an era of globalizing educational practices. International teaching has appealed to a variety of Anglo-western educators who cite pull factors such as a desire for travel or adventure, or push factors such as poor job prospects and deskilling of the profession under global education reforms at home (Hayden, 2006; Ingersoll, 2014; Lagace, McCallum, Ingersoll, Hirschkorn, & Sears, 2016; McIntyre, 2011, 2013). For international school parents, both expatriates and locals, a consistent factor in their decision to send their children to an international school is the desire for their children to be educated in English (Hayden, 2006; MacKenzie, 2009, 2010). Digital depictions of the ideal candidate for overseas teaching overwhelmingly reveal a preference for a "native speaker-ism" that is embodied in the "young, White, enthusiastic native speaker of English from a stable list of inner-circle countries": Canada, the United States, Britain, Ireland, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand (Ruecker & Ives, 2015).

At international schools, "a number of parents would 'prefer' their child be taught by a native English-speaking 'Western-trained' overseas-hire expatriate" (Garton, 2002a, p. 87). Research on parental choice at international schools indicates that a desire for children to learn English and quality teachers are the top factors in parents' decision-making (Ingersoll, 2010; MacKenzie, 2010). The interchangeability of these findings across multiple contexts suggests that there may be a globalizing conflation of quality teaching with the native-speakerism and social capital embodied by Anglo-western trained teachers. Embodied social capital is conceptualized here as marketable "personal skills" that will facilitate transition from international schools to global higher education:

> English-medium K-12 international schools have become a highly targeted sector for many Western universities, because virtually all of these schools' students are aiming to pursue undergraduate degrees abroad, and because the schools prepare students with the academic and personal skills relevant for this purpose. (Glass, 2016, p. 2)

Heard within the echoes of neoliberal reform discourses, this embodied social capital also serves to separate the common from the uncommon, given its scarcity outside the elite international school enclosure. By the same logic, this conflation of quality with Anglo-western educators also works to keep local host national educators out of or subordinate within the enclosure, as in practice their roles are frequently limited to the role of local language instructors or classroom assistants.

In the most exclusive and expensive top tier schools, notions of scarcity and escalating strategic advantage (Waters, 2006) can be activated by hiring from private recruitment fairs and firms, or from within existing professional networks of experienced international teachers, or by requiring credentials beyond a teaching qualification, such as post-graduate degrees. Greater numbers of career international educators are obtaining education doctorates, and school websites have begun citing their teachers' academic credentials and professional qualifications. Whether in the interests of accountability or marketing is irrelevant – both are neoliberal strategies characteristic of GERM. As competitive, autonomous, privatized educational enclosures, international schools' economic and reputational dimensions are paramount, and teachers are expected to maintain a high level of performance to ensure their job security. Entry into the enclosure does not guarantee protection within it, as a leading international schools fact sheet indicates: "It is a very competitive environment for both teachers and administrators" (ISL, 2016). Within GERM, autonomy is heartily promoted, but privatized educational enclosures can also be perceived as a "largely hidden dimension of education" (Bunnell, 2008, p. 390) with varying degrees of transparency and accountability.

Other dimensions of enclosure are evident in representations of the international school and its community as a *bubble* separate from the local community (Bunnell, 2005; Garton, 2002b). Bunnell (2013) points out how early international schools operated in a "largely isolated and parochial environment" (p. 168) and 40 years later were still characterized as existing "mainly in a sort of bubble"

(Bates, 2011, p. 7). Others challenge this depiction, and Tarc and Mishra-Tarc (2015) assert that while it does have gates and guards, "the international school is not an elite homogeneous bubble with impermeable borders keeping the host community at bay" (p. 48). The borders may be permeable, but the dimensions of privilege that facilitate or impede the crossing of those gated and guarded borders into the bubble persist – and directionality is an important feature of the flows. As Tarc and Mishra-Tarc (2015) assert, international schools are densely transnational spaces where agentic "microforms of class and group changing can chip away at the determinism of the macro structure" (p. 48). However, the gates around international schools are powerful symbolic and structural indicators of their status as enclosures. While the outside community and its public spaces are unguarded, the movement into and out of international schools is in many places like a border crossing, where identification cards or passports must be shown or surrendered in order to obtain passage. And for those less advantaged on the scale of privilege, there may be additional checks and measures in order to gain access, and in order to leave. Accounts abound of local employees being subjected to bag searches as they pass through the gates of the enclosures. Salary tensions in international schools are another form of distancing, separation, and stratification (Hardman, 2001). Undeniably, local staff often receive higher wages within the enclosure than for similar jobs outside, but the differential between expatriate and local staff for the same job *within* the enclosure highlights how powerful messages of persistent inequalities are reified within the exclusionary space. Symbolic messages are not without power, regardless of how they are perceived.

International educators speak of the "expat bubble" as a cultural territory separate from the local environment. In another study of expatriate teachers (Ingersoll, 2014), they reported experiencing strong social ties among the foreign teachers. They described how easy it can be to remain in the "expat bubble" when most teachers live in "teacher apartments right next door to the school in our guarded compound," or when they circulate only within the confines of the enclosure:

> Honestly, I'm either at the gym or I'm at home. I live in a very small world between the school, my apartment building about a kilometer away, and the gym right beside it, so most of my day to day is spent in this bubble.

Staff and students (Bailey, 2015) and families (Velliaris & Willis, 2014) have also reported feeling isolated from the local community and culture, especially those living in similarly guarded and gated expatriate compounds (Harrington, 2009).

So the schools are, as Tarc and Mishra-Tarc suggest, not places where the borders are impermeable, but as Means suggests, sites where

> capital attempts to set up systems of enclosure to expropriate value from the common, [but] there is always a constituent element or surplus to human relationships, ideas, affects, and creativity that evade capture, or what can be thought of as the surplus element of the common. (2014, p. 127)

In light of these analyses, and calls for forms of education that are beyond the bounds of neoliberal privatizations, how can we reconfigure for a future educational movement that "explodes the boundaries of the public and private property, state and capitalist command, and liberal and cosmopolitan frameworks of national and global human rights pedagogy and citizenship education" (Means, 2014, p. 128)?

Conclusion

The global education reform movement has produced a multilayered context in which standardization and quality are highly valued but increasingly tethered to financial resources and social capital. Policy responses that originated within Western confines have been taken up on a global scale, spreading neoliberal discourses of choice and competition as models to be adopted in order to improve educational outcomes within national, regional, and international contexts. These measurable outcomes have become defined by instruments that privilege narrow forms of economics-driven, skill-based knowledge over dispositional, pro-social outcomes. In response to these narrow definitions and in the search for educational credentials that are poised to be competitive beyond national markets, global choice seekers have responded to policy imperatives, exiting national school systems and seeking educational opportunities branded with the promotional language of global access and citizenship. However, these privileged supra-national educational spaces are masked in ideals of exclusion, since the commons are precluded from participation in these elite realms. Global education reform policies have also given rise to divestments in public education and increased focus on privatization through school choice policies and maneuvers that encourage club membership in elite educational enclosures. As nations continue to adopt and promote deregulated competitive educational markets, they are potentially abdicating themselves of the responsibility to provide an equitable education system for the common good.

The neoliberal policy shifts on access to international schools in Malaysia are representative of neoliberal trends within global education reform. In the Malaysian context, international schools are a prestigious option for local families who aspire for their children to gain social capital and access to the global marketplace. Liberalizing the enrollment regulations also shifts responsibility for an English-language education onto parents who can afford to exit the national system. Enrollment in private international schools allows access to the transnationally recognized credentials that facilitate access to prestigious universities and provide advantageous social capital for trade in the global or, increasingly, the Asian workplace. In Malaysia and across the globe, there are indications of growing inequality as those positioned to choose transnational qualifications exit national systems, potentially perpetuating or exacerbating national social divisions and repositioning local elites who must join the global elite to sustain their privilege.

Market-driven reform agendas engage slogans of quality and choice, and competitive policy structures have emerged across the globe as the proposed solution

to improving educational outcomes. Choice policies are portrayed as responsible and necessary reforms, rationalizing choice as an equity marker since everyone is free to make the best choice. It is a seductive rhetoric, and engages even those who do not have the capacity to choose, but desire the perceived freedom to do so. Simultaneously and surreptitiously, this also justifies the reduction of government funding for public institutions. The result of neoliberal policies is that public schools receive less funding but parents are told they have greater choice, with particularly an emphasis on the *freedom* to choose. In reality, choices are limited to what an individual can afford, and many are not free to choose. The inequalities perpetuated by choice policies are not, however, part of their marketing or branding rhetoric.

The intra-national public-private educational divides characteristic of GERM are being reflected and perpetuated on a global scale. Private international schools become enmeshed in the creation of classed educational enclosures that separate transnational and host national elites from the commons of the host country in new, global forms of tiered elitism. Even as they proclaim their international spirit, international schools (unwittingly or intentionally) employ neoliberal discourses of quality to signal their prestige and allure to parents seeking the best education for their children. Liberalized policies that impose a choice imperative attach heightened value to educational commodities marketed as superior in quality to what is available to the commons. The potential impact of GERM policies is a globalizing convergence with the values of the transnational capitalist class (Cambridge, 2002) with advantageous social capital that separates and distances them from the national and global commons. If international schools and credentials are accessible only to families who have the financial resources to access educational privilege and distinction, international schools become actual or symbolic sites of enclosure. The multifaceted social and cultural impacts of globalization are played out within the global reform context, which places pressures on local educational systems to align with globally determined standards and accountability measures. Although autonomy is a key feature of GERM, ironically these tools of regulation and exclusion in formal institutional settings promote market compliance. The adoption of accountability mechanisms and standards becomes necessary in a competitive global market in order for students to access the skills required in the increasingly competitive global marketplace. As national systems adopt the reforms that are made legitimate by global agencies such as the World Bank or the OECD, local contextual knowledge that is not deemed necessary for international competition becomes lost. These dominant structures, presented in the form of desirable commodities or rational choices, may prevent organic, indigenous, or artistic alternatives from emerging or being sustained. As dimensions of educational privilege and exclusion dominate the global commons, and separate international schools as symbolically exclusionary spaces, we are called to envision alternatives. To critically reimagine how we might interrupt the privileging of educational credentials financially inaccessible to the majority of the global educational commons, we must first highlight how the creation of international educational enclosures has the potential to perpetuate inequalities on a global educational scale.

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14

Startup Schools, Fast Policies, and Full-Stack Education Companies

Digitizing Education Reform in Silicon Valley

Ben Williamson

Introduction

Silicon Valley technology companies, entrepreneurs, investors and philanthropists are currently engaging in education with considerable enthusiasm. Global technology companies, including Facebook and Google, have launched major technology platforms for education, and begun investing financial resources in other startup firms. More specifically, Silicon Valley has become the center for a "startup school" movement which has seen entrepreneurs associated with social media and web companies creating their own private schools as competitive alternatives to state schooling and models for the reinvention of public education on a massive scale. Investment initiatives from venture capital firms and philanthropists based in the Valley have helped raise venture capital for these initiatives, while new educational technology "incubators" have begun to provide technical, legal and financial support for startup projects from apps to new institutions.

In this chapter I analyse the role of Silicon Valley as a major center of technology-driven global education reform. I utilize the concepts of "fast policy" and "policy mobilities" (Peck & Theodore, 2015) to advance the argument, and focus specifically on "startup school" projects as exemplars of digitized fast policy solutions in action. AltSchool, Summit Public Schools, Khan Lab School, and XQ Super School Project – as well as many other initiatives with which they are networked – exemplify how Silicon Valley's approach to speeding up education policy involves sprawling networks of technology companies and entrepreneurs, venture capital sources, incubator programs, technology philanthropy, digital apps and platforms, technology evangelists, policy entrepreneurs, and new educational "experts." These actors are creating relational networks of institutions, practices, technologies, money, and marketing, which together function as paradigmatic models of the future of public schooling.

Startup school projects are prototypical of Silicon Valley's ambitions to become the techno-political center of global education reform, and exemplify techniques of educational fast policy in motion. In the next section, I situate Silicon Valley as a social, technical, economic, and political zone of innovation with particular aspirations to reform public education in its own image. I then identify and map a particular "fast policy" network of Silicon Valley projects, funders, and practices associated with startup schooling, before proceeding to interrogate three distinctive practices of this network. The first is the financial dependence of startup schooling on philanthropic and venture capital funding; the second is the centrality of digital data to the vision of high-tech "personalized education" characterized by startup schools; and third, the "experimental" approach to treating startup school classrooms as "learning laboratories" where new scientific theories of learning based on psychological and neuroscientific forms of expertise are to be trialled and tested upon students. Together, these financial techniques, data practices, and learning science theories constitute a blueprint for the future of education that Silicon Valley is prototyping and beta-testing through a number of startup school initiatives, and which it aspires to scale up across the public schooling sector.

Situating Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley is both a topographical zone that can be defined geographically, and a social, technical, and political zone of activity. Geographically delineated, Silicon Valley stretches from the east Bay Area of San Francisco and runs south through Santa Clara valley to include San Jose, Stanford, Mountain View, Cupertino, and Palo Alto, plus parts of San Mateo, Alameda, and Santa Cruz counties. As a social and technical zone of activity, however, the origins of Silicon Valley lie in the 1950s' establishment of the Stanford Industrial Park by Stanford University and its centrality to silicon chip innovation. In his seminal work on the "information age," Castells (1996, pp. 54, 57) described Silicon Valley as a "milieu of innovation" and a "social, cultural and spatial pattern of innovation" that could be characterized by the continuous creation of startup firms, rapid knowledge diffusion and ideas exchange, spatial concentration of research centers, business networks of venture capital and finance startups, as well as loose social clubs where software developers and designers could share ideas and information. Rather than a purely topographical zone, then, Silicon Valley can be understood as the topological outcome of networks of relations that have sedimented into specific technical, economic, and cultural patterns of innovation and production.

More recently, Duff (2016, p. 14) has claimed Silicon Valley presents itself as a "technopolis," simultaneously the headquarters of the "information revolution," an identifiable social and cultural community, a physical space with borders, and "a peculiar 'state of mind' too." Silicon Valley's high-tech companies, technology philanthropists, startup companies, and culture of venture capital are "the centre of a techno-economic revolution" that is "now spreading outwards across the world, with major societal effects and implications" (p. 5). Silicon Valley has,

then, positioned itself as the center of a technical revolution to be "executed with bits, algorithms, code, telecoms, expert systems, [and] AI," but also an economic revolution in "information capitalism," a seemingly contradictory mixture of standard capitalist practice, characterized by its extreme work ethic, profit-seeking and efficiency, with libertarian individualism, hippie radicalism, and the idealism of sharing and community values (p. 13).

Although Silicon Valley's culture of technology and economic innovation is well-known, it also projects an idiosyncratic political outlook. Ferenstein (2015) has described Silicon Valley as a socio-demographic zone characterized more by the liberal politics of the technology sector than its geography. Silicon Valley liberals mix libertarianism with Democratic political convictions, he argues, leading to extreme idealism about human nature, society, and the future, as well as a rejection of the idea there are inherent conflicts of interests between citizens, the government, corporations, or other nations. Ferenstein (2015) terms the new Silicon Valley liberals "civicrats," or "tech-Democrats," whose goal is to make everyone innovative, healthy, civic, and educated, and see government's role as an investor in maximizing people's contribution to the economy and society. Education itself is therefore integral to a so-called "Silicon Valley ideology," which is centered on the belief "that the solution to nearly every problem is more innovation, conversation or education," and therefore demands "massive investments in education because they see it as a panacea for nearly all problems in society" (Ferenstein, 2015).

However, Silicon Valley's vision of an education that can serve these ideals is one which, in its view, bureaucratic government education departments are failing to deliver. Technology entrepreneurs instead particularly advocate performance-based funding systems like charter schools as educational alternatives that can operate free of centralized government regulation and teachers' unions, and want state education to be run like a business and a competitive marketplace:

> This helps explain why tech elites, including Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg, have given hundreds of millions of dollars to charter schools. Charters are often highly experimental, union-less public schools that are managed by performance-based metrics. Indeed, the federal education law, itself, Race to the Top, is basically a giant prize competition, which awards a greater share of federal dollars to schools and districts that outperform their peers. (Ferenstein, 2015)

A particular politics therefore underpins Silicon Valley's approach to education, one which emphasizes the centrality of education to innovation and to the creation of "awesome," entrepreneurial individuals, and the establishment and support for competitive models of education that can be measured and rewarded, based on performance toward these goals. The combination of commercial Silicon Valley technology companies with education is part, therefore, of a broader "restructuring of public education by economic and political elites," who have "succeeded in strategically advancing privatization and market-based school 'reforms' to transform public education into a private industry while also hijacking public governance over educational policy" (Saltman, 2016, p. 107).

At least in part, the interests of Silicon Valley in education can also be understood instrumentally as a commercial opportunity. As the "epicenter of technological optimism" (Cuban, 2016a), Silicon Valley-based technology companies and venture capital firms have invested in education technology development with unprecedented enthusiasm in recent years. In 2012, Global Silicon Valley, a merchant bank that has advised, invested in, and accelerated many technology companies, published a report entitled *American Revolution 2.0*, that described key technical catalysts for educational transformation and reform – such as cloud computing, wired classrooms, low-cost hardware and software – and estimated the K-12 education market to be worth over US$2.2 trillion (Bulger et al., 2017). An estimated US$2.3 billion of venture capital was invested in education technology companies in the K-12 space in the US between 2010 and 2015 (*EdSurge*, 2016), although investment appeared to decline in 2016 (Watters, 2016).

Venture capital funding tends to be awarded as seed funding for new startups, early stage investment, or expansion investment, and by 2015 was consolidating around expansion stage funding in a direct challenge to the existing monopoly over educational technology by big publishers such as Pearson, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and McGraw-Hill. One venture capitalist quoted in a magazine article on Silicon Valley's educational ambitions has noted that education "is an industry that is measured in the trillions of dollars, not billions; it's multiple percentage points of gross domestic product" (Kuchler, 2017). Silicon Valley even has its own educational technology news and media source, *EdSurge*, "to connect the emerging community of edtech entrepreneurs and educators" and help "entrepreneurs who build new products and businesses, educators who use these tools, and investors and others who support companies and schools" (http://about.edsurge.com/).

The growth of entrepreneurial and venture capital support for education via Silicon Valley makes financial revenue generation, measurable returns on investment, and path to profitability into decisive factors shaping education reform. Although Silicon Valley philanthropists such as Bill Gates have long sought to interfere in public education through charter schools (Reckhow, 2013), Silicon Valley is now seeking more overtly computational models of education reform which use the technical expertise of Silicon Valley itself to design new software systems and technological fixes for insertion into the institutions of education. The distinctive "Silicon Valley ideology," or "Californian capitalism" being applied to education (Watters, 2015) privileges a "programmer mindset" toward solving computational problems, entrepreneurialism, and "making a difference" while making a profit, all of it driven by similarly "computer-savvy venture capitalists and 'angel investors'" (Selwyn, 2016, pp. 114–115). As a result, Silicon Valley companies are becoming "shadow education ministries" (p. 131) with the entrepreneurial capacities, technical expertise, economic capital, and political aspirations alike to set reformatory agendas for contemporary education.

Fast Startup Networks

Many of Silicon Valley's most successful companies have positioned themselves to support education. Although major technology corporations like Microsoft, Apple, and IBM have long-established educational aims and programs, more

recently web and social media companies like Google and Facebook have begun to concentrate financial and technical resources on educational technology development. A lively startup scene, supported by massive increases in venture capital funding for ed-tech products noted above, has also emerged. Events such as HackingEdu, where thousands of ed-tech software engineers compete for funding and entrepreneurial support to develop their ideas into products, twinned with "incubator" and "accelerator" schemes to consolidate and grow startup teams into profitable companies, have transformed the educational technology sector into a dynamic, fast-moving, and lucrative marketplace of ideas and technical expertise.

A notable aspect of Silicon Valley's recent focus on education is the establishment since 2013 of a number of "startup schools," recently described in the *Financial Times* magazine as "Silicon Valley's classrooms of the future" (Kuchler, 2017). These are specifically school-centered initiatives, led by some of Silicon Valley's most successful technology entrepreneurs and engineers, that focus on a "reinvention of learning" based on the ideal of "personalized, digital tutoring," and which their promoters aim to scale up from being startup companies to state education solutions (Kuchler, 2017). Though startup schools have been the subject of little critical academic scrutiny (see Cuban, 2016a, 2016b; Williamson, 2016), they have been the focus of extensive commentary in the technology and business media. AltSchool alone has featured in *Wired*, *TechCrunch*, *EdSurge*, *Fast Company*, *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg Business*, *Business Insider*, *Forbes*, and *Business Week.* Though these sources note that personalization may be pedagogically innovative, their emphasis is on business model innovation and technical invention as the model for future schooling.

The fast pace with which the startup school movement has developed is symptomatic of how education policy work has, in recent years, become increasingly accelerated and distributed. Although, as Peck and Theodore (2015, p. 3) note, the "modern policymaking process may still be focused on centers of political authority," it is dispersed among "networks of policy advocacy and activism," and sources, channels, and sites of policy advice encompass sprawling networks of human and nonhuman actors. Their conceptualization of "fast policy" captures how new generations of "best practice and paradigmatic models," twinned with "enlarged roles for intermediaries as advocates of specific policy routines and technologies," have led to a significant shortening of policy development processes, fast-tracked decision-making, continuous experimentation, rapid rollout, and a privileging of particular participants in the policy process (p. 4). Fast policy and "policy mobility" are evident in education specifically in the ways that "a diverse cast of new actors and organizations" is participating in contemporary modes of educational policy-making and governance, particularly those actors that lie outside of government, such as edu-businesses, think tanks, philanthropic and venture capital funders, technical experts, entrepreneurs, and lobbyists (Gulson et al., 2017, p. 1).

Startup schools are typically mobile fast-policy models. They originate not in political centers but from networks of entrepreneurs and advocates, with new paradigmatic models of "personalized" education that they aspire to market and mobilize across public education; they are seeking to build "best practice" sites that can act as models for rapid rollout and expansion to other sites and spaces;

they are interlinked with policy actors, intermediaries, and advisors from government departments as well as commercial businesses; they are funded both through sources of venture capital and philanthropic giving; they are staffed by in-house technical experts capable of continuous forms of experimentation, product development, and evaluation; and they mobilize web-based communication platforms and social media, as well as traditional media channels, to maximize exposure and catalyze uptake of their school models and products. The mode of fast-policy work being undertaken by startup school entrepreneurs is therefore part of a "degovernmentalization" of education policy and governance (Olmedo, 2014) and a rapid escalation in the influence of Silicon Valley and its webs of business-backed charitable foundations, wealthy elites, venture capital sources, business models, and technical practices within the schools sector.

In what follows I concentrate on a selection of key startup school actors that exemplify how the participation of commercial Silicon Valley technology companies in education is part of a broader "restructuring of public education by economic and political elites," which have "succeeded in strategically advancing privatization and market-based school 'reforms' to transform public education into a private industry while also hijacking public governance over educational policy" (Saltman, 2016, p. 107). AltSchool (https://www.altschool.com/) is a private chain of high-tech schools based around Silicon Valley, originating from the vision of a former Google executive and supported by a philanthropic donation from Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook. Summit Public Schools (http://summitps.org/) is another charter school chain, also extensively supported by funding and technical support from Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, via his philanthropic program dedicated to "personalized learning." Zuckerberg has also established his own startup school, The Primary School (https://www.theprimaryschool.org/), in the Palo Alto area. The Khan Lab School (http://khanlabschool.org/) is the product of the entrepreneur Salman Khan, formerly best known for launching the Khan Academy platform for online learning based on shareable video content. Finally, the XQ Super School Project (https://xqsuperschool.org/) has funded 10 high school redesign projects across the US; it too is philanthropically funded via wealthy tech sector donors, emphasizes the role of digital technology and data analytics in school improvement, and is extensively linked with networks of venture capital, entrepreneurship, and policy expertise.

Some startup schools are public, some private, and others are funded by non-profits. As a private school, AltSchool charges fees of US$27000 per year; Khan Lab School charges between US$27000 for lower-school entrants and $32000 for upper-school students, plus enrollment fees. Summit Public Schools is a tuition-free charter school chain, while the XQ Super School Project has supported public and charter schools with funding from its non-profit philanthropic sources. In addition to these specific sites of innovation, startup schooling is also supported by a range of organizations and actors from across the business and government sectors. Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook is one of the most high-profile supporters of startup schools, though others include the Silicon Schools Fund, the venture capitalists Andreessen Horowitz and First Round Capital, and the Founders Fund, the venture capital company of Peter Thiel – the founder of PayPal, long-time Facebook board member and, in 2016, a technology advisor to then President-elect Donald Trump.

Startup schools, their entrepreneurial founders, and their venture capitalist and philanthropic funders constitute new and mobile fast-policy networks of educational development, innovation, and reform that explicitly challenge existing policy-making approaches and the established pedagogic and curriculum practices of state schooling. In particular, they are experimenting with reformatory innovations in three ways: (1) through combining venture capital with technology philanthropy; (2) by applying data analytics to generate real-time insights into classrooms and pedagogic processes; and (3) by experimenting with new psychological and neuroscientific theories of learning.

Venture PhilTech

Startup schools are supported financially through sources of venture capital and technology sector philanthropy. "Venture philanthropy," or "philanthrocapitalism" are terms used to describe the distinctive nature of how philanthropic giving has combined with venture capital practices of for-profit investment. As Saltman (2010, p. 33) has demonstrated, Silicon Valley entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates have actively sought to intervene in public education through venture philanthropies such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, "the largest player in a fundamental transformation of education philanthropy: it is setting the agenda for modelling public education in the United States on venture capital." Philanthropies such as the Gates Foundation have sought to replace public education with privatized educational provision, mobilizing techniques of goodwill, care, and generosity to "redistribute control from teachers, parents, students and communities to private foundations, for-profit and non-profit organizations, business groups, and investors" (p. 35). Venture philanthropy in American education has been characterized by the participation of wealthy business-backed foundations in charter school networks particularly, both on the "demand side" by sponsoring advocacy coalitions and on the "supply side" by directly funding and supporting new brand-name charter networks (Reckhow, 2013; Saltman, 2010). Charter school policies have enabled privately owned philanthropic organizations to penetrate the publicly funded education sector, govern institutions directly, and advocate for more deregulated, competitive models of public education, thereby "serving as a vehicle for privatizing public policy—diminishing the public while enhancing the position and influence of private interests and organizations in public policymaking" (Lubienski, 2013, p. 498).

A distinctive form of technology philanthropy has emerged from Silicon Valley: abbreviated to "philtech," it articulates a strongly utopian vision of social progress through software, and is part of the "solutionism" of Silicon Valley that focuses on solving all social, cultural, economic, and political problems with the application of code and algorithms (Morozov, 2013). This form of Silicon Valley solutionism is increasingly being applied to education (Selwyn, 2016) to propose very specific kinds of educational intervention and reinvention. Silicon Valley philtech advocates emphasize new approaches to "personalized learning" and propose to become supply-side creators of new institutions, practices, and products that are modeled on the business plans, technical practices, and distinctive

political outlook of Silicon Valley "startup" culture. An illustrative example of the emerging venture philtech movement for education in Silicon Valley is the Silicon Schools Fund (http://www.siliconschools.com/). It is supported by a range of philanthropic foundations and wealthy individuals from business and technology, and is staffed by a board of directors from influential foundations, think tanks, and charter school networks with a focus on innovation in education. The organization "provides seed funding for new blended learning schools that use innovative education models and technology to personalize learning," focusing on the creation of new schools in the Bay Area as "laboratories of innovation and proof points for personalized learning" – a "national demonstration hub of high quality learning":

- Schools that give each student a highly-personalized education, by combining the best of traditional education with the transformative power of technology.
- Students gaining more control over the path and pace of their learning, creating better schools and better outcomes.
- Software and online courses that provide engaging curriculum, combined with real-time student data, giving teachers the information they need to support each student.
- Teachers developing flexibility to do what they do best – inspire, facilitate conversations, and encourage critical thinking.

The schools that Silicon Schools Fund supports include Khan Lab School and Summit Public Schools, the charter chain also funded directly by Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, through his own philtech organization.

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI) set up by Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan is one of the wealthiest and most influential philanthropic donors to startup schooling (https://chanzuckerberg.com/initiatives/). CZI was established as "a limited liability corporation … free to make philanthropic donations, invest in for-profit companies, and engage in political lobbying and policy advocacy" (Herold, 2016), after Zuckerberg and Chan announced in 2015 their intention to give away 99% of their Facebook stock, valued at around US$45 billion, to a variety of causes, particularly technology-enabled personalized learning in K-12 education. The head of the educational arm of the initiative is James Shelton, former US Deputy Secretary of Education; Shelton has previously worked as a program director at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and as a partner at the NewSchools Venture Fund, both of which have donated and invested heavily in education technology, charter schools, and other new school models.

Zuckerberg and Chan have also established a series of for-profit and non-profit organizations as part of "a new, multi-pronged effort to use their massive fortune to reshape public education with technology" (*Education Week*, 2016), including a partnership with Summit Public Schools, which has metamorphosed from a single school in Silicon Valley to a Summit Personalized Learning Platform used by 20000 students across 27 US states (Kuchler, 2017). Mark Zuckerberg has additionally established a non-profit organization known as Startup:Education to channel $120 million for Bay Area schools and millions more to support

charter-school growth, as well as the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, which has funded his own startup school The Primary School.

AltSchool, set up in 2013 by Max Ventilla, a technology entrepreneur and former Google executive, has been the recipient of substantial philtech funding. Originally set up in San Francisco in 2013 as a "collaborative community of micro-schools," AltSchool later expanded to Brooklyn, Chicago, and Palo Alto, with further long-term plans for new schools and partnerships across the US. In 2016, it announced that schools could apply to join to become part of the AltSchool Open partner network, and it plans to market its emerging software platform to traditional public schools from 2019 (Herold, 2017). AltSchool has hired executives from Google, Uber, Airbnb, and other successful Silicon Valley startups, as well as senior executives from a number of charter school networks, and in 2017 announced recruitment of one of California's top district superintendents.

Financially, on its establishment AltSchool originally raised $33 million in venture capital funding, with another $100 million investment in 2015, including donations from Mark Zuckerberg's Silicon Valley Community Foundation, the venture capital firms Andreeson Horowitz and First Round, as well as from LearnCapital (an education technology investor, of which the global education business Pearson is the largest limited partner) and Peter Thiel's Founders Fund. It is seeking to generate revenue through both the AltSchool Open partner program and its platform, with each school partner "paying AltSchool an undisclosed sum of money," and, in the future, any school using its platform is required to "pay some sort of recurring fee" (Madda, 2016).

AltSchool's plan for educational reinvention is ultimately symmetrical with the Silicon Valley business model of gradually escalating a small-scale startup through expanding its team and its networks, while beta-testing and fine-tuning its product, in order to become viable as a massively scaled-up platform for public consumption.

AltSchool has also received substantial philanthropic support from the philanthropic organization of Laurene Powell Jobs (the widow of Steve Jobs, former head of Apple). In 2015, Laurene Powell Jobs granted a $50 million philanthropic donation to a crowdsourced school redesign project. The XQ Super School Project is a competition to redesign the "dangerously broken" social institution of the American high school. Its founder and president, Powell Jobs is the world's ninth wealthiest woman and one of the richest women in Silicon Valley. The XQ Super School Project is managed by the XQ Institute, itself an incubated product of the Emerson Collective (http://www.emersoncollective.com/). Also chaired by Powell Jobs, the Emerson Collective is a philanthropic organization that claims to "invest in ideas and fuel innovation" through partnering with entrepreneurs, and is a key partner of the Silicon Schools Fund and source of AltSchool funding. It is directed by Russlynn Ali, a former Assistant Secretary in the US Department of Education. In practice, the XQ Super School Project is conceived as a massive "democratic and crowdsourced" experiment "to reimagine and design the next American high school" in order to "deeply prepare our students for the rigorous challenges of college, jobs and life." The project began soliciting proposals in late 2015, with the

objective of partnering with winning teams to provide them with expert support, including the allocation of $50 million funding for the winning proposals to turn them into "real Super Schools." In autumn 2016, ten winning schools were announced. The winners included Summit Elevate, a high school in Oakland, California, and one of the Summit Public Schools network. At Summit Elevate, announced the XQ Super School Project website, "students will truly be 'in the driver's seat' of their own educations, whether selecting their own network of personal advisors and mentors from education and industry, or using the Summit Personalized Learning Platform to ensure college and career readiness" (http://xqsuperschool.org/abouttheproject).

Like the Silicon Schools Fund, the XQ Super School Project is prototypical of Silicon Valley's efforts to invest and intervene directly in schools through venture philanthropic means, with the role of wealthy tech-entrepreneurial individuals in the attempt to "fix" schools and the "failed system" of schooling, and the increasing blurring of lines between Silicon Valley entrepreneurship and education policy activism and advocacy. These declarations of "failure" represent an assault on the public sector and its "failed systems," and thus "naturalize private enterprise as the cure to public schools 'failings'" (Saltman, 2010, p. 37), as well as proposing new solutionist "technical fixes" for intractable social problems. As solutions to the failures of state education, startup schools are positioned by their investors as high-risk and high-growth companies that are required to guarantee profitable return on investment while solving social problems. AltSchool, for example, has a legally defined special type of corporate structure, "where the goal is not only to be a profitable entity, but also to have a positive impact on society" (Cutler, 2015). Venture-based philtech is the business model of the startup school that its investors hope to make profitable, all the while using these schools as private beta-testing sites for new digital personalized learning platforms that might be scaled up and marketed competitively within the public schooling sector.

Algorithmic Progressivism

The use of data as a source for performance measurement has a lengthy history in American education. Over recent decades, a vast infrastructure of test-based systems for monitoring US schools, teachers, and students has been developed as the product of interrelated policies and technical developments. The consequence of the quantification of performance has been an increasing intensification of standardization in schools as "students' standardized test scores and the standardized quantitative measures of teacher and school performance derived from them … enable students, teachers, and schools to be sorted into performance categories to which incentives and sanctions can be attached" (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2013, p. 14). The collection and analysis of data as a means of calculating school effectiveness have been advanced and intensified further through the involvement of technology businesses and philanthropic foundations in charter schools networks (Reckhow, 2013).

The standardization of schooling associated with the infrastructure of test-based accountability is viewed by startup school advocates, however, as one of

the core problems with state education. According to a profile of Silicon Valley's emerging educational entrepreneurs in *Wired* magazine,

> they believe that the very philosophical underpinnings of modern education are flawed … Problems arise, the thinking goes, when kids are pushed into an educational model that treats everyone the same—gives them the same lessons and homework, sets the same expectations, and covers the same subjects. (Tanz, 2015a)

By contrast to standardized, test-centered schooling, the dominant discourse supporting startup schooling is of "personalized learning" enabled by adaptive learning technologies.

Personalization has become a significant concept for schools such as AltSchool, Khan Lab School, and Summit Public Schools, which merge a progressivist emphasis on student-centered learning with the social media technique of customizing digital experiences to individual users based on data analytics (Corcoran & Gomes, 2016). The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, for example, has a stated aim to develop both "products and practices" as "personalized learning solutions":

> We focus on developing breakthrough products and practices that address the needs of each student, bringing together the best teachers, researchers, advocates and engineers to tackle pressing problems and growing a movement to support the development and broad adoption of powerful personalized learning solutions … Many philanthropic organizations give away money, but the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative is uniquely positioned to design, build and scale software systems … to help teachers bring personalized learning tools into hundreds of schools. (https://chanzuckerberg.com/initiatives/)

To this end, CZI is the main philtech supporter of Summit Public Schools, the charter schools network headquartered in Silicon Valley and also a beneficiary of XQ Super School funding. Not only has CZI dedicated significant funding to Summit; it has also seconded a dedicated engineering team from Facebook to build a software platform for the chain.

At the core of the Summit Personalized Learning Platform is a powerful suite of learning analytics techniques and applications, complemented by built-in courses made up of projects and focus areas vetted by Stanford University's Center for Assessment and Learning. By tracking students' engagement and progress on each of the courses, the system automatically adapts to allow students to "work through playlists of content at their own pace and take assessments on demand" and to enable teachers to "use that data to personalize instruction and provide additional support through mentoring and coaching." Available for free online, the Summit Personalized Learning Platform is available to schools outside of the official Summit Schools Network, which can join as part of a Summit Base Camp program designed to provide "teachers and schools across the US with the resources they need to bring personalized learning into the classroom" (http://summitbasecamp.org/explore-basecamp/).

AltSchool has likewise developed its own personalized learning technology platform. Notably, AltSchool founder Max Ventilla was previously the head of "personalization" at Google, with responsibility for the Google + social network platform. A recent profile claimed that

> when Ventilla quit Google to start AltSchool, in the spring of 2013, he had no experience as a teacher or an educational administrator. But he did have extensive knowledge of networks, and he understood the kinds of insights that can be gleaned from big data. (Mead, 2016)

Self-described as a "full-stack education company," AltSchool is staffed equally by engineers, educators, and business managers, with some of its staff development time dedicated to "hackathons," where they collaborate to delegate "robot tasks" such as routine data entry to software.

The software platform, which it describes as a new "central operating system for schools," consists of two main applications – the "Playlist" tool for students and the "Progression" tool for teachers – as well as a parent communication application called "Stream." "A Playlist is a customized to-do list for students to manage their work," claims the AltSchool website. "Educators curate a Playlist for each student. Within the Playlist, students can view their assignments, communicate with their teacher, and submit their work. Educators can then provide feedback and assess student work." In addition, the teacher tool, Progression

> provides a comprehensive portrait of a student's progress in math, language arts, and social-emotional development. It tracks a student's practice and trajectory … and gives educators a rich view of past learning experiences, patterns, successes, and areas that need support. Insights from Progression inform how an educator plans future learning experiences and sets goals.

These tools, AltSchool's founder has claimed, are part of "a revised conception of what a teacher might be: 'We are really shifting the role of an educator to someone who is more of a data-enabled detective'" (Mead, 2016).

In autumn 2016, AltSchool announced it was to begin distributing its software platform to other schools, with ambitions to "apply the company's formula to a network of private, public, and charter schools across the US" (Alba, 2016). Another profile piece noted that AltSchool's founders and investors hoped it could

> help 'reinvent' American education: first, by innovating in its microschools; next, by providing software to educators who want to start up their own schools; and, finally, by offering its software for use in public schools across the nation, a goal that the company hopes to achieve in three to five years. (Mead, 2016)

Recent media coverage of AltSchool's plans estimate a target date of 2019–2020 (Herold, 2017) "to scale a massive network of schools around personalized learning" (Madda, 2016).

The reinvention of American education prototyped by AltSchool and Summit is one that hybridizes learner-centered approaches to personalized learning with social media techniques of personalizing user experiences online. As Lapowsky (2015) characterizes it in a recent profile of AltSchool in *Wired* magazine:

> AltSchool is a decidedly Bay Area experiment with an educational philosophy known as student-centered learning … To that, however, AltSchool mixes in loads of technology to manage the chaos, and tops it all off with a staff of forward-thinking teachers set free to custom-teach to each student … This puts AltSchool at the intersection of two rapidly growing movements in education. Along one axis are the dozens of edtech startups building apps for schools; along the other are the dozens of progressive schools rallying around the increasingly popular concept of personalized education.

According to a study of technology-enhanced personalized learning in Silicon Valley schools by Cuban (2016a), however, the Silicon Valley brand of progressivism is closer to that of efficiency-minded, "administrative progressives," whose approaches seek to emulate the practices of corporate leaders of large organizations committed to both efficiency and effectiveness, than to Dewey's progressive form of democratic education.

This reflects a long history of competing forms of progressivism in education. While "one wing of these early progressives were pedagogical pioneers advocating project-based learning, student-centered activities, and connections to the world outside of the classroom," the administrative progressives "counted and measured everything in schools and classrooms under the flag of 'scientific management'":

> They reduced complex skills and knowledge to small chunks that students could learn and practice. They wanted to make teachers efficient in delivering lessons to 40-plus students with the newest technologies of the time: testing, film, radio. They created checklists for teachers to follow in getting students to learn and behave. They created checklists for principals to evaluate teachers and checklists for superintendents to gauge district performance including where every penny was spent … What exists now is a re-emergence of the efficiency-minded 'administrative progressives' from a century ago who now, as entrepreneurs and practical reformers, want public schools to be more market-like where supply and demand reign, and more realistic in preparing students for a competitive job market. (Cuban, 2016a)

What differentiates AltSchool, Summit and their networks from administrative progressivism, however, is their dependence upon, and advocacy for, digital data analytics. Roberts-Mahoney et al. (2016, pp. 1–2), for example, argue that powerful venture philanthropies, educational technology companies, and the US Department of Education have combined to form "a growing movement to apply 'big data' through 'learning analytics' to create 'personalized learning' in K-12

education in the United States," which, they argue reflects "narrow corporate-driven educational policies and priorities such as privatization, standardization, high-stakes assessment, and systems of corporate management and accountability."

Moreover, the new forms of data analytics being developed and deployed at AltSchool and Summit introduce new forms of algorithmic automation into school administration and the pedagogic environment of the classroom itself. Their model represents an evolution of forms of administrative progressivism into algorithmic progressivism. In a rare empirical observation of AltSchool, Cuban (2016b), for example, notes that AltSchool has adapted a form of progressive pedagogy inspired by John Dewey, and hybridized it with the legacy of Edward Thorndike, "that early twentieth century 'educational engineer' who thought everything could be measured and analysing data could point the way to better managed and efficient schools." With the emergence of big data, startup schools such as AltSchool are increasingly applying algorithmic processes, such as machine learning, predictive analytics, and adaptive systems to engineer better-managed and more efficient systems of personalized learning.

Algorithmic progressivism as a concept captures well the pedagogic uptake of big data software within the personalized learning aspirations of Silicon Valley. Critical studies of data and software in a variety of sectors have begun to detail how code and algorithms have begun to intervene in diverse processes, practices, and institutions. Kitchin and Dodge (2011), for example, have articulated how software and analytics have pervasively entered into everyday life through the production of "code/spaces" – environments that entirely depend on software systems for their intended functioning, and that are recursively transformed by their presence. They note in particular the emergence of a new form of governance they term "automated management," where tasks are increasingly performed by autonomous software systems that operate automatically, with limited human intervention. In particular, data collection and analysis have become an increasingly automated task, with algorithms designed to gather, store, sort out, and process information.

Startup schools are prototypical of classroom code/spaces, where the pedagogic processes of the school are increasingly governed by algorithmic processes of automated management and the constant collection and analysis of data from learners and teachers. The discourse of personalization that accompanies and justifies startup schools supports new hybrid data-driven forms of individualized learning, a form of algorithmic progressivism that is managed via data analytics and adaptive platforms, and that is rationalized simultaneously as a form of social good and a source of revenue generation under an experimental regime of technology philanthropy in public education.

Learning Laboratories

As well as acting as new classroom code/spaces of algorithmic progressivism, Silicon Valley's startup schools are also positioned as laboratories where new scientific theories of learning itself may be trialed in experimental fashion. Summit Public Schools, Khan Lab School, and AltSchool have been described as

"mini-research and development labs, where both teachers and engineers are diligently developing the formula for a 21st century education, all in hopes of applying that formula … to private, public, and charter schools across the country" (Lapowsky, 2015). In this sense, startup schools are setting themselves the highly normative goal of defining the future of education and learning, informed by their own in-house analyses from data about their own classrooms, curricula, teachers, and students. They also draw on academic expertise in the assessment of both the cognitive and the non-cognitive aspects of learning developed in recent years by psychologists at Stanford University within Silicon Valley.

The Facebook-supported Summit Learning Platform used across the Summit Public Schools network, for example, has been engineered on an explicit model of cognitive skills development developed at Stanford:

> Summit developed the Cognitive Skills Rubric built into our Summit Learning Platform in collaboration with the SCALE team at Stanford, whose mission is to improve instruction and learning through the design and development of innovative, educative, state-of-the-art performance assessments and by building the capacity of schools to use these assessments in thoughtful ways, to promote student, teacher, and organizational learning. (http://info.summitlearning.org/program/program-requirements/)

Thus, 70% of each student's grade on the Summit platform is criterion-referenced with the cognitive skills rubric, with the remaining 30% assessed on content knowledge. "Our grading policy reflects our values," it states, "which is why we emphasize cognitive skills over content knowledge." Similarly, the Khan Lab School has been established as an experimental R&D lab for testing different educational approaches and technologies, and aspires to contribute to the production of new theories of learning itself. As an educational R&D laboratory, Khan Lab School has been profiled in *Wired*, which noted that

> [Its] goal isn't just to build one fancy school but to develop and test a new model of learning that can be exported to other schools around the country and the world. [Its] team is diligently recording and tracking every student's progress and sharing the findings with their parents and the staff, an open source approach to educational innovation. In this view, the Lab School kids are guinea pigs … willingly subjecting themselves to new ideas that have never been tried before, then adapting and adjusting and trying again. 'This is a lab for establishing new theories that could affect the rest of the planet,' Khan says. 'The whole point is to catalyse change.' (Tanz, 2015b)

Lab School's "touchy-feely surface" of character education, well-being and mindfulness, however, "masks a rigorous fealty to tracking data about every dimension of a student's scholastic and social progress" (Tanz, 2015b).

At Altschool, likewise, "parents pay fees, hoping their kids will get a better education as guinea pigs, while venture capitalists fund the R&D, hoping for financial returns from the technologies it develops" (Kuchler, 2017). Notably,

AltSchool has ambitious technical and methodological aspirations to subject its students to data analytics, not just through academic tracking and monitoring of cognitive skills, but also through wearable biometrics, facial vision analysis, and motion detection that can capture the non-cognitive aspects of learning. This includes fitting cameras that run constantly in the classroom, capturing each child's every facial expression, fidget, and social interaction, as well as documenting the objects that every student touches throughout the day; microphones to record every word that each person utters; and wearable devices to track children's movements and moods through skin sensors. This is so its in-house data scientists "can then search for patterns in each student's engagement level, moods, use of classroom resources, social habits, language and vocabulary use, attention span, and academic performance, and more" (Herold, 2016).

An emphasis on the non-cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of learning has emerged strongly in US education in recent years. Startup schools are seeking new experimental ways of capturing, quantifying, and acting upon such qualities. The US Office of Educational Technology in the Department of Education published its report *Promoting Grit, Tenacity and Perseverance* in 2013, noting these were "critical factors for success" in the twenty-first century (Schechtman et al., 2013). The report sought to encourage a shift in educational priorities to promote not only content knowledge and cognitive skills, but also grit, tenacity, and perseverance, and proposed the use of technical systems to measure non-cognitive factors and student dispositions, such as levels of frustration, motivation, confidence, boredom, and fatigue. One of the influential psychological advisors to the report, Carol Dweck of Stanford University, has turned her theory of "growth mindset" into practical techniques that she has successful marketed not only to the education sector but also to technology management in Silicon Valley, while California state has become the emerging testbed for a range of techniques to measure the non-cognitive, social-emotional and personal qualities of education (Zernike, 2016).

Beyond its symmetries with emerging policy regimes, AltSchool's aspirations to monitor not only students' academic progress but also track their social and emotional learning through data are an exemplar of what McStay (2016) has designated "empathic media." Empathic media consist of "technologies that track bodies and react to emotions and intentions," or a combination of online behavior tracking and the commercial application of neuroscience-based understandings of the involuntary nature of human emotions and affects (McStay, 2016, p. 1). These technologies include biometrics that can detect emotional arousal through the skin, and affective computing systems. Affective computing relies on the development of systems that can collect physiological data from the user, often through facial recognition software and algorithms. The user's emotion can then be classified using psychological theories of how emotions express themselves physiologically, with training sets of data used to teach an algorithm to identify particular emotions, thus allowing the system to respond appropriately and even simulate human emotions in a way recognizable to humans, and in some cases deliberately generate a particular emotional response in the user (Rose, Aicardi, & Reinsborough 2016).

A recent summary of "emotive computing in the classroom" produced by Silicon Valley's ed-tech industry magazine *EdSurge* has identified a number of relevant ongoing technical innovations:

- Transdermal Optical Imaging, with a camera that is able to measure facial blood flow information and determine student emotions where visual face cues are not obvious.
- Electroencephalogram (EEG) electrical brain activity tests to measure students' emotional arousal, task performance, and provide computer mediation to individuals.
- Wearable social-emotional intelligence prosthetic which uses a small camera and analyzes facial expressions and head movements to detect affects in children in real time.
- A glove-like device that maps students' physiological arousal and measures the wearer's skin conductivity to deduce excitement, engagement or fatigue and stress (Spreeuwenberg, 2017).

As these examples indicate, AltSchool's ambitions to utilize affective computing and wearable biometric technologies are prototypical of wider Silicon Valley aspirations to treat the body of the student as a source of psychological and neuroscientific data collection and analysis. Students are treated by Silicon Valley not just as active, enquiring agents, but as transparent and machine-readable bodies of data that can be tracked and traced through their unconscious physiological signals or even brain activity.

XQ Super School Project takes neuroscience expertise even further in its vision of the future of US high schooling. A paper on the "science of learning" provided on its website – and intended as guidance for entrants to the competition – refers to "understanding and applying the fundamentals of brain science" to "empower young people to become agents of their own learning journeys." It draws on neuroscientific claims about the malleability and "neuroplasticity" of the "adolescent brain" and about the brain-based nature of students' "mindsets." In this sense, XQ Super School Project is an instantiation of the recent interest in "neuroeducation" and the proliferating discourse and practices of neuroscience in education, which tends to treat the functional architecture of the brain in explicitly determinist terms, and even "to reduce learning to an algorithmic or computational process" (Pykett, 2015, p. 97).

Another Super School guidance document for competition entrants further emphasizes the skills students require in the twenty-first century. It dismisses the so-called "old paradigm" (of following orders, being product-driven, 9–5 lifelong employment, and domain specialization), and replaces it with the "knowledge economy" paradigm of co-creation, distributed leadership, flexibility, domain agility, and creativity. These "21st-century skills" are reflected in numerous other initiatives led by the Silicon Valley technology companies, most notably the influential Partnership for 21st Century Learning, which are concerned with cultivating the skills associated with STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and maths) and accord closely with the workforce priorities of the tech sector itself. As XQ Super School Project illustrates, theories of brain plasticity from neuroscience wedded to economic rationalities are becoming the dominant

ways of thinking about processes of learning, linked to "a manic plasticity demanded in the global marketplace" (Pitts-Taylor, 2016, p. 18):

> There is clearly an 'elective affinity' … between this emphasis on plastic, flexible brains and more general sociopolitical changes that prioritize individual flexibility across the life span to accommodate to rapidly changing economic demands, cultural shifts, and technological advances. (Rose & Abi-Rached, 2013, p. 223)

Indeed, concerns about "training a twenty-first century workforce" have been taken up in neuroscientifically-based training programs designed to mold the plasticity of the brain, which represent strategies of "preemptive neurogovernance" that are intended to promote the economic and political optimization of the population (Pitts-Taylor, 2016, p. 40).

As an institutionalized realization of pre-emptive neurogovernance, XQ Super School Project makes young people's STEM mindsets into characteristics that can be activated through the brain. Its aspiration is to activate human capital through brain-targeted pedagogies that are intended to produce malleable minds, future-proofed for the demands of the global marketplace and technology-centered jobs. Roberts-Mahoney et al. (2016, p. 1) have recently articulated how many educational data analytics systems are based on categories that measure skills reductively in terms of "human capital":

> Big data and adaptive learning systems are functioning to redefine educational policy, teaching, and learning in ways that transfer educational decisions from public school classrooms and teachers to private corporate spaces and authorities. [They] position education within a reductive set of economic rationalities that emphasize human capital development, the expansion of data-driven instruction and decision-making, and a narrow conception of learning as the acquisition of discrete skills and behavior modification detached from broader social contexts and culturally relevant forms of knowledge and inquiry.

The student of a silicon startup school is therefore addressed through pedagogies and technologies inspired by neuroscientific, psychological, and economic categories. In this context, the student of a silicon startup school becomes the subject of a kind of R&D process where human cognition, emotions, and behavior itself are seen as targets for techniques of governance, improvement, and optimization.

Conclusion

The new educational models that Silicon Valley is beta-testing on itself and seeking to roll out and scale up represent the next step in the "corporatization of public schools" – not just the "transformation of the school on the model of the corporation" (Saltman, 2010, p. 13), but more specifically the transformation of

the school on the technical, economic, cultural, and scientific model of Silicon Valley itself. Silicon Valley's startup schools exemplify the growing influence of venture capital and philtech in shaping and mobilizing new paradigmatic fast-policy models of best practices in education. They are actively prototyping new kinds of code/space classrooms where pedagogic routines are increasingly semi-automated through the use of sophisticated analytics and adaptive systems that can help educators define "personalized learning playlists" based on student data. The hybridization of personalized learning software and data analytics with progressivist educational aspirations is leading to a new form of algorithmic progressivism which combines student-centered pedagogic ideals with social media logics of user customization. And startup schools are acting as learning laboratories for new psychological and neuroscientific theories, in ways which make cognitive skills, non-cognitive social-emotional learning, and even the plasticity of the brain itself the targets for intervention, management, and optimization.

Lewis-Krause (2016) claims that the "most important thing happening in Silicon Valley right now is … institution-building—and the consolidation of power—on a scale and at a pace that are both probably unprecedented in human history." Increasingly, Silicon Valley is seeking to de-governmentalize public education by governing educational institutions such as schools directly from its own offices and studios. Through this strategy, it is seeking to consolidate its position as a techno-political center of global education reform by enacting fast-policy processes such as rapid roll-out, policy experimentation, and diffusion of best practices. It has created startup schools as competitive alternatives to state schooling, and built these schools as the physical infrastructure that overlays its digital infrastructure of data analytics and adaptive systems. In this way, entrepreneurs such as Max Ventilla, Mark Zuckerberg, Laurene Powell Jobs, and Salman Khan have become architects of a new model of the "full-stack education company" – a supply-side provider of a school service that also includes commercial, for-profit in-house software engineering and product development – but also high-profile and persuasive corporate education reformers. Their aspiration is to govern education entrepreneurially and digitally from the offices of philanthropic foundations and the engineering studios of software development startups.

Most notably, these Silicon Valley entrepreneurs are constructing a new digital infrastructure of personalized learning technologies as a direct counter to the sociotechnical infrastructure of test-based accountability that has driven processes of quantification and standardization in US education particularly (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2013). Startup schools such as AltSchool may be understood, then, as both R&D labs and marketing devices for the digital systems and infrastructural networks being developed by their engineers, analysts, and entrepreneurial founders and boards of directors and investors. These digital systems are imprinted with the values and business plans of their originators, and act as sociotechnical diffusers of their aspirations and priorities to reinvent public education in the image of Silicon Valley itself. If, as it plans, AltSchool successfully launches its platform across state education in 2019/2020, for example, then any school paying the required recurring fee will be transformed into a mini-AltSchool

outpost, with its administrative and pedagogic processes running on Silicon Valley's encoded models of teaching, learning, and schooling. Instead of an infrastructure of test-based accountability, it is creating a digital infrastructure of data-based algorithmic progressivism, from which it aims to profit while making a positive social and public impact.

Just as Silicon Valley itself may be best understood as a topological array of relationships between business, money, technologies, entrepreneurship, and coding practices - rather than just as a topographically defined geographical zone – startup schools are seeking to extend their founders' and funders' influence and power topologically by linking public schools via a networked digital infrastructure to headquarters in Silicon Valley. In other words, Silicon Valley is seeking to reproduce the model of the startup school across public education by implanting its software platforms in classrooms at massive scale, and stitching the entire system together as a vast digitally connected network of pedagogic management and data analytics software platforms. The reformatory policy model favored by startup school founders and funders is exactly the same as its business model and its technical plan: to mobilize and scale innovation at speed through digital networks. It is digitizing education reform itself.

Through these techniques, actors, and relations, Silicon Valley is involving itself in a major program of institution-building and the consolidation of power within education itself. As the leading site of global digital education reform, it is treating education as a marketplace within which successful startup companies might scale up to public education at large, as long as they can secure the right investment, build the right software, tune the right algorithms, secure the required customers and users, and guarantee return on investment.

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15

Who Drives the Drivers?

Technology as the Ideology of Global Educational Reform
Petar Jandrić and Sarah Hayes

Introduction

Global policy documents in higher education are increasingly interspersed with references to digital technologies. Inter-linked with ubiquitous buzz-words, such as "knowledge economy," "technology enhanced learning" (TEL), and "the student experience," information and communication technologies (ICTs) are tacitly identified as "drivers" of global educational reform. Yet, this view carries a lot of ideological baggage. If global educational reforms are really driven by technologies, then the intentions of their makers become internalized in educational systems, without consideration or public debate. Civic discourse gives way to a language of corporate culture (Giroux, 2002) in accompanying policies. It has already been noted that global reform, based on techniques of performativity, accountancy and audit *through numbers* (Shore & Wright, 1999, p. 2015) reorient the very soul of the teacher in ways that leave "the heart of the educational project gouged out" (Ball, 1999, p. 1). As neoliberal patterns of governance are rapidly exported world-wide, to reconfigure higher education, we describe ways that new policy paradigms, *through texts*, omit the very presence of teachers and students from these discourses altogether, instead attributing human labor to statements about "the use of technology."

Yet, technological references in global higher education policy documents do not simply subscribe to one particular neoliberal ideology. Furthermore, hegemonies are not just "there," they are constructed, through multiple material-discursive practices (Sum & Jessop, 2013). It is therefore our intention to explore some of these material-discursive mechanisms, from several angles, as we consider the question of "who drives the drivers?," if technology is repeatedly declared as the force that is driving global educational reform. We use the term of information and communication technologies with a broad perspective that acknowledges both historical narratives built into systems we use, and also ongoing constructed political and economic hegemonies, including what has been discussed as post-hegemonic power (Lash, 2007). Thus, it is not our intention to suggest

that theory around audit cultures or performativity are no longer applicable, but rather to consider additional material and discursive factors that have now added further layers of complexity to the question in our title.

In *Towards a Cultural Political Economy: Putting Culture in its Place in Political Economy* (2013), Sum and Jessop stage an encounter between Marx, Gramsci, and Foucault in order to explore the production of hegemonies. They make the important point that: "hegemony is not a cohesive, unilateral, monovalent relationship of leaders and led; it is riddled with tensions, contradictions, and depends on the 'suturing' of difference that is always vulnerable to pulling apart and ruptures" (2013, p. 223). Given that discourse is always contested and people can choose to ignore policies, this opens possibilities for counter-hegemonic networks and movements. However, in global digital society, there are other material-discursive interventions into our lives that are less easy to ignore and more sinister in the ways in which they infiltrate our ways of being. Later in this chapter we consider, through Knox (2015), three interrelated phases of digital cultures in education: cybercultures, community cultures, and algorithmic cultures.

First, though, we begin by clarifying our use of the term "neoliberal patterns of governance." We then proceed to discuss, through Shore and Wright (2015), the notion of governmentality as a powerful driver of neoliberalism, in creating so-called "self-managed" subjects, where perpetual "enhancement" of what we do appears to be the key objective. We draw attention though to a curious contradiction in this logic, as we then demonstrate how policy texts, that appear to bring new ideas and forms of knowledge, simply reinforce an ongoing and alarming tendency to drive out human characteristics and instead foreground the agency of technology, in enacting and achieving educational reforms.

With reference to a corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), we reveal powerful ideological underpinnings of technological references in global higher education (HE) policy documents. We show the grounding of these texts in particular epistemological assumptions, and reveal how these translate into concrete policies. From the point of view of cultural studies and anthropology, policies create new categories of individuals to be governed, including new global actors, subjects, and social spaces. CDA provides one way to look at the inner mechanics of neoliberal networks, where numbers and texts co-opt with digital technologies to optimize practices, but potentially marginalize related human labor. However, returning to the point from Sum and Jessop (2013) that hegemonies are not cohesive, there are further routes through which the question of "who drives the drivers?" might be explored. The notion of human capital might be clearly linked with theories of governmentality, through audit and performativity.

A self-governing individual within a neoliberal public organization is frequently discussed. Yet Peters and Jandrić (2018) remind us that human capital is not that well suited to the digital age, when crowdsourcing and creative collaboration across groups and networks are overriding the assumption of humans as self-sufficient entities. The figure of *homo economicus* is considered alongside that of *homo collaborans* to demonstrate that transitions of human nature in a

neoliberal context are not clear-cut. This applies more than ever when digital networks are inextricably implicated in the struggles between economic self-interest and collective intelligence and responsibility. On this basis, the chapter seeks to intervene subversively at several levels into the current discourse of global educational reform.

Neoliberal Patterns of Governance

In order to develop this problematic, where technologies, via the medium of policy language, are identified as "drivers" of global educational reform, it is important, first, to be clear on what we mean by "neoliberal patterns of governance." Then we can proceed to explain our conception first, of certain *textual* ways that such patterns might rapidly spread world-wide, through policy documents, to support ongoing neoliberal reconfigurations of Higher Education (HE). Though the CDA examples provided a little later may seem like rather small elements to describe, in a very big picture, these are supplied to offer some actual illustrations of what Aihwa Ong refers to as a "migratory set of practices" that appear to "participate in mutating configurations of possibility" (Ong, 2007, p. 1). Ong discusses multiple practices within "Big-N," or neoliberalism, that are rising like "an economic tsunami that is gathering force across the planet" (p. 1). Therefore, the practice of routinely attributing human activity to technology, in written HE policy about learning, is just one such practice where "technological determinism co-opts with neoliberal agendas" (Hayes & Jandrić, 2014). Later we will discuss these findings in broader cultural terms and in relation to changing views on power, hegemony, and governance.

   Venugopal describes a "deep" form of neoliberalism, that travels via a "multiplicity of governing networks, nodes and modes that now allows for far greater levels of contingency and context-specific variation" (2015, p. 170). In *The New Way of the World* (2014), Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval build on the work of Foucault to describe how neoliberal rationality is re-making the world via a governmentality approach. A governmentality approach, "with its emphasis on technologies of optimisation, and the formation of market-responsive subjectivities, is the most influential version of deep neoliberalism" (Venugopal, 2015, p. 170). We consider such "technologies of optimisation" to be inclusive of all human practices (and indeed, we explain later, how these now merge with non-human practices) that aid the enacting of neoliberal agendas, including the conscious, or unconscious writing of rational and deterministic claims about technology in HE policy.

Governmentality as a Powerful Driver of Neoliberalism

Shore and Wright perceive the governmentality of neoliberalism to be enacted in HE through "governing by numbers." They describe managerial and organizational technologies for producing calculative, responsibilized, self-managed subjects in "a global industry of measuring, ranking and auditing organisations

and individuals," that has arisen over the last three decades, based on ideas of enhancing "quality," "efficiency," and "transparency" (Shore & Wright, 2015, p. 22). While there are important values in ensuring student learning is of a high quality, to detach concepts like quality, efficiency, and transparency from the humans who spend many hours supporting students, and indeed the students themselves, makes these "categories" easier to quantify and to govern (also self-govern). Given that easy-to-read decontextualized numbers provide useful tools for governance, they pose the question: "How do we know that our subjectivity has been 'snatched' from us by the audit monster?" (p. 27). In reply, they suggest that these factors "may explain why so many people have embraced audit, and also why others, more critical of its rationality and ethics, struggle to find ways to contest processes of governing by numbers" (p. 27).

With such arguments in mind, we suggest that processes of "governing by text" need ongoing scrutiny too, not as exclusive discursive or representational dimensions alone, but interacting with multiple elements that co-constitute human subjects, objects and sociopolitical orders. Though many authors before us have developed concerns over governance through policy texts (Jessop, Fairclough, &Wodak, 2008; Mulderrig, 2011), in our analysis we reveal a set of practices buried within "deep" neoliberalism that threatens to literally steal human subjectivity. Critical analysis of written texts have been closely linked to the concept of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) where the power of dominant groups in society becomes integrated through multiple forms of discourse. However, later we will discuss a shift in focus to a "more nuanced understanding of the power potentials and dynamics of digital or new media" (Beer, 2009, p. 997) with reference to post-hegemonic power (Lash, 2007). For now we draw the reader's attention to particular grammatical constructions that can position technologies and policies as enacting the enhancement of quality, but failing to attribute the human. Grammatical constructions have wider sociological significance (Mulderrig, 2011). Therefore, "governance by numbers" is also constructed and enacted via textual patterns. Shore and Wright (2015) make the point "that audits do not so much steal our subjectivity as actively constitute it." However, in our examples, human subjectivity appears to be missing altogether. We demonstrate, in extracts from policy texts about teaching in HE, how the very presence of teachers and students is omitted from discourse altogether. What remains are frequent statements where all manner of technologies, policies, and material factors are attributed with our acts of human academic labor. Thus, the "drivers" of global educational reform seem to be of a distinctly non-human variety!

However depressing though such revelations may sound, from the point of view of cultural studies and anthropology, policies create new categories of individuals to be governed. In an "anthropology of policy," policy documents are not simply external forces, or confined to texts, but rather they are considered to be "productive, performative and continually contested" domains of meaning (Shore, Wright, & Però, 2011, p. 1). So, having identified the issue of material objects cited as enacting human labor, we can intervene subversively into the current discourse of global educational reform as a contested domain of meaning. In place of the dominant deterministic positions we encounter in written policies, and as a first step to a more open and democratic dialogue, we can

introduce more complex, posthumanist and organizational views. These acknowledge the diversity of digital cultures and their roots in philosophy of technology. Human labor and identity are intermingled with the material devices we use. For instance, few users of smartphones will deny the mixed blessings of the "autocorrect" text function. When it alters the words we write, and results remain unnoticed as we hit "send," embarrassment can swiftly follow. While humans are adapting to digital actors intervening in ways like this for convenience, it may be less obvious to us that these devices and new algorithmic practices (Beer, 2009) are also powerful participants in the political economic context of "Big-N" (Ong, 2007, p. 1). To describe any of these encounters as enacted by technology alone denies the political dimensions of technology (Winner, 1980).

When applying these arguments in an HE context, the foregrounding of technology itself, apparently separated from its social context in strategic plans, brings policy itself under scrutiny to be found wanting. Rather than accept the "policy continuities that support this dominant discourse" (Hayes, 2016), we can choose to expose textual reports, as forms of media in themselves, that need to be re-considered. If we challenge students in HE to take a critical approach when exploring global and local issues, through a variety of visual media, perhaps we need to ask why the writing of institutional policy remains an anonymized textual exercise (Hayes & Obradović, 2016). This becomes a more pressing question when we are able to demonstrate tangible ways that policy documents resort to "trafficking in human attributes" (Kopytoff, 1986, p. 85), thus ignoring decades of research that has exposed the complexity and diversity of human learning relationships with technology. We will therefore return later to discuss some complications that new algorithmic cultures introduce to the question of "who drives the drivers?" among human and non-human actors.

Identifying Who Is "Acting" in Textual Patterns of Governance in HE Policy

Our initial textual analysis is drawn from a corpus-based approach to critical discourse analysis, where Sarah Hayes collected 2.5 million words of UK government policy and university strategy texts written between 1997 and 2012. A corpus can be understood as a collection of naturally occurring language, in this case, HE policy texts that were freely available in the public domain. Corpus linguistics (Baker, 2006) offers structured ways to search a large bank of text like this to examine constructions of language. It is important to note that these initially quantitative findings do not prove anything, or explain why particular patterns may occur. They do though provide significant "content" to examine when considering questions about governance by numbers or by text. Undertaking further qualitative analysis through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), more specifically, transitivity analysis (Halliday, 1994), aids a closer scrutiny of such questions in relation to critical theory.

Sarah first examined the policy corpus through software called *Wordsmith* to observe which quantitative patterns emerged through corpus linguistics. *Wordsmith* supports corpus linguistic analysis through *keywords* (Scott, 1997)

Table 15.1 Keywords and how often they appeared in the corpus

Keyword	Number of instances
Learning	19260
Use	8131
Technology	6079

which are words that are statistically significant when measured against a comparison corpus, in this case, the British National Corpus (BNC). The British National Corpus was chosen as it contains 100 million words of written and spoken English from a wide range of sources for comparison purposes. In Table 15.1 some of the keywords that were highlighted and how often they appeared in concordance lines within the corpus are shown.

The keyword "use" was explored more qualitatively, to consider how "the use of technology" was discussed in relation to human academic labor. In a small extract from the findings, shown below, it is possible to observe a sustained pattern of attributing many human activities, such as teaching quality, provision of feedback, student learning, productivity and management to "the use of technology." In a transitivity analysis, breaking down these statements to look at their components aids us in noticing who the actors are and which goals they are attributed with achieving.

5437   'the use of technology *to improve* teaching quality'

5441   'the use of technology *to enable* and support work-based learning'

5447   'the use of technology *to enhance* the student learning experience'

5448   'the use of technology *to enhance* learning, teaching and assessment'

5457   'the use of technology *to support and enhance* the business and management functions'

5485   'the use of technology *to enhance* assessment and the provision of feedback'

5504   'the use of technology *to enhance* learning, teaching and assessment'

5520   'the use of technology *to create, sustain and develop* reflective learning communities'

5522   'the use of technology *to promote* efficiency and effectiveness'

5523   'the use of technology *to overcome* problems, circumvent disability, or finding alternatives'

5547   'the use of technology *in meeting* the needs of a diverse student body'

5573   'the use of technology *can increase* accessibility and flexibility of learning'

5602   'the use of technology *to enhance* learning and teaching'

5638	'the use of technology *to enhance* the student learning experience regardless of location'
5659	'the use of technology *can increase* accessibility and flexibility of learning'
5660	'the use of technology *to create* digital archives to improve practice'
5661	'the use of technology *to enhance* front line productivity and management'

In transitivity analysis, verbs reveal different types of processes, and nouns tell us who or what is actually "doing" these. Above we can see that many verbs describe active processes that are being undertaken. These are shown in italics: "*to improve,*" "*to enable,*" "*to enhance,*" "*to create,*" "*to sustain,*" "*to develop,*" "*to overcome,*" "*to increase.*" The noun: "the use of technology" is enacting these processes, and thus it is implied that the many goals: teaching quality, provision of feedback, student learning, productivity and management, are achieved by "the use of technology," rather than the dialectically intertwined breadth of human labor that is likely to accompany this.

There is not scope within this chapter to explain in more detail than this the detailed linguistic forms of analysis undertaken, see Hayes and Bartholomew (2015) for more on Sarah's particular methodology of corpus-based CDA applied to educational technology policy discourse. However, it is worth drawing attention to the role of "repetition" in the above textual examples. In some cases this verges on plagiarism, as phrases and statements are frequently reproduced across institutional and national policy texts. According to Lash, "the hegemonic order works through a cultural logic of reproduction, the post-hegemonic power operates through a cultural logic of invention" (2007, p. 56). This is an argument we will return to later. For now, we proceed to consider not only the clearly instrumental approach that such statements reinforce, as part of a global approach to measuring, ranking, and auditing efficiency (Shore & Wright, 2015), but also to place these in a wider consideration of cultural studies and algorithmic cultures. This extends our previous discussions of textual drivers within policy (Hayes, 2015, 2016; Hayes & Jandrić, 2014) to acknowledge that these managerial and organizational agendas need to be negotiated within new powerful cultural spaces where "older habits of thought, conduct, and expression appear to give way to newer ones that have yet to fully replace them" (Striphas, 2009, p. 189).

Who Drives the Drivers? A Post-Hegemonic Cultural Studies Perspective

In earlier writings, we have shown that the common-sense narrative of "using technology to enhance the student learning experience" is closely linked to Barbrook and Cameron's Californian ideology in two main ways. "By positioning students as passive recipients, of the notion of 'the student learning experience' builds a consumerist perspective into the process of teaching and learning" (Hayes

& Jandrić, 2014). Furthermore, "the notion of 'using technology to enhance learning' transfers human powers into information technologies" (Hayes & Jandrić, 2016). On that basis, we offered a possible form of "linguistic resistance" through posthumanist perspectives. In this chapter, we go one step further and analyse the common-sense narrative of global policy documents in the context of cultural studies. According to Knox, the perspectives of digital culture

> offer two principal and interrelated ways of thinking differently about education: the diversity, nuance, and strangeness of culture, as opposed to the rational universalism of education, combined with useful perspectives from the philosophy and theory of technology, which are able to account for more complex notions of our relationships with the digital. (2015, p. 1)

Knox identifies the "three interrelated phases of digital cultures in education": cybercultures, community cultures, and algorithmic cultures (p. 2).

The first phase of digital cultures in education, cybercultures, is focused on concepts of space, place, and identity. Major works from this phase include scientific studies such as Donna Haraway's *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (1991) and also seminal works of science fiction such as Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984). The common-sense narrative of "using technology to enhance the student learning experience," and the consequential omission of the very presence of teachers and students from the discourse of (higher) education evoke the worst dystopian nightmares of Frankfurt School theorists such as Herbert Marcuse and Martin Heidegger. Yet, the notion of technological control over people (or, in this case, higher education) is clearly overblown. Technologies are not independent from humans; they merely perpetuate ideologies that are built into their foundations. In order to understand the present-day ideology of information technologies, therefore, we inevitably need to look into the history of their creation.

It is well known that information technologies were developed in laboratories funded by the US Army. Their developers were predominantly white, male, and well-off – yet, they had been strongly marked by the spirit of 1968 and the hippie movement. The historian of technologies Fred Turner shows that development of information technologies was ideologically much more complex than the commonly accepted discourse of left-wing vs. right-wing ideologies. For instance, the left was divided into two main groups. One of these groups, the New Communalists

> believed that new tools would bring people to new levels of consciousness, which would in turn foster development of a new and hopefully better society. On the other hand, the New Left engaged in standard political activities such as gatherings and lobbying, and sought to change the world from within the system. (Turner & Jandrić, 2015, p. 169)

Similarly, the right was also divided into several fractions. To make things more complicated, some right-wing fractions such as the Wired blended neoliberal ideologies with libertarianism; some left-wing fractions such as the New Left were actually much more politically conservative.

Based on such historical background, technological references in contemporary global higher education policy documents do not simply subscribe to one particular neoliberal ideology. This ideological uncertainty fits well with the uncertainty of identity and place characteristic for posthumanism, and with the main concerns of the phase of cybercultures. In this contested space, the dominant ideology of technological references in global higher education policy documents is hard to pin down and critique. Furthermore, it is in this contested space that we can find roots for resistance to the dominant narrative. From a broader historical perspective, the current ideology of technological references in global higher education policy documents might merely be a passing phase in human development. Already in 2000, Richard Barbrook put forward a brave thought experiment or McLuhanist probe: "Engaged in superseding capitalism, Americans are successfully constructing the utopian future in the present: cyber-communism" (Barbrook, 2000; see also Jandrić, 2017. Ch. 5). From Barbrook's perspective, the question 'who drives the drivers?' has an even more complex answer. Is it possible, that allowing technologies to drive changes might eventually supersede the neoliberal ideological underpinnings of contemporary higher education?

The second phase of digital cultures in education, community cultures, describes the shift toward the culture of participation developed within interactive Web 2.0., and replaces the notion of virtuality by the notion of the network. From this perspective, "using technology to enhance the student learning experience" brings about a whole new set of questions such as unequal access to digital resources. As information technologies become more and more available, the notion of the digital divide characteristic of the 1990s and 2000s has slowly been pushed aside by more pressing issues such as digital literacy. In community cultures, technologies are viewed predominantly as vehicles for human collaboration and social participation. This theoretical position, which can probably best be described as soft technological determinism (Levinson & Jandrić, 2016), still insists on the importance of human agency. However, this agency is conducted on various online platforms, and thus limited by their inner workings.

The phase of community cultures continues and reinforces the ideological mashup started in the phase of cybercultures. For instance, Howard Rheingold – an early digerati who was heavily involved in circles around the Wired, and who is generally recognized as one of the main architects of the right-wing Californian ideology – also strongly advocates many positions that are typically defended by the left: knowledge as commons, net neutrality, decentralization of power …

> We are in a period of struggle over control … Whether digital technologies such as tools used by the United States Department of Defense to surveil populations is going to give them complete control, or whether the continued development of personal technologies and knowledge how to use them will increase the power of people to more democratically determine their faith, is still undecided. I think that if you assume that centralised power has won, that is a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Rheingold & Jandrić, 2015, p. 161)

In the perspective of community cultures, ideological underpinnings of technological references in global higher education policy documents are most prominent in various social struggles inside and outside of the realm of technology.

The third phase, algorithmic cultures, refers to the ways in which automated data processing interacts with educational formations. Algorithmic cultures introduce radical equality between human and non-human actors – a few decades after the works of Gibson and Haraway, questions of identity that marked the phase of cybercultures have returned with a vengeance. From the viewpoint of engineering, algorithms are simple mathematical relationships that are clearly defined by humans. However, algorithms are often hidden from the user, and the interaction between multiple algorithms may yield unexpected results. Set up by humans, algorithmic actors act fairly independently and unexpectedly. This calls for a deeper conceptual analysis: how human (or non-human) are algorithmic actors? However, questions pertaining to identity are just a tip of a much larger iceberg. Algorithmic cultures are instrumental in building "the digitally saturated and connected world" (Bell, 2011, p. 100), where issues of identity are intertwined with issues of community and issues of technology. In the context of algorithmic cultures, therefore, the question "who drives the drivers?" has become muddier than ever.

The researched policies create new categories of individuals to be governed. Cyber-students and cyber-faculty, who build values pushed through technology into their own identities. Social networkers, who "critically" use Web 2.0. technologies without much reference to their underlying architecture. Human consumers of algorithms, who click on personalized ads and build their own realities around algorithmically produced data; also non-human algorithmic actors, which interact and produce these realities without much reference to their original set-up. The researched policies also create new spaces. Cyberspaces, which offer escape from human bodily reality. Spaces of communication, which offer an opportunity for collaboration between humans. Spaces of computation, which present to most people as black boxes that somehow create their reality. These developments are local, because cyborgs recombine the human and the technological in numerous creative ways. They are also global, because algorithms employ the same principles in a vast number of different situations.

The classification of digital cultures into cybercultures, community cultures, and algorithmic cultures is a mere historical construct which describes scientific development during the past few decades. In reality, these phases have always co-existed, because they reflect "the basic human urge to question one's own identity, social relationships, and the relationships between the human and the non-human" (Jandrić, 2016). Cyber-students and cyber-faculty are also social networkers, and producers/consumers of algorithmic data. Cyberspaces are spaces of collaboration and spaces of computation. The drivers are mixed up, but not the same as, those who are driven – and their mutual relationships are often hidden.

Therefore, we now return to the points we made earlier, regarding hegemony, as an integration of the ideologies of powerful groups into everyday life, laws, texts, and policies. Domination takes place through consent, through ideology and through discourse. Over time theorists have also observed the cultural

spread of power through different forms of media and imagery. However, where in the past specific forms of resistance may have been easily located within everyday processes, Lash suggests that the spaces for resistance are now filling up in new ways. In place of discourse, power has become more sinister, to "penetrate your very being" (Lash, 2007, p. 59). Beer describes this as a "vision of close up and inescapable power" that "lives with us and reacts to us" (Beer, 2009, p. 993). In other words "it is not just resistance in our post-hegemonic culture, but also domination that works ontologically" (Lash, 2007, p. 58) and this has implications for organization and self-organization (Beer, 2009).

In the realm of traditional cultural studies (Stuart Hall, Terry Eagleton, David Harvey) and in the realm of traditional critical pedagogy (Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren), this study should be based on typical research questions such as: "Who drives the drivers? Which ideologies drive the drivers' drivers? Which mechanisms do they employ to drive these ideologies?" On the historical scale, however, technologies entered the arena of higher education only yesterday – and it was very necessary to embrace them in the existing critiques. Cricial studies in digital cultures cannot rely merely on pre-digital analyses of power and dominance. Therefore, we need to develop a new language of critique, and transform traditional cultural studies in and for the context of the age of the digital.

Post-Hegemonic Power and Educational Reform

According to Peters and Jandrić (2018, p. 341), "we are at a stage today where we can begin to investigate links between creativity, the mode of digital production, and the logic of public organisations." They show that this logic fosters "large group creative collaboration and co-creative labor based on being open, peer-to-peer, sharing, interdependence and acting globally". Based on Peters's earlier work, they call this "co(labor)ation, that is, a form of collective intelligence or 'the wisdom of the crowd' (so-called 'crowdsourcing') as a systematic learning process that encourages "creative labor" (CL)," and offers "CL as a substitute to human capital (HC) which is not well suited to the digital age" (Peters & Jandrić, 2018, p. 342). The notion of human capital corresponds to the well-known figure of *homo economicus*, while the notion of creative labor corresponds to the developing figure of *homo collaborans*.

Homo economicus and *homo collaborans* are based on three confronting assumptions: (1) the assumption of individuality, characteristic of neoliberal ideologies, is counterposed by the emerging concept of collective intelligence; (2) in a networked environment, the assumption of rationality is superseded by horizontal relations between entities which make a rationally aware self-sufficient entity ontologically impossible; and (3) the main defining feature of the *homo economicus* – the assumption of self-interest – is superseded by decentered forms of collective responsibility. In spite of obvious differences, the transition from *homo economicus* to *homo collaborans* cannot be cut clearly. For instance, a lot of pre-digital science is based on collaboration, and *homo economicus* seems to thrive in the digital worlds. Instead, this transition can be described as a slow change from one mode of being into another, which mostly concerns questions

pertaining to human nature, and which is essentially pedagogical. It is in this way, show Peters and Jandrić (2018), that process philosophy reveals the new power relationships in the age of post-hegemony.

These processes are strongly linked to the current educational reform of higher education. Contemporary institutions of higher education are based on the model developed in the early nineteenth century by Wilhelm von Humboldt. The Humboldtian university is a public good, which holistically blends research and education, and which strongly relies on the humanistic concept of *Bildung*. In Humboldt's view, the university should be independent of (daily) politics, religion, and economy, and the produced knowledge (as well as the process of knowledge production) is always a commons. It is within the Humboldtian university, that early information and communication technologies have been developed in research institutes of MIT and Stanford, and that principles such as Net Neutrality and Free Software have defined the current digital landscapes. However, these principles have been appropriated by neoliberal ideologies. In the field of technology, neoliberalism has been introduced by the Californian ideology; in the field of higher education, neoliberalism has been introduced by rapid commodification of the contemporary university. However, the same technologies that fostered the development of *homo economicus* are now slowly but surely building the new *homo collaborans* (Peters & Jandrić, 2018, p. 350). Perhaps, after all, Barbrook's question whether humanity currently enters the phase of cyber-communism (Barbrook, 2000) is not a mere thought experiment. Through the emergence of *homo collaborans*, this daring hypothesis gets surprisingly close to current reality.

The Humboldtian university was built on the ancient humanistic notion of *homo collaborans*, who then gave way to the neoliberal *homo economicus*, who is now being superseded by the new digital *homo collaborans.* Instead of analysing which social groups benefit from the current commodification of education, therefore, this analysis situates the question "who drives the drivers?" into a higher conceptual plane of the eternal struggle between *homo economicus* and *homo collaborans.* This perspective is useful, because it allows for the contributions of various fields, such as philosophy and anthropology. This perspective is also blind to detail, because it deliberately avoids standard questions from cultural studies such as: "who benefits from commodification or decommodification of higher education?" However, while there is a plenty of research that asks the standard questions, we believe that it is important to add this higher-level perspective to the wider debate.

This analysis clearly rejects dominant deterministic positions, identified in our critical discourse analysis, which understand technology as a driver for reform of higher education. It shows that the concept of the university is directly linked to our understanding of human nature, and that any reform of higher education should be guided by a vision of the future university. This vision is primarily humanistic, but also imbued in a current technological and social context. In a posthumanist universe of contemporary digital cultures, neoliberal *homo economicus* is dialectically intertwined with the digital *homo collaborans.* However, aristocratic *homo economicus* of the nineteenth century is radically different from the neoliberal *homo economicus* of the twenty-first century, and Humboldt's

homo collaborans based on *Bildung* is radically different from the digital *homo collaborans*. The contemporary struggle over the future of the university is an old battle, fought by new warriors and on a new terrain.

In our previous works, we have shown that in order to intervene subversively into the current policy discourse of higher education, we need to bring humans back into the equation. However, this analysis shows that it is not enough to emphasize the role of human administrators, teachers, and learners – we must also understand the complex forces that form their nature, and the links between past, present, and future. It is only by feeding a more complex understanding of these forces back into the discourse, that it is possible to intervene subversively into the current reform of higher education. Cultural studies need to develop a new, posthumanist language that is able to acknowledge the complexity and diversity of digital cultures, maintain roots in philosophy of technology, and ask new questions pertaining to power in the current post-hegemonic environment.

We return now to the point raised earlier about hegemony and reproduction. This has links with efficiency, where technology in modern society has been discussed as the "use of scientific knowledge to specify ways of doing things in a reproducible manner" (Castells, 2000). In policy texts there is the same tendency to repeat statements, which when heard often enough end up being repeated by people, though often unconsciously. In this way we then contribute to reproducing a discourse that marginalizes how our labor is discussed. Post-hegemonic power, however, is said to work through a cultural logic of "invention" or "chronic production of economic, social and political relations" (Lash, 2007, p. 56). Thus, "post-hegemonic power and cultural studies is less a question of cognitive judgements and more a question of *being*" (p. 58). The implications of this become clearer if we recall that we have argued previously for human beings to reclaim their place within policy texts, to avoid being written out altogether. Yet the ontology that might have offered some form of resistance to re-occupy cognitive judegments in policy texts is being penetrated from every angle and "power, previously extensive and operating from without, becomes intensive and now works from within" (p. 59). It is within this complex posthumanist context, that we need to link analyses of power and discourse to more fundamental questions pertaining to digital cultures such as human identity in the age of digitally saturated environments.

Conclusion

As Lash points out: "politics was once confined to a set of more or less clearly defined institutions" but now "politics leaks out" (2007, p. 75). Politics leaks from technologies, from (the lack of) people in policy discourse, from our personal and social identities, from our communications, and from algorithms. These leaks change the existing power relationships, and radically transform various traditional concepts such as hegemony. Such ubiquity of politics, and such a transformation of power relationships, are never more apparent than when we ask "who drives the drivers?" among the human and non-human actors of algorithmic cultures.

In late twentieth century, cultural studies have significantly contributed to our understanding of education and educational politics in particular. In the age of digital cultures, however, traditional cultural studies are also undergoing significant changes. Speaking of contemporary reform in higher education, therefore, we are not merely facing a new research problem that can be "attacked" by old methods. Literally and metaphorically, we make the road by walking, and research questions which emerge from digitally saturated environments inevitably require new research methodologies and new languages of critique to be developed. In the age of digital cultures, addressing important educational problems requires the development of a new generation of cultural studies. Obviously, this huge task cannot be achieved within a single book chapter. Yet, our research does offer some guidelines for future developments.

Critical discourse analysis shows a strong lack of human agency in the policy language of higher education. Traditional cultural studies would address this problem by seeking actors hidden by discourse through an analysis of power and knowledge. In our previous research (Hayes & Jandrić, 2014), such an approach has led to identification of illicit ideologies in the discourse. In the age of digital cultures, however, cultural studies need to embrace the emergence of non-human actors and the complexity of their relatinships with human actors. Using the metaphor of struggle between neoliberal *homo economicus* and digital *homo collaborans*, this approach acknowledges the complexity of mutual interdependence between these two ideals. In this context, traditional analysis of hegemony (and the very concept of hegemony!) become increasingly muddled and connected to deep inquiry into the philosophy of technology and ontology.

Historically, information and communication technologies have been around for only a very short amount of time. Yet, their power and ubiquity have definitely brought about rapid social and technological transformations roughly described through the notion of digital cultures. At this moment in history, the exact scope and extent of these transformations are by and large unclear – it is only with the wisdom of hindsight that, some time in the future, we will be able to accurately describe the moment here and now. However, this should not refrain us from experimenting, asking new questions, developing new modes of analysis, and creating new languages of critique. The new approaches have not arrived from thin air. Standing on the shoulders of critical pedagogy and cultural studies, traditional modes of analysis are still important and valid. Yet, as we write these words, these modes are being rapidly superseded by emerging forms of critique such as digital cultural studies, and we need to dare and explore what it means to be an educator in the age of digital cultures. At this moment in history, it is hard to say which elements of the traditional critique are still valid, and which elements need to be updated or even completely changed. However, the question "who drives the drivers?" clearly indicates the need to simultaneously ask new questions and develop a new language of critique – and digital cultural studies might be a possible route for asking questions pertaining to contemporary global reform of (higher) education.

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16

Resurgent Behaviorism and the Rise of Neoliberal Schooling

Mark J. Garrison

Introduction

This chapter argues that behaviorism is the psychological foundation of a neoliberal outlook, underpinning the human capital conception of skill. After highlighting the behaviorist nature of current neoliberal education policies and initiatives, the chapter presents an overview of behaviorist thought, paying special attention to how its assumptions break with liberal political ideals. Similarities between analyses of neoliberalism and the logic of radical behaviorism are then explored. Having established the striking similarities in the logics, assumptions and outlooks endemic to neoliberal and behaviorist thought, the chapter ends by exploring the way in which behaviorism has influenced conceptions of skill in education policy geared toward the production of human capital, and the contradictions these practices produce. As the foundation of the neoliberal conception of skill, behaviorism works against the development of the human capacities required to confront the various crises confronting humanity.

Neoliberal Education Policy as Applied Behaviorism

While not highlighted in critical investigations of school privatization and corporatization of education in the United States and elsewhere, a *prima facie* link between the neoliberalization of education policy and behaviorism is relatively easy to establish. This certainly appears to be evident with the strategic use of "incentives" in recent policy formations, where merit pay, competitive grants, and other rewards are offered to educators in exchange for adopting reformers' favored educational practice. In fact, it is not hard to find behaviorist assumptions in school reform efforts from the Progressive Era to the present (Au, 2011; Mehta, 2013). For example, modern standardized testing technology, premised on E. L. Thorndike's behaviorist theories of learning (Friesen, 2013; Mills, 1998), has increasingly been relied upon in many countries in the name of accountability,

giving rise to a "new public management" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Trohler, 2014). Related to these are the so-called Value-Added Models of teacher evaluation popular in the United States and favored by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). These models and the testing technology they are based upon are premised on the behaviorist methodology known as operationalism, where the meaning of concepts is generated by measurement (Garrison, 2015). To take another example, the U.S. Department of Education's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiative aims to foster a "positive school climate" by rewarding certain behaviors with prizes and privileges; this too is rooted in behaviorist principles as is the related and often state-mandated practice of Response to Intervention (see https://www.pbis.org). This federal initiative has spawned its own education technology industry, with firms promising to create "positive school culture" with software that "[e]ffortlessly motivates students [and] automatically keeps track of [their] behavior points, scholar dollars, student paychecks, and school store rewards."[1] In a similar vein, prominent charter school management companies rely heavily on behaviorist techniques for classroom management (Lemov, 2010; Saltman, 2016; also see Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, & Little, 2004). The technique of "close reading," a darling of advocates of the Common Core Standards (CCS)[2] that epitomizes what advocates mean by academic "rigor," has been traced back to the behaviorism of John B. Watson (Gang, 2011; Frey & Fisher, 2013). Closely related to the emergence of the CCS in the United States is the re-emergence of Competency Based Education (CBE), sometimes referred to as personalized learning; CBE is also a favored model of the OECD for fostering human capital development. Like the Common Core, CBE is also premised on behaviorist assumptions and practices, including explicit demands that educators "teach to the test" (Kerka, 1998; Spady & Mitchell, 1977). The link between behaviorism and current personalized learning technologies relying on new data technologies advanced by corporations, government officials, and philanthropies has likewise not gone unnoticed (Friesen, 2013; McRae, 2013; Peters, 2009; Roberts-Mahoney, Means, & Garrison, 2016). In an issue of the American Association of United Professors' publication *Academe*, Julie Vargas, the daughter of B. F. Skinner, argued machine learning should be the basis of all online learning, which is, it should be noted, consistent with a CBE framework (Vargas, 2014). And finally, to take one more example, the thriving educational gaming industry has long been and continues to be rooted in behaviorist learning doctrines (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2006).

Behaviorism Is Not Dead

Like neoliberal ideology following the 2008 financial crisis (Mirowski, 2013), behaviorism has repeatedly been pronounced dead. Behaviorism, we are often told, was an "early chapter in the history of psychology," narrow and simplistic, and thus "consequently superseded by the 'cognitive' revolution several decades ago." These views, two British psychologists reported, are commonly presented in textbooks, journals, and mainstream publications. "It may come as a surprise to some, then, that radical behaviorism — and its science, behavior analysis — are

in fact thriving" (Brown & Gillard, 2015, p. 27). Other recent commentaries offer quite similar observations (Ahearn, 2010; Freedman, 2012; Horgan, 2012; Ledoux, 2012; Roediger, 2004).

While much of the literature on neoliberalism evidences concern about the meaning and use of the term *neoliberal*, this problem of meaning and use is not a unique one. There are indeed problems with respect to how key characteristics of behaviorism are understood, and where differences between expressions of behaviorist thought actually exist. This limited understanding is particularly significant given the relative lack of attention to the role of behaviorism in efforts to radically restructure traditional forms of public education.

Three types of behaviorism have been noted in the literature: methodological behaviorism, associated with founding behaviorist, John B. Watson, psychological or radical behaviorism, notably B. F. Skinner, and analytical or logical behaviorism, a good example being Ludwig Wittgenstein (Day, 1983; Graham, 2015; Mills, 1998). Historians have also distinguished between behaviorism and neobehaviorism, with Watson and Skinner again being respective examples (Mills, 1998). Bandura's popular social learning theory might be considered *cognitive* behaviorism, but it is not often discussed as behaviorism proper on account of its "mentalist" tendencies (see Skinner, 1984). Methodological behaviorism is the sort of behaviorism commonly found in psychology departments, derided as positivist, preaching the scientific wisdom of controlled experiments, independent and dependent variables, operational definitions, statistical inference, hypothesis testing, and so on (Day, 1983). Just as differences between these three kinds of behaviorism exist, commonalities can nonetheless be identified (Mills, 1998). While the day-do-day implementation of education policy may evidence adherence to methodological behaviorism, certainly an important observation, it is a comparison between radical behaviorism and neoliberal reason, especially that of the Chicago School, that is, I believe, especially valuable and significant.

Having outlined rather extensive links between various education initiatives readily identified as both neoliberal and behaviorist, knowing that other examples are clearly evident in other fields such as healthcare (e.g. Thaler & Sunstein, 2009),[3] it is striking how little recognition or discussion of behaviorism exists within examinations of neoliberalism. While Wacquant (2010, 2016) repeatedly acknowledged the behaviorist (punishing) nature of the neoliberal penal state; and while DeCanio (2013) implicated behaviorist reasoning in his extended critique of neoclassical economics, there is very little exploration of the behaviorist roots of a system premised on reward-punishment dynamics mobilized to replace the liberal human person and citizen with a neoliberal worker/consumer/entrepreneur; when mentioned, the analysis of behaviorism remains impoverished.

A fairly recent discussion at the University of Chicago (Becker, Ewald, & Harcourt, 2012) may be serving to broaden recognition of the workings of behaviorism in the conception of human capital theory, the discussion having noted Gordon's now decades-old insight: "the American neo-liberal *homo economicus* is *manipulable man*, man who is perpetually responsive to modifications in his environment. Economic government here joins hands with behaviorism" (Gordon, 1991, p. 43). Dean, in a recent work taking stock of this Chicago discussion,

cites Foucault's one-paragraph mention of B. F. Skinner in his celebrated lectures on biopolitics (Dean, 2016, p. 92). The referenced portion of Foucault's lectures reads as follows:

> *Homo economicus* is someone who accepts reality. Rational conduct is any conduct which is sensitive to modifications in the variables of the environment and which responds to this in a non-random way, in a systematic way, and economics can therefore be defined as the science of the systematic nature of responses to environmental variables … if you define the object of economic analysis as the set of systematic responses to the variables of the environment, then you can see the possibility of integrating within economics a set of techniques, those called behavioral techniques, which are currently in fashion in the United States. You find these methods in their purest, most rigorous, strictest or aberrant forms, as you wish, in Skinner, and precisely they do not consist in analyzing the meaning of different kinds of conduct, but simply in seeing how, through mechanisms of reinforcement, a given play of stimuli entail responses whose systematic nature can be observed and on the basis of which other variables of behavior can be introduced. In fact, all these behavioral techniques show how psychology understood in these terms can enter the definition of economics given by Becker. (Foucault, 2008, pp. 269–270)[4]

Foucault proceeds to elaborate the distinction between the economic agent of liberalism, "who must be let alone," and the neoliberal agent who is "eminently governable." "From being the intangible partner of *laissez-faire*, *homo economicus* now becomes the correlate of a governmentality which will act on the environment and systematically modify its variables" (pp. 270–271). Importantly, Becker found little objection to Foucault's reading of his work (Dean, 2016, p. 92).

Beyond footnoting links between Foucault's notions of neoliberal governmentally and Skinner, no attention has been given to exploring this connection. The attention given to behaviorism seems impressively limited, given its vast role in various and sometimes global expressions of neoliberal education polices. At least two facts may have contributed to this state of affairs.

First, the trends just tagged *behaviorist* in the previous section rarely if ever mention behaviorism or its thought leaders, possibly because behaviorism was thought to have been discredited or it is thought too controversial to mention by name (Freedman, 2012; Rutherford, 2003). As is so common in academe, new vocabularies are constructed to signify (putatively) new thinking and analysis. New theories have emerged which do not advertise their behaviorist foundation, such as Relational Frame Theory and its therapeutic intervention, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Brown & Gillard, 2015; Dymond & Roche, 2013). The popular notion of learned helplessness was a behaviorist invention (Smith, 1986, p. 325), but this lineage is rarely emphasized. Charter school management companies' fixation on fostering student's "character" through intensive body control techniques has behaviorist foundations as well (Saltman, 2014), yet behaviorism as such appears never to be mentioned in the charter management promoted literature (e.g. Lemov, 2010).

Possibly a more important factor in failing to critically examine resurgent behaviorism is that behaviorist assumptions are so deeply rooted in present cultural forms that otherwise sophisticated examinations assume it sufficient to label behaviorist any reward or punishment system, as if no significance rests in behaviorism's omnipresence following its death. In fact, despite the radical behaviorists' insistence that present culture refuses to give up on old ideas (Day, 1983; Skinner, 1971), the reality that behaviorism already exists as both a popular frame for understanding human motivation and as a means for governing individual and group conduct is obvious in everything from corporate management schemes, commercial television, to parenting manuals. Even leftist activists who presumably reject capitalist logics can be found incentivizing meeting attendance with pizza. Simply put, the extrinsic motivational frame assumed by twenty-first-century capitalist consumer culture screams behaviorism as "reward points" and "cash back" lead us into more debt. Some "social justice" efforts betray behaviorist assumptions about motivation as well: once properly frightened or outraged by aversive stimuli (e.g. pictures of starving children in Africa or mutilated babies in Iraq following the US invasion), it is assumed people will contribute financially or attend an anti-war march as a way to remove the bad feelings generated by the stimuli.

If any system of thought has been approached in a one-sided or over-simplified manner, it is not only neoliberalism, and its tendency to be confused, for example, with *laissez-faire* attitudes,[5] but it is also what I take to be neoliberalism's lost intellectual sibling, behaviorism, which has its own contradictions, factions, and varied origins. I might add that while misunderstanding and confusion about neoliberalism are at least in part a function of organized neoliberal intellectual's tendency to present one view to the public, and another less palatable view when speaking only among themselves (Mirowski, 2013), behaviorists have been relatively forthright in their views and recommendations, and they have suffered for this honesty (Bjork, 1993; Rutherford, 2003).

I am inclined to argue that behaviorism was first to replace the liberal political ideals of individual rights, conscience, and dignity with that of a stimulus-response organism whose behavior is selected and continuously modified by its environment, without needing any help from a "self," what Mirowski identifies as the "Incredible Disappearing Agent" precept in neoliberal thought (2013, p. 59). The political implications and role of behaviorism in banishing the individual or collective subject as a history-making agent should not be underestimated. To explore these propositions more fully, it is necessary to offer a primer on the various foundations and elements of behaviorist thought.

The Philosophical and Political Foundations of Behaviorist Thought

Radical behaviorism maintains that the causes of behavior and learning lie entirely in an organism's history with its environment. Importantly, the notion of cause assumed here is functionalist, and can be traced back to early pragmatists such as William James (Mills, 1998). Functionalist approaches do not search for

the essence of appearance (as is the starting point for materialism) but rather remain narrowly focused on establishing functional relations between constructed variables (Bunge, 2011, pp. 91–98; Mészáros, 2015, pp. 63–68). Behaviorism's functionalism is closely associated with what has been identified as its utilitarian and even hedonist moral theory (Mills, 1982, 1998). The links between pragmatism and behaviorism are more extensive than many scholars are either aware or willing to accept (Baldwin, 1981; Barnes-Holmes, 2000; Dymond & Roche, 2013; Hayes & Long, 2013; Malone, 2001; Mills, 1998; Tolman, 1992). Truth, when mentioned, is simply "what works"; success is defined as adaptation to the environment. The circular and conservative nature of these postulates proves to be especially important when examined in relation to neoliberalism.

The behavior modification process postulated by behaviorists is modeled on the logic of natural selection, with knowledge understood only as a functional behavioral adaptation to the environment (Glenn, 1989; Naour, 2009; Smith, 1986). "The environment may be said to select behavior when a consequent change in the environment leads to survival of the behavioral unit in the behaving organism's repertoire" (Glenn, 1989, p. 11). As these natural selection logics deny discussions of the role of agency in explaining human conduct, behaviorism has since its inception insisted on denying the reality of consciousness ("mentalism"). Thus behaviorists oppose the idea that human behavior could originate out of social consciousness and a sense of social responsibility.

There is an emerging link between radical behaviorism and epigenetics (Brown & Gillard, 2015), and this link is more interesting given the neo-Lamarckian perspective assumed by behaviorists working in the early and middle of the twentieth century (Mills, 1998, p. 7). In this context, it is also worth noting recent efforts to draw parallels between and integrate the perspectives of sociobiology and radical behaviorism (Naour, 2009). In the past these approaches were deemed incompatible, as sociobiology evidences biological determinism while radical behaviorism assumes environmental determinism. Common to both, however, is the logic of selection by environment and the denial of human agency in making history. That Skinner's entire philosophy assumes that individual and collective human conduct can be analysed in a similar manner to that of natural selection portends social Darwinian tendencies, especially as behaviorism assumes its place in the really existing, non-ideational form of neoliberal orders. The emphasis of adapting individuals to the environment is inherently conservative, in the literal and political senses, linking the otherwise contrary but historically contemporary movements of environmental determinism in the form of behaviorism, on the one hand, and biological determinism in the form of eugenics, on the other.

For Skinner and others, all behavior is thus a lawful function of environmental changes (Skinner, 2014).[6] Importantly, radical behaviorists treat everything associated with the life of an organism as a *behavior*, including private events such as thinking and feeling, making them subject to the same principles of learning and modification that exist for overt behaviors. This includes thinking or, in Skinnerian parlance, *verbal behavior* (Skinner, 1957). Characteristics of individuals or groups that do not take a verb form are, however, viewed with skepticism

or said not to exist at all. Mills (1998) challenges many of Skinner's claims, noting that his expansive conclusions were based on data "almost exclusively derived from a very narrow base," the laboratory behavior of two species of rats and one specie of pigeon, and "characterized by a startling absence of comparative observations" (Mills, 1998, p. 7). Mills (1988) also demonstrated that Skinner's theory of operant conditioning fails to explain a variety of animal behaviors.

The determining role of the environment has been a common assumption of various behaviorisms since the writings of John B. Watson. His vision of the human person as having neither agency nor genetic predispositions, his attack of any who assume "mentalism," and the comfort with which he expressed assuming complete control over the "organism" are striking but far from anomalous. Watson boasted:

> Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any specialist I might select—doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and yes, even beggarman and thief, regardless of his talents, tendencies, abilities, vocations and race of his ancestor. (Watson, cited in Birnbaum, 1955, p. 17)[7]

With this quote from Watson another key aspect of behaviorism emerges: the singular aim of control. Given to behaviorism by Watson in 1913, control of behavior remains its central focus (Dymond & Roche, 2013; Morris, 2013). As Mills highlighted, "In writing that psychology's theoretical goal was the prediction and control of behavior, Watson succinctly expressed the spirit of his era." Noting that Watson's friend and famous mental tester and eugenicist Robert Yerkes "kept himself aloof from the fervor of behaviorism," behaviorists and mental testers were both nonetheless obsessed with "social control and social technology" (Mills, 1998, p. 6), an obsession originating in ruling-class concerns about American urbanization (Bakan, 1966).[8] As behaviorism's main promoter, Watson was quite explicit about the role of behaviorism in maintaining the social order: "Behaviorism," Birnbaum (1955) noted,

> was designed to 'mold the good worker—not the griper or clock watcher.' Watson said what the business man wanted to hear: success in life was measured by material standards. A man was to be judged by how much money he earned … (p. 19)

One of the most influential behaviorist theorists of that time, Clark L. Hull, developed an "approach to theory and the benefits he expected from theory … modeled on the social structures of the American corporate boardroom" (Mills, 1998, pp. 6–7).[9] In a complementary vein, Earnest Vargas (1975), spouse of Julie Vargas, argued that there "is no intrinsic merit to any right" (p. 181), that rights are mere verbal conventions of ethical communities. Notably, Vargas challenged the validity of the concept of consent in research ethics reviews ("informed consent"), arguing that science would have advanced much faster if behaviorists were allowed to experiment on individuals without the restriction of consent.

If consent is a fiction of mentalism, as Vargas believed it was, it should not be allowed to block progress (Vargas, 1975, p. 190).

For behaviorists, consciousness cannot be a causal agent (one cannot be said to have done something because of their consciousness). If acknowledged at all, consciousness is simply given as evidence of having been effectively controlled. "To increase a person's consciousness of the external world," Skinner wrote, "is simply to bring him under more sensitive control of that world as a source of stimulation" (Skinner, cited in Ulman, 1991, p. 65).[10]

Further insight into the significance of the rejection of social consciousness and human agency is offered by Skinner in his discussion of what he terms agencies of social control (schools, governments, religions, etc.). In *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971) he wrote:

> As organized agencies induce people to behave "for the good of others" more effectively, they change what is felt. A person does not support his government because he is loyal but because the government has arranged special contingencies. We call him loyal and teach him to call himself loyal and to report any special conditions he may feel as "loyalty". A person does not support a religion because he is devout; he supports it because of the contingencies arranged by the religious agency. (p. 116)

Elsewhere Skinner argued: "Feelings are the by-products" of the contingencies of reinforcement (p. 110). Skinner advocated positive reinforcement over other forms of behavioral control (e.g. an increased police force, p. 118) because it effectively prevents, in his words, "counter attack" (p. 109). The argument is that feelings, beliefs, etc., follow *from*, that is, are the result of, *being controlled*. They are evidence of a kind of control, not a cause of individual or collective action.

For behaviorists, control has epistemological significance. Effective control is equated with understanding or knowledge: to control is to know. As knowledge is given as successful control, it is necessarily hitched to power; as all behavior is controlled by the environment, control (or power) is assumed to be "everywhere" and knowledge disembodied. Thus, Smith's (1986) observation that Skinner's behaviorism was fundamentally connected to a particular kind of epistemology becomes significant. Knowledge, for Skinner, existed only in the form of conduct, that is, "adaptation to an environment" (Smith, 1986, p. 290).

Accompanying the emphasis on control is the endemic use of passive voice in behaviorist narratives. It is rarely stated who is or should be in control, who defines success, etc. When such problems are raised by Skinner, for example, they remain substantively unresolved. The last section of Skinner's (2014) *Science and Human Behavior* is a classic example. Well aware that those who act to control behavior in the manner he specifies could command great power, Skinner nonetheless skirts the issue, noting only that social control is necessary and it would be best to approach it as he has outlined. He naïvely offered that in "distributing scientific knowledge as widely as possible, we gain some assurance that it will not be impounded by any one agency for its own aggrandizement" (p. 442).

The focus on control extends to what appear as the basic building blocks of scientific inquiry. For behaviorists, measurement is not about ascertaining the

dialectal relations between quantitative and qualitative properties of really existing phenomena (Garrison, 2009), but rather, about control. The opening paragraph of Fraley's (1980) chapter on teacher behavior boldly declares: "Data collected during the process of measuring are stimuli which control behavior" (p. 9). Revealing behaviorists' pragmatic conception of measurement, he continues:

> Responses to the resulting data tend to be more effective than responses to phenomena unenhanced by measuring … The data produced by making a measurement is preserved as some kind of record, and a record is not the same as the event to which it pertains. Thus, a measurement datum *per se* is not a property of the phenomenon under study. (pp. 9–10)[11]

Fraley's comments provide some evidence of the behaviorist origin of measurement-driven accountability when he claimed that "the practitioner cannot be held accountable for controlling variables that are not even measured" (1980, p. 12), buttressing one historian's emphasis on the close link between behaviorism, operationalism, and a focus on political control (Mills, 1992).

This fixation on control extends to the aim of reconstructing the entire social order on the basis of experimental regulation of human beings. Through the repeated experimental manipulation of variables, "cultural design" can take place. For cultural design to function as Skinner and others envisioned, the formation of a new discipline – behaviorology – is required (Fraley, 1987).[12]

A clear expression of this aim to reconstruct the social order is found in Skinner's novel, *Walden Two* (1976) and his notoriously controversial book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971). In the former, Skinner's vision of a society led by behavioral scientists is elaborated; its formation is clearly outside a classic liberal political framework. Described is a social structure where the planners ultimately decided everything. While voting took place, results were understood as recommendations only. Neither the planners nor the managers below them were elected. Doctors in *Walden Two,* for example, were empowered to demand personal checkups at any time and they were also empowered to implement large-scale preventative measures, such as changes in the food served. Members of *Walden Two* were described as uninterested in governing, satisfied with the limited choices offered to them regarding their own lives, and nearly always pleasant and content. The economy of *Walden Two* is communal; everyone must work and there is no cash or exchange, only work credits.[13]

Operant Conditioning

While Pavlov studied *classical conditioning*, where a signal precedes the "reflex" giving rise to automatic behaviors, behaviorists posit operant conditioning through reinforcement or punishment *following a behavior* to explain how organisms learn their voluntary behaviors.[14] There are two kinds of reinforcers in this framework: positive and negative. Positive reinforcement is a reward. When it follows an operant, it increases the likelihood the response will occur. In negative reinforcement, the likelihood of a response or behavior is strengthened by the removal of an aversive stimulus. Patterns and schedules

of reinforcement are used to optimize learning of the targeted behavior (e.g. piece rates); however, reinforcement cannot be presented until the desired response actually occurs. Punishment and extinction differ from reinforcement, as they are designed to decrease the occurrence of a behavior. Punishment involves adding something aversive to the situation to decrease likelihood of a future behavior, whereas extinction involves the removal of something to decrease a certain behavior in the future. Note that punishment is often confused with negative reinforcement.

Thus, behaviorism locates the origin of human conduct in the environment's response to the *operant* – Skinner's term for spontaneous action of any organism. The operant is the thing that the environment acts upon, and it is these consequences that reinforce, that is, increase or decrease the likelihood the behavior will occur again. The operant is how behaviorism addresses the issue of volition. Skinner explains:

> [O]perant behavior is closely associated with "volition." A "deliberate act," undertaken to obtain a "desired end," is an operant. The traditional way of describing it is unfortunate because it emphasizes a future event which can have no contemporary effect. It is necessary to endow the individual with a "knowledge of consequences" or some sort of "expectation" to bridge the gap between the past and future. But we are always dealing with a *prior* history of reinforcement and punishment. (Skinner, 2014, pp. 342–343; emphasis in original; see also Copeland, 1971)

This raises the important issue of how behaviorists understand history. In the above quote, the possibility of imagining a future, and the possibly of that imagining influencing conduct, are ruled out. Thus, behaviorism assumes human history to be *natural history*. As one contemporary behaviorist argued, all events including those involving humans are "natural events" which "occur [only] because of the way the universe is arranged" (Baum, 1995, p. 94). In articulating the behaviorist epistemology of Relational Frame Theory, Hayes and Long argued that it is "not the literal future that is part of the psychology of the verbal animal — it is the past as the constructed future" (Hayes, cited in Hayes & Long, 2013, p. 8). While this might seem to evidence a certain emphasis on the importance of history, Skinner envisioned that the subject of history would not be taught to the children of *Walden Two,* because it was for him of no value. This is, presumably, because the kind of understanding associated with historical consciousness cannot be rendered in behavioral terms and because behavior can never be in the future.

For radical behaviorism, the principles of generalization (applying what is learned in new settings) and discrimination (learning to act appropriately in different settings) explain how the setting can control complex behaviors. These precepts are directly related to the conception of and methods designed for rendering thinking or personality traits as skills. Learning is conceived as the acquisition of a new response, as well as learning when that response will be reinforced and when it will not. This is accomplished through the process of discrimination. Generalization involves learning to transfer the new response to similar situations. *Shaping,*

defined as the gradual molding of a diffuse behavior into a well-defined operant, increases the likelihood that a behavior will occur (Skinner, 1957). This idea has been rebranded for policy use in the popular book, *Nudge* (Thaler & Sunstein, 2009). In shaping, the form of an existing response is changed gradually by rewarding segments of that behavior until the organism emits the desired, targeted behavior.

Targeted behaviors are broken down to their smallest units and are reinforced after every segment or piece of behavior. *Progressive approximation*, or the reinforcing of discrete skills or segments of behavior, explains, for behaviorists, how complex behaviors are subject to the same rules of modification as lower-level behaviors. If learning the targeted behavior is reinforced at each step, the process is more efficient and effective, behaviorists argue.

Finally, learning in this way, for Skinner, yields to "self-management," the aim being to teach students to increasingly interact with the environment to emit successful behavior, which is defined as behavior that is reinforced. He argues:

> Certain kinds of behavior traditionally identified with thinking must, however, be analyzed and taught as such. Some parts of our behavior alter and improve the effectiveness of other parts in what may be called intellectual self-management. Faced with a situation in which no effective behavior is available (in which we cannot emit a response which is likely to be reinforced), we behave in ways which make effective behavior possible (we improve our chances of reinforcement). (Skinner, 1968, p. 120)

Importantly, the significance of the operant is not in an organism's "mind," but rather the environment (which is anything but the emitted behavior itself). Put differently, meaning can never originate with or be created by the subject: it only exists with the action of the environment.

Understanding does not constitute any significance within the framework of radical behaviorism, as one does not *do* understanding. Understanding is a condition or characteristic, not an action, thus it is deemed to be of little value. For example, in discussing thinking, Skinner explains:

> When we teach a child to press a button by reinforcing his response with candy, it adds nothing to say that he then responds because he "knows" that pressing the button will produce candy. When we teach him to press a red button but not a green, it adds nothing to say that he now "discriminates" or "tells the difference between" red and green. (1968, p. 120)

As with the controlling agencies discussed above, understanding is not the basis of conduct, but rather a by-product of its environmental regulation.

A final but crucially important aspect of behaviorist thought is related to the idea of *traits* or *characteristics* noted above. Skinner was very skeptical of explaining behavior in terms of personality characteristics or other individual traits, including intelligence. For Skinner, differences in patterns of behavior that might be said to evidence personality traits or talents, are in reality,

simply reflections of different histories of reinforcement. Thus, we are counseled by Skinner in the following manner:

> Trait-names usually begin as adjectives—"intelligent," "aggressive," "disorganized," "angry," "introverted," "ravenous," and so on—but the almost inevitable linguistic result is that adjectives give birth to nouns. The things to which these nouns refer are then taken to be the active causes of the aspects. We begin with "intelligent behavior," pass first to "behavior which shows intelligence," and then to "behavior which is the effect of intelligence." Similarly, we begin by observing a preoccupation with a mirror which recalls the legend of Narcissus; we invent the adjective "narcissistic," and then the noun "narcissism"; and finally we assert that the thing presumably referred to by the noun is the cause of the behavior with which we began. But at no point in such a series do we make contact with any event outside the behavior itself which justifies the claim of a causal connection. (Skinner, 2014, p. 202)

This point becomes especially important as it is a key logical basis for rendering personality characteristics such as being creative or empathic in terms of skill, that is, in behavioral terms.

   We are now prepared to observe parallels between behaviorist and neoliberal thought.

Parallels Between Neoliberal and Behaviorist Thought

In April 1945, a condensed version of F. A. Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* was published by *Reader's Digest*.[15] By the end of April of that year, Hitler had committed suicide and victory for the Allied forces looked imminent. In his 1999 preface to the condensed version, Edwin J. Feulner, former President and Trustee of the Mont Pelerin Society, and founder of the Heritage Foundation, outlined the aim of presenting Hayek's thinking to mainstream America. He wrote:

> John Chamberlain characterized the period immediately following World War II in his foreword to the first edition of *The Road to Serfdom* as "a time of hesitation" … The rise and subsequent defeat of fascism had provided an extremely wide flank for intellectuals who were free to battle for any idea short of ethnic cleansing and dictatorial political control. At the same time, the mistaken but widely accepted notion that the unpredictability of the free market had caused the depression, coupled with four years of war-driven, centrally directed production, and the fact that Russia had been a wartime ally of the United States and England, increased the mainstream acceptance of peace-time government planning of the economy. (Hayek, 2000, p. 11)

Nothing short of a reconstruction of the political and economic order was required to ward off the threat of communism, and an important part of this

reconstruction, according to a leader of Neoliberal Thought Collective (NTC), was to take place in the sphere of ideas (Mirowski & Plehwe, 2015). Recent work has shown, however, that what members of this collective expressed publicly varies significantly from internal discussions and methods of organization, designed to serve the aim of remaking the state. While freedom phrases ring forever against the scoundrel of planning, in the end, some in the NTC posit, in private company, of course, that a portion of population must remain "a slave to the state" (Mirowski, 2013, p. 41).[16]

Neoliberalism and Behaviorism Are Constructivist Projects

Unlike liberalism, *neo*liberalism emerges as "a constructivist project." It "does not presume the ontological givenness of a thoroughgoing economic rationality for all domains of society but rather takes as its task the development, dissemination, and institutionalization of such a rationality" (Brown, 2005, pp. 41–42). For neoliberals, competitive free markets not only require expansive state action, but also a logic of politics as economics; economic logics and mechanisms become the preferred means of social construction. A strong state is required, according to this outlook, to neutralize the "pathologies of democracy" (Mirowski, 2013, p. 84). It is important to emphasize that to say an ideology is constructivist means that the emphasis is not on promoting a vision of "how the world works" but in reconstructing the world so that it works in a particular way. It is not a claim to truth, but rather a production of a certain kind of *doing.* Neoliberalism is a form of governance that advocates a move away from the problem of legitimate power rooted in public debate and consent of the governed toward power rooted in designations of success and failure as standards of truth.[17]

    While the NTC was interested in remaking the state and the individual, Skinner's vision was equally expansive. He in fact claimed behaviorism was necessary for cultural survival. He wrote:

> Since a science of behavior is concerned with demonstrating the consequences of cultural practices, we have some reason for believing that such a science will be an essential mark of the culture or cultures which survive. The current culture which, on this score alone, is most likely to survive is, therefore, that in which the methods of science are most effectively applied to the problems of human behavior. (2014, p. 446)

Keeping in mind Skinner's thesis that feelings and beliefs are byproducts of control, we see a most telling application of behaviorism to impose neoliberal educational practice. Here are the words of Sir Michael Barber, former education standards chief under Tony Blair, now chief executive for Pearson, along with Vicky Phillips, from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation:

> There is a popular misconception about the process of change. It is often assumed that the key to successful change is "to win hearts and minds." If this is the starting point then the first steps in the process of change are likely to be consultation and public relations campaigns …The popular

> [liberal] conception is wrong. Winning hearts and minds is not the best first step in any process of urgent change. Beliefs do not necessarily change behavior. More usually it is the other way around — behaviors shape beliefs. Only when people have experienced a change do they revise their beliefs accordingly … Sometimes it is necessary to mandate the change, implement it well, consciously challenge the prevailing culture and then have the courage to sustain it until beliefs shift. (Chitty & Simon, 2001, p. 89)[18]

Like neoliberalism, then, radical behaviorists seek social reconstruction and a new rationality on a non-liberal basis. While each has a vision rooted in some postulates about nature, each vision nonetheless must be actively constructed.

Just as neoliberalism should be understood not as an esoteric academic economic doctrine but rather a socio-political philosophy and program (Mirowski, 2013), behaviorism is a philosophy, far more than a particular branch or approach to the subject of psychology (Mills, 1998). Just as members of the Mont Pelerin Society advanced ideas far beyond the field and subject matter of mainstream economics (Mirowski & Plehwe, 2015), behaviorism has been extended to address many facets of social organization, and offers itself as a solution to problems addressed by neoliberal policies, such as low achievement in schools, the environment, and population growth (e.g. Fraley, 1987; Skinner, 1971, 1984). For both thinkers, the mechanism of market or environment is the basis for all proposed solutions. Just as neoliberals constructed unique financial instruments having little basis in real economic value, breaking with many of the previous assumptions of economic policy and regulatory practices (Mirowski, 2013), behaviorists invented their own brand of positivist science that was uniquely American (Smith, 1986). This last point is an entire subject unto itself, but suffice it to say that the historical evidence demonstrates that the positivism developed by behaviorists was in fact pseudo-positivism (Mills, 1998), native to American intellectuals and not imported from abroad. It broke ranks with much of logical positivism in particular (Smith, 1986), developing a uniquely American variant of what is known as operationalism (Mills, 1998, 1992; Smith, 1986).

The Environmental Determinist Logic of the Neoliberal Market

There are clear parallels between the understandings of and roles given to "market" and "environment" in neoliberal and behaviorist thought. The first obvious parallel is the basic premise that behavior originates from and is controlled by interactions with the environment; behavior is understood as an abstraction from the "person" in the form of constructed variables. Just as behaviorism postulated that behavior emerged akin to the logic of natural selection, Mirowski (2013) identifies similar logics in neoliberals' "portrayal of the market as an evolutionary phenomenon" (p. 55). It is worth highlighting Mirowski's finding that neoliberals never clearly defined the concept of market (2013, pp. 54–55), as a similar

state of affairs exists for the all-important concept of *environment* in behaviorist thought. In his *Science and Human Behavior* (2014), for example, Skinner never defines the concept, but uses it to describe everything from the change one experiences when they buy a new car (p. 66), to the effect of another person on behavior or "the social environment as a whole" (p. 40). The environment can be internal and external to the organism. Both behaviorism and neoliberalism as thought systems jettison the liberal self as they assume the non-defined but revised and ever-present versions of the market/environment. While behaviorists deny outright the existence of a self with rights (Baum, 1995), neoliberals render the individual so fragmented as it continuously responds to competing market cues, that a stable self with interests and rights necessarily vanishes (Mirowski, 2013, pp. 60, 107–108; see Urciuoli, 2008).

For both neoliberals and behaviorists, individuals need not and cannot be conscious of the operation of the environment or market, and thus this consciousness and the knowledge accompanying it cannot be the basis of conduct. While neoliberals, according to Mirowski (2013), value the promotion of public ignorance (pp. 78–83), behaviorists, as I have shown, regard (all but their own) conscious decisions as fiction. Just as the market is the ultimate mechanism for governing social life, the environment, and its experimental regulation, are the prime mover in behaviorist thought. While neoliberals are far less honest about their manipulation of markets, a process that mirrors the logic of variable manipulation in behaviorist experiments can be seen. Behaviorists are, however, a bit more honest about the role of the scientist in experimental control, but as ready as neoliberals to dismiss such concerns. In both cases, the workings of the market or the environment cannot be known *in total*; both are subject to constant experimentation, in which the elements of each, constructed as variables, interact, with an infinite array of "intervening" variables always possible. This framework should be contrasted with the neoclassical emphasis on rational choice and calculated self-interest. As Hayek concluded, "Man in a complex society can have no choice but between adjusting himself to what to him must seem the blind forces of the social process and obeying the orders of a superior" (Hayek, cited in Mirowski, 2013, p. 84). Skinner renders this adjustment to non-cognizable social forces as self-management, a concept similar to the entrepreneur of the self (see Holborow, 2015).

Neoliberalism, Behaviorism and Control for the End of History

Both thought systems evidence a profound fixation on power or control, or a "behaviorist" governmentality, and present power or control as necessarily omnipresent. Both seek not freedom from power but rather an alternative to coercive means of social regulation: the emphasis is on changing the "rules of the game" and not regulating the players (Lemke, 2001). Even the behaviorist rejection of freedom finds parallel in the NTC's "recoded and heavily edited" view of freedom (Mirowski, 2013, p. 60). Foucault, Dean argues, is open to the sort of liberal

utopia that one can associate with the goal of "power without coercion," (2016, pp. 98–100). Neither outlook is emancipatory, and both are philosophically palliative. The behaviorist notion of design of culture is not properly understood as being akin to Soviet central planning, as the libertarians fear (Hocutt, 2013). It should rather be understood as the careful construction of the "rules of the game" and the constant experimental manipulation of relevant variables.

Both thought systems place emphasis on conduct, not consciousness, and in both analyses, one loses sight of human agency with the constant assertions of the omnipresence of techniques of control that seem to emanate from nowhere, certainly not a social class interest. Importantly, Mirowski (2013) charges: "Foucault denied any efficacy to the modern conscious intent on the part of anyone to exert political power, because the market effectively thwarts it" (p. 100). And this is precisely Skinner's argument: controlling agencies and those they control are both subject to the contingencies of reinforcement. There is only adaptation to the environment, which takes place as natural history. Being natural, this history occurs without social revolution. Skinner explained it this way:

> It does not matter that the individual may take it upon himself to control the variables of which his own behavior is a function or, in a broader sense, to engage in the design of his own culture. He does this only because he is the product of a culture which generates self-control or cultural design as a mode of behavior. The environment determines the individual even when he alters the environment. (2014, p. 448)

Finally, the behaviorist precepts of functional relation as cause and history without future should be understood as rooted in structural features of capitalism: "There can be no future ahead in a meaningful sense of the term, since the only admissible 'future' has already arrived" (Mészáros, 2015, p. 65), the so-called thesis of the end of revolution which hails the end of history (Dean, 2016, pp. 93–94). There are only, for this outlook, functional events in a decontextualized present that exists as a series of unrelated, discrete events, like an evolutionary Twitter feed.

These desires and predictions of power without coercion fail to correspond with the reality of an expanded and violent neoliberal penal state (Wacquant, 2016; see Mirowski, 2013, p. 66) and the "endless" wars that now accompany neoliberal globalization.

Neoliberalism and the Skillsification of Education

Even a casual observation of education policy discourse would reveal the extent to which any possibly valued human attribute is now rendered as a skill. A recent content analysis of personalized learning narrative buttresses this claim (Roberts-Mahoney, Means, & Garrison, 2016). This is of course true for the so-called basic skills, such as reading and math, but equally and increasingly sought are the so-called soft-skills, which target everything from so-called critical thinking to communication (Urciuoli, 2008). A particularly salient example of

this phenomenon can be found in reports of grant-based efforts of the United States Department of Education. *Education Week* reported, for example, on efforts to embed daily assessments in kindergarten classrooms. "Nearly one-third of the skills [teachers have] been trained to look for are in the domain of 'social foundations,' which includes skills such as expressing concern for others, following multi-step directions, and working cooperatively" (Gewertz, 2014). With this formulation, the human quality of empathy is given as a skill. A recent World Economic Forum report, to take one more example, defines twenty-first-century skills as being made up of 16 proficiencies including creativity, initiative, and perseverance (World Economic Forum, 2016; also see Barber, Rizvi, & Donnelly, 2012).

At stake here are two interrelated problems: are the phenomena denoted by the phrases such as "critical thinking" or "showing concern for others" properly considered skills, and how does rendering all human qualities in skills terms alter the conception of these phenomenon? Thus, human capital theory has been critiqued for being wrong, dehumanizing, and politically reactionary, fostering an extremely narrow purpose for education (Dilts, 2011; Holborow, 2012; Means, 2015).[19] The particular conception of skill that accompanies neoliberalism and human capital theory in particular remains largely unexamined.[20] The argument here is that rendering all potentially valuable human attributes in skills terms requires the assumptions of the behaviorist outlook outlined above. Put differently, the conception of skill that follows from human capital logic is necessarily behaviorist.

The Behaviorist Conception of Skill

While it is common to talk about skills as such, there are at least three distinct conceptions of skill: the behaviorist, the Aristotelean (*techne*), and what Hinchcliffe advocates, a situated understanding (Hinchliffe, 2002; also see Papastephanou & Angeli, 2007). These differences make a difference, and inform both how educators think about the aims of education and how they devise methods for realizing these aims. While, for example, few would argue against the aim of schools fostering critical thinking, the more behaviorism informs practices designed to foster critical thinking, the more depoliticized and decontextualized the educational process becomes. In this sense, critical thinking becomes nothing more than having successful completion of an instrumentally conceived critical thinking task, eschewing any consideration of the purpose the particular task is to serve (Papastephanou & Angeli, 2007).

Behaviorists define it as: "skill is in terms of a series of operations, capable of repetition, with an outcome that is measurable" (Hinchliffe, 2002, p. 189). "The result of the skill," he emphasizes, "is entirely independent of the operations that produced it." This yields to a form of assessment, where

> [the] quality of the outcome need not require too much acquaintance with process. In particular, though knowledge and understanding may be necessary conditions of the exercise of a skill they are none the less to be regarded as mere inputs as far as measuring the outcome is concerned. (p. 189)

This behaviorist assumption stands behind the fixation on so-called measurement and testing and is consistent with neoliberal management logics, so-called accountability, the audit culture, etc. As elaborated earlier, measurement is understood by behaviorists as a means of control, and thus central to managing the production of skill. If skill is capital, its successful manifestation is realized through responsiveness to environmental variables, stimulus from the market. Thus, the logic of reinforcement and shaping govern the production of skill, which becomes abstracted from the human being.

Hinchcliffe emphasizes that, for behaviorists, skill "is essentially a performance that is based upon a body of knowledge of which the performer need not be aware. It may even be conceded that those in possession of the knowledge underlying a skill are not necessarily the best people to exercise it" (p. 189). The behaviorist's disregard for understanding justifies and leads to narrow and impersonal curricula. On account that neither is a behavior, knowledge and consciousness are given as unimportant by-products of the successful control of behavior. The behaviorist insistence on the separation of knowing from doing finds easy company with corporate management practices, such as deskilling of teaching through the use of scripted curriculum. A signature example of this premise is also at work in education in the form of "close reading," advocated by the corporate and philanthropic interests that designed the Common Core standards in the United State (Schneider, 2015). A hallmark of this behaviorist approach is the insistence on having students read historical texts *out of context* (Gang, 2011); in this sense, "close reading" is akin to reading *as* a machine would read, constituting an ideological expression of the end of history thesis and strikingly similar to Skinner's banishment of history from education in *Walden Two*. Separating performance from the knowledge that informs it decontextualizes the task and limits the means available to evaluate the purpose for which the activity is to be undertaken. Finally, the behaviorist denial of a stable self makes such contemplation impossible. As behaviorism denies the possibility of future-driven behavior and thus also an overarching aim for guiding conduct, *doing* is limited, paraphrasing Hayek, to responding to unknowable social forces or the boss.

For behaviorists Hinchcliffe points out, a skill "is an operation in which the personal characteristics of the doer are in little evidence … the value attached to a skill is precisely that individual differences are effaced." This behaviorist tenet is the basis for the reconceptualization of school as the *production of human capital*, and the emphasis on the value of skill transfer over both general and disciplinary knowledge and critical engagement with social institutions, cultures, etc. The emphasis on transfer is the basis of the impersonal, decontextualized, and standardized nature of neoliberal education policies and practices. So-called reformers the world over dream of being able to develop generic capacities of humans such that they can be easily traded and deployed in a wide variety of settings with minimal training. This is expressed as learning understood as generalization and discrimination. This is the dream behind teaching "critical thinking" *directly,* as opposed to thinking human beings *resulting from* a well-rounded (and thus costly) education geared toward fostering both economic productivity *and* democratic living. Promotion of the development of critical thinking as a curriculum *goal* as opposed to understanding critical thinking as an

outcome of the totality of educational experiences within a democratic culture took center stage with the election of Ronald Reagan, supported since the 1980s by both federal and private funding (Lipman, 1991).

The behaviorist conception of skills, and soft skills in particular, should be understood as efforts to construct human capital. Keeping in mind the constructivist nature of behaviorism and neoliberalism, the assertion of human capacities as capital is not an issue of fact but an issue of desire: *homo economicus* must be made. Thus, human capital is a socialization project, one that serves austerity, the financialization of education, and the associated logics of audit culture as a means of control and regulation. The emphasis on skills in behaviorist terms fosters and justifies a stripped-down curriculum as broad knowledge and understanding for democratic participation are no longer desired or recognized as the proper aim of education. An education reduced to hard and soft skills is cheaper, more profitable, and advocates hope, in Skinner's terms, immune to "counter attack."

Conclusion

While many have traced the intellectual roots of behaviorism and successfully critiqued various aspects of the work of Skinner and other behaviorists (e.g. Mills, 1998) to my knowledge, none have identified what logic drove the adoption of extreme and indefensible positions. And while I have articulated the reactionary political implications of behaviorism, attention to which problems of the present behaviorism might be a "solution" need to be identified. It is my hope that in establishing behaviorism as the psychological foundation of neoliberal thought and the manner of its expression in educational policies, a deeper understanding of the nature of the crisis faced by the current political and economic arrangements might emerge.

In broad terms, behaviorism's banishment of conscience and consciousness is key, as these are both hallmarks of human agency and progressive education traditions. Their banishment removes the need for reason and political legitimacy as a basis for "good" government, a hallmark of liberal political thought. From the vantage point of the NTC, this banishment might be considered necessary, as the political and economic arrangements associated with neoliberal reason are in practice, if not so obviously in theory, anti-democratic and in many respects, anti-liberal. In some ways, behaviorism is not even modern, in the liberal sense, but pre-modern, and medieval. It serves to downgrade or even eliminate the rights of individuals or collectives; it does nothing to expand democratic control over the social and natural environment. With behaviorist assumptions regarding the nature and origin of human conduct, it becomes possible to replace democratic processes as a basis for the justification for public authority with a "science" of privately controlled behavior management, an approach assumed by neoliberal educational policies such as test-based accountability and the corporate takeover of public schools such policies have facilitated (e.g. Saltman, 2016). Like many aspects of neoliberalism, behaviorism is thus nearly complete in its break with liberal political and economic ideals, the theory that stable, good

government is formed at least in part by consent of the governed, some measure of influence for public opinion, and so on. "Reason" or the "reality-based community" (Mirowski, 2013, p. 242) is banished as a basis for individual or collective action, as the imposed environment/market is presented as generating individual and group conduct. And so the origin of the resurgence of behaviorism might be found in the very crises associated with neoliberal social forms. In this sense, the behaviorist principal of the operant – that is the spontaneous action of an organism in response to its immediate environment – denies a conscious role for human beings in transforming their social world and thus denies the possibility of emancipation. In the end, this crisis of neoliberalism is that it, like behaviorism, cannot conceive of or have a future. It is against having an aim, and thus purposelessness rings out from the shallow culture that remains in the form of responding to variables and markets.

In somewhat more practical terms, the critique of current conceptions of skills must not lead to underestimating the need to foster human capacity through education as a means to solve a wide array of intensifying social, political, economic, and environmental problems, on the one hand, and to facilitate human emancipation, on the other (see Means, 2016). Part of the reason production of skill might not be associated with economic growth is the manner in which skill is understood and fostered: it is a cruel and dangerous illusion that workers and citizens will be able to solve problems if they are schooled in the assumptions of behaviorism. Put differently, human capital theory proves yet again to be wrong because it gets skill wrong: human capacities and potentials are either distorted or destroyed when they are rendered in behaviorist terms, decontextualized, and grossly impersonal. But we should be clear that opposition to an emphasis on skills on the grounds that it signals the vocationalization of education misses a deeper issue, and might serve to romanticize professionalism, or offer pre-industrial forms of production as the holy grail of worker liberation. Thus, it is not merely or even mainly the focus on skill that is at issue. Rather the problem rests with how skills and human abilities in general are conceived. Hinchcliffe, for example, argued for a kind of "thinking skills" that he believes are required for democratic public deliberation:

> A democratic culture needs the spirit of critical enquiry writ large. The language of thinking skills helps to provide a vocabulary that is common to all, that can be used by all and that helps to ensure that claims made from one knowledge domain can be subjected to scrutiny by others. (p. 200)

For educators and education policy-makers, this analysis calls for a very careful evaluation of how human motivation and capacity are understood and suggests how educators might identify and counter agency-denying assumptions embedded in currently promoted curriculums, pedagogies, assessments, and governance schemes. Because behaviorism is framed as a science of learning, it is not a surprise that it has taken an especially strong hold over the field of education. Yet, this suggests in turn that educators in particular play an especially important role in re-imagining human motivation, learning, and human potential, and thus have a key role in fostering social and democratic renewal.

Notes

1 This is from Kickboard (see https://www.kickboardforschools.com/product-features). Kickboard is a classic example of the venture capital-funded education technology industry.

2 Known officially as the "Common Core State Standards" in the United States, these documents were neither initiated nor carefully reviewed by states in the union. They were instead imposed by a cabal of corporations, think tanks, and foundations, and even teachers' unions, induced with close to $10 billion from both the federal government and venture philanthropists such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Schneider, 2015).

3 Much of the popular literature on parenting has long been behaviorist in nature. John B. Watson, a prominent founder of behaviorism, published in numerous popular outlets a variety of recommendations regarding how parents should raise their children, such as the following: "Never hug and kiss them, never let them sit in your lap. If you must, kiss them once on the forehead when they say goodnight. Shake hands with them in the morning" (as quoted in Birnbaum, 1955, p. 18). In this way, a clear link between the cold, "no excuses" charter schools in the United States and behaviorism can be seen (see Horn, 2016).

4 Earlier, Foucault reports a definition of economics, adopted by Gary Becker, which is strikingly similar to the definition of psychology offered by behaviorists during the first two decades of the twentieth century. "Economics is the science of human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have mutually exclusive uses" (Foucault, 2008, p. 222).

5 Classic libertarian philosophers have offered useful criticisms of Skinner, one situating his critique within the context of the Obama Administration's health policies that point to the behaviorist assumptions inherent in the work of Thaler and Sunstein (2009). See Hocutt (2013). Note that Thaler has presented his behavior control techniques to the OCED. See OECD (2015).

6 This is the B. F. Skinner Foundation's re-issue of the original 1953 version; it is freely available online. It is a comprehensive introduction to radical behaviorism, including Skinner's many philosophical ideas about culture, education, and control.

7 From the same volume:

> When, in the 1919 edition of *Behaviorism*, Watson asserted that his was the only valid psychology, that all psychologies not stemming from the study of the human animal were spiritualistic and not valid scientifically, he was asked to resign from Johns Hopkins. Watson was offered a vice-presidency in a prominent advertising agency, and from this time on, the career of Behaviorism resembled a large-scale advertising production. All available media were used to publicize his ideas, and more extravagant claims were made. (p. 17)

8 Bakan concluded:

> Behaviorism must be understood as a cultural expression; and a number of the important features of the complex which behaviorism represented enjoyed a

special confluence in the personality and background of this one individual. John B. Watson, "American," from rural South Carolina, could "stand for" behaviorism in a way that Max Meyer, for example, who was born, raised and educated in Europe, could not. (1966, p. 8)

9 While Skinner sometimes appears more critical of capitalism's competitive tendencies, he remained ever focused on control of individual and group behavior (Skinner, 2014).

10 Ulman's work cited here stands out for attempting to render Marx's analysis with that of Skinner; Ulman has made a half-dozen attempts to mingle various aspects of Marxist political economy with behaviorism, and to my knowledge, is the only academic who has attempted such a feat.

11 For a useful and extended discussion of the problem of measurement in psychology from a critical realist perspective, see Michell (1999).

12 Lawrence E. Fraley was a close collaborator of Ernest and Julie Vargas. These and other behaviorists aligned with Skinner separated from the American Psychology Association and other professional associations to affirm their method and philosophy as a "natural science" that goes by the name of behaviorology. See http://www.behaviorology.org

13 While written in reaction to Watson's *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist*, George Santayana made remarks that are equally fitting in evaluating Skinner's social vision. "I foresee," he wrote after reading Watson's book, "a behaviorist millennium; countless millions of walking automatons, each armed with his radio … all jabbering as they have been trained to jabber, never interfering with one another, always smiling, with their glands all functioning perfectly." (Santayana, 1922, p. 735).

14 For a contrast, see Simon and Simon (1963) for examples of how educational psychology emerged in the USSR following Pavlov.

15 John Blundell wrote in his 1999 Introduction:

Whereas the book publishers had been dealing in issues of four or five thousand copies, the *Reader's Digest* had a print run which was measured in hundreds of thousands. For the first and still the only time, they put the condensed book at the front of the magazine where nobody could miss it. (Hayek, 2000, p. 18)

16 This points to possibly one of the most significant difference between behaviorists such as Skinner, who was open in expressing his views and who did not form or attend secret societies, and prominent neoliberal intellectuals.

17 Brown (2005) contends expediency rationalities are particularly dangerous (p. 50) constituting, in part at least, "a new form of legitimation" that "contrasts with the Hegelian and French revolutionary notion of the constitutional state as the emergent universal representative of the people" (p. 41).

18 This is not unlike the now famous quote from Ron Suskind and the Bush administrations thesis that the empire produces its own reality (Mirowski, 2013, pp. 242–243).

19 Echoing Skinner in advocating a rethinking of the moral and philosophical assumptions of liberal moral orders, Theodore Schultz (1961) wrote: "Our values and beliefs inhibit us from looking upon human beings as capital goods, except in slavery, and this we abhor." He recognized that, "to treat human beings as wealth that can be augmented by investment runs counter to deeply held values" but nonetheless insisted that "by investing in themselves, people can enlarge the range of choice available to them" (p. 2; see Dilts, 2011).

20 While the instrumental and utilitarian foundation of the human capital demand for skills has certainly been noted, few have interrogated the conception of skill per se, and still fewer have linked this conception to specific features of neoliberal reason that parallel behaviorist thought.

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17

Educating Mathematizable, Self-Serving, God-Fearing, Self-Made Entrepreneurs

Jurjo Torres-Santomé

Introduction

Education plays an essential part in the creation and development of idealistic human beings who view the world as a perfectible reality and confide optimistically in the possibility of achieving progressively fairer, more inclusive and more democratic models of social organization.

Educating children to live in accordance with the ideals of a just, inclusive, and democratic society can only be achieved through public policies designed to offset and correct the structural injustices that shape and determine their lives and the lives of their families. These policies, in turn, must be underpinned by an education system committed to upholding the same ideals, and teachers with the appropriate training, professional autonomy, working conditions, and resources to do so.

In recent decades, however, and particularly since the global economic recession of the 1980s, economistic international organizations have had an increasingly important role in proposing "official" solutions, based on what are presented as objective, technical, scientific arguments. For these organizations, control of the education system has become one of their key objectives, owing in large part to the business opportunities opened up by the shift away from the welfare state toward a state of cut-throat capitalism more interested in liberalizing the market and giving it room to move. As a result of this, society has been inundated with economistic discourses concerning freedom of choice, with governments and citizens alike becoming obsessed with the correlating merits of privatizing everything from education and health to social services, the justice system, etc.

Alarming PISA reports regarding the low standard of education in the vast majority of countries surveyed have been used as grounds for the effective installation of the OECD, the World Bank and the IMF as a kind of global Ministry of Education, signaling the direction of education policies and reforms to come.

To help the message gain more traction within society, citizens are subjected to a regular flow of studies and surveys chronicling the advantages of neoliberal practices and policies. Their proponents reference socially respected concepts such as excellence, efficiency, skills, choice, performance standards, external quantitative assessment, etc., employing the kind of mathematical language associated by most people with notions of objective, neutral, apolitical measurement. The obsessive production of rankings and comparisons is represented as a public exercise in transparency and accountability, leading citizens without the necessary statistics education (many education professionals among them) to accept as neutral and apolitical the raft of laws, royal decrees, regulations, professional tasks, bureaucracy, and demands imposed upon them by their governments (especially conservative governments) with the promise of improving education.

Strategies of this kind make it easier to disguise the moral, social, and political aspects of the educational practices and policies being advocated, and simultaneously more difficult to advance a convincing argument against them or demonstrate the harmful effects in prospect in the short, medium and long term.

In the name of efficiency and practicality, the new neoliberal approach uses a discourse of monitoring and evaluation that has hampered attempts to debate or analyse its impact on the political system's nominally official commitment to promote and support the principles of equality of opportunity, democracy, justice, and solidarity in society.

Since it became the responsibility of the state, the education system has been used for different goals and purposes. Today, the objective of achieving, consolidating, and reproducing a globalized colonial, conservative, neoliberal society has given the education system a new task: *the construction of conservative, neocolonial, neoliberal self-entrepreneurs*. In Spain, that aim was embodied in law by the 2013 LOMCE, "Improvement of Educational Quality Act" (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa*).

Official Education Policies and the Conservative, Neocolonial, Neoliberal Intentions Behind Them

At the risk of oversimplifying a very complex reality, the main features of the *neoliberal being* may be summarized as follows:

- Competitive: exists in accordance with the dictates of performance and efficiency; all aspects of their common sense are commodified.
- Obsessed and ruled by mercantilist considerations in the planning and organization of their personal life, leisure time, social and professional relations, employment decisions, etc.
- Knowledge: viewed as objective, neutral, quantifiable, consumable, standardized, etc., in keeping with positivist rationality.
- Views as depoliticized: the technocratic prescriptions and economic and business rationality are applied in the taking of decisions and the selection and evaluation of processes.

- Coercive, violent aspects of neoliberal bureaucratic processes seen as logical (statistics and quantification allow for constant assessment, comparison, and evaluation of individuals; standards verify the efficacy of actions and processes).
- Authoritarian personality: lacks the knowledge, resources, and social values to take into account concepts such as the common good or social justice.
- Other people are exploited and treated as commodities in all interactions; the ambition to achieve success in life entails the necessary removal of all rivals.

These economic humans, who pursue and aspire to self-interest above all else, are described by Amartya Sen (1986) as "rational fools": individuals devoid of feelings, morality, dignity, curiosity, or any social or interpersonal commitments.

The everyday operation of this personality – *homo economicus*, *consumens* and *debitor* – is guided by three types of moral behaviour: (1) *morality of effort* (with no reference to the contextual considerations which may impinge upon the success of the outcome); (2) *morality of promise* (the willingness to honor, as a matter of the utmost priority, any payment due as a consequence of a promise made or a contract signed); and (3) *morality of fault* (assuming individual responsibility for all risks, dangers, and consequences of one's actions). It is the model of an individual who exists outside of history, transmuted into a mere commodity.

The education system also serves to reinforce a neocolonial mentality in dominant countries, while colonizing attitudes in dependent countries and among immigrant communities in the so-called First World.

The essential features of the *neocolonial* or *colonized being* are as follows:

- Accepts as true a constructed Spanish identity founded on significant historical manipulations and the omission and/or distortion of historical events, sectors of society (such as women), and peoples (Arab, Jewish, African, Roma-Gypsy, Basque, Catalan, Galician, Canary Islands, etc.).
- Ignores and/or rejects all signs, symbols, languages, and learning associated with stateless nations or peoples without a homeland (e.g. Roma-Gypsies, Palestinians); feelings of self-hate may arise in relation to ineradicable physical characteristics, accent or customs that betray the person's origin.
- Views as *legitimate and superior* all intellectual (signs, symbols, narratives, representations, etc.), cultural, artistic, technological, and military products created by the dominant nation.
- Feels no sense of duty, obligation, or commitment toward non-dominant nations or collectives.
- Relations with other countries and peoples are always based on a hierarchy topped by their country and others with a similar political outlook.
- Responsibilities and commitments toward communities in "inferior" countries reflect an attitude of tolerance or charity, rather than policies in support of redistributive justice, recognition, and democratic equality and participation. (NGOs are often used as imperialist spies or infiltrators.)
- No comprehension of their country's involvement in the exploitation of communities, military invasion or theft of land and resources in nations in the so-called Third World.

- Accepts as legitimate the right of rich, powerful nations to impose laws, regulations, rights, and responsibilities on dependent or subjected peoples.
- Ignores responsibilities, even those contained in the various United Nations Declarations of Human Rights ratified by their country.

These characteristics are strengthened by targeted educational policies which conform to the attributes of the *conservative Catholic being*, and the growing importance of religion within the compulsory school curriculum. The essential features of this personality type include:

- Barely developed sense of empathy: incapable of putting themselves in the position of others, especially in the absence of any shared social class, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, age profile, abilities, nationality, or citizenship.
- Guided by presentism: lack of knowledge and learning; closed, inflexible mentality; unwilling to acknowledge critically their place in the course of social history.
- Restrictive common sense, in keeping with traditionalist religious beliefs; also afraid to take risks.
- Submissive to power and lacking ability to imagine options and possibilities other than those traditionally endorsed and upheld by religious and/or conservative authorities.

Constructing a new conservative, neocolonial, neoliberal common sense requires a major reform of the subjects and cultural content in the compulsory school curriculum. If children are to be molded into enterprising, competitive beings, obsessed with quality and excellence and the numerical methods to measure and classify them – a generation of *homo numericus* to service the labor needs of the big financial and economic corporations – then the curriculum must change to reflect the kind of subjects and learning which may be useful in a globalized capitalist market.

The triennial PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) surveys play a crucial role in this redirection of the education system (Torres-Santomé, 2011, pp. 186–200). PISA drops an "information bomb" (Virilio, 2016) of test findings on all participating states on the same day, which are sold to the public as a true and objective statement of the quality of the education system in each country. However, PISA measures only three competencies across all member countries: reading comprehension, mathematics, and science. A fourth competency – financial literacy – was added in 2012, but has thus far only been implemented in 18 states, including Spain.

As a result of these assessments, the attention of governments and the public in general has become increasingly focused on the areas of learning targeted by PISA testing, with subjects in the arts, humanities, and social sciences relegated as less useful, relevant or worth devoting time to, in contrast to reading, maths, experimental science, and financial literacy.

Meaning and Purpose of the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Cultural content transmitted to children through the education system is heavily biased in relation to questions of social class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religious belief, etc. Much attention and critical discussion of this problem

have been deflected, however, by the current attack on the education system from the most conservative, neoliberal and religious fundamentalist sectors of society.

Against such a backdrop, the role of social science is clear, although, as Immanuel Wallerstein (2000, p. 97) has remarked:

> Social science has been Eurocentric throughout its institutional history, which means since there have been departments teaching social science within university systems … Social science is a product of the modern world-system, and Eurocentrism is constitutive of the geoculture of the modern world.

It was Europe (followed, in more recent times, by the United States) who first developed this area of learning to demonstrate the continent's supposed cultural superiority based on a largely positivist epistemological approach to knowledge and the universal (sometimes deterministic) scientific theories, truths, and laws deriving from it. Practitioners have often gone so far as to present their contributions to knowledge as a mark of civilization in contrast to what is correspondingly constructed as primitiveness or barbarism (frequently in reference to non-European creations, which are ignored or dismissed out of hand).

Citizens in today's world need to be aware of the huge variety of people within our cities. Education, therefore, must also take on the vital role of teaching younger generations to live and work side by side and in equality with those whom the dominant racist Eurocentric worldview would portray as a kind of subaltern, enemy *other*.

One of the political duties of a truly public and democratic educational curriculum is to teach different social groups to acknowledge one another, expose stereotypes, interact with one another, live and work side by side, and view and treat each other as equals. Our models of society should have at their core an educated, informed citizenry composed of wise, not uninformed, *rebels*. Nevertheless, critical, thinking citizens are unlikely to emerge from the highly conservative, neoliberal reorientation of the education system in Spain, which has seen the downgrading of subjects and curricular content associated with the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

Meaning and Purpose of the Social Sciences in the Curriculum

Curriculum content in the social sciences has a profound effect on the formation of actively critical, reflexive citizens. The omission, silencing, and distortion of any content or information within the different social science disciplines, as well as the ways in which disciplines are bound together and linked in turn to other areas of learning, are of the highest importance.

One of the most striking changes introduced by the LOMCE is the removal of responsibility for the History curriculum (objectives, content, learning outcomes, performance markers, assessment criteria) from educational authorities in the Autonomous Communities, and its transferral to the state government Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport.

For over 40 years, the Franco dictatorship was obsessed with an ongoing campaign of destruction against nations and identities within the Spanish State which had a separate language and culture of their own (the Basque Country, the Catalan Countries and Galicia). One of the methods used by the regime was to manipulate school curricula in the same areas of knowledge which are now being instrumentalized once again in an attempt to instill a new form of common sense, founded on neoliberal, neocolonial, Catholic fundamentalist ideals; an education designed to reinforce some imaginary sense of Spanish nationalism, or, to quote José Ignacio Wert, the former Minister for Education and author of the LOMCE, in an address to the Spanish parliament: "to Spanishize Catalan schoolchildren."[1]

The social sciences curriculum draws a veil over conflictive issues, or presents them solely from the perspective of those in power. Political, social, and ethnic conflicts and ideologies are obviated or distorted, as has happened in the case of the history and presence of the Arab and gypsy peoples in the Iberian peninsula. The dynamics of social class and different sectors of society are discussed and analysed from the point of view of the most dominant social groups and classes: women's history is suppressed and/or distorted; and the political power, interests, and history of religious institutions are ignored. Like the Eurocentric worldview, fascist and populist regimes claim to act only in the general interest, disregarding questions of different social class, ethnicity, or nationality. They present themselves as being objectively superior to all other options, hence the populist language they use to persuade the public that we are all equal now: no more social groups or classes, no national interest, states or nations, no North or South.

Citizens educated under such a curriculum are ill prepared for a world in which conflict is a constant reality. What is even more concerning is that, without the tools to understand and respond to the world around them, many will be rendered incapable of acting to resolve by peaceful, democratic means what conflicts they may perceive or encounter in life. The education system would thus be responsible for producing mutilated subjectivities: citizens whose ability to act is restricted by their limited exposure to certain areas of knowledge and their inability to comprehend the complex interrelations that are a fact of life in today's world.

One of the main reasons for including History in the compulsory curriculum is as part of the attempt to equip students with the necessary cultural background, methods, and strategies to realize how understanding the past origin of events and experiences can help us to tackle and find solutions to many of our problems in the present. History shows us the enormous capacity we have as human beings to transform our reality: that, whatever difficulties we may encounter along the way, the world around us is not immutable. As citizens, we must be aware of how we are constrained by the present and coerced to "behave ourselves"; of the pressure upon us to live restrictively, bow our heads, and tolerate situations which those in positions of power and privilege have rationalized as inevitable. Historical memory thus becomes our strongbox of knowledge against a dismembering (and *disremembering*) present.

Integrationist education seeks to transform individuals from all groups, communities, and backgrounds (those destined for the inevitable "clash of

civilizations" predicted by Samuel P. Huntington (1987)) into citizens capable of imagining, discussing, designing, and sharing non-violent democratic projects for a peaceful coexistence.

The recovery of historical memory allows us to learn from the mistakes of the past: the political, economic, employment, religious, and philosophical models behind certain actions; the conflicts created, and their disastrous ongoing consequences. It helps us to put ourselves in the position of those who have lost and suffered the most, and to use that empathy and increased awareness to know what mistakes, situations, and behaviors to avoid in the future.

Reason and common sense are not neutral qualities, but the result of specific learned behaviors and routines which, in turn, derive from choices influenced by conceptions of what the world is or should be. A properly educated, questioning citizen understands that the domination of communities and social groups is founded upon a dangerous premise of major *epistemic and cognitive injustice*: the dominant power's refusal to acknowledge the alternative forms of knowledge according to which people from different parts of the world live and find meaning. Western imperialism, not content to pillage and plunder countries of their wealth, assured itself of continued domination in the countries it despoiled by classing their populations as subordinates and reinforcing that second-class status through a colonial education system that distorted, disfigured, and destroyed their past (Fanon, 1963). Over time, the coloniality of economic and political power has thus become associated with the coloniality of knowledge, being, seeing, doing, hearing, thinking, and feeling (Mignolo, 2014). It is for this very reason that colonizers and colonized alike have before them the urgent task of *detaching themselves* from the naturalized fictions invented and shaped by the colonial project.

Such an undertaking will require debate of the most rigorous intellectual, ethical, and political standard on all sides, to allow parties to open up, listen to one another and begin to build together. The process will also help to make us more alert to the dangers and deformations of self-referential, essentialist, fundamentalist arguments, and to work instead toward achieving a more interdisciplinary conception of knowledge and genuinely liberating, emancipatory interaction between cultures.

Meaning and Purpose of the Humanities in the Curriculum

All members of society are forced to deal at various moments in their lives with conflictive issues of a social, political, economic, cultural, or moral nature. To meet such challenges, citizens must engage in a continuous process of learning and honing of their ability to identify, analyse, and employ different moral, historical, and sociological arguments and discourses. Regardless of whatever interpersonal differences we may have, our aim should be to safeguard the values and attitudes of respect, solidarity, justice, and friendship toward our fellow citizens.

Objectives of this kind must be accompanied by explicit support and promotion of genuine academic freedom of thought and research, leading in turn to open dialogue and debate, and a true commitment to the goal of educating for freedom. For education to be truly empowering, individuals must be free because

they have and know their own minds, not because of the wealth they possess or the family into which they are born (Nussbaum, 2005, p. 319).

The humanities comprise the fields of knowledge and learning best suited to this challenge. In the words of Edward Said (2004, p. 28), "Humanism is the exertion of one's faculties in language in order to understand, reinterpret and grapple with the products of language in history, other languages and other histories."

Nobody would dare to suggest that either literature (the reading of novels, poems, comics, etc.) or philosophy is a waste of time, despite a noticeable fall-off in the value placed on the latter and its progressive downgrading in the school curriculum. They are the pre-eminent repositories of human experience through which we develop our sense of empathy and solidarity toward others, communicative ability, and expressive and aesthetic qualities. Literature opens us up to a wide spectrum of emotions and experiences that we might never otherwise encounter, while works created at different moments in time and/or space bring us into contact with other realities, offering us new insights into our social and historical development.

Literature allows us to recreate and imagine the experiences of different people, groups, and communities from the past and present; to connect and empathize with them across different ages, origins, and ethnicities.

Likewise, it spurs our imaginations, allowing us to imagine fantastical ideal future worlds in which to experiment with simulated realities, explore the possible consequences of actions that would never occur otherwise, and try out new models of personal, relational, community and social life, and alternative forms of government.

Literature pushes back our mental boundaries, allowing us to travel through time and space, and experience new cultures and subjectivities. It brings us into contact with previously unimaginable ways of seeing and feeling, and teaches us to think and see through the eyes of others, as in the sonnet, "Conversation with the dead", by Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580–1645): 'Retiring to these deserts now in peace, / with few but learned volumes to be read, / I live in conversation with the dead, / and listen with my eyes to the deceased" (*Retirado en la paz de estos desiertos, / con pocos, pero doctos libros juntos, / vivo en conversación con los difuntos, / y escucho con mis ojos a los muertos*).

Contact with different works of literature can also help us to contrast our values, hopes, dreams, and ideals with those of other people from different social classes or of different age, sex, sexuality or abilities, people from different cultures and nations, or people with a different religion or belief system. By helping us to understand ourselves, our feelings, and our problems better, it can even perform a therapeutic function in spurring us to confront our fears, obsessions, phobias, anxieties, and prejudices.

Literature is a fundamental source of information about our world and forces us to re-examine many of the stories and accounts we have been told about the past. Travel diaries, reports, and other writings by the women who accompanied the great colonial expedition leaders, political officials, and civil servants in their adventures overseas (or who made the journey on their own) chronicle what they encountered and experienced there, giving us an insight into what life was like both for these women and for ordinary people in colonized countries (Morató, 2005, 2007).

The same contemptuous silence surrounding the work of women creators in most literary canons usually extends to their artistic and philosophical creations as well; the situation is even starker in the case of women from colonized communities. The official, dominant form of knowledge is based on an epistemology that excludes women as a source of knowledge, with the result that analysis and discussion of the work of feminist creators such as Mary Field Belenky, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Virginia Woolf, Emily Brontë, Alejandra Pizarnik, Alaíde Foppa, María de Zayas, María Rosa Gálvez, Rosalía de Castro, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Selma Lagerlöf, George Sand, Gabriela Mistral, Maya Angelou, Flora Tristán, Alfonsina Storni, Carmen Martín Gaite, Fatima Mernissi, and Gloria Anzaldúa, among others, is largely absent from our educational institutions, most university faculties included.

Silencing and censorship of this kind should leave us in no doubt that "the actuality of reading is, fundamentally, and act of perhaps modest human emancipation and enlightenment that changes and enhances one's knowledge for purposes other than reductiveness, cynicism, or fruitless standing aside" (Said, 2004, p. 66).

The cultural content included in subjects in the arts, humanities, and social sciences is usually closely monitored by the powers that be, ever zealous to argue and disseminate their official truths.

One striking illustration of this bid to construct a new conservative, colonial, neoliberal personality type is the virtual disappearance of Philosophy from the curriculum under the LOMCE. The same piece of legislation saw the elimination of a subject introduced under the previous government, "Education for Citizenship and Human Rights" (*Educación para la ciudadanía y los derechos humanos*), and its replacement by a subject choice between "Religion" and "Civil and Social Values."

As the etymology of the word shows, philosophy refers to the "love of wisdom," inviting us to reflect on human nature and our reason for being, the meaning of life, behaviors, relationships and interactions, and the values and aspirations people share in a world with equality and respect for cultural diversity at its core.

The study of philosophy plays an essential part in equipping minds to think in a more organized way about knowledge (with all its flaws and deformations) and the soundness of arguments. It is the spur that urges us to ask ourselves what makes life worthwhile, what it means to live well, and what and where happiness is. Likewise, it is the area of knowledge that gives us the opportunity to explore questions of justice, truth and virtue, and the extent to which our judgments and actions are or may be influenced by sociocultural, political, or other structural factors; to discuss and explain practical questions of duty and responsibility, to resolve our moral dilemmas, and to engage with and reflect critically on the nature and creation of art and beauty.

Philosophy is a space of thought where we learn and develop the skills of critical thinking and judgment we need in order to participate fully in society and the democratic decision-making processes which that entails.

Meaning and Purpose of the Arts in the Curriculum

In a society dominated by the image, there has never been more reason for the arts to be placed at the center of the school curriculum for children and young adults. The pre-eminence of advertising and audiovisual creation (film, television, the internet, etc.) has turned visual literacy and the ability to communicate and tell stories using different artistic languages into basic skills for citizens in today's world and the tools to build a fairer, more caring and democratic world in the future.

Each artistic language (painting, sculpture, installation, collage, cinema, short film, ballet, dance, mime, music, comedy, etc.) offers a unique approach to the analysis, exploration, and creation of the world around us. While the methodology used may be very different from that found in mathematics or the experimental sciences, it represents an invaluable part of our way of thinking, acting, creating, making decisions, and solving problems.

Artistic languages are also idiosyncratic ways of communicating, understanding and establishing relationships of cooperation with other people. Each language represents a distinct way of connecting emotionally with the people around us, cutting through the obstacles and restrictions created by verbal forms of language.

Arts education is one of the driving elements of an education system that seeks creative solutions to the challenges it encounters, influencing us to think and act to improve the quality and sustainability of the way we live, rather than simply ignore what is happening around us. Even art which is rejected at first has a vital role to play in explaining the artistic revolutions which it originated, as in the case of Marcel Duchamp's urinal, the Dada movement or certain films by Luis Buñuel.

The arts offer enormous potential to bring about integrated approaches to curricular planning, encouraging a cross-curricular organization of learning and the strengthening and enrichment of artistic points of view through contact with sociology, history, geography, mathematics, science, and other art forms (dance, cinema, music, etc.).

The arts teach us how to look at and appreciate beauty, to develop our aesthetic sense, personality, sensibility, and style. The better we understand the ingenuity behind a concert, painting, monument, film, piece of graffiti, etc., the more we can appreciate and enjoy it.

Art makes us happier and more creative, and gives us ways to use our knowledge and experience to create something new and beautiful. It gives us a voice with which to express our feelings, to criticize and protest against the unjust aspects of life that leave us feeling unhappy, alienated, distorted, or overlooked, and to propose alternatives to those same problems and injustices.

The art world also highlights the effects of certain economic, cultural, social, employment, and education policies, such as the privatizing, mercantilist, classist policies of exclusion advocated by the neoliberal economic system, in which art ownership is confined to those rich enough to buy the works, leaving the wider public with more limited access to art and its enjoyment.

While art reflects the achievements, quality of life, lifestyle, and enjoyments of individuals, groups, and peoples down through history, it also illustrates the

historical humiliation and repression endured by nations, social groups, and women in general who were treated as incapable of creating or understanding art.

Art has always been used as a language of protest, criticism, provocation, and ridicule, and to expose injustice, but also as a language of liberating alternatives and empowerment for the most marginalized members of society. Authoritarian regimes were quick to realize the political power of art, and for that reason have frequently acted to remove and ban creative works of film, photography, painting, graffiti, sculpture, song, drama, etc. which use their particular artistic language to challenge oppression.

Some of the most important transformations to emerge from the revolutions of the past century have come in the form of artistic change (Torres-Santomé, 2011, pp. 137–149). Definitions, conceptions, and criticism of artistic creation have changed, especially in relation to artists whose work has traditionally been overlooked or rejected: colonized nations and communities, subordinated ethnicities, women and young people. All political movements adopt a particular cultural style to underpin their programmes and ideas, giving precedence and support to whichever artistic style or movement best matches their worldview and interests.

The arts can play a vital part in the school curriculum as a way of making methodologies more meaningful and relevant for pupils, integrated teaching units and project work representing just two examples.

Access to the arts, humanities, and social sciences generally makes people more readily able to recognize and contend with the reductionisms and distortions frequently employed by the major cultural, political, and media power groups to gain their consent. As citizens, we are better equipped to expose and challenge self-interested manipulations, and open our eyes to the situations and realities in which we find ourselves (whether directly or indirectly) or for which we are jointly responsible in some way.

Greater interdisciplinarity allows us to recognize the opportunities, risks, and dangers entailed by many advances in science and technology: how life and the planet might be harmed or destroyed, or, conversely, how life on Earth might be preserved and made more sustainable. Interdisciplinarity helps us to gear technological research and development toward benefiting the whole community, not just those with the most power and economic resources.

The democratization of knowledge and research raises fundamental questions about the political and ethical aspects of both. Most of the challenges to knowledge produced by the practical and theoretical branches of learning (e.g. physics, chemistry, architecture, engineering), as well as other areas, such as law and business administration, emanate from the arts.

Critical reading requires the reader to remain alert to the less explicit aspects of a text. Undetected, these tacit additions may result in a failure to understand the full repercussions of our interpretation and the decisions made in that light.

Including Financial Literacy in the Curriculum

Neoliberal governments take advantage of situations such as the current financial and employment crisis to push for a greater focus within the curriculum on job

training and other economic aspects of learning. A clear example of this is the inclusion of economic content and an explicit commitment to "financial education" in the compulsory secondary school curriculum established by the 2013 LOMCE.[2]

The broadening of the curriculum in this direction is supported by the OECD, whose 2012 PISA report included a set of assessment indicators to measure financial literacy.[3] So far, financial literacy assessment has been implemented in 18 countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, New Zealand, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and the United States.[4] Interestingly, countries such as Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, who have large, consolidated welfare states and whose PISA scores are consistently high, have not signed up to this initiative.

The importance of financial literacy, as argued by the OECD, assumes the non-existence of a welfare state.[5] Its "Project on Financial Education," for example, cites the urgent need for greater "financial education and awareness" due to "increasing transfer of risks to households, which are more directly responsible for essential financial decisions for their future wellbeing." This is attributed to three main developments:

1) Important changes in *retirement pensions*, amounting in practice to the disappearance of defined benefit pensions and the resulting need for more private pension plans.
2) Greater individual responsibility in relation to *health and illness*, and the resulting need to obtain private health insurance to ensure proper health care coverage.
3) The need by families to plan for and invest in their children's *education* as a consequence of the removal of grants and the resulting need to learn how to manage bank loans, student loans, etc.

Prior to the global financial recession in the 1980s, such questions had ceased to be of any concern for citizens in countries in the so-called developed world, since they were protected by law. However, the politics of austerity being pursued at present call for major cutbacks in relation to the social functions of the state. The political bid in recent years to dismantle the welfare state has been accompanied by a campaign of statistical manipulation and distortion to persuade citizens that the social reforms of the past are no longer "viable": owing to the gravity of the country's financial situation, the state has no choice but to relinquish its duty to protect and ensure the redistribution of social justice, and entrust that function to private enterprise. The real object behind this is, of course, to redesign the state in order to create new business opportunities for the neoliberal market in areas previously under the remit of the public sector, such as health, education, and retirement pensions.

Rather incongruously, the attempt to equip young people to deal with the problems and injustices created by neoliberal economic policies is conceived of in terms of financial literacy education, rather than the counter-perspectives of a critical economic literacy approach.

As one of the areas encompassed by the social sciences, *critical economic literacy education* should be an intrinsic part of children's and young people's social and

political education, highlighting the interface between political and economic decision-making and its effect, in one way or another, on the lives of each and every one of us and the social communities to which we belong. Effective economic education should provide citizens with the tools to understand and participate in the interdependent decision-making processes and management of their public and private lives. The knowledge, methods, skills, and attitudes developed should encourage: analysis and understanding of the production and employment issues affecting our community; the search for informed solutions to financial, economic and employment problems, and proposals for how to improve quality of life for all citizens; the avoidance of human exploitation in all its forms, and actions to ensure the sustainability of life on our planet.

Financial education, on the other hand, is based on the implicit premise that neoliberalism is the only "logical," viable model; that there is no alternative. It is a way of imposing and legitimizing one social, political, and economic model over all others, with no attempt to generate informed discussion of either the dysfunctions of the system or its possible alternatives. It is yet another measure aimed at "monetizing all our talents and showing them off to the world" (Chan, 2016, p. 148) (via social media, for example); sharpening competitive spirit on the basis that anything can be turned into money.

Politics, philosophy, ethics, and the social and human sciences in general are represented as branches of knowledge of lesser importance. These knowledge branches are vital, since the questions children ask themselves about the world around them are conditioned by the way cultural content is classed and presented to them in terms of relevance and importance: the skills and methods developed in the classroom, the moral dilemmas with which they are faced, the resources they have to think about them, and the manner in which they do so. Unsurprisingly, this positivist, economistic approach to curriculum planning makes it much harder for pupils to raise challenges or objections in the face of most situations of privilege or injustice.

Even though we know that knowledge is one of the pillars of our existence as a society, that cornerstone is now under threat from the marketization of education over recent decades, and the hidden curriculum it has brought with it of short-term utilitarianism and generalized unlearning of all aspects of culture not directly linked with the needs of the economy. This downgrading of critical reflection and resistance is a flagrant contradiction of the ideas of freedom and empowerment that, not so long ago, were taken for granted.

One final aspect of this refocusing of the curriculum is the strong prejudice shown by neoliberal policies in favor of private and charter education, and its negative ramifications for schools in the public system.

Differentiating Public, Private and Charter Schools

Educational institutions operate very differently depending on whether they are guided by principles of social justice and human rights, or by the philosophies and values of the market economy. Education based on ideas of social justice involves meeting pupils' individual needs and balancing them with the common

interests and issues that affect society as a whole. Schools should be provided with the best material and human resources, particularly in the case of pupils in situations of cultural, educational, nutritional, health, or socio-emotional disadvantage, with educational programmes based on a genuinely fair and inclusive curriculum. An education system at the service of the community encourages the development of strong ties of cooperation among pupils and their extension to the wider society.

In the case of institutions governed by more market-driven parameters, student marks are the main determinant of the school's priorities, since it is they, in turn, which determine how schools are classed in the market-friendly rankings of "best" schools. Assessments lose their value and focus on a very limited set of variables, while teaching methodologies are confined to coaching pupils in exam techniques. Education is reduced to offering services to satisfy the school's customers – seen as consumers, not citizens.

Any analysis of the education policies put in place by conservative, neocolonial, neoliberal governments nowadays must also take into account the purpose and significance of the two main types of school system responsible for educating citizens: the public and the private (including so-called "charter" education, i.e. private schools funded with public money).

The differences between public, private, and charter institutions can be summarized in terms of nine core duties and responsibilities, while the same barometer allows us to gauge the extent to which schools in the public system are actually meeting the functions entrusted to them by society.

Comparison of Nine Core Duties

First, public schools are created, organized, and operated for the purpose of educating society's *citizens* as an equal right of all. Public education permits and encourages individual difference, provided that difference does not provoke inequality or injustice or restrict anybody else's rights. Pupils may not, therefore, be grouped or selected on the basis of social class, cultural capital, sex, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, nationality or ability.

Private and charter schools, on the other hand, are created, set up and operated to provide a service to their *customers*. The services offered vary in accordance with the economic capacity of the clientele – in other words, how much each person can afford to pay. Unequal access to services is accepted as a correlation of unequal personal economic potential. Pupils are selected in consideration of the benefits and advantages that may accrue to the school within the prevailing education market; the main concern is to improve academic performance in external assessment tests and to position the school as high up the rankings as possible. Private and charter schools, therefore, select their pupils based on the social class, cultural capital, race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, ability and religion of their customers, and operate like private clubs (Torres-Santomé, 2007).

Second, public schools are run in accordance with the principles of democratic participation and promote emancipatory education in the service of the community, and in the interests of the common good. Public education has always supported more *progressive pedagogies*, aimed at breaking down the

social, cultural, political, pedagogical, emotional, and intellectual barriers that favor more privileged social groups while disadvantaging people from lower social classes, underprivileged ethnicities, "undocumented" immigrants, women, etc., to ensure the perpetuation and legitimation of the existing order. As now, it was the public system that implemented Paulo Freire's *conscientization* (critical consciousness) and pedagogy of hope, the methods and concepts of Célestin Freinet, teaching and learning based on integrated curricular projects, critical pedagogy, intercultural education and, more recently, the commitment to inclusive pedagogies: curricula and classroom learning aimed at tackling questions of inequality and criticizing the failures and misrepresentations of policies of recognition in relation to democracy, redistribution, and political participation.

Curriculum planning, reform and assessment can, therefore, be achieved in a way that is consistent with the potential of education to empower citizens through access to up-to-date, relevant information and the development of their critical cooperation skills. A number of additional factors must also be in place, however, the promotion of optimistic citizens – equipped with the knowledge, methods, skills, and habits necessary to analyse economic, political, social, employment, and financial structures from the perspective of social justice – must be fostered in order to encourage the educational development of cooperation to improve pupils' ability to participate in joint actions that find solutions to problems and transform unjust structures. Their involvement in efforts and actions to improve the quality of life within the community and in society as a whole is paramount.

In the private system, schools follow a *fundamentally positivist-technocratic curriculum*, according to which education is conceived of in scientific terms as a design to be standardized and validated using clear quantitative data. The system allows for very little discussion (much less, any democratic discussion) of the possible political, social, and cultural functions of the curriculum. Priority is given to passing the exams and tests designed to assess pupils' knowledge of the course content for each subject based on quantifiable performance parameters, the aim being to ensure that students achieve the highest possible marks, especially in external assessments.

Critical pedagogy and critical curriculum perspectives are ignored, while concepts such as critical thought, cooperation, solidarity, helping others, etc. are considered only from the point of view of how they can benefit the individual or her/his group of equals. *Enterprise culture*, for example, is taught from the individualistic, capitalist perspective of acquiring personal wealth and encouraging business relations that produce financial profit for the individual or the owners and shareholders of the business. The question of social injustice is disposed of using Margaret Thatcher's TINA argument: "There is no alternative to capitalism."

Third, all schools in the public system have a political obligation to plan their curriculum with a view to ensuring pupils receive a fully rounded education in the experimental, social, and human sciences, arts, sport, and technology, that will aid their social and psychological development and educate them to exercise their rights and responsibilities as active, critical citizens. A genuinely public education socializes individual pupils to make them realize that they are part of

a larger community and collectively responsible for and with their neighbors. It teaches them how to be a person and to exercise their rights as citizens responsibly, creating and consolidating habits of solidarity and justice and high ethical standards. Pupils learn how to work together, help others, and engage in dialogue with people who are different. Public school curricula should be driven by optimism and confidence in the ability and potential of each child, regardless of social class, cultural capital, ethnicity, nationality, sex, sexuality, religion, or ability. Public education assumes that a different world is possible and that the way to achieve it is by equality, justice, solidarity, and participatory democracy.

In private schools, curriculum planning usually focuses on particular subjects over others, with more time devoted to subjects and content targeted by exit examinations and national and international testing. Priority is thus given to more technological, scientific, and experimental content (the STEM subjects: experimental science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), while the arts, humanities, and social sciences are treated as "lite" subjects.

Fourth, the public system has a duty to ensure that all members of the community receive a proper education, in keeping with the principle of equal opportunity. It makes sense, therefore, that people living in situations of disadvantage should receive more support. No effort or resource should be spared when it comes to student interests, and expenditure decisions should always be based on the needs of those who use the service: the pupils. Financial savings and profits should be reinvested in the school for the improvement of services and purchase of better, more up-to-date educational and teaching resources, with the aim of improving the work, responsibilities, and services entrusted to it by society.

As institutions where student intake is governed by "risk selection," private schools show a marked tendency to select pupils based on the amount of time and volume of teaching resources they are likely to require. The school is run and managed to generate profit and benefit for private interests. Its board of management, teachers, and other employees are constrained by the owners and shareholders to seek maximum financial and/or symbolic (reproduction of religious beliefs, ideologies, values, etc.) returns for the least expenditure of resources. All profits are private, and go towards expanding the capacity of *homo economicus* and *homo consumens* to accrue greater wealth to himself by purchasing, consuming, or investing in private goods.

Fifth, public schools *trust in the professionalism of their teachers* and should, therefore, receive every support and encouragement from government and other public authorities to provide ongoing training and development, together with the conditions necessary to improve their *professional capital* (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2014). This, in turn, leads to the improvement of curricular planning and implementation, and the overall raising of teaching standards. Teachers in the public sector should be allowed the *professional autonomy* to adapt their teaching methods and techniques to the diversity of pupils in their classrooms.

In private institutions, teachers and pupils alike are selected in accordance with the ideology of the school's owners. The lack of transparency involved, including failure to convene a competitive recruitment process or publish the selection criteria for the post, disregards the constitutional principles of equality, merit, and ability that govern the appointment of teachers in the public sector.

The approach is one of *depoliticized professionalism*, characterized by technical proposals that avoid any explicit discussion of the collateral effects and hidden curriculum conveyed.

Teachers are monitored by both parents and school heads, reducing their autonomy and restricting their professional function to inculcating the goals and principles of the private system. They are subjected to *continuous inspection and evaluation*, and possessed with the need to conform to quantifiable standards and measurements of performance in which they have had no say. Priority is given to achieving the highest possible scores in government exit examinations and periodic assessment tests by international organizations such as the OECD and IEA (PISA, PIRLS, and TIMSS).

Sixth, the public system caters for students of all kinds, with a particular focus on those worst affected by social, economic, cultural, intellectual, psychological, physical, or emotional disadvantage. As such, it invites support and cooperation from other organizations, groups and collectives in the design, creation, and implementation of public services and benefits, targeted especially at the sectors of society that need them the most. Educational goals and pedagogical organization are combined in the public system to safeguard the principles of diversity and equality that are the bedrock of any truly democratic society.

In the private system, collective interest is generally conceived of in terms of the specific social groups for whom each school and its program have been created. Relations with other organizations are exploited in the interests of those enrolled in the school and to reinforce the ideology (religious, economic, etc.) that is the institution's reason for being. While neoliberal propaganda may extol the freedom parents have to choose the school and curriculum best suited to their needs, the reality is quite the opposite: they do not choose the school, the school chooses them.

Seventh, public schools are horizontal, democratic structures in which participation by teachers, families, students, and the wider community is organized according to the principle of democracy. Management boards, staff meetings, and classrooms provide spaces for dialogue, disagreement, collaborative thinking, joint work plan creation, and contact, and active cooperation with different groups in society, without fear of reprisal from school management. There are more opportunities for teachers to develop their own educational proposals and greater professional autonomy to meet the needs, demands, and aspirations of the communities in which they work.

Private schools are organized hierarchically: vertical structures managed in accordance with the ideology of the school and in the interests of the patrons and families responsible for creating and/or financing it. Forums for participation are constrained by a climate of fear and intimidation in which teachers, subordinated to the interests and ideology of the trust, foundation, or religious order that owns the school, are less inclined to propose opinions or work plans of their own.

Eighth, public schools are given total freedom of choice in respect of the course materials and teaching resources they require to provide a quality education service. They are not limited by ideology or religion in the books, authors, documentaries, social media, software, etc. they choose to use. The commitment in

the public system to defend freedom of thought and inclusive, multicultural principles means that schools are obliged, not just to make pupils aware of the plurality and diversity of philosophies, ideologies and perspectives in the world, but to teach them to respect and coexist with them, engage in dialogue with others, and put their critical analytical skills to use.

While public schools are permitted to sign agreements with private companies for the provision of different services and supplies (e.g. food, cleaning products and materials, stationery, building, plumbing, etc.), these contracts must always be procured by public competition to guard against favoritism and ensure the best service at the best price.

Private and charter schools see business opportunities everywhere. Compulsory course materials, for example, often include textbooks (in paper and electronic formats) produced by privately-owned religious publishing companies. Similar prescriptions apply in relation to the school uniforms and sports clothes worn by pupils, school transport, trips and outings, canteen facilities, vending machines selling drinks and snacks, stationery (pens, folders, notepads, rucksacks, etc.), computer equipment (software, hard drives, memory sticks, tablets, etc.), and so on. Often, these services are contracted to private companies based on the principle of maximum return and increased financial gain, even if it means bypassing standard sales and distribution channels.

The same situation applies in the case of the lucrative business of extra-curricular activities which parents are "encouraged" to avail themselves of, and which has become a critical factor in the growing cultural breach between children educated in private and public schools. It is also worth remembering that children in private schools are selected from groups and classes at the high end of the social scale, and are therefore at an advantage before they ever enter the school system.

Finally, ninth, one of the fundamental reasons for the public education system's existence is to strengthen and create a more cohesive society and a sense of interdependence among its members.

It is impossible to focus on the public nature of educational service without highlighting the political considerations involved: all citizens realize that they are affected by the way services are designed and delivered, and that the decisions which they make individually may have wider repercussions for the people around them.

Education is a public good and a public service offered by right to all members of society without exception. A properly functioning service should therefore be fully inclusive, and not discriminate against any particular group or social class in favor of another.

The high proportion of pupils from upper-class and upper-middle-class families in private and charter schools has a doubly negative effect on education: while people with fewer resources begin to look on the private system as a model to be imitated and an ideal to be sought, public schools become a dumping ground for children with higher levels of risk and disadvantage. In the vast majority of cases, public schools are left to look after the pupils with the fewest resources and least cultural capital: children from underprivileged families (Roma-Gypsy communities, immigrants from poorer countries, speakers of non-prestige languages), children with disabilities and children with special needs.

The meaning and purpose of education in Spain today have been redefined by the three main types of education in the country to legitimize social inequality and rationalize the stratification of society as the result of individual effort. The tripartite system comprises three types of education: public schools, private and charter schools, and various forms of homeschooling (under the monitoring of groups such as *Asociación para la Libre Educación* (ALE), *Coordinación Catalana pel Reconeixement i la Regulació del Homeschooling* (CCRRH), *Crecer Sin Escuelas*, etc.)

The discourse of the family's freedom to choose presupposes that parents own their children and are therefore free to dispose of them as they wish without interference from other members of society, since their personal freedom does not interfere with the individual rights of others. However, the impact of educating particular sections of society in isolation from others does extend to the whole community, with children prevented from meeting and getting to know each other, exposing myths and false ideas about people from different cultures, communities, and backgrounds, and learning to work and live together.

Public policy that places teacher training and the education of society's youngest citizens in the hands of private education providers makes it very difficult to implement curricula aimed at encouraging recognition, participation and cooperation, and tackling issues of social, cultural and emotional justice, economic equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability. It hinders educational programs and strategies for the promotion of mutual understanding among children and young adults, and stands in the way of genuine social and educational inclusivity.

Notes

1 "Wert quiere 'españolizar' Cataluña." *El País*, October 10, 2012. Retrieved from: http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2012/10/10/actualidad/1349859896_604912.html
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18

Putting *Homo Economicus* to the Test

How Neoliberalism Measures the Value of Educational Life
Graham B. Slater and Gardner Seawright

At the World Bank Human Development Network Forum on March 2, 2011, in Washington, DC, former United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan declared, "education today is inseparable from the development of human capital." Playing on the persistent trope that public education in the US is an inefficient, failed institution that hinders economic growth and threatens national security (Berliner & Biddle, 1995), Duncan claimed rather dramatically that "improving education is vital to 'win the future' for America." In nearly the same breath, however, he was quick to clarify that the need to maximize the educational production of human capital could also be a collective global endeavor, one leading "all nations to win the future together." The rhetorical move away from the Cold War protectionism of previous generations of US educational policy, and toward a collaborative global vision, might seem to be a progressive change. But in fact, it indicates a general shift in perspectives on the purpose of education toward a neoliberal vision in which public education's role in eliminating inequality and promoting social well-being is foisted onto students and teachers, tied directly to their individual effort and effectiveness. This transfer of responsibility coincides with the escalation of both nationally and globally-focused dedication to positivist forms of measurement and comparison, processes that are facilitated by new forms of standardization and assessment and the corporate imposition of new testing technologies and evaluation metrics.

Crucial to Duncan's vision of the human capital imperative was the prioritization of market-based reform, a movement that had been at the forefront of US educational debates for several decades, but which has recently been amplified by the proliferation of adaptive and algorithmic technologies and an attendant fetish for "big data" solutions to complex educational and social problems. The general assumption behind this reform movement is that market competition and private investment are ideal mechanisms for reducing costs and ensuring quality instruction and high achievement in education. Yet key to ensuring that market-based policies yield their intended effects have been more specific mechanisms of

assessing students and evaluating teachers. In this chapter, we examine the relationship between recent trends in standardized testing and accountability metrics, and the increasingly global educational imperative to develop human capital using big data tools and adaptive testing technologies. Shifting away from the predominant focus in educational research on standardization's epistemological dimensions – its effects on curriculum and knowledge production – we aim to further develop critiques of the political and economic consequences of standardized testing by framing the issue within the global problematic of capitalist struggles over value. This framing has two central meanings. The first is concerned with the way neoliberal educational reforms across the globe *are bound up in the basic struggle for capitalists to accumulate surplus value* (and profit). The second is the attendant problem of how such a mode of production *fosters stratified social relations in which different forms of social life are unequally valued.* Our aim in pursuing this line of thought is to consider more carefully how new standardized testing technologies and assessment metrics impact the educational formation of subjectivity and promote a more thoroughly economized vision of social life.

The human capital imperative constitutes a global educational problem. Tied primarily to a neoliberal political rationality, the human capital imperative influences education policy-making in an expanding array of settings. More crucially, its impact on knowledge, politics, and economy permeates the increasingly porous borders of nation and culture, colonizing the subjectivities of actors and collectives with an austere, anti-social rationality of calculation, risk, and hyper-economic individualism. In particular, we focus on the way current standardized testing practices and evaluation measures are geared toward producing the ideal human capital subject: *homo economicus.* Such efforts do "not simply change what people do," but instead seek to fundamentally change "who they are" (Ball, 2003, p. 215). Though this process is often promoted by curriculum and pedagogy (Au, 2007), it is also advanced *by the specific technological form that assessment and measurement practices take, rather than the mere content they include.* Against the notion that cultivating human capital will reduce inequality and produce a market-driven global utopia, we argue that standardized testing and the neoliberal evaluation imaginary reduce educational life to an exchange-based field of value. In this view, students' productive potential should be invested in, optimized, and extracted, and value-added performance metrics can accurately measure the quality of educational instruction (Pierce, 2013). The human capital imperative threatens education with wholesale economization and the enclosure of social possibility within a narrow vision of competitive rationality and consumer choice. Though education may be an endeavor that cannot be extricated from questions of value, it is one in which the struggle over value – the hegemony of exchange, or fidelity to use – remains open and contested.

Neoliberalism, Educational Reform, and the Human Capital Imperative

In the United States, public education has undergone over three decades of privatization, standardization, and exposure to a degrading discourse of failure that has aimed to justify the institution's widespread disassembly and reconstruction.

At the heart of this process lie the tropes of efficiency and efficacy, which are regularly deployed as common-sense contrasts to the bureaucratic bloat and the rank-and-file mediocrity that supposedly characterize public schools (see Saltman, 2012). Public schools, according to the reformist narrative, have long struggled to adequately serve students, and at the apogee of the Cold War, they threatened U.S. economic prosperity and national security. According to Clayton Pierce (2013), this line of criticism is alive and well in the current phase of reform, which has only accelerated in the past decade. Under the "neo-*Sputnik* fervor" characterizing the current phase of school reform today, "economic vitality" and "the nation's ability to reenergize its high-tech human capital base" remain at the forefront of discourses advocating privatization, competition, and technology-driven forms of pedagogy and assessment (p. 2). While this narrative parades under the guise of a fidelity to the needs of students and the goal of high-quality education, it is, in fact, driven by the immense profitability of the educational sector, serving primarily to advance the hyper-economization of social life, intensifying long-standing social inequalities along the way.

Of course, compulsory schooling in capitalist societies has long played a significant role in reproducing a stratified labor force and attempting to justify the exploitative relations inherent to capitalist production (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). In this sense, the cultivation of human capital has long been a central concern for institutionalized forms of modern education. However, during a historical moment of globalization in which many social contexts are heavily influenced by market-driven thought and policies, human capital has taken on a heightened, more crucial meaning, and has been positioned as ever more "integral to the success of the neoliberal restructuring of education" (Pierce, 2013, p. 44). Thus, far more than a technical strategy or a mere institutional rearrangement, the human capital imperative driving the neoliberal overhaul of education is evidence of a "fundamental transformation in methods of valuation and measure of human life by capital" (Adamson, 2009, p. 272). This transformation is particularly troubling because, as many have noted, human capital theories traditionally subordinate the needs and desires of human life to reified economic models, rather than the other way around (see Lemke, 2011).

An awareness of the deep social and individual transformations mandated by the human capital imperative is not new to critical theory. In particular, this problematic has been taken up by radical critics of mainstream economics, who challenge the flawed vision of rationality at the heart of human capital theory, and theorists of biopolitics, who have been concerned with governing strategies that place *life itself* at the center of politics. Shared between both approaches is a rejection of human capital theory's perverse tendency, by placing the optimized production of surplus value at the masthead of the proclaimed social good, to render much human life itself as a surplus. As Michel Foucault (2004) warned in his now famous lectures at the Collège de France in 1979:

> As soon as a society poses itself the problem of the improvement of its human capital in general, it is inevitable that the problem of the control, screening, and improvement of the human capital of individuals, as a function of unions and consequent reproduction, will become actual, or at any rate, called for. (p. 228)

Under the sway of such an imperative, the "knowledges, skills, and health" of individual subjects – and thus, simultaneously, of the population as a whole – come to constitute "a form of fixed capital" (Adamson, 2009, p. 272). These two points are particularly important to the development of any critique of human capital education, for they indicate a crucial theoretical and political tension. That is, though dominant (that is, neoliberal) human capital discourse proceeds along a relatively affirmative terrain on which social subjects are framed as relatively agentic – pursuing self-interested "investment" strategies, freed from the constraints and influence of power – the imperative of maximizing human capital necessitates invasive, even repressive, strategies of governmentality. In this light, the purportedly "entrepreneurial" subjects of human capital education are also objectified as cogs in the neoliberal growth machinery.

The human capital imperative in education is often construed as a national problem. And in a sense, this is true. Yet national education policy contexts are affected by global flows of power and economy (see Dale, 1999). Human capital certainly plays a significant role in almost any national economy, however, in an era of intense globalization and transnational corporatization, the meaning of such a statement is truncated if not incorporated into a broader understanding of the global force of neoliberalism, specifically, which manifests to different degrees in different national, social, and political contexts. Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill (2004) support such a notion, arguing that "while a great deal of recent educational policy can be explained in terms of the sociological concept of globalization … it must be theoretically represented in relation to the political philosophy of neoliberalism" (p. 13). And despite the fact that "global policy pressures and globalized policy discourses … always manifest in vernacular ways," the human capital imperative is significant and troubling for its essentially unfettered global scope of educational vision (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. x).

Despite the fact that human capital, in its neoliberal presentation, is put forth as meritocratic, an individual capacity, and the key to social welfare, it is at root a fundamentally exploitative concept. Even in Adam Smith's early liberal formulation, human capital stood beside machines, buildings, and so-called improvements to land in the dank pantheon of "fixed capital" (Adamson, 2009). Though, even in Marxian articulations, human labor power – the revolutionary tradition's affirmative corollary to the objectifying notion of human capital – is tied to value-generating potentiality, the key distinction rests on the collective recipient of the value that is ultimately produced by laboring activity. In the capitalist system of exchange value, surplus value is accumulated by capitalists; in an emancipated system predicated on use value, surplus value is returned, in an augmented form, to its originary source as commonwealth for the collective good (see Hardt & Negri, 2009).

In societies under the spell of market fervor, neoliberal rationality manifests a totalizing scope in its "discursive production of everyone as human capital" (Brown, 2016, p. 3). The near wholesale economization of society rearticulates previous "non-economic" spheres of life as markets, sites of investment, and opportunities for strategic entrepreneurialism. Ultimately, this has the effect of rendering the globe a risky terrain best navigated by relying on competitive

calculation rather than ethics of cooperation and mutual aid. Instead of cultivating a society filled with assertive, undaunted subjects negotiating the hazardous social field of neoliberalism with self-assurance, however, "the combined effect," according to Wendy Brown (2016), "is to generate intensely isolated and unprotected individuals, persistently in peril of deracination and deprivation of basic life support, wholly vulnerable to capital's vicissitudes" (p. 3). Yet rather than a condition of targeted political imposition that is differentially distributed according to class, race, and gender, neoliberal insecurity is oddly construed as a shared condition of sorts, one that necessitates an austerity politics that perversely rationalizes further neoliberal restructuring (see Atasay, 2014; Slater, 2015). In particular, students are exposed to pedagogies, data regimes, and techno-scientific measurement processes that reinforce the neoliberal logic that precarious social contexts are best navigated with an economistic subjectivity.

Subjects of Interest, Subjects of Value: *Homo Economicus* and the Global War over Measure

For many critical scholars, the deluge of neoliberal education reforms constitutes a form of *enclosure*, the exclusionary and dispossessive process of institutional and social reconstruction that captures common wealth for private gain (see De Lissovoy, 2008; De Lissovoy, Means, & Saltman, 2015; Slater, 2014). But the meaning of enclosure exceeds pure concrete materiality, infiltrating the symbolic and existential registers, landing heavily on the worldviews of those subjected to virulent depredations. This is particularly crucial in the highly political and relational realm of education. "[M]aterial and symbolic relations of enclosure," according to De Lissovoy, Means, and Saltman (2015), "need to be understood as attempting to call into being an idealized neoliberal subject of education. This is a subject who largely identifies as a consuming economic actor in a competitive and fragmented environment" (p. 46). "The ideal subject of neoliberal education," they continue, "is one who makes rationally calculated choices in an educational market to acquire scarce educational resources and out-hustle their rivals for credentials in an increasingly transient and precarious employment structure" (p. 46). That subject is *homo economicus*.

Homo economicus is constructed as a universal human subject position that social actors can come to inhabit by consistently making rational choices that are driven by the motives of economic incentive and set personal gain as their target. Though this model of human subjectivity is generally perceived by many as benign because it is tied to an interest-driven rationality – a rationality supported by the hyper-economism of neoliberalism – the figure of *homo economicus*, when taken to its conclusion, renders human life "an elevated consumerist survival machine capable of morphing into different forms to achieve the scheme of the moment" (Saltman, 2016b, p. 105). In this portrayal, *homo economicus* is not a benign individual among many who makes sensible choices that, when aggregated at the broader level of human capital society, tally up to the social good of growth and prosperity. Rather, *homo economicus* is a human subject that is fundamentally pitted against others. It is a figure ideally suited for a dystopian

realm marred by the duplicitous calculations of what are at their core anti-social individuals (see Saltman, 2016b).

According to Jason Read (2009), this fundamental tension in the theory of *homo economicus* resides in the neoliberal shift to a specifically economic anthropology of the human subject. "What changes," he writes, "is the emphasis from an anthropology of exchange to one of competition … while exchange was considered to be natural, competition is understood by the neo-liberals of the twentieth century to be an artificial relation" (p. 28). Thus, the conditions of competition necessary for *homo economicus* to emerge, live, and thrive are not innately present in the socio-political field, but must instead be cultivated. This is, in part, why Philip Mirowski (2013) calls neoliberalism "a constructivist project." And it is this slippage between meritocratic idealism and necessary constructivism that causes the most tension in the neoliberal vision of *homo economicus*. If it is not innate, this figure of social subjectivity must be cultivated not only through self-investing strategies, but through corporate/state assurance of the conditions for its flourishing as well. Even if *homo economicus* could be actualized with any integrity, if it was a truly attainable subject position, those subjects would still live their lives in complex social fields and under historically produced political economic conditions. In doing so, these subjects would necessarily draw on capitalist, racist, sexist, and colonial logics as the tools with which to make their calculations and investments. As such, strategies of maximizing interest and optimizing human capital are likely to be cruel and damaging, rather than democratic and egalitarian.

In *Education in the Age of Biocapitalism*, Clayton Pierce (2013) provides a detailed theoretical account of the neoliberal educational effort to instantiate *homo economicus* as the primary social subject. "In a world carved out for *Homo economicus*," he writes, education is "cast as an individuated practice of investment and entrepreneurial acumen" (p. 13). Troublingly, however, such individuation divorces education from more democratic concerns for social life, as the process of "isolating and valorizing human life through measurement techniques" presents an obstacle to "deep ethical and political questions by substituting in the figure of *Homo economicus* as the archetype of human moral action" (p. 47). Even more concerning for Pierce is the resemblance between contemporary theories of human capital optimization in the educational production of *homo economicus* and older models of maximizing the value-producing potential of African-American slaves in the United States. In more recent work, Pierce (2015) argues that this connection points to the ethical imperative of reframing neoliberal human capital education as an "educational biopolitics where the life value of the urban poor and communities of color is not considered worthy of investment" (p. 291). This problem is an increasingly global one, as governments worldwide buy in to international testing platforms and enforce competitive standards that reinforce mystifying notions of the role of human capital in the "development" of the global economy.

The focus on measurement in the neoliberal political economy of education is an incorporated facet of the broader scientific rationality guiding neoliberalism's data fetish, a rationality which is shot through with "[a]ssumptions about the data-oriented efficiency and accuracy of metrics," allowing political elites "to use the rationale of science to point government and its multiple partners toward

market-oriented 'solutions' to social problems" (Mitchell, 2017, p. 752). Arguing against the tendency in some strands of critical theory to privilege the liberatory potential of "immaterial labor," Massimo De Angelis and David Harvie (2009) insist that, while the productive activity driving "cognitive capitalism" exceeds measure in the most rigid quantitative sense, the most ardent proponents of neo-liberal reforms "are attempting to do just that" (p. 5). "An army of economists, statisticians, management-scientists and consultants, information-specialists, accountants, bureaucrats, political strategists and others," they explain, "is engaged in a struggle to commensurate heterogeneous concrete human activities on the basis of equal quantities of human labour. that is, to link work and value" (pp. 5–6). Education, driven by the human capital imperative, is equally bound up in this global "war over measure." The struggle to measure nearly all facets of educational activity "has had a profound impact on educational practice, from the highest levels of educational policy at national and supra-national levels down to the practices of local schools and teachers" (Biesta, 2010, p. 12). This trend is particularly evident, not only in the context of the persistence of stand-ardized testing and high-stakes accountability metrics, but in the spread of what Ben Williamson (2016) calls "digital education governance," a process within which "digital technologies, software packages and their underlying standards, code and algorithmic procedures are increasingly being inserted into the admin-istrative infrastructure of education systems" (p. 123).

At the heart of the escalating global war over measure is the new fetish of "big data." The enhancement of digital and algorithmic technological capacities in recent years has enabled the collection, collation, management, and most impor-tantly, the exploitation of massive amounts of data "for private ends: the accumu-lation of capital and control by a small elite" (Chis, 2015, p. 52). Bodies, as well as subjectivities, in this context, become sources and sites of the production of data, and the incautious valorization of this development has serious political implica-tions. "The speed and nature of data collection," Chis (2015) warns, "are acceler-ated to the extent where technocratic control may become incorporated and augmented within everyday life and the body/life itself" (p. 52). The invasive siphoning of data becomes an almost unnoticeable part of our lives, and thus, is slowly normalized in a manner in which generations of science fiction writers have foreshadowed. In the process, as Ted Striphas (2015) points out, culture takes on an algorithmic character in which

> the forms of decision-making and contestation that comprise the ongoing struggle to determine the values, practices and artifacts – the culture, as it were – of specific groups are essentially privatized, subordinating demo-cratic modes of public deliberation to the purportedly hyper-efficient objectivity of corporate data systems. (p. 406)

Although there is significant cultural buy-in to big data commodification, as evi-denced by the willing surrender of biometric data through products such as the wildly popular FitBit, which tracks and quantifies daily exercise and fitness, or general assent to Amazon's "convenient" algorithmic recommendations of even more commodities to buy based on a user's previous purchases, the increased insinuation of big data into aspects of daily life also entails a significant dose of

psychically and socially degrading anxiety (Chis, 2015). For Chis (2015), this is due in large part to the withering of healthy forms of the public in the age of privatization and austerity. Under neoliberalism, anxiety is understandably heightened, as there is no longer a particularly robust public sense of collectivity or shared concern for social welfare, but also because of the specific and acute forms of social violation visited upon people (often from groups that have long been targeted by domination) within a callous matrix of cultural politics of responsibility and resilience. Rather, big data primarily serves as a mechanism of surveillance and control in a moment characterized by audit culture and the austere mandates of efficiency and effectiveness. Such anxiety is attached to the rise of big data technologies in the educational arena, as well, as evidenced by the intense array of "metrics" that promise to track and assess every manner of educational process and problem. Though accountability and assessment metrics are advanced by their advocates – primarily corporate school reformers and those who support narratives of public educational failure – as positive technologies in the service of improving educational practice and learning outcomes, "never before has so much metrical energy been expended with so little accompanying clarity regarding the nature of our efforts to pass on the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of human cultures and prepare youth for the social transformation they must lead" (Garrison, 2015; see also Saltman & Means, 2017).

The Techno-Scientific Production of Educational Life

In "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology," Herbert Marcuse ([1941] 1982) argued that technology, rather than wholly constituted by the array of devices and knowledge available in any given society, is itself a social process that plays an integral role in "organizing and perpetuating (or changing) social relationships," potentially serving as both "a manifestation of prevalent thought and behavior patterns, [and] an instrument for control and domination" (p. 139). Reflecting on the administrative cult of techno-scientific efficiency that characterized Third Reich fascism, Marcuse lamented the rise of a "technological rationality" in which the patterns and processes of human action are largely captured by the logics and modes of operation of the proliferating array of machinery at hand. Within the bounds of this rationality, "[i]ndividual distinctions in the aptitude, insight and knowledge are transformed into different quanta of skill and training, to be coordinated at any time within the common framework of standardized performances" (p. 142). The resemblance here to contemporary forms of human capital education, and to neoliberal forms of assessment and measurement, should be increasingly apparent and troubling.

If anything, Marcuse's vision is even more salient today, particularly in the realm of institutionalized education, in which:

> policy discussions of educational technology equate the expansion of educational technology with capitalist growth, assume that technology is a prerequisite for the proper formation of future potential workers and

consumers, assume that good teaching must use technology to be effective, and assume that even bad teaching can be made effective with technology. (Saltman, 2016a, p. 113)

Such resolute "technophilia" is magnified by the influence of venture capitalists and corporate school reformers, who doggedly hawk new educational technologies in the quest for heightened profits, and to secure invasive forms of corporeal and pedagogical control (Saltman, 2016b; see also Selwyn, 2016). Yet these insidious innovations are packaged as exciting upgrades, new products with which to improve the purportedly stunted forms of teaching and learning targeted by the high-stakes accountability movement in recent decades. "[B]ig data, cloud computing, learning analytic software, and adaptive learning systems," reformers insist, "hold the potential to fundamentally 'reinvent education for the twenty-first century'" (Roberts-Mahoney, Means, & Garrison, 2016, p. 405).

And indeed they do. Just as the vast and rapid expansion of digital technological capabilities is fundamentally changing social and political life on a planetary scale, education in many settings across the globe is being fundamentally transformed by technological innovation and technology-driven policies. Catalyzing this transformation is the fervor for "personalized learning technologies." Heather Roberts-Mahoney, Alexander Means, and Mark Garrison (2016) refer to the increasing prominence of technological personalization in neoliberal school reform as the "Netflixing" of human capital development. Just as many major corporations such as Netflix, Google, Amazon, and others rely on adaptive and responsive digital technological platforms, advocates of personalized learning push for the utilization of algorithmic programs, computer-adaptive testing, and other data-driven and collecting systems that, they claim, efficiently enhance student learning by precisely tailoring educational processes – replacing engaged forms of pedagogy – to the skills and needs of students. Thus, the issue is not so much that these technological shifts are reinventing education, but is instead the form and ultimate purpose of that reinvention.

From this perspective, our concern is not the utilization of technology in education *per se*, but rather the consequences of uncritical valorization of and increased reliance upon particular types of technology. In *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies*, Jodi Dean (2009) makes a similar argument about enhanced technologies and networks of communication. In the neoliberal era, she argues, digital technologies organize and streamline new communicative networks, facilitating both the production and consumption of information, which in turn are framed as inherently democratizing developments. If access to information is increased, democratic capabilities become increasingly unfettered. The troubling underside of this argument, for Dean, is that politics is portrayed, to a staggering degree, as "content," reducing democracy to a "politics that talks without responding" (p. 22). In this context, we often see transformative political potential captured in vapid circuits of information and forms of expression that rarely coalesce into meaningful social activity or political action. Similarly, in the context of human capital education, these new technologies are framed as an unquestionable educational good, and are incorporated into the ever-entrenching neoliberal common sense of educational individualization and corporate control.

Clearly this development unveils a broad and troubling array of problems for critical scholars. However, what we want to focus on here is how new technological platforms for testing, evaluating, measuring, and assessing students, teachers, and even entire schools, are designed to more efficiently maximize human capital, and to produce neoliberal forms of subjectivity through techno-scientific means. Crucial to our argument is that the *technological form and practice* of many of these technological innovations, when applied to education, reinforce the logics of human capital, competitive individualism, and neoliberal rationality as much, if not more, than the content of standardized tests and curriculum. That is, the increasingly data-driven algorithmic process of assessing students constitutes a technological refinement of optimizing, measuring, assessing, and ultimately *producing*, human capital in the educational figure of *homo economicus*. In this sense, as theorists of educational biopolitics argue, neoliberal and corporate-driven forms of schooling increasingly put the question of *life itself* at the forefront of policy and practice in education (see Bourassa, 2011; Giroux, 2009; Lewis, 2009; Pierce, 2013; Simons, 2006). Two prominent examples of the techno-scientific production of forms of educational life that correspond to the human capital imperative are: (1) computer-adaptive testing; and (2) value-added metrics.

Computer-adaptive testing (CAT) has emerged in recent years as the benchmark model for high-stakes testing in K-12 schools in the US, becoming the "industry standard" for international educational research entities and cross-national testing platforms (see Thompson, forthcoming). In the US, the rise of CAT as the primary model for standardized testing has emerged as a response to the Race to the Top funding initiative's call to develop "next-generation assessments," which are intended to transcend the traditional limitations of multiple-choice "bubble tests" and to provide innovative means of measuring students' knowledge and skills by implementing "digital learning environments," along with "adaptive and personalized learning and other applications of predictive analytics" (Sellar & Thompson, 2016, p. 497). Viewed in this light, these technological developments in assessment practices are to be seen as progressive educational endeavors, positioning corporate-developed smart educational technologies as the harbinger of more effective forms of teaching and learning. Successful next-generation assessments are designed to complement other aspects of comprehensive education reforms that are aimed at maximizing human capital development, and to aid in the realization of the holistic "cradle to career" educational agenda in the US, and transnational competitiveness of students from different contexts ("developed" and "developing") across the globe.

In response to the call for next generation assessments, education policy-makers and educational technology corporations have embraced computer-adaptive testing. For instance, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) was awarded contracts by the consortium initially charged with the task of developing next-generation assessments that would prove compatible with the new Common Core State Standards. The particular CAT developed by AIR was used by the consortium's participating states, but it also set a new standard for what next-generation assessments should look like. Another sign of CAT's rise to prominence in the realm of educational assessment is evidenced by its implementation

in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The international scores gathered through PISA have led many American politicians to lament the low standing of the United States in the global educational hierarchy, adding fuel to calls for competitive educational reforms so the US can, to borrow Duncan's phrase once more, "win the future." While CAT is not widely used across the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development's (OECD) current array of tests and testing platforms, the OECD has included CAT as an integral part of its longer-term strategy for the PISA test.

CAT has been widely adopted as an assessment method because of its perceived precision and efficiency. The attributes of CAT appeal across political affiliations. While fixed-form tests (e.g. "bubble sheet tests") cater to so-called "average" students, CAT, according to advocates, actively adapts to the ability of individual students (see Thompson, forthcoming). This individualization also appeals to many progressives who hold to the old dictum that urges educators to "meet students where they are." Traditional fixed-form tests are designed to assess a decontextualized majority of students, creating a situation in which more proficient examinees have to wade through unchallenging questions before answering questions that are viewed as within their perceived range of ability, while at the same time forcing "less proficient" students to endure a marathon of questions that are inordinately (that is to say, unfairly) difficult. CAT has been heralded by educational technology advocates as a remedy to this problem, and is considered by many to be the most efficient way to optimize human capital, and thus, to extract students' value-producing potential (see Pierce, 2013).

As an assessment technology, CAT is uniquely responsive to the human capital imperative driving neoliberal education. In a way, adaptive testing models might be seen as the logical evolution of fixed-form testing. In traditional fixed-form assessments, the "average" student catered to by tests places limits on the potential of different test-takers. Human capital theory, which views people as individuated units of value-producing potential, promotes an ideology that the degree to which individuals cultivate their human capital potential reflects their ingenuity, savvy, work ethic, and rationality. Adaptive forms of algorithm-driven testing reflect this theory by hosting a broader range of questions, allowing "exceptional students" to provide evidence of their own unique ability to cultivate their human capital through testing performances. In its ability to adapt to the test-taker, CAT not only *evaluates*, but also facilitates the *valuation* of the productive capacity (i.e. the embodied property that is human capital) of individual students. In other words, as a student is being assessed, the test literally adapts to their human capital potential. In this way, following Marcuse ([1941] 1982), CAT organizes and perpetuates educational relationships that are premised upon the idea that students are indeed individual units of educational acumen that, when empirically accounted for, predict a student's success in a world curated for the emergence of optimized hordes of *homo economicus*. Thus, many recent developments in testing technology not only deal with knowledge production, but also influence the global political economy of education under neoliberalism.

In addition to computer-adaptive testing, value-added metrics (VAM) function within a matrix of educational technologies that are animated by the assumption

that the human capital, and thus, the social value of students and teachers can and should be quantified in market terms of competition and high-stakes accountability. Over time, this ever-present matrix of educational technology disciplines educational settings and pedagogical praxis, fundamentally shaping the structure of the environment. The disciplinary character of educational technology harbors a capacity to manipulate and radically alter its surroundings. In this way, educational technologies set the norms for educational behaviors, relationships, and ultimately what it means to be an educated person.

VAM, in particular, have been implemented as a measure of teacher effectiveness. Similar to the systemic changes made to high stakes testing, how teacher effectiveness is understood and assessed became linked to human capital logics in an intensified way. The effectiveness of a teacher is determined by the amount of value that they add to their student. Or framed within the language of human capital theory, pedagogical effectiveness is judged according to the value that teachers contribute to their students. In this way, VAM are concerned with students' latent potential to produce value, and are thus not only concerned with *production* now, but also *extraction* and *accumulation* in the future. How effectively a teacher adds value to their students routinely impacts their earnings according various merit-pay schemes. Bonus pay for highly effective teachers can be found, for example, in many settings across the US, such as New York City schools. Perhaps even more troublingly, schools in Florida directly tie the remuneration of teachers to this misleading and methodologically-defective neoliberal metric. Value-added approaches have also been used to justify the dismissal of "ineffective teachers," a process that has taken place in school districts across the US, to the dismay of teachers' unions and educational researchers who denounce the validity of VAM (Pierce, 2013).

The most common variable used in VAM to decide the effectiveness of a teacher is student scores on high-stakes standardized tests. In the era of the assumed precision assessments associated with CAT, VAM are marketed by educational research and assessment companies as an additional and complementary level of precise assessment of a whole educational system. VAM operate on the assumption of equal educational opportunity based upon a homogeneous view of a student's potential to succeed. This can be seen across various VAM modeling, and the way they attempt to control for supposedly extraneous variables like race, class, and gender is a central feature. The capacity of VAM to control for these variables is imperfect in its technical application, creating a situation in which some teachers may be misclassified depending on the particular statistical model in operation and the variables it considers. VAM appear even more flawed, and ethically problematic, when considering that the basic assumption that all students have the same chance to succeed (construed as opportunity and a falsely affirmative definition of potential) within the current system, when, in fact, schools across the world, but especially in the United States, are highly stratified institutions in which unequal funding, racial segregation, poverty, food insecurity, citizenship status, and language, all contribute to starkly unequal educational opportunities.

In various ways, value-added schemes threaten not only to reinforce, but also to exacerbate, racial disparities in testing outcomes (and in education. VAM are

designed to assess the value added to students who are perceived as homogeneous units of educational, and thus of economic, potential). As Clayton Pierce (2013) explains, when the goal of schooling is rooted in perspective focused on the production of economic value in students then the historical forces of oppression get recoded as economic failure. In other words, VAM, in conjunction with other neoliberal technologies like CAT, reinforce racial segregation in schools by promoting an assessment model (of teachers and students) that sees students of color in disinvested schools as inherently devalued. In VAM's attempt to disregard the variables of race, class, and gender, as not applicable in the consideration of teacher effectiveness, they have in turn disregarded a historical legacy of structural educational inequality that indeed set certain students up for failure.

Operating under the assumption that historical barriers to educational success do not exist, VAM implicitly advocate for the continued devaluation of marginalized educational lives in different contexts across the globe. This is particularly clear when considering the ways VAM affect teachers' wages. If the effectiveness of a teacher is determined by the value added to an (abstract and hypothetical) student, then teaching students from backgrounds that historically do not perform well on tests is not only evacuated of incentive (a clear degradation of educational purpose), but even constitutes a threat to teachers' financial well-being and professional security. But more insidiously, when considering the degree to which these same human capital logics set the social norm in schools, value-based and extractive educational practices perpetuate racial stereotypes that students of color are inferior. In doing so, VAM exacerbate disinvestment in public schools and forms of educational life that are viewed by the logics of neoliberalism as intrinsically less valuable sites of human capital production.

Rethinking Educational Questions of Value at the Limits of Neoliberal Measurement

In her 2000 presidential address to the American Educational Research Association, Lorrie Shepard argued that educational scholars and practitioners

> have not only to make assessment more informative, more insightfully tied to learning steps, but at the same time we must change the social meaning of evaluation. Our aim should be to change our cultural practices so that students and teachers look to assessment as a source of insight and help instead of an occasion for meting out rewards and punishments. (p. 10)

Indeed. Yet in the intervening period, the hegemony of standardized testing, along with competitive and comparative forms of assessment such as PISA, have only been entrenched as the primary approaches to measuring student learning. And though Shepard's proclamation was, in many ways, compelling, her argument was nevertheless framed within the concept of a "learning culture" that does not sufficiently interrogate the diffusion of neoliberal rationality and the relationship between the political economy of schooling and the global accumulation of capital.

Concerted opposition to standardized testing and neoliberal forms of human capital measurement have emerged in recent years, threatening the hegemony of corporate control of assessment technologies and evaluation practices. In the United States, for example, an "opt-out" movement of students, teachers, parents, and educational activists has begun to refuse the imposition of standardized tests, insisting that the social value of young people in schools amounts to far "more than a score" (Hagopian, 2014). The opt-out movement constitutes more than a symbolic political maneuver, though it is a powerful one. Collective test refusal movements also deliberately withhold "the data that is the very fuel of the corporate education reform machine," starving neoliberal advocates of the "empirical" grist that supposedly justifies their discourses of human capital deficit and educational crisis (Au & Hollar, 2016, p. 36). In this sense, test refusal deprives big data neoliberalism of the fuel it needs to reproduce itself, just as strikes deprive capital of the labor power it must have in order to produce and accumulate value.

The technological rationality of neoliberalism only sees us speeding toward the precipice of "a world where the intellectual functions have to account for their every moment with a stop-watch" (Adorno, 2005, p. 127). Even in the face of widespread movements refusing the reductive economism and stagnant educational vision of the neoliberal era of assessment, evaluation, and measurement, as Kenneth Saltman (2016a) rightly points out, "[i]t will be years before the inertia for testing and standardization can potentially be reversed, and such a reversal is hardly guaranteed" (p. 110). This is due, to a significant degree, to the ideological depths that positivist theories of assessment and conservative logics of standardization have insinuated themselves into the social psyche. "The value of knowledge," Henry Giroux (2012) laments,

> is now linked to a crude instrumentalism, and the only mode of education that seems to matter is that which enthusiastically endorses learning marketable skills, embracing a survival-of-the-fittest ethic, and defining the good life solely through accumulation and disposal of the latest consumer goods. (p. 44)

The neoliberal forms of measurement that pervade educational contexts in many places across the globe are attuned to the logic of exchange-value. That is, the impulse to standardize knowledge and evaluate it within competitive frameworks forefronts the imperative of equivalency – the ability to compare students, teachers, and indeed the complex process of *learning* itself. And equivalency, in turn, is crucial to the technocratic optimization of the value-producing potential that is human capital. In this stark depiction, knowledge and the outcomes of compulsory education are tied to the ability to produce value that can be exchanged (and thus, that can also be accumulated by capitalists), rather than value produced democratically, sustainably, and thus non-exploitatively, for collective use. Thus, human capital (as the organizing principle of the political economy of neoliberal education), and *homo economicus* (as the ideal social subject summoned by this process), are not only ill-suited, but are in fact diametrically opposed, to critical visions of education that are committed to the

struggle for an egalitarian world. Faced with a period of global educational reform in which the big data fetish and technocratic educational productivism strangle alternative visions of a "broader reconstruction of society against neoliberalism," we are faced with a series of questions (De Lissovoy, Means, & Saltman, 2015, p. 99). What form could alternatives to adaptive and data-driven standardized testing take? How can we think about assessment, evaluation, and measurement outside of neoliberal visions of human capital and the capitalist logic of exchange-value? And how might we develop new ways of imagining education in the context of globality that do not reinforce colonialism, imperialist national hierarchies, and the rule of capital?

The task at hand for scholars of educational reform across the globe is urgent, requiring more than the adjustment of policies or reordering of hierarchies of governance. The global educational reform movement is, in many ways, paired with the reproduction and expansion of the political economy of global capital. It not only seeks to profit from control of schooling across the world, but to produce educational life in the mold of *homo economicus*. In this sense, global educational reform is a crucial component in the neoliberal restructuring of social life at a planetary scale. As Pauline Lipman (2004) argues, "The struggle over the direction of education policy is not only a question of who is being prepared for what roles in the economy and society, but of how we define the purpose of education and the kind of society we want to be" (p. 11).

Though neoliberals and advocates of marketization of all stripes argue otherwise, a society populated by callous and calculating swarms of *homo economicus* is not merely objectionable, but threatens the very possibility of egalitarian social relations. The neoliberal vision of the economically calculating society is predicated upon a degrading anti-social mythology that, while not truly attainable, stunts viable alternatives in the destructive quest for corporate-controlled educational markets across the globe. Beyond its basic believability as an ideal construct for educational or social subjectivity, *homo economicus* more importantly fails ethical and political tests. The quest to fit young people into an economized mold of subjectivity threatens to distort and damage, though the consequences are perhaps only partial or impermanent, as the resistant agency of youth is built of heavy-duty material. Yet this fact, of course, does not vindicate the neoliberal project of educational restructuring. Rather, it merely reinforces the necessity of developing alternative visions of education that lie outside the stultifying productivism and competitive individualism that characterize dominant approaches. This is a global problem, we have argued, in larger part because of the entanglement between educational economism and the unfettered extractive accumulationism of global capital. That is, the production of *homo economicus* through the measurement apparatuses of digital education governance is an integral facet of the global entrenchment of capitalist political economy, a fact that is unfortunately not bound by national specificity.

In this process of recognizing and cultivating alternative educational visions, we are faced with the application of techno-scientific rationality to testing in education. This process, we have argued throughout this chapter, not only leads us to misguided evaluations of student learning, but they also play a direct and

crucial role in the educational production of subjectivities. Although prevailing narratives insist on the necessity of testing students, empirically measuring their "learning outcomes," many of those who proclaim a fidelity to educational progressivism themselves fail to challenge the hegemony of testing and assessment in the educational imagination. Here we face profound questions about the politics of education, as much as about pedagogy or the measures we employ in efforts to understand and chart student learning. For some, technological developments present a source of liberatory possibility, provided that educators reconstruct many of their fundamental presuppositions. For others, assessment, evaluation, and positivist empiricism in the evaluation of student learning are irretrievably flawed models that need to be abandoned. The tensions between these perspectives are at the core of struggles to imagine emancipatory approaches to education. We do not seek to resolve this struggle here. However, we do ultimately conclude that, as advocates of the global human capital imperative seek to subordinate education to a subservient role in facilitating the proliferation of transnational capital, educational reform must be reclaimed as a democratic movement and rearticulated in radical egalitarian terms. Only by a diverse global movement whose vision of education abandons the narrow script of economic productivism and positivist calculation can the measures of educational life be recalibrated to just and ethical settings.

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19

EcoJust STEM Education Mobilized Through Counter-Hegemonic Globalization

Larry Bencze, Lyn Carter, Ralph Levinson, Isabel Martins, Chantal Pouliot, Matthew Weinstein, and Majd Zouda

Introduction

We are a group of university-based science educators from six different countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Syria, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America). While we are far apart physically, we are, in many ways, united ideologically. Among our areas of agreement, perhaps few rival our concerns about *neoliberalism* – a capitalist ideology that we believe is wreaking havoc around the world. Although named as a new form of economic liberalism of the eighteenth century, in which proponents urged governments to limit regulation of private sector economic transactions (thus, liberating them to pursue economic self-interests), *neo*-liberalism is a more recent socio-economic system that *encourages* government intervention and, moreover, has rallied vast and complex networks of cooperating "actants" (e.g. materials, including people and diamonds, and semiotic messages, like "I'm successful!") aligned to its causes (Latour, 2005). It is like a giant three-dimensional spider web that encompasses nation states and infiltrates into them. In his book, *Global Education Inc.*, Ball (2012) describes various neoliberal networks involving "think tanks," like the *Atlas Economic Research Foundation*, that are reciprocally (and dynamically) linked to diverse other actants, such as: *John Blundell, Koch Family Foundations, Education for All Brazil* and *Families that Can*. Critical to such networks are *trans-national* organizations, like the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), that operate largely independently from nation states. Such vast and deep networked orientations toward private profit apparently have engendered many personal, social, and environmental problems (McMurtry, 2013). There is alarming poverty worldwide (Oxfam, 2016), for instance, that appears destined to dramatically increase (Piketty, 2014). We also are facing many social and environmental challenges linked to neoliberalism, not the least of which are severe problems from climate change associated with excessive fossil fuel uses (Klein, 2014).

Given our mutual concerns about neoliberalism-linked personal, social, and environmental problems, we have tended to gravitate toward each other at international educational research conferences – finding a sense of "community" at a more global, rather than local, level. Among our numerous shared events, perhaps particularly symbolic of our synergy was when three of us (LB, LC, and MW) held an "illegal" meeting in a member-only cabaña owned by the resort used as the site for the 2013 NARST conference, at which we also had given papers in a symposium protesting such meetings held in gated communities.[1] It was at this conference, as well, that we initiated discussions that have led to a special issue (released in 2017) of the journal *Cultural Studies of Science Education* dealing with relationships between biopolitics and science education. After our cabaña meeting, we continued to collaborate on a regular basis (about twice per month) through Internet-based communication tools like Skype™ and Google Hangouts™. Through these and numerous other inter(trans)-national discussions, we also have undertaken several related projects, including symposia at international conferences; and, we have plans to publish a book promoting politicization of science education (involving several of us, and others).

Although we feel we have accomplished much in our scholarly critiques of neoliberalism, we are now extending this work to include analyses of rapidly expanding STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education initiatives. To a great extent, we believe that such projects often seem like Trojan Horses; that is, they have various attractive features that encourage people to "consume" them while hiding dangers within them (Bencze et al., 2018). Broadly,[2] we have two areas of concern about STEM education initiatives; that is, in terms of compromises to social justice and environmental sustainability. Although, for example, it often is claimed that intense focus on STEM education – including regarding large financial expenditures – is justifiable because of the many jobs and financial security that would accrue, it seems that the private sector needs relatively few STEM experts and, moreover, prefers to have a large pool of them from which to choose so that they can maintain relatively low wages and benefits (Pierce, 2013). The narrative allows influx of STEM workers, while competition – apparent in STEM discourses and practices (e.g. competing for STEM funds, in standardized tests, for jobs, etc.) – screens out the best of this workforce to efficiently support for-profit agendas. Meanwhile, the well-being that societies are promised through STEM products and services seems questionable. STEM education initiatives often seem to prioritize applied knowledge, and practical flexible skills. This transformation of science education has to be understood as "interested," i.e. the motive for reworking these practices, etc., is intended to reduce the autonomy of science and refocus it on what has been termed translational, but in plain speak is on profit-driven and corporate topics. Hence, the appealing narrative of securing advanced positions in the global economy has been effectively used to justify this transformation. It is new emphases on "engineering" that more deeply transforms science into corporate activity. In the US, every science subject, starting with earliest elementary school, now includes engineering, i.e., techno-rational problem solving, in its curriculum. As David Noble (1977) has argued, engineering education has from the 1800s been about the insinuation of the corporation into educational institutions. It is most

obviously at the level of science becoming engineered science (bioengineering rather than biology) that STEM most clearly functions as a Trojan Horse, smuggling in ideologies of capitalism (Bencze et al., 2018), techno-rationality, top-down decision-making, and environmental disregard (though if the US standards are any measure, there is push back on this last aspect). STEM, in other words, really represents a neoliberal reworking of science education, changing it from cautious description to exuberant technical intervention, in the form of engineering challenges and contests. Neoliberalism, with its focus on the entrepreneurial subject, is the paradigm for the scientist-as-engineer that is touted throughout the new STEM science education materials that groups such as the NSTA (National Science Teachers' Association) now promote. If past practices are any indication, associations among STEM fields and private sector interests will prioritize shareholder wealth over the health of commodity users and environments (Mirowski, 2011).

In light of concerns like those expressed above, it is apparent that alternatives to neoliberalism-informed STEM education initiatives are needed that would emphasize the humanistic, the socially just, the critical perspective, and the political.

Alternatives to Neoliberal Stem Education

STEPWISE: An Ecojust Alternative to Neoliberalism-Informed STEM Education

One approach to school science that prioritizes social justice and environmental sustainability is the STEPWISE[3] program (Bencze, 2017). This approach is based on a tetrahedral schema that organizes teaching and learning domains (e.g. *skills education* and *students' research*) to acknowledge their reciprocal relationships while prioritizing socio-political actions to address problems perceived by students in relationships among fields of science and technology and societies and environments (STSE). Emphases on citizen-led socio-political actions are prioritized in this schema because of concerns about adverse personal, social, and environmental effects of government-sponsored private sector influences on STEM professionals, universities, and others (Hodson, 2011; Mirowski, 2011). The approach places particular focus, as well, on citizen-led research-informed and negotiated actions (RiNA), based on the premise that deep understandings and commitments occur when learners self-direct reciprocal relationships between phenomena and representations of them (e.g. through research and actions based on research) (Wenger, 1998). For complex reasons, however, teachers tend to avoid the tetrahedral version of STEPWISE, preferring a more linear schema like that depicted in Figure 19.1, which assumes that students can benefit from one or more sets of "apprenticeship" lessons and activities aimed at providing them with expertise, confidence, and motivation to eventually self-direct RiNA projects to address STSE problems of their concern/interest (Bencze & Alsop, 2009). Teachers' reluctance to use the arguably more theoretically-sound tetrahedral framework may be due, in part, to neoliberal influences on the nature

nRiNA Projects for pSTSE Relationships

(Students' Networked Research-informed & Negotiated Action Projects to Address Power-related Problems in Relationships Among Fields of Science & Technology and Societies & Environments)

www.stepwiser.ca

To prepare students to self-direct RiNA projects (as at far right), teachers often take them through an 'apprenticeship' like that at near right.

when students are ready

Students Reflect

- they express 'ASK' about STSE relationships & actions (with preparation) to address problems
- activities are mostly SD/OE

Apprenticeship for nRiNA for pSTSE

(Repeated until the teacher feels students are ready to self-direct RiNA projects on STSE issues)

Students Practise

- they practise nRiNA projects, with teacher support as necessary, to address pSTSE relationship(s) of their choice
- projects are as SD/OE as students desire

Teacher Teaches

- teacher leads lessons & activities to help students to learn about pSTSE relationships & nRiNA projects
- lessons/activities are mostly TD & CE

LEGEND

• ASK = Attitudes, Skills & Knowledge
• pSTSE = problematic relationships among fields of Science & Technology and Societies & Environments
• nRiNA = networked Research-informed & Negotiated Action(s)

Students' Networked Actions
e.g., reduce personal shower times
e.g., develop pamphlets about shower use
e.g., march against climate change
e.g., make announcements on Twitter™
e.g., send letters to politicians & companies

SD/OE nRiNA Project

Study of Teens' Shower Lengths

Gender (vertical axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60)

Legend: 0–5 minutes, 5–10 minutes, 10–15 minutes, 15+ minutes

Males, Females
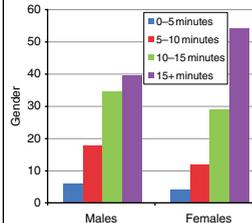
Students' Research About pSTSE

Secondary Research:
e.g., Internet searches about energy use choices, government laws. companies' government lobbying, climate change effects

Primary Research:
e.g., a study of shower lengths taken by teen-aged males & females

TEACHING/LEARNING CONTROL

Regarding to schema at right, different parts of the apprenticeship and students' RiNA projects should vary in control of learning:

• Students Reflect – mainly SD/OE
• Teacher Teaches – mainly TD/CE
• Students Practise – partly SD/OE
• Students' RiNA Projects – mainly SD/OE

OE
Open-ended

CONCLUSIONS

TD
Teacher-directed

TOPICS and PROCEDURES

SD
Student-directed

CONCLUSIONS

Closed-ended
CE
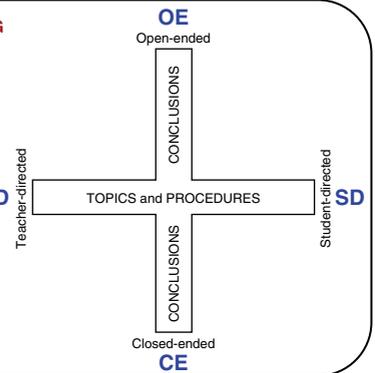
Figure 19.1 Schema for promoting student-led RiNA projects.

of science education leading school systems to, for example, educate classes of students in relatively homogeneous and regimented ways (Bencze & Carter, 2011).

Although there are, likely, many ways to analyze and evaluate the STEPWISE frameworks, there is much to suggest that they may be considered versions of STEM education that prioritize premises of *ecojustice* education, including concerns about and recommendations for actions to address: anthropocentrism, consumerism, commodification, (possessive) individualism, scientism (excessive faith in science and technology), and (continuous) progress (and growth) (Martusewicz, Edmundson, & Lupinacci, 2015). The frameworks attempt to integrate studies and uses of fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, along with studies and uses of many other fields (inherent in the STSE component of the framework) while placing priority on matters of social justice and environmental sustainability. Such claims about STEPWISE may be, perhaps, evident in discussions below about three major premises of its implementation:

- *Altruism*: A common major premise of many neoliberalism-influenced STEM education initiatives is to educate students so that they may become effective entrepreneurial (innovative) citizens, prepared to adapt to a perpetually changing world and compete to gain personal access – often to the exclusion of others – to its riches (Pierce, 2013). STEPWISE, by contrast, encourages students to spend at least some of their cultural and social capital gained from their education on promoting well-being of other living and nonliving things. Students have, for instance, posted numerous activist videos on YouTube™ – such as the one highlighted at: https://goo.gl/jeAihg – advising friends, family, and others about hazards of various commodities and recommending alternatives. Such more altruistic acts can, to some extent, be understood in terms of the schema in Figure 19.2, which depicts reciprocal relations between phenomena and representations of them. In both directions of translation, that is, from World→Sign (associated with "science") and from Sign→World (associated with technology/engineering), there are likely to be ontological gaps, that is, inefficiencies in translation due to differences in the ontological nature of each kind of thing (e.g. tree vs. drawing of tree) in the process (Roth, 2001). Such *mis*translations can lead to difficulties, such as
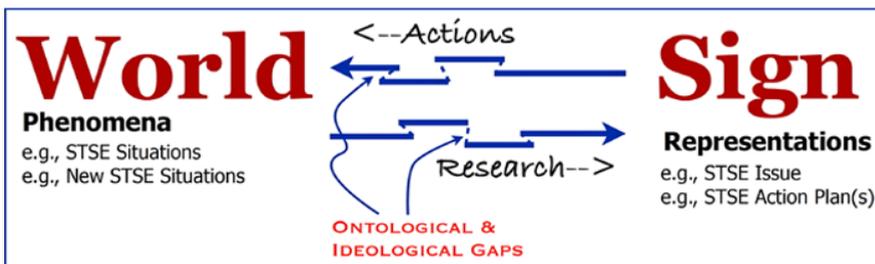
Figure 19.2 Model for research-informed and negotiated actions on socio-scientific problems.

challenges in constructing an aircraft that flies effectively because of inefficiencies in fully representing (e.g. via graphs) factors, such as air currents, that may affect its flight. Perhaps more problematic, however, are ideological gaps, that is, *purposeful* mistranslations between World and Sign, such as idealized advertisements (Signs) for household cleansers that, actually, contain numerous potentially carcinogenic chemicals (World) (Leonard, 2010). For reasons elaborated below (under *Realism*), students' research and actions may, by contrast, involve less problematic ideological gaps.

- *Realism*: It is apparent that neoliberalism-influenced STEM education initiatives are highly reductionist, both in terms of excluding non-STEM subjects and, perhaps related to that, de-emphasizing studies from the humanities and social sciences – many of which suggest problematic relationships among STEM fields and powerful members of societies, such as individual financiers and corporations (Gough, 2015; Zeidler, 2016). School science seems to have a long tradition of avoidance of enlightening students about problematic business-science partnerships (Carter, 2005), omissions that may be perceived as highly undemocratic, keeping uncomfortable truths from students (Pierce, 2013). The STEPWISE framework, on the other hand, promotes *explicit* attention ("Teachers Teach About pSTSE & nRiNA Projects" in Figure 19.1) to a range of potentially problematic actants, including, with regards to genetically-modified salmon, government regulations encouraging propagation of sea lice that can endanger young wild salmon (Pierce, 2013).

- *Self-determination*: Although perhaps well-meaning, those of us wanting to teach students about problematic actants like transnational organizations and trade agreements could be accused of subjectification of students, just as we claim about neoliberalism-influenced STEM education projects (Hoeg & Bencze, 2017). Although subjectifying influences of instruction can, likely, never be erased, the STEPWISE schema (Figure 19.1) prioritizes shifting control of learning from the teacher to students. Students can, accordingly, develop relatively personalized identities associated with socio-scientific problems, research methods and socio-political actions of their choices. Such identities may, as well, be strongly held – given that learners tend to develop deep attachments to learning when they have significant control over actions to represent the world (World → Sign in Figure 19.2) and to change the world (Sign → World in Figure 19.2) (Wenger, 1998). Moreover, with such personal decision-making, each student may develop relatively unique expertise in ways important to her/him — rather than, as in neoliberalism-influenced STEM initiatives, be limited in their development because of excessive focus on teaching/learning of standardized knowledge and skills.

Some teachers using STEPWISE have had considerable successes helping students to develop expertise, confidence, and motivation for self-directing research-informed and negotiated actions to address problems they perceive in STSE relationships. However, since the inception of the framework in 2006, few teachers have chosen to work with it. Although there are, undoubtedly, many possible explanations for such resistance, it may be that the dominant paradigm in school science systems is supporting (perhaps tacitly) neoliberalism, a tendency

that appears to be continued (if not magnified) with the emergence of STEM education initiatives (Pierce, 2013).

Addressing Ecojustice in University-based Science Teacher Education

That the STEPWISE framework has been well implemented only in relatively rare cases, particularly where teachers had views about the nature of science that acknowledged possibly-problematic relationships among STEM professionals, private sector interests, governments, transnational economic entities, etc. (Bencze & Krstovic, 2017), suggests the need for approaches to science teacher education that may provide future teachers with perspectives and practices that, if they so choose, may challenge neoliberalism-informed STEM education initiatives. The cases provided below, in which university-based science teacher educators from different institutional contexts around the world describe alternatives to neoliberalism-influenced STEM education, may serve as possible beginnings for such transformations in science teacher education.

Case Studies

Towards Globalization as Possibility

Isabel Martins

The acronyms STEM, STEMM, STEAM, STEEM have increasingly been used to qualify a field of activity once known as Science Education. But why is a new name or, in this case, a new acronym needed? If one accepts that discourse and society are bound by a dialectical relationship, that is, a reciprocal relationship strongly influenced by contextual features and that implicates mutual determination, then it seems appropriate to ask about both social circumstances around the emergence of the new acronyms and the increase and intensification in their use.

White (2014) argues that STEM is not a new concept and that, in the US, STEM Education can be traced back to events such as creation of universities that focused on engineering training programs in the late nineteenth century and investments made on innovation and instruction in the context of the space race initiated after the Soviet launching of the *Sputnik* satellite in the late 1950s. Since then, the role of science and technology education as a driving force in economic development and political supremacy has been reinforced. Globalization has added complexity to such relationships. Contemporary scenarios are signified in terms of concepts like Beck's risk society and Bauman's liquid modernity, neoliberal ideologies and its associations with "the death of the state," meritocracy and free market economy. Santos (1996, cited in Melgaço, 2013) has coined the term "technical-scientific informational milieu" to describe contemporaneity in terms of ways through which digital information starts to play a similar role to "engineering systems" in the mediation of

relationships between human beings and nature. Such a conceptualization may help us frame demands for an explicit acknowledgment of Technology, Engineering, Environment, Medicine, Arts, etc., and of their relationships with Science, in the context of Education. Not only does it reflect more flexible boundaries between areas of knowledge but also an awareness of strong relationships between models of scientific technologic development and economic development.

In countries like Brazil, where the pressure to compete in a global economy comes at a stage when social inequality has not yet been resolved, the issue of a scientific technological education acquires different contours. In this context, a problematization of the concept of globalization such as that offered by Santos (2017) is strongly needed and may help us face up to such challenges. According to the Brazilian geographer, the concept of globalization must be understood in three different ways: (1) as *fable*; (2) as *perversity*; and (3) as *possibility*. The view of globalization as fable corresponds to hopes that technology would allow for more increased awareness, horizontal participation and fairer distribution of goods in society. Such a view is grounded on features like the contraction of time and space, the global village, and the homogenization of the world, which Santos refers to as myths. Optimism around opportunities brought about by globalization is confronted with the reality that distances have been shortened for a minority and that dreams of truly universal citizenship have gradually been replaced by ideals of consumerism, while local differences were exacerbated. Together with phenomena like homelessness, unemployment, starvation, and lack of access to clean drinking water, migration and refugee crises, among others, they constitute the face of globalization as perversity. Santos argues that the combination of the ideology of competition with the manipulation of information by the mass media creates conditions for global capitalism to prosper. Nonetheless, he acknowledges social indicators of a more promising perspective on globalization, namely, one in which social interests are not subaltern to economic interests. For him, aspects such as a mixture of peoples and cultures offers the potential for mixtures of rationalities, that is, encounters between dominant hegemonic rationalities – often associated with science and technology – with counter-rationalities (or irrationalities) that are typical of socially disadvantaged social groups. This facilitates the appropriation of technologies by non-hegemonic actors and, consequently, increased possibilities of sharing contexts and creating new meaning as, for example, in the current uses of social media.

Science and technology, including information technology, have had a crucial role in the production of globalization as we currently experience it. How is it possible to think about them in the context of producing more human, respectful, and just forms of living together in this planet? This is where the importance and urgency of thinking about STEM education lie. It is important to face up to criticisms of STEM Ed. as a set of hegemonic practices that operate under a deficit framework and neglect issues such as values and normative components of science (Zeidler, 2016). More important is to think about alternatives and the possibilities of STEM education to foster what Santos calls globalization as possibility.

Science Education Guided by Social and Ecojustice Principles

Lyn Carter

I can find no better example of alternatives to corporatized STEM education than to narrate approaches that my wonderful colleagues have adopted in their preparation of preservice science teachers. Over the past two decades, the women with whom I have shared my professional journey, Drs. Caroline Smith, Mellita Jones, Jenny Martin, and Carolina Castano Rodriguez have made a formidable science education team at the Melbourne and Ballarat campuses of the Australian Catholic University (ACU). ACU is a unique multi-campus public university across five states and territories in Australia. On the Melbourne and Ballarat campuses (hereafter ACU Vic, as both these campuses are located in the state of Victoria), we have worked with sociocultural and political conceptualizations of science education, rather than the mastery of reductive science knowledge and skills commonly associated with narrow STEM education schemes. Despite pressures of curriculum and standards frameworks of various types mandated or otherwise, ACU's Mission Statement has enabled a conceptual space to embrace fundamental questions about human experience and meaning. We have adapted the statement's focus on "enhancing the dignity and wellbeing of people and communities, especially those most marginalised or disadvantaged" and "to be guided by social and eco justice principles" in developing our teaching and researching projects.

My story begins with Caroline Smith, a science and education for sustainability (EfS) preservice teacher educator, a classroom science teacher in multiple national contexts, an author of scholarly and other manuscripts, an organic farmer, permaculturalist, and committed environmental activist (Smith 2007; Smith & Dawborn, 2011). Caroline was instrumental in establishing ACU Vic's science education direction in the early 2000s, as her diverse interests provided her with unique insights into how best to foster ecological literacies that are essential for life in the twenty-first century. At that time, my own scholarship was concerned with the impact on science education of radical social and epistemological injustices consequent upon twenty-first-century globalization. Focusing principally on educational policy and curriculum studies, and using a methodology of critical philosophical inquiry and other textual analyses, I examined ways in which postcolonialism, indigenous knowledge, and ecological sustainability could act as counter-discourses to globalization and resource new approaches to teaching and learning in science (Carter, 2005, 2008, 2010). As colleagues for more than a decade and a half, our work coalesced into a shared vision that believed science education should work not only toward a deeper understanding of our planetary systems, but also toward the explicit goals of creating a more just, equitable and sustainable world (Carter & Smith, 2003).

During the early and mid-2000s, Caroline, Mellita, and I implemented student units (courses) whose organizing framework drew from literatures of science studies, cultural diversity, and sustainability science to depict the development of science as cultural stories reiterating themes of recognition, difference, and localism. In a departure from what would be regarded as typical science content, our major core unit began by exploring cosmologies from various cultures to show that human societies have always tried to understand and shape their world; sciences

and technologies are as old as humanity, and that there are as many sciences as there are contexts/cultures. Western science could thus be understood as a particular form of localized ethnoscience, shaped by and reproductive of, political, economic, cultural, and social forces of the times. Through its epistemological robustness, reliability, and usefulness, Western science was shown to have transcended its immediate determinants, eclipsing other ways of knowing and ensuring its universal acceptance as *the* powerful way of understanding our world. Reviewing precepts of energy and matter conceptually and within their historical context as necessary precursors for potent technologies of the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries, our unit explored how Western science has been responsible for much human flourishing. But enmeshed as it is in the global capitalist progress paradigm, Western science was also shown to have been co-productive of hegemonic interests resulting in much ecological devastation and many forms of imperialism. This "warts and all" approach to teaching about science at the same time as developing its concepts and skills was our attempt at working within politics of the practical (see Carter, 2008).

Caroline's departure from ACU in 2010, coupled with growth in the university, enabled new colleagues in Carolina Castano Rodriguez and Jenny Martin to continue the evolution of our sociocultural agenda, despite the increasing popularity of STEM in Australia and overseas. Carolina's experience in South America using empathy with animals as a way of mitigating violence within disadvantaged communities brought a new perspective to our work (Castano, 2008, 2012). A committed environmentalist and outdoor educator, Jenny's interest in student agency and a unique methodological approach from discursive psychology (Martin, 2016), along with Mellita's strength in reflective pedagogies (Jones, 2014; Jones & Ryan, 2014), added further insights. Our newly minted team was just as like-minded in its desire for science education to promote eco-social justice rather than corporatized/neoliberal agendas. Our collective scholarship somehow seemed to coalesce around an interest in facilitating sociopolitical activism, both our own and that of our preservice teachers.

While Jenny (with a little help from me) continued her investigation of student agency (Carter & Martin, in press; Martin & Carter, 2015), Carolina, Mellita, and I worked with transformative learning theory (TL), attractive for its focus on promoting action. First described by Jack Mezirow in the late 1970s, TL argues that critical reflection and emancipatory education practices (which was perhaps where our earlier emphases lay), are necessary but not sufficient conditions for transformation. Individuals must experience their own *conflict/disorienting dilemmas /triggering event* to make the learning transform into action (Cranton, 2006). Accordingly, we developed and implemented an elective unit for preservice teachers to explore whether TL could become pedagogical for socio-political activism within science education (Carter, Castano, & Jones, 2014, 2016). Challenged with the proposition that "any sort of egg/chicken consumption contributes to animal cruelty," designed to create the required disorientation or conflict, our results showed that preservice teachers' reflections on what supported their assumptions were critical to generating awareness of their own choices and actions.

Our efforts, of course, continue and are, as always, a work in progress. More recently under Carolina's leadership, we have begun exploring ethics of care

(EoC) as an approach to science education jointly developed by Carol Gilligan (1982), Nel Noddings (1992) and other feminist scholars. EoC furthers our focus on action, as it shifts the moral/ethical question from "what is just?" to "how to respond," while it works to enhance positive relations and recognition of affective needs. We have already completed a small EoC in science project at an outer suburban Melbourne primary school with low socio-economic students typically with first-generation migrant and refugee backgrounds (Castano, Carter, & Martin, in press; Castano & Martin, 2015). With a focus on the development of collective practices and participants' personal senses of science education, we found the invention and construction of new tools and patterns of practice philosophically grounded in an EoC. Our team is also busy implementing EoC in teaching our preservice science education units. Who has time for STEM?

Let's Get STEAMD!: Connecting Pre-Service Teachers to Social Movements

Matthew Weinstein

> The structure we live in kind of requires hypocrisy to function.
> Chapo Trap House Podcast, June 13, 2016, 51:07

At the University of Tacoma's Secondary Education Program, we work under a model we call STEAMD, meaning Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics, and Democracy. The D at the end is an attempt to push back on approaches to science and other techno-rational fields that disconnect them from human and environmental interests. I emphasize democracy because that is in a very real sense what is at stake in STEM and the neoliberalism for which STEM is a Trojan Horse. Common and widely shared participation and collective empowerment (beyond raw consumerism) are perpetually at stake as markets become the ideal and form of all activities or the only valid paradigm for human relations. To imagine a science education program late into the time of what Stephen Ball (2012, p. 3) calls "roll out" neoliberalism, i.e. the neoliberal phase in which the viscera of the state (of which our programs certainly are part) has largely been replaced by neoliberal or quasi-neoliberal organs, is complex, dangerous, vulnerable to dissolution and, as my epigraph indicates, contradictory.

Our program's contradictions include a commitment to see our students through a complex accountability system, which focuses their whole student teaching experience on compliance, and which is required of all student-teachers in the state (edTPA, a Pearson-administered and evaluated portfolio) *and* prepare them for a professional life of resistance against such accountability systems – in as much as they legitimate already-existing capital in an underfunded and culturally deaf education system that produces what Giorgio Agamben (1998) calls *disposable populations*, that is, the extant education system labels people as unworthy of care or support through supposedly meritocratic testing and authority arrangements. The STEAMD program weaves four democratically oriented dimensions:

1) *Critique of neoliberalism*. Starting in their first quarter, and built on every quarter in both methods and foundations classes, are analyses of ways in which neoliberalism produces inequality, diminishes scientific and educational institutions, and replaces shared responsibility with gamified competitions

à la The Hunger Games, a trilogy written as a response to conditions of neoliberalism (Collins, 2008).

2) *Sociopolitical pedagogy.* In our classes, students engage with pedagogies that are explicitly political and connect the preservice teachers to betterment of their students' lives through various approaches – ranging from environmental projects, Freirian problem-posing science education, culturally relevant pedagogy, multiple STS approaches, including STEPWISE and Webquests, that explore power struggles over socio-scientific issues.

3) *Critical framings of science.* To help them understand the intentions of these pedagogies, our students have to re-learn their science as a socio-political process. Over the course of the year, the students are educated in science studies, explore relationships between colonialism and racism and scientific practices, and understand complex tensions and interactions that exist between professional sciences and needs of the public. This *autre*-science education informs both the pedagogy and reflects the critiques of contemporary capitalism (neoliberalism) already explored.

4) *Articulation to contemporary social movements.* It has long been recognized that teacher education has few enduring effects on subsequent teaching. Rather than assume that pedagogies executed under the materially liminal space of preservice teaching is somehow scalable or translatable to teaching as a daily labor, I put my effort on leading students to teacher movements that are working to transform the profession into a more just, more sane, and less corporate vocation. Among these groups are the BATs (the Bad Assed Teachers Association), the Network for Public Education, unions, and Northwest Teaching for Social Justice Conference. The idea is to push students to become activists over the terms of their labor not just over issues through pedagogy in schools as they now stand. These groups stand in explicit opposition to corporate intrusion (both directly in the form of charter schools and indirectly in the form of testing) into the purposes and practices of schooling.

To be clear, the program *does* prepare students for existing schools (that hypocrisy again). They learn techno-rational curriculum design. They work their way through such canonical texts as McTighe and Wiggins' *Understanding by Design* (2004), which is basically the Tyler Rationale dressed up in some constructivism and critical education practice, science education commonplaces such as "inquiry" (Haysom & Bowen, 2010), as well as engineering design, fairly commonplace classroom management techniques, and immersion into systems of classification that schools stabilize (special education/regular education; success/failure). The difference is we also challenge those things, talk about the search for tactical opportunities to take back egalitarian space, and the need to strategically struggle with other teachers for a better model.

We provide our students with a variety of intellectual tools to allow them to critique forms of school they are coming to inhabit: theories of colonialism, race, and gender inequities as they impact science and, of course, critical discourses on impacts of neoliberalism. They also produce what might be thought of as better practices: inquiry that has students analyzing the toxicity of their environs, STS problems that both involve individual and collective decision making, pedagogies that draw on "funds of

knowledge" (link content to students' worlds), and Freirian models of science pedagogy. That said, the material conditions of schooling only occasionally allow such deviations from the hegemonic curriculum, and when I think of what STEAMD means, it is not particular pedagogical practices. It is, instead, an apprenticeship in struggling over the very terms of the conditions of work of teaching: pushing back against the neoliberal and neoconservative forces dominating schools at present.

Considering 'The Other' in Science Teacher Education

Ralph Levinson

While there is a triumphalism about STEM, advocates also acknowledge that nothing is risk-free. The impacts of the products of science and technology are uncertain and, therefore, it is important that society is co-opted into feeling more confident about the role of STEM. Gough (2015) makes the point that the political motivations behind science and society curricula, known as Vision II (Roberts, 2007), play into the hands of the neoliberal discourse of innovation, entrepreneurship, and national competitiveness. It is this aspect of vaunted public support for STEM that is behind the European Union's formulation of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) (Sutcliffe, 2011; von Schomberg, 2012). As the state sector and welfare protection break up in countries like the United Kingdom, it is vital for the operation of the market that trust is encouraged between consumers and producers. Second, risk and uncertainty play into the hands of market growth because there is always the opportunity to reduce risk, whether real or not, hence low-sugar drinks, hands-free mobile phones, genetic testing kits, personalized pharmaceuticals. So far, so rational. Science can be deemed to have a social responsibility and to promote economic growth.

But this outward rationality *is* the Trojan Horse (Bencze et al., 2014). I want to draw on two examples to show that certain aspects of science production are hidden precisely because they blow that respectable surface apart. First is the electronics industry: mobile phones; laptops; most communication systems. For those in wealthy countries, communications systems have transformed our lives. Cell phones "democratize" the world, although they also enable terrorists using modern communication networks to destroy those systems that make the technology possible. There are also environmental consequences from toxic metals through electronic gadgets, discarded because they are so competitively priced and upgraded so regularly, potential radiation effects on young brains, and repetitive strain injury: the hazards of post-normal science (Ravetz, 2006).

Electronic communication devices are only made possible through the mineral coltan, a mixture of rare metals, particularly tantalum, which is used in all modern computers and phones. One of the main actors in the extraction of coltan are miners in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), who form the seminal material node of the network in the production line of cell phones and laptops. But to call them actors in the Arendtian sense (Arendt, 1998) of contributing to a socio-political story is a misnomer. Coltan miners have no autonomous power to make sense of their lives in the DRC; they are subject to conditions of near-slavery compounded by the actions of the paramilitaries who control the mines. Eastern lowland gorillas are being wiped out from their natural habitat by villagers

driven out from their lands near the mines taking refuge in territories shared by the gorillas and slaughtering them for meat. All this is concealed within the electronics industry's Trojan Horse, those who cannot be heard because they have no voice.

The second example is catalytic clothing. This is a collaboration between chemistry and design in making clothes that purify the air (www.catalytic-clothing.org). The promotions on this website describe a dress that "carries new technology and shares it with the world." The catalyst absorbed into the clothing allows us to breathe "more beautifully." What – as the trope goes – is not to like? Concealed inside the catalytic clothing Trojan Horse are the rutile mines of Sierra Leone. Titanium oxide – the catalyst in the clothing – is extracted from rutile. The global corporations that own the mines in Sierra Leone are the biggest suppliers of rutile. Rutile is commonly found in top soils and separated out through flooding and dredging, consequently destroying the topsoil, most of which supports farming, particularly fruit trees in the Imperi Chiefdom. Those villagers who have lost their land have been plunged even further into poverty, unable to afford basic health care or school fees. Despite the massive profits engendered by this mining, the largest global mining corporation in Sierra Leone, Sierra Rutile, paid no corporate income tax on its profits until 2014. Problems noted by the National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives (NACE, 2009) include lack of transparency on the financial positions of mining companies and the government in Sierra Leone, lack of capacity to collect revenues and taxes, lack of adequate monitoring mechanisms, gaps in mining regulations, and corruption. Villagers have not been adequately compensated for the loss of their land. Sierra Leone is near the bottom of the UN's Human Development Index and in the last few years has been devastated by the Ebola outbreak.

Inside the contemporary post-modern Trojan Horse is the unseen, unheard, powerless Other, rather than an army of warriors. In that light, what is to be done? Here, I want to focus on pedagogy and its role in raising moral consciousness. Power and subjectivity have dominated western science since the Enlightenment. The project of modern science is intricately connected with power and domination: "From its Baconian inception, modern science has been about both knowledge and power, above all the power to control and dominate nature, including human nature" (Rose, 1998, p. 273). So, there is a disconnection between the actor who controls and dominates, and the Other who is acted upon. For Levinas (1993), ethics begins with the realization of the Other, that the Self is constituted by and responsible for the Other by opening oneself to the Other non-reciprocally (the Other has no ethical responsibility toward me, i.e. the Self); consequently, the possibility of social justice. Chinnery (2000), drawing on Levinas, exposes the problem of neglecting the Other even when people act humanely in the name of common humanity. This advocacy of commonality can also impel people to act barbarously toward human beings because they do not see them as the same. In other words, one's moral obligations extend only to those for whom there is a perceived sameness. For Levinas, there is no pre-ethical subject: the lesson for education is moral responsibility, for the Other lies outside familial or even species relationship, and the Self becomes realizable through the acceptance of the Other.

This refusal to impose one's subjectivity, the acceptance of the Other, the notion that we always have a responsibility for the Other, has consequences for pedagogy. The teacher must welcome difference in terms of the voice of the students and Otherness, of other people, of the natural world, both biotic and abiotic. All actions taken on the world must take into account the needs of Others, sharing of the world. To see students as the Other, for example, is to open oneself up to them, where teachers become learners and students as a consequence become teachers as well as learners. Hence, the Other – those entities (actants) and their interactions that constitute the living and material world, for example, those who labor unseen and suffering, students – is not a phenomenological construct but ruptures the experiential world of the subject, which makes possible a critical non-dualistic connection between those who consume and those who suffer.

Socio-technical Controversies in and out of Classrooms

Chantal Pouliot

One way to enrich science education and/or (try) to counter the STEM current is to address socio-technical controversies in science classes and/or in teacher education programs. In the Canadian province of Québec, several controversies related to fields of science and technology are taking place. These controversies are related to extraction and/or transportation of oil or minerals, involve companies whose financial resources are immense, and are documented by citizens who organize to assert their views and value the knowledge they have or develop. These cases have in common that they can have devastating consequences for the populations exposed to materials extracted, transported, or transshipped. And, even though they are highly concerned, citizens struggle to be heard and respected. Nevertheless, in the three cases described below, citizens and environmental groups have used the courts to force companies to change their practices or to make available information necessary for socio-political deliberation. In other words, these cases have in common citizen activism that made visible and questionable situations that industrial representatives and many political leaders want to marginalize in public debate.

One of the controversies concerns the expansion of an open gold pit mine located in an urban area. While representatives of the Canadian Malartic Company justify the expansion project, saying it will create jobs with good wages, citizens complain that mining have not paid taxes on its income in the last seven years (the value of gold extracted from the mine is estimated at $3.25 billion). In addition to economic aspects, social and health issues regularly make the headlines. Many people suffer from anxiety; they are worried about the amount of dust generated during the blasting needed to extract the ore (the mining has received 171 notices of violation for non-compliance with environmental legislation over the years). Furthermore, for the mine expansion (to which most of the citizens of the town are opposed), approximately 200 houses and buildings are to be sacrificed and many residents have seen the value of their houses melt like snow in the sun.

Another acute controversy in Québec is the transport by rail of oil through the town of Lac-Mégantic. Many have heard of the worst rail disaster in modern

Canadian history that took place in 2014 when a driverless train exploded in the city, burning and killing 47 people. Three years later, according to Québec public-health officials, 67% of people in Lac-Mégantic report signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. Nevertheless, the train still crosses the city and, for many people, this situation exacerbates the memory of a horrible night. Regarding compensation, about 4300 people have received between $3000 and $2.5 million for children who have been orphaned. The money came from a grouping of companies in exchange for the promise not to prosecute. For citizens, injustices remain, among other reasons because the Canadian Pacific train company (CP) refused to compensate citizens, even though it was involved in the oil transportation.

A third controversy in Québec involves the TransCanada™ pipeline project. Highly publicized because of its environmental, political, economic, and legal issues, it involves the construction of one of the longest pipelines in North America. This pipeline would be used to transport 1.1 million barrels of oil per year from Alberta to New Brunswick. Many organizations, citizen groups, and environmental associations have asked for the suspension of the current pipeline review process by the National Energy Board because two of the commissioners mandated to study the project met with the former premier of Québec when he was a consultant for TransCanada. TransCanada promotes positive economic impacts generated by the creation of 3000 jobs (for the pipeline's construction) and political partisans of the project claim that Québec shows solidarity with Alberta, which struggles to find a way to export its oil.

Finally, on a more local level, perhaps, a controversy is unfolding in Québec City about metal dust coming from the Port of Québec and particularly from the ore transshipment facilities (Pouliot, 2015). Briefly, in 2012, two citizens alerted the city the day a layer of red dust consisting of multiple heavy metals covered the streets of their neighborhood (I also lived in this area). To date, the political and industrial actions taken regarding this controversy are considered by citizens as peripheral and cosmetic because metal dust still settles on the central districts of the city.

There likely are many ways students can benefit from education relating to cases like those outlined above. One approach is to think of them in light of the model for research-informed and negotiated actions illustrated in Figure 19.2. Human descriptions of cases like those above can be considered "Signs," presented to students in various contexts (e.g. schools, colleges, and universities), who may then implement various actions to possibly affect the "World." It is common for science teacher educators, for instance, to present student-teachers with cases and, to varying degrees, ask them to negotiate ideas, etc. and imagine or take actions to possibly change the World. Information for such representations are frequently drawn from secondary sources, such as YouTube™ and various websites. With regards to the cases described above, however, representations are more local and, perhaps, consequently more authentic (or more relevant for students). For example, I invited Louis Duchesne and Veronique Lalande (the citizens who first questioned the presence of red dust in their neighborhood and introduced the topic into the political sphere) to give a talk to student-teachers in my science teacher education courses. They presented the results produced by the citizens' vigilance group. Then, for the two subsequent classes, the student-teachers produced an interdisciplinary written document on the

subject. Some student-teachers wrote a letter to the media (that letter was published), others attended the hearings of one of the two class action suits (in both cases, citizens sued the Port of Québec and the responsible dust transshipment company; they require that industrial practices cease to be a threat to their health and to the quality of their environments). Some students also decided to visit a Limoilou (the neighborhood in which the controversy began) café to talk with citizens in order to document their views on the issue.

Perhaps recognizing her expertise and passion for the Québec City dust pollution case, Ms. Lalande has frequently been invited to speak to other educational groups, including, for example, at a local Cégep. In light of my familiarity with citizen engagement related to the dust case, I also have been invited to present the case in different educational contexts. A sociology teacher invited me to present the controversy, for example, to his students (future primary and secondary school teachers). After the presentation, we talked about their concerns about the dust (those students were in a school located in Limoilou) and the students wrote texts, in which they articulate their understanding of the situation. Finally, because of our different – but, perhaps, complementary – theoretical and practical perspectives (in Figure 19.2, complementary translation gaps), Ms. Lalande and I were invited to speak at a 2017 summer school in connection with sustainable development.

From an educational perspective, by getting students to meet with engaged citizens, by using interdisciplinary approaches, by shedding light on ways in which developments in science and technology have contributed to and been co-produced by neoliberalism (Tyfield, 2016) and by accompanying students to the courthouse, teachers (and I) have tried to walk the talk of a humanistic and politicized science education. Furthermore, those pedagogical activities are for us, as public intellectuals (Giroux, 2006; Pouliot, in press), ways to "take action and to develop democratic emancipatory projects that challenge neoliberalism's power, dominance and oppression and to provide a service to the world" (Macrine, 2016, p. 308).

Conclusion

As science education scholars working in different contexts around the world who are concerned about neoliberalism and its influences on society (including education) and environments, we have been particularly alarmed by rapidly-spreading STEM education initiatives. Although we accept some merits in integrating and/or interrelating STEM fields in schooling, we mainly perceive of such projects as Trojan Horses promising to improve people's lives and economic prosperity while, actually, further implementing neoliberal ideologies that are likely to lead to increased poverty (and wealth concentration), along with much environmental degradation. In this chapter, we have provided readers with what we believe to be *ecojust* alternatives to neoliberalism-influenced STEM education projects (Martusewicz et al., 2015). In doing so, it seems that we have attended to different ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives on STEM education (Creswell, 2013). As pointed out by authors here and

stressed elsewhere (Pierce, 2013), STEM education initiatives tend to promote highly reductionist ontological views of phenomena. Several authors here, however, recommend that, instead, students need to be enlightened about problematic actants, such as poor laborers in disadvantaged parts of the world, often hidden from them (and consumers, generally). Related to this, perhaps, is the contention here that, rather than portraying epistemic practices in STEM fields as highly logical and data-driven, educators need to acknowledge significant contextual variables – availability of resources – affecting them. Of particular interest in this regard, moreover, have been calls for more altruistic axiological perspectives — such as ethics of care in determining appropriate actions to address perceived socio-scientific problems.

While the accounts above perhaps provide positive alternatives to apparently problematic neoliberalism-informed STEM education projects, it seems clear that the road ahead for such perspectives and practices is likely to be bumpy, if not blocked. Neoliberalism appears to be deeply and broadly entrenched, although enlightenment as to its dangers from politicians like Bernie Sanders in the USA and Jeremy Corbyn in the UK seems hopeful (Jacques, 2016). Nevertheless, as indicated by difficulties in encouraging teachers to implement lessons and activities based on the STEPWISE frameworks discussed here, globalizing educational reform towards greater focus on ecojustice (including regarding STEM education) seems highly challenging – if not highly unlikely. Having acknowledged barriers, however, perhaps a way forward lies, ironically, in mimicking, to some extent, neoliberal capitalist practices. It seems clear that much success and resiliency (e.g. recovery from the financial crisis of 2008) of neoliberalism is associated with its Borg-like[4] character; that is, its assimilation of myriad actants into a cyborg-like entity with an agenda for dominance. Indeed, in explaining difficulties experienced by citizen activists regarding the Québec City dust pollution case discussed here, it is apparent that much of the resistance can be explained using Callon's (1991) concept of *dispositif*, that is, an aggregate of actants aligned toward a common cause, including corporations, mining and shipping technologies, banks, politicians, government authorities, finance, and promises of jobs and well-being for all, each supporting, for example, increased transshipment of nickel ore (Bencze & Pouliot, 2017). It seems logical, therefore, for those promoting ecojustice to work to assemble *dispositifs* aiming to promote ecojustice. In this chapter, authors have suggested such a tack, including in terms of encouraging student-teachers to connect with activist teachers and activist citizens. In doing so on a much larger scale, however, Evans (2012) suggests that reformers launch a program of *counter-hegemonic globalization* that, rather than "re-inventing the wheel," "capitalizes" on many existing actants in capitalist networks, including, among many, electronic social networks (e.g. Facebook™, Skype™ & Twitter™), educational entities (e.g. universities), and transnational agencies (e.g. the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).

Although there may be much to be gained from accommodating the infrastructure arranged by neoliberals, engaging in what, effectively, would be dialectical relationships with them, may cause some "infusion" of neoliberal ideologies into reformists' mindsets (Hardt & Negri, 2009). Moreover, although creating pro-ecojust *dispositifs* may be ideal in our minds, perhaps we would

be guilty of an imperialist agenda that we claim to abhor. Indeed, pointing this out, McLaren (2000) suggested we needed to learn from experiences and models provided by revolutionaries Che Guevara and Paulo Freire who, in addition to promoting conscientization (critical consciousness about problematics), also urged *praxis* – programs of critical reflective practice that consider perspectives and approaches of various and potentially conflicting individuals and groups.

Notes

1 Related Paper set, entitled "Science education for/against 'gated communities,'" with S. Alsop, L. Carter, & M. Weinstein. A presentation at the annual conference of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, Rio Grande, Puerto Rico, April 6–9, 2013.
2 We feel that there are extensive published critiques of neoliberalism-influenced STEM education initiatives and, consequently, we only provide a brief overview of some of these. Our main focus for this chapter is on ecojust alternatives to such projects.
3 STEPWISE is the acronym for Science & Technology Education Promoting Wellbeing for Individuals, Societies & Environments, a framework that prioritizes citizen-led socio-political actions to address problems perceived by them relating to fields of science and technology (and, likely, engineering and mathematics). To learn more about STEPWISE, refer to: www.stepwiser.ca
4 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borg_(Star_Trek)

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20

When the Idea of a Second Grade Education for the Marginalized Becomes the Dominant Discourse

Context, Policy, and Practice of Neoliberal Capitalism

Ravi Kumar

Introduction

There is a global trend toward state withdrawal from education. Every country has followed the trajectory from welfarism to neoliberalism in its own way, depending upon its historical conditions. For a country like India, it has been different. Despite its state institutions voicing commitment to educate all children and despite constitutional guidelines for the same, the idea of universal quality education never happened. It has missed that phase unlike Britain or even the United States, which had a brief stint with welfarism in education. It has jumped directly to an inhuman, utterly commodified education system, which has no place for the poor, oppressed castes, women, and tribals. Even if there is what appears to be an educational commitment to them, it is nothing more than a well-thought-out plan to provide them with a substandard education to fit them into a segmented labor market. This chapter tries to understand the context and politics of corporate capital mediated by the intellectuals and the state to ensure that this process is implemented as a reality.

The neoliberal stage of capitalism takes inhumanity to new levels through institutionalized discrimination, and the normalization of oppression, as well as through the collapse of the powerful solidarity of the working class to challenge the system. This is the age of "farce" – when representational democracy becomes a farce through its spectacularization and consensualized oppression of the masses; when skilling and manipulated information are accepted as education. These are times when one needs to reflect on how the market has effectively made us all look alike – we all have been induced and seduced into eating pizzas and burgers from the fast food killing machines, which only seemingly cater to the different national/cultural taste buds. Capitalism is transforming us into look-alike clones with similar thinking, habits, and behaviors and is doing away with possible resistance to any alternative imagination. But then we also know

that this phenomenon needs to be understood and then challenged and resisted. This can be done by a revolutionary critical pedagogy.

There is a global pattern to what is happening to education. Education in general is undergoing the following processes:

1) It is being handed over to private capital because it is seen as a burden for the state.
2) When it is handed over to private capital, the social sciences and humanities are targeted as useless disciplines and, therefore, face closure.
3) Even the state-run institutions are trying to follow the principles of the market through using similar concepts and idioms of efficiency, regulation, work ethics, and impact, hence, the state institutions are coming up with quite similar working conditions as the private institutions.
4) The lack of resources and the waste of resources are presented as the major reasons for transferring education to the marketable, commodified sphere.
5) Education ceases to be a source of knowledge and remains merely a training ground for the workforce that is required by capital.

How this translates into practice is something interesting, although it may not be unique to the Indian scenario, because that is how the global education scenario comes under the influence of what is called neoliberal capitalism.

The Dangers of Affordable Private Schools (APS)

There has been a global shift in the discourse from the days of welfarism, that the government-run schools are not the only option available to educate children. The welfare capitalist idea of mass education through state-run education system has gradually been rejected. It has been done in different ways over a period of time. While the Conservatives began the destruction of the public education system in UK from the late 1970s (Hill, 2004a), Reagan in the US ensured that the policy of state support for education was gradually withdrawn. Countries like India today can be seen to be doing exactly what the rest of the world has been doing – treating education as a commodity that can be traded. However, due to the nature of this commodity, its marketing is different and so is the approach to remove it from state control. This also is interesting, complex, and difficult because there are counter-narratives to the process of its commodification, ranging from those who argue for radically altering the education system and take it out of the control of capital (of all variants) to those who think that welfarism was not bad and therefore want a return to the welfarist regime, as it can be the antithesis of the neoliberal attack. These different oppositions create hurdles for the commodification process and therefore an elaborate discourse had to be constructed to show why the private is better than the public and also how and why state funding for state-run institutions must decrease. Even if there is funding, it must go through private capital.

Hence, there has been a very clear trajectory of how the state-run schools have been delegitimized on account of bad quality education, teacher absenteeism, and now worse learning outcomes. Once, this delegitimization is complete,

alongside the state withdrawing its financial support to them, the picture of an institutional mechanism collapsing becomes complete. No attempts have been made by the state to look into the issues of absenteeism and tackle it but rather it was served to the corporate interests and their partisan intellectuals on a platter as a plausible excuse to cut the regularized teacher workforce. Research studies were produced to show that the contractual teachers perform much better than those with job security. It is argued that the para-teachers (contractual, low-paid teachers) perform better than the regular, well-paid, unionized teachers (Kingdon & Sipahimalani-Rao, 2010). Unease with the politicization/unionization of the teaching labor force has been found among certain researchers as well (Kingdon & Muzammil, 2001). World Bank studies also went on to show the same good things about contractualization when one report says that

> Within public schools contract teachers are associated with higher effort compared to regular teachers. And higher teacher effort is associated with better student performance after controlling for other school and student characteristics. Attendance and engagement in teaching activity are higher for contract teachers compared to regular teachers in the areas of study in India. (Goyal & Pandey, 2009, p. 10)

The authors of the study go on to conclude that:

> The evidence so far suggests that at least in the short run, contract teachers are a more efficient resource compared to regular teachers. In a recent study that collected data on teacher salaries in the two states, we find that contract teachers get paid between one-fourth and one-fifth of regular teachers … By hiring contract teachers in lieu of regular teachers, the government buys the same or more learning output at a lower cost. (p. 10)

As a comment, the authors say that "most teachers in private schools have little or no professional pedagogical training and in general, their students have better test scores compared to counterparts in public schools" (p. 11).

One finds an argument taking shape where openly scholars and new organizations "dedicated" (?) to education have been arguing against providing any infrastructural support but rather focusing on "learning outcomes" and on providing quality education without any additional financial burden to the state. Rather they want to hand over the responsibility to private capital. One such organization called *Gray Capital Matters* (GCM) says:

> Our strategic focus in India is to increase access to affordable, quality education for low-income families through our work with Affordable Private Schools (APS). Our program in India includes School Ratings and School Improvement Solutions for the APS segment. Through our school rating system we intend to demonstrate that in this unique market we can create social value that will increase school and sector performance by increasing sector transparency, stimulating market growth, and ultimately attracting more resources to this sector. (GCM, 2012, p. 2)

GCM says that private schooling has now "started tapping into the aspirations of low-income communities in developing countries"(GMC, 2010, p. 12). This is also significant because its calculation says "the education market for the lower 60% of the population, by income distribution, has been estimated to be worth about $5.2 billion" (2010, p. 13). If the market is so huge, who would not like to tap into it? The idea is to transform each and every aspect of education into a marketable commodity. Private capital is ready to devour whatever it can. So the idea was that it would go for the opening of big schools. Here is a management model that is based on the idea of quality and affordability. It is supported by many such institutions – GCM and ISFC (Indian School Finance Company Private Limited) are only two of them. ISFC says that it is "engaged in the business of lending to educational institutions and entrepreneurs managing" schools. In its own words,

> [It is] widely recognized and appreciated in the education segment for its impact on schools and focus on improvement in quality of education … The objective of ISFC is to assist the Schools and other education institutions in capacity building through infrastructure improvements, thereby enabling students to access quality education. (ISFC, 2017)

Thus, there is a growing clamor among intellectuals and the organizations such as those mentioned above to argue that the government schools have been underperforming and eating up money without producing the desired learning outcomes. So, the focus has now shifted to affordable private schools (APS) or low-fee private schools and along with this to the learning outcomes. Consequently, there is a spurt in testing learning outcomes globally, and in India such exercises are being undertaken by the private organizations as well as state-run institutions, such as the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT). It is based on these tests that an argument is being put forward that the government schools are not doing well and are playing with the lives of poor children who are enrolled in these schools. Hence, it is argued that even the poor are sending their children to the private schools. While making this argument, the scholars, lobbyists, concerned citizens, etc., have attacked the way private schools have been shut down because they do not comply with the regulations. Madhav Chavan, whose organization has been at the forefront of standardized testing, writes that "banning private schools or even curtailing them is no more a democratic option unless a visibly better government school alternative can be presented … There is no reason why government-aided and privately managed schools cannot be encouraged further" (Chavan, n.d., p. 2). His argument ends up encouraging an institutionally multi-tiered system based on a certain criterion. "There is no question that schools need to have good infrastructure, but to keep achievement of quality on hold until all infrastructure is taken care of is quite absurd."

Chavan is asking us not to demand from the state education infrastructure for poor children exactly what the elite children get in their elite private schools. These arguments are also creating legitimacy for sub-standard private schools (in general private schools) to replace the free government schools. It is, in other

words, an attempt to throw open the last possible corner to capital accumulation as well. It is like the self-help groups (SHGs), which played a significant role in bringing the small money that lay in the pockets of sections of the poor into the market, thereby increasing (quantitative) circulation of money, but also it brought them into the market's reach and hence, open to consumption and all the other vagaries that the market brings with it. The aspiration generated by the system, as well as the pauperization, compelled an illusion of whatever possible upward mobility, and has been forcing people to go to the private schools of all varieties. As a result, a lot of unregulated private schools being run in shacks have appeared in the rural hinterlands. Private capital would like to regulate them so that it can have a share of that pie as well. Once regulated, private capital can enter this market also because it would be easier for them to be regulated, as they are accustomed to such measures, unlike the informal small schools.

Everybody seems to talking about how the state spends more on educating a child compared to the private schools, but nobody asks for a moment, why should that not be the case? If education is to be free and if it is to be of a quality that is best – through physical infrastructure as well as curriculum and pedagogy – then the cost might go up further. Rather, intellectuals of the Right justify their analysis of criticizing government expenditure through combining it with the issue of learning outcomes. Taking an example of a few states in India, research argues that the per pupil expenditure is much higher in public schools, whereas "public schools produced only 48% as much learning as private schools. Putting these two things together we find that private schools offer 5.3 times the value for money (VFM) as public schools" (Kingdon, 2017, p. 29). Indian public school teachers are paid much more than teachers in many countries, such as China, not to mention compared to private school teachers in India, so then how does one explain the low quality of teaching in these schools? In other words, research concludes that: (1) there is no correlation between higher salary and better quality of teaching; and (2) teachers with low salaries determined by the demand and supply of an educated workforce in the market can produce much better results than the higher-paid teachers. What is notable in all these arguments is the absence of an argument about why private school teachers should not be paid as much as regular public school teachers, and why the public school teachers should be paid much more than what they are paid now. The reason is simple: these research studies seek to transform the teacher into what Marx called the wage worker, left to the vagaries of the market struggling to fend for themselves, living in constant fear of job insecurity and at the mercy of the owners of private capital. Capitalism, by creating a huge reserve army of labor, ensures that wages remain low and that is what is happening in education. The teacher is no longer the entity in whom one entrusts knowledge but s/he is like any other worker, i.e. a service provider. The *value for money* or *cost-benefit analysis* are tools developed by market-based economic systems to transform the human part of such professions into mere mechanical, service delivery professions. That is the reason why one would not see any use for an education system such as Tolstoy, Gandhi or Tagore had envisaged. Rather, they would argue for how the private school could be safeguarded against any possible regulation from the state, and how the argument of resource crunch, when there is none, can be

given to say let us have the "best" knowledge for least amount of money. "It is such a vision that makes one think that the high value for money offered by private schools is probably what led to the adoption of a kind of public-private partnership (PPP) in India's Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009, with government funding and private schools producing education" (Kingdon, 2017, p. 29). Kingdon makes a case for sensitivity toward the low-fee private schools, so that they do not close down due to non-compliance with the Right to Education regulations, etc. She also makes a case for a PPP model in which the public sector funds and the private sector produces education. And she is not alone, as the World Bank has also argued for a PPP model

> in which the public and private sectors can join together to complement each other's strengths in providing education services and helping developing countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals for education and to improve learning outcomes. These public-private partnerships (PPPs) can even be tailored and targeted specifically to meet the needs of low-income communities. (Patrinos et al., 2009, p. 1)

So, they are clear in agreeing that these low-fee schools should be a mechanism to provide education to the marginalized.

What is interesting is that in trying to build a discourse of such a nature, the intellectuals go to such inconceivable levels – one example is how Gandhi has been portrayed as a supporter of privatization and it is claimed that he would have promoted neoliberalism, had he been alive. James Tooley says that government should not enforce wages for teachers in private schools or ensure they are well trained because these low-paid and underqualified teachers are hired because low budget private schools cannot afford higher salaries or better qualified teachers. He argues that, despite these shortcomings, they are indeed giving good affordable education to poor children. He says, "In other words, private schools don't have to be impeded by shortfalls in any one input, they can flexibly compensate with improvements in other inputs. The RTE, and government officials enforcing it, show no such flexibility" (n.d., p. 5). He is claiming that the APS are better than the government schools. In fact, he goes on to equate the Indian state trying to close down private schools that do not meet RTE regulations with the British colonial administration and pre-independence Indians, and, in his view, Gandhi would have also done the same. "I suggest that Gandhi would be aghast at the school closures under RTE. To see why, we need to go back to 1931, when Gandhi was in London for the Second Round Table Conference on constitutional reform for India," he says (n.d., p. 7). He quotes Gandhi from Dharampal's *Beautiful Tree*:

> I say without fear of my figures being challenged successfully, that today India is more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago, and so is Burma, because the British administrators, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root like that, and the beautiful tree perished … (Gandhi, quoted in Tooley, n.d., p. 8)

He further quotes Gandhi:

> and the schools established after the European pattern were too expensive for the people … I defy anybody to fulfil a programme of compulsory primary education of these masses inside of a century. This very poor country of mine is ill able to sustain such an expensive method of education. Our state would revive the old village schoolmaster and dot every village with a school both for boys and girls. (p. 9)

What Tooley is doing is equating the villages with slums and forgetting that Gandhi was not talking in a context of such inequality as is visible in the education system in terms of private and government schools. Tooley forgets that Ghandi's idea of schooling was inclusive and if Tooley were to read the Wardha document of pre-independence India prepared by the Congress on education, he would have to rethink his analysis. His analysis is rooted in methodological fallacy. For instance. he says:

> When Gandhi spoke at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London on 20 October 1931, I could now see more clearly what was at stake. When he said that the British came to India and uprooted 'the beautiful tree', he was referring to the beautiful tree of a private education system, serving the poor as well as those wealthier. Instead of embracing this indigenous private education system, the British rooted it out, and it perished. And this left India 'more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago'. (p. 15)

What one finds with APS is not an idea of indigenous education. It is rather an offshoot of privatization and a result of the Indian state's failure to realize in practice Article 45 of the Indian Constitution which wanted every child to be educated with the enactment of the Constitution. Tooley brings in Gandhi to say that he would have argued that such an imposition (of a proper school building) was too expensive, and Dharampal, according to Tooley, suggests that "conditions under which teaching took place in the Indian schools were less dingy and more natural" (as quoted in n.d. p. 21). Hence, Tooley has no problems with one-room schools or classes being held under a tree, etc., whereas the elite of Indian society or those with purchasing power can have much better equipped classes, laboratories, and playgrounds. It seems from this discourse that quality is not defined through the infrastructure or qualification of the teacher and the consequent curriculum and pedagogy. Will they also say the same for the elite private schools? They would not, because there the awe factor comes from the smart boards in the classrooms, exposure trips to exotic places, state-of-the-art laboratories, and so on. Hence, there is an inbuilt bias against the poor children. Also, if infrastructure or teachers' qualifications do not matter, then why not agree with the idea that knowledge does not necessarily come from schooling as a generic principle? It has been argued time and again within education how knowledge is experiential. So let us completely do away with schools and universities. Unfortunately, they do not want to get into the epistemological and philosophical dimensions of this debate on knowledge as

well, because they need training centers for capital as well as they want education to be a tradable commodity to make profits. The aim of such scholarship is to hand over everything to the sphere of the market and they have a willing partner in the shape of the neoliberal state.

The present Indian state has been arguing that everything should be privatized because it is controlled by corporate capital, which wants to extract as much as possible from wherever possible. The Chief Executive Office of the Niti Aayog (a Government of India think tank, whose role is to envision development) said that the government must privatize jails, schools, and colleges (*Times of India*, 2017). The Niti Aayog vision also puts forward the same view as that of its CEO. Its says, "In terms of regulation, states should regulate only based on outcomes and transparency requirements, not through regulating inputs like library, fees and playgrounds." It goes on to say that there should be "bolder experiments" on how to involve private players. "These could include education vouchers and local government-led purchasing of schooling services. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models could also be explored where the private sector adopts government schools while being publicly funded on a per child basis" (Niti Aayog, 2017, p. 133). It has brought the same logic of outcome to higher education as well, wherein it recommended a three-tiered university/college system: (1) research-focused universities; (2) employment-focused universities; and (3) the poorly performing universities. When all this was recommended, the state governments began to follow these recommendations. The Government of Rajasthan (a federal state in North India) decided to hand a huge number of schools over to the private sector. The University Grants Commission, the nodal agency that oversees the Indian university system, has accepted the three-tiered university system and the Government of India has already advertised for applications to set up Institutions of Excellence. Hence, one finds that there is a very strong discourse, which dominates through its mechanism of state patronage, institutionalized intellectual support by corporate capital, in favor of dismantling the state-run education system in India, as has been happening in different ways in various parts of the world. This agenda of privatization and making education contingent on purchasing power is grounded in a context which is characterized by extreme inequality. It is also aimed at ensuring that a particular kind of education becomes part of our existence, wherein the critical dimensions are completely sidelined.

The Difficult Times: Inequality and the Impossibility of Quality Education for All

We are living in difficult times. These are the times when the prosperity of a few represents the prosperity of the whole nation, when the state is represented through private capital's contract agencies, when the education and health of the masses are no longer a concern for the state except in rhetoric and when the capital offensive has resulted in the oppression of a most brutal nature demolishing everything that comes its way – from human settlements to forest, mountains, and rivers. It is in these dark times that existence can be defined only by resistance – blasting through the concrete walls of capital's mansions and

making a deafening noise to shake its foundations. Yes, the only possibility is an intensified class struggle.

There is death everywhere and this is not only on account of natural calamities, it is also due to the lust for wealth that has destroyed/is destroying all that is public, all that can be accessed by the masses as a matter of right. Capitalism, while it gives you new ways of survival, also takes away the possibilities of accessing them. In other words, the scientific and technological advances are accompanied by poverty, deprivation, and the marginalization of the masses. Once, everything is transformed into a saleable commodity, there will be vast masses of people who are deprived of it all. Hence, food, water, land, plants, etc., all get privatized and therefore out of reach of all those people who cannot pay for them. In other words, if you cannot pay, you have no right to have it – whether it is food, shelter, or clothing. Education comes only after that.

The rich are becoming richer at the cost of making the poor even poorer as well as by depriving them of their basic rights. While this is a trend that can be overwhelmingly seen across the world, India is no exception. The gap between rich and poor, even on the most conservative estimate, has been widening.

> The richest 10% of Indian society have seen the highest growth while the poorest 10% have seen the slowest increase in incomes. The remaining 80% of the people have seen roughly the same levels of growth ranging between 35% and 40% in rural areas and between 40% and 50% in urban areas over 12 years. That means that for 90% of people, annual growth in income was just over 3% in rural India, and just over 4% in urban India.
>
> Clearly, economic policy that resulted in high GDP growth for most of this period has not trickled down to the neediest. Rather, it appears to be benefitting the already affluent sections more. (Varma, 2013)

This trend seems to be getting furthermore skewed as indicated by the data on growth of the richest Indians:

> This growth in wealth of a few people has been obscene. In fact, it is so stark that the growth in their wealth leaves behind the growth of top 1% richest people across the world. In the year 2000 India's richest 1% had "a lower share of India's total wealth than the world's top 1 per cent held of its total wealth. That changed just before and after the global recession – though the world's superrich are recovering and India's top 1% holds close to half of the country's total wealth." (Rukmini, 2014)

Combined with this trend of growing wealth of the nation, often celebrated by the myopic intellectuals through the high GDP growth rates, has been the trend of bringing everything possible into the ambit of market. This is an ever-expanding ambit, where commodification process happens in different ways:

- *By making certain services/products available directly to the consumers for purchase*, hence, you pay money to use the toilet in many of the cities or you pay money to use the parks or botanical gardens or you pay money to use the roads or many other goods as well as enter what is designated as the public sphere.

- *By transforming institutions that appear public but in essence serve the rule of private capital*, such as the state institutions going all out to privatize the electricity and water supply or sanitation in the cities or privatize the hiring of non-academic staff in universities.
- *By transforming the character of the body-politic* that constitutes the state, such as the constitution of the Parliament as well as its functioning, making it overtly a place where only representatives of private capital can enter.

Through these ways of commodification, the system not only brings everything within the ambit of market but also makes another world impossible to imagine. After all, the democratic institutions which are presumed to be the embodiments of popular aspirations themselves operate in a way which facilitates the accumulation of wealth for a few at the cost of the majority. The trends toward the increasing involvement of corporate capital in elections and the increasing presence of millionaire and billionaire members of parliaments are indications of this takeover of representational democracy by the spectacularity of corporate capital.

The body-politic has overtly become a playground for private capital. As institutions created by the welfare state become areas where the vices of private capital flourish, the notions of freedom, liberty, and equality manifest themselves as rhetoric, as farce, put to use for one and only one purpose – to create the illusion that capitalism even today stands for the interests of everyone. Democracy, in its liberal bourgeois avatar, remains only a tool to further the processes of capital accumulation. This could not be more evident than in the uses of the term "democracy" itself – when the repressive instruments of state use the power of the gun to murder innocent tribals it is termed collateral damage,[1] but when Maoists kill a group of politicians, it is termed the murder of democracy.[2]

This is one of the characteristic features of neoliberalism – that the state unabashedly becomes an agent of private capital. It was working in the interests of capital in earlier avatars but had a semblance of welfarism attached to it. In contemporary times, the Constitution, the judiciary, the legislature, and all other instruments combine their forces to ensure that the march of capital is unhindered. This is visible in the reforms, which are being initiated in big universities such as Delhi University, or in the case of handing over of mineral-rich areas to private players despite the protests of local people. The sensitivity of the state to the needs and demands of the masses is completely lacking in this age of neoliberalism. The tragedy of our times is also that there is no large-scale opposition to this unilateralism of private capital, as social democratic tendencies mar the Left and sectarianism takes its own toll. This is also the situation where the reproductive role of education becomes crucial for capitalism as it, alongside prosperity, also faces the continuous danger of its own dissolution, embryonic in the many crises that it has been confronted with.

The Logic of Reproduction in Education

While the voices of the opposition are baffled, confused, and create situations for their own dissipation, capital continues its expansion through the idea, quite similar to what the liberal-bourgeois theorists (Kumar, 2012) in the

post-World War II West were putting forth, that the possibilities of prosperity have rendered the idea of a systemic change irrelevant and that capitalism does not need an alternative. The expansion is furthermore strengthened through the machinations put in place to reproduce labor power. Althusser demonstrates that

> in order to exist, every social formation must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce … [it] must reproduce: the productive forces, the existing relations of production. (2006, p. 86)

The reproduction of the means of production is necessary for the system to survive. The labor power is reproduced "by giving … the material means with which to reproduce itself: by wages" (p. 87) and by providing conditions that would ensure that the worker could again come back to the workplace. But for labor power to be reproduced as labor power, it requires more than merely material conditions because it needs to be competent in its reproduced form once again. Hence, the significance of skill development becomes important, and it is provided more by outside production: "by the capitalist education system, and by other instances and institutions" (p. 88). While they reproduce the labor power, the educational institutions under capitalism simultaneously seek profit as a motive. They cannot work through the logic of creating critical beings who may imagine a new world beyond the rule of capital. Or they cannot afford to have disciplines which do not find a demand in the market. Hence, we find streamlining of disciplines taking place and there is a declining presence of social sciences and more so institutionalized research in social sciences. A simple survey of higher education institutions would reflect how marginalized the social sciences are, despite these disciplines being increasingly for the status quo and uncritical except on the surface. Hence, reproduction happens not in the way of only reproducing labor power but also a labor power which is consensual.

These sets of institutions are essential for capital to survive because

> The reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submissions to the rules of the established order, i.e., a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation, so that they too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class 'in words.' (p. 89)

Gramsci (2004) talks of a similar kind of process when he cites the use of consent and force by the ruling classes in a polity. *Consensus creation* is a process that is aimed at ensuring that the system, that is capitalism in contemporary times, emerges victorious. The challenges created by the blurring of the boundaries between instruments that represent *force* and those representing *consensus* are emerging as a major challenge because it prepares a citizen ideologically

as an object that endorses the use of force whenever the system resorts to it. Some interesting studies in this respect can be found in contexts of the USA (Wilson, 2012) and Sri Lanka (Kumar, 2013).

On another level, the illusion of possibility generated by the system does not allow a huge section of the population to unite in revolt against the system. University campuses exemplify this tendency. The pedagogical failure of the Left has furthermore denied its cadres the possibility of establishing the dialectics between the experiences at the institutional level and the larger accumulative logic of capital. Hence, the campus-based assertions of teachers and students are consistently losing the battle. In fact, combined with this failure to identify the root of the problem is also the failure to create alternatives in the workplace. The Left has scarcely thought of ways to run institutions. Hence, we do not find experiments in education on the part of the Left, whether at school or university level.

One is confronted with serious challenges to make education more than a mere mechanical process of skill development. It needs to be seen as more than mere vocationalization because unless that happens it would amount to destroying the possibilities of deeper engagement with society and the issues confronting society, as it creates a disjunction between what is taught and what is lived. One cannot ignore the fact that knowledge is experiential. There are already academics who are denying the significance of caste, class, and gender in our lives. Arising from an equally serious kind of academic trend, one will have to resist it alongside countering the reduction of higher education to mere skill development.

Commodifying Education in a Situation of Inequality

Poverty is a huge issue for the neoliberal state today. It tries constantly to prove that the rule of capital has been equalizing rather than marginalizing. However, it finds it extremely difficult to hide its ugly underbelly beneath the shimmering surface that it presents to the world.

The attempt to hide this ugly underbelly is manifested in the way the state has been incessantly trying to bring down the calculation of poverty. One committee after another has been appointed by the Indian state to show how neoliberalism has brought down poverty rather than escalating it. The reality remains that the majority of the people in India are deprived of their basic needs: unemployment, low wage rates, mounting inflation, and a non-existent state as far as taking care of the marginalization is concerned. There is also a growing gap between rich and poor and the concentration of wealth in a few hands is occurring at a faster pace.

> The top 10% of wage earners now make 12 times more than the bottom 10%, up from a ratio of six in the 1990s …
>
> There is evidence of growing concentration of wealth among the elite. The consumption of the top 20% of households grew at almost 3% per year in the 2000s as compared to 2% in the 1990s, while the growth in consumption of the bottom 20% of households remained unchanged at 1% per year. (*Times of India*, 2011)

The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector's (NCEUS) report demonstrated how the "buoyancy" visible in the economy at a macro-level, be it in form of the growth rate, increasing per capita income or the saving rates

> [did not touch the] majority of the people, who did not have even Rs. 20 a day for consumption … At the end of 2004–05, about 836 million or 77 per cent of the population were living below Rs.20 per day and constituted most of India's informal economy. About 79 per cent of the informal or unorganised workers belonged to this group without any legal protection of their jobs or working conditions or social security, living in abject poverty and excluded from all the glory of a shining India. (NCEUS, 2007, p. 01)

The report further showed how "only about 0.4 per cent of the unorganised sector workers were receiving social security benefits like the Provident Fund, and this proportion had not changed since 1999–2000." In other words, the pauperization of the vast mass of population has been happening while the macro picture shown as part of consensus-building exercise tells the story of an India marching ahead to progress. A vast mass of the population are deep in debt for various reasons. The poorer sections take out loans largely from non-institutional sources which makes life more difficult for them because of the viciousness of poverty in which they get caught because of debt. The institutional lending system either does not exist or if it exists, it is inaccessible to the poor population.

In this situation of poverty and the absence of mechanisms that would take care of the reasons of poverty, the Indian state has been under pressure to demonstrate that neoliberal capitalism has been performing well and efficiently. As the loyal agent of capital, it puts its ideological apparatuses to work. One such example is how the poverty line is defined by the Indian state. One of the Planning Commission committees in 2010, calculating the poverty line for the purposes of food security, said that the number of people living below the poverty line in India was 37.2% of the total population (Iyer, 2010). In 2012, the same Planning Commission showed a further decline in poverty figures by 7.3% when it stated that anyone with a daily consumption expenditure of Rs. 28.35 and Rs. 22.42 in urban and rural areas respectively is above the poverty line (Balchand, 2012). Sainath (2012) argues that the media is part of the consensus-creating mechanism because it "rarely" mentions the methodologies adopted to calculate the figures, because a change in variables can bring about a drastic change in the figures. That is the reason why the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) put the numbers of Below Poverty Line Indians at 77% of the population and the N.C. Saxena committees put it at 50%, both of which were higher than the Tendulkar Committee, which had put it at 29.9%.

While great efforts are being made to tell us that there are fewer poor in the country and therefore the way capital is unabashedly marching on should not be questioned, nobody even questions the kind of money that the Indian state is doling out to the private enterprises in the way of waivers to different kinds of duties and taxes.

The Indian state decided to give waivers to corporates worth Rs 83,492 cr in the financial year 2017 (*The Economic Times*, 2017). This happens when the Indian state and the intellectuals cited above argue that there is a resource crunch and no money to spend on education, and therefore increasingly private participation in education is required. This mode of planners, private capital, educationists and all those part of the effort to commodify education, acts in unison. And sadly enough, those who claim to represent the masses through an anti-systemic politics remain silent and therefore become party to the whole process.

This mode of bringing education into the sphere of the market comes from all quarters. It begins by arguing that skill development is the main objective of higher education so that global economic needs could be met (MHRD, 2011, p. 09). This is what the Indian state considers to be the purpose of education. The Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) wants immediate attention to be paid to public-private partnerships. It has already started in central universities and IIITs. It raised the concern that there had been

> [an] inadequate response to the PPP mode. As per Education policy, 6% of the GDP is required to be invested in education. This has, however, not been done so far on account of financial constraints. The National Knowledge Commission has suggested modifying the trust laws and the income tax laws so as to encourage private investment in the education sector. As no action has been initiated in this regard, private investors are not showing any response in this regard. (MHRD, 2011, p. 34)

It further says that, "the role of the private sector in education has so far been marginal and needs to be suitably enhanced in view of competing claims from other relevant sectors for enhanced public spending" (p. 44).

The Approach Paper of the 12th Five Year Plan said, "Higher education is also essential to build a workforce capable of underpinning a modern, competitive economy" (Planning Commission, 2011, p. 100). The vision is to enhance private participation (p. 102) and encourage institutions "to raise their own funds through various legitimate means. Reasonable tuition fees in higher education need to be supplemented with appropriate publicly-funded financial aid" (p. 101). Remember that the Indian state due to "pragmatic reasons" wanted to bring education within the Companies Act because private capital had been demanding this for quite some time so it could make an uninterrupted entry into the education market.

It is not only the state institutions which have been arguing that education should be made into a fully-fledged commodity but the even the "progressive" committees, such as the Yashpal Committee, talk in a similar idiom as the then Minister of Human Resource Development, Kapil Sibal. The Minister said in an interview that he felt that "one of our biggest challenges is to make that dissemination of knowledge at the university level relevant to the employer" (Sibal, 2010). This was an echo of what the committee had also recommended. It had pointed out the need to tune the university system according to the

needs/orientations of a society and an economy that believed in commodifying it to the last limits.

> Consequently, university education is no longer viewed as a good in itself, but also as the stepping-stone into a higher orbit of the job market, where the student expects a concrete monetary return, and consequently in this perception, the university of today is expected to be in tune with the emerging needs of the society. Even so, graduates should be sufficiently exposed to interdisciplinary experiences, which can sustain them when the demands of a particular job market change. (MHRD, 2009, pp. 09–10)

The committee further also argued "in order to reach the goals of doubling the higher education capacity from the present level, it will be necessary to encourage participation of the private sector" (p. 34). The role of academia, and even of those known to be progressive, working in tandem with the industry and the instruments of state have led to the entrenched rule of private capital in education sector. This also reflects how the consensus-building process works. The state openly collaborates with the representatives of capital and it becomes obvious when the Planning Commission constituted the Steering Committee for Higher and Technical Education for Formulation of the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012–17) on April 8, 2011. It included as special guests the corporate houses in the country, such as Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services, FICCI, CII, NASSCOM, Infosys, Biocon Group, Tata Group and NIIT among others. The coordination between the state and the private capital has been immaculate.

The industry, which seeks to deregulate the education sector, is therefore making its demands heard at the highest policy-making bodies. They have been arguing that the Indian higher education sector is not serving the demands of the new economy. The Executive Director and National Leader for the Education Sector Practice, PriceWaterhouseCoopers states:

> Traditional business models and practices are becoming redundant and employees and managers need the education, skills and training to be able to respond to the challenges of a dynamic and increasingly competitive economy. This places a huge task and responsibility on the higher and vocational education institutions to change and impart education and training that is relevant to industry needs. Sadly, the majority of educational institutions are still mired in arcane syllabi and teaching methods invariably divorced from the changed environment. The time has therefore come to acknowledge and encourage the active participation of industry and the private sector in creating all-round success in the higher education sector, especially the engineering and technical education sectors. (CII & PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012, Foreword)

The report says that the Indian formal higher education has been over-regulated and under-governed and "plagued by several regulatory restrictions that act as entry barriers for investors" (p. 08). So clean it up, reduce the number of

regulators, create one body to govern the higher education bodies so that the changes in terms of creating what is suited to the needs of the industry can all be done in one go.

Hence, this vision emerges not in isolation and definitely not as part of innovative thinking on part of the state. It is part of the larger plan of neoliberal capitalism to extract as much profit as possible from an area which has a great deal of potential. Some estimates pointed out that the regulated segment of the education market would be around US$65 billion and the unregulated market in education around US$20 billion by 2012 (Venture Intelligence, 2011). The neoliberalization of education, like other aspects of life, is a global phenomenon, which cuts across countries and regions and percolates down to the lowest level. The reflection can be seen even at the state level.

The Altered Educational Institutions Under Neoliberalism

What does neoliberalism exactly do to education apart from privatizing it? The following are some of the consequences of the neoliberal onslaught on education:

1) It says that all problems in the education sector – from lack of infrastructure to bad teaching and learning – can be resolved through more efficient private sector participation. The government-run system lacks quality, innovation, and needs to be updated, therefore it should not be forced upon people (a logic which the voucher system proponents give).
2) It is aggressive and undemocratic in its ethos and therefore enforces rules, regulations, and legislation concerning the education system without democratic consent from the people's bodies/representatives.
3) It creates authoritarian structures across the board – from universities to larger state structures. For instance, the Vice-Chancellors whimsically make changes in the academic content of the university system without consultation with wider academia, or bureaucrats/politicians hastily pass laws breaking the conventions of Parliament, such as in the case of the Right to Education Act, when popular views were not invited by the standing committee.
4) It has saturated the spaces of democratic politics and the expression of dissent. Universities, which have been known to be liberal spaces, are crying for freedom to express their dissent.
5) It breeds a system of unprecedented allegiance from the teacher-worker community. The new structures comprise primarily those who formulated and implement the repressive rules and run the university with a heavy hand. Teachers themselves in Jamia hunt down their colleagues or prevent them from exercising freedom of speech; faculty members at Patna University played an instrumental role in bringing about retrogressive hostel rules that sparked massive protest from the All India Students Federation (2012); the administration at Jawaharlal Nehru University came up with a circular to censor public meetings and film shows (2010); Delhi University plans to introduce a biometric attendance system for teachers.

6) It destroys solidarities by bringing into its structural fold the segments of the population whose class interests, otherwise, lie in opposition. Hence, those who could have struck at the weakest link of the system become its sol-diers – the committee heads, Deans, Head of Departments, Registrars, Proctors, Provosts, etc. A section of the teacher-workers become what the managerial class is in factories.

7) It transforms the notions of progressivism and co-option – the neoliberal system creates institutions for legitimation by involving voices/people who are known to have a progressive image. Hence, there are Yashpal Committees and Common School System Commissions that help neoliberalism create legitimacy for itself.

8) It changes the nature of what is to be taught and how is it to be taught. Critical aspects of education are increasingly being excluded from the national curriculum as the demand is more for teaching content, which can give jobs (Hill & Kumar, 2009, p. 18). A new, safe and de-theorized education system and training of teachers are being conducted in countries such as the UK (Hill, 2004b), and the trend can be seen more and more in India as well. Social sciences are, consequently, are not in demand due to their non-job-oriented character.

Amidst Poverty, How Would One Buy Education?

Education in neoliberal times is out on the open market. While state-managed institutions would continue to exist, and if anybody takes the assault of private capital as culminating in the death of public institutions, they are mistaken. State-managed universities and schools would remain but with a changed character. The private institutions would open up whenever and wherever they have the possibility of extracting profit. One of its ultimate goals remains the segmentation of the labor force, after all, you cannot have decent employment opportunities for everybody because the logic of capital accumulation never allows one to do that.

Given that the character of higher education institutions has also been chang-ing, they are acquiring a similar character to any other private institution, whether it is in terms of sale and purchase of education (as also recommended by the Planning Commission), or in terms of subjecting faculty members to similar working conditions as any other person selling their labor power for wages.

With the price of education going up and the purchasing power by even the most conservative estimates not going up sufficiently, higher education would remain inaccessible as a commodity to most of the citizenry. Given the complex and multi-fold exploitative system, which characterizes our socio-economic sys-tem, it will be difficult for people to access the kind of education that they would like to have.

People across the rural and urban landscapes have differential incomes and therefore also a differential ability to spend. Given that the number of private insti-tutions is increasing and the state-managed institutions have been increasing their fees, it has become difficult for those in poverty – those 77% of the people who cannot spend more than Rs. 20 a day – to spend that on higher education.

Table 20.1 Growing privatization of Higher Education in India

	University/University-level institutions	Colleges	Diploma granting institutions
Central	152	669	0
State	316	13024	3207
Private	191	19930	9541

Source: Ernst & Young, FICCI and Planning Commission (2012).

Social Justice, Democracy and Neoliberalism

The processes of neoliberalism have set in motion a highly undemocratic work ethic and mode of living our everyday life. When the dwindling public sector takes away the idea of transparency and accountability, as corporates work under a regime, which cannot be questioned it also results in debunking the idea of social justice and democracy. Accepting that democracy under capitalism cannot be achieved, it is important that one keeps contesting the expansion of non-democratic tendencies.

The higher education institutions in their everyday functioning have become centers of dictatorial regimes. The presence of voices of dissent is not only regarded with suspicion but they are trampled at the first instance. The protest marches and gatherings were video-recorded in Delhi University so that the people present could be identified by the administration, and syllabi and curriculum are changed through repressive mechanisms despite faculty members protesting against the content and ways of teaching. The everyday relations between the faculty are also ruptured because they are divided into groups of those supporting the de-democratization process and those opposing it. In actual terms the question of labor and contestation of the regimes by it, comes to the fore in these situations.

At another level the increasing numbers of higher education institutions are using their enrollment figures to show that the enrollment figures have gone up and are indirectly institutionalizing a discriminatory regime (Table 20.1). The private institutions without any rules governing their admission process deny the possibility of oppressed castes, women, and tribal members entering these institutions. There remains only one criterion – that of ability to pay for admission. The democratic institutions such as teachers' unions, students, etc., in these centers have also been absent and even if they do exist, they are devoid of any political content and remain an associate of the institution itself.

Conclusion

In such a situation the solution lies only in expanding the state-managed higher education, which does not believe in meeting its expenses out of the pockets of those who are studying there. There has to be a collective of institutions that

operate not in relation to the market, therefore, keeping away from any market principle and aiming at creating a knowledge system that is critical in nature to democratize the ethos within which we live, preparing students to dream about possibilities that would lead them to transcend the system.

In the case of India, we have been silent witnesses of the virtual takeover of each and every possible aspect of our life by the whimsical power of money represented through a callous market system. That cannot be accepted. Our basic needs – water, electricity, employment, healthcare, and education – have been commodified. Education, our concern here, has become a commodity with an exchange value from being a substance to being one with use-value. No doubt, this transition has been historical and through a process of transformations witnessed in the production process, social relations, and the mode of production as a whole.

This process of commodification must be reversed if we can imagine a democratic and egalitarian system because it nurtures only an undemocratic and authoritarian ethos that has no space for the poor, Dalits (the oppressed castes), and women.

Notes

1 See the following news items: http://www.indianexpress.com/news/carrying-bodies-tribal-women-lead-protests-against-cops/1118025/0 (accessed September 13, 2013); http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/newdelhi/collateral-damage-incurred-in-anti-naxal-ops-mha/article1-1063214.aspx (accessed September 13, 2013); http://www.pudr.org/?q=content/not-merely-collateral-damage-tragic-killing-adivasis-chhattisgarh (accessed September 13, 2013).
2 See, for instance, the reaction of Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the Congress Party at: http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/it-s-an-attack-on-democracy-rahul-gandhi/article1-1066126.aspx (accessed September 13, 2013).

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21

Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education

An Ethics for Capital or the Other?

Chris Arthur

Introduction

Precarious employment and financial insecurity continue to expand in the wake of an anemic recovery for most from the 2008 financial crisis. Improved job numbers in the United States are offset by the fact that most of the jobs created three years in the recovery are low-paying and "nine of the ten fastest growing occupations don't require a college degree" (Buchheit, 2015, para. 11).[1] We see much the same story in Canada: middle-income jobs are scarce and middle-income wages have stagnated, falling behind tuition and housing price increases (Tal, 2015; The Canadian Press, 2014). According to Wayne Lewchuck, professor at McMaster University's economics and labor studies department, insecure employment is the norm in Canada – in a survey of 4,000 people in Toronto and Hamilton, Ontario, Lewchuck found that almost half "work in jobs with some degree of insecurity" and that workers are often "viewed as a liability or a cost to be minimized whenever possible" (Grant, 2014, para. 12-14). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2015) presents a similarly bleak picture on a larger scale, finding that "temporary and part-time work and self-employment now account for about a third of total employment in OECD countries [and] since the mid-1990s, more than half of all job creation was in the form of non-standard work" (p. 17). Youth increasingly face the brunt of this precarity: as of early 2015, 10% of youth in the United States were classified as unemployed compared to 5.5% for those 25 and older (Kasperkevic, 2015) while in Canada the numbers are worse with a youth unemployment rate of 13.7% compared to 5.9% for those 25 and older in 2013 (Tahirali, 2014).[2] Student debt has also exploded in recent years, posing a particular hardship for recently graduated unemployed and precariously employed youth: in Canada, student debt grew 44.1% from 1999 to 2012, while in the US, student debt grew 110% between 2005 and 2012 (Tencer, 2014).

In response, policy-makers, politicians, and mainstream media pundits call for the integration of financial literacy education (FLE) and entrepreneurship education (EE) into all levels of education. A chair from *The Learning Partnership*,

an organization involved in integrating business with education systems and institutions in Ontario, Canada, offers a typical justification for EE:

> The working world has changed. A university education used to guarantee a long-term job in a large company. Not anymore. Today, large companies are disappearing. Employment opportunities are short-term. Most people in tomorrow's working world will find employment filling niche gaps, providing goods and services. People who are unprepared for that reality will be unable to provide for themselves. They will need to think like entrepreneurs. (Ransome, 2014, para. 8)

EE advocates argue that through EE training everyone, particularly those in low-income communities, will become economically secure and be able to pursue private and public interests of value to them: Akela Peoples, President and CEO of The Learning Partnership, believes EE will help individuals "take ownership of their futures" (Peoples, 2014), a sentiment echoed in a brochure from the Ontario Centres of Excellence (n.d.), which holds that entrepreneurial individuals will "forge whatever world they wish" (p. 10). Ted Beck, CEO of the National Endowment for Financial Education, sounds the same notes, calling for the teaching of financial literacy in schools because "today's young adults are a test-case generation of what's to come. They'll be responsible for their financial lives to a much higher degree than previous generations" (Malcolm, 2012, para. 30). For FLE advocates, we must accept and take on greater personal responsibility for more economic risks, but, by effectively managing this increased economic responsibility, we can achieve economic security and expanded personal freedom. FLE supporter John Hope Bryant argues this is an issue of economic justice:

> In the 21st century, in the backdrop of a global economic crisis and in an era of economics, understanding the language of money (financial literacy), accessing the mainstream financial system with dignity, avoiding financial predators and pursuing your aspirational dreams without illegitimate barriers of opportunity, is in fact the freedom we seek today. It is the freedom we have always sought. (Bryant, 2010, para. 6)

In this chapter, I draw from Levinas to analyze the ethics of these initiatives and the dominant narratives their advocates espouse. I find that while FLE and EE are motivated by a responsibility for the other, this responsibility has been perverted, privileging capital's accumulation needs at the expense of others' economic security. Following the analysis, I outline the contours of a critical and ethically-oriented FLE and EE.

FLE and EE: Remaking the World and Others

FLE and EE each have roots in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century educational initiatives associated with cooperative organizations and craft guilds, which educated consumers and self-employed producers (Arthur, 2012), but

their more recent neoliberal iterations are substantively different. FLE prior to the 1990s was subsumed under consumer education, an initiative that responded to the problems associated with the rise of mass consumerism and citizen demand for improved product regulations in the early twentieth century (Arthur, 2012; Spring, 2003). However, with the "democratization of finance" (Ertürk et al., 2007) (i.e. the rapid expansion of individualized financial products and the individualization of economic risk), FLE began to appear as an initiative in its own right rather than a subset of consumer education. This more prominent role for FLE followed a neoliberal transformation of consumer protection, which moved from a mandate to *protect* consumers to a responsibility to *empower* consumers and investors (Arthur, 2012). Reflecting the shift, FLE aims to empower individuals whose needs are assumed to be too varied for a one-size-fits-all regulatory approach and whose purchasing decisions are believed to better regulate financial institutions and improve a political jurisdiction's competitiveness than the clumsy "freedom-restricting" regulatory bureaucracy of the Keynesian Welfare State (KWS) (OECD, 2005). Highlighting its popularity, 45 nations have implemented or are in the process of implementing a national financial literacy strategy (Russia's G20 Presidency and OECD, 2013).

The modern form of EE can be dated to the 1970s. In the 1950s and 1960s, governments tended to promote physical capital as the key to increased economic growth and collective prosperity, but, in the 1970s and even more so in the 1980s, the shift to a post-Fordist economy driven by niche-oriented, flexible, just-in-time immaterial production gave further impetus to the widespread teaching of improved technical skills and, in the US and the UK, entrepreneurship. From this point on, the quality of an individual's, group's, or population's human capital and entrepreneurial acumen increasingly came to be seen as important in accounting for differences in productivity, income, and wealth (Becker, 1994; Casson, [1982] 2003; Florida, 2003; Henrekson, 2014).[3] Since the 2008 financial crisis, the clamor to improve human capital, innovation, and individuals' ability to create their own jobs has increased: today, politicians, policy-makers, and media pundits overwhelmingly begin from the assumption that our hyper-competitive, global, post-Fordist economy needs the constant and perpetual mobilization and reformation of all inputs and practices, especially an area's store of human capital, to improve economic security.

Together, the overarching aim of FLE and EE initiatives is to improve the economic security of all by creating financially literate entrepreneurs: individuals who appropriately apply prudent investment strategies, "money math" skills, basic macro-economics principles and business creation and dissolution procedures. They also have human capital that is in demand, in particular, substantial amounts of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) knowledge. For FLE and EE advocates, the STEM disciplines are a financial investment, significantly improving one's human capital portfolio by providing the skills and knowledge employers desire and founders need to create the high tech "Gazelles"[4] that have captured the social imaginary of policy planners the world over.[5] Coding is another key skill routinely linked to high-tech entrepreneurship and lauded as a prudent "educational" investment. To choose one example among many, the British

government recently created a £500,000 fund to train teachers in software coding. The aim, according to key government officials, is to ensure British schools "can inspire the next generation of tech entrepreneurs … and make sure Britain leads the global race in innovation" (Gove & Osborne, 2014, paras 1 and 3). Finally, financially literate entrepreneurs should also combine a skilled trade with theoretical or planning knowledge because of the flexibility the combination provides (i.e. being both a plumber and an engineer enables one to better accommodate the market's shifting employment needs) (Parmar & Connelly, 2014).

In addition to the above knowledge and skills, the financially literate entrepreneur must have the traits and dispositions that will drive him or her to take financially literate and entrepreneurial action. Knowledge is necessary but insufficient. Individuals need the appropriate feelings, desires, and moral intuitions so they will employ the knowledge and skills they have and obtain new knowledge and skills when upgrades are needed. The spark must come from within (even if it must be put in there by others). The individual must want to invest prudently, act on entrepreneurial opportunities, and consume responsibly. To increase the likelihood knowledge will be applied and continually upgraded, character traits such as resiliency or "grit," innovativeness, a risk-taking attitude, prudence, adaptability, desire for life-long learning, and responsibility must be inculcated. FLE and EE advocates argue that with the proper knowledge, skills, and dispositional portfolio, the individual has a much greater chance of attaining a middle-class lifestyle in which one has access to the means (e.g. employment, healthcare, housing, retirement, food, and education) to pursue the public and private interests one values.

The scale of the effort to create these entrepreneurs and financially literate consumers/investors is staggering. Both initiatives are supported by myriad regional, national, and transnational private and public groups, including financial institutions, insurance companies, charities, all levels of government, ministries of education, school boards, universities, the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the OECD. Though youth are a favored target, financial literacy and entrepreneurship lessons are aimed at everyone from pre-schoolers to seniors. The means through which these initiatives "teach" individuals are similarly expansive. They include formal lessons in schools, soap operas, video games, apps, contests, special days, pamphlets, posters, websites, summer camps, workshops, street theatre, and mainstream media texts, such as editorials, articles, and television shows which report favorably on FLE and EE initiatives, argue for more FLE and EE, or blend FLE and EE with entertainment (e.g. *Shark Tank*, *Dragon's Den*, *Money Morons*, the *Suzy Orman Show*, *Till Debt Do Us Part* and *Prince$$*). FLE and EE lessons are to be delivered to everyone throughout their lives, through all possible means, at all times, and in all possible locations.

Direct instruction, overt persuasion, entertainment, and data collection and dissemination are not separate initiatives but are part of a larger project reforming our economic practices and cultural understandings to encourage and create more opportunities for entrepreneurial and financially literate behavior. For FLE advocates enamored with the promises of behavioral economics (Yoong, 2011),

this project includes the reconfiguration of the present's "choice architecture" to nudge consumers and investors to make the "proper" choices, e.g. automatic pension enrollment, the promotion of life-cycle pension plans, automatic savings schemes, lottery incentives, and, in a few instances, the banning of certain financial products and increased regulation of financial marketing and selling practices. A prominent example in Canada is the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) program (one can also include more recent examples such as Canada's Tax-Free Savings Accounts and Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs)). While RRSPs are not new – they were created in 1957 – particular policy changes to RRSPs (continually increasing the amount individuals can claim and enabling RRSPs to be used to buy one's first home) are made in the hope of encouraging more private investment (Dougherty, 2008). The aim is to create more financially literate behavior by transforming the stimuli that influences individuals' decision-making.

EE advocates are more explicit, arguing we must rebuild our world to create an entrepreneurial "ecosystem"[6] replete with university incubators, "investment-friendly" tax regulations, business investment partnerships with formal education institutions, limited employment regulations to promote flexible labor relations, fewer barriers to investment, business creation and destruction, government procurement policies that stimulate business growth, easy access to finance capital, public responsibility for investment risk, and intellectual property rights (IPR) and immigration regimes that promote innovation and competition (OECD, 2007; OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, 2009; Slavica et al., 2015). At the same time, we must breathe life into this new material world by creating an "entrepreneurial culture" or "spirit." This is held by prominent EE advocates to be "the ultimate objective of entrepreneurship education policies" (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2010, p. 3). Robert Cornell (2001), writing on youth entrepreneurship for the OECD, outlines the goal perspicuously:

> As entrepreneurial education spreads throughout a society, it can create a self-reinforcing mechanism. The "target" is not only just the individual, the pupil or student who may decide to go into independent business or become a successful employee in the modern workplace, but also the whole society with whom the person will come into contact or who will affect his life or her life … unless or until all of society shares the entrepreneurial spirit, the educational task will not be complete. (p. 82)

FLE and EE advocates' subjectifying aims, in particular their desire to inculcate particular dispositions and desires, and their world reformation plans illustrate the deep and expansive character of FLE and EE initiatives. Taken together the myriad FLE and EE initiatives, texts, and accompanying material changes to our political economic practices comprise a "public pedagogy" aimed at creating a financially literate and entrepreneurial world and public. As "public pedagogies" – a term used by Henry Giroux (2004) to describe the educative character of culture, which "plays a central role in producing narratives, metaphors, and images that exercise a powerful pedagogical force over how

people think of themselves and their relationships to others" (p. 62) – FLE and EE are not parochial initiatives with modest ends. FLE and EE public pedagogues seek to persuade the public that the "financially-literate" and "entrepreneurial" practices, relations and ethics they promote are necessary, valued and responsible. The concern I bring out below is that FLE and EE advocates promote a public pedagogy that transforms our responsibility for the other and marginalized others into a responsibility for capital's accumulation needs, justifying actions, relations, practices and institutions which benefit capital's needs but harm the other and others.

The FLE and EE Public Pedagogy, Levinas, and Ethics

While they eschew substantive inquiry into our responsibility for others, FLE and EE public pedagogues' justifications for providing FLE and EE and creating a political economy more supportive of entrepreneurship and financially literate action can be linked to a number of ethical traditions. Of particular interest here is that the responsibility FLE and EE public pedagogues argue we have for others' economic security and well-being shares a number of similarities with the ethics Emmanuel Levinas outlines. Many present the responsibility we have for others as an ontological fact; Citibank researchers argue that there exists a "*moral imperative* for the global community to empower low-income clients to take control of their own financial needs" (Deb & Kubzansky, 2012, p. 2, emphasis in the original). Paul Golden, spokesman for the National Endowment of Financial Education, echoes the Citibank researchers, baldly claiming, "we have a societal responsibility to send our youth into the world with the tools to be financially capable, and globally competitive, as adults" (Moodie, 2015, para. 7). FLE and EE proponent John Hope Bryant (2014) even goes so far as to argue that FLE is an extension of the civil rights movement, and financial literacy is a basic human right: we have a collective duty to teach others.

For Levinas (1969), this primary and unjustified responsibility for the other is a core feature of humanity: "Our orientation towards the other at the level of deep subjective experience is one of something like compassion or something like being affectively moved by their presence." writes Critchley (2009, p. 20).[7] Though we routinely ignore the other's needs and alterity, even going so far as to kill the other, the responsibility remains. One can live without consideration of the other but to live a meaningful life requires one accept one's responsibility and attempt to respond ethically to the other (Morgan, 2008).

Second, FLE and EE public pedagogues also hold, like Levinas, that the other to whom I am responsible is a unique, singular being; FLE and EE advocate Gary Rabbior (2007) draws our attention to the uniqueness of others and their myriad needs for which we are responsible:

> Different people will have different goals because, as we all know, people are different. What one person wants out of life can be different from what another person wants. What people have in life also differs greatly. Individuals face life and its financial challenges from a wide array of

> starting points. Some people have access to a great deal, including opportunities for education, training, working, and acquiring income. Others have access to very little and face different challenges and opportunities. Different cultures have differing attitudes to money and material things. The same is true of various religions. (p. 5)

In response to the unique groups, individuals and needs that exist, FLE and EE advocates have shifted their assistance from a one-size-fits-all approach to more tailored interventions targeting the unique needs of those in poverty, women, Aboriginals, youth, recent immigrants and refugees using technology in different ways or experimenting with approaches that might be more culturally or contextually appropriate.[8] FLE and EE advocates are also concerned to meet the new needs that arise from technological changes, the expansion of financial products, and increasing competition between nations, firms and individuals. Every new financial literacy or entrepreneurship taskforce, speech or policy document begins by stressing that changed circumstances, new or previously occluded needs or groups or recently created means of improving financial literacy or entrepreneurship (e.g. FLE video games or online coding classes for budding entrepreneurs) necessitate a change of course. The driver in all these instances appears to be a responsibility to ensure others can meet the varied challenges they face and pursue the unique ends they, as unique beings, desire.

Less concerned with what should follow from one's responsibility for the other than with the character of the self's responsibility, Levinas's account of our responsibility for the other's unique needs is more abstract. For Levinas, the other is beyond the self's understanding and the world's present formation. His conception of the other's singularity stresses the other's "alterity" or otherness such that the other's needs are beyond those the other has as a woman, unemployed migrant worker, or orphan. "It is the other *per se* … [that I am responsible for], whether white or coloured, whether wealthy or prosperous or poor or very poor, in the sense that she is stricken with mortality, and *especially,* vulnerable to murder *by me*" (Horowitz & Horowitz, 2014, p. 9). This murder, an extreme abrogation of our responsibility for the other, is an ending of the other's life, but it can also be a destruction of the ethical spaces, relations, and practices necessary for the other to live as other, flourish in his or her own unique way, and be responded to as other; once destroyed, these spaces, relations, and practices are then replaced by those which secure the self and world against the other's conflicting and/or incommensurate needs and desires. Murder in this latter sense is what Levinas (1969) refers to as "saming," the construction of an ossified, totalizing, and hostile world and self in which history is over, and the self and world are not to be called into question, reducing ethics and political action to routinized practices which provide fertile ground for the assimilation or physical eradication of the other.

A final similarity is a shared belief in the necessity of political action. As noted, FLE and EE advocates constantly stress the necessity of political action aimed at creating a world more favorable to entrepreneurs and more supportive of financially literate action. For Levinas, political action (world-creation) is fraught

with risk, but we need both ethics and politics: ethics without justice (i.e. political action) is unethical just as justice without ethics would be tyrannical (Cohen, 1998, p. xvi). To be responsible for other others – those Levinas (1969) refers to as the "third" – ethics must be supplemented with political action aimed at reforming our world. Political action is necessary because the world is inhabited by a plurality of unique others. This plurality demands the construction and reconstruction of economic, political, and cultural practices, possible subjectivities and the institutions which adjudicate between and respond to the myriad and sometimes conflicting needs of these unique individuals.

The political action one takes, however, is made without assurances that one has acted ethically. Ethics demands action but does little to inform political action. Ethics in this sense is an empty negative and positive force. To borrow from Critchley's (1999) translation of Levinas's project, ethics is both an anarchic force calling into question the world for the other and an archic force demanding political action to recreate the world for the other: a cycle of disruption and creation or questioning and response that is without end. The other demands action but the other always escapes my full knowledge and the present possibilities the world supports, creating a lack or irresponsibility between what I and the world can offer and what the other needs. This insufficiency, or irresponsibility in Levinas's language, calls into question my being and the world, demanding I take responsibility for the other's precarity and singularity (i.e. the other's ability to exist and flourish in ways other than those I understand and value and the world presently supports). This is true both for my fleeting interactions with a singular other (e.g. offering bread, providing charity, opening up my home, or providing advice on the benefits of a diversified portfolio) and the way in which those actions and actions taken in concert with others to intentionally affect political change contribute to the recreation of our world. A world and self offering full recognition of the other's needs and an equitable distribution of resources are always to come: the other is ungraspable and forever calling us to account, escaping our modes of representation and demanding the reconstruction of the world and the self who faces the other.

Measured against our infinite responsibility, the conclusion that the FLE and EE public pedagogy is irresponsible should be unsurprising; we cannot but be irresponsible because a sublimation of our infinite responsibility for the other is always necessary. We must act, but in acting, we necessarily fall short of the infinite demand, and we create or reinforce an order that is oppressive in some way we cannot foresee. FLE and EE public pedagogues would likely agree that they are irresponsible in this sense. They tend to trumpet miniscule accomplishments (e.g. research showing that FLE can improve the meager amount impoverished families save, that EE increases the desire of individuals to open their own businesses or that financial lessons delivered to individuals via video games are more effective in transferring knowledge of the "magic" of compound interest than a brochure) and are prone to soaring rhetoric on the benefits of their initiatives (e.g. FLE and EE will complete Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream of equality and prosperity for all and eradicate the need for foreign aid), but they also perpetually castigate themselves and wring their hands at their

collective failure to significantly improve the economic security of others. FLE and EE advocates almost always feel there is more they could do, that their work for others is never finished.

Their irresponsibility, however, lies not simply with their initiatives' failure to meet the other's impossible demand. FLE and EE public pedagogues are fundamentally irresponsible because they pervert the ethics that Levinas outlines, transforming a responsibility for the other and others into an infinite, primary, and ethical-political responsibility for capital accumulation which benefits those privileged by its present spatial, racialized, gendered, and classed mode of capital accumulation. FLE and EE public pedagogues profess that their primary ethical obligation is to those most insecure and that expanding capital accumulation is a means to this end, but a close examination of the FLE and EE public pedagogy reveals that capital's never-ending accumulation needs take priority and that the other and others suffer as a result.

An FLE for Capital

A principal example of FLE public pedagogues' perversion of our responsibility for the other is their *capitalization* of the other's singularity and unique needs: the social construction of the other and the other's needs in a manner of benefit to capital's accumulation needs. Students, for example, face rising tuition fees – FLE researchers at TD Bank project that a four-year university degree in Canada will cost $100,000 in 2028 (Alexander & Marple, 2010, p. 7) – and to FLE public pedagogues, the key need students have is to become more responsible debtors. They do not have a need to be debt-free because FLE public pedagogues can only see capitalized needs that are articulated differently given the *seeming* immutable disparity in financial resources each student can access: some need access to student loans; others have wealthy relatives and need to figure out how to monetize their kinship ties; others need to continually monitor the human capital portfolio they are creating and their debt exposure because they only have access to high interest rate loans; and those with very few resources and who can only access high interest rate loans need to understand that attending a post-secondary institution may not be financially feasible. Dixon (2015), writing in *The Globe and Mail* on the importance of financial literacy, similarly sees the needs of parents of adult children living at home through capital's lens. Wanting to help their children but also fund their own retirement, Dixon comes upon a typical "financially literate" solution for parents: first, abandoning one's adult children to the market is actually good for them and will hopefully give them the same desire for autonomy as the fabled Depression-era generation and baby boomers (as if this is why adult children are moving back in with their parents). Second, he writes "you have to prioritize yourself" and this is a "decision that doesn't need to be so emotional … it really could be based simply on the ability to pay [to assist one's adult children] after first contributing to one's own retirement savings" (para. 8). Neither the parents nor their children seemingly have a need to live in a world in which one does not have to make choices framed by capital's need to externalize costs (e.g. individualize retirement, use private debt rather

than progressive taxation to fund tertiary education or replace secure, well-remunerated employment with flexible, precarious labor relations).

Many FLE advocates realize that typical FLE lessons on how interest rates, life-cycle investment strategies, and diversified portfolios work are unhelpful because these assume individuals have significant funds to invest and ignore differences in wealth. Yet, more tailored advice fitted to individualized financial needs is also of little use in improving economic insecurity created by capital's need to externalize costs or the wide disparities in wealth it generates (Marx, [1867] 1990; Piketty, 2014). An FLE teaching the benefits of saving and investing more, however it is constructed, will not help those who face significant structural economic challenges and have minimal resources. The tailored financial literacy "advice" offered by McDonald's to its employees is a case in point. Selling unopened presents and unwanted possessions on Ebay and Craigslist, breaking food into smaller pieces so employees and their families can eat less and still feel full, working a second job, applying for food stamps, and turning off the heat in their homes is not going to improve McDonald's employees' economic security (Lutz, 2013). Numerous other seemingly ethical initiatives targeting women, Aboriginal groups, the elderly, and youth suffer from the same problem. Driven by competition to externalize costs and cheapen inputs, including labor, capital creates necessary insecurity, which is inequitably distributed given disparities in political, economic, and social power between groups. Individualized assistance tailored to the present's racialized, gendered, and classed distribution of economic resources will not appreciably reduce economic insecurity or its distribution. Instead, this individualized assistance naturalizes capitalized (as well as gendered and racialized) individual needs.

In this respect, FLE echoes the "resilience studies" discipline described by Ken Saltman (2014) which

> Examines students in schools in poor communities where the majority of students succumb to the ill-effects of poverty such as gang violence, imprisonment, and teenage pregnancy. Resilience studies ask not how the social conditions of poverty and violence can be transformed or how students can learn to comprehend and act to change what oppresses them. Instead resilience studies identifies the rare student who survives, graduates, and goes to university despite the social disinvestment, violence, targeting by the criminal justice system, despair, and poverty. Resilience studies focuses on the exceptional 'success against all odds story'. The thinking goes that if only the unique characteristics that allow for resilience can be identified, teachers, by replicating those unique characteristics, can design a course of action that might allow for more students to succeed in spite of the context. (p. 52)

Contra FLE public pedagogues, the problem is not others' lack of financial resilience, but the financial insecurity capital necessarily produces. One should not have to decide between retirement and assisting one's economically insecure adult children. One should also not "need" better individualized assistance deciding whether to take out a massive student loan or forego college. These are

problems and needs which individuals should not have. Retirement, living independently and accessing education are social goods that all should be able to access. An ethical problematization and understanding of another's singular needs would help us see that we cannot limit the needs we take responsibility for to those which conform to capital's need to offload and individualize the costs of social goods. An ethical FLE would stress the necessity of radically changing our world and political economic practices so that these and other similar problems/needs do not exist and the other can pursue those ends he or she values, and grow and become other than he or she presently is. Our infinite responsibility tasks us with going beyond a responsibility for the capitalized other's needs. We are responsible for the other who is beyond and after capitalism.

Presently, however, FLE advocates eschew any political economic change that goes beyond minor choice architecture adjustments, presenting any significant non-marketized, collective, and democratic provision of social goods and services (e.g. food, water, housing, education, healthcare, etc.) as impossible. FLE researchers Kozup and Hogarth (2008) are paradigmatic:

> Due to current demographic trends, rising health care costs, and other factors, we face the possibility of decades of mounting deficits, which left unchecked will threaten our economic and national security, while also adversely affecting the quality of life and opportunities available to future generations. Americans must be aware of these developments in planning for their own financial futures, since, for example, we can no longer assume that current federal entitlement programs will continue indefinitely in their present form. (p. 128)

The primary obstacles to the collective provision of social goods are not, however, rising "costs" or "demographic trends," but capital, those who control it and our acceptance of this state of affairs. Demographic trends and healthcare advances increase costs, but they are epiphenomenal. Capital is going lean to compete globally (Sears, 1999), and so FLE public pedagogues argue that redirecting funds through progressive income tax or corporate taxation to provide high quality education, healthcare, unemployment insurance, retirement for all or a guaranteed income is "irresponsible" and "financially illiterate"; at a time of hyper-competition, publicly educating everyone or funding unproductive hangers-on who are not working to accumulate capital puts particular agglomerations of capital at a competitive disadvantage compared to those who have externalized their former obligations by offloading pensions, shedding employment regulations, and reducing their tax burdens.

John Risley (2013), a board member of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE), illustrates clearly the capitalized horizon of FLE public pedagogues' responsibility for others:

> The market creates wealth. The world's wealthiest countries and people and those which are its fastest growing understand how this works. We need to ask ourselves very basic questions. It would be great to have a sophisticated hospital in every meaningful population centre. It would be

wonderful if we could twin more roads. Both would save lives. But what can we afford, what level of taxes will we endure to support what level of services? (para. 7)

According to Risley, we must first be responsible for capital's needs, and to be "financially literate" is to understand this duty. In fact, the role of FLE is to act as a public pedagogy ensuring "John Q. Public … grasp[s] the significance of fiscal discipline" (para. 3) and understands that no matter how "wonderful" it would be to improve social services, capital and those with significant control over it will not "endure" the transference of wealth and power this would entail.

This is untenable. A constant trope in FLE narratives is that of the irresponsible consumer who wastes money on luxuries or frivolous goods while racking up debt. Two popular debt television shows embed this narrative in their titles: *Money Morons* and *Prince$$*. Collectively, however, we are the "money morons." We have created an economy in which wealth is filling the coffers of the economic elite and corporations (Canadian corporations are sitting on $700 billion (Brennan, 2015), the top 50 US corporations have over $1 trillion (Platt, 2015) and global hording has reached obscene levels with an estimated $21–$32 trillion hidden in off-shore tax havens, as much as half of all global debt (Vellacott, 2012)) while public and private debt grows. Wealth inequality continues to rise with no end in sight; as of 2015, 1% of the world's population owns more than 50% of all wealth while the bottom 50% owns only 1% of the wealth (Treanor, 2015). We have created a choice architecture that fuels the obscene luxuries of the few at the expense of the lives and freedom of many and assumes that lessons on compound interest, self-reliance, increasing the amount one can invest tax-free and enlarging the font on credit card agreements will bring economic security to all. Despite the glaring need to radically change how we produce and distribute the resources needed to live well, FLE public pedagogues see only the plurality of needs capital sanctions; they do not see the need for ethical-political action for the other. They only see the need for minor choice architecture changes and lessons on spending and investment. They do not challenge the insecurity capital creates because at the heart of the FLE public pedagogy is an ethics for capital, not the other.

An EE for Capital

The EE public pedagogy suffers from the same problems because capital's needs take priority and shape EE public pedagogues' response to others' economic insecurity. Faced with moribund growth for the foreseeable future (Braconier et al., 2014), significant competition for work and a politically and technologically aided capital able to flit around the globe searching for the best return on investment, stable employment is increasingly a fiction for most. Even more alarming, capital is not merely trading in one set of workers for another but shedding labor *in toto* through automation. Recent popular examples include the manufacturing giant Foxconn's plans to automate most of its production, trimming substantially its 1.3 million strong workforce (Gold & Lee, 2015),[9] the

creation of automated cars, Amazon's online marketplace and the retail giant's experimentation with drones that will deliver purchases by air to customers' doorsteps. These examples are only a few of the present and predicted automation advances which many believe will render a significant number of blue- and white-collar workers obsolete: Frey and Osborne (2013) are cited by many and predict *conservatively* that 47% of total US employment in the next 10–20 years can be automated. EE public pedagogues' response to this employment precarity and automation of labor is to empower individuals to create their own jobs (as well as call for changes to our economic, political, and social practices to encourage entrepreneurship, e.g. weaker employment regulations, lower corporate taxes and public monetary and affective support for business).

They are aware that creating one's own job is difficult but argue that it is necessary and presents an opportunity for individuals to create employment through which they can pursue their private interests and even affect political change which will improve the world for others. Leong's (2014) account in the *National Post* is typical:

> Generation Y may be the most entrepreneurial generation on the planet. Parents have raised their children to value independence, personal aspirations and meaningful work. Rather than wait for the ideal job in a competitive job market, many graduates are charting their own path and finding ways to fund their aspirations. (para. 4)

In the Levinasian ethical-political language introduced earlier, the other and others *should* be empowered to pursue their singular ends and grow their human capacities in ways they find important, not merely remaining other than I can fully know (an epistemic infinity) but continually becoming other than they presently are (an ontological infinity). This means we must also support opportunities for marginalized others to engage in political action. Exclusion and the "saming" of others are inevitable and so our political economic institutions and practices should enable everyone – particularly those excluded or "samed" – to engage in effective political action for and with others to challenge exclusion and "saming". The online craft-site Etsy's goal of supporting "regenerative entrepreneurs" – individuals who do not simply want to keep the world the same but make it better (Shemkus, 2015) – seemingly supports this aim, melding economic activities and public values/political action to create what Alan Hurst (2014) calls the "purpose economy," a new economic paradigm "based on the creation of purpose for people" (para. 2).

The proposed solution of creating more self-employed workers and entrepreneurs will not, however, improve individuals' economic security. Expanding a class of workers who are self-employed may reduce the direct coercion one experiences by working within a firm for another but becoming one's own employer does not abate capitalism's competitive pressure to create a good or a service that is cheaper and/ or better quality than one's competitors. It does not mitigate the need to compete to win access to the goods and services needed to live and live well or change the fact that many will fail to win access. In fact, the strategy of creating more small-scale capitalists expands and intensifies competition within a subsistence

entrepreneurial class whose economic security is already even more precarious than those who are employed by others (Pinto, 2014).

Even assuming EE public pedagogues' best-case scenario in which everyone has equal access to the immaterial means of production (e.g. Internet and education),[10] only a few can succeed in creating their own well-remunerated immaterial work because of relative differences in skill and desire to innovate and create immaterial goods; consumers' limited time and desire to use and pay for the massive amounts of unique immaterial goods that would have to constantly be made if all are to achieve security in this fashion; and a herd behavior which draws consumers to choose products others desire (G.I., 2014), leading to a handful of products garnering attention and money. Thus, even if we start out as equally unequal immaterial entrepreneurs, capitalism tends towards centralization, i.e. the amassing of capital into fewer and fewer hands (Marx, [1867] 1990; Piketty, 2014), and, without political countervailing measures (e.g. progressive taxation, unions and a robust social welfare state), we would be back to where we are now: a state in which 1% of the population owns more than half of the world's wealth and looks set to amass an even greater percentage in the future (Hardoon, 2015). The benefits for capital, on the other hand, are clear. Creating more entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs reduces capital's human input maintenance, upgrading, and storage costs which are then offloaded onto the vestigial remains of the KWS state (Jacobs et al., 2015) and individuals, particularly women (Fraser, 2013).

In response to this critique, EE public pedagogues counter that a politicized, "social entrepreneurship" is the countervailing measure we need. Through social entrepreneurs, they argue, there is no limit to the kind of political, economic, and social change that can be brought about and so the reversal and eradication of expanding economic insecurity are only a matter of time and ingenuity. Lauding the benefits of EE, social entrepreneur, Rajan Patel states, "The techie stuff can be empowering and enable you to solve problems, but which problems will you choose to solve? What does it mean to be a good citizen, and how will you do that? (Zhou, 2015, para. 32). David Edwards, engineering professor at Harvard, continues in this vein: "there's a real need to have a deep understanding of a complex world and to also think out of the box" if we are going to improve the lives of others (Zhou, 2015, para. 33). As with FLE public pedagogues, however, capital's needs limit their "deep understanding" and ethical-political action for the other.

This limitation is visible when we look into the ethical-political action they propose, which generally breaks down into two forms: (1) ensuring people are engaged in producing, selling, or distributing a good or service for sale; and (2) creating goods and services that meet the needs of precarious consumers. The latter focus is important, and we should continue to make cheaper medicines and experiment with water sanitation, energy, and housing solutions that will meet the needs of the poor now. Too often consumer demand diverts resources away from those who need them most. Our infinite responsibility for others, however, calls us to go beyond entrepreneurial action aimed at creating cheap commodities or cheaper ways of making commodities for the benefit of the poor. Levinas (1998) writes of a responsibility to give which strips "me of what is

more my own than possession" and is akin to taking "the bread out of one's own mouth, to nourish the hunger of another with one's own fasting" (p. 56). This requires more than working tirelessly for others by creating low-cost commodities. It can mean giving one's life for another (i.e. dying), but it can also mean changing one's life and world for others when this will improve the lives of others and especially when my present life and the present construction of the world render others' lives worse. When the bread that is in my mouth is there by dint of a system which bars others from bread, I must change the bread distribution system (Dussel, 2006). Sacrifice in this sense means creating a new self and world for others, one in which economic security is more equitably distributed, a necessity in a world which produces enough food to feed everyone but leaves many hungry and dying from starvation (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2002). Hunger, the result of extreme, *structural* economic insecurity, is not a technological but political problem which requires ethical-political and entrepreneurial innovation aimed at remaking global trade regulations and relations as well as fundamentally rethinking how we as a species produce, distribute, and consume the goods we make.[11]

No commodity or technological creation will eradicate capitalism's necessary insecurity. To free others from an imposed scarcity and insecurity, including the need to sell themselves into precarious labor, requires that we fundamentally reform our political economic practices and relations. Yet, at a time when technological advances coupled with political economic change could significantly reduce economic insecurity and make jobs, in particular precarious jobs, obsolete, EE public pedagogues cannot break with the "notion that our welfare demands relentless toil" even when this work ethic has "outlived its usefulness in the sense that our collective productivity these days surpasses what is necessary for the provision of food, clothing, housing, and other basic amenities" (Ruti, 2014, p. 306). For all their talk of creating a new world for others and preparing youth for a future we cannot imagine, EE public pedagogues can only envision a world in which many must be insecure and provided access to the means to live only if they successfully compete against others. Beholden to capital, EE public pedagogues call for the creation of new desires/needs and jobs that robots cannot do or cannot do as cheaply as humans so that individuals can continue to compete and thus continue to win *and fail to win* access to the means to live a meaningful life.

Instead of hoping we can create work and new needs/desires to increase our production of commodified goods and services, others need to be free from continually submitting to a job accumulating someone's capital or even their own – they need to be free from capital. There is no necessary reason that those who are made obsolete by automation cannot access the goods and services they did previously when working. Even more goods would exist in the world than before, so it makes little sense that they could not receive the same amount of goods as before. Their access is only barred because they live in a capitalist system and so do not get to share in the bounty we create without creating a good or service the market values. Automation sets individuals free but does so in a world that ensures capital is secure from abundance by barring democratic access to our commons (e.g. the means of material and immaterial production).

Entrepreneurship promoters, however, do not see this as a concern, lauding the creation of work, even precarious work, as the antidote to mind-numbing, hierarchical employment. They argue that though entrepreneurs are less secure, they are in control of their lives and can pursue interests they value. Nowak's (2013) claim is typical:

> Part of the reason people are precariously employed is that a growing number choose to be. Which makes sense to me. I left a very good stable job with our public broadcaster more than two years ago. The pay was great, the benefits were good and the pension was exceptional. But, having been technically 'precariously employed' since then, I don't think I could ever go back to any sort of 'stable job'. The benefits of being my own boss, setting my own hours and doing whatever I want more than offset those tangible payoffs.
>
> Would it be nice to have cheaper benefits or an easier time getting a loan? Absolutely. Do I have any idea what I'll be doing in the future, even a year from now? Absolutely not – but that's part of the fun … the future may be more precarious, but it's obviously much more interesting and fulfilling than a stable one. (paras 8–9)

Some entrepreneurs are able to pursue interests they value through work they create: writing articles, making jewelry, creating apps, or working alongside family members. However, in a context of hyper-competition and increased precarity, not only are entrepreneurs less secure but they are also less able to pursue a significant range of private interests, values, and ends. Presently, those interests, values, and ends which make one more employable and benefit capital accumulation are becoming necessary to pursue and those which are unprofitable are denigrated, seen as luxuries, and left without support.[12] Further, despite arguing one can pursue myriad private interests through work, EE advocates tacitly and paradoxically acknowledge a hierarchy of interests and privilege those of benefit to capital accumulation.

Young, an advisor for the British Prime Minister on entrepreneurship education, is illustrative.[13] He proposes the institution of an "enterprise passport" to record students' extra-curricular enterprise activities that "add value" (2014, p. 11) which, along with his recommendation that the "government take steps to publish both employment rates and earnings over a period of ten years post-completion of every further and higher education course" (p. 9), will assist businesses in choosing the most "entrepreneurial" employees and encourage students to value their formal education and their interests and activities outside of formal schooling in terms of their impact on capital accumulation. Rather than a responsibility to ensure others can pursue their unique interests, Young's enterprise passport is emblematic of EE advocates' support for the post-Fordist transformation of our world into a "social factory" supplying the human capital and material and cultural creations (e.g. practices, relations, languages, affects, values, etc.) needed to improve one's competitive position and capital accumulation (Dyer-Witheford, 1999; Haiven, 2014; Hochschild, 2002). Once again, a responsibility for the other is perverted for capital.

An Ethics Against the Other

Capital is vampiric and insatiable (Marx, [1867] 1990); it requires the continual quantitative expansion and qualitative reformation of fodder to accumulate as well as the expulsion of the detritus it has no use for or which slows it down. They may forefront a concern for others' economic security and freedom, but when FLE and EE advocates lament the difficulty of preparing the next generation to meet the needs of the global economy in the future (e.g. creating youth with the capacities to take up the jobs that do not yet exist or manage the risks yet to be offloaded), they are, in effect, chiefly concerned others are not fulfilling their infinite responsibility to accumulate capital and manage their abandonment. Sublimation of the infinite responsibility Levinas describes is necessary if it is going to motivate a finite, material response, but the FLE and EE public pedagogy channels concern for others' security toward ends that support capital's security and which render others insecure and unable to pursue the unique interests they value. The result is that FLE and EE public pedagogues pervert an infinite responsibility for the other into an infinite responsibility for capital: a capitalized, or "samed" to borrow from Levinas, endless responsibility driven by competition between capital formations (McNally, 1993) and capital's need to expel, reform, and incorporate *ad infinitum* those aspects of the world and living beings that it has no use for, who resist its capture and/or limit its exploitation (Casarino & Negri, 2008).

I have illustrated that this ethics for capital *capitalizes* the other's needs and the possible ethical-political action taken by and on behalf of the other, supporting the continuance of others' economic insecurity. More concerning, however, is the replacement of the other with capital which renders the other ethically suspect, transforming the other into a potential threat. This is logical: just as the other was threatened by the self and the dominant political order, both of which could limit the other's potentialities or even eradicate/same the other, so is capital threatened by the "unethical" other who could limit its potentiality or even eradicate it. It is also implicit: the existence of threatening, irresponsible others is implied through the creation of virtuous individuals who, according to FLE advocate Lawrence Solomon of the Consumer Policy Institute, have "values such as self reliance and maturity – the norm in youth before our nanny state culture left them infantilized and government-reliant" (Solomon, 2015, para. 7). If the virtuous are those who follow serial entrepreneur and author Lauren Bias's (2014) advice and do "whatever is needed to maximize value creation" (paras 5 and 8), then those without virtue are those who are a drag on value creation. Employers "want workers thinking like start-ups – hungry, creative, reactive," opines Della Casa from the non-profit organization *Growing Leaders* (Locke, 2015, para. 19), and the virtuous eagerly fall in line while those without virtue, one assumes, are those who do not want to mirror capital's relentless creative and destructive drive and contingent form.

Finally, some FLE and EE public pedagogues explicitly point out the threat posed by those who are not resilient, flexible, optimistic, innovative, financially autonomous, and who do not accept capital's abandonment and the need to continually reform oneself and others so as to integrate into the global economy

how, when and where needed. Prominent FLE researcher Lusardi (2008) is a case in point, writing, "If people with low [financial] literacy make mistakes, who will pay for these mistakes?" (p. 17). She is joined by the OECD (2014) which splits the world into those who have taken the "appropriate steps to manage the risks transferred to them" and those who require "government aid" because they have "taken unwise financial decisions – or no decision at all" (p. 16). Harnisch (2010), writing about the role of colleges and universities in improving Americans financial literacy, is more explicit:

> The cost of poor financial decision-making and planning often gets shifted on to other members of the community, state and nation through higher prices for financial products, the diversion of economic resources and greater use of public 'safety net' programs. (p. 3)

In other words, the virtuous must now pay for the healthcare and food stamps of those who cannot manage their money properly or create their own jobs. Covered over by claims of empowering the insecure to help themselves, the FLE and EE public pedagogy logically, implicitly, and explicitly encourages fear and hatred of the financially insecure; rather than substituting oneself for the other or working tirelessly to improve the world for the other, the FLE and EE public pedagogy fuels the self's desire to be free of the seemingly morally depraved other who is a threat to one's own precarious economic security and capital's continued accumulation.[14]

A Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship for the Other

EE advocates lament that we have a jobs-skills gap – i.e. there is a mismatch between the human capital we have and the jobs that are being created – but this is not the pressing problem (Means, 2015). The gap we should be worried about is the gap between what the other needs and what we are providing. Our creativity, cooperation, understanding, and imagination need to be used to take responsibility for others, not to continually remake the world, ourselves and others for capital. To take better responsibility for the other, the present FLE and EE public pedagogy and its accompanying initiatives must be overhauled. The first step is to institute the other as the ideal motivating FLE and EE initiatives and our popular representations of entrepreneurship and financial literacy. In particular, we should take up Jones and Spicer's (2009) "entrepreneurship for the other" as the ideal motivating a critical FLE and EE (i.e. "an innovation in which the innovation is not one's own but one that makes possible the innovation of the other") (pp. 108–109). With this ideal, the other, not capital or my freedom and security, takes precedence, calling me to be more responsible for the other's potential to innovate, i.e. the other's ability to grow and be other than he or she is at present by creating and engaging in forms of life and activities that are meaningful to him or her.[15] Rather than answering questions posed by capital (e.g. how can we

incorporate inputs that are not operating at full capacity within the global economy?; how can we harness individuals' creativity and innovation to spur economic growth?; or how can those abandoned manage their "precarity" so they leave me and capital alone?), we must respond to the problems motivated by the other's needs (i.e. the other whose claims cannot be met within the present order and so call us to reform the world).

To better respond to the other, an ethically-oriented FLE would teach us to read our present political economy for both difference and dominance, enabling individuals to better see the forces arrayed against the other and the present alternatives and potentialities that exist for the other. Thus far, I have performed a "reading for dominance," analyzing and drawing attention to the ways in which FLE and EE advocates support a public pedagogy and ethics beneficial to capital accumulation but threatening of others' financial security and well-being. Borrowing from Gibson-Graham (2006), the practice of "reading for difference" illuminates the myriad, micro alternative relations, practices, potentialities, and subjectivities that already exist, bringing into view events, practices, and everyday relations that are at odds or could be at odds with capitalism's logic (e.g. participatory budgeting, alternative currency movements, producer cooperatives, babysitting groups, and community gardens) to stress capitalism's heterogeneity. It is hoped that through analyzing the diverse logics, ethics, and practices that comprise capitalism, we can expand upon the alternatives that exist and loosen our subjective and affective investment in capital's continuance to see others and ourselves as more than employees, entrepreneurs, consumers, or investors.[16]

Though Gibson-Graham (2006) are critical of approaches which read for dominance, arguing that a monolithic view of capitalism can stymie the creation and expansion of alternative economic practices, both are necessary. At stake is not only the obfuscation of the plurality of economic practices that exist, but also the occlusion of capital's *necessary* destruction and cooption of alternatives, and we must attend to both. A critical FLE for the other must stress that alternative production relations within a capitalist system, such as the massive Mondragón Cooperative Gibson-Graham cite as an alternative, are not enough on their own.[17] The key problem is outlined succinctly by McNally (1993):

> As important as workers' self-management within the enterprise may be, it cannot break free of the logic of the market unless the working class can establish democratic, planned control of the economy. Reuniting workers with the means of production is thus about more than workers' control at the level of the firm; it also requires democratic control of the economic reproduction of society – otherwise the means of production will continue to be subject to the market-driven imperative to accumulate at the expense of living labour. (p. 182)

Despite its laudable achievements in improving the lives of many, Mondragón protects some workers from capital's insecurity at the expense of others by outsourcing work to precariously employed workers outside of Spain to help keep its labor costs down (Gasper, 2014). Gibson-Graham (2003) argue that in doing so

Mondragón stays "true to the guiding vision of people over capital in the Basque region (i.e. maintaining sustainable employment) while engaging in operations elsewhere along mainstream business lines (where capital rules over people)" (p. 152) and that

> the task of extending cooperative education and membership to workers in the myriad international sites … would potentially carry with it all the worst aspects of missionizing that go counter to the grass roots participatory involvement that is so much a part of the cooperative vision. (p. 153)

What their monolithic reading for difference obfuscates, however, is the necessary insecurity capital creates and which Mondragón has shunted onto others overseas who are used for cheap labor, a practice that has more to do with "missionizing" than that extending democratic control over production. A reading for difference and dominance takes into account that capital is a totalizing force that allows for myriad forms of economic production (e.g. producer cooperatives, self-employment, multinational corporations, etc.). It also acknowledges that how one answers capital's command to produce at the socially necessary rate is not set in stone, but to be responsible for others rather than capital, we cannot limit ourselves to responding to capital in different ways and should not be so quick to assuage our guilt when we shunt the worst of capital's depredations onto others.

A more ethically-oriented and critical EE must also extend this reading and analysis by promoting action for and with the other: empowering individuals to disrupt the present, expand upon the responsible practices that exist and create novel innovative practices to support the other's security and entrepreneurship. Rather than Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and competitions like *Shark Tank*, ethical entrepreneurs must learn from and build on anti-capitalist and alternative political entrepreneurial events and movements like Occupy, the indignants movement in Spain, Basic Income Earth Network, Quebec's Maple Spring student movement, Idle No More, the World Social Forum, the Zapatistas, the factory occupations in Argentina, the participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre and Strike Debt's strategy of buying and forgiving debt. These events and movements provide examples which can be learned from to resist policies and practices that limit the other's freedom and security, and built upon to reform our political and social institutions. Building on this experimentation is necessary to spur innovation enabling the other to better engage in democratic discussion, contestation and action with others and create the spaces, relations and practices needed so one can grow his or her human capacities in ways he or she finds important.

One important element these movements and events share and which a critical, ethically-oriented EE must include is the creation of "worldly things" for the other: "things that serve as the focal points of democratic activity [and] are disputed; they do not admit of a single identity or meaning" (Myers, 2013, p. 96) but are an aspect of the world that is openly contested in an attempt to be better responsible for the other. Worldly things bring together a public to debate, learn about, and institute solutions to problems that before being made into worldly

things were not seen as problems. A key component of a critical EE for the other must be the public problematization and material transformation of those practices and ideological beliefs which are irresponsible, sparking the birth of worldly things open to a contestation between differing groups and individuals attempting to better respond to the needs of the other.

In a context in which precarity is growing for many and well-remunerated work is expected to be increasingly difficult to find, let alone create, critical EE advocates must problematize the necessity, moralization, intensification, and hierarchical undemocratic structure of work by creating alternatives. Two worldly things which disrupt the present by radically experimenting with alternatives to the present structure of work are the demand for and institution of a guaranteed income (Weeks, 2011) and participatory economy (Albert & Hahnel, 1991).[18] For Weeks (2011), the demand for a guaranteed income is a "concrete utopian demand" that brings together two key elements of a worldly thing – the "real-possible" and the "novum" (the unpredictable new) (p. 197). This non-reformist reform begins with the demand that all citizens have a guaranteed basic income in an amount we have the productive capacity to provide but would have far-ranging, unforeseen, and contestable effects given that the initiative would allow people to opt out of waged work and would be given to all citizens unconditionally. The demand for a participatory economy is similarly both a real-possible demand and radically unpredictable in that it is not clear what the creation of democratic rather than marketized relations of production, consumption, and distribution within and outside enterprises would entail. What comes after these concrete utopian demands and how they are read and instituted are the outcome of political work between cooperative and contesting groups. Both demands do not offer blueprints of what a society which has instituted these initiatives would look like but aim to "spark the political imagination of, and desire for, a different future" (Weeks, 2011, p. 146), a future more responsible for the other's economic security and entrepreneurship. Critical alternatives that can reasonably be implemented but which also provoke wonder are key aspects of any critical EE for the other.

In essence, critical, ethical entrepreneurs' public demands and creation of alternatives (i.e. economic democracy and a guaranteed income system) act as "structured provocation[s] and challenge[s]" to the present (Simon, 1992, p. 47) while also opening up to the unknown – a critical element of our responsibility for the other. Through contestable examples and participatory experiments we can glimpse the future's potentiality in a way that is not only critical toward particular aspects of the present but is "open and indeterminate … rooted in an ethical-political vision that attempts to take people beyond the world they already know but in a way that does not insist on a fixed set of meanings" (Simon, 1992, p. 47). The hope is that demands for and experiments with a guaranteed income and economic democracy will continue to spur thinking as well as political action; to paraphrase from Simon (2006) in another context, the hope is to see differently and "initiate a desire to know more, to become more certain and to form more conclusive judgments" (p. 202) on what we should do for the other, encouraging a continual rethinking of not simply the means through which we act but the ends we pursue for others and ourselves.

Contrary to FLE and EE public pedagogues, our responsibility is not to help others manage their abandonment or reform excluded and marginalized individuals so as to include them within a system that requires their or others' marginalization and exclusion to function; we are instead tasked with reforming our political economic system so that we do not have to accept the abandonment of others or their forced reformation and more ethical relations and outcomes are possible. It is true, as Critchley (2009) comments, that "nothing flows deductively from the fact of the ethical demand right the way down to real world politics" (p. 16). But something must flow, and certain things should not flow. An ethics without a decision would be no ethics at all; however, what one chooses to do and is against require more than ethics. It requires an agonistic politics that is for a particular world and against others, understanding that politics is not simply destabilization but is also the creation of a new hegemony that even in its most ethical iteration is only open to the other in particular ways (i.e. only particular aspects of the hegemonic order are easily rendered into "worldly things" open to contestation) (Mouffe, 2010). The world I am for is one created through critical analysis of the present's injustices and radical, contestable experimentation in work and economic management for the other; the world I am against is that which FLE and EE public pedagogues are encouraging us to create: a world hospitable to capital but hostile to the other and others.

Notes

1 Additionally, Katz and Krueger (2015) estimate that "all of the net employment growth in the U.S. economy from 2005 to 2015 appears to have occurred in alternative work arrangements" (p. 7).

2 Highlighting the racialized character of this precarity, African-American youth have an unemployment rate of 29.6% (Kasperkevic, 2015). In Canada, the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board (2015) found that despite some signs of progress in reducing the gap between Aboriginals' and non-Aboriginals' level of unemployment, First Nations youth continue to experience higher unemployment rates than non-Aboriginal youth (in 2011, Aboriginal youth rates of unemployment were 23.9%).

3 This is not to say that a jurisdiction's population characteristics were not thought to affect its wealth and power much earlier (Foucault, 2007). EE discourse extends the biopolitical framework Foucault outlines, supporting an intensification and expansion of efforts to create and attract individuals able to complement a nation's accumulation needs.

4 "Gazelles" are fast-growing firms that are able to grow to such a size that they employ a significant number of people and capture a large share of the world market.

5 Some EE advocates also support teaching humanities and the arts, believing they can give entrepreneurs a competitive advantage in creativity, innovativeness, and critical thinking. In place of STEM, they champion STEAM or even ESTEAM (entrepreneurship, science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) (Nambisan, 2014).

6 The term "ecosystem" is now a staple in innovation and entrepreneurship discourse and litters entrepreneurship education policy texts (Slavica et al., 2015; Spike Innovation, 2015).

7 The claim that a core feature of humanity is a responsibility for the other is an essentialist claim, but a minimal essentialism cannot be avoided (i.e. that the self is composed of universal propensities which are subsequently influenced by one's environment and experience). Positing the self as an empty vessel which is subsequently influenced to act in *x* or *y* manner by his or her environment does not do away with metaphysics because this also posits a prior human essence, one that is an unlimited potentiality shaped entirely by one's environment. Furthermore, positing the human as responsible for the other explains why most who harm or reduce the other to existing schema go to great lengths to absolve themselves of their responsibility for the other and avoid confronting the other as other. If the self were not responsible for the other, there would no need to continually construct frames through which to dehumanize and justify the other's suffering and assimilation.

8 Exemplifying the concern to meet the needs of those who escape our present common-sense understanding of entrepreneurship, the OECD has a policy research series entitled *The Missing Entrepreneurs.*

9 One mobile phone plant in China has already replaced 90% of its workforce by machines, leaving the bulk of those who remain to monitor the machines (Linning, 2015).

10 According to three EE public pedagogues, the Internet "is a full employment act for entrepreneurs" (Stewart, 2011), opening "the door to any would-be entrepreneur wanting to start a business on a shoestring" (Pagano, 2011, para. 11) and leveling "the playing field between individuals and corporations" (Strong, 2013, p. 3).

11 Instances in which low or zero cost goods are barred by intellectual property rights (generic medicines and knowledge) or public goods are privatized also illustrate the limits and threat to any public or private strategy of producing low-cost commodities from capital's incessant drive to increase profits by reducing costs, collecting rents, and expanding markets.

12 This is also a staple of FLE public pedagogues who constantly stress that students must conduct cost-benefit and return-on-investment analyses of their course and degree choices. A report by CIBC is exemplary, noting that

> [While]most Canadians are aware that on average, your odds to earn more are better with a degree in engineering than a degree in medieval history … it's not clear that students, armed with that knowledge, have been making the most profitable decisions". (Marr, 2013, para. 15).

13 A holdover from the Thatcher regime, he is also indicative of the recycled character of EE public pedagogic claims and the lack of innovation at the core of recent EE initiatives.

14 Further problematic, FLE and EE narratives' seeming neutral and unquestioned character also lends legitimacy to (even as they draw from) more vulgar discourses attacking immigrants, welfare recipients, women, racialized minorities, and

feminized public sector workers for their perceived drain on capital's resources and the resources of the supposedly virtuous and financially-literate entrepreneurs.

15 This responsibility follows from my originary responsibility to ensure the other's radical otherness is not colonized and reduced to the same. This responsibility is responsible for the other's present otherness but also must take responsibility for the other's future self, protecting and providing the means for the other to become other than the other is at present. I am concerned with not only the other's negative freedom but also the other's positive freedom and the ends the other can pursue and person the other can become.

16 As an example they note that during the Argentinian factory occupations following the 2001 economic crisis, the owners had fled and the means of production were there for the taking, but it was workers' affective investment in a totalized capitalism and employee subjectivity which were capital's last line of defense: many continued to see themselves as employees looking for work rather than part of a democratic collective deciding how to value their labor and direct the surplus they created.

17 Means (2014), analyzing the strategy of building alternatives outside of institutions, spaces, and practices presently colonized by capital, summarizes the problem with a politics of difference or exodus to capital's interstices rather than one of confrontation with capital: "This privileging of exodus implies a debilitating withdrawal from political engagement with public institutions, including educational institutions, the State, and the legal mechanisms, that maintain the seemingly inexorable momentum toward the total commodification of all life on the planet" (p. 129). It is not enough to remake the space capital has left to us or let us retreat to; we must also remake the spaces capital presently colonizes. We must use the spaces left to us as staging areas to continually encroach upon and take back the spaces, institutions and practices capital dominates.

18 In fact, in preparation for a referendum on a guaranteed income, a Swiss group conducted a public pedagogic campaign in Switzerland on the issue (Foulkes, 2013), creating a worldly thing that was the object of debate and contestation and bringing into the world a public centered around it. Though it was recently voted down, other political jurisdictions and political parties are beginning to take seriously the idea (e.g. the Labour Party in Britain and the liberal government in Ontario, Canada).

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22

The Socially Just School

Transforming Young Lives
John Smyth

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a concrete antidote to the global educational reform trajectory canvassed in the remainder of this book and that has the underlying premise that there is no alternative to the neoliberal rationality of competitive individualism, market-based forms of regulation, and privatized mentalities of educational provision. In that regard, what I am offering is an alternative to the neoliberal school, one that is grounded in a very different ideology, set of values, and sensibilities.

   The chapter has three parts. First, I want to robustly contest the dangerous and fallacious proclamation derivative of Margaret Thatcher in the UK, that "there is no alternative" to capitalism – often know by its acronym TINA. Second, having despatched this arrogant disposition for what it is, I want to disrupt and supplant the dominant and paralyzing neoliberal ideology of schooling, with an approach that is more concerned with "problematization" (Masschelein, 1998) and that is permissive of the kind of questions posed by Diane Reay like: "How possible is socially just education under neo-liberal capitalism?" (Reay, 2016), and "What would a socially just education system look like?" (Reay, 2012). In other words, I want to try and canvass some broad principles around which an alternative might begin to coalesce, something that Francis and Mills (2012) admitted "was notably hard to do" (p. 578), and even more fraught when they invited a group of noted scholars "to propose alternative educational models" (p. 579). Building upon the previous two sections, in the third part of the chapter, I proffer a very different social imaginary based upon a heuristic that I am calling the *socially just school* (Smyth, 1994, 1996, 2013, 2016a, 2016b; Smyth, Angus, Down, & McInerney, 2009; Smyth, Down, McInerney, & Hattam, 2014; Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014). Here I want to address the shortcoming identified by Francis and Mills (2012) that "sociological work in education has been extremely

effective in identifying social *in*justice" but less adroit in "proposing alternative models" (p. 579). I will conclude with some final reflections.

In their lead paper in the special issue of the *Journal of Education Policy* (vol. 25, no. 2, 2016) on what a socially just education system might look like, Francis and Mills (2012) argue "that a socially just education system seems further away than ever …" (p. 577). That having been said, in a more optimistic hue, they claim that "periods of challenge are often fruitful for ingenuity and radicalism, so perhaps there may be opportunities in this challenging moment" (p. 577). They invoke Žižek (2005) who argues that utopian thinking "emerges when there are no ways to resolve the situation within the coordinates of the possible, you have to invent a new space" (cited in Gandin & Apple, 2012, p. 636). This is particularly fitting for the dark space we find ourselves in with regard to socially just education.

There Were Alternatives, It's Just That We Were Muzzled!

The idea that there was the neoliberal way, or the highway – meaning we had to take it or leave it – is arguably one of the most outrageous scams ever perpetrated on Anglo-western democracies. Those of us with even a modicum of understanding of economics and economic history – and I was trained in both in the 1960s – know only too well that Keynesian economics prevailed during a period of unprecedented prosperity from the end of World War II until the oil crisis of the early 1970s. Its touchstones were the notion of a mixed economy, with a role for government stimulatory intervention – something that came strongly back into vogue in the wake of the global financial crisis (GFC) and the demonstrable failure of neoliberal economics. Where the Keynesian view of the world parted company from its successor, was in its refusal to accept that an economy is ultimately sustainable based only on the regulatory market mechanism of myriads of individuals making choices based on self-interest. In other words, the Keynesian view is that viable and sustainable economies are only possible through a combination of good public policy and strategic government intervention – a realization that is taking a long time coming, but we are gradually getting there.

History is not only interesting as a way of contextualizing ideas like these, but it is also crucially important for the insights it brings. Neoliberalism in its contemporary form was first trialed experimentally in Chile in 1975 by a group of US economists know as the Chicago Boys – a group of University of Chicago economists who had a strong affinity to the monetarist ideas of Milton Friedman. The results of this experiment were catastrophic, as O'Brien and Roddick (1983) detail in their book *The Chicago Boys: Chile, the Pinochet Decade.* The way Stocker (1983) reviewing O'Brien and Roddick's book put it, in circumstances uncannily similar to the recent GFC is: "The experiment came to an undignified end around the beginning of 1983 when the State had to take over some of the country's largest banks to prevent their total bankruptcy." The knock-on effect of this ill-conceived and failed experiment was to impoverish the majority of the Chilean people, while a small number of industrialists made huge fortunes. The underlying moral here of this early experiment with neoliberalism is that

> [the] mentality of those who proceeded to apply the shock treatment to the Chilean economy from 1975, car[ed] nothing for the social consequences [instead they were driven only by] one extraordinary simple idea: the argument that economic liberty is more fundamental than political liberty. (Stocker, 1983)

This kind of history can be extremely revealing. As O'Brien and Roddick (1983) go on to report, Cecil Parkinson, Thatcher's Minister of Trade, unashamedly lauded the Chilean experience, saying "[This] is very similar to what we are trying to develop now in Great Britain" (Stocker, 1983). The strategy, at least as enacted by Margaret Thatcher in the UK, and followed compliantly in all other western democracies, was really a bullying tactic. Clearly, there were other alternatives but, as in the case of the UK and elsewhere, the populace was "dragged defiantly [along the] neo-liberal path" of privatization, marketization and de-regulation without any evidence that this was in any way a workable policy trajectory. As Flanders (2013) points out, there were alternatives, and "some squealed against the onslaught, but it was hard to hear what they had to say, because with the turn of the economy came a shift in democracy and the media." Dissenters were dealt with ruthlessly, with incessant claims that they were "the enemy within," who were to be despised and brutally put down, as Thatcher did with the mine-workers in the UK in 1985.

With the dismemberment of the USSR that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the argument was made was that socialism was dead, and consistent with the thesis of people like Francis Fukuyama (1992), what we had arrived at was "the end of history" – in other words, the only political and economic system that made any sense was unrestrained capitalism. In the US, this was referred to as the Washington consensus (Williamson, 1990), and it was enthusiastically embraced by international institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO and the OECD, who have become the major international advocates and celebrants of neoliberalism (Peet, 2003).

The question of how neoliberal ideas have become insinuated into all facets of our lives, including thoroughly infecting schools, is a story that is beyond the scope of this chapter (for discussion, see Harvey, 2007; Peck, 2012; Springer, 2016; Springer, Birch, Black, & Macleavy, 2016). Suffice to say, neoliberalism has become so pervasive in all parts of our lives – with its market mechanisms, the supremacy of the consumer, competition, choice, de-regulation, devolution of decision-making, and privatization – that to think otherwise, is to be a like a fish out of water, or worse, to be engaged in heresy or treason.

The Neoliberal School

What has eventuated over the past three to four decades is that Anglo-western countries have become thoroughly infected with the model of the neoliberal school, driven by what Sahlberg (2011) refers to as the GERM, the "global educational reform movement" (pp. 99–106). At first pass the neoliberal school does not appear as standing out in any kind of unique way,

rather it presents as being fairly ordinary and natural – it has an inherent and compelling logic to it that we have come to accept as being the way things are and that cause it to go largely unquestioned and thus unquestionable. The "neoliberal juggernaut" as Doherty (2015) has labeled it, has transformed and "reshape[d] education sectors in starkly diverse settings" to the point where in relation to schooling "neoliberal policy is fast becoming the only story in town" (p. 395).

The neoliberal school has a number of clearly identifiable features:

1) It is thoroughly riven with and driven by the *logic of the market* – its defining hallmark is *competition* and a pervasive *competitive urge* that infiltrates, animates, and defines every aspect of what children, teachers, schools, and education systems do, locally, nationally, and internationally.

2) In order to sustain this market logic, the neoliberal school purveys a particular philosophy that constructs education as a *consumer good* – something the individual extracts personally from participation and through exchange – rather than education being regarded as a public good that has social benefits beyond the individual for society generally. If they have a dimension beyond the individual, schools are seen as being of value because of their capacity to generate *human capital*.

3) With the focus on consumption and the market, comes the necessity to *standardize everything* the school does so that it is amenable to comparison and hence choice – by students, parents, employers, and systems. This means that everything has to be measured, calibrated, and audited, hence the need for testing and other measures of performance, and the construction of ordered hierarchies of perceived value, for example, league tables.

4) The *shift of responsibility* in the neoliberal school onto the individual – students, teachers, schools, and whole systems – to be entrepreneurial, self-managing, self-responsible, self-promoting, means that image and impression management, or "branding," become crucial mediators in marketing oneself and displaying one's position in the hierarchy.

5) Within this "neoliberal cascade," as Connell (2013) calls it, the neoliberal school is required to reconfigure and regard itself as a commercial enterprise competing with others in a global market, and in order to do that it will require "*entrepreneurial managers* to run them – not educators" (p. 107). This means schools consuming more and more of their emotional and physical resources in "managing" things, with less resources and effort available for actual teaching and learning.

6) With this increasing managerialization of the school, Connell (2013) argues, comes a "change in the relationship between classroom teachers and school executives" (p. 107) in the direction of forms of "re-engineering" along the lines of business enterprises. This change of mentality "does not stop [either] at the classroom door. Teachers' relationships with their pupils are also being re-shaped" (p. 107). Connell (2013) points in particular to the way the neoliberal school becomes subjugated to "intensified testing regime[s] … narrowing the curriculum to the knowledge being tested," and "drilling the particular performance that pupils have to emit during the test" (p. 107).

There are many negative and desultory consequences of this paradigmatic re-configuration, but Connell (2013) points to one obvious and highly predictable one:

> Working class children are being tested on middle class practices, and not surprisingly they generally do worse at them than middle class children. Thus the hierarchy of success and failure solidifies, and schools serving mainly working class, migrant and indigenous communities, who collectively occupy the bottom layers of league tables, are collectively re-defined as failures. (p. 107)

Why Neoliberalism Is Destined Not to Work in Schools

Under neoliberalism there are a number of quite explicit tenets that are historically alien to the way schools envisage themselves. It is worth summarizing the particular way schools are increasingly expected to deport themselves, while erasing or expunging any former vestiges.

At their core, schools are required to conceive of themselves and operate as if they are stand-alone profit centers, taking on the language, mantle, and ethos of private enterprise and the business sector in competing against other schools for "customers" – formerly known as students. In this, schools are also expected to convey to students that they are to be entrepreneurs of the self in the way they approach their learning – to be self-responsible, self-managing, and searching out opportunities to enhance their potential. Schools are thus quintessentially being imagined as places of individual educational "consumption in which there is no longer any such thing as the public good in education." The education playing field is seen as being essentially flat, meaning that merit is equated with application and competitive effort, and in the minority of cases where student background militates against this, then adequate compensatory measures can be implemented to counter any inequities. By becoming self-managing and self-disciplining organizations, schools will thus be responsive to parental choice, with market forces securing "market share" while also exercising the discipline necessary to engender self- improvement or risk being driven out of business. The neoliberal school is expected to allocate resources to deploying marketing, image management, and forms of self-promotion in which deception is simply another variant. The basis upon which everything operates in the neoliberal school is measurement, i.e. forms of testing. Measuring and comparing schools presented in league tables enable parents to make rational choices about where to send their children, and indeed ranking and rating are legitimate ways of displaying and assigning quality, value, and worth. Within this overall requirement that educators envisage themselves in everything they do as being economic players doing "economic work," in a national and internationally competitive process of out-competing others for scarce resources, it follows that teachers as the key technicians are paid according to results based on the performance of their students on tests.

The problem with these unquestioned one-size-fits-all tenets of neoliberalism that are assumed can be unproblematically "applied" to education, is that schools, knowledge production, teaching, and learning are dynamic and indigenous processes, that are not necessarily amenable to such incorporation. Schools have unique qualities and dispositions that make them markedly and qualitatively different from profit-making or business entities. When we attempt to graft alien ideas like those derived from neoliberalism onto social institutions like schools that have vastly different clients, cultures, histories, social purposes, and agendas to profit-making businesses, then we are bound to have what Freebody et al. (1995) refer to as "interactive trouble" – that is to say, there will be damage and chaos because the school is out of sync with the paradigm being imposed. The two are operating out of quite different universes.

To fully understand how this "interactive trouble" is likely to play out in schools, we need to delve a little into the sociology of the school, and in particular, the sociology of the high school (Smyth, 2004b; Smyth, McInerney, Hattam, & Lawson, 1999). There are a number of enduring sociological features that mark schools out as distinctive types of institutions:

1) School are fundamentally "*relational cultures*" (for a detailed elaboration of the "relational school," see Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2010) in which young people learn "stuff," but from the vantage point of the young people, schools are places in which they make use of the resources made available to them to do identity work – that is, they are intimately involved in the process of "becoming somebody" (Wexler, 1992).

2) Schools are "*emotional places*". In Bondi, Davidson, and Smith's (2005) terms, schools have "emotional geographies" – they are not places in which people act like "a stockbroker [who] deals in dollars" in some kind of detached clinical exchange, or where it is possible to "measure policy outcomes in terms of some bureaucratically derived hedonistic calculus" (p. 2). Rather, schools are places that "try to express something that is ineffable … namely a sense of emotional involvement with [the lives of] people and places, rather than emotional detachment from them" (p. 2).

3) As Connell (1996) reminds us, schools are places that are involved in perpetuating a "gift relationship." The way sociologists and anthropologists put it, a gift relationship "is founded on a public rather than a private interest" (p. 6). Gift relationships bring with them a relationship of reciprocity between donor and recipient (see Sahlins, 1972). In other words, the paramount interests being served are those of learners, and by implication "society's collective interest," rather than narrow sectional interests of the market, and one of the most crucial elements acting as a buffer to the "logic of the market" is the creation of the conditions where "knowledge is circulated, debated and tested" (p. 6) rather than simply presumed or proclaimed.

4) Connell (1993) also highlights a crucial defining sociological feature of schools as residing in their refusal to be treated instrumentally, or in ways that amount to de-humanization. This has to do with the inherent nature of the work of schools:

Being a teacher is not just a matter of having a body of knowledge and a capacity to control a classroom. That could be done by a computer with a cattle-prod. Just as important, being a teacher means being able to establish human relations with the people being taught. Learning is a full-blooded, human social process, and so is teaching. Teaching involves emotions as much as it involves pure reasoning.

The emotional dimension of teaching has not been much researched, but in my view is extremely important. Teachers establish relations with students through their emotions, through sympathy, interest, surprise, boredom, sense of humor, sometimes anger and annoyance. School teaching, indeed, is one of the most emotionally demanding jobs …

Good teachers [especially] in disadvantaged schools regularly perform astonishing (and unheralded) feats of human relations, overcoming age, class and ethnic barriers, breaking through resentment, suspicions and fears, to establish workable educational relationships. An effective social justice policy for schools will see this as a crucially important educational process, and will work to support it rather than making it harder. 'Supporting it' means providing resources (especially time), teacher autonomy (because human relationships cannot be planned), advice (especially from networks of other teachers), and recognition (that this is an important part of teaching). 'Making it harder' is much easier to do. All you need is to insist on pupil time on-task, tell teachers they are slack and need to get back to basics, demand teacher productivity, throw in a few standardized tests, and presto! the job is done. (p. 63–64)

What Do We Mean by the Term Socially Just Education?

We are indeed fortunate to have a well-informed literature on the arguments for a sociologically-informed socially just education, and before I move to discussing the practicalities of the socially just school, I will briefly rehearse the main arguments.

Diane Reay in the UK provides one of the most concise statements on what is meant by socially just education, when she says: "A socially just education system is one premised on the maxim that a good education is the democratic right of all rather than a prize to be fought over" (Reay, 2014, p. 1). Reay (2014) points to the way in which "current educational policy has intensified educational cruelties in schooling," particularly around "testing regimes" and the way schools are increasingly perpetrating forms of "symbolic violence" through practices of "setting and streaming" (p. 1) – meaning, the socially distorting effect of socially segregating young people according to arbitrary measures of ability. Invoking the English historian and social critic R. H. Tawney, who is alleged to have used the phrase "freedom for the pike is death for the minnows" (Tawney, 1931, p. 238), Reay uses this imagery to make the point that the social inequity that arises from the acquisitiveness of some, is done at the expense of equality of opportunity for others. She finds the following quote from Tawney (1934) to be particularly apt because of the way a socially just view of education foregrounds the notion of

equality, not simply in terms of what an individual can garner for themselves, but as a systemic and structural collective social priority:

> I should be lacking in candour if I did not state my conviction that the only basis of educational policy worthy of a civilised nation is one which accepts as its objective, unpopular though such a view is in England, the establishment of the completest possible educational equality and that it is the duty of such educationalists as agree with that view to make it clear by definite, explicit and repeated statements that that and nothing less is what they mean. (Tawney, 1934, 1, cited in Reay, 2012, p. 587)

Raewyn Connell (2012) is also most helpful in the arguments she presents. For starters, she says that, "education is dangerous" because of the way "authoritarian governments and religions" can use it as way of controlling societies through both the "content of education" as well as "rationing its distribution" (p. 681). It is not only the reproduction of culture that can be problematic with regard to education, but as Connell (2012) argues, because of the way schools "shape the new society that is coming into existence all around us" (p. 681). What is no longer in question is that schools produce inequalities. Connell (2012) argues that schools not only control the way educational opportunities are distributed, but also the very nature of "the service itself" (p. 681) – both of which have consequences for society through time. Connell is pointing in the latter, to the shift in the nature of educational inequality itself, "from old forms of inequality based on institutional segregation [to] new forms of inequality based on market mechanisms" (p. 681). The way Connell puts it is that education has become the new "zone of manufactured uncertainty, with 'achievement' through competition as the only remedy" (p. 681).

We cannot properly countenance what a socially just education system might look like, without confronting some deep structural and ethical questions. In this regard, Connell argues that at the center of the notion of justice is the concept of "responsibility." For her, "we act unjustly towards someone [when] we fail to take responsibility for the effects of our actions on them" (p. 681). What this means is that "just social relations involve mutual responsibility," and when it comes to the "shared responsibility for children," there are some especially "dense webs of mutual responsibility" (p. 681) in which the school is an important mediating institution. The crucial point to be taken here is that neoliberalism is "ethically damaging precisely because it undermines the web of responsibility" (p. 682). Following Connell, we cannot exercise mutual responsibility in a market system that is fundamentally premised on success and failure, and that is so deeply etched with a commitment to measuring and quantifying it.

Connell's argument really revolves around socially just education requiring a commitment to "mutual responsibility" at two levels – institutionally, in the form of a publicly provided educational system (not one privately owned); and pedagogically at the level of the classroom, where there is overt acknowledgment and support for learning by *all* students, not just the ones able to take advantage of the school by dint of their backgrounds. Socially just education, as envisaged by Connell (2012), has three inter-related facets: (1) "curricular justice," meaning "a

curriculum organized around the experience, culture and needs of the least advantaged" (p. 682); (2) "social encounters" of a kind that foreground "mutual respect," which means providing materially for *all* students as well as according them "respect and recognition" (p. 682). In Connell's terms, "A just education system … does not define some students as good … and others as rabble," in the same way that "it does not underinvest in some social groups and overinvest in others" (p. 682). And, finally, (3) a just education system identifies itself because of the way it promotes "trust" – trust in leaners to learn "without the whip of examination," and trust in teachers to teach "without the club of auditing" (p. 682). Connell's (2012) concluding argument is that unless an education system places these ideas at the center of what it does in promoting the pursuit of a sense of "security," then it can only serve "privileged minorities," in which case it is a "corrupted education" (p. 683).

What Is the Socially Just School? Where Is It Coming from? Who Does It Exist for?

I will start with the second and third parts of my rhetorical questions, and then move to the former.

To argue that the press or quest for a *socially just school* is coming from the academy would be inaccurate, mischievous, and a gross exaggeration. It would be nice if it were that way, and that scholars in universities were indeed the harbingers in a search to develop a more just form of schooling, but sadly that is not the case, which is not the same as saying that there are not people in universities sympathetic to this idea. The truth is that the turn to the *socially just school* is emerging from and is insinuated in the progressive responses and practices of schools that have come to the realization that there has to be a better way than the grotesquely distorting neoliberal way. Being at the frontline, as it were, schools and teachers have to handle the dysfunctional effects on young lives in which increasing numbers of young people are becoming alienated, disaffected, and marginalized from school systems that simply do not care about them. The fact that a virtual tsunami of young people are becoming disengaged and eventually disconnecting from education and learning, draws more of the same harsh response from within neoliberal project of bearing down even more harshly on them, their teachers, and schools with even more damaging and demeaning forms of managerialism. The problems of schools are construed by education systems, policy-makers, politicians, and the media as residing in the defects in the individuals within schools, and the official solutions are, therefore, seen as needing to be managerial and behavioral. Because they are at the frontline in having to deal with the complexities confronting young lives, it is schools and teachers who are devising the alternative indigenous practices that constitute an insurgent and progressive alternative to the damaging, demeaning, deforming, and disfiguring neoliberal agenda. Many schools have come to the realization that they need to operate differently, and in the face of a dearth of innovative direction from above, they have developed spaces within which to construct and inhabit an alternative. Connell, White, and Johnston (1990), reflecting on the

little-known experience in the 1970s through to the 1990s, beyond Australia, when social justice was officially a prominent theme in Australian schooling, described it as being something "largely worked out locally" (p. 10) – meaning by schools, teachers, students, and their communities.

Where academics come into this picture, if at all, is in the opportunistic way some academics have realized they have to recast themselves as sociological observers of what is going on inside these schools, and become astute narrators (even advocates) of the alternatives that schools are developing to the neoliberal way (see for example, Smyth & McInerney, 2013). So, the genesis of the *socially just school* is much less salubrious than the rarefied groves of academe, and resides much more in the pedestrian and pragmatic responses of schools born out of frustration. That having been said, there are a number of identifiable dispositions, orientations, or hallmarks that appear with remarkable consistency in the way schools have been able to recast themselves in socially just ways.

When I speak of the socially just school I am referring to an archetype of a school for children of the increasingly large swath of the population in the US, the UK, and Australia, who are making their presence felt because of the way they have been disenfranchised by the ravages of globalization. I am referring to the white working class – the people who voted for Brexit and Donald Trump in such large numbers. The children of these people are the ones for whom the global educational reform movement (Sahlberg, 2011) has not delivered social mobility through education and for whom schools need to be re-invented. Without reinforcing old stereotypes, what needs to be done is to re-work the ruins of these young people's lives through a form of education that provides hope for more socially just lives.

There have been various descriptions of actual responses by schools over the years, and in different parts of the world, including in the US, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Brazil, going under various names, such as the democratic school (Apple & Beane, 1995; Goodman, 1992; Horton, 1990; Horton & Freire, 1991; Meier, 1995, 2007, Wood, 1992, 1998, 2005), the relational school (Smyth, Down & McInerney, 2010), the alternative school (Mills & McGregor, 2013), student voice schools (Smyth & McInerney, 2012), the pedagogically engaged school (Smyth, 2007), the just school (Gale & Densmore, 2000), the critically multicultural school (Cazden, 1989; May, 1994, 1998); schools of hope (McInerney, 2004; Wrigley, 2003, 2006), the critically and sociologically engaged school (Batini, Mayo, & Surian, 2014; Borg, Cardona, & Caruana, 2013; School of Barbiana, 1972), even on occasions and for periods, democratic school systems (Gandin & Apple, 2002, 2012).

What is common to the indigenous response of the various schools of this type, over time, and who have taken what amounts to an activist stance toward supplanting the neoliberal school, is that they have created the social space within which to construct an alternative. There has been a remarkably consistent ensemble of features which have coalesced and emerged, that is encapsulated particularly in contemporary research that I and my colleagues have been pursuing for some three decades in Australia, and which we have labeled for convenience *the socially just school* (see Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014).

The way *the socially just school* manifests is through a number of pervasive generative themes, which I will put as a proposition, followed by a brief explanation.

- *Incorporating and including the lives, cultures, and backgrounds of the most marginalized students.* Educational experiences in these schools take as their starting point the lives, cultures, backgrounds, and histories students bring with them to schools, which are invariably riven with notions of oppression and marginalization, and failure. Rather than ignore these, erase, expunge, or demean them, they become instead the starting point for reintroducing the political into learning. This constitutes what Finn (1999) refers to as an education for working-class children "in their own self-interest" through "making literacy dangerous again" (pp. 155–172), in contrast to education being domesticated and neutered of any perspective. The kinds of questions pursued here involve asking: Whose interests are being served? How did things get to be the way they are? What forces operate to sustain the existing order? What might a more democratic order look like

- *Explicitly putting a focus on the curriculum and pedagogy, and on the place of the school in its community.* One thing that seems to profoundly characterize working-class life, is the importance of local immediacy, which is to say, there is a strong attachment to place, neighborhood, and community. Some argue that this inscription of the "materiality of space" is given expression "in the sense of place as somewhere in which we are either 'at home', indifferent or alien" (Charlesworth, 2000, pp. 86–87). As Charlesworth (2000) puts it, "the contours of the world in which we belong," powerfully shape the way we comport ourselves. For the working class, immediate locality and its relationships are the ones that give most the comfort and security. Pedagogically, this is where working-class education ought to most sensibly start.

- *Emphasizing the primacy of relationships.* Something working-class people learn very early, and with some degree of bitterness, is the meaning of institutionalized relationships. They are variously quantified, categorized, stigmatized, stereotyped, demeaned, controlled, and eventually robbed of their humanity in various dealings with officialdom, or the middle-class institutions of society – schooling, policing, housing, welfare, health, unemployment, criminal justice, substance rehabilitation, etc. What they are taught is that when it comes to interacting with institutions, their individuality does not count. What is required is compliance and conformity. Little wonder that their progeny, who have been close witnesses, react indignantly when treated institutionally, as do their parents when they have to cross the threshold of schools, invariably because of infractions. What is needed here, for education to be successful, is a very different starting point – one that manifestly values what working-class children and their parents have to offer, and that starts from a "humanizing" vantage point (Bartolome, 1994). As Bingham and Sidorkin (2004) put it, there can be *no education without relation* and a reworking of authoritarian relationships in a way that "restore[s] the power of relations in schools" (Sidorkin, 2002). What we want, Sidorkin says, "is that students will be attracted to schools because of the quality of human relationship, the quality of the communal experience there" (p. 80).

- *Celebrating success rather than punishing failure.* Neoliberalism, and along with it the neoliberal school, are predicated on the basis of separating winners from losers. Hayek ([1948] 1958), the pioneer of neoliberalism, championed an institutional framework as the basis of the cultivation of "a competitive order" (pp. 107–118; see also Nik-Khan & Van Horn, 2016). As Connell (2013) argues, it is necessary to have educational winners so that education can be "rationed" and regulated through a market. The basis of rationing is the existence (or the artificial creation) of conditions of scarcity, and in education the currency of scarcity is "achievement," and who is allowed to have it. Once we have scarcity and rationing, then we have the basis Connell (2013) says, with which "to commodify access" (p. 105) – people are prepared to cash in success and pay for access to higher education and the best-paying jobs. Thus, the construction of educational hierarchies of success and failure, based on competitive testing, means that students are sorted, but "the creation of this elaborate system of sorting sheep from goats, winners from losers, top students from bottom students, is deeply corrosive of education" (p. 106).

  The socially just school starts from a very different premise. It disavows the need to ration success, to treat it hierarchically, and hence commodify it, turning it into an exchange commodity. Instead, success is conceived of in terms of achievement being possible *for all* – if the right conditions are created. By this I mean, a "success-oriented culture," in which arbitrary judgments of worth are replaced by authentic forms of assessment. The way I put it is that:

  > Assessment and reporting [in the socially just school] exist to provide authentic feedback to students on their success and to highlight areas for growth and improvement. The school has multiple ways of assessing student achievement, and students have opportunities to negotiate assessment tasks and to present the products of their learning to their peers, caregivers and members of the community. (Smyth & McInerney, 2007, p. 213)

- *Acknowledging schools as places of emotional work.* The socially just school does not believe in artificial detachment. It takes an expansive view on why students attend school – certainly to learn things that schools have on offer, but as we have also found, this can also mean that "not everyone has a perfect life" (Hattam & Smyth, 2003) – meaning that some young people have complex identities that they are working out in schools (see also Smyth & Hattam, 2004). A major part of this involves emotion work, as we refer to it, and the recognition that students have emotional lives in which it is not feasible or possible for them to park their emotions at the classroom door or the school gate. These schools take a mature approach to working with students' emotional lives by, for example, enhancing their emotional intelligence, and acknowledging that they have part-time work lives, personal relationships, involvement in popular culture, and social media that may well intrude into school. All of these are seen as arenas for education.

- *Promoting "curricular justice"* (Connell, 1992), which is to say, *a socially just curriculum* (McInerney, Hattam, Smyth, & Lawson, 1999). According to

Connell (1992), curricular justice entails acknowledging three principles. First, there is "participation and common schooling" (p. 138) which is the underpinning for participation as a citizen in a democracy. This means schools modeling the conditions necessary for enacting active citizenship, which Connell (1992) argues, must be extended to *all* students. In a practical sense, this "rules out all selection, competitive assessment, streaming and classifying mechanisms … [that] differentiate offerings … and [that] advantage some [students] over others" (pp. 138–139). Justice is being advanced, in this way, "by banning all grading and competitive testing during the compulsory years of schooling" (p. 139). Similarly, there is a commitment to an "inclusive curriculum" which "rules out curricula produced from a socially-dominant standpoint" (p. 139). Second, a curriculum that serves the "least favoured groups, or that foregrounds the 'interests of the least advantaged'" (p. 139). Connell's argument here is that a socially just curriculum must avoid "curriculum ghettos" that are "separate-and-different" by requiring instead "counter-hegemonic" projects that confront patterns of inequality across multiple fronts of "gender, class, race [and] ethnicity" (p. 139). This also means having the courage to countenance the "possibility of *critique* of the political agenda itself" (p. 140). Third, curriculum justice challenges "the historical production of inequality" (p. 140), which is to say, the curriculum needs to be centrally concerned with asking how inequality is produced in the first place and what is operating to guarantee its reproduction.

Curriculum justice is therefore advanced when learning is organized so that no social group gains a disproportionate share of "social power" (p. 141), where learning does not confirm or justify the disadvantage, exclusion, or selection of some groups (p. 141) over others, nor where the production or continuation of inequality is justified on historical grounds that has the effect of reducing the capacity of some students "to remake their worlds" (p. 142).

- *Puncturing class-base myths about schooling.* The socially just school does not accept the all-too-convenient class-based construction of the inherent distribution of ability contained in the separation that envisages some students as being capable of "brain work," while others are "hands-on" people. This form of sorting may serve the interests of the labour market, but it is not primarily serving the interests of students. The binary has more to do with young people's family backgrounds, educational histories, socio-economic status, and is used as the basis for legitimating some young people as being destined for high status and well-paying work, others are relegated to insecure, menial, low-paying work labeled as being "unskilled."

The socially just school challenges this construction in several ways. First, by arguing that schools should be "hospitable places of learning" (Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014, p. 163) for all students, not as places where some succeed and others are relegated to inferior tracks or streams. All students, regardless of background, should have the opportunity to experience school as a rewarding experience. The socially just school thus pursues a "capabilities approach," which drawing from Sen (1992), means "identifying what kind of lives they wish to

lead," "providing them with the skills and knowledge to do that" and "helping them understand and confront how their political, social and economic conditions will allow or impede them" (Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2010, p. 74).

The socially just school works with students to acquire an "understanding of the complexity of the labour market" (Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014, p. 164) so that they can see how the labor market is changing, for whom, so that when they are excluded they do not take this as an indication of personal deficit or personal failing.

The socially just school, in disavowing the "self-fulfilling prophecy of tracking" (p. 165), refuses to accept that some students are destined by dint of background to "high status" work, while other students are residualized to vocational tracks that lead them to inferior forms of work.

Finally, the socially just school is committed to enabling students to "go … beyond menial, piece-rate and poorly paid jobs" (Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014, p. 165) and be able to see the difference between "good" versus "bad" work (Kincheloe, 1995, 1999). In developing a socially critical approach to work, these schools position themselves as endorsing Standing (2009), who says that everyone has a right to pursue "creative and dignifying work around a set of self-chosen activities" that bring with it forms of "occupational citizenship" conducive to "forms of civic friendship and social solidarity" within the forces of global transformation (p. 10).

- *Accepting that "disadvantage" is socially constructed and not a natural state of affairs.* This assertion follows axiomatically from many of the previous dispositions, and is best captured in the dictum to students to "be the best you can." Again, it amounts to a refusal to accept the situation where some students are assigned labels like "at risk" or "disadvantaged," to be used as legitimation for alleged under-achievement. It is seen as being the responsibility of the school to ensure all students succeed regardless of background.
- *Re-casting educational policies so they work for the least advantaged.* Educational policies can often have extremely damaging and deforming effects on students, for example, in the insistence upon forms of competition, ranking, rating, and comparing students. The socially just school has an approach to externally imposed policies that enables them to accept, modify, or reject them based upon the internal philosophical framework of the school. The framing question they use as the basis of debate within the school is: how does this policy advance learning for the least advantaged students in this school? They back up their decision to act in respect of external policies based upon discussion within the school and its community, with the courage of their convictions.
- *Denouncing practices of so-called "choice" as being for only the already advantaged.* Notions of choice when applied to schooling disguise the fact that the playing field, meaning the opportunity structures necessary to succeed, is far from a level one. Students approach schools with vastly different material, cultural, emotional, and social resources, in navigating entry. School choice is, therefore, a fallacious notion when there is a refusal to make visible the resources necessary to engage with the middle class institution of schooling, and it is made to look as if it is entirely a matter of individual volition.

- *Treating image and impression management and other forms of self-promotion as dangerous forms of deception and disfigurement.* When the school is contrived prima facie as a competitive institution, then it is pushed into forms of self-promotion, and deception, in order to secure market share. This competitive ethos permeates everything the school does, including student learning. The socially just school has a very different ethos; it sees successful learning as being everyone's responsibility, and in this the school endorses, collaboration, reciprocity, and solidarity. It promulgates the view that when one fails, all fail!

- *Situating learning and pedagogy at the center of what the school does – not managerialism, accountability, governance or organizational re-structuring.* Business management notions of managerialism, control, accountability, and contrived forms of governance and re-structuring imported from the corporate sector, are regarded by the socially just school as destructive and costly deflections that detract from the school's primary mission of pedagogy and learning. They are seen as an admission that the school no longer understands that it exists for its students. The socially just school robustly rejects these damaging deflections for what they are.

- *Regarding student disengagement as a curriculum issue rather than something requiring behavior management.* An irrelevant curriculum that does not connect to young people's lives and that is delivered through an uninspiring pedagogy, are two of the major sources, young people say (Smyth & Hattam, 2004), of them switching off learning and resorting to what is labeled as classroom misbehavior. The conventional school response to student refusal to engage with what the school has on offer, is to label this as a behavior infraction, which is dealt with punitively through invoking behavior management policies and regimes. The socially just school regards this as a misdiagnosis of the issue and responds very differently by looking instead at how to ensure that their curriculum better connects to young people's lives and interests. In other words, they see student disengagement as an issue of curriculum relevance.

- *Pursing contingent rather than hierarchical forms of leadership.* Given that management and governance of schools are heavily derivative of ideologies, paradigms, and practices borrowed from business, industry, and the military, it is not surprising that leadership is conceived of hierarchically. It seems to matter little whether leadership is portrayed as being inspiring, charismatic, heroic, or whatever, it still remains vested in the designated hierarchal status of organizations like schools. Occasionally, there are apparent slight deviations, for example, in so-called "distributed leadership," but even these still conceive of leadership as being invested in official "authority roles" (May, 1994, p. 98). The socially just school regards leadership quite differently; it regards it as having a temporal dimension, and having to do with aspects of place and circumstance, and the contingent possession of expertise. In other words, the expertise upon which leadership is dependent can be widely dispersed in a complex entity like a school, and it can come from anywhere regardless of formal status. As May (1994), invoking the philosopher R.S. Peters (1973) put it, "provisional authority" is "that held by the person 'who knows the most' in a given situation" (p. 98). In this sense, leadership is seen as much more dynamic and "provisional" (Smyth & McInerney, 2007, p. 203), rather than an assigned or fixed authority role.

- *Promulgating agency rather than victim construction.* Continuously, for the past half a century, schools have been increasingly envisaged politically as annexes of the economy – that is to say, their prime purpose is to do economic work, and the educating of children is subsidiary. This kind of view has had quite devastating effects on young lives, not to mention the institution of schooling. In the case of schools serving the most marginalized and disadvantaged communities, this kind of policy trajectory has meant that these have become schools that have almost exclusively been "done to." They have been portrayed consistently as having no virtues, as being "sink" schools, and with all manner of deficits and pathologies. They are seen as places that have to be reformed so as to conform to middle-class norms and values. The language used to categorize them is informative in itself – they are labeled "failing schools," "underperforming schools," and as requiring "special measures" to fix them. The socially just school rejects these pejorative labels that construct the school and those with it as victims. Rather, the socially just school presents itself as a place of dignity, respect, complexity, and diversity with assets and strengths that reside in the school and its community (Smyth, Angus, Down, & McInerney, 2008). These schools are not only adroit at mapping their strengths (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; McKnight & Krezmann, 1996), but they also publicly and proudly proclaim and celebrate them. These are not places of despondency and hopelessness, but rather spaces and places of agency and critical hope. Another way of putting it is that the socially just school is "worked out locally" (Hattam, 1994).

Conclusion

Bourdieu and Champagne (1999) use the term "outcasts on the inside" as a way of depicting the "educational malaise" or "school sickness" (p. 421) being visited upon and experienced by non-middle-class students. This is rather an apt signifier for what I have described as the construction of the neoliberal school and what it is doing to young people who do not present to school with middle-class norms and values. The unremitting press over the past 30 years or so to convert schools into "annexes of the economy" (Smyth, 2016c, p. 147) has meant that schools have become increasingly inhospitable places for burgeoning numbers of non-middle-class young people. My consistent point here, and elsewhere (see Smyth, 2014) is that "it need not have been this way" – we have been willfully deceived into believing, on the basis of zero evidence, that there is no alternative to the marketized, managerial, self-promoting, even self-damaging, neoliberal school.

What I have posited instead are the features and philosophies of the socially just school – one that starts from the position of respecting young lives regardless of social background, race, gender, or ethnicity, and that believes educational success is possible *for all*. Puncturing the "bad faith," as Bourdieu and Champagne (1999) call it, peddled by the neoliberal apologists who tell us that there is only one way to organize schools and it has to be around competition, comparison, calibration, and exclusion, I proffer instead a number of generative themes that offer a more just and inclusive possibility.

The socially just school pursues a curriculum, forms of organization and pedagogy that put students before the economy. The emphasis is upon relationships rather than de-humanized, detached, and institutional forms of treatment. Within the success-oriented culture, there is a mature approach to the way emotions are dealt with, and curricular justice is embodied in student, teacher, and community participation in decision-making, in ways that are counter-hegemonic and that confront inequalities. There is an outright rejection of the artificially constructed academic/vocational class binary, and a refusal to accept the school as a place of individual educational consumption, and all the apparatuses that come with it. The effect of having a relevant and engaging curriculum focused on learning and students" lives, is that behavior management is obviated, and leadership takes on the form of the possession of expertise rather than investiture in status. Students thus become active agents in constructing their own lives, rather than passive victims of other people's constructions.

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23

Beyond Neoliberalism

Educating for a Just Sustainable Future
David Hursh and Alice Jowett

Introduction

Fredrich Hayek, as it turns out, got it completely wrong. In 1944, Hayek, in his book *The Road to Serfdom*, argued that social democratic policies like those embodied in Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal would limit citizens' choices and evolve into totalitarianism as in the Soviet Union. For Hayek, the only way to avoid totalitarianism was to reduce if not eliminate government's role in society and, instead, use markets to decide individual and societal questions. Every decision – what and how we use our "natural resources," how we produce and consume energy, what our schools should teach – should be made within a free market economy, with a tallying of individual decisions, unconstrained by governmental interference. The government that governs best governs not at all.

Hayek's support for free markets as the ultimate arbiter of how we are to live formed the core principles of neoliberalism, which ultimately became the basis for political, economic, and social decisions and policies in much of the world over the last 35 years. Hayek's views were taken up and elaborated and expanded upon by economists such as Hayek's colleagues who composed the Mont Pelerin collective (Mirowski & Plehwe, 2015; Peck, 2010; Peters, 2016). Milton Friedman (1962) and his followers, dubbed "The Chicago Boys," formed the Chicago School of Economics at the University of Chicago. They advised politicians, including General Augusto Pinochet in Chile, who overthrew the elected government in 1973. As dictator, and with the help of the Chicago Boys, Pinochet privatized and cut social services, including reducing the funding for public education and universities. Later, in the 1980s, neoliberal ideas were put into practice by Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and neoliberal ideology has dominated ever since (Peck, 2010).

The neoliberal faith in markets forms the basis of other neoliberal policies, including the notion that the public sector should be privatized as much as possible and social spending reduced and, where possible, eliminated. In the

United States, we have experienced the privatization of most social services, including the penal system, law enforcement, emergency services such as ambulances and fire fighters (Ivory, Protess, & Bennett, 2016), and even the military (see Scahill (2007) on the US contracting with the private militia Blackwater in the Middle East). Moreover, education is increasingly privatized at the elementary and secondary levels with the proliferation of publicly funded but privately operated charter schools, and handing over making of curriculum and assessments to private corporations, such as Pearson PLC (Hursh, 2016).

In this chapter we want to directly oppose Hayek's contention that all societal issues are economic ones that can best be solved through markets, therefore marginalizing environmental, ethical, educational or other considerations in our decision-making. For Hayek, considering anything other than cost and profit necessarily makes markets less efficient. He saw markets as self-regulating and, therefore, any governmental or other interference beyond individual choice undermined "the wisdom of the market." Doing so, argue Hayek and his neoliberal followers, undermines the logic and benefits of market-based decisions and, therefore, is less efficient.

In contrast, while Hayek described the emerging social democracies before and after World War II as necessarily leading to a totalitarian state and "serfdom" for its citizens, we assert the opposite. It is by reducing all decisions to market-based decisions that we will subject ourselves to serfdom. This occurs in two ways.

First, Hayek limits freedom to choosing between options provided through the market, eliminating the role people play in setting societal goals and the means to achieve them. Similarly, Thomas Friedman (1999, 2005), a popular Pulitzer Prize-winning political and cultural commentator, often promotes neoliberal ideologies mirroring Hayek's views. For example, Friedman approvingly describes neoliberalism, which he, as is common in the United States, calls "free-market capitalism," as resulting in the "Golden Straitjacket" (1999, p. 105). For Friedman, free-market capitalism is inevitable and beneficial as the executive officers of transnational corporations shift production to the most efficient low-cost producers (i.e. low paying). In addition, the countries that follow the neoliberal tenets of markets, free trade, and privatization, "that put on the Golden Straitjacket," are rewarded with investment capital from "traders sitting behind computer screens," who compose the "electronic herd" seeking profit. Friedman concludes that to thrive in today's globalization system a country not only has to put on the Golden Straitjacket, it has to join the Electronic Herd (Friedman, 1999, p. 109). Information on where the electronic herd should invest is provided by the investment rating companies, including Moody's and Standard & Poor's. Given how the investment companies contributed to the financial collapse of 2008 by handing out A+ ratings for mortgages that were doomed to fail, shows not only how useless the rating services were, but also how dangerous. (For an entertaining and disturbing depiction of the corruption of the rating agencies, see the book and movie *The Big Short* (Lewis, 2009).)

For Hayek and Friedman, who both claim to value freedom, freedom consists in seeking advantages within free markets, in putting on the "Golden Straitjacket" as part of an "Electronic Herd," in submitting to the dictates of the market, which sounds to us less like the road to freedom but the neoliberal road to serfdom.

Second, we argue that relying solely on markets when making environment decisions exacerbates our environmental problems rather than solving them. For example, making decisions regarding different energy sources, including coal, oil, solar power, wind power, natural gas from hydrofracking, based on which is the cheapest or yields the most profit, without considering their environment impact, is the central reason for climate change and global warming (Hansen, 2009). Moreover, making decisions based only on the market rather than how we create a socially just and environmentally sustainable planet not only exacerbates climate change and harms environmental sustainability in the present, it also increasingly limits our choices in the future. For example, as modern economies have been largely based on fossil fuels, such as oil, coal, and natural gas, they have contributed to climate change and global warming. If we are to limit global warming to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommended level of 2 degrees Celsius, we must decrease the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and must severely limit our use of fossil fuels. Therefore, we no longer have any other choice than to leave fossil fuels in the ground (Indigenous Uprising, 2015; Malm, 2016; Peters et al., 2013).

Similarly, parts of the globe such as Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East are becoming hotter, drier, and inhospitable to agriculture, livestock, and humans, leading to social and political unrest and increasing migration to Europe and North America. Likewise, global warming has resulted in rising sea levels, and coastal communities are forced to explore ways to hold back or cope with coastal flooding (Gillis, 2016). These and other consequences of climate change will impact the environment for thousands of years (Archer, 2009). We are increasingly confronted with crises caused by our inability to incorporate long-term consequences and issues of environmental justice into our decision-making and often are required to choose between several undesirable options. For example, Europeans and Americans face the question of either accommodating an overwhelming number of immigrants or turning them back, which has resulted in thousands of deaths. Coastal cities that face rising sea levels have the choice of investing in expensive barriers and pumping systems in an attempt at mitigation, or risk seeing their communities submerged. Our over-reliance on markets and the marginalization of environmental and ethical criteria are the central cause of many of our environmental problems. Our past choices have narrowed our present and future choices. Hayek was wrong. Individual decision-making through markets has negative consequences for our present and future (Richtel, 2016). It is not social democracy that is the road to serfdom, but markets.

Therefore, we begin by arguing that we face three interrelated crises – economic, environmental, and educational – that share neoliberal assumptions about how society should work. But neoliberalism is based on false premises and does not produce the positive outcomes that neoliberals claim will result from implementing neoliberal ideologies. The neoliberal economic policies that have been implemented for the past three to four decades have not resulted in either the economic growth promised or a better life for all. The assumption that environmental issues will be solved through markets that will promote technologies that will produce energy without contributing to climate change and global warming is misguided. The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has only increased

and the temperature has risen. Similarly, our educational system has not benefit-ted from neoliberalism, but has only been harmed by the increasing competition provided by privatizing public education through charter schools (Zernike, 2016).

The False Premises and Pernicious Outcomes of Neoliberalism: Market Fundamentalism, and the Inability to Think Beyond Individual Preferences and the Short Term

Block and Somers (2014) describe neoliberals as market fundamentalists because neoliberals have an unfounded faith that markets can operate without governmental oversight, and whatever regulation that needs to occur can be provided by those who are part of the market. The argument being, for example, that banks and financial institutions will recognize when regulations need to be put into place and do so. However, the neoliberal faith that markets will regulate themselves has proved to be unfounded. The recession that began in 2007–2008 was caused in part because the Glass-Stegal Act of 1933 that regulated traditional banking was repealed, new financial derivatives were unregulated, and credit and mortgage rating agencies faced financial disincentives to provide accurate assessments. In the end, the mortgage lending and rating services acted in their own interests, rather than the finance industries' interests, and precipitated a financial collapse that was only prevented from destroying the economic system because the federal government intervened.

Not only do neoliberals falsely believe that neoliberal economic systems can operate without outside regulation, but the results of 35 years of neoliberal policies have worsened the economic conditions for all but the very rich. Neoliberal economic policies have resulted in increasing economic crises such as recessions, governmental austerity budgets reducing spending on social services and education, the shrinking of the middle class, and growing inequality between the rich and the poor. Between 1979 and 2012, the income for the top 1% increased by 180.9% and the other 99% by a mere 2.6%. The United States has the second highest childhood poverty rate among the 35 industrialized nations, second only to Romania (Children's Defense Fund, 2014, p. 16). The Southern Education Foundation (2014) reports that over half (51%) of all students attending public schools are eligible for free or reduced lunch – indicating that their families are low income. The recent vote in the United Kingdom to exit from the European Union is partly a protest against the neoliberal policies of the past decades instituting austerity budgets and cuts in public services.

By reducing all decisions to market wishes, neoliberals externalize other non-market criteria such as environmental consequences including climate change and global warming or toxins in our environment. Their assumption, as we will describe further below, is that markets, in the same way that they will regulate themselves, will create the technologies that will solve our environmental problems.

Neoliberalism, by focusing on individual choice and with markets in which efficiency and profits are the dominant, if not the only, criteria, undermines

people's ability to think beyond the immediate short term and to think not only of themselves, but of the greater social good. Our resulting inability and disincentive to think beyond the immediate, and beyond ourselves, are one of the main causes for our environmental and educational problems.

How Neoliberalism Has Failed the Environment

Neoliberal market fundamentalism has become a dominant contributor to the increasing environmental disasters associated with climate change, toxins in our environment, and the destruction of "nature," that we will soon, if not already, need to respond to in ways in which we have little choice. Our free market system, which is designed to only respond to individual choice, externalizes the results of those market choices, making it difficult for society to respond to the environmental impact of those choices.

Moreover, neoliberalism, by focusing on the immediate and the individual, undermines our ability to conceptualize the long term and the common good. It is difficult to convince individuals that what they do, along with that of billions of others, can affect the climate and will do so for centuries into the future. For example, in the United States, the rise in gasoline prices in 2008 (Bunkley, 2008) resulted in declining sales of large motor vehicles and increased sales of energy-efficient vehicles. However, the current decline in gasoline prices has led to the opposite result. In both cases the underlying dynamics have not changed. The more gasoline that is consumed, the more carbon dioxide enters the atmosphere.

Gardiner, in *A Perfect Moral Storm: The Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change* (2011), points out how difficult it is for people to conceptualize the long-term effects of our ever-day actions, what Schaeffer, Hare, Rahmstorf, and Vemeer (2012) describe as "the long memory of the climate system" (p. 14). Moreover, those who generally contribute the most to climate change are the middle and upper classes from the developed nations. The consequences are worse, continue further into the future, and have generally a greater impact on developing countries and the poor. In New Orleans, it was the poor who lived in low-income housing situated in the low lands, and who did not have access to the mobility afforded to wealthier residents, who were the ones most likely to be impacted by the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Taking a global example, citizens, particularly the poorest citizens, in flood-prone regions of Bangladesh are more likely to be adversely affected by rising sea levels than the citizens of the Netherlands, who have invested in sophisticated and expensive means of mitigation. For many, the consequences of climate change are still to happen, or something that happens to others, making it hard to conceptualize its effects and the common good.

Understanding and Responding to Our Current Crises

While many seem unable to comprehend climate change, even with monthly announcements that the global temperature has set a new record, and the cascading number of 100- and even 1000-year floods (most recently in West

Virginia), others understand all too clearly that the coming centuries will be ones in which the Earth is transformed for the worse. David Orr, in *Down to the Wire: Confronting Climate Collapse* (2009), describes the forthcoming changes wrought by climate change as "the long emergency," a phrase borrowed from William Howard Kunstler (2005). Orr, Kunstler, Naomi Klein and others argue that even the most optimistic scenario regarding climate change and its effects (higher temperatures, drought, rising seas, and the destruction of habitats on land and in the water) are almost too great to respond to. The effects from the increased carbon already in the atmosphere will, notes Andres Malm in *Fossil Capitalism* (2016), be with us for a million years. John Podesta and Peter Ogden (2008) at the Center for American Progress, not a radical think tank, state that even in the most optimistic scenario "There is no foreseeable political or technological solution that will enable us to avert many of the climate impacts projects" (p. 97).

While is it too late to avert many of the impacts, it is not too late to do something. Based on our analysis above, we assert that this presents an opportunity to rethink our economic system, our relationship to the environment, and our educational goals and practices. Naomi Klein (2014, 2015) states that we need to acknowledge that neoliberalism, as an extreme form of capitalism that privileges free markets and individual choice over governmental intervention in the economy and the common good, is the cause of our environmental crisis. Therefore, rather than wallowing in despair, we need to see the current crises as a last opportunity to focus on the global community and environment. We need to develop a global democracy. Otherwise, the world's population will be living on a planet that inadequately provides the resources for its survival. We may descend into the Hobbesian "war of all against all," where:

> Each person is free to decide for herself what she needs, what she's owed, what's respectful, right, pious, prudent, and also free to decide all of these questions for the behavior of everyone else as well, and to act on her judgments as she thinks best, enforcing her view where she can. In this situation … there is not common authority to resolve these many and serious disputes. (Lloyd & Sreedhar, 2014)

For Naomi Klein (2014, 2015), David Orr (2009), Bill McKibben (2007, 2010), and others, climate change exposes the failure of capitalism in general and neoliberalism in particular. Focusing on the individual rather than the good of all, and on profits rather than learning to live sustainably on a planet with finite resources, has created the current environmental crises. One of the characteristics of the neoliberal approach to societal problems is to assume that free markets will solve our problems by enabling investors to earn profits through creating and developing technological solutions. For example, a columnist for the *Financial Times* (London), Martin Sandbu (2014), reflects the faith in market solutions to environmental problems when he writes that "the increased risk to the planet is exactly offset by the values of the extra growth, that is, if the environmental harm exceeds the benefits to economic growth, markets will adjust to reduce the environmental harm" (p. 1). There is no need for policies; markets on their own can solve everything.

It is not only mainstream economists who promote market and technological solutions to environmental problems, but also some leading environmentalists, including E. O. Wilson – biologist, conservationist, author and twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize. Environmental sociologists Bram Büscher and Robert Fletcher (2016), while acknowledging Wilson's vast contributions to our understanding of the environment, criticize Wilson's proposal in his new book, *Half Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life* (2016), to set aside half of the Earth as a series of nature parks, and restrict humans to the remaining half, therefore limiting the negative effects that humans can have on nature. While such a proposal has obvious practical problems, such as how do we decide which half of the Earth has to be made "human-free," it does not specifically respond to many of the environmental crises we currently face. Büscher and Fletcher (2016) describe Wilson's portrayal of an "'intensified economic evolution' in which 'the free market and the way it is increasingly shaped by high technology' will solve the problem seemingly automatically" (p. 2). Moreover, they write, Wilson invokes a biological version of Adam Smith's invisible hand in writing that "just as natural selection drives organic evolution by competition among genes to produce more copies of themselves per unit cost in the next generation, raising benefit-to-cost of production drives the evolution of the economy," adding "almost all of the competition in a free market … raises the average quality of life" (p. 2).

Jedidiah Purdy (2016) raises a similar critique of Wilson's faith in the market to create technologies that will enable humans to live within ecological limits, pointing out that such a change requires a "massive political decision to build ecological 'costs' into the price of energy and other technologies; otherwise markets will continue to 'evolve' dysfunctionally by treating the global atmosphere as a free dumping ground" (p. 5). Purdy (2015) provides a contrasting view to our environmental problems than that of Wilson (2016) and Sandbu (2014), noting that the way we approach thinking about these issues is too limited to be helpful. For example, he notes the ways in which discussion of environmental problems are limited to technological problems and solutions as if they were separate from issues of global justice. Often, he notes, "treating climate change as an 'environmental' question obscures issues of global justice – the ways that the world's rich are much more responsible for, and less vulnerable to, the problem than the poor" (p. 1).

Not only do we err by treating environmental questions as if they were not political ones, but by treating nature as if it were separate from human activity. There are essentially no places left where nature is unaffected by humans. Even the most desolate places are affected by climate change, meaning that we always need to consider how we have affected nature and its consequences for the environment and for one another. Purdy (2015) suggests that we need to remember that "worlds originally and essentially belong to everyone, and that this common heritage may be divided into property only in ways that the dividers can justify on moral and political grounds" (p. 2).

Instead, we argue that all decisions are really political decisions. We agree with Block and Somers (2014) when they write that the neoliberal notions of markets that can regulate themselves free from the government, and that decisions can be apolitical, cannot exist. Block and Somers (2014) write that "the project of creat-

ing self-regulating markets is ultimately impossible" and "has never – and cannot ever – actually exist" (p. 10). They have examined how "markets are always organized through politics and social practices" (p. 10) and what this means for contemporary debate. Most importantly, they argue, market fundamentalists are not setting "the market free from the state but [are] instead *re-embedding* it in *different* political, legal, and cultural arrangements, ones that mostly disadvantage the poor and the middle class, and advantage wealth and corporate interests" (p. 9, italics in original). Recognizing that neoliberalism is necessarily political, and that it privileges some groups over others, helps refute the notion that we can and should use markets to make all decisions. Failing to do so undermines any effort to achieve social justice.

We need, then, to rethink the economic system to take into account our effect on the environment and how to live within ecosystem limits (also called "one planet living") (Agyeman, 2005, p. 52). We also support Agyeman's (2013) view that we need to acknowledge that there is no one answer to how to achieve just sustainabilities, but that sustainability is a "relative, culturally and place-bound concept" (p. 5).

In addition to realizing that all interactions are political, and to situating economics and the environment within questions of justice and fairness, we need to (re)build those social institutions and processes that help solve our collective problems. Block and Somers (2014) advocate an approach, rooted in scholarship, where communities learn from one another past, present, and future, and analyze the varied means by which people cooperate to sustain the kinds of institutions, allocations, and social practices that support collective livelihood. From this perspective, understanding how to best meet livelihood needs requires anthropological and historical analysis of actual social practices rather than abstract assumptions and economic axioms (p. 226).

Rethinking Education

With the rise of neoliberal economic policies in the 1970s and 1980s, came the rise of neoliberal education policies. With the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, schools were blamed for the Reagan-induced economic recession, and while some have always promoted education as a means of creating productive workers and promoting economic growth, for neoliberals, economic productivity has become the central, if not the only, purpose of education. Neoliberal education policy also incorporates other aspects of neoliberal policies, including assuming that competitive markets provide school choice, privatization, and replacing the older bureaucratic state structures with what has been described as a new public management.

Creating charter schools, which are publicly funded, privately administered elementary and secondary schools, has been the central means of promoting competition between schools. Milton Friedman, who hoped to end public schools entirely, envisioned charter schools as "the next best thing" as families who "voted with their feet" and by sending their children to charter schools, would ultimately doom public schools, or what he preferred to call "government schools" (as described in Hirschman, 1970).

New public management (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012) emphasizes ongoing quantitative assessment of students, teachers, and schools, partly as a means of providing families with information so that they can choose the "best school" within the array of choices, and partly to hold students, teachers, and students responsible. Consequently, over the last several decades, students and teachers have suffered from an increased auditing and effort devoted to preparing for and taking standardized tests. Teachers are required to devote more time to engaging in quantitative assessments of students and to use that data as part of "data-driven instruction."

These neoliberal reforms have resulted in narrowing the curriculum as teachers focus on improving students' test scores. In the United States, since *No Child Left Behind* and *Race to the Top* require evaluating students and teachers based on their standardized test scores in mathematics and language arts, schools have reduced or eliminated lessons in other subject areas and emphasized the kinds of skills assessed through standardized tests. In New York, most school districts require teachers are teach the Common Core curriculum known as *New York Engage* as the best means to support students in passing the state-administered standardized tests. The goal of education becomes achieving proficiency on the standardized tests over any other outcome (Hursh, 2013, 2016).

What is excluded following this strategy are subjects that are not on the standardized test. As Henderson (2016) points out, climate change is too rarely discussed among educators or taught beyond a superficial and often scientifically inaccurate understanding. Therefore, in the remaining part of this chapter, we argue for the need to transform education by first rejecting the neoliberal tenets undergirding current corporate reform tenets (Hursh, 2016; Hursh & Martina, 2016). Rather than privatization and competition, and standardized testing and standardized curriculum, we need to create schools where teachers and students are encouraged to ask difficult, multidisciplinary questions that are important for the students and the communities in which they live.

Moreover, we stress that all learning is political, not least because all learning impacts how we are to live in the world, and how we are to live together. For us, education should be directed at creating a just and sustainable society, and any society that is not just cannot be sustainable and any society that is not sustainable cannot be just. However, what such a world looks like will be different in different places and times.

As discussed previously, Bangladesh faces different challenges than the Netherlands, and both face different challenges to the United States (Nixon, 2011). As Julian Agyeman (2013), an environmental theorist and planner, points out, there is no one answer to how to achieve just sustainabilities, sustainability is a "relative, culturally and place-bound concept" (p. 5). We find useful Agyeman's (2005) four essential conditions for just and sustainable communities:

1) Improving our quality of life and well-being.
2) Meeting the needs of both present and future generations.
3) Justice and equity in terms of recognition (Schlosberg, 1999), process, procedure, and outcome.
4) Living within ecosystem limits (also called "one planet living") (p. 52).

Given that how just sustainabilities are defined and achieved will differ by place and time, what questions should be posed and how answers should be worked toward will differ. For example, we both have experience working with students in the United States, and internationally in the United Kingdom, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South-east Asia. In one project in the United States, Hursh worked with fifth graders (12-year-olds) on the dangers from different toxins in the environment, particularly those that cause harm through the vector of water. Students were given access to different websites that provide child-appropriate information on different toxins such as from agricultural practices (fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, animal waste), gasoline, oil, and phthalics from plasiticizers (Frumkin, 2012, p. 497), and were asked to choose a particular toxin to research for its health consequences and how to reduce risks to humans. To our surprise, the students chose to investigate pet waste, which was not a topic we mentioned. However, pet waste *is* a problem for them. They investigated the diseases associated with pet waste and researched possible solutions to reduce or eliminate the problem at the individual and community level and presented what they learned to students and teachers in the school by creating a website, video, and brochures (Hursh, Martina, & Davis, 2011).

In a project in Sub-Saharan Africa, Hursh was prepared to teach elementary age students in a typical poorly resourced school in Uganda about different energy resources (oil, wood, dung, etc.), where energy ultimately comes from, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. The lessons were seen as one way to educate students as to why the school had switched from municipal energy sources (electricity generated by oil) to electricity generated by photovoltaic cells. However, on the first weekend, the electricity for the school and the adjoining complex, which included kitchens and reception rooms, shut off early in the evening. The reason was easy to ascertain: some staff had come to the school to watch television on an old energy-inefficient television, therefore, depleting the storage batteries. Once the batteries are depleted and the sun has set, electricity switches off until it is regenerated by sunlight the next day. This event precipitated creating and teaching lessons to both students and teachers on how different electrical devices use energy at different rates (energy-efficient light bulbs: 9 watts; old energy-inefficient televisions: 450 watts) and, therefore, adults and students needed to make choices about how they were going to consume electricity and that if they chose wisely, they would have a sufficient amount of electricity to last through the night.

In our teaching we aimed to develop an interdisciplinary approach where students asked questions that were important to them, and that they would share what they learned not only with classmates, but also with children and adults in the community and, with the new technologies, around the world. As argued previously, education must be central to creating a just sustainable society.

Conclusion

We began this chapter by arguing that Hayek (1944) was wrong in arguing that the best, and indeed the only, way to make decisions was through markets and that any governmental intervention into markets distorted the process and was

the first step to acceding our responsibilities to the state and, therefore, the beginning to the "road to serfdom." In sharp contrast, we have argued just the opposite: developing a socially just and environmentally sustainable society requires that we work together to conceptualize our societal goals and engage in an on-going collaborative effort to achieve those goals.

To believe that competitive markets will create the technologies that enable us to avoid the hard questions of how society should be organized is to engage in magical thinking, especially when we realize that the last four decades of neoliberal dominance have led us to the brink of environmental disaster as the amount of carbon in the atmosphere, along with its attendant feedback loops, guarantee climate change and its consequences, including global warming, sea level rises, coral bleaching, and other threats to the survival of the Earth's species. Block and Somers (2014) close their book arguing that neoliberalism follows an irrational faith in markets by stating that:

> 'Our obsolete market mentality' with respect to nature is a dangerous delusion that threatens the future of the human species … Only a perspective that ceases to treat nature and natural resources as commodities to be exploited will make it possible to meet the challenges of global climate change and overcome the current threats to the ocean and the supplies of clean water on which humanity relies. (pp. 239–240)

They add that we must create the institutions that will enable use to engage in the democratic dialogue that challenges the ways in which neoliberalism has shaped society. As we have pointed out, neoliberalism focuses on immediate individual rewards, rather than the long-term consequences for society. As long as the focus is on individual short-term rewards, we cannot hope to create an environment that provides justice for all within a sustainable environment.

Instead, we need to change the way we think about and act in the world, so that we consider the consequences of our actions not just on ourselves but on living things, and on the environment decades, if not centuries, into the future. This requires that we transform education so that we prepare students not to pass the next multiple-choice question and standardized exam, but to think critically both locally and globally, in the short and long term about the world.

A century ago John Dewey wrote *Democracy and Education* ([1916] 2016), where he elaborated on the idea that all our institutions need to be structured to support social justice and democracy. For Dewey, schools and all institutions – and even corporations – should be places where people put democracy into practice. For Dewey, the division between democratic theory and practices was false. Theory and practice have a dialectical relationship and democratic theories are refined as one attempts to implement them. Alan Ryan (1995), a political philosopher, described Dewey's vision of democratic "self-government" as "a self-disciplined exercise in freedom that uncovers truth that is never fully attained but is progressively achieved" (p. 101).

We need, then, to revise our economic and educational systems so that children and adults of all ages can work together to think about how to respond to the real challenges we face in creating a just sustainable world. The environment

must be central to our thinking and the results of this dialogue must be shared with others locally, regionally, and globally, in order for us to collectively work, and learn, together.

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24

When Schools Become Dead Zones of the Imagination

A Critical Pedagogy Manifesto

Henry A. Giroux

Introduction

> Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak.
>
> (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

If the right-wing billionaires and apostles of corporate power have their way, public schools will become "dead zones of the imagination," reduced to anti-public spaces that wage an assault on critical thinking, civic literacy and historical memory.[1] Since the 1980s, schools have increasingly become testing hubs that deskill teachers and disempower students. They have also been refigured as punishment centers, where low-income and poor minority youth are harshly disciplined under zero tolerance policies in ways that often result in their being arrested and charged with crimes that, on the surface, are as trivial as the punishment is harsh.[2] Under casino capitalism's push to privatize education, public schools have been closed in cities such as Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York to make way for charter schools. Teachers' unions have been attacked, public employees denigrated, and teachers reduced to technicians working under deplorable and mind-numbing conditions (see Yates, 2013).[3]

Corporate school reform is not simply obsessed with measurements that degrade any viable understanding of the connection between schooling and educating critically engaged citizens. The reform movement is also determined to underfund and disinvest resources for public schooling so that public education can be completely divorced from any democratic notion of governance, teaching, and learning. In the eyes of billionaire un-reformers and titans of finance such as Bill Gates, Rupert Murdoch, the Walton family and Michael Bloomberg, public

schools should be transformed, when not privatized, into adjuncts of shopping centers and prisons.[4]

Like the dead space of the American mall, the school systems promoted by the un-reformers offer the empty ideological seduction of consumerism as the ultimate form of citizenship and learning. And, adopting the harsh warehousing mentality of prison wardens, the un-reformers endorse and create schools for poor students that punish rather than educate, in order to channel disposable populations into the criminal justice system, where they can fuel the profits of private prison corporations. The militarization of public schools that former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan so admired and supported while he was the chief executive officer of the Chicago school system was not only a ploy to instill authoritarian discipline practices against students disparagingly labeled as unruly, if not disposable. It was also an attempt to design schools that would break the capacity of students to think critically and render them willing and potential recruits to serve in senseless and deadly wars waged by the American empire. And, if such recruitment efforts failed, then students were quickly put on the conveyor belt of the school-to-prison pipeline. For many poor minority youth in the public schools, prison becomes part of their destiny, just as public schools reinforce their status as second-class citizens. As Michelle Alexander points out: "Instead of schools being a pipeline to opportunity, [they] are feeding our prisons" (Sokolower, 2013).[5]

Market-driven educational reforms, with their obsession with standardization, high-stakes testing, and punitive policies, also mimic a culture of cruelty and instrumental rationality that neoliberal policies produce in the wider society. They exhibit contempt for teachers and distrust of parents, repress creative teaching, destroy challenging and imaginative programs of study, and treat students as mere inputs on an assembly line. Trust, imagination, creativity, and a respect for critical teaching and learning are thrown to the wind in the pursuit of profits and the proliferation of rigid, death-dealing accountability schemes. As John Tierney points out in his (2013) critique of corporate education reforms in the *Atlantic*, such approaches are not only oppressive – they are destined to fail. He writes:

> [P]olicies and practices that are based on distrust of teachers and disrespect for them will fail. Why? 'The fate of the reforms ultimately depends on those who are the object of distrust.' In other words, educational reforms need teachers' buy-in, trust, and cooperation to succeed; 'reforms' that kick teachers in the teeth are never going to succeed. Moreover, education policies crafted without teacher involvement are bound to be wrongheaded.

The situation is further worsened in that not only are public schools being defunded and public school teachers attacked as the new welfare queens, but social and economic policies are being enacted by Republicans and other right-wingers to ensure low-income and poor minority students fail in public schools. For instance, many Tea Party-elected governors in states such as Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Maine, along with right-wing politicians in Congress, are enacting cruel and savage policies (such as the defunding of the

food stamp program) that directly impact on the health and well-being of poor students in schools (see, for example, Rawls, 2013). Such policies shrink, if not destroy, the educational opportunities of poor youth by denying them the basic provisions they need to learn, and then using the consequent negative educational outcomes as one more illegitimate rationale for turning public schools over to private interests.

When the billionaires' club members, such as Bill Gates, and right-wing donors, such as Art Pope, are not directly implementing policies that defund schools, they are funding research projects which turn students into test subjects for a world that even George Orwell would have found hard to imagine.[6] For instance, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has provided a half a million dollar grant to Clemson University to do a pilot study in which students would wear galvanic skin response bracelets with wireless sensors that would track their physiological responses to various stimuli in schools. A spokesperson for the foundation argues in defense of this creepy obsession with measuring students' emotional responses by claiming that the biometric devices are a help to teachers, who can measure '"real-time" (reflective feedback), kind of like a pedometer' (Kroll, 2012).

It is not the vagueness of what this type of research is trying to achieve that is the most ludicrous and ethically offensive part of this study: it is the notion that reflective feedback can be reduced to measuring emotional impulses rather than produced through engaged dialogue and communication between actual teachers and students. How can bracelets measure why students are acting out if they are hungry, bored, fearful, sick or lack sleep because their parents might be homeless? How do such studies address larger structural issues, such as the 50 million people in the USA who go hungry every night, one-third of whom are children? And how do they manage to ignore their own connection to the rise of the surveillance state and the ongoing destruction of the civil rights of children and others? Research of this kind cannot speak to the rise of a Jim Crow society, in which the mass incarceration of poor minorities is having a horrible effect on children. As Michelle Alexander points out,

> These are children who have a parent or loved one, a relative, who has either spent time behind bars or who has acquired a criminal record and thus is part of the under-caste – the group of people who can be legally discriminated against for the rest of their lives. (Sokolower, 2013)

And the effect of such daily struggle is deadly. She writes:

> For these children, their life chances are greatly diminished. They are more likely to be raised in severe poverty; their parents are unlikely to be able to find work or housing and are often ineligible even for food stamps. For children, the era of mass incarceration has meant a tremendous amount of family separation, broken homes, poverty, and a far, far greater level of hopelessness as they see so many of their loved ones cycling in and out of prison. Children who have incarcerated parents are far more likely themselves to be incarcerated. (Sokolower, 2013)

In contrast to the socially and ethically numb forms of educational research endorsed by so-called reformers, a ground-breaking study has linked high-stakes testing to lower graduation rates and higher incarceration rates, indicating that such testing plays a significant role in expanding "the machinery of the school-to-prison pipeline," especially for low-income students and students of color (Noor, 2013b). Most critics of the billionaires' club ignore these issues. But a number of critics, such as New York University education professor Diane Ravitch, have raised significant questions about this type of research. Ravitch argues that Gates should "devote more time to improving the substance of what is being taught … and give up on all this measurement mania" (Simon, 2012). Such critiques are important, but they could go further. Such reform efforts are about more than collapsing teaching and learning into an instrumental reductionism that approximates training rather than education. As Ken Saltman (2012) points out, the new un-reformers are political counter-revolutionaries and not simply misguided educators.

Noam Chomsky gets it right in arguing that we are now in a general period of regression that extends far beyond impacting education alone (Falcone, 2013). This period of regression is marked by massive inequalities in wealth, income, and power that are fueling a poverty and ecological crisis, and undermining every basic public sphere central to both democracy and the culture and structures necessary for people to lead a life of dignity and political participation (Sirota, 2013). State violence has proliferated, just as the paramilitary forces and war zones necessary for it to be legitimated have proliferated. The burden of cruelty, repression, and corruption has broken the back of democracy, however weak, in the USA. America is no longer a democracy, nor is it simply a plutocracy. It has become an authoritarian state steeped in violence and run by the commanding financial, cultural, and political agents of corporate power (see, more recently, Pollack, 2012).

Corporate sovereignty has replaced political sovereignty, and the state has become largely an adjunct of banking institutions and financial service industries. Addicted to "the political demobilization of the citizenry" (Wolin, 2008, p. ix), the corporate elite is waging a political backlash against all institutions that serve democracy and foster a culture of questioning, dialogue, and dissent. The apostles of neoliberalism are concerned primarily with turning public schools over to casino capitalism in order to transform them into places where all but the privileged children of the 1% can be disciplined and cleansed of any critical impulses. Instead of learning to become independent thinkers, they acquire the debilitating habits of what might be called a moral and political deficit disorder, which renders them passive and obedient in the face of a society based on massive inequalities in power, wealth, and income. The current powerful corporate-based un-reform movement is wedded to developing modes of governance, ideologies, and pedagogies dedicated to constraining and stunting any possibility of developing among students those critical, creative, and collaborative forms of thought and action necessary to participate in a substantive democracy.

At the core of the new reforms is a commitment to a pedagogy of stupidity and repression that is geared toward memorization, conformity, passivity, and high-stakes testing. Rather than create autonomous, critical, and civically engaged

students, the un-reformers kill the imagination while depoliticizing all vestiges of teaching and learning. The only language they know is the discourse of profit and the disciplinary language of command. John Taylor Gatto (2002) points to some elements of this pedagogy of repression in his claim that schools teach confusion by ignoring historical and relational contexts. Every topic is taught in isolation and communicated by way of sterile pieces of information that have no shared meanings or context.

A pedagogy of repression defines students largely by their shortcomings rather than by their strengths, and in doing so convinces them that the only people who know anything are the experts – increasingly drawn from the ranks of the elite and current business leaders, who embody the new models of leadership under the current regime of neoliberalism. Great historical leaders who exhibited heightened social consciousness, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela, John Dewey, Paulo Freire and Mahatma Gandhi, are relegated to the dustbin of history. Students are taught only to care about themselves and to view any consideration for others as a liability, if not a pathology. Ethical concerns under these circumstances are represented as hindrances to be overcome. Narcissism, along with an unchecked notion of individualism, is the new normal.

Under a pedagogy of repression, students are conditioned to unlearn any respect for democracy, justice, and what it might mean to connect learning to social change. They are told that they have no rights and that rights are limited only to those who have power. This is a pedagogy that kills the spirit, promotes conformity and is more suited to an authoritarian society than a democracy. What is alarming about the new education un-reformers is not only how their policies have failed, but the degree to which such policies are now embraced by liberals and conservatives in both the Democratic and Republican Parties, despite their evident failure.[7] The Broader, Bolder Approach to Education study provides a list of such failures which is instructive. The outcomes of un-reform measures noted in the study include:

> Test scores increased less, and achievement gaps grew more, in 'reform' cities than in other urban districts … Reported successes for targeted students evaporated upon closer examination … Test-based accountability prompted churn that thinned the ranks of experienced teachers, but not necessarily bad teachers … School closures did not send students to better schools or save school districts money … Charter schools further disrupted the districts while providing mixed benefits, particularly for the highest-needs students … Emphasis on the widely touted market-oriented reforms drew attention and resources from initiatives with greater promise … The reforms missed a critical factor in achievement gaps: the influence of poverty on academic performance … Real, sustained change requires strategies that are realistic, patient, and multipronged. (Weiss & Long, 2013, pp. 3–6)

The slavish enthusiasm of the cheerleaders for market-driven educational policies becomes particularly untenable morally and politically in light of the increasing

number of scandals that have erupted around inflated test scores and other forms of cheating committed by advocates of high-stakes testing and charter schools (see, for instance, Noor, 2013a). David Kirp offers an important commentary on the seriousness and scope of the scandals, and the recent setbacks of market-oriented educational reform. He writes:

> In the latest Los Angeles school board election, a candidate who dared to question the overreliance on test results in evaluating teachers and the unseemly rush to approve charter schools won despite $4 million amassed to defeat him, including $1 million from New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and $250,000 from Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Former Atlanta superintendent Beverly Hall, feted for boosting her students' test scores at all costs, has been indicted in a massive cheating scandal. Michelle Rhee, the former Washington D.C. school chief who is the darling of the accountability crowd, faces accusations, based on a memo released by veteran PBS [Public Broadcasting Service] correspondent John Merrow, that she knew about, and did nothing to stop, widespread cheating. In a *Washington Post* op-ed, Bill Gates, who has spent hundreds of millions of dollars promoting high-stakes, test-driven teacher evaluation, did an about-face and urged a kinder, gentler approach that teachers could embrace. And parents in New York State staged a rebellion, telling their kids not to take a new and untested achievement exam. (Kirp, 2013)

While pedagogies of repression come in different forms and address different audiences in various contexts, they all share a commitment to defining pedagogy as a set of strategies and skills to use in order to teach prescribed subject matter. In this context, pedagogy becomes synonymous with teaching as a technique or the practice of a craft-like skill. There is no talk here of connecting pedagogy with the social and political task of resistance, empowerment, or democratization. Nor is there any attempt to show how knowledge, values, desire, and social relations are always implicated in power. Any viable notion of critical pedagogy must reject such definitions of teaching and their proliferating imitations, even when they are claimed as part of a radical discourse or project. In opposition to the instrumentalized reduction of pedagogy to a mere method that has no language for relating the self to public life, social responsibility, or the demands of citizenship, critical pedagogy works to illuminate the relationships among knowledge, authority, and power.[8] For instance, it raises questions regarding who has control over the conditions for producing knowledge, such as: Are the curricula being promoted by teachers, textbook companies, corporate interests, or other forces?

Central to any viable notion of what makes a pedagogy critical is, in part, the recognition that pedagogy is always a deliberate attempt on the part of educators to influence how and what forms of knowledge and subjectivities are produced within particular sets of social relations. In this case, critical pedagogy draws attention to the ways in which knowledge, power, desire, and experience are produced under specific conditions of learning, and in doing so rejects the notion that teaching is just a method or is removed from matters of values, norms, and

power – or, for that matter, the struggle over agency itself and the future it suggests for young people. Rather than asserting its own influence in order to wield authority over passive subjects, critical pedagogy is situated within a project that views education as central to creating students who are socially responsible and civically engaged citizens. This kind of pedagogy reinforces the notion that public schools are democratic public spheres, education is the foundation for any working democracy, and teachers are the most responsible agents for fostering that education.

This approach to critical pedagogy does not reduce educational practice to the mastery of methodologies. It stresses, instead, the importance of understanding what actually happens in classrooms and other educational settings by raising questions such as: What is the relationship between learning and social change? What knowledge is of most worth? What does it mean to know something? And in what direction should one desire? Yet the principles and goals of critical pedagogy encompass more. Pedagogy is simultaneously about the knowledge and practices teachers and students might engage in together, and the values, social relations, and visions legitimated by such knowledge and practices. Such a pedagogy listens to students, gives them a voice and role in their own learning, and recognizes that teachers not only educate students, but also learn from them.

In addition, pedagogy is conceived as a moral and political practice that is always implicated in power relations because it offers particular versions and visions of civic life, community, the future, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment. Pedagogy provides a discourse for agency, values, social relations, and a sense of the future. It legitimates particular ways of knowing, being in the world and relating to others. As Roger Simon observed:

> [It also] represents a version of our own dreams for ourselves, our children, and our communities. But such dreams are never neutral; they are always someone's dreams and to the degree that they are implicated in organizing the future for others they always have a moral and political dimension. (1987, p. 372)

It is in this respect that any discussion of pedagogy must begin with a discussion of educational practice as a particular way in which a sense of identity, place, worth, and, above all, value is informed by practices which organize knowledge and meaning.

Central to my argument is the assumption that politics is not only about power, but also "has to do with political judgements and value choices" (Castoriadis, 1996, p. 8), indicating that questions of civic education and critical pedagogy (learning how to become a skilled citizen) are central to the struggle over political agency and democracy. Critical pedagogy rejects the notion of students as passive containers who simply imbibe dead knowledge. Instead, it embraces forms of teaching that offer students the challenge to transform knowledge, rather than simply 'processing received knowledges' (Mohanty, 1989–90, p. 192). Under such circumstances, critical pedagogy becomes directive and intervenes on the side of producing a substantive democratic society. This is what makes

critical pedagogy different from training. And it is precisely the failure to connect learning to its democratic functions and goals that provides rationales for pedagogical approaches that strip what it means to be educated from its critical and democratic possibilities (Gutman, 1999).

Critical pedagogy becomes dangerous in the current historical moment because it emphasizes critical reflection, bridging the gap between learning and everyday life, understanding the connection between power and difficult knowledge, and extending democratic rights and identities by using the resources of history. Rather than viewing teaching as a technical practice, pedagogy in the broadest critical sense is premised on the assumption that learning is not about memorizing dead knowledge and skills associated with learning for the test, but engaging in a more expansive struggle for individual rights and social justice. The fundamental challenge facing educators within the current age of neoliberalism, militarism, and religious fundamentalism is to provide the conditions for students to address how knowledge is related to the power of both self-definition and social agency. In part, this suggests providing students with the skills, ideas, values, and authority necessary for them to nourish a substantive democracy, recognize anti-democratic forms of power, and fight deeply rooted injustices in a society and world founded on systemic economic, racial, and gendered inequalities.

Any viable notion of critical pedagogy must be understood as central to politics itself and, rather than disconnect public education from larger social, economic, and political issues, it must be connected to such forces as part of a wider crisis of both education and democracy. At the very least, education must be viewed as part of an emancipatory project that rejects the privatization and corporatization of public schools, and the tax and finance forces that support iniquitous school systems. For pedagogy to matter, it must support a culture and the relations of power that provide teachers with a sense of autonomy and control over the conditions of their labor. Teachers must be viewed as public intellectuals and a valuable social resource, and the conditions of their labor and autonomy must be protected. In this instance, the fight to preserve labor unions must be viewed as central to preserving the rights and working conditions necessary for public school teachers to teach with dignity under conditions that respect rather than degrade them.

Critical pedagogy must reject teaching being subordinated to the dictates of standardization, "measurement mania," and high-stakes testing. The latter are part of a pedagogy of repression and conformity, and have nothing to do with an education for empowerment. Central to the call for a critical pedagogy and the formative and institutional culture that makes it possible is the need to reconfigure government spending and to call for less spending on death and war, and more funding for education and the social programs that make it possible as a foundation for a democratic society. Schools are about more than measurable utility, the logic of instrumentality, abject testing, and mind-numbing training. In fact, the latter have little to do with critical education and pedagogy, and must be rejected as part of an austerity and neoliberal project that is deeply anti-intellectual, authoritarian, and anti-democratic.

As a moral and political project, pedagogy is crucial for creating the agents necessary to live in, govern, and struggle for a radical democracy. Moreover, it is

important to recognize not only how education and pedagogy are connected to and implicated in the production of specific agents and a particular view of the present and future, but also how knowledge, values, desires, and social relations are always implicated in power. Power and ideology permeate all aspects of education and become a valuable resource when critically engaged around issues that problematize the relationship between authority and freedom, ethics and knowledge, and language and experience, reading texts differently, and exploring the dynamics of cultural power. Critical pedagogy addresses power as a relationship in which conditions are produced that allow students to engage in a culture of questioning, to raise and address urgent, disturbing questions about the society in which they live, and to define in part the questions that can be asked and the disciplinary borders that can be crossed.

Education as a democratic project is utopian in its goal of expanding and deepening the ideological and material conditions that make a democracy possible. Teachers need to be able to work together, collaborate, work with the community and engage in research that informs their teaching. In this instance, critical pedagogy refuses the atomizing structure of teaching that informs traditional and market-driven notions of pedagogy. Moreover, critical pedagogy should provide students with the knowledge, modes of literacy, skills, critique, social responsibility, and civic courage needed to enable them to be engaged critical citizens who are willing to fight for a sustainable and just society.

Critical pedagogy is a crucial antidote to the neoliberal attack on public education, but it must be accompanied and informed by radical political and social movements that are willing to make educational reform central to democratic change (Aronowitz, 2010). The struggle over public education is inextricably connected to a struggle against poverty, racism, violence, war, bloated defense budgets, a permanent warfare state, state-sanctioned assassinations, torture, inequality, and a range of other injustices that reveal a shocking glimpse of what America has become and why it can no longer recognize itself through the moral and political visions and promises of a substantive democracy. Such a struggle necessitates both a change in consciousness and the building of social movements that are broad-based and global in their reach.

The struggle to reclaim public education as a democratic public sphere needs to challenge the regressive pedagogies, gated communities, zones of racial segregation, and massive inequality in wealth and income that encourage the production of the cultural, economic and political war zones which now characterize much of contemporary America. Yet, these sites of terminal exclusion demand more than making visible and interrogating critically the spectacle of cruelty and violence egregiously used by the apostles of neoliberalism to energize the decadent, yet powerful, cultural apparatuses of casino capitalism. Their obscene presence in the body politic calls for a fresh understanding of politics, a new language of critique and possibility, and a sustained critical encounter with new forms of pedagogy, modes of moral witnessing and collective action.

Neoliberalism is a disimagination machine that remakes social identity by turning civic subjects into consuming and marketable subjects. As a public pedagogy, it works aggressively in multiple sites – extending from the new screen culture and mainstream media to the schools – to produce desires,

needs, and values as a form of second nature, internalized as a habit and common sense. As Doreen Massey (2013) points out: "It is an internalisation of 'the system' that can potentially corrode our ability to imagine that things could be otherwise." This is cultural politics with a vengeance, and necessitates a new understanding of culture as an educational force and pedagogy as central to any viable notion of politics. What I am suggesting is that the educative nature of politics calls for new modes of social responsibility, civic engagement, and collective struggle. It also calls for the translation of political outrage into civic and moral courage.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. (1967) insisted: "We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for victims of our nation and for those it calls enemy, for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers." We can update King's speech to encompass the marginalized, voiceless, and victims of our nation who are now represented by the low-income and poor minority youth, who inhabit both the public schools and, increasingly, the prisons. These are the throwaway youth of an authoritarian America who have zero jobs, hopes, and futures. They are the excess populations of the new punishing state who disturbingly remind the corporate and financial elite of the need for social provisions, the viability of the public good, and those principles of economic life in need of substantial rethinking.

Under neoliberalism, it has become more difficult to fulfill the claims of the social contract, public good, and the social state, which have been pushed to the margins of society – viewed as both an encumbrance and pathology. And yet such a challenge must be engaged and overcome in the drive to reform public education and prevent it from becoming another "dead zone of the imagination." The struggle over public education is the most important struggle of the twenty-first century. It is one of the few public spheres left where questions can be asked, pedagogies developed, modes of agency constructed and desires mobilized. It is one of the most valuable sites in which formative cultures can be developed that nourish critical thinking, dissent, civic literacy, and social movements capable of struggling against those anti-democratic forces that are ushering in dark, savage and dire times. We are seeing glimpses of such struggles as brave students from Parkland, Florida, and equally courageous teachers throughout the United States lead mass movements of demonstrations, walkouts, and strikes. We can only hope that such movements offer up not merely a new understanding of the relationship among pedagogy, politics, and democracy, but also one that infuses both the imagination and hope for a more just and democratic world.

Notes

1 I have taken this term from Graeber (2012).
2 I address this issue in great detail in Giroux (2010).
3 See also the June 2013 special issue of *Monthly Review*, edited by Michael Yates, entitled "Public School Teachers Fighting Back."
4 For an excellent critique of this type of corporate educational un-reform, see Saltman (2013).

5 These themes are more fully developed in Alexander (2012).

6 For two examples of the appropriation of culture by corporate power and its donors and foundations, see Stewart (2013) and Nichols and McChesney (2013).

7 On the predatory nature of such reforms, see Giroux (2012) and Gecan (2013). On the failure of such reforms, see the work of Kenneth Saltman, Diane Ravitch, Henry A. Giroux, Jonathan Kozol, Shirley Steinberg, bell hooks and others.

8 For examples of this tradition, see Nikolakaki (2012) and Giroux (2011).

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