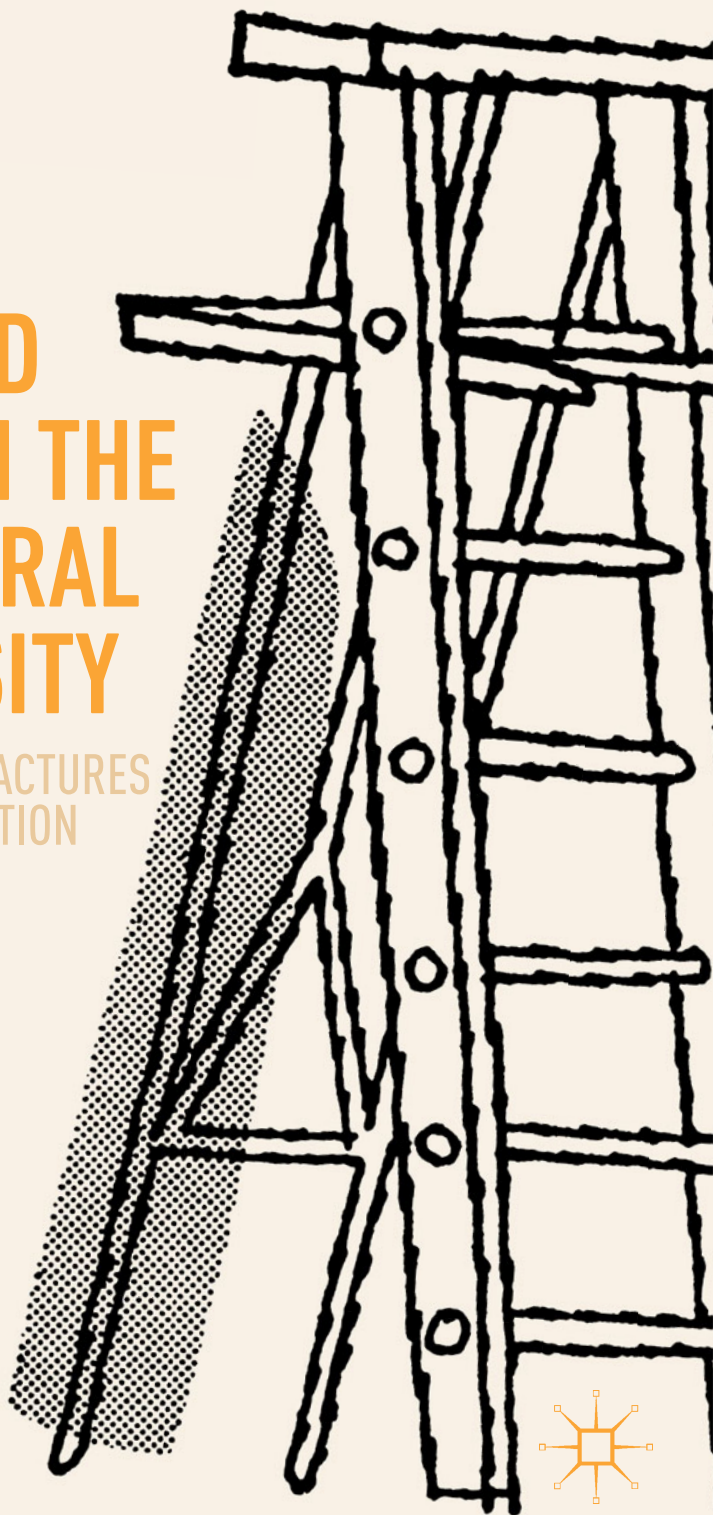


TIME AND SPACE IN THE NEOLIBERAL UNIVERSITY

FUTURES AND FRACTURES
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

*Edited by
Maddie Breeze,
Yvette Taylor and
Cristina Costa*



Time and Space in the Neoliberal University

“The editors have brought together a rich and insightful collection which add specificity and nuance to our understanding of neoliberalism - and resistance to it - in contemporary academia.”

—Professor Rosalind Gill, *City, University of London, UK*

Maddie Breeze · Yvette Taylor ·
Cristina Costa
Editors

Time and Space in the Neoliberal University

Futures and Fractures in Higher
Education

palgrave
macmillan

Editors

Maddie Breeze
School of Education
University of Strathclyde
Glasgow, UK

Yvette Taylor
School of Education
University of Strathclyde
Glasgow, UK

Cristina Costa
Department of Education and Childhood
University of the West of England
Bristol, UK

ISBN 978-3-030-15245-1 ISBN 978-3-030-15246-8 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2019934714

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2019

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover image: © CSA Images/Getty

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Foreword I

This is a refreshing contribution, full of straightforward discussions about the possibilities and tensions facing academics, particularly academics who have less power such as early career academics or as a result of a combination of characteristics such as gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, disability and social class.

The contributors to this book are challenging the orthodoxies that are embedded in the Academy. If you read the chapters, as I have had the privilege to, you will see that the chapters make liquid again the spaces that tradition, disciplinary parochialism, pedagogical stasis, colonisation have solidified. This book loosens academic straightjackets and helps us to rethink. This is very important in the disjointed and challenging times we find ourselves in whether that be globally or in the Academy.

The authors draw from the formal but also hidden curriculum of the academy (e.g. ethos, networking) to require us, the reader to acknowledge our positionality not just as educators but as members of society.

It asks us to acknowledge that as academics we are in positions of power and that we can use that to enable and transform or indeed to maintain spaces of privilege, inequity and misrecognition.

In reading this book, to maximize impact, critical self-reflection is key.

Edinburgh, UK

Professor Rowena Arshad OBE
Chair in Multicultural and Anti-Racist Education
Head of Moray House School of Education
Co-Director of the Centre for Education
for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES)

Foreword II

Academia has a geography of its own. This geography can be traced in those who are visible and where they are placed within the academy; it is equally evident in who is not there, who leaves, who is marginalised, and who has less power or opportunity to speak. This geography is, of course, similar to the geography of the wider world and reflects society's inequalities, hierarchies, and injustices. Yet, academia is a place of knowledge production; a place where ideas about people and the world are made. The borders, boundaries, and blockages of academia are also constituent of what comes to be known about the world, whose world views are accepted, and whose knowledge is taken to be credible (Collins 1991: 203; Gutierrez y Muhs et al. 2012).

The specificity of this geography is often ignored; questions about being 'inside' or 'outside' academia abound. 'Becoming an academic' and subsequently 'being an academic' are key to the identity-production process which upholds, in part, the wider geography of being inside or outside the academy (Thwaites and Pressland 2017). The development of an arguably prestigious (academic) identity takes place throughout higher education processes, as students are slowly inducted into

the ‘hallowed halls’ of universities, supposedly becoming more valid ‘members’ with every postgraduate certificate, and then later, publication acquired. The path to ultimate academic success (from a Western perspective), seemingly clear to all: Ph.D., Research Fellow, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor, with publications mounting in length, scope and importance, and the grant capture in amount and significance of funder, as the pay and status grades increase (Breeze and Taylor 2018).

However, this journey is by no means straightforward, linear, or accessible for all budding academics in the uncertain, neoliberal times in which we live. In fact, in our recent publication (Thwaites and Pressland 2017), early career academics from across the globe expressed their fears about their futures in higher education, in spite of their desire to ‘become academics’. A number of contributors questioned seriously the possibility of progressing in academia, due to precarious contracts, the requirement to be hyper-mobile, challenging childcare arrangements, high workloads, unfair treatment during illness, and gender discrimination. These contributors asked themselves daily questions in relation to their identity, location, and whether their vocation was ultimately worth it. The fear of ‘what could I do professionally if I did not work in academia’ was felt sharply by many and perhaps reflects the high walls which surround academia, at once to restrict access, protect insiders, and create a sense that leaving is not an option.

By contrast there can be a sense externally that academia is a progressive, inclusive, and open space, where ideas are shared in a context of horizontal power.¹ Unfortunately this is rarely the case, and, as with any organisation, academia has myriad power hierarchies. Despite sometimes desperate attempts by universities to showcase their ‘progressive’ gender/race/class/religion/sexuality campaigns and demographic data, the reality of minority students and academics is exposed by or

¹Alongside a discourse that academia creates low-level and poorly crafted work, with an ideological slant, intended to indoctrinate students and others; the recent Sokal Squared hoax was intended to ‘expose’ this kind of work—focusing in gender and ethnic studies—and therefore shows this is both an internal as well as an external narrative. For an overview of this hoax see: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Sokal-Squared-Is-Huge/244714>.

via national newspapers in the UK (for example, Bates 2015; Bhopal 2017) or they are used as token representatives, which can be equally painful.² These power hierarchies ensure that certain knowledges are more accepted than others, certain voices more acceptable, and indeed certain bodies. And alongside the people/workers, the subjects they study are also in a hierarchy with the perennial debate about the difference in value (for the individual, the university and wider society) of hard versus social sciences continuing to reinforce this. This hierarchy has a wider-reaching impact on research funding priorities and subsequent successful applications. Moreover, women face an uphill battle not experienced as regularly by men in the academy, to be seen as credible knowledge producers and to be respected in their teaching practice (Thwaites and Pressland 2017).

It is without doubt that universities have historically been male-dominated. The higher proportion of female HE students in the UK perhaps obscures this idea, but nonetheless a lingering feeling of masculine power and male dominance remains in many a university council chamber or senior management meeting. This inequality is exacerbated when considering the whiteness of the university, the middle and upper-class dominance, and the difficulties of access for those who break this mould. As Ahmed (2007: 153) argues, “Doing things” depends not so much on intrinsic capacity, or even upon dispositions or habits, but on the ways in which the world is available as a space for action, a space where things “have a certain place” or are “in place”. Certain bodies seem more ‘in place’; certain spaces more ‘comfortable’ for certain contours (Taylor 2016). The constructed nature of this is masked by power and comes to be normalised.

In Ranciere’s argument (1991), education is built upon inequality, and it is only through facing this, minimising it, and understanding

²Or see the treatment of Lola Olufemi by a national newspaper, which misrepresented a campaign to decolonize the curriculum at Cambridge: https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/telegraph-lola-olufemi_uk_59f1fe0fe4b077d8dfc7eaf9?guccounter=1&guce_referrer_us=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2x1LmNvbS8&guce_referrer_cs=1x4oPKOjpMQwQSxTywn3og.

that everyone has something to contribute and teach that we can all become emancipated. In a time, in the UK at least, where ‘experts’ are derided and professional skills undermined,³ this argument has the potential to be co-opted for a different agenda than the one initially intended. However, attending to the original, radical ideas of Ranciere, reminds us that the education system has gatekeepers, and that it can exclude and devalue. This collection highlights this issue within the contemporary UK and Australian university, and calls us to move beyond this and seek a more equal and just higher education.

Inequalities of gender, ethnicity, class, age, place/accent, sexuality, dis/ability, job role, insecure versus secure staff (and so on) continue. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) found that in 2015/16 there were 158,405 white academic staff and just 3,205 black academic staff; women drop steeply in numbers the higher up the academic career ladder one goes (Savigny 2014). Indeed, in the United Kingdom women account for 45% of academics at universities; however, they occupy only 20% of professorships (HESA 2015). There are only 99 female professors of colour in the UK on permanent contracts (Solanke 2017). At the highest rank in universities, only 14% of vice-chancellors are women (HESA 2015). This within a changing academic context, in which neoliberal values have become the norm in higher education and the political austerity agenda has decreased spending across the public sector.

We write from the UK, where divides between the ‘elite’, ‘ancient’, and ‘selective’ universities versus the ‘modern’, ‘post-1992’, ‘teaching-focused’ universities continue. The system divides up spaces, staff, and students across numerous lines. In the UK the higher education system varies across the four different nations, but nevertheless there are acute and pressing problems across the board. Despite this, the UK Higher Education system has arguably been seen historically and contemporarily as globally exemplary; the legacies of Oxford and Cambridge universities, the journals and publishing houses based in the UK, the flow

³See for example the notorious comment from UK politician Michael Gove to Sky News that Britain ‘has had enough of experts’ in the lead-up to the Brexit Referendum in 2016.

of publications which are produced at UK HEIs and the interest from international students and academics alike wishing to study and work in these institutions suggest a certain international reputation of ‘excellence’. These aspects give a certain privilege to those who study and work in the system. However, this situation is not natural or spontaneous, but reflects the global distribution of resource and power that pushes English as the dominant international language of academic knowledge and publishing (Pereira 2017), and connects with and sustains the flow of people to jobs and role, compounding the drive to be ‘mobile’ as part of being ‘excellent’ as an academic. Furthermore as UK campuses expand to other countries, having ‘satellite campuses’ situated around the world, there is a neo-colonialism built into this that should be of concern. There is also increasing scrutiny within the UK and UK universities—sometimes in the form of identity checks on students and staff—as cultures and structures of border control are engendered by a shift to the political right. Tight immigration controls, high student fees and cultural boundaries are limiting factors for access into the UK and other Western academic institutions.

Also, for those in academia—staff and students—there is unequal access to the privilege associated with it, as this collection emphasises. For those who do not fit the comfortable contours and feel the landscape of academia as uncomfortable, their ‘difference’ is emphasised. This has been found in research on class and sexuality (Falconer and Taylor 2017), along with gender and ethnicity (Ahmed 2007). It can increase stress and likelihood of dropout (Loveday 2018). The changes in the funding landscape and the rise in fees for many parts of the UK are seeing changes in access and the retrenchment of inequality. With implications for the future, and future-orientated governance and subjectivities, of academia.

Given these uncertainties, precarities and questions about the future, it is crucial that we take stock of where biases can be interrupted, where boundaries might be identified, and where blockages are being resisted. Mahony and Weiner (2017) write about creative strategies employed by senior management, senior academics, lecturers and union representatives in the face of institutional pressures caused by neoliberal styles of

management at universities. In our collection about early career feminist academics' experiences in HE, contributors wrote of a plethora of innovative methodologies employed in order to overcome the (sometimes) gloomy, depressing and demoralising daily realities of working in HE. Creative methods such as collaging thoughts and experiences are discussed by Jauhola and Saarma and by Tarrant and Cooper (Jauhola and Saarma 2017; Tarrant and Cooper 2017) who employed collaboration and a dialogic form of writing to explore methods of resistance to daily struggles as ECR. The Res-Sisters, a collective of nine authors from across UK HEIs, draw on examples of in/exclusion in academia and subsequently wrote a 'Manifesta' which sets out ways to live within the system while resisting it at the same time (The Res-Sisters 2017). These are some contemporary examples of how certain groups are interrupting norms and attempting to shake up the status quo with boundary-shifting actions and behaviours. However, this is only the beginning and we need to advance this conversation in order to create a broader understanding of how the geography of academia, locally and globally, can be disrupted. This disruption might just leave space to design a new future for higher education.

When we conceptualised our *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic* collection (Thwaites and Pressland 2017), we envisaged a truly global volume. The reality of this aim was much harder to achieve and ultimately the contributions, while diverse, do not represent all. We are cognisant that this is problematic and that we occupy a particularly privileged position. We also recognise the need to address those voices that are not being heard and 'unblock' the perceived/real boundaries which privilege a certain viewpoint and position of knowledge production. This book is therefore a highly important and welcome collection. It adds to a growing and important conversation about the state of academia in the contemporary moment. It provides significant reflections on the inequalities of UK and Australian academia, in the context of global fractures, and provokes questions around structural, political shifts, while also reflecting on what possibilities there are for academics to make change together. The boundaries, borders, and blockages of academia are clear, but with hope for changed and different futures. Its scope is wide,

attempting to look at as many areas of concern as possible, and to shine a light on the state of higher education at a critical moment.

The on-going conversations advanced in our publication (Thwaites and Pressland 2017), are extended, deepened and to an extent reinforced in this new collection. We have been invited to take part in discussions on the past and present status of academia and of those academics inside, outside, and on the margins. In this collection, the conversation develops further around future-orientated temporalities and truly questions what lies ahead for academia and (higher) education more broadly. Several important themes emerge from this book, and we wanted to pull out a few of these for discussion here. Race and ethnicity as important concerns about who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out’ of academia; chapters in the book discuss race in the Scottish literature curriculum (Mahn, this volume) and experiences of the whiteness of the academy (Dear, this volume). The experience of being a minority in a white dominated academy is characterised strongly, as structural inequalities and institutional racism emerge in personal experience; the barriers of academia creating anger, division, and violence to self and others. Alongside discussions of other structural inequalities, the book examines in critical and careful ways the experience of exclusion and—and its widest sense—the violence of this on those who are marginalised within academia.

This violence can, in part be enacted through division across career stages too (Breeze and Taylor 2018): separating people into groups of ‘us versus them’ in terms of power, opportunity, security, demands, entitlements, and expectations (from the university and colleagues at other career stages). The stages of the academic career—which have become more encoded and formalised through recent discussion of them, alongside job and funding application eligibility criteria which has implications for how resources are distributed, the recognition that can be awarded to individuals, levels of reward and prestige—do mean that individuals are presented with particular opportunities and challenges. We have been part of this discussion ourselves and maintain that it is important to look at the difficulties that emerge at different points in the career and how wider social, political, and economic impacts shape the academic career (Thwaites and Pressland 2017). However, as Breeze

and Taylor (this volume) point out, in so doing we can minimise the connections between career stages and the need for solidarity. There is a lot of connection between academics at all stages of their career and it is important this is recognised, rather than setting ourselves up as career stage ‘enemies’. This is especially significant for those whose voices are marginalised within the university. Standard means of ‘working together’ are challenged by this volume, for example by critically examining collegiality (Lipton, this volume), but by making space for discussion of career stages and ways of working together this collection asks the reader to look again at how they themselves are placed within academia, and what boundaries and borders they may be creating for themselves and others that could be dismantled.

By creating spaces for feminist collegiality, without fear of consequence, it might be argued that those academics have created safe spaces, without labelling them as such. Waugh (this volume) discusses safe spaces in relation to student populations. The alarming resistance to safe spaces by prominent politicians and university leaders, as described by Waugh (this volume) outlines the precarity which students face in the current university climate. While most of this collection focuses on academic staff, it is concerning that on both sides of the classroom, vulnerabilities are being exploited by the powerful; rather than a protectionist, welfare-led approach, individual resilience and ‘grit’ are promoted. The resistance to safe spaces seems to be fueled in part by a fear of censorship, and yet the market-driven, neoliberal approach to free speech in universities have led to scenarios for both staff and students which are harmful to individuals’ learning, self-confidence and careers (as seen in Hook, this volume). Here the neoliberal model of subjectivity, which promotes individuals to seek bespoke solutions to structural problems, results in a lack of collective regard for student/staff welfare.

While this collection provokes the individual academic to look in the mirror and beyond their individual career stage in order to enhance collegiality, it also underlines the perennial assumption that the ‘softer skills’ namely pastoral, collegial, care, and emotional labour—the ones which bridge differences and break down barriers—are the work of women. While Lipton (this volume) explores strategies which feminist

academics have employed to create alternative intellectual spaces for collaboration and collegiality, she also highlights a wider problematic which is that collegiality ultimately advances the neoliberal agenda; by doing the ‘caring’, organising the staff social events, sitting on welfare committees, providing pastoral care, and generally being responsible for the often unseen emotional labour that is the glue of universities, women are *feeding the machine*. While feminist academics are to be lauded for finding collective feminist space for themselves, and their colleagues, they must also be cognisant of complying with the wider gendered roles and hierarchies which make universities prosper, at the expense of excluded groups. Here is further evidence that change is needed, and quickly.

Feminism, as a social movement, risks itself being complicit rather than resisting the damaging draw of the traditional university. Scandrett and Ballantyne’s chapter (this volume) explores the danger which social movements face as elements become incorporated and entangled in university system, reappropriated, and therefore co-opted. This is the ‘dangerous liaison with neoliberalism’ which Fraser (2008: 14) warns of. This is truly walking on a knife edge; much feminist work has its foundations in the informal education of consciousness raising, however there is an element of ‘safety’ for social movements at universities, not least due to the valuable knowledge production which authenticates and brings social capital to the message. As such, feminism and other social movements alike, must learn to exist in the system whilst engaging in a meaningful critique of that same system.

In looking at academia, we are looking at ourselves. This collection calls academics to face the power hierarchies that organise academia, the painful exclusions and injustices we may feel, as well as the exclusions and injustices we may be a part of maintaining. This is hard work, but work that is critical.

Edinburgh, UK

Dr. Rachel Thwaites
Senior Researcher, Scottish Government

York, UK

Dr. Amy Pressland
Head of Learning and Development
at DB Cargo (UK) Limited

References

- Ahmed, S. (2007). A Phenomenology of Whiteness. *Feminist Theory*, 8(2), 149–168.
- Bates, L. (2015). Female Academics Face Huge Sexist Bias—No Wonder There Are So Few of Them. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/womens-blog/2015/feb/13/female-academics-huge-sexist-bias-students>. Accessed 22 Nov 2017.
- Bhopal, K. (2017). A Nearly All-White Diversity Panel? When Will Universities Start Taking Race Seriously. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2017/may/31/a-clash-of-personalities-why-universities-mustnt-ignore-race>. Accessed 22 Nov 2017.
- Breeze, M., & Taylor, Y. (2018). Feminist Collaborations in Higher Education: Stretched Across Career Stages. *Gender and Education*. 10.1080/09540253.2018.1471197.
- Brown, Z. (Ed.) (2016). *Inclusive Education: Perspectives on Pedagogy, Policy and Practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Collins, P. H. (1991). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. London: Routledge.
- Falconer, E., & Taylor, Y. (2017). Negotiating Queer and Religious Identities in Higher Education: Queering ‘Progression’ in the ‘University Experience’. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38(6), 782–797.
- Fraser, N. (2008). Mapping the Feminist Imagination: From Redistribution to Recognition to Representation. In N. Fraser, *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (pp. 100–115). Cambridge: Polity.
- Gutierrez y Muhs, G., Flores Niemann, Y., Gonzalez, C., & Harris, A. (Eds.). (2012). *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia*. Colorado: Utah State University Press.
- Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). (2015). Academic Staff. Accessible at <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/staff>. Accessed 30 Nov 2017.
- Jauhola, M., & Saarma, S. (2017). Reflecting Realities and Creating Utopias: Early Career Feminists (Un)Doing International Relations in Finland. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 141–165). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Loveday, V. (2018). Luck, Chance, and Happenstance? Perceptions of Success and Failure Amongst Fixed-Term Academic Staff in UK Higher Education. *British Journal of Sociology*, 69(3), 758–775.
- Mahony, P., & Weiner, G. (2017 online). Neo-Liberalism and the State of Higher Education in the UK. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 1–13.
- Pereira, M. (2017). *Power, Knowledge and Feminist Scholarship: An Ethnography of Academia*. London: Routledge.
- Ranciere, J. (1991). *The Ignorant Schoomaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Savigny, H. (2014). Women, Know Your Limits: Cultural Sexism in Academia. *Gender and Education*, 26(7), 794–809.
- Solanke, I. (2017). *Black Female Professors in the UK*. Runnymede Trust Report. Available <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/BlackFemaleProfessorsMarch2017.pdf>. Accessed 21 Nov 2018.
- Stanley, L. (Ed.). (2013). *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory, and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology*. London: Routledge.
- Tarrant, A., & Cooper, E. (2017). Exposing the Hidden Injuries of Feminist Early Career Researchers: An Experiential Think Piece About Maintaining Feminist Identities. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 131–139). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Taylor, Y. (2016). *Fitting Into Place? Class and Gender Geographies and Temporalities*. London: Routledge.
- The Res-Sisters (2017). ‘I’m an Early Career Feminist Academic: Get Me Out of Here?’ Encountering and Resisting the Neoliberal Academy. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 267–284). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Thwaites, R., & Pressland, A. (Eds.). (2017). *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Acknowledgements

With thanks to all participants at the 2017 Educational Futures and Fractures conference, University of Strathclyde. Thank you to all the authors for their work, and to the publishing team at Palgrave.

Contents

Introduction: Time and Space in the Neoliberal University	1
<i>Maddie Breeze, Yvette Taylor and Cristina Costa</i>	
Closed Doors: Academic Collegiality, Isolation, Competition and Resistance in the Contemporary Australian University	15
<i>Briony Lipton</i>	
Feminist Pedagogy: Fractures of Recognition in Higher Education	43
<i>Genine Hook</i>	
(Dis)Assembling the Neoliberal Academic Subject: When PhD Students Construct Feminist Spaces	65
<i>Elizabeth Ablett, Heather Griffiths and Kate Mahoney</i>	
The Imperial/Neoliberal University: What Does It Mean to Be Included?	93
<i>Lou Dear</i>	

Black Scottish Writing and the Fiction of Diversity <i>Churnjeet Mahn</i>	119
In Defence of Safe Spaces: Subaltern Counterpublics and Vulnerable Politics in the Neoliberal University <i>Chris Waugh</i>	143
Public Sociology and Social Movements: Incorporation or a War of Position? <i>Eurig Scandrett and Elaine Ballantyne</i>	169
Discourses of Dissonance: Enabling Sites of Praxis and Practice Amongst Arts and Design Doctoral Study <i>Jacqueline Taylor</i>	191
An Embodied Approach in a Cognitive Discipline <i>Jennifer Leigh</i>	221
Aesthetic Education and the Phenomenology of Learning <i>Jonathan Owen Clark and Louise H. Jackson</i>	249
Response-Ability: Re-E-Valuing Shameful Measuring Processes Within the Australian Academy <i>Melissa Joy Wolfe and Eve Mayes</i>	277
Index	299

Notes on Contributors

Elizabeth Ablett is an ESRC funded Sociology Ph.D. student at Warwick University. Her ethnographic research examines shifting political identities, practices and cultures in English local government during the EU referendum. Her ethnography investigates how (gendered, classed and racialised) power among representatives is safeguarded and challenged, focussing on what is being done to tackle sexual harassment and abuse in politics. Elizabeth teaches on Sociology and Gender modules and is an active member of the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender at Warwick. She is a former Visiting Researcher in the Center for Feminist Social Sciences at Örebro University, Sweden.

Elaine Ballantyne is a Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy, Queen Margaret University. A qualified Occupational Therapist, she has worked as a clinician and manager in a variety of contexts including mental health, social work and acute medicine. Elaine co-instigated Britain's first programme in Mad studies.

Dr. Maddie Breeze is a sociologist and chancellor's fellow in the School of Education, University of Strathclyde. Her 2015 book *Seriousness in Women's Roller Derby* won the BSA Philip Abrams

Memorial Prize and she has published research on imposter syndrome as a public feeling in HE and young people's political participation.

Prof. Jonathan Owen Clark is an artist and academic, and currently Head of Research and Professor of Aesthetics and Arts Practice at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. He has previously held lecturing positions at the University of Newcastle and Brunel University, and has research interests in critical theory, phenomenology and aesthetics.

Dr. Cristina Costa is Associate Professor Digital Education and Society in the Department of Education and Childhood, University of the West of England. She has published on digital scholarship practices, digital literacies and cultures, and curriculum innovation.

Dr. Lou Dear is Research and Development Officer at the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights; Tutor and Research Assistant at the University of Glasgow. Lou has a Ph.D. in Comparative and English Literature from the University of Glasgow. Research interests include: colonial history; post-anti and decolonial movements, theory and literature; queer/feminist movements, theory, literature and performance; epistemology, pedagogy and political economy of education; no borders; queer science fiction. Lou has published with Palgrave Macmillan, Routledge, the Open Library of the Humanities, and the *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*.

Heather Griffiths is an ESRC funded sociology Ph.D. student at the University of Warwick. Her qualitative doctoral research explores how gender is embedded in flexible working practices within the asset finance sector and how this affects the way employees negotiate their work-life balance. The study was inspired by her ten-year career in finance before entering Higher Education as a mature undergraduate in 2011. During her time as a doctoral student Heather has presented at several domestic and international conferences, taught on a variety of undergraduate modules and been an active member of the Centre for Women and Gender at Warwick.

Dr. Genine Hook studied Sociology and Education (Secondary) and conferred her Ph.D. from the Faculty of Education at Monash University in May 2015. Her research explored the experiences of sole parents at universities in Australia and her thesis was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Commendation for Thesis Excellence in 2015. Her first book was published by Palgrave Macmillan (UK) in July 2016 titled; *Sole Parent Students and Higher Education: Gender, Policy and Widening Participation*. Dr. Hook's lectures in Sociology at The University of the Sunshine Coast with a research focus on gender, higher education, family-based violence, familial norms, feminist pedagogy and social policy.

Prof. Louise H. Jackson is Head of Learning Enhancement and Professor of Critical Pedagogy and Arts Education at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and holds a National Teaching Fellowship. Her areas of interest in research include how widening participation enacts and promotes notions of neoliberalism.

Dr. Jennifer Leigh is a lecturer in the University of Kent's Centre for the Study of Higher Education. Her research interests include embodiment, reflective practice, reflexivity and phenomenological and creative research methods and how these relate to academic practice and academic identity as well as aspects of research, teaching and learning in higher education. Her edited book *Conversations on Embodiment Across Higher Education: Teaching, Research and Practice* which brings together 14 academics from across the disciplines to share how embodiment has influenced their academic work has recently been published by Routledge.

Dr. Briony Lipton is an academic in the School of Sociology at The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia. Her current research explores the relationship between feminism and neoliberalism in understanding gender inequality in higher education. Briony has recently co-authored a monograph with Elizabeth Mackinlay (UQ) entitled *We Only Talk Feminist Here: Feminist Academics, Voice and Agency in the Neoliberal University* (Palgrave 2017). Briony has an interest in gender and higher education, creative and collaborative research methods, feminist and queer theories.

Dr. Churnjeet Mahn is a Senior Lecturer and Chancellor's Fellow in English at the University of Strathclyde. She is currently a co-investigator on the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) project, *Creative Interruptions: Grassroots Creativity, State Structures and Disconnection as a Space for 'Radical Openness'* and is completing a project on queer postcolonial travel writing.

Kate Mahoney is a postdoctoral researcher on the Wellcome Trust-funded project 'Body, Self and Family: Women's Psychological, Emotional and Bodily Health in Britain, c. 1960–1990,' based in the Department of History at the University of Essex. Her research focuses on women's health activism in late twentieth-century Britain. Her publications include "It's Not History; It's My Life': Researcher Emotions and the Production of Critical Histories of the Women's Movement," in Tracey Loughran and Dawn Mannay, eds., *Emotion and the Researcher: Sites, Subjectivities and Relationships*, forthcoming from Emerald Books.

Dr. Eve Mayes is a Lecturer in Pedagogy and Curriculum at Deakin University. She was formerly a secondary school English and English as Second Language teacher. Her doctoral thesis was awarded the Australian Association for Research in Education's Ray Debus Award for Doctoral Research in Education (2017). Eve's research is concerned with exploring and problematizing 'experiences' of educational institutions, through creative methodological and philosophical experimentation with issues of 'voice', affect, space and materiality. She utilizes conceptual resources from poststructural and new materialist thinking to enquire into the (re)production and potential interruption of intersecting inequalities in and through education.

Dr. Eurig Scandrett is a Senior Lecturer in Public Sociology and trade union activist at Queen Margaret University. After an initial career as an environmental scientist, he spent 15 years in community education including as Head of Community Action at Friends of the Earth Scotland.

Dr. Jacqueline Taylor is an artist, researcher, writer and Senior Lecturer in Research Practice at Birmingham City University, UK where she is the Doctoral Training Coordinator at the Faculty of Arts,

Design and Media and university-wide PGCert in Research Practice Programme Director. Alongside her practice-led research that examines the interrelations between non-representational art practices and poetics, her research also explores alternative Arts and Design doctoral pedagogies and their onto-epistemological dimensions. Jacqueline has taught and lectured on research practice globally, including at Victoria University, Australia. She also presents, performs, exhibits and publishes widely as a para-academic on artistic research practice internationally.

Prof. Yvette Taylor is a Sociologist and a Professor of Education, University of Strathclyde. Yvette has published four sole-authored books: *Working-Class Lesbian Life* (2007); *Lesbian and Gay Parenting* (2009); *Fitting Into Place? Class and Gender Geographies and Temporalities* (2012) and *Making Space for Queer Identifying Religious Youth* (2015). Edited titles include *Educational Diversity* (2012) and *The Entrepreneurial University*.

Chris Waugh is an independent researcher based in Leeds, UK. His research interests include masculinity, Marxism, student resistance, anti-sexism, heavy metal subculture, and revolutionary theory. His academic work has been published in LSE Review of Books and the Marx and Philosophy Review of Books. He blogs at www.classwaugh.wordpress.com.

Dr. Melissa Joy Wolfe is a senior lecturer in Creative Arts Education (Monash University). Awards received include the International Visual Sociology Association Prosser (2016), the Australian Association for Research in Education ECR Award (2016), the Mollie Holman award for best education thesis (2016), Monash University, and a commendation award from the Australian Association of Educational Research (2017). Melissa's research in high schools utilizes a creative filmic research methodology, engaging with theories of affect, gender, socio-economic status and public pedagogical practice. Her film, *Girls' Tales: Experiences of Schooling* (2015) was released through Ronin Films. Melissa's feminist research interests encompass a filmic synthesis of aesthetics, affect, gender, and participatory creative methods.

List of Figures

Discourses of Dissonance: Enabling Sites of Praxis and Practice Amongst Arts and Design Doctoral Study

- | | | |
|--------|---|-----|
| Fig. 1 | Typologies of practice as research, Paul Norman and Jacqueline Taylor (2018) | 199 |
| Fig. 2 | Images gathered from participants as part of the Arts, Design & Media Ph.D. mentoring scheme | 211 |
| Fig. 3 | Selected images of speakers at ‘Beyond Borders: Approaches and Pathways to Arts, Design and Media Research’ conference, July 2017 | 213 |

An Embodied Approach in a Cognitive Discipline

- | | | |
|--------|---|-----|
| Fig. 1 | ‘Wellbeing’ (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance) | 233 |
| Fig. 2 | ‘Constraints on wellbeing’ (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance) | 236 |



Introduction: Time and Space in the Neoliberal University

Maddie Breeze, Yvette Taylor and Cristina Costa

‘Neoliberal’ is a ubiquitous and perhaps over-used concept in current debates about higher education (HE). Alongside other useful terms used to analyse contemporary conditions for academic labour in the ‘performative’ (Pereira 2016) and the ‘entrepreneurial’ (Taylor 2014) university, we use it broadly in the collection title to refer to the ubiquitous extension of the principles of ‘free market’ capitalism—particularly the logics of profit, individualism and competition. It is well established that *the* university is subject to and implicated in the reproduction of market logics, often identified in the tuition fees regime of England and

M. Breeze (✉) · Y. Taylor

School of Education, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK

e-mail: maddie.breeze@strath.ac.uk

Y. Taylor

e-mail: yvette.taylor@strath.ac.uk

C. Costa

Department of Education and Childhood, University of the West of
England, Bristol, UK

e-mail: Cristina2.Costa@uwe.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_1

Wales and the attendant lifting of caps on student numbers, but the local specificities glossed in such universalising claims remain in need of investigation and analysis. Accordingly, this collection attends to how time and space are configured, and intertwined, in HE.

We are writing at a particular moment in time, in the accelerated (Vostal 2016) fast (Gill 2010) academy, in which evidence of the ‘chronic stress, anxiety, and exhaustion’ (Gill and Donaghue 2016: 91) arising from the intensification and extensification of work in the ‘greedy institution’ (Hey 2004) is abundant. Here academics are ‘time squeezed’ and doing as much as possible as quickly as possible (Southerton 2003); ‘working harder and sleeping less’ (Acker and Armenti 2004: 3), and becoming ‘too tired to think’ (Pereira 2018).

At the same time, future-orientated temporalities are materialized in UK HE in multiple institutes of ‘education futures’, which are contested for example in the student occupation and inauguration of the ‘Real Edinburgh Futures Institute’ galvanized by University and College Union (UCU) industrial action in March 2018 (Wallis 2018). We are writing at a time too when academic subjectivities are interpolated as future-orientated, articulated in *the* early-mid-established career course as academics are required to endlessly set their goals, collate ‘achievements’, ‘plans’ and ‘visions’ in annual review processes and institutionally mandated career planning (Breeze and Taylor 2018a), and chase funds to guarantee research time, as if externally unfunded research lacked *measurable* merit or value (Münch 2014). Funding bodies structure access to grants temporally, in schemes for ‘new investigators’, ‘future leaders’, and ‘young scientists’ (Breeze and Taylor 2018a). Here—now—academic entrance, arrival, and success can be felt as permanently deferred (Taylor 2014) to an imagined future, *if I get a more permanent contract, next semester, after this round of marking, when this bid is submitted* just as everyday ‘work goals’ become an ‘ever-receding horizon that cannot be reached’ (Pereira 2016: 106).

Attending to contemporary moments in HE brings the temptation of looking back nostalgically to idyllic times in which *the* university and those who worked within it were unbothered by market forces or

the world—tellingly—*below* the ivory tower. Such imagined glory days both never really existed and are dependent on sweeping exclusions of women, working class, and BAME people. As the University of Glasgow recently ‘discovered’ (BBC 2018) how it ‘benefitted from racial slavery and the profits it generated’, and published proposed reparations (Mullen and Newman 2018: 7) it is important to interrupt comfortingly linear narratives of both ‘decline’ and ‘progress’. Such narratives are only possible to sustain if we ignore, for instance, universities’ foundational *and continuing* roles in liberal settler-colonial state-building and as agents of border control in racist capitalism (Dear 2018). Thinking through time and space in the neoliberal university means getting tangled up in contested and political distinctions between *then* and *now*, and avoiding over-simplified linear diagnoses of *the* problem as occurring exclusively then, or only now.

Articulating the *then* and *now*, and the *here* and *there*, of HE is bound up too with the reproduction of epistemic status, as Pereira (2014: 627) has shown how ‘the importance of being ‘modern’ and foreign’ in epistemic hierarchies is mapped on to nations. Higher education is fractured by global hierarchies, national and ‘world’ rankings,¹ the dominance of Anglophone publishing, and the tokenizing of scholars and scholarship from the global south. The language used to describe academic work articulates on-going investments in the spatial configurations of colonial expansion and extraction—*pioneering research, pump priming the research pipeline* (McLean 2018; de Leeuw 2017).

As activist movements and scholarship that aim to decolonize the university gain traction it is crucial to ask how sincere institutional efforts to ‘decolonise’ are (Arday and Mirza 2018; Bhabra et al. 2018). This question becomes even more important when UK research funders and university schemes incentivize ‘partnerships’ in the global south in the name of ‘international development’ and ‘global challenges’. In ‘Decolonisation is not a Metaphor’, Tuck and Yang (2012: 1) identify how the metaphorical use of decolonization ‘makes possible a set of evasions... that problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity’. These authors clearly state that ‘decolonization brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and

life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools' (ibid.).

As attention is drawn and re-drawn to the whiteness of curricula, canons, disciplines, and universities (Ali et al. 2010; Mirza 2015) 'diversity' is increasingly mainstreamed in HE policy and governance. Diversity is then figured as a desirable, promotional characteristic of the university² (Mirza 2006; Taylor 2013). Yet such institutional commitments can be understood as 'non-performative' and not only do not bring about the diversity they name, but function to block attempts at its realisation (Ahmed 2012a, b).

The materiality of exclusionary structures in HE is clear in 'Brick Walls', a chapter in *Living a Feminist Life* that 'think[s] about materiality through institutional brick walls' (Ahmed 2017: 142). In Ahmed's analysis, brick walls are what diversity workers come up against, as racism and sexism become walls in the university, formed and sedimented through exclusion; 'Walls are how some bodies are not encountered in the first place' (Ahmed 2017: 145; see Puwar 2004). Attending to the spaces of HE—from global HE inequalities across and between nations, 'satellite campuses', 'Global Challenge' funding and collaborations with 'developing nations', to doors which bar access without a swipe card, open plan offices, teaching rooms without enough chairs, the names of buildings and the marble busts and oil paintings inside them—is a key concern of the chapters that follow.

As editors we are writing from the UK, and contributors are writing in and about UK and Australian HE, attending to their locatedness in relation to HE in global context. This particular collection of chapters then repeats entrenched problems with the dominance of English-language publishing and the universalizing of some HE systems as *the* university, as we repeat, rather than resolve, such inequalities in time and space. We can think of how academics—especially but not only when studying education—are implicated by their own practice and participation in the phenomena they seek to understand. We can think of the importance of understanding the UK HE system as it positions itself as exemplary and *world leading*, as setting the standards to be followed, as producing exportable models of Research and Teaching Excellence, and student satisfaction.

The enduring materiality of institutions is felt too, by those academics on casualised, temporary, and insecure contracts which do not necessarily come with access to the resources required to do the job of teaching, research, and administration, including being paid for work done (Wångren 2018). When UK based (UCU) members, including academics and professional services staff, took part in the largest dispute in the history of the union, 14 days of industrial action in February and March 2018, it was to protect pensions. As discussed on picket-lines during the strike action, pensions are a form of deferred pay, bound up with investments in futurity encouraged in academic over-work. Later that year UCU members were balloted on industrial action over pay, including pay inequalities and casualization, only 10 universities met the 50% turnout threshold (UCU 2018).

Academic labour is restructured to accommodate precarity. This is visible in the type of contracts that are offered through the UK HE system (casualised short-term, part time, and zero-hour). Such structural changes ensue a set of inequalities that sees academics' role as knowledge workers declining in social and economic status. These processes are exacerbated as universities are beholden to national research and teaching benchmarks that assert their position in the academic marketplace, nationally and internationally.

In the case of the UK, Universities are bound by regular Research Excellence Framework (REF) audits of research capacity. Such exercises avowedly gauge—and work to discursively produce—universities' symbolic power, prestige and recognition. The consequences for individual academics are clear in the redefinitions of REF guidelines, for example, in the introduction of partial, interim 'non-portability' rules for the 2021 audit. Here the association of research outputs with an institution as well as the researcher(s) that produce them means that importance is placed on the welfare of the institution rather than their workers. Such regulatory changes emphasise the university as a dominant power and limit academics' mobility in navigating increasingly fractured career paths. This cannot be regarded as 'good news for those who have invested in long-term research strategies, but bad news for those who have not' as asserted by Murphy (2017: 37) as doing so would be to

conceal the unequal working conditions and opportunities in academia. Rather, the discontinuity of total portability of outputs in future REF exercises implies that academics will face increased difficulties in career progression, even when *playing the game* and mobilizing their publications as employment currency, since it seems likely that these will be formally attached to universities. The neoliberal university adjusts itself to serve its goals, entrenching hierarchies among staff, students, and institutions.

Just as academics travel, and are interpolated as mobile subjects, we write, and work, from institutional locations that place us within the stratified national and international rankings of universities in competition with each other. We see a colleague introduced with her ‘primary’ institutional affiliation, she responds by naming the two other universities she is currently working for on casualised contracts. Writing some of this introduction in office space at the University of Strathclyde we hear the drilling and driving noise of construction, another ‘statement’ building. As the new sports centre is built, anticipating student recruitment and satisfaction scores, our pathways through and across campus are shaped by a shifting maze of temporary fences, blocking pavements, ramps, and stairways. Writing this introduction we read news about Hungary’s Prime Minister and leader of the far-right Fidesz-KDNP alliance government Viktor Orbán moving to ban gender studies in the country’s universities, and reports of police entering universities in Brazil to remove anti-fascist materials after Jair Bolsonaro’s far-right ‘Social Liberty Party’ electoral win (Phillips 2018).

All the while we remain invested—if ambivalently, reluctantly, critically—in HE as a site of hope and possibility, for transformative queer, feminist, anti-racist ways of knowing and being (Mirza 2008; Gunn 2018). In these times and places we’re left with the question of what to *do* with these cruelly optimistic desires and self-defeating attachments (Berlant 2011); how to inhabit educational hopes and disappointments. The chapters that follow, in part, are framed by and unpick these questions.

Alongside a Special Issue on ‘Futures and Fractures in Feminist and Queer Higher Education’ (Breeze and Taylor 2018b) this edited collection is one product of the *Educational Futures and Fractures*

conference organized by one co-editor, Yvette Taylor, at the University of Strathclyde (Glasgow, Scotland) in February 2017. The conference brought together speakers from across and beyond the UK, including a keynote from Prof Rowena Arshad OBE and invited talks from Dr. Amy Pressland and Dr. Rachel Thwaites. With the conference we set out to share new interdisciplinary analyses of borders, boundaries, blockages and im/mobilities in HE, and how these might be identified, inhabited, resisted, and re-worked. We are working in a context where the future of HE is uncertain and the sector remains stratified by and complicit in entrenched inequalities of access and outcomes among students and staff, with boundaries of who does and does not belong continually drawn, enacted, contested, and redrawn in the spatial and temporal locations of HE. The collection is concerned partly therefore with how alternative academic futures can be claimed both because of, and despite the neoliberal university.

Chapter Summaries

In ‘[Closed Doors: Academic Collegiality, Isolation, Competition and Resistance in the Contemporary Australian University](#)’ Briony Lipton explores collegiality in neoliberal university spaces. Lipton analyses in-depth qualitative interviews with women academics alongside critical autoethnographic reflections, and argues that collegiality is best conceptualised as a set of gendered practices and performances rather than a quality or virtue. The chapter traces how academic women articulate the complexity and contradiction of collegiality discourse, and as a consequence, are rendered invisible in different academic spaces. Lipton also demonstrates how academic women create alternative spaces for feminist collectivity in the shifting spaces of Australian HE.

In ‘[Feminist Pedagogy: Fractures of Recognition in Higher Education](#)’ Genine Hook considers generative feminist pedagogies for creating educative spaces and queering privilege and normative social structures in the process. In doing so Hook analyses how everyday institutional and educational norms can be contested and

reworked. Hook explores how students grapple with feminist activist pedagogy in ways that can include attempts to re-assert normative, hierarchical dominance. Alongside this, early career feminist academics encounter conditions of recognition based around student survey data, promotion criteria, casualisation and market-driven student expectation and demands. Hook follows Ahmed's (2017), *Living a Feminist Life*, to articulate how the personal as theoretical is embedded in becoming-academic.

In '(Dis)Assembling the Neoliberal Academic Subject: When PhD Students Construct Feminist Spaces' Elizabeth Ablett, Heather Griffiths and Kate Mahoney reflect on the paradox of becoming entangled in neoliberal practices based on their experiences organising a critical workshop for doctoral students and working to create alternative academic spaces. Ablett et al. approach the workshop as a conceptual framework of analysis, and interrogate their own feminist practices, including how these are embedded in the intensification of doctoral life. The workshop produced tensions between solidarity and critique, and the chapter explores how creative activities such as zine-making can interrupt academic productivity norms. The authors tease out the challenges of continuing this work beyond the workshop and into everyday doctoral spaces.

In 'Black Scottish Writing and the Fiction of Diversity' Churnjeet Mahn operationalises two different lenses to consider teaching postcolonial literature in the Scottish university classroom: the use of 'postcolonial' in Scottish literary studies to partially figure the relationship between Scotland and England, and discussions of race in Scotland through recent iterations of an inclusive Scottish civic nationalism. Mahn argues that as politicised histories of racism are displaced to the broader British context, alongside Scotland's own framing of colonial and colonised history, race is de-emphasised as a marker of difference in Scottish literary criticism. However, Scottish writing by ethnic minorities produces a more ambivalent position on race and nationalism, and a more ambivalent appreciation of the relationship between race and nationalism. This contradiction illustrates the ideological tensions that characterise teaching race in Scotland.

In 'The Imperial/Neoliberal University: What Does It Mean to Be Included?' Lou Dear explores how movements like Rhodes Must Fall identified institutional racism at the heart of UK universities, just as a

range of activists argue that addressing the underrepresentation of marginalised staff and students is only one part of a complex path towards decolonisation. In this context, as imperial/neoliberal universities mobilise internationalisation and widening participation agendas, the politics of diversity and inclusion are critiqued (Ahmed 2012b). Dear illuminates the *experience of participating* in British HE institutions by reading David Dabydeen's *The Intended* (1991) and Diran Adebayo's *Some Kind of Black* (1997). The chapter therefore illustrates the race, class and gendered costs of inclusion within the imperial/neoliberal university. Reading the texts reveals how universities covet certain bodies and simultaneously destroy alternative ways of thinking and being, interpersonal relationships, and community and kinship bonds.

In 'In Defence of Safe Spaces: Subaltern Counterpublics and Vulnerable Politics in the Neoliberal University' Chris Waugh pursues an analysis of 'safe spaces' policies in UK Universities, arguing that such policies encourage reflexive behaviour, and acknowledgements of societal privilege and dynamics of oppression. Drawing on Butler and Fraser, Waugh contends that safe spaces can be conceptualised as counterpublics; offering imperfect but vital spaces of opposition to neoliberal discourses of resilience and allowing recuperation and resistance formation. Waugh contends that criticism of safe spaces is also a criticism of the rejection of imperatives for neoliberal resilience.

In 'Public Sociology and Social Movements: Incorporation or a War of Position?' Eurig Scandrett and Elaine Ballantyne consider how activist academics work to challenge neoliberalism in HE via collaborative engagement with various social movements. The authors draw on their experiences working with movements against violence against women; for environmental justice; and Mad studies. They mobilise Gelpi's understanding of *lifelong education* to analyse the dialectical relations of knowledge exchange that inhere in such collaborations, and that work to expose and transform social contradictions. However, such projects also encounter the risk of hegemonic incorporation into the neoliberal university. The authors argue that the Gramscian concept 'war of position' helps to identify such risks, and that collaborative pedagogy can raise a defence against neoliberal attacks on social movements, as well as providing opportunities to challenge neoliberal hegemony in HE.

In ‘Discourses of Dissonance: Enabling Sites of Praxis and Practice Amongst Arts and Design Doctoral Study’ Jacqueline Taylor explores how Ph.D. study occupies a fractional, anomalous space in the university. Taylor argues that the Arts and Design Ph.D., partly by virtue of a complex relationship with *practice*, disrupts the normative frameworks of the academe and the broader landscape of doctoral research. Taylor explores transformational, performative and embodied spaces of learning, teaching and becoming as part of a spatiotemporality that brings to the fore spaces of praxis and practice. The chapter demonstrates how, while dissonance is normally conceived as a negative lexicon, the dissonance of the Arts and Design Ph.D. can be reconceived as a generative paradox in eliciting ‘doctoralness’.

In ‘An Embodied Approach in a Cognitive Discipline’ Jennifer Leigh foregrounds how academia can be an uncomfortable place to work, as a cerebral, critical, competitive and judgmental environment. Leigh discusses a study that used creative research methods with academics who self-identified as having an embodied practice, and defines embodiment to mean both a state of being and a process of learning about the self. Arguing that embodied practices are ways of bringing conscious self-awareness to and about the body, Leigh demonstrates how participants reflected on the meanings they attributed to their own embodied practices, including tensions with their embodied identity, and ‘wellbeing’ imperatives in the neoliberal university.

In ‘Aesthetic Education and the Phenomenology of Learning’ Jonathan Owen Clark and Louise H. Jackson attend to the limitations of temporal consciousness in contemporary UK HE, as manifest in an accelerated neoliberal present. The authors undertake a phenomenological and pragmatist reading of meaning-formation, learning and temporal consciousness, adopting critical approaches from aesthetic theory. This enables the positing of an ‘aesthetic education’ that exposes and makes visible neoliberal narratives that are temporally and pedagogically suppressive, thereby linking the phenomenological with the political. The chapter builds to an examination of polylogical pedagogies, especially in the arts, that are fundamental to resisting the foreclosure of potential in learners and educators alike.

The collection draws to a close with ‘Response-Ability: Re-E-Valuing Shameful Measuring Processes Within the Australian Academy’ in

which Melissa Joy Wolfe and Eve Mayes consider how evaluative practices dominate contemporary Australian HE. Such measures are analysed as reductive and as limiting knowledge-making capacity. The chapter reads ‘evaluation’ through two of the authors’ own personally stultifying and shameful encounters within measurement in the Australian academy. This critique does not simply oppose evaluative methods but crafts a conceptualisation of evaluation as *mattering* otherwise. The authors therefore promote an *ethics of affect* in relation to academic performance evaluation, by considering how consequences of evaluation are always co-constituted. Evaluation processes are thus re-conceptualised response-ably, in order to build capacity for a diversity of knowledges and to matter otherwise.

Notes

1. As I (Maddie) work on this introduction I look for an article on the *Times Higher Education* website. A pop-up invitation appears; do I want to compare eight universities and enter my details for a chance to win an iPad? I dutifully click on the links, following the instructions to choose between a series of paired university logos, *which is the best?*
2. Again, this introduction was written while both a ‘REF audit’ and a ‘diversity audit’ were underway at one of our institutions.

References

- Acker, S., & Armenti, C. (2004). Sleepless in Academia. *Gender and Education*, 16(1), 3–24.
- Ahmed, S. (2012a). Embodying Diversity: Problems and Paradoxes for Black Feminists. In Y. Taylor (Ed.), *Educational Diversity: The Subject of Difference and Different Subjects*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ahmed, S. (2012b). *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ali, S., Mirza, H., Phoenix, A., & Ringrose, J. (2010). Intersectionality, Black British Feminism and Resistance in Education: A Roundtable Discussion. *Gender and Education*, 22(6), 647–661.

- Arday, J., & Mirza, H. S. (Eds.). (2018). *Dismantling Race in Higher Education Racism Whiteness and Decolonising the Academy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- BBC. (2018). *Glasgow University 'Benefited from Slave Trade Profits'*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-45539706>.
- Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bhambra, G. K., Gebrial, D., & Nisancioglu, K. (Eds.). (2018). *Decolonising the University*. London: Pluto Press.
- Breeze, M., & Taylor, Y. (2018a). Feminist Collaborations in Higher Education: Stretched Across Career Stages. *Gender and Education* [Online Advance Publication].
- Breeze, M., & Taylor, Y. (2018b). Introduction, Futures and Fractures in Feminist and Queer Higher Education. *Journal of Applied Social Theory*, 1(2), 1–11.
- de Leeuw, S. (2017). Writing as Righting: Truth and Reconciliation, Poetics, and New Geo-Graphing in Colonial Canada. *The Canadian Geographer*, 61(3), 306–318.
- Dear, L. (2018). British University Border Control: Institutionalization and Resistance to Racialized Capitalism/Neoliberalism. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 17(1), 7–23.
- Gill, R. (2010). Breaking the Silence: The Hidden Injuries of Neo-Liberal Academia. In R. Flood & R. Gill (Eds.), *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. London: Routledge.
- Gill, R., & Donaghue, N. (2016). Resilience, Apps and Reluctant Individualism: Technologies of Self in the Neoliberal Academy. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 54, 91–99.
- Gunn, V. (2018). Queer Desire's Orientations and Learning in Higher Education Fine Art. *Journal of Applied Social Theory*, 1(2), 35–57.
- Hey, V. (2004). Perverse Pleasures—Identity Work and the Paradoxes of Greedy Institutions. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5(3), 33–43.
- Mirza, H. S. (2006). Transcendence Over Diversity: Black Women in the Academy. *Policy Futures in Education*, 4(2), 101–113.
- Mirza, H. S. (2008). *Race, Gender and Educational Desire: Why Black Women Succeed and Fail*. London: Routledge.
- Mirza, H. S. (2015). Decolonizing Higher Education: Black Feminism and the Intersectionality of Race and Gender. *Journal of Feminist Scholarship*, 7(8), 1–12.
- McLean, H. (2018). *It's Time Universities Walk Their Decolonial Talk*. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/its-time-universities-walk-their-decolonial-talk>.

- Münch, R. (2014). *Academic Capitalism: Universities in the Global Struggle for Excellence*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203768761>.
- Mullen, S., & Newman, S. (2018). *Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow: Report and Recommendations of the University of Glasgow History of Slavery Steering Committee*. Retrieved from https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_607547_en.pdf.
- Murphy, T. (2017). Revising the Research Excellence Framework: Ensuring Quality in REF2021, or New Challenges Ahead? *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 21(1), 34–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603108.2016.1246386>.
- Pereira, M. (2014). The Importance of Being ‘Modern’ and Foreign: Feminism and the Epistemic Status of Nations. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 39(3), 627–657.
- Pereira, M. (2016). Struggling Within and Beyond the Performative University: Articulating Activism and Work in an ‘Academia Without Walls’. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 54, 100–110.
- Pereira, M. (2018, February). *Too Tired to Think: On (Not) Producing Knowledge in the Hyper-Productive University*. Talk at the University of York. Retrieved from <https://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/public-lectures/spring-18/too-tired/>.
- Phillips, D. (2018). Snitch on a Teacher: Bolsonaro Win Sparks Push Against ‘Indoctrination’. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/30/bolsonaro-win-students-urged-report-teachers-who-complain-whatsapp>.
- Puwar, N. (2004). *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Oxford: Berg.
- Southerton, D. (2003). ‘Squeezing Time’: Allocating Practices, Coordinating Networks and Scheduling Society. *Time and Society*, 12(1), 5–25.
- Taylor, Y. (2013). Queer Encounters of Sexuality and Class: Navigating Emotional Landscapes of Academia. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 8, 51–58.
- Taylor, Y. (Ed.). (2014). *The Entrepreneurial University: Engaging Publics, Intersecting Impacts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 1–40.
- UCU University and College Union. (2018). *HE Pay and Equality Ballot Results*. Retrieved from https://www.ucu.org.uk/he_ballot_oct18.
- Vostal, F. (2016). *Accelerating Academia: The Changing Structure of Academic Time*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

- Wallis, H. (2018). BREAKING: Student Occupation to Continue. *The Student Newspaper*. <http://www.studentnewspaper.org/breaking-student-occupation-to-continue/>.
- Wångren, L. (2018). Feminist Trade Unionism and Post-Work Imaginaries. *Journal of Applied Social Theory*, 1(2), 102–124.



Closed Doors: Academic Collegiality, Isolation, Competition and Resistance in the Contemporary Australian University

Briony Lipton

Introduction

I knock on her door. The neon white corridor in the modern refurbished building is empty but I see an expanse of open-plan cubicles ahead. Sue opens the door. ‘You must be Briony’, she smiles, and invites me into the narrow shoebox room. I shuffle into her office. Her workspace is pushed up against a wall near the only window in the tight space. I sit down at a chair positioned to the side of her desk. ‘Would you like a cup of tea?’ She asks. My nervousness has made me thirsty. For a split second, I weigh up how long our conversation will go for and how long it will take for my tea to cool. What if the meeting finishes and my tea hasn’t cooled enough for me to drink it? Is it impolite to leave an untouched cup of tea? These anxieties run through my mind. This is a cup of reciprocity. ‘Thank you. That would be lovely’ I reply. The woman promptly leans down and flicks on her electric

B. Lipton (✉)

The Australian National University, Canberra, ACT, Australia
e-mail: briony.lipton@anu.edu.au

kettle, hidden in the corner behind her desk. ‘Do you take milk?’ she asks, ‘because if you do I will need to get some from the tearoom.’ I shook my head. Neither of us took milk with our tea and so we were saved from having to venture into the communal space.

The kettle in Sue’s office was a revelation to me. During our meeting, Sue was warm and inviting. She was generous with her time and her thoughts. After we exchanged goodbyes, I couldn’t stop thinking about academic spaces—both material and affective—and the invisible dissonance between the personal kettle under the desk and the communal milk carton in the kitchenette down the corridor. Our workspaces can tell us a lot about the ways in which we perform our gender identities (Tyler and Cohen 2010; Thwaites and Pressland 2017; Taylor and Lahad 2018). With a computer, a personal printer, a kettle, and a home-packed lunch, there is almost no reason for Sue to need to leave her office except for the routine toilet trip, scheduled meetings—and of course, teaching. It wasn’t that it was simply more efficient to have the kettle in her office rather than walk the ten paces down the hall to the staff room. Sue’s decision to bring her own kettle into work speaks more to the critical issue of ongoing gender inequality in Australian higher education.

I begin with this encounter because it reveals the subtle and corrosive ways in which spaces are gendered in the contemporary university. It is also an example of academic collegiality as a gendered and embodied practice, and the paradoxical nature of collegial discourse, with whom and how we perform collegiality, and in what spaces and contexts. Collegiality and collaboration are discourses of higher education internationalisation. Global competition for academic talent, and the recruitment of international students and partnerships, impacts upon our relationships with colleagues. This chapter is an exploration of how academic collegiality is constructed in and shaped by the spaces of the neoliberal university, and how this subsequently impacts on the future of gender equality projects in higher education. It stems from a research project that focused on the tensions between neoliberal and feminist discourses and how they constitute academic performativity and identity in the contemporary Australian university. This project was based on a series of in-depth qualitative interviews with fifteen academic

women. In this chapter I focus on the experiences and reflections of four women: Alison, Carolyn, Leslie, and Sally as well as some of my own critical auto/ethnographic reflections. Participants were allocated pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality. These academic women were located in top-tier research-intensive as well as teaching-focused institutions in a variety of humanities, social science, and science and technologies disciplines, and their academic positions range from early career scholar, and sessional senior lecturer, to associate professor and professor with senior leadership responsibilities.

Many of the women interviewed, including the one's whose voices feature in this chapter, spoke of explicit incidences of sexual assault and harassment, and all shared anecdotes about departments where colleagues had refused to speak to one another, where cold-shouldering each other in hallways was common practice, and academics worked with the lights off and doors locked. This chapter is concerned with how the performance of collegiality, focusing on themes of collectivity, competition, resistance and conformity and how these inform aspects of identity practices within various academic spaces. In doing so, it is possible to see how collegiality is gendered, raced, and classed, and the ways in which these are rendered invisible in various academic spaces. This chapter thus also reveals how academic women have created alternative abstract and lived spaces for feminist resistance in the changing Australian higher education environment.

Collegiality

Making cups of tea from underneath one's desk is not such a far cry from the gendered differences in academic collegiality that Virginia Woolf describes in *A Room of One's Own*. 'He was a Beadle; I was a woman. This was the turf; there was the path' (Woolf 1928: 8). Here Woolf satirises the masculine authority of the Oxbridge security officer deterring Woolf's narrator from the manicured campus lawns, 'only the Fellows and Scholars are allowed here; the gravel is the place for me' (Woolf 1928: 8). Collegiality is understood as a desirable trait and invokes the ethos of polite society. It is at once both an individual characteristic and a

cooperative relationship between those who belong in a space. Collegiality is often described in universalising terms as being able to ‘get along’, ‘fit in’ and ‘work well with colleagues’ and is one of the prevailing ideologies that structures academia. To belong to the college is to possess collegiality. What is implied in these terms is the sense of the proper: ‘something of someone *belongs* in one place and not in another’ (Cresswell 1996: 3). Nirmal Puwar (2004) uses the evocative expression ‘space invaders’ to highlight the way women and minorities experience space as if it were not intended for them, invading spaces reserved for others.

‘How good life seemed, how sweet its rewards’ (Woolf 1928: 11) if you were to be a beneficiary of such fellowship. What revisiting *A Room of One’s Own* highlights is the successful preservation of patriarchal collegiality in the contemporary academy. Indeed, we continue to see in the neoliberal university, although perhaps in more subtle ways, that the Woolfian adage that *what is his; must not be hers* still very much applies. Of course, Sue did not need to be ‘accompanied by a Fellow of the College or furnished with a letter of introduction’ (Woolf 1928: 9) to be able to walk across her university campus or to enter the tearoom, but there was something in the way she asked, ‘do you take milk?’ that made me feel that for us, the communal kitchenette was a place that should largely be avoided. This was not a neutral shared space but one imbued with complex gendered collegial relations.

Collegiality is not just about getting along with colleagues but rather it means understanding how to successfully ‘get on’ in the social life of the university and about understanding how routinised daily practices reproduce values and cultures of an institution and how these practices then feed into a system of valuation. Little has changed in terms of mainstream understandings of collegiality in academia. Characteristics of collegiality and autonomy continue to underpin notions of contemporary academic work. It is simultaneously global and local (Finke 2005), individual and institutional, hierarchical and context specific (van Oort 2005; Watt 2005), everywhere and nowhere (Caesar 2005; Watt 2005). Collegiality is used to understand the social dimensions to relationships that are almost wholly mediated through professional protocols (Taylor 2014). For Terry Caesar, what springs from the term collegiality is ‘just enough normative force to activate a professional relationship or just enough civil character

to process a professional occasion to a successful conclusion. But no more' (2005: 10). While the concept of academic collegiality can be understood to lack political impetus and worth, it does retain an element of power in how it stands for an ideal (Caesar 2005: 13; Finke 2005). Collegiality's broadness in definition, complexity and somewhat 'slipperiness' as a concept is what allows it to maintain its value.

As academics, we often look to collegiality as a tactic for survival against the unrelenting neoliberal measures of performativity and accountability in the contemporary university. Collegiality is often associated with consensus and occupies a 'neutral' connotation in that social space. While universities have gradually adopted more neoliberal, corporatised management practices, the remnants of 'collegial governance' is reflected in the continued centrality of university academic boards, senates, and consensual decision-making committees, as well as through federal funding models, and in the daily administration of university organisations (Marginson and Considine 2000). Collegiality can be identified as a form of management of public life, which materialises as 'institutional life' and is inextricably connected to power and legitimacy in the academy (Berlant 1998). With collegiality a criterion on academic job, promotion, and grant applications, as well as being a more informal interaction between colleagues, academic collegiality becomes a complex set of social practices or performances that demonstrate our inclusion or proficiency as academics. Being an expert networker or a social colleague can help advance individuals' academic careers, it supports the development of group research projects, and improves office morale. While the immediate rewards of collegiality might be individual, overall it advances an institutional neoliberal agenda.

Organisational socialisation or body pedagogics are the means through which a culture seeks to transmit its main corporeal techniques, skills and dispositions (Shilling 2007). It is where a new academic embraces the values, expected behaviours, and social knowledge that is required to be recognised as a member of the organisation. Indeed, collegiality infers a need to identify and be accepted into a group (van Oort 2005: 161). This idea that the body is the surface onto which culture is inscribed is a relatively under explored aspect of organisational learning beyond the embodied character of Pierre Bourdieu's habitus

(Bell and King 2010; Reay 2004). The body becomes a vehicle for the reproduction of knowledge and collegiality with various places and spaces in academia acting as the means through which these bodies transmit knowledge and enact certain cultures and subjectivities. The body is a receptive surface (Grosz 1994) onto which an ideological construction of the proficient academic is written. Collegiality homogenises academic communities through various collegial protocols and practices and excludes on the basis of difference. It not only reinforces the gendered and heteronormative aspects of organisational socialisation or body pedagogics, but that it also becomes a purely individualistic, and competitive pursuit (Caesar 2005: 14). Collegiality is produced as well as performed through the body.

It is easy to deduce that collegiality is marred by neoliberalism when in fact, the discourse of collegiality in many respects supports the neoliberal agenda in that collegiality imposes obedience paradoxically through the fear of competition. Those academics who do not attend meetings, or seminars, who are not seen to be working all the time, may not be considered as collegial (Gardiner 2005: 119). Indeed, most models of collegiality are ones that advance the strategic agenda of the neoliberal university. Collegiality is linked to cultural norms and the management of academics. It raises academic anxieties around disciplinary differences, quantification of research output, downsizing of teaching and administrative staff (and in some cases increasing in the latter), casualisation, peer review, and professional evaluation. The discourse of collegiality quite often enforces conformity and prohibits change. Collegiality discourse is thus an intricate and discursive set of practices and performances that reproduce academic identities through repetition of the everyday. Collegiality becomes another 'cruel object' (Berlant 2011) in the neoliberal university.

Collectivity

Collegiality and collectivity in the contemporary academy appear interchangeable as an academic virtue, with such practices being nurtured in the constraints and opportunities of provided by the transformation of academic institutions. Judith Gardiner (2005) describes collectivity as

a heightened kind of collegiality. Collectivity is a complementary type of professional interaction. Gardiner depicts traditional forms of collegiality as ‘cool’, and masculine in style, with collegiality, often, as I also argue, inspiring both excellence and anxiety through the intentional deployment of competition:

I picture collegiality as the more masculine of the two, dressed in tweed, chatting in leather chairs, even drinking sherry. In contrast, collectivity connotes for me women in jeans, sitting on the floor vigorously discussing ideas, with a pot of chili bubbling on a stove nearby. (2005: 108)

Accepted or normative qualities of collegiality are frequently coded as masculine. Masculine gestures, voices, postures, accents are all involved in the performance of collegiality, and thus these transferable skills we come to learn through the body are not only taught as appropriate but also as aspirational qualities. I have written elsewhere (Lipton 2017: 73) about the posturing that occurs during meetings, the arm stretching, chest inflating, and domineering speech. Academics’ performativity in a committee meeting is a demonstration of how embodied subjects might assume or masquerade as the universal academic. It teaches us how and with whom we should interact. Knowing when to speak and when to remain silent in meetings and seminars is learnt via these bodily interactions. Women are often judged as mimicking men rather than simply being women whose performativity encompasses a mix of masculinities and femininities. Collegiality is thus a set of practices and performances rather than a quality or virtue and ‘exposes the extent to which performance involves interactions not only among individuals but between individuals and institutions as well’ (Finke 2005: 124).

Academic women’s marked absence from and presence in positions of leadership and authority in the academy interacts with the performance of collegiality in particular ways. Historically, the paucity of women was in part a consequence of their continued exclusion from certain practices of collegiality, and variations of the ‘boys club’ that dictate dominant cultural norms that contribute to women’s ‘insider-outsider’ status in the university (Morley 2014). In theorising space and collegiality and the ways in which such sites enable and constrain academics

it is possible to disrupt dominant and polarising narratives of academic women as either radical ‘outsiders’ in the academy or entirely depoliticised ‘insiders’ and complicit neoliberal subjects of the contemporary Australian university. While such static representations of women as dislocated, marginalised and in exile within the university can articulate different ways of being in a space, and have been politically effective, they often fail to articulate how academic women move across and between centre and margin and embody more mobile subjectivities in the neoliberal university, and close down possibilities for rethinking women’s place in space marked too by intersections of class and race (Newman 2012; Pratt 1998).

Collectivity should not be positioned in gendered opposition to collegiality. Collectivity does not emanate naturally from women working together but rather it is deliberately built from a specific political approach to collegial relationships (Gardiner 2005: 115). Membership on a journal editorial board is an example of collective organisation, or collegial governance (Kligyte and Barrie 2014: 160). Journals have a goal external to the university organisation, with collective aims and scopes. Academics come together in a way that elevates the expert status of an individual academic above the role of employee in order to produce multiple issues each year. The group of editors decide the journal’s contents by examining submitted manuscripts and by soliciting book reviews and commentaries. There is a considerable amount of volunteer labour that goes into supporting many aspects of academia’s infrastructure. Gardiner highlights that the goals and the group are enhanced by practices that ‘encourage people to develop personal knowledge, respect, trust, and affection for one another, but without undue expectations for continued closeness or personal friendship outside the group’s times and purposes’ (2005: 117).

Collectivity is often mobilised (although problematically) as a means of resistance to neoliberal individualism. However, collective resistance to hegemonic or coercive collegiality are not without their limitations (Gardiner 2005: 117), but it is important to explore the contradictions and potentiality of collegiality and collectivity; of their competing and complimentary projects since they require different agents and occur in different temporalities and spatialities. This chapter thus also reveals

how academic women have created alternative intellectual and lived spaces for feminist collectivity in the changing higher education environment. The following sections interweave the voices of interviewees—Alison, Carolyn, Leslie, and Sally—with analysis of the ways in which these women articulate the complex and contradictory discourse of academic collegiality. Particularly their experiences of isolation, competition, and resistance in both in the private and communal spaces of the contemporary Australian university.

Isolated Colleagues

In my interviews, there were many accounts of closed doors both literal and metaphorical. Women working in their offices with the doors closed and the lights switched off. After her department merged with another and academics were required to reapply and compete for their positions, Alison tells me, ‘Everyone now works in silence, with their doors locked, and their headphones on’. While this could simply be interpreted as academics just trying to get some writing done without distraction, office doors function as a signal for the readiness of collegial interactions. For some academics, if they kept the lights switched off and moved their desks behind the door, no one would know if they were even in their office. Sally points out:

well that’s the other problem, I think. I think so much of happiness about work is the physical space you’re in. I work in a rabbit warren. It’s really disjointed, it is eight buildings semi-connected.

The material geographies of offices, classrooms and buildings necessitate a capacity for mobility, for traveling to and from somewhere. While not spatially fixed, online arenas also require the capacity for access to technologies and skills that enable participation. These sites are steeped in power; the ways that people engage with or participate within spaces hinge upon the associations they ascribe to them, the affects and psychic-emotional experiences they have, or project they may have, within them. Such experiences are informed by relations of gender, race,

sexuality, class, and education and may play out in desires for engagement or disengagement. For academia, the corporate style of open plan and glass walled staff offices are often purported to benefit the free flow of communication and ideas, as well as improved collaborative opportunities among staff. Far from enhancing collegiality, these spaces foster disconnection and decreased productivity (Baldry and Barnes 2012), in the way such spaces encourage ‘competitive peer-to-peer monitoring’ and a culture ‘of being seen to be present and accountable’, as well as placing a harsher emphasis on academic hierarchies (Khoo 2014: n.p.). How these spaces are perceived varies with the different experiences of the individual and the collective, but it is clear that even the campus and its buildings in their design are conducive to producing specific collegial states.

Sally believes that the physical layout of the campus and its buildings plays a large role in the creation and absence of opportunities for collaboration. Because of her isolation, Sally makes more of a conscious effort to meet with colleagues:

I do, I do, but I guess the more you feel shitty about your work, the less inclined you are to... I feel horribly lonely, but not so personally, [more] professionally. I feel really lonely, I really miss working with people, but the lonelier I feel the more inclined I am to sit in my office by myself. Even though that's counterproductive.

Leslie eats her lunch alone while working at her desk. It is not an uncommon habit in her department. She tells me:

I'm not the only one who sits with my light off in my office. Lots of people come in, shut their door and don't talk to anybody. There's a time for that but there's just this sense that everybody is just so kind of down in that dark pit of despair that even wanting to talk to people is just too much, haven't got time for that, I've got to be working 24/7, I've got to be productive, I'm under so much pressure. So everyone just kind of holes themselves away. I think that's really sad.

The contemporary university with its global rankings and performance appraisals places unprecedented pressure on academics to excel, and produces an affective mistrust. Moreover, women who feel unsafe in the

literal and figurative spaces of the academy are even more likely to seek out the security of their private office, or work remotely. Closed doors not impel academics' collegiality to go beyond professional protocol. The layers of privacy; the headphones, the locked door, the darkened room. It highlights a lack of connectedness and solidarity in a highly competitive and critical work environment.

Competitive Collegiality

Universities pride themselves on valuing, celebrating and rewarding collegiality, and of building a culture of collegiality and engagement. Evidence of ability to work with others, being able to operate effectively in a team, or contribute positively to departmental operations; however collegiality is phrased, it is not only a popular question asked during job interviews, but has become an important criterion on academic job, promotion, and grant applications, and a formal evaluative tool in academic recruitment and promotion. While the collegial expression, 'working together' denotes collaboration, or even, equality, its emphasis remains on autonomous individualism, and the value and uniqueness of separate and competing persons. This notion of competitive collegiality is often articulated when institutional leaders push for greater efficiency and greater productivity, especially in interdisciplinary initiatives intended to garner large research grants. The competitiveness of the contemporary university environment is a common refrain amongst academics. 'Research today is highly, highly competitive,' Alison repeats. Outside of her teaching commitments, Alison is a solitary academic. She closely guards her research from other academics because she has first-hand experience having her research poached and then published by another colleague in the field:

I was a bit naïve when I started [out as an academic]. I would happily tell people what I was doing. Only to find that they would then go off and do the same thing. Which isn't to say you can't all be researching the same subject, billions of people, for instance, research Shakespeare - all over the world. But it's when you share your ideas with someone else and then they go and do exactly that, which is a bit dodgy.

Alison pauses after this. She is still very much hurt and disappointed even several years on from the incident. Collegiality also incites fear of the evaluation of our performances of collegiality, academic freedom, and ‘stifles dissent in favour of civility and cordiality’ (Finke 2005: 123). Alison continues:

Also, in the arts where I am based the idea of collegiality is very different to in the sciences, say where you might have nine people co-writing a paper... You're totally responsible and very rarely do you ever co-produce with somebody unless you are writing a chapter in a book. So, we are not used to working together and we guard our research quite jealously. And I certainly do now. I don't broadcast what I am doing any more.

The isolation and autonomous work of some academics (namely those in the arts and humanities disciplines) appears in contradiction to the collegial performativity of the scholar-entrepreneur, who, in turn, is paraded as an ‘ideal academic’ and commodified by the neoliberal university (Danielewics and McGowan 2005: 168; Watt 2005: 21); used in advertisement campaigns, and sent to conferences and conventions to represent the university's brand and intellectual property (Taylor 2014).

Who you collaborate with communicates your collegial relationships. Academic collegiality is important for a successful career with interpersonal networks often providing job opportunities (Van den Brink and Benschop 2014) and reveals professional allegiances. It is also hierarchical (van Oort 2005; Gardiner 2005), and academics are often strategic in whom they are collegial with. For instance, who we decide to approach socially in the moments before the commencement of a meeting, whose plenary sessions we attend at a conference is not always based solely on research interest, who we ask out for coffee, those we smile at in the corridor, and those whom we ignore entirely. Our collegial interactions are not only based on gender, race, and age, but also academic rank; their position, their institution type (top-tier research intensive, or teaching and vocationally focused), their performance as academics (their research output and grant attracting abilities) and the mutual benefits of social and cultural capital we might accrue from our potential connection and collaboration.

Academics are urged to collaborate, particularly when it comes to research activities, but career and promotion prospects still very much depend on the evaluation of individual achievement; developing an independent body of work and in obtaining research funding. This is central to what Bruce Macfarlane (2017) describes as the paradox of collaboration. Similar to collegiality and collectivity, collaboration, involves the free sharing of ideas ‘for the common good of scientific advance’, or what Macfarlane describes as ‘collaboration-as-intellectual generosity’ (2017: 474). Collaboration is also purported to nurture the development of less experienced colleagues seeing them learn the accepted practices and attitudes of the group, and sharing in knowledge claims via a range of scholarly platforms. However, Macfarlane finds that other forms of collaboration are essentially self-regarding, when considering the pressures of academic performativity, and there is some debate around whether this fits into a working definition of collegiality (van Oort 2005; Watt 2005). Collaboration reinforces existing networks of power, creating and perpetuating hierarchies of exploitation. Macfarlane (2017: 472) observes that:

Whilst collaboration has always been at the heart of academic labour its paradoxes illustrate how individual and collective goals can come into conflict through the measurement of academic performance and the way in which such audits have perverted the meaning of collaboration.

There is an assumption that if you are passionate about your research that you will continue to research for love and not for money, that you will not question your position as second or third author on a paper regardless of how much extra work you put in, and you will accept additional responsibilities from senior academics. Thus, Alison adds:

Research tends to then be something that you do privately, in your private life as well. Because there is no paid time to do it in.

All the women I spoke with suffered from time poverty. The intensification of academic work is an endemic feature of academic life (Gill 2010) that is in part a product of competitive collegiality. It is not

merely that frequent faculty restructuring, increased workloads, or the rise in a casualised academic workforce place an increased pressure on academics to produce more and to excel, but it is also in our desperate competitive push to secure those short-term contracts, our acceptance of their employment conditions, and the networks we forge in the process that we contribute to this intensification.

Communal Spaces

The kitchenette, the resource room, the photocopying area—these are all spaces in contemporary organisations that are principally designed as a place where academic and professional staff members come together in a seemingly neutral space, regardless of rank or position. These communal areas are where we make tea and coffee, or eat lunch, print materials, pick up mail and chat with our colleagues, although they are diminishing in lieu of cafes and for profit creative workspaces within university campuses. Space and place are used to structure a normative landscape (Hurdley 2015; Cresswell 1996). However, these spaces are not neutral sites of egalitarian collegiality. The tearoom in particular, is a gendered place where the private and the public spheres converge, as Alison observes in her department:

I think the thing you notice on an informal level is that the women go to the tea room and talk together more than the males. There's one male I have never ever seen go to the tea room, ever!

Sometimes it is hard to pinpoint how collegiality explicitly and implicitly excludes when we appear to share these spaces. Sally explains:

I don't know just little things, like every time we have a group meeting, one of the honours girls has to bring a cake. Doesn't have to obviously, but they're the ones that volunteer, it's never a man's job to bring a cake to work.

Such places are ideological in that they serve a social hierarchy. Place is not merely about geography (Cresswell 1996; Puwar 2004). Our place

in the academy is constituted in the spaces of the university. It combines the spatial and the social. Space always intersects with place through sociocultural expectations.

Academic identities and collegial relationships are constructed through embodied experiences and processes of embodied learning in different types of academic spaces. In a recent faculty restructure, Alison's school of art was merged with the school of education. This amalgamation resulted in the integration of two groups of academics; two sets of management, leaders, and students. This came with a lot of antagonism between the two departments, including at the personal level, as Alison tells me, it goes right down to 'the people in education are not in the tearoom at the same time as the people in arts, and vice versa'. The merger has placed a strain on the newly formed department. Even though arts academics are increasingly teaching education students, which Alison believes is why she and her arts colleagues still have jobs ('everyone is conscious of losing their jobs') but the amalgamation has changed the staff culture. She gives an example:

there's a sessional room for sessional staff [to meet with students], and recently I had a student with a very loud voice and I refused to have the door shut with a mature age male student in the room with me, or any student in the room with me for that matter, so I don't shut the door with any student for my own protection as well as theirs, but somebody from education basically paraded up and down the corridor and kept looking in my room because the door was ajar and looking at me because I was facing the door because they [education staff] like silence.

Alison considers such collegial expectations 'an added strain. You're meant to be doing your job but, in a whisper, just to satisfy the education staff, which I refuse to do.' Here, she observes and also anticipates a difference in the two (former) departments' collegial cultures. For Alison, it is a gendered strain too. If Alison had been a man talking with a loud student, she didn't think she would have been treated in the same way by her colleague.

Sally cites a similar experience. She is one of only two women in her department. When she walks the corridors of her building it is to a

cacophony of men whistling from their offices, their backs facing open office doors. The whistling is a competition for space. The sound pushes Sally to avoid using the shared areas, opting for alternate workspaces outside of her building:

you have those everyday interactions that just put you back into that funk, why would I want to reach out when someone's just been rude to me to my face in the tearroom.

Sally complains that with her short curly hair and slim figure she is, ironically, often mistaken for a man and at times, is even treated as one of 'the boys'. She laughs wishfully at the thought of a future where she is not called mister or sir. Sally finds that when she is mistaken for a man and is invited into the homosociality of hegemonic or competitive academic collegiality that she becomes privileged to a litany of sexist, misogynistic and racist conversations. Some of which, upon being 'outed' from the 'boys club', are directed at her:

Inequalities, harassment, everything, my school's awful. We have this lab manager, he used to make really vile anti-Semitic jokes, even though he knew my family were Jewish, and racist jokes too. When my supervisor was really mean and bullied me, he went around and told everyone in the school that I had a problem with men. That I was aggressive and abusive and too emotional. Which I think is highly gendered type of bullying, and I don't know, I don't know what else, it'll come to me.

Social and professional judgements and standards are measured in relation to normative gender performativities. Women who do step over from being 'not-men' to 'like-men' transgress gendered spatial boundaries. To such an extent that these women destabilise the existing social order by sheer virtue of their presence. Although women's position in such spaces continue to be ambiguous and confused as they are seen as still being women as well as honorary men (Puwar 2004: 100). Women are granted access to the public sphere so long as they have the 'ability to emulate those powers and capacities' that come with male and masculine privilege (Gatens 1996: 71).

A culture of collegiality is often used to delineate permanent academic staff from casual and sessional academics. It separates the haves from the have-nots. Collegiality manifests in the various ways we interact with our colleagues; from who we choose to chat with in the office corridor to which staff are invited to staff meetings. Collegiality is used to explain or justify the ways in which academics act in their everyday relationships (Caesar 2005: 15). Alison remarks:

Collegiately, don't ask me why, but sessional staff don't get invited to the Christmas party, which I think is a little bit rude. I find that a bit rude. I think, well you want us to be in there doing all the work then when it comes to the party time no invite. Less people to pay for I suppose?

Collegial connections and collaborations between sessional and more permanent staff are essential to the employment of casual and sessional academics. To be sessional is to be considered to be on the wrong side of the academic institution, with the transient figure of the casual academic often not considered to be part of the contract of collegiality. Alison needs her supervisor's approval, support, and ultimately, sign-off to secure future teaching work. Driven by a need for work, academics often internalise what are ostensibly structural issues associated with life as a sessional academic. The interdependency of academics and institutions in terms of casualised labour is part of an ongoing process of subject formation in relation to temporality. Those without the stability of a permanent position are disinclined to turn down the invitation. Moreover, even those with job security also feel pressured to say yes to additional leadership responsibilities and opportunities because of the continuous scrutiny of academic performance.

Behind Closed Doors

Leslie tells me, 'what I see happening is a lot of door closing.' She uses this spatial metaphor to describe the dissonance not just between academics and institutions but also between individuals. Leslie elaborates, closing the door, is 'that idea that the only way that we can get on as a

manager or a leader and you as a non-manager or follower is distance between us'. Shutting the door, closing lines of communication, speaks to a lack of transparency and a blind eye to inequality and discrimination, as well as a lack of connectedness and solidarity in a highly competitive and critical work environment.

Alison tells me that even though she is a sessional worker, and so only on campus during teaching periods, she still sees her Head of School every week or two. Often a few colleagues including her Head of School will go out together for a quick coffee and a chat. 'I think that's what is not valued', Leslie considers, is that idea that a Head of School or a Dean or Professor could:

operate at that level of friendship and of love where we're actually looking out for one another, we're being responsible to one another in the sense that we're not trying to change your identity or change your disciplinary, the way you act within your discipline. I'm here to allow you to be whatever it needs - or not allow but I'm here to facilitate or open the doors.

Sally weighs the failures of her workplace in cultivating a connected, collaborative and supportive environment against the benefits of being physically isolated:

When [Maryanne] comes up for lunch... she'll be like, who's that guy? I'm like, oh don't worry about him, he sleeps with his students. Or don't worry about him he does such and such, it's just like every person, I just don't want to see that [them].

Unsafe places are the spaces that we try and avoid. Many offices and resource rooms only have one entry and exit point. Leslie knows this all too well after being sexually assaulted in the photocopier room by an older male colleague, giving her even more reason to hide away in her office when she is not giving a lecture or tutorial. This is a history where consent is 'read off women's own bodies or conduct' (Ahmed 2014: 55); what women wear, how they move, the way their bodies are thought to enact a yes even when they say no. Women are not homogenous bodily specifications but are differentiated through power relations constituted,

in this instance, in an organisational space (Puwar 2004: 25). There are a whole set of identifications and disidentifications between women and space. Who we engage with in these communal areas of the academy demarcates which bodies are considered inside of academic culture, and the conversations and interactions that occur in these environments demonstrate how collegiality is transmitted through bodies. An account of gender in the neoliberal university may do well to include an analysis of 'how women willingly agree to situations in spaces where their safety and wellbeing are compromised' (Ahmed 2014: 55). Ahmed reminds us that there is a history 'whereby men give themselves permission to hear no as a yes, to assume women are willing, whatever women say' (2014: 55). When Leslie told a fellow academic, what had happened:

she said 'well he does that to all the women in the school' and I said 'what?' I said 'why aren't we looking after one another?'

To be collegial is to 'know your place' or to use a gendered expression 'to be put in your place'. Leslie reported the assault and both individuals were made to attend a face-to-face mediation with the Head of School. In such an arbitration all members are accountable to the ideal of collegiality:

I felt that it was more about her [the Head of School] trying to say 'I've got to file the policy, how can I keep everybody happy?' But at the end of the day sometimes I do feel a bit angry because I think well who really - not that it was about winning or losing, but who really won from that? I think it was him, because apart from being slapped on the wrist and told you can't do that, he's still being allowed to - none of his privilege as an older white male have been taken away. This staff member continues to work in the workplace and I didn't necessarily want to ruin his life, but I didn't necessarily think that him continuing to have such a prominent role as a - he's only a sessional staff member. But I didn't necessarily think that that was appropriate, particularly with a cohort of students that are predominantly female and where have been instances of sexual harassment reports from students.

For Leslie, mediation led by her Head of School was not justice. In the mediation process she was forced to comply and agree to the terms of collegiality:

It probably doesn't really mean anything but it did strike me as kind of strange. She didn't even have a box of tissues ready, and she didn't even - not once did she say are you okay, how are you coping with it? Are you feeling alright about being at work or do you need to take some time off? Nothing like that. It was just straight to 'right, let's look at the policy, this is what I'm going to say, this is what you [say]'- she did say things like 'it's important for you to say what you experienced' but she didn't once step back from that, this the procedure to say, I just want to check in that you're alright.

In the mediation room, their collegial relationships were driven by process. Leslie felt that her body had been labelled as the problem, and she did not feel supported by her Head of School beyond what was written in the policy:

Then not once since then has she said how's it going? Because this guy and I are on the same floor. She hasn't once said I just want to check that everything is alright, and nothing further has happened. To me that shows that what she was concerned about when I brought it to her attention, is nothing about the embodied aspect of that kind of thing and what the implications might be physically, emotionally, mentally. But more about the managerial implications.

Here Leslie is caught up in the paradox of naming sexual assault and harassment as a problem and becoming the problem herself (Ahmed 2014). This is part of the dual process of naming, that is, revealing the characteristics of the problem, and experiencing the negative repercussions of naming that problem.

As for the lack of emotion expressed by Leslie's Head of School, collegiality is not distinct from the (unrecognised) care work, emotional labour, and 'academic housework' so often gendered as feminine and allocated to women in the university (Fitzgerald 2014; Due Billing 2011). Images of the tough, charismatic, entrepreneurial, decisive and

self-interested collegial academic are tied to masculinity. Academic women may internalise masculinist collegial practices, which also positions them in opposition to their peers. Collegiality also shares an adjacent affinity to conviviality—‘being nice’. The success of the convivial academic women is based on the way they maintain the masculine ideal of the collegiate academic. Whether it be a strategy for survival or a means of claiming power, women can adopt and internalise masculinist practices (Fitzgerald 2014: 5), including collegiality. There is a continued pressure to emulate and live up to the academic masculine norm. Leadership and management in its construction as masculine makes it increasingly difficult for women to ‘strike a balance between being seen as a competent manager/leader and as sufficiently feminine’ and not being seen to break with gender expectations (Alvesson and Due Billing 1997: 91). Women’s position in academic spaces continues to be ambiguous and confused as they are seen as being women as well as honorary men (Puwar 2004: 100).

Collegiality in the Margins

Women’s marginalisation in academia is often a consequence of their continued exclusion from certain practices of networked collegiality. Being an academic ‘outsider’, ‘working on the fringes’, being ‘marginal’ and working ‘within and against’ are reoccurring spatial metaphors in literature on women, work and organisations (Black and Garvis 2018) and my interview material is no exception to these findings. Feminist metaphors of borderlands, marginalisation, and exile articulate different ways of being in a space. Metaphors of marginality insist upon difference and a distance from hegemonic culture (Pratt 1998: 14). bell hooks writes of marginality as a space from where we can imagine alternative ways of existing outside of hegemonic culture and presents an opportunity to create counter-hegemonic cultures. She describes the margins as ‘to be part of the whole but outside the main body’ (hooks 1990: 341). hooks is speaking here of the silencing and appropriation of black women’s voices and she grounds her argument in her lived experience. For hooks marginality is a site of resistance, a position from

which to resist colonisation by the dominant white culture: 'that space of refusal, where one can say no to the coloniser, no to the downpressor, is located in the margins' (hooks 1990: 341). Race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, job security, and academic rank all influence access to and participation in collegiality. It is important to recognise the differences in marginality between women academics and how this influences collegiality at the centre as well as the margins.

For Leslie, there's power in the margins. Since the assault, Leslie has learnt 'about other things that have happened to women and what other women in the school think about the male leaders in our school'. The isolation, secrecy and silence that other women in her school experienced:

I didn't even know, I knew nothing about how women had been treated. But this kind of secret network of women who are - if the opportunity arises we will talk to one another about it. The only thing I can see that's slightly problematic with that is that because it's in secret and the power of it actually is that it's secret and that none of the guys know that we're - or the women who aren't part of that little network, they don't know that we talk about these things.

In the margins these women formed a strong feminist collective identity. Leslie finds that part of its power is that it happens in secret, 'but the downside is that we all kind of feel, or we'll talk - but we've got this little secret network going and we don't know what else to do, so we won't do anything.'

This is not to say that the margins is a safe space or feminist utopia. hooks acknowledges, that the margins can be a just as much a site for repression as well as resistance and that the margins are not a space for separatism, but her insistence on choosing the margins are an intervention against being positioned as marginal by oppressive structures highlights how it is possible to move beyond static spatial representations to explore the tenuous position academic women occupy as both insiders and outsiders of the neoliberal university. Leslie concedes that despite their feminist collegiality in the margins:

nothing ever happens publicly, it still happens in that secret space because we're all – we're all kind of worried about breaking that secrecy and maybe being brave enough to break the secrecy, to do something about some of the things that go on.

This is what Carolyn describes as navigating surface and subterranean academic spaces:

That the fact that what you're navigating is 50 per cent surface and 50 per cent subterranean, I think because women have had to struggle to make their way in the academy for so long, I think they're much better at working out that framework and navigating it.

Carolyn's reflections resonate with what Kathy Ferguson (1995) describes as 'mobile subjectivities' this oscillation between centre and margin. Understanding how individuals move between and across boundaries we can destabilise those under examined dualisms and see the connection between inside/outside, centre/margin (Pratt 1998: 15). In some respects, women are made to remain in the margins, but that there is also a self-proclaiming and creative power that comes from such a space; 'an inclusive space where we recover ourselves' (hooks 1990: 343).

Appropriations of Feminist Collegiality

When claiming the potentiality of the margins of the university as a site of resistance for women academics it is important to consider how neoliberalism appropriates feminist and social justice principles, as well as how academic feminists are implicated in reproducing—as well as interrupting—these structures. As Leslie remarks:

It's scary how if something public - the way neoliberalism works, it can put a spin on something like that to cover it up. What might happen and it may not be really covert – but the repercussions will happen in a very covert, insidious way, perhaps without you even realising. Then by the time you do it's too late.

Any criticism of neoliberal managerialism, or any dissenting voice that challenges the fabric of academic collegiality might be praised publicly, but as Leslie explains, if you are a feminist and you speak out, there are always consequences for such actions that happen privately in comments, meetings, or appraisals. Leslie continues, institutions appear to be very much supportive and may even benefit from the social kudos of feminist voices in the organisation. Senior leaders profess:

‘oh great we’ve got this great voice of feminists’ and then undercut them [feminists] privately in everyday interactions. So they no longer have a voice but what everyone sees is this really, ‘oh they’re being so supportive.’ But actually they’re not.

hooks (1990: 143) observes that the language of resistance can be misappropriated by the dominant in a way that silences the lived experiences of the marginalised. Because of the way in which neoliberalism individualises the social and collective, feminism is made culpable for its depoliticisation, its widening interpretations and broadening political objectives. While this identification may present particular opportunities, the door remains closed in terms of feminist and academic voices. Leslie gives some more examples:

one of the ways that that happens is that they might ask you to be on a panel to talk on International Women’s Day or in the public moments where feminism matters they want to be seen to be doing things, feminist academics will be asked. But then in the things that then matter may possibly - for women getting promoted - is that - to get promoted from Level D to Level E you’ve got to show significant school leadership or faculty leadership. What can happen is that women won’t get supported to take up those roles, or the doors won’t be open for women to take on that [unclear] leadership. Or it’ll just be given to somebody else. So I think that’s one of the things – that’s one of the ways you can get the back-handed slap. It’s not ever said publicly, it’s not ever said in a performance appraisal but just those opportunities, the doors just get shut.

Here we see another spatial metaphor used to describe the power and influence of hegemonic collegiality. This time, Leslie is shut out.

She highlights that feminism and a feminist academic identity is not always about large scale activism but can also be about the small everyday actions and interactions.

Marginality nourishes our capacity to resist (hooks 1990: 342). Carolyn maintains that ‘a huge part’ of her practice as an academic is ‘that I think about all of those things.’ What’s really important to her is ‘to always maintain a strong commitment to feminist spaces’ where women’s voices are heard and articulate the importance of such spaces in all aspects of her work:

I like the work that I do. Mostly the places that I need to talk to people about things, I feel that I can do that. Yeah, so like I don’t feel marginalised - I think that would be really hard. But I do think that is a little bit about working with a group of colleagues that are basically really good. I like working with them and I want to support them in the work that they do. Yeah. So I do think a part of that is really about luck.

Feminist collectivity can incorporate collegiality. This is what Gardiner (2005: 118) sees as collegiality in its ideal forms—that of friendly intellectual comradeship and mutual respect. Such feminist collectivity, Gardiner argues ‘is one alternative to the bland, but sometimes implicitly coercive, implicitly masculine demands of individualist collegiality within hierarchical university structures’ (2005: 118). Who you end up working with is important and there is a need to rethink the relationship between feminism and neoliberalism in terms of reciprocal appropriations where there is space for new discourses and new articulations.

Conclusion

Globalisation of the higher education marketplace complicates our understanding of academic collegiality. The intensification of academic labour and academic rivalries produce a more contrived and competitive notion of collegiality that is imposed by institutions and perpetuated by academics. Collegiality is gendered. It is through our bodies that we performatively transmit values and reproduce knowledge. Collaboration

in research and teaching reinforces existing networks of power, creating and perpetuating hierarchies of exploitation. Collegiality is not just about getting along with colleagues, who are we collegial with, in what spaces and contexts is career making. This chapter's exploration of gendered collegiality in the meeting rooms, tea rooms and corridors of the contemporary Australian university reveal how individuals negotiate established norms and find refuge in the margins. When problematising academic collegiality in the neoliberal university, it is important remember that as academics we are connected. We are connected in and by space, and in ways which are gendered. We are connected because we work in the same place, we work together, and it can feel good for us to be connected, regardless of whether or not our collegial relationships are complicit in or resistant to a neoliberal agenda. Most importantly, there must be space for women's voices, and for their experiences to be listened to and valued. What Sally, Leslie, Alison, and Carolyn's accounts of collegiality tell us is that there is a lack of connectedness, and their experiences are often rendered invisible in the spaces of the neoliberal university.

References

- Ahmed, S. (2014). *Willful Subjects*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Alvesson, M., & Due Billing, Y. (1997). *Understanding Gender and Organisation*. London: Sage.
- Baldry, C., & Barnes, A. (2012). The Open-Plan Academy: Space, Control and the Undermining of Professional Identity. *Work, Employment & Society*, 26(2), 228–245.
- Bell, E., & King, D. (2010). The Elephant in the Room: Critical Management Studies Conferences as a Site of Body Pedagogics. *Management Learning*, 41(4), 429–442.
- Berlant, L. (1998). Collegiality, Crisis, and Cultural Studies. *Profession 1998* (pp. 105–116). New York: MLA.
- Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Black, A. L., & Garvis, S. (Eds.). (2018). *Lived Experiences of Women in Academia: Metaphors, Manifestos and Memoir*. London: Routledge.

- Caesar, T. (2005). The Specter of Collegiality. *Symploke*, 13(1–2), 7–17.
- Cresswell, T. (1996). *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*. Minneapolis, MS: University of Minnesota Press.
- Danielewicz, J., & McGowan, J. (2005). Collaborative Work: A Practical Guide. *Symploke*, 13(1–2), 168–181.
- Due Billing, Y. (2011). Are Women in Management Victims of the Phantom of the Male Norm? *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18(3), 298–317.
- Ferguson, K. E. (1995). The Man Question: Visions of Subjectivity in Feminist Theory. *Hypatia*, 10(4), 143–150.
- Finke, L. (2005). Performing Collegiality, Troubling Gender. *Symploke*, 13(1–2), 121–133.
- Fitzgerald, T. (2014). *Women Leaders in Higher Education: Shattering Myths*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gardiner, J. K. (2005). On Collegiality, Collectivity and Gender. *Symploke*, 13(1–2), 108–120.
- Gatens, M. (1996). *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power and Corporeality*. London: Routledge.
- Gill, R. (2010). Breaking the Silence: Hidden Injuries of the Neoliberal University. In R. Ryan-Flood & R. Gill (Eds.), *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Grosz, E. (1994). *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.
- hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Hurdley, R. (2015). Pretty Pants and Office Pants: Making Home, Identity and Belonging in a Workplace. In Y. Taylor & E. Casey (Eds.), *Intimacies, Critical Consumption and Diverse Economies*. London: Palgrave.
- Khoo, T. (2014, August 12). Open Plan, Not Working. *The Research Whisperer*. <https://theresearchwhisperer.wordpress.com/2014/08/12/open-plan-not-working/>. Accessed 20 Sept 2018.
- Kligyte, G., & Barrie, S. (2014). Collegiality: Leading Us into Fantasy—The Paradoxical Resilience of Collegiality in Academic Leadership. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 33(1), 157–169.
- Lipton, B. (2017). Writing Through the Labyrinth: Using L'écriture Feminine in Leadership Studies. *Leadership*, 12(1), 64–80.
- Macfarlane, B. (2017). The Paradox of Collaboration: A Moral Continuum. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(3), 472–485.

- Marginson, S., & Considine, M. (2000). *The Enterprise University: Power, Governance and Reinvention in Australia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Morley, L. (2014). Lost Leaders: Women in the Global Academy. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 33(1), 114–128.
- Newman, J. (2012). *Working the Spaces of Power: Activism, Neoliberalism and Gendered Labour*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Pratt, G. (1998). Geographic Metaphors in Feminist Theory. In S. Hardy Aiken, A. Brigham, S. A. Marston, & P. Waterstone (Eds.), *Making Worlds: Gender, Metaphor, Materiality*. Tuscon, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.
- Puwar, N. (2004). *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Oxford: Berg.
- Reay, D. (2004). 'It's All Becoming a Habitus': Beyond the Habitual Use of Habitus in Educational Research. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 25(4), 431–444.
- Shilling, C. (2007). Sociology and the Body: Classical Traditions and New Agendas. *The Sociological Review*, 55(1), 1–18.
- Taylor, Y. (Ed.). (2014). *The Entrepreneurial University: Engaging Publics, Intersecting Impacts*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Taylor, Y., & Lahad, K. (2018). *Feeling Academic in the Neoliberal University: Feminist Flights, Fights and Failures*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Thwaites, R., & Pressland, A. (2017). *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences, and Challenges*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tyler, M., & Cohen, L. (2010). Spaces That Matter: Gender Performativity and Organizational Space. *Organization Studies*, 31(2), 175–198.
- Van den Brink, M., & Benschop, Y. (2014). Gender in Academic Networking: The Role of Gatekeepers in Professorial Recruitment. *Journal of Management Studies*, 51(3), 460–492.
- van Oort, R. (2005). Crisis and Collegiality. *Symploke*, 13(1–2), 158–167.
- Watt, S. (2005). Collegial Propositions. *Symploke*, 13(1–2), 18–29.
- Woolf, V. (2001 [1928]). *A Room of One's Own*. London: Penguin.



Feminist Pedagogy: Fractures of Recognition in Higher Education

Genine Hook

Introduction

This chapter will examine the possibilities for feminist pedagogy to respond to educational fractures and disadvantage. Gender in higher education is regulatory (re)producing inequities and extending historic institutional structures that shape belonging, '[i]n the halls of academe...At first women were transgressive just by virtue of being there' (Davies 2006: 500). Exploring the emerging tensions between academics and students in relation to queer, gender and feminist content I consider academic well-being, career progression and sustainability towards feminist academic futures. I draw on a critical incident in my own teaching practice to explore institutional responses and some of the personal and career implications of these pedagogic tensions. I will focus on ways in which pedagogy is gendered, shaping the content taught and the co-construction with students of academic subjectivity. I

G. Hook (✉)

University of the Sunshine Coast, Sippy Downs, Australia

e-mail: ghook@usc.edu.au

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_3

suggest that tensions emerging from feminist pedagogy are increasing in frequency and are examples of conditions in higher education wherein '[i]nequalities of gender are increasingly complex and insidious formations, often shaped by deep-seated but subtly expressed institutionalized misogynies' (Morley 2011, cited in Burke 2017: 3).

In her exploration of the obstacles for women academics, Savigny (2014) uses the term 'cultural sexism; the significant, invisible, normalising barrier to women's progression within the academy' (p. 795). Given the over-representation of women at lower academic levels in positions which also tend to take up a disproportionate level of teaching (MacKinlay 2016; McKenzie 2017; Lipton and MacKinlay 2017), how teaching within university contexts is experienced becomes critical for feminism and gender equity. Thwaites and Pressland (2017) note that higher education is a male dominated sector where the increasing focus on marketisation of education and increased competition for funding and jobs is counter to 'feminist values and practices' (p. 6). Following Thwaites and Pressland (2017), this chapter explores ways to navigate the contested terrain between feminist pedagogy and the market-driven institutional demands of higher education, 'this political outlook can lead to transformative events but can also create difficulties in a non-feminist department or a research climate that does not take gender seriously' (p. 6). This chapter will address fractures in feminist pedagogy in higher education by illustrating ways that gender operates within this context and begins to shape what feminist pedagogy can be and ways feminist teaching and learning practice can be both productive and damagingly disheartening. Feminist pedagogy is able to respond to educational fractures and disadvantage by contesting normative structures, challenging students to think critically and supporting higher education's aims of equity and inclusion.

Gendered Fractures in Higher Education

The academy remains profoundly gendered and within teaching and learning spaces a 'double-bind' exists where normative 'gendered expectations (that women be nurturing and supportive) conflict with the professional expectations of a higher-education instructor (that they be

authoritative and knowledgeable)...[which when transgressed] can also result in student disapproval' (MacNell et al. 2015: 294). In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed (2017) suggests that 'When he is seen as professor, there is a way he too is not seen. They are seeing what they expect to see; they are seeing one person and not another as professor. Here comes the professor; *he* is the professor' (Ahmed 2017: 127).

Female academics tend to work within lower levels of the academy, teach introductory and bridging courses, or be on casual or fixed-term contracts, which influences the recognisability of female academics and also shapes their engagement with students (Bosanquet 2017). Australia has 40 research universities and despite increasing enrolments following the 2009 Bradley Review which sought greater participation for under-represented groups, structural inequities remain with Indigenous students, rural and regionally-based students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds having limited access, participation and achievement (James et al. 2017). In the Australian context, the gendered construction of the academy is illustrated in that

more than 50 per cent of women at Associate Lecturer (Level A) reduce to just 16 per cent at Professor (Level E); there is a concentration of women in the fields of humanities and social sciences, especially in teaching and nursing, and a corresponding under-representation of women in science-related disciplines. (Winchester et al. 2006: 507)

Sonya Wurster (2017) focuses on the leaky pipeline; the attrition of woman from Ph.D. level to Professor level who exit the sector for complex and intersecting reasons,

[i]n Australia, women comprise just over 50 per cent of graduates; however, they hold only 26 per cent of full-time, permanent lecturing positions. The numbers then decline at each subsequent level of promotion: only 20 per cent of associate professors and professorships are currently held by women. (p. 2)

The gendered profile of an academic limits and shapes recognisability for women academics, the 'desire for recognition is in actuality a

site of power, where who gets to be recognized, and by whom, is governed by social norms...the choice to be recognized (or not) within the constraints of normativity is a condition of agency in the doing and undoing of subjectivity' (Jackson and Mazzei 2012: 77). Davies (2006) agrees, noting that in neo-liberal institutions there is a 'generation of policies and rules that are *intended* to be transparent and to make the process of recognition (appointment, promotion, funding, publishing) available to anyone' (emphasis added, p. 501). However, the process of recognition is problematic '[w]e are vulnerable both to the power of the one who recognizes and to the terms of their recognition' (Davies 2006: 508). I suggest that a key site of recognition for academics is within their teaching practice. The dual mechanism of recognizability that both constrains and enables is useful to examine the everyday repetitive acts that regulate and shape our capacity for recognition. This enables an exploration of institutional structures that regulate the nature of being and becoming an academic and negotiations of our desire to be recognised as academics must be negotiated through these norms and regulations. I suggest that issues relating to sexism and belligerence from students becomes critical to teaching practice, job satisfaction, retention and wellbeing and contribute to the boundary maintenance of what it is (can be) to be and become an academic.

This chapter will explore gendered recognition for female teaching academics, conditions wherein 'the care work of teaching [is] both romanticised and devalued – materially and symbolically: women care, men lead' (McLeod 2017: 46). Existing research illustrates that female academics can experience precarious and disadvantageous conditions as they seek to be recognised within higher education. Disadvantageous conditions for women in higher education are illustrated in teaching evaluations bias. In the Netherlands, Mengel et al. (2017) examined 19,952 student evaluations and found that 'male students evaluate their female instructors 21% of a standard deviation worse than their male instructors. While female students were found to rate female instructors about 8% of a standard deviation lower than male instructors' (p. 2). The authors connect this gender bias evident in student evaluations to job market success, teaching awards, the reallocation of

resources away from research towards teaching-related activities, effects of self-confidence and beliefs about teaching and reasons why 'women are more likely than men to drop out of academia' (Mengel et al. 2017: 4). Anne Boring (2017) found similar gender bias in student evaluations in the French context, 'students give lower scores to women than men for the same level of teaching effectiveness' (p. 35). Boring (2017) notes the possible career implications for woman academics as institutions rely on these measures for promotion and tenure and discourage and demotivate women in the academy.

Research on gender bias against female academics by MacNeill et al. (2015) demonstrate that 'students rated the instructors they perceived to be female lower than those they perceived to be male, regardless of teaching quality or actual gender of the instructor' (p. 300). Examining the experiences of bias and disadvantage within teaching and learning spaces is crucial because they are critical in regard to career development, progression, promotion and tenure/permanence and also one's own wellbeing. 'Given the widespread reliance on student ratings of teaching and their effect on career advancement, any potential bias in those ratings is a matter of great consequence' (MacNeill et al. 2015: 293). Holly Smith (2012) agrees, stating that 'student feedback has real implications for our pay, promotion or job security, this sort of sexism must be taken seriously' (p. 750).

Within this context, teaching particular subjects with gender, feminist and queer content is arguably more likely to create conditions which challenge and are uncomfortable for some students. Sharp et al. (2007) note that in their teaching of gender '[a]t times, we feel as though the classroom environment is a 'war zone'. It is often clear that we can become objects of students' frustration and, at times, rage' (p. 543). Kuvalanka et al. (2013) surveyed 42 college/university instructors with regard to incorporating lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex (LGBTQI) issues into family courses and noted the link between teaching controversial issues and a reduction in reappointment or tenure chances. 'The educators in our research faced resistance from other faculty in addition to students, teaching about transgender and queer issues' (Kuvalanka et al. 2013: 712). Emily Gray (2018) grapples with 'ontological deadlock that teaching in and about difference

can generate' (p. 2). In theorising 'tolerance' Gray (2018) discusses how students (re)produce and protect difference 'the student illustrates both the fragility of tolerance; minority voices are only welcome if they (re)produce the status quo, and also the way in which power circulates through tolerance discourse (re)producing the hierarchical relationship between tolerator and tolerated' (p. 9). Olga Marques (2017) shares her experiences of the considerable personal and career costs of teaching gender/feminist content in a chapter that discusses the 'embeddedness of gendered expectations and subsequent bias faced by women academics' (p. 53). Marques (2017) recounts an anonymous student comment that was repeated over 3 pages;

I hate your class and think it is a waste of time, clearly you are a lesbian because you don't shut up about your man complaints. This isn't a class that should be taught anywhere because feminism is a load of shit. I think you should be fired and you shouldn't be teaching [:] period. (p. 53)

Marques (2017) adds that '[w]omen colleagues recounted the accusation by disgruntled students of their being lesbian man-haters and offered me tips' (p. 54). As an early career feminist scholar Marques notes her development of a 'pedagogical approach that would ensure I present theories, concepts and gendered content in an engaging, provocative, yet non-confrontational manner...in which negative responses to personally challenging course content are not projected onto me as an individual' (p. 66). McKnight (2016) discusses feminism in teacher's identities and curriculum design and notes that description of sexist interactions with male students are 'hinting at a vast, unexplored sexism informing male students' relationship with female teachers...she tells us about the boy who uses the term 'retarded chick' to describe a teacher' (p. 10). These are confronting examples of sexist responses from students and are useful to provide a contextual overview of ways that women teaching in the academy negotiate difficult conditions. These negotiations of feminist teaching practice highlight gendered disadvantage embedded within institutional structures of market-driven higher education.

The Possibilities of Feminist-Activist Pedagogy

Feminist activist pedagogy may particularly trigger disgruntled student protests but also be a useful pedagogical tactic to respond to these tensions. These possibilities emerge because feminist-activist pedagogy begins with creating learning and teaching spaces that critically explore ‘socially-contextualized knowledge claims, participatory learning and valuing personal knowledge’ (Markowitz 2005: 44). Olga Marques (2017) acknowledges multiple feminist pedagogies, however ‘[d]espite ideological differences, all feminism and feminist pedagogies challenged the normative and encourage feminist scholars to reflect on the contradictions of our own practices and theory’ (p. 61). A process of inquiry supported by critical pedagogies of discomfort which as Megan Boler (1999) argues, allow us to ‘examine constructed self-images in relation to how one has learned to see others’ and to ‘recognise how emotions define how and what one chooses to see, and conversely, not to see’ (p. 176, in Amsler and Motta 2017: 6). Feminist pedagogy is closely aligned with pedagogies of discomfort, ‘grounded in the assumption that discomforting feelings are important in challenging dominant beliefs, social habits and normative practices that sustain social inequities and they create openings for individual and social transformation’ (Zembylas 2015: 163).

Feminist pedagogical spaces can be subject-producing practices and spaces, for both academic and student we can begin to shape an understanding of the tensions and conflicts that emerge. Through my feminist pedagogical practices I aim for the ‘affective power of the educational field to act as a counter-discourse; counter, that is, to the dominant social norms that seek to instil an uncritical relation to the world of business and to the role of education in “knowledge transfer”’ (McRobbie 2009: 134). I work to build my feminist pedagogical approach which can be ‘informed by awareness of the relations of power and knowledge underpinning the very existence, as well as the transmission, of the feminist curriculum’ (McRobbie 2009: 133). Markowitz agrees arguing that feminist pedagogy seeks to ‘ask students to become aware of how and why they possess their knowledge claims that they become cognizant of their power to create, shape and change knowledge’ (2005: 42).

Within the teaching and learning co-constructed spaces I seek to develop, '[p]edagogies that actively engage students in dialogue about their own understandings of the connections between self, learning and economic' (Saltmarsh 2011: 123). McCusker (2017) suggests that feminist pedagogy values 'personal experience, diversity and subjectivity, reconceptualising classrooms as spaces for social justice' (p. 4). I suggest that a tension exists with feminist activist pedagogy wherein we aim to create collaborative, self-exploratory and critical teaching and learning environments while we are also 'responsible for providing information and evaluating student knowledge' (Sharp et al. 2007: 545). This illustrates a clash of intent and capacity of pedagogy within higher education that it seeks to cultivate student subjectivity and evaluate them simultaneously. This tension is heightened within pedagogy and curriculum spaces that are 'questioning constructs of sex and gender, evaluating the implications of privilege and justice, and imparting all this information into a traditionally masculine discipline' (Marques 2017: 59). Following Taylor (2014) tensions between feminist pedagogy and the marketized university may also be productive and generative, that can enable rather than dissuade. The negotiations discussed here seek to not only recount experiences but also to begin to consider ways that these negotiations with students and structures can inform and build our feminist pedagogy.

Following McRobbie, feminist pedagogy's utility is in its capacity to bring a critical approach to teaching and learning spaces to shift towards interrogating social norms 'seeks to cross boundaries, requiring students to leave their comfort zones and confront issues that are not nice to know, feminist teaching cannot please students or the university' (Naskali and Keskitalo-Foley 2017: 8). Jones (2011) describes a 'post-modern orientation' to teaching which is a theoretical model designed to explore multiple perspectives around truth, authority and reality, involving students' deconstruction, co-construction and reflectivity. The teacher in this orientation as Jones (2011) outlines is often the 'devils advocate'. This contesting and 'devils advocate' approach is difficult within the economic and performance pressures of higher education. 'Developing an explorative, fluid, nuanced approach that explores multiple subject positions and "truths" remains a challenge' (Ollis 2017: 472).

Ahmed (2015) notes these pedagogic challenges in her feministkilljoys blog 'Against Students'. In this piece Ahmed (2015) discusses the positioning of students in higher education as the 'problem student', 'related figures: the consuming student, the censoring student, the over-sensitive student and the complaining student' (Ahmed 2015: n.p.). Ahmed (2015) argues that it is when students are critical or challenge what is being taught that academics tend to dismiss students as 'acting like consumers'. I would also suggest that teachers in social science, social justice and equity and gender, queer and feminist areas are more likely to negotiate backlash or challenges relating to this content. Ahmed (2015) notes that such backlash or challenges can prompt some academics to 'hit the mute button' rather than delve into trigger warnings and difficulties of teaching content that may be sensitive to some. Ahmed (2015) suggests that rather than dismissing these difficulties as the issues of 'over-sensitive' students, trigger warnings and diving into these messy issues 'enable some people to stay in the room... [creating] safe spaces [as a] technique for dealing with the consequences of histories that are not over' (Ahmed 2015). These negotiations of space and pedagogy are messy because within university classrooms 'asymmetrical relations of power [are] not stable' (Ahmed 2015). In the following section I recount one of my own teaching experiences and reflect on this to further explore the tensions and utility of feminist pedagogy.

The messy and complex negotiations between students, curriculum and academics are central to exploring feminist pedagogy. These exchanges in university classrooms are part of the broader conditions of recognition, for the students, academics and the institution. Ways to negotiate and build capacities for critical thinking and challenge existing knowledge are fraught for both student and academic and an examination of the purpose and the conditions within which feminist pedagogy emerges is critical to understanding its generative possibilities.

Teaching Sociological Theory: Pedagogy Going 'Pear-Shaped'

During 2016 I began my first academic position, a fixed-term contract position where I was parachuted into a subject coordinator role for a 2nd year core Sociology theory subject. With very little teaching

experience and even less internal collegial mentoring, I negotiated the teaching and learning space and re-designed the unit based on critical inquiry pedagogy within which I was ‘ready to relinquish power but students were not always ready to receive it’ (McCusker 2017: 8). My aim was to introduce my students to the sociological imagination through social theory. I wanted my students to be able to connect social theory with the personal and back to the broader social issues concerning them and sociology more broadly. On reflection, these aims were lofty and beyond my inexperienced capacities as a first year academic particularly given the content. Such aims and questions in relation to gender, feminism and queer theories can ‘carry emotional weight and ethical responsibility...[that] other lectures do not’ (Allen 2015: 766).

I took this new position up as a challenge and relished the opportunity to revitalize the subject’s content and delivery. I purposefully condensed the traditional and conventional focus on the ‘three dead white men of Sociology’ Marx, Weber, Durkheim to a minimum. In their place I introduced Foucault, Bourdieu, Freire, Bauman, hooks, Connell, Halberstam and Butler etc. Each week a different theory and theorist which we put to work on a particular social issue. I drew on critical enquiry pedagogy ‘described as an interactive, student-driven process, where knowledge is constructed rather than transmitted’ (Preston et al. 2015: 73). In the second week of semester, during tutorial class, one student directs the following questions to me:

What is the point of all this?

What is your role here?

What am I meant to do with all this?

When will you get to the solutions?

I was a bit taken-aback. I had not expected this series of questions. The whole class was silent, they seemed to be wondering what I would do with this challenge and the substance of the claim? What is the point of this subject? Good question?

My feeble response:

The point is to think critically about the interrelatedness of our society and to ask why do people, events and social understanding appear and operate as they do?

My role is to provide interesting content and to set engaging assessments tasks.

Your role is to engage with the material and complete the assessment tasks.

There are no solutions. I have a PhD and I still don't have any solutions, this is kind of the point of Sociology, if you want or need answers perhaps the science building is the place!! We have questions and exploration and critique but no unquestionable solutions.

This exchange illustrates that this student seems to be having difficulties with the content and my delivery of the ideas, theories and challenges which are inherent in a social theory subject. This student voices their concerns and reminds me that:

Opening a pedagogical space for students to speak about controversial issues in a lecture is challenging...For me, the idea of the lecture as a safe place (either for students or myself) is a fantasy. To suggest that the lecturer has the power to make this space safe implies a too simplistic and instrumental conceptualization of agency given the complexities of what it means to teach and learn. (Allen 2015: 767)

Zembylas (2015) agrees, 'there are no safe classroom spaces, if one considers that conditions of power and privilege always operate in them. For example, marginalized students' need for safety (i.e. not being dominated) seems incompatible with the privileged students' desire to not be challenged' (p. 165). Zembylas (2015) and Allen (2015) discuss the tensions between safety and challenging students and content, a balance that feminist pedagogy seeks to address.

The subject continued and during most tutorials the same student as discussed above spoke in often polemic and dominating ways to which I responded, diverted and deflected aiming to share the opportunity for all students to be engaged and heard. In week's eight, nine and ten I introduced Feminist, Gender and Queer and contemporary theories

to the group. In response to our discussion on Feminist theory, the same student comments:

We don't need feminism. The sexes are already equal. Feminism is just women using their bodies for sex to dominate men.

In the moment, I did not know how to respond to this statement. I thought it was rude, ignorant and ridiculous, I felt that my anger to this student statement would not be a professional response. My response was to deflect this statement to the class as a group and I asked the cohort how they would respond to this statement. This was a mistake, the cohort responded with anger which got personal and unproductive. I intervened and asked the angered students to think and respond sociologically, provides some evidence to counter the original statement...they could not. I intervened again to defuse the angered exchanges and attempted to counter the students position that the sexes were 'already equal' by opening up discussions about the gendered wage gap, family-based violence, and gendered violence.

The pedagogic fractures within this social theory unit continued to escalate. The same disgruntled and disaffected student began posting a barrage of up to 20 controversial Youtube clips onto the subject's Moodle site. The titles of these videos included;

The war on men; The inevitable collapse of feminist societies; What you need to know about single moms; Top three lies of feminism; The myth of the gender wage gap; Queer theory pseudoscience; The war on boys; Feminism was created to destabilize society; Why do men become feminists?; Top four reasons being a single mom rocks REBUTTED; Black fathers matter; 36 stupid feminist questions answered; Ten secrets to being an alpha male; Alpha male vs beta male: Why being a beta male sucks; Feminism 2.0.

I was advised by the Head of Department to delete these Moodle posts. The removal of their posts prompted the following student response:

You proved with deleting my posts that Feminists want abolish (sic) all ALPHA MALES, and as I said in class it is all about power and domination. (emphasis in original)

The accumulative affects of the class discussions and the Moodle postings resulted in a class-cohort fracture that could not be restored. Removing the Moodle clips was too little too late as the rest of the subject's student cohort had read and responded negatively to the content which was largely racist, sexist and purposefully antagonistic, this resulted in the class becoming alienated and disengaged from the subject. Some students notified the universities equity and engagement office and advised that they did not feel safe in this class and requested official support not to attend for the remaining semester. Some students advised me and the equity and engagement office that they felt that the exchanges both in class and on Moodle were personal against me and that they were worried on my behalf. I was also worried about my safety and more concerned about the failures of my teaching and learning practices. The following section reflects on these teaching experiences and possible responses to the tensions arising from feminist pedagogy within higher education.

Generative Responses to Provocative and Volatile Feminist Pedagogy

My above reflections illustrate the failures and tensions in my feminist pedagogy practices teaching a social theory course. Sharp et al. (2007) discuss their experiences of teaching a course on gender, and note that 'students in our courses tend to experience the gender content as provocative and volatile' (p. 533). I suggest that the core and compulsory nature of this social theories course that I have outlined here contributes to elements of obligation and resentment which increases the 'potential to create a hostile class environment' (Sharp et al. 2007: 534).

Institutional responses to hostile teaching and learning experiences are required. One of the ways to respond to pedagogical failures, is to review the induction process, through which we gain awareness of the institutional supports and policies in regard to student conduct. I learnt about the student code of conduct after the event and from university staff outside my discipline and department. The other academics I spoke with about this experience, shared similar stories and issues

and had different strategies to manage it. I wondered if many of these strategies tended to pass the problem along to the next semester, the next academic and group of students.

Inequities of power and academic subjectivity within higher education are shaped by power relations with university classrooms. Institutional and political pressures tend to position students as consumers and as such students voice their concerns more readily and evaluation of academic teaching has intensified as has the focus on student retention and successful outcomes. Leathwood and O'Connell (2003) note in the UK context that students are constructed as 'active consumers of educational services, taking responsibility for their own learning as independent, autonomous and self-directed individuals' (p. 599). This may register a cruel optimism (Berlant 2011) for some students who don't or can't aspire to position themselves within this framework. Some student's expect lecturers and academics to be male, as 'persistent depiction of females as stereotypically sexualised or otherwise intellectually impoverished in relation to the positive images of men...to suggest that the 'intellectual woman' is an 'impossibility' (Coate and Howson 2016: 568–569). Students who are belligerent and aggressive may adhere to the notion that 'authority, status, expertise, scholarly standing and so on are perceived in academia...are more easily acquired by men and are more likely to be associated with male academics' (Coate and Howson 2016: 569).

Teaching demanding and complaining students, I argue, adds to the burdensome workload that already tends to fall disproportionately on women academics, together with 'boundary-less expectations and few rewards' (Angervall 2016: 11). Carson (2001) discusses the negative consequences of gendered teaching evaluations and student pressure noted 'the personal time and emotional costs involved in dealing with demanding and sometimes distressed students, were considerable' (p. 343). Filling in the student conduct forms, progressing through the institutional process to remove problem students, manage the rest of the class's issues, manage one's own insecurities and re-work teaching practices and question the content. These are exhausting processes and I suggest have a significant impact on workload. Briony Lipton (2017), highlights the 'cruel optimism' [of] our optimistic attachment to gender

equity and diversity policies as tools for improving the representation of women may be detrimental to achieving gender equality in academia' (p. 487).

Berlant's (2011) concept of cruel optimism is useful here to explore pedagogic experiences for both academics and their students. Berlant (2011) states that cruel optimism is 'like a new habit that promises to induce in you an improved way of being...They become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially' (p. 1). 'Cruel optimism is the condition of maintaining an attachment to a significantly problematic object' (Berlant 2011: 24). Berlant (2011) asks '[w]hat happens when those fantasies start to fray – depression, dissociation, pragmatism, cynicism, optimism, activism, or an incoherent mash?' (p. 2). I suggest the pedagogic experiences that I have recounted in this chapter could be regarded as 'incoherent mash' because the content and delivery became hijacked and they were allowed to become destabilised to the point of incoherence. The focus shifts away from content, critique of ideas and power and becomes unproductively polemic, personal and not fit for purpose. Activist expectations and possibilities are embedded in feminist pedagogy as academics seek to contest enduring inequities of gender, whiteness and power within both what we teach and how we teach.

For the student whose exchange within the social theories course is discussed here, my pedagogy and endless loops of questions, uncertainty and messiness is clearly alienating. The student is perhaps articulating a clash of expectations, that this type of learning space and the content represents to this student a cruelled optimism wherein, 'people's desires for things they think may improve their lot, but actually act as obstacles to flourishing' (Rasmussen 2015: 192). Here, a university education, the seeking of a qualification and the emancipatory expectations of education to 'improve their lot' is cruelled for this student within this pedagogic encounter. The student expects solutions and no solutions were forthcoming. This combined with the critical enquiry teaching mode becomes difficult for this student and he responds defensively. There is also a cruel optimism in this encounter for me as a new teaching academic. That my students are wanting and even demanding 'solutions'.

My desire to teach from a feminist activist position, to deliver critical enquiry pedagogy to address social inequities and unpack normative structures is cruelled (Berlant 2011) because for some students it refuses to acknowledge the institutional and structure elements within which I am teaching in. It fails to address the employability stakes which many students are invested, it fails to address my limitations as a teacher and the mis-match of academic becoming and everyday experiences. Cruel optimism (Berlant 2011) allows for examination of the expectations and desires for Ph.D. and new academics and how projections and optimism for teaching and ‘making a difference’ is cruelled as a point of departure from the reality of academic work. Utopian ideals are cruelled in the gap between how we may like to create a feminist academic life and the real and everyday experiences of being an academic. I suggest that my fantasies of feminist pedagogy are unachievable within the conditions of higher education. Following Rasmussen (2015) I also ask ‘is transformation something that can be achieved as part of a broad political project within education and other spheres? Or is this a form of “cruel optimism”?’ (p. 195).

The pedagogic difficulties I recount in this chapter refer to my beginner and somewhat inept teaching practice but also to a ‘condition of possibility that also risks having to survive, once again, disappointment and depression, the protracted sense that nothing will change and that no-one, especially oneself, is teachable after all’ (Berlant 2011: 121–122). My reflections on this teaching experience are about teachable moments and the creation of places and spaces for teachable-ness. ‘To be teachable is to be open for change. It is a tendency’ (Berlant 2011: 122). The cruel optimism of the teaching exchange I have illustrated here is the striving through optimism for my teaching to work towards activism, social change, gender equity and living a feminist academic life that is misplaced within the educational fractures in university contexts.

For Ahmed (2017) living a feminist life is informed by feminist theory which she notes is both intellectual and emotional work because we experience gender as ‘a restriction of possibility, and we learn about worlds as we navigate these restrictions’ (p. 7). This restriction of possibility can be uncomfortable and can create ‘bad feelings and disrupting

the normal flow of things' (Murray 2018: 164). Murray (2018) notes that those who do not fit within the academy work harder to survive and are often understood as disruptive. I suggest that the disruption made possible with feminist pedagogy is one of the ways academics can further the equity aims of higher education and to 'living a feminist [academic] life' (Ahmed 2017). Rather than being against individual students who challenge and may be read as sexist, following Ahmed (2015) I focus on building my teaching and learning practices and to shape these negotiations into generative critical enquiry. This chapter has extended our understandings of student experiences, beyond framing them as consumers, by exploring institutional and social structures that shape student and academic experiences of higher education.

In Closing

In this chapter I have explored and reflected on my negotiations towards becoming a feminist academic. I have drawn on my own teaching experience to reflect on feminist pedagogy and the institutional and personal impacts of gendered teaching and learning. I acknowledge the practices and understandings of feminist pedagogy are not fixed and are creative in their application within diverse contexts. However, as a teaching and learning tool, feminist pedagogy focuses on resisting hierarchies, draws on personal experiences and seeks to contest normative thinking and ways of being. These negotiations within teaching and learning spaces have consequences for access, equity, progression and retention of both academics and students. I suggest feminist pedagogy is a mechanism for responding to gender inequities within and beyond higher education, but this recognition and pedagogic practice is not trouble-free, and can fuel 'emotional disjunctures'...both 'seductive and disturbing' (Taylor 2013). This chapter begins to explore how feminist pedagogy may result in *and* respond to educational fractures which limit equity and sustaining engagement for feminist academics.

References

- Ahmed, S. (2015). *Against Students*. Feministkilljoys Blog, Posted 25 June 2015. <https://feministkilljoys.com/2015/06/25/against-students/>. Accessed 14 Nov 2017.
- Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Allen, L. (2015). Queer Pedagogy and the Limits of Thought: Teaching Sexualities at University. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 43(4), 763–775.
- Amsler, S., & Motta, S. C. (2017). The Marketised University and the Politics of Motherhood. *Gender and Education*, 31(1), 82–99.
- Angervall, P. (2016). The Academic Career: A Study of Subjectivity, Gender and Movement Among Women University Lecturers. *Gender and Education*, 30(1), 105–118.
- Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Boler, M. (1999). *Feeling Power: Emotions and Education*. London: Routledge.
- Boring, A. (2017). Gender Biases in Student Evaluations of Teaching. *Journal of Public Economics*, 145, 27–41.
- Bosanquet, A. (2017). Academic, Woman, Mother: Negotiating Multiple Subjectivities During Early Career. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 73–91). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Burke, P. J. (2017). Difference in Higher Education Pedagogies: Gender, Emotion and Shame. *Gender and Education*.
- Carson, L. (2001). Gender Relations in Higher Education: Exploring Lecturers' Perceptions of Student Evaluations of Teaching. *Research Papers in Education*, 16(4), 337–358.
- Coate, K., & Howson, C. K. (2016). Indicators of Esteem: Gender and Prestige in Academic Work. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37(4), 567–585.
- Davies, B. (2006). Women and Transgression in the Halls of Academe. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(4), 497–509.
- Gray, E. (2018). Teaching and Tolerance: Aversive and Divisive Pedagogical Encounters. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 39(3), 422–433.
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Viewing Data Across Multiple Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- James, R., French, S., & Kelly, P. (2017). *Visions for Australian Tertiary Education*. Parkville: Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Melbourne.

- Jones, T. M. (2011). Saving Rhetorical Children: Sexuality Education Discourses from Conservative to Post-modern. *Sex Education, 11*(4), 369–387.
- Kuvalanka, K. A., Goldberg, A. E., & Oswald, R. F. (2013). Incorporating LGBTQ Issues into Family Courses: Instructor Challenges and Strategies Relative to Perceived Teaching Climate. *Family Relations, 62*, 699–713.
- Leathwood, C., & O’Connell, P. (2003). ‘It’s a Struggle’: The Construction of the ‘New Student’ in Higher Education. *Journal of Education Policy, 18*(6), 597–615.
- Lipton, B. (2017). Measures of Success: Cruel Optimism and the Paradox of Academic Women’s Participation in Australian Higher Education. *Higher Education Research and Development, 36*(3), 486–497.
- Lipton, B., & MacKinlay, E. (2017). *We Only Talk Feminist Here: Feminist Academics, Voice and Agency in the Neoliberal University*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- MacKinlay, E. (2016). *Teaching and Learning Like a Feminist*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- MacNell, L., Driscoll, A., & Hunt, A. (2015). What’s in a Name: Exposing Gender Bias in Student Ratings of Teaching. *Innovative Higher Education, 40*, 291–303.
- Markowitz, L. (2005). Unmasking Moral Dichotomies: Can Feminist Pedagogy Overcome Student Resistance? *Gender and Education, 17*(1), 39–55.
- Marques, O. (2017). Navigating Gendered Expectations and the Margins on Feminism and Criminology. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 51–69). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- McCusker, G. (2017). A Feminist Teacher’s Account of Her Attempts to Achieve the Goals of Feminist Pedagogy. *Gender and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2017.1290220>.
- McKenzie, L. (2017). A Precarious Passion: Gendered and Age-Based Insecurity Among Aspiring Academics in Australia. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 31–49). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- McKnight, L. (2016). A Bit of a Dirty Word: ‘Feminism’ and Female Teachers Identifying as Feminist. *Journal of Gender Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2016.1202816>.

- McLeod, J. (2017). Reframing Responsibility in an Era of Responsibilisation: Education, Feminist Ethics. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 38(1), 43–56.
- McRobbie, A. (2009). Inside and Outside the Feminist Academy. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 24(59), 123–138.
- Mengel, F., Sauermann, J., & Zölitz, U. (2017). *Gender Bias in Teaching Evaluations*. Bonn: IZA Institute of Labor Economics.
- Murray, O. M. (2018). Feel the Fear and Killjoy Anyway: Being a Challenging Feminist Presence in Precarious Academia. In Y. Taylor & K. Lahad (Eds.), *Feeling Academic in the Neoliberal University: Feminist Flights, Fights and Failures* (pp. 164–189). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Naskali, P., & Keskitalo-Foley, S. (2017). Mainstream University Pedagogy in Feminist Perspective. *Gender and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2017.1315057>.
- Ollis, D. (2017). The Power of Feminist Pedagogy in Australia: Vagina Shorts and the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women. *Gender and Education*, 29(4), 461–475.
- Preston, L., Harvie, K., & Wallace, H. (2015). Inquiry-Based Learning in Teacher Education: A Primary Humanities Example. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(12), 73–85.
- Rasmussen, M. L. (2015). ‘Cruel Optimism’ and Contemporary Australian Critical Theory in Educational Research. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 47(2), 192–206.
- Saltmarsh, S. (2011). Economic Subjectivities in Higher Education: Self, Policy and Practice in the Knowledge Economy. *Cultural Studies Review*, 17(2), 115–139.
- Savigny, H. (2014). Women, Know Your Limits: Cultural Sexism in Academia. *Gender and Education*, 26(7), 794–809.
- Sharp, E. A., Bermudez, J. M., Watson, W., & Fitzpatrick, J. (2007). Reflections from the Trenches: Our Development as Feminist Teachers. *Journal of Family Studies*, 28(4), 529–548.
- Smith, H. (2012). The Unintended Consequences of Grading Teaching. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 17(6), 747–754.
- Taylor, Y. (2013). Queer Encounters of Sexuality and Class: Navigating Emotional Landscapes of Academia. *Emotion Space and Society*, 8, 51–58.
- Taylor, Y. (2014). *The Entrepreneurial University: Engaging Publics, Intersecting Impacts*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Thwaites, R., & Pressland, A. (2017). *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Winchester, H., Lorenzo, S., Browning, L., & Chesterman, C. (2006). Academic Womens' Promotions in Australian Universities. *Employee Relations*, 28(6), 505–522.
- Wurster, S. (2017). *The Leaking Pipe: Women in Academia*. Australian Women's History Network. Sourced from <http://www.auswhm.org.au/blog/leaking-pipe/>.
- Zembylas, M. (2015). 'Pedagogy of Discomfort' and Its Ethical Implications: The Tensions of Ethical Violence in Social Justice Education. *Ethics and Education*, 10(2), 163–174.



(Dis)Assembling the Neoliberal Academic Subject: When PhD Students Construct Feminist Spaces

Elizabeth Ablett, Heather Griffiths
and Kate Mahoney

Introduction

This chapter is about how feminist PhD students based in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) can both unmake, and be implicated in making, the neoliberal academic subject. It explores what happens when PhD researchers construct feminist spaces of support within the doctoral community at a UK HEI. The PhD is often viewed as an ‘apprenticeship’ for students hoping for an academic career (Peabody 2014). But the narrowing academic job market has implications for how PhD

E. Ablett (✉)

Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK
e-mail: E.Ablett@warwick.ac.uk

H. Griffiths

Oxford Brookes Business School, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK
e-mail: h.griffiths@brookes.ac.uk

K. Mahoney

Department of History, University of Essex, Colchester, Essex, UK
e-mail: k.mahoney@essex.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_4

students experience the time over which they complete their degrees, and how that time is presented and perceived within the academy (Jaschik 2017; Thwaites and Pressland 2017; Wolff 2015). The neoliberalisation of UK HEIs has normalised an ever-expansive definition of what 'successful' or 'productive' PhD time looks like. Doctoral researchers have experienced intensification of their workloads, while still being expected to complete their degrees in three to four years if full-time students, and six years if studying part time. PhD students ensure their employability by fulfilling tasks that extend beyond their thesis. On job or postdoctoral applications, they are asked about publications, the number of conference papers they have given, their teaching experience, awards and funding, and their contributions to public engagement and impact agendas.

Whilst these additional activities may be professionally rewarding and even enjoyable, we are concerned about the exclusionary effects that are produced when this mode of doctoral study becomes normalised. Many PhD students decide that this way of working is incompatible with their caring responsibilities, relationships and wellbeing, involvement with activism and other personal interests. As a result, they choose to leave academia (Anonymous 2014; Kadir 2017). For those who decide to stay, the PhD has arguably become the time when ontological insecurity and imposter syndrome is normalised (Ball 2003; Breeze 2018). This way of relating to academic work persists throughout many individuals' careers (Gill 2009). Furthermore, funding cuts to Higher Education have constricted university resources, intensifying competition between PhD students (Belfield et al. 2017; Shepherd 2011). As current and recent doctoral researchers, we believe that PhD students can respond to these developments in two ways. We can accept such developments, rendering the issues that they raise as individualised concerns, ensuring that the unanswerable question 'Am I doing enough?' will continue to dominate PhD time and reinforce students' insecurities. Alternatively, we can resist these implications by building collegiality within the doctoral community.

In this chapter, we reflect on our experiences as feminist PhD students living and working with and within the contradiction of (re)producing neoliberalism in UK HEIs. Our analysis draws on the

time we spent co-creating a 'feminist workshop space' at our home institution, the University of Warwick. As funded doctoral students, we were encouraged by our institution and funding bodies to access pots of money reserved for PhD researchers organising conferences. We were told that doing so would look good on our CVs. We chose to utilise these funding streams to host a day that would, conversely, create a space for PhD students to share their experiences of working and studying in the neoliberal academy, and to consider how we might (or might not) resist modes of neoliberal performativity, logic, and practices. The workshop was held in October 2016 and included academic speakers, discussion workshops and a creative zine-making session. Early career researchers (ECRs), the definition of which we have deliberately expanded to include PhD students, provided fascinating reflexive papers that explored their experiences from a variety of intersections and institutions.

We will use the workshop as a springboard for considering how various aspects of event organisation both disrupt and reaffirm neoliberal academic practices. Creating spaces of support and resistance for PhD students within UK HEIs can be a paradoxical endeavour. By facilitating a workshop, for example, students acquire an aspect of administrative experience that helps them to 'stand out' in the increasingly competitive academic job market. Furthermore, the extra-curricular nature of event organisation means that students seeking to resist neoliberal practices simultaneously enact the expansive and unbounded working patterns that define neoliberal subjectivity in an 'academia without walls' (Santos 2014; Pereira 2016).

Our chapter begins by briefly outlining the casualisation, intensification and performativity that occurs at PhD level in the UK, with recognition of how these impact doctoral students differently according to (dis)privilege. We subsequently analyse the various stages of workshop organisation, including our inspirations for the event, our thoughts and feelings as it took place, and our reflections once the workshop had occurred. We discuss how we took up space in the university, the affective dynamics and language of the sessions, and the ways in which solidarity and critique were performed. In doing so, we draw out some of the key lessons we learnt when organising and hosting our event,

examining how critical feminist workshop spaces can be constructed and how paradoxical implications might be negotiated. Taking inspiration from all our speakers, our chapter concludes by considering the ways in which such ruptures, solidarities and acts of resistance can continue to have reverberations beyond temporary space, serving to disrupt institutional norms in collective, creative, and powerful ways.

Methodology

The content of our chapter serves as a conceptual tool; we use the experience of organising a workshop to consider the paradoxes involved when using feminist practices to instigate change within the neoliberal university. We draw on Henderson's (2015) assertion that the 'highly conventionalised context of a conference is also a site that resists the traditional constructions of academia as rational and systematic' (2015: 915). She argues that conferences enable the examination of the social and emotional 'microprocesses' involved in event organisation, as well as the broader concerns within Higher Education that influence these interactions (2015: 914). As such, the chapter takes a chronological approach to consider the impetus for the workshop, the day itself, and its after-effects.

Part of our feminist approach to disrupting the neoliberal academic subject in this chapter is through unsettling 'the' neoliberal, authorial voice. During our workshop, we were inspired by a presentation given by a member of feminist academic group, The Res-Sisters (2017). She argued that collective writing can enhance collegiality and has inspired us to work collectively on a number of projects where individual authorship may be indicated but downplayed. In this chapter, we partially obfuscate our authorship to maintain our commitment to a feminist politics that encourages the collaborative and supportive generation and expression of ideas.

Writing collaboratively, however, forms part of the paradox of engaging in critical scholarship within the neoliberal academy. Collaborative writing fosters vital scholarly comradeship. By sharing risk, we can communicate experiences that we may not have the confidence to do

when writing alone. This chapter, for example, incorporates our individual personal reflections, which are indented and italicised throughout. These accounts illustrate our commitment to a feminism that politicises personal experience. By distinguishing typographically between our collective analysis and individual accounts, we also engage in a form of feminist bricolage. Weaving together different reflective threads serves as a ‘materialisation of multiple voices, which...disrupt assumptions about form and linearity’ in normalised academic writing (Handsforth and Taylor 2016: 629). We wrote these accounts individually but deliberately left them anonymous. As junior scholars, we want to begin our careers by taking intellectual and political risks, and acknowledge our relative privilege in being able to do so. However, we are also mindful that junior scholars may pay a higher price for undertaking such risks; be that through critical scholarship, organising collectively or exposing discrimination and harassment on campus. Therefore, as we navigate through the neoliberal UK HEI landscape, writing collectively simultaneously enables critical scholarship *and* constitutes us ‘playing the game’. If ‘the paradoxical precondition for [feminist] dissent is participation’ in ‘the academic “game”’ (Hark 2016: 84, cited in Pereira 2017: 207), then we are unavoidably implicated in this.

In embarking on this reflexive project, we recognise Mazzei and Jacksons’ (2012) concerns that the ‘voice’ in qualitative research is sometimes erroneously assumed to ‘speak the truth of consciousness and experience’. We also acknowledge Bhavnani’s (1993) concept of feminist accountability. She argues that feminist research ‘cannot be complicit with dominant representations which reinscribe inequality’ (1993: 97–98). With this in mind, our account of the workshop is presented in a thematic and semi-fictional manner, as based on our observations on the day, and should not be read as direct representation of what was said or done. This approach is aligned with feminist research that uses semi-fictionalised accounts as analytical material (Inckle 2010). It also ensures participant confidentiality. We recognise that any direct quotations from our workshop speakers would not be reflective of their experiences, but rather our interpretations of their contributions.

Living a Feminist PhD Student Life

The intensification of PhD workloads has resulted in the blurring of temporal and spatial boundaries in doctoral students' everyday lives.

I submitted my doctoral thesis in September 2017. After returning home on my submission day, I sat on the sofa with a copy of my thesis on the table beside me. It felt then as though my thesis was more alive than I was. No longer simply a few hundred paper pages, it had become something organic and beating, an object that reflected the time and energy that I had spent attempting to bring the subject of my thesis to life. My very sense of self had been consumed by the production of this work. The time I had used to produce it, and the space that I had taken up to while doing it, was now reduced to the ream of paper next to me. Throughout the process of completing my PhD, I often considered why it was, at times, such a painful and all-consuming process. When I started my doctoral research, the work that I needed to do in order to complete my degree seemed easily manageable. If I divided the research and writing that I proposed to do equally over the three years for which I was funded, adopting a professional routine that replicated a nine-to-five working day, then I would be able to finish my PhD on time. I soon became aware, however, that if I wanted to not only complete my thesis but embark on an academic career at the end of it, then my carefully laid out research plan, and routine that reflected 'normal working hours', would be insufficient.

PhD students are often informed that if they want to pursue a career in academia, then the completion of their doctoral thesis is not enough. They must also teach, publish, attend conferences, give papers, organise events, and perform administrative duties. In doing so, they demonstrate their dedication to the academy, and their ability to perform tasks associated with permanent academic posts. The range and breadth of work now associated with the successful completion of a PhD, however, has been aggravated by the increased casualisation of academic work. The neoliberalisation of Higher Education, defined by Mudge (2008) as the privileging of the market above all else, has led to a proliferation of fixed-term contracts that reflect universities' aims to reduce costs and increase flexibility (2008: 704–705).

This precarious employment is largely carried out by ECRs, who work under increasingly poor conditions for diminishing pay. Teaching diaries and surveys collated by anti-casualisation campaign groups in the UK indicate that many fractional tutors are not paid for the administrative and preparatory tasks that they perform (Warwick Anti-Casualisation 2016; Fractionals Fighting for Fair Play 2014). Some tutors are paid below the living wage. The failure to recognise the work completed by hourly-paid tutors has financial and emotional implications for PhD students. One tutor interviewed by the anti-casualisation campaign group Fractionals for Fair Play stated: ‘The fact that I run around so much teaching, and for very low pay, means I am not stable for my PhD work, financially, in my living conditions, in my personal life’ (2014: n.p.).

I would often laugh with my friends in the latter stages of my PhD that I had become a living, breathing version of my thesis. I think that these jokes provided me with a means of recognising the sense of displacement, foreboding, anxiety, and guilt that I felt when I headed out to socialise in the knowledge that my work remained incomplete.

The absence of a work-life balance is bolstered by the unstructured nature of independent doctoral study. The hours that students are supposed to be working, and the number of days that they can take as annual leave, often remain unspecified.

These indeterminate temporal parameters are echoed in the spaces that PhD students work. Many university departments do not have the resources available to provide students with permanent office space. This means that they often ‘hot desk’ in open plan, shared offices. Desks are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and students are unable to personalise their workspaces, bolstering their sense of impermanence and insecurity. Alternatively, PhD students work from home. Merging personal and professional temporalities and spaces with an expansive workload can often mean that everyday tasks become overwhelming. Personal concerns become enmeshed within the work that students produce, and it becomes impossible to decipher the causes of certain feelings and emotional responses. The nature of being a ‘good’ neoliberal

subject at a doctoral level is such that you may feel identifiable only by the work that you have completed, and the work that you still need to do. This is influenced not only by the need to complete ongoing daily tasks, but also by a concern for the future, associated with the precarity and competitiveness of early-career academic posts. These feelings can instigate and aggravate symptoms of mental illness. A study carried out in Belgium reported that half of all PhD students experience psychological distress, whilst one in three is at risk of common psychiatric disorders, such as depression (Levecque et al. 2017).

Sexist, ableist and racist discrimination, and an absence of diversity in many university departments, further intensifies the precarious and future-focused tenets of PhD time. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are underrepresented at PhD-level in the UK. This underrepresentation negatively affects the 'quality of knowledge and the research process itself, which derive from diverse viewpoints and experiences' (Wakeling 2016: 4). Writing of his experiences as a black PhD student at graduate school in the United States, Grollman (2017) documents his time and effort taken to foster a supportive circle of friends outside his institution. Because racism is the 'norm in academe', he felt obliged to create a support network where he could discuss the discrimination he experienced as a student 'without fear that your actions or words will get back to your colleagues' (Grollman 2017: n.p.). Bradbury (2013) recalls her elation when she realised that she wanted to be an academic, but also her disappointment when she realised how 'white and male' university departments can be. She argues that limited funding opportunities and an 'overwhelming lack of role models' mean that there are few Arts and Humanities PhD students from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds in the UK (Bradbury 2013: n.p.). As argued by Kwali (quoted in Hall 2017: n.p.), a 'university culture driven primarily by targets that contribute to league table status or funding success' means that institutions often have 'no apparent incentive to address the ethnic profile of staff or doctoral students'.

Academics have published numerous accounts detailing their experiences of being 'critical of yet trapped within the same logic of individual solutions and techniques of self' promoted within neoliberal HEIs (Gill 2009: 236). Many of these narratives, whilst successfully articulating the

personal and institutional implications of neoliberalism, are produced by senior academics. At the same time, PhD students' voices are not always incorporated into volumes that examine the experiences of early-career academics. In recent years, however, doctoral researchers have played a significant role in campaigning against neoliberal practices, including the casualisation and precarity of ECRs and the perpetuation of inequality and discrimination through university syllabi. We therefore argue it is important to incorporate PhD student experiences into broader discussions about the paradox of working within and against the neoliberal academy.

Workshop Impetus and Inspiration

As Pereira (2017) observes in her ethnography of academia, one strategy that feminist or critical scholars have used to fend off vulnerability or marginality in the performative academy is to embrace accelerated and intensified forms of work productivity. Pereira acknowledges a productivity paradox which may allow some academics to gain the legitimacy and space to do other critical or more collegiate work on the side, albeit on a 'contingent and conditional basis' (Pereira 2017: 207; Hark 2016). Resisting this, for Pereira, means moving beyond critical writing or informal engagement with the issues, and instead building on the feminist politics of anti-work (Weeks 2011) and the slow academy (Berg and Seeber 2016) to slow down or refuse work, creating alternative working environments and normalising alternative 'care-ful' (Lynch 2010) working practices.

Some doctoral students may occupy too vulnerable a position in relation to practising a politics of anti-work, as the earlier discussion on forms of (dis)privilege, precarity and casualisation intimates. This is not to say PhD students do not, will not or cannot refuse or slow down accelerated and intense productivity. PhD students, professional staff and ECRs may also encounter the negative consequences of senior colleagues' refusal to work, when this work is passed on to others. We argue it is vital for PhD students to have access to a range of spaces where they can come together collectively, with and without more

senior colleagues, to confront the risks associated with vulnerability, productivity and anti-work, and to organise effectively. The workshop we co-organised is just one example of how we might do this. Another is through broader collective political action, as some of us experienced during the 2018 University and College Union strikes across some British universities. The strikes also represented a rupture to the usual academic temporality, presenting us with different spaces in which to come together with colleagues and students in more creative and collegial ways. On a sustained basis, engaging in the ‘productivity paradox’ is a path to overwork and exhaustion, as we found out when organising the workshop.

In the first year of my doctorate, figuring out what was expected of a ‘good’ PhD felt overwhelming. I knew I had to finish the thesis in four years (in line with my funding), but there seemed to be so much more that was encouraged and expected during that time. Trying to deal with this uncertainty, along with anxiety over my academic ability, I busied myself with other projects. There was some reassurance in this busyness; I felt at least I was working towards ‘something’ tangible, be that delivering a conference paper or organising events. It also fitted with patterns of intense work and balancing multiple responsibilities that I had grown accustomed to in my working life prior to the PhD. I could do that. I didn’t like it, but I could do it, and there was some security in that. But I felt deeply uneasy about how normalised this way of working seemed in academia. Had I just left my job for more of the same?

When PhD time is filled with accelerated and intensified forms of productivity, there is less time to read, write, and think about our PhD projects; a loss which has potentially fundamental implications for the nature of academic knowledge production and for the sustainability and quality of our respective fields more generally (Pereira 2017). We argue that we therefore need more spaces that can foster some ‘breathing space’, where the focus is not to produce ‘more’ academic outputs but to reflect, think, engage, and create. This is not simply about re-energising in order to return to our usual productive selves, though helping one another to replace lost energy and being buoyed up by sharing experiences is both political and necessary. It is rather to discourage or

disrupt constant productivity as the norm, which has become necessary for many to survive and thrive in academia. A challenge for the workshop was how to negotiate the ways in which we are implicated in reproducing this norm, however much we desire to subvert it.

Preparations

As our relationship to one another was of co-organisers, colleagues, co-authors and most importantly friends, our mode of organising often involved late night personal messages to one another, blurring these categories and complicating our relationships with one another. Whilst this was mostly positive and enriching, at times it reproduced some of the more insidious affective states associated with academic neoliberal subjectivities. Alongside the messages between us, organisation involved many emails back and forth with a variety of people, writing funding bid applications, publicising the event, and dealing with small crises, all of which interrupted the more usual temporal rhythms of a PhD. They were not the only interruptions to our 'PhD time', but were fitted in around teaching, fieldwork, writing papers and other project work, all of which could, at times, be resented as things which distracted us from our own work and made it suffer.

Carving up our time in such a way reflected the mode of working we saw from more senior colleagues; it didn't seem especially unusual to be balancing several tasks at one time, all the while being expected to continue our own studies at a (relatively) quick pace in order to complete within the three or four years that our funding provided for. At times, this meant that the emails and messages from one another, and from workshop attendees, produced a certain kind of annoyance among the three of us. As messaging services now generally include the function to view if the recipient has read your message, we also unwittingly became one another's surveyors, with a non-response coming to increase that annoyance. This was despite knowing that we had instigated the workshop ourselves, intentionally adding to our workloads and having set out to organise it with positive intent.

Creating (Alternative) Space

To tackle my uncertainties about the nature of the PhD time and the prospect of the future, I went to careers talks, PhD and ECR workshops, read PhD blogs, and signed up for other academic projects. Talking with PhD friends, I realised that living in doubt and uncertainty was a common experience. Doubts about the legitimacy of my doubts crept in; being white, middle-class, able-bodied, with English as my first language and not having to worry about visa issues, I was in a privileged position in relation to many PhD students. There seemed to be a lot of desire from fellow PhDs to address these issues in a space devoted to analysing and politicising the chats we were having over post-work drinks or in hushed tones in the PhD offices. Although workshops existed to address some of these concerns, it was often hard to escape dominant institutional discourses, which invariably just focussed on ways to increase productivity or promote yourself, without questioning the foundations of these principles.

To unmake neoliberal academic subjectivities, we needed to re-think our relation to the temporality of the PhD. We wanted to create a different experience within its temporal boundaries, a workshop that had critical reflection and creativity at its core. We built in time to rest, eat pizza and watch a feminist comedy act in the evening. But to do all this you need money, energy and time ‘to spare’. In creating an alternative, feminist-inspired space where we could fill our time differently to the usual academic rhythms and activities, we needed to work long hours and juggle multiple tasks and responsibilities; in many ways, embodying the ‘perfect’ neoliberal academic subject (McRobbie 2015). Feelings of exhaustion, restlessness, inertia and irritability were also shared by participants who expressed how relieved they were to attend a *different* PhD workshop. This was the mood of the day; a palpable, collective outtake of breath, a sigh of relief and a nod of recognition that each one of us shared the desire for a space where we could reflect on our experiences in an alternative way. As organisers, however, we also breathed a sigh of relief when it was over.

We framed our event as an ‘opening-up’, a rupture of neoliberal space and time; a fracture where the possibilities for resisting the neoliberal productivity and personhood could be explored. Here, we consider how

the event attempted to do this, paying particular attention to the ‘successes’ and ‘failures’ of the space as a rupture; the awkward, unsettling and disheartening moments as well as the political possibilities we, and the participants, found. A common theme throughout the workshop was the sense of vulnerability that people feel when undertaking doctoral work; for instance in relation to a problematic supervisor relationship, precarious teaching contracts, or cultures of silence around institutional ableisms, racisms and sexism. The workshop was described by many attendees as a ‘necessary’ space where we could learn about one another’s experiences without fear of the usual risks, such as being considered too troublesome, or being heard only as a ‘killjoy’ or ‘complainer’ (Ahmed 2017). Participants feared not being heard or listened to due to the negative connotations and intentions of these labels, which can become attached and stick to those bodies who do speak out (Ahmed 2014).

There were periods during the workshop devoted to discussion of, and reflection on, our personal experiences of doctoral work, designed to identify both particularities and commonalities of experience. In doing so, we hoped to encourage thinking about these issues less as personal problems or failings, and more as structural issues whose effects are distributed unevenly across PhD student populations. As with any academic space, the workshop was an emotional place. We attempted to foster a specifically feminist space which disrupted any gendered dualism associated with emotional expressions and paid attention to the needs of a variety of bodies (Henderson 2015). In the following section, we problematise these attempts, exploring how emotions circulated within the workshop, and what this indicates about the complexity of trying to unmake academic neoliberal subjects in ‘critical’ academic spaces.

On the Day: Navigating Positive and Unsettling Moments

The day began with a powerful discussion about the embodied experiences of doing a PhD and the problematic practices that wear us out. In small groups, we explored questions that asked: who the feminist

academic community is, and what it takes to be part of it; who is worn out and left out; the feminist PhD students who choose not to pursue academic work; the ableist assumptions at the heart of contemporary academia; and institutional racism within universities. We shared our sometimes painful experiences of excessive demands, workloads and institutional frameworks, and how this contradicted our desire not to compromise on intellectual rigor or the quality of our teaching and research. Yet in some of the small break-out groups, there seemed to come a moment when the discussion reached an 'affective tipping point', where the accumulation of shared experience and critique seemed to make everyone feel a bit *too* disheartened.

When these moments occurred, someone inevitably felt compelled to comment on the privileges of academia or affirm the positive aspects of working in the academy. This relates, in part, to participants' impetus to avoid reproducing notions of academic exceptionalism in terms of precarious work. There was, however, another effect of this reorientation; the conversation faltered, and the momentum which had enabled critique was paused or lost. To balance out the weight of negative affect by reminding ourselves of the positive aspects of academia, we unwittingly pressed pause on the development of further critique. The tensions between positive aspects of academia, hopeful desires for the future, and contrasting painful, hidden injuries in the present, produce complex and conflicting emotions. Usually, as part of the individualising processes and responsabilisation logics of neoliberalism, compounded with the isolation that many PhD students encounter, we experience these emotional ambiguities on our own. The workshop enabled us to feel alongside one another, and therefore engage in collective feminist work (re)making the personal and professional as political. This constituted fulfilment to us as organisers, much more so than the formal 'successful event outcomes' we reported to our funders.

One presenter showed us images of an 'ideal type' of neoliberal academic subject in the country where they were from. The images were striking in their depiction of both the subjects' whiteness and extreme entrepreneurial endeavours; the women were not only successful academics, but variously built their own houses, started their own companies, and juggled motherhood. These images had an interesting effect on

everyone in the room. Initially, there was some astonished laughter at the seemingly caricature-like depiction of extreme neoliberal subjectivities. Participants also expressed shock, even a little awe, and disbelief. Then, some participants highlighted their concern at what it meant for academic feminists to be laughing at images of other women who were not there to speak for themselves. The laughter stopped, and the discussion seemed to falter once again whilst everyone digested this critique and reoriented themselves. Problematising the laughter had the effect of silencing the room.

What we want to highlight here is what the laughter and its problematisation did to the space, and what silences were produced as a result. After the morning sessions, where we shared some painful emotions and experiences, the laughter was welcome. It served as a relief valve, as laughter often does, collectively bonding those in the room by observing the more ridiculous or extreme forms of academic performativity. Laughter served to position the women in the images as 'other', as a form of neoliberal subjectivity that we, in the room, rejected. It therefore functioned to posit such ridiculous practices as occurring outside the room, in another place and time, and as other to our own identities as 'critical' PhD students. Laughter as an othering practice belied the fact that we are all entangled within neoliberal practices; that resistance and critique form constitutive parts of academic neoliberalism, extending even to the production of this chapter.

As with other activist spaces, by moving individually experienced problems into a more formalised space, we reconfigured the conversations. The workshop therefore operated within a kind of liminal range; working both within institutionalised spaces and temporalities and working against them. As we have noted, coming together in such a way has the positive effect of politicising shared issues. But by formalising this coming together in a workshop configuration, we stood to repeat patterns of institutionalised exclusion. Postfeminist or neoliberal subjectivities may affect each of us, but these subjectivities are shaped along racialised, classed and localised lines (Jolles 2012; Butler 2013; Dosekun 2015). We recognise that our workshop (re)produced some of the patterns of academic, institutionalised white and middle-class dominance, even where our intent was to be as inclusive as possible.

As Kelsey Blackwell (2018) notes in her defence of caucusing, patterns of white dominance are inevitable in integrated spaces because, ‘the values of whiteness are the water in which we all swim. No one is immune’ (Blackwell 2018: 3). Blackwell argues that these values may include behaviours and practices like, ‘being legitimized for using academic language, an expectation of ‘getting it right’ (i.e., perfectionism), fear of open conflict, scapegoating those who cause discomfort, and a sense of urgency that takes precedence over inclusion’ (Blackwell 2018: 3). As white, middle-class feminist academics, we need to support students and colleagues where and when they need to caucus. When constructing ‘inclusive’, integrated spaces, like our workshop, we need to examine and limit practices like perfectionism and act more decisively to ensure fear of open conflict does not silence or stop the development of critique.

Critical Creativity

Though we were conscious of resisting the desire to ‘produce’ something with or for participants, we were able to use the momentum of our collective feminist work to create something removed from the usual forms of academic production. Drawing on the feminist tools of the Riot Grrrl movement, the final session was devoted to creating a zine reflecting on the themes and emotions of the day. In small groups, we each created one page, joining them together to make a full zine. The zine-making enabled us to enact some of the crucial issues highlighted during the day; practicing self-care, working and fighting collaboratively, being creative and critical, but having fun whilst doing it. In an environment of seemingly ceaseless academic production, it felt liberating to make time for creativity and to permit ourselves space to collectively explore our thoughts and emotions outside the boundaries of our normal work. The end result was a beautiful expression of the day that participants could take home as a physical representation of the connections and solidarities fostered at the workshop.

The workshop zines articulated a feminist (punk) pedagogy, inspired by the British punk subcultures of the 1970s which were reignited by feminist activists as part of the Riot Grrrl movement of the 1990s

(Way 2017). Our zine-making session was hosted by participants from Edinburgh University who had been experimenting with zines in their teaching. The relationship with feminist anarchism and alternative forms of knowledge dissemination made zine-making a perfect way to conclude our workshop. Everyone in the room, us included, indulged themselves in the childlike freedom of cutting, gluing, and giggling at each other's attempts to draw. Rather than feeling like we were wasting time, it was a relief to step off the productivity treadmill. Contributors to the workshop said how good it felt to have a break from the normal expectations of the working day and come together with like-minded strangers to have fun. It was a chance to think freely and creatively, knowing that whatever the end result, it would be appreciated for what it was, with no feedback or reviews. The process of creating the zines became a metaphor for the workshop's message of creating individual strength through collectivism and collaboration. Zine-making is a collaborative process (Creasap 2014) and although each group worked on their individual piece, the finished article was a collection of everyone's work and the final zine was bold and evocative.

Maintaining Space

Organising the workshop was too much. It was arranged for October 2016 which was the start of my third year as a PhD student. I had lost direction with my research and filled the void by launching myself into the academic community around me, getting involved with all sorts of projects which I thought would entertain me and look good on my sparse academic CV. I joined numerous committees and studied toward a Postgraduate Award in Teaching in Higher Education. This was to support the teaching I was doing in the department, which I was juggling alongside another part-time job as a Social Media Correspondent. I enjoyed every one of these activities and they each taught me so much, but they also gave me something much darker. The following summer I was diagnosed with Depression and General Anxiety Disorder and the only activities I was able to manage were those prescribed by my CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) advisors. Not wanting to admit that I was struggling, I continued with my PhD and did not confess the full extent of my problems to my supervisors. They could see exactly what I was

doing though. All these extra activities were a way to avoid the daunting task of producing 'original' research. I was lured into the trap of needing to make the most of my time as a PhD student to the detriment of my health, and my research. I am less than two months away from submitting my thesis as I write this chapter and precariously tiptoeing around burnout again. I don't regret finding my edge and tumbling right over it but I do regret that this has become a 'normal' part of many student's PhD experience.

Organising the workshop took considerable time and energy away from our doctoral work. We wanted the workshop to be the beginning of a small social movement amongst postgraduate feminists, but we soon realised that we were struggling to sustain the commitment required to launch something on this scale. We thought about virtual spaces for community building and resistance, even drafting a Facebook page that never went live. We briefly discussed a follow-up workshop but that did not materialise either. It soon felt like the energy generated during the workshop was only temporary and had faded as normal life resumed. We received some incredible feedback from the workshop and we knew that if we wanted to continue our mission we had to act quickly. However, none of us could find the time or motivation to so, or maybe it was a lack of time that fed the demotivation. As the months passed, we felt disheartened that the workshop had made no discernible difference to our postgraduate community. Our neoliberal voices were holding us to account, berating us for not doing enough rather than celebrating what we had achieved—that we had brought together a room full of inspiring people who had made a small difference to each other's lives and working practices. The following section will explore what we mean by this and how carving a workshop space to challenge the PhD experience has caused reverberations in our own lives and across the academy.

Collaboration

The benefits of collectivism and collaboration were amongst the most poignant messages to emerge from the workshop. When collaborating, the responsibility for completing that task is a shared one. As the Res-sisters argue, the act of collaboration becomes 'a political act

of refusing the hyper-individualised and competitive modes of working that academia encourages' (Res-sisters 2017: 269). By writing collectively, there is no lead author or self-promotion and the work that they produce as the Res-sisters is a conscious resistance against the competitive individualisation encouraged by the UK Research Excellence Framework. Collaborative writing is not unique to feminism. What makes feminist collective writing special, however, is its capacity to destabilise power inequalities. As Pearce (2018) reminds us, the unequal power distribution across the academy can often leave PhD students vulnerable to exploitation at the hands of their citation-hungry senior peers. As a result, respectful, egalitarian collaborations should be celebrated and treasured (Pearce 2018).

As authors of this chapter, we welcomed the opportunity to work together again, fostering exactly the kind of egalitarian collaboration we experienced during the workshop. Yet, once again, the act of producing this text created a paradox whereby we were required to become ideal neoliberal workers in order to complete it. The process of writing, revising and editing this chapter is pulling us away from our own research and the resulting busyness is reminiscent of co-ordinating the workshop. Yet we continue. We realised our motivations for writing this chapter resemble those we had two years ago when co-ordinating the workshop. It forms part of our collective commitment to carve space for a feminist critique of the PhD experience and support the work of our feminist peers who champion collections such as this one. But we are simultaneously moving our own careers forward with this publication. As we highlighted in the methodology section of this chapter, writing collaboratively is not a straightforward rejection of neoliberal academic practices. But we hope that, if we stay in academia, we can continue to expand on, trouble and disseminate collaborative practices amongst students of the future.

Mainstreaming (Punk) Feminist Pedagogy

Six months after our workshop, we were excited to see a zine making session at the British Sociological Association (BSA) Postgraduate Pre-Conference Day, facilitated by the Res-Sisters. Reflecting on the day,

one participant wrote how the collective act of zine-making fostered solidarity between PhD students from different disciplines because the exercise encouraged them to discuss their experiences and use imagery rather than words to explore their feelings (Käkelä 2017). It is also something that participants have since reported introducing into their own teaching practice. In this way, we notice the ripples of our collective feminist work extending beyond the temporary workshop time and space. Whilst Sociology PhD students were attending the BSA conference, second year undergraduates at the University of Edinburgh were finishing off their assessments for a core module on the fundamentals of Sociological concepts and research. The assessment was based on coursework students had developed throughout the module in the form of a handbook, and in line with the course ethos of 'learning through play and through making' (Moore 2016), the handbook took the form of a zine.

As an assessment method, zines could be thought of as occupying a 'middle ground' between traditional essays and other forms of media such as blogs (Creasap 2014: 154). As an alternative teaching resource, zines can help students facilitate connections between theory and everyday life, and provides them with a rare opportunity to 'tap into passion and creativity' (Creasap 2014: 166). In her autoethnographic research into zine-making as a classroom pedagogy in Further Education, Way (2017) extends Creasap's (2014) claims by arguing that students become 'active creators and agents in their own learning' (2017: 152). Way (2017) considers the practice to be 'empowering' and 'liberating', especially for students who feel as though their voices are marginalised within the traditional classroom setting. However, Creasap (2014) warns that zines can become a labour of love and students can spend a lot of time designing, writing, compiling and publishing them. Here the paradox of productivity emerges once more. Whilst experimental feminist pedagogies can challenge the boundaries of contemporary knowledge production and make subjects more applicable to the everyday, creative tasks such as zine-making can take up more resources than traditional forms of assessment. Not only can this have an impact on the students that it aims to serve, but it can also have ramifications for PhD students who are increasingly (precariously) employed to support

the teaching on these experimental modules. The zine-making conducted in our workshop was an activity with defined temporal and spatial boundaries. Without these boundaries, creative pedagogies, and the activities they encourage, risk becoming another demand on the time of students across the academic hierarchy. The following section continues the theme of creativity to show how the workshop experience encouraged us to become more creative in our own lives.

Making Time for Creativity

As PhD students, the ability to be creative in our own work is limited but zine-making at the workshop encouraged us to rediscover our own creativity as an act of self-care during the doctorate. Between the three authors, we paint, embroider and crochet and one of us is even learning to glass-paint. The fact that these hobbies are stereotypically feminine is worthy of an entirely separate discussion, but for us they offer relief and distance from the chapter deadline or demoralising feedback from supervisors or reviewers. Yet, we often struggle to make time for these activities when we need them most. The time and energy demanded by the expanding PhD leaves little time or energy for art, despite evidence that these kinds of activities could actually help us in our academic work. Research by Eschleman et al. (2014) found that creative activities, from crafting to crosswords, can boost performance at work. These forms of deliberate rest (Pang 2016) encourage deeper and more rewarding relaxation, while practicing a creative activity promotes feelings of mastery and control over a subject. Eschleman et al. (2014) argue that creative pursuits can even help us discover new cognitive pathways to enhance the kind of creative thinking we need to work more effectively.

The paradox is that this research is promoted as a way to improve productivity in the corporate world. It suggests that what individuals do in their own time benefits both the employee and employer in work time. This economic manipulation of creative thought is an uncomfortable reminder of how far neoliberal expectations have burrowed into our everyday lives. By bringing non-productive, creative activities like

zine-making and watching a comedy show into an academic workshop, we were committing a small act of resistance against this narrative. For many, the doctoral process is a gruelling mental challenge where we struggle to prioritise our own cognitive and physical needs. It is therefore important to find time and space within the institutional setting to support deliberate, non-productive creativity. As academics of the future, we can think about how to promote creativity and relaxation amongst the postgraduate communities, and across academia more widely. If we can routinely harness just a fraction of the creative freedom and resulting relaxation we felt during the workshop's zine activity, future postgraduates may start to break the cycle of seductive productivity in pursuit of academic success.

Closing Reflections

In this chapter we have reflected on how we, as feminist PhD students in the UK Higher Education system, are trapped in a productivity paradox. By recalling our experience of organising a feminist workshop for postgraduates, we showed how we simultaneously disrupted and reaffirmed the problematic practices encouraged by the neoliberal academy. The workshop created a much needed space to critically analyse the postgraduate experience and develop strategies for resistance, support and change; but we found that the act of carving out that space only served to reinforce the academic neoliberal subjectivities we were trying to resist. Our hope is that by writing about the discomfort of this paradoxical experience, we are creating a small ripple of disruption that extends beyond the temporalities of the workshop space to the normalisation of doctoral productivity. As part of this reflective piece we foregrounded our emotional experiences, not only as a challenge to the formulaic linearity of 'traditional' academic texts but also as an attempt to recapture expressions of conflicting emotions we witnessed during the workshop.

Calls for greater (formal and informal) collegiality and collaborative working are one of the ways in which PhD students can learn to survive and thrive in academia. Sharing risk, or failing strategically and

collectively in relation to some of the neoliberal markers of academic success, are important ways of helping PhD students to imagine alternative academic futures. This is difficult work, not least because of the plethora of needs, feminist (and non-feminist) beliefs, priorities, citizenship statuses and identities that make up the UK's doctoral student population. Deciding when and where to strategically fail or resist, and whose voices dominate the collective that decides this, is an almost impossible task. It is why there was such diversity of views among ECRs in the 2018 UCU strikes. In building alternative, feminist spaces, issues of privilege and vulnerability are intrinsically entwined and often difficult to unpack, as we experienced in the workshop. Who is able to express or perform vulnerability or criticality? As white, middle class feminists from a Russell Group institution, the risk we took of being vulnerable in our personal reflections in this chapter are arguably less risky to our status and potential academic futures, though they felt risky enough for us to want to anonymise them. We have to continue to interrogate and refute a context in which some are able to gain forms of academic capital from performing vulnerability or criticality (as we do, with this chapter), when for others, similar exposure would afford too great a cost.

References

- Ahmed, S. (2014). *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Anonymous. (2014, May 1). Academics Anonymous: Why I'm Leaving Academia. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/may/01/academic-anonymous-leaving-academia>. Accessed 5 Aug 2018.
- Ball, S. J. (2003). The Teacher's Soul and the Terrors of Performativity. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 18(2), 215–228.
- Belfield, C., Britton, J., Dearden, L., & van der Erve, L. (2017). *Higher Education funding in England: past, present and options for the future*. London: Institute for Fiscal Studies. Available at <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/9335>. Accessed 27 Mar 2018.

- Berg, M., & Seeber, B. (2016). *Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Bhavnani, K. (1993). Tracing the Contours: Feminist Research and Feminist Objectivity. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 16(2), 95–104.
- Blackwell, K. (2018, August 9). Why People of Color Need Spaces Without White People. *The Arrow: A Journal of Wakeful Society, Culture and Politics*, 1–15. Available at <https://arrow-journal.org/why-people-of-color-need-spaces-without-white-people/#fnref-2149-2>.
- Bradbury, J. (2013, May 3). Black, Female and Postgraduate: Why I Cannot Be the Only One. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2013/may/03/black-postgraduate-university-diversity-recruitment>. Accessed 3 Aug 2018.
- Breeze, M. (2018). Imposter Syndrome as a Public Feeling. In Y. Taylor & K. Lahad (Eds.), *Feeling Academic in the Neoliberal University: Feminist Flights, Fights and Failures [e-book]* (pp. 191–219). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Butler, J. (2013). For White Girls Only? Postfeminism and the Politics of Inclusion. *Feminist Formations*, 25(1), 35–58. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ff.2013.0009>.
- Creasap, K. (2014). Zine-Making as Feminist Pedagogy. *Feminist Teacher*, 24(3), 155–168.
- Dosekun, S. (2015). For Western Girls Only? Post-feminism as Transnational Culture. *Feminist Media Studies*, 15(6), 960–975. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2015.1062991>. Routledge.
- Eschleman, K. J., Madsen, J., Alarcon, G., & Barelka, A. (2014). Benefiting from Creative Activity: The Positive Relationships Between Creative Activity, Recovery Experiences, and Performance-Related Outcomes. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 87(3), 579–598.
- Fractionals Fighting for Fair Play. (2014). *Fractional Staff Survey Results*. PowerPoint Presentation. Available at <http://fractionalsforfairplay.webs.com/survey-results>. Accessed 21 Feb 2018.
- Gill, R. (2009). Breaking the Silence: The Hidden Injuries of the Neoliberal Academy. In R. Ryan-Flood & R. Gill (Eds.), *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections* (pp. 228–244). London: Routledge.
- Grollman, E. A. (2017, February 24). “Playing the Game” for Black Grad Students. Inside Higher Ed. Available at <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2017/02/24/lessons-learned-black-phd-student-essay>. Accessed 5 Aug 2018.

- Hall, R. (2017, November 16). "I've Been Mistaken for the Coffee Lady": Experiences of Black Female Academics. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2017/nov/16/black-female-academics-ive-been-mistaken-for-the-coffee-lady>. Accessed 5 Aug 2018.
- Handsforth, R., & Taylor, C. A. (2016). Doing Academic Writing Differently: A Feminist Bricolage. *Gender and Education*, 28(5), 627–643.
- Hark, Sabine. (2016). Contending Directions: Gender Studies in the Entrepreneurial University. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 54, 84–90.
- Henderson, E. J. (2015). Academic Conferences: Representative and Resistant Sites for Higher Education Research. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 34(5), 914–925.
- Inckle, K. (2010). Telling Tales? Using Ethnographic Fictions to Speak Embodied "Truth". *Qualitative Research*, 10(1), 27–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794109348681>.
- Jaschik, S. (2017, August 28). The Shrinking Humanities Job Market. *Inside Higher Ed*. Available at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/08/28/more-humanities-phds-are-awarded-job-openings-are-disappearing>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Jolles, M. (2012). Going Rogue: Postfeminism and the Privilege of Breaking Rules. *Feminist Formations*, 24(3), 43–61. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ff.2012.0031>.
- Kadir, N. (2017, July 31). I'm Glad I Eschewed a Career in Academia—There Are Plenty of Alternatives for PhDs. *Times Higher Education*. Available at <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/im-glad-i-eschewed-career-academia-there-are-plenty-of-alternatives-for-phds>. Accessed 5 Aug 2018.
- Käkelä, E. (2017, May 22). Reflections on the BSA Pre-conference Postgraduate Day 2017. *British Sociological Society Postgraduate Forum*. Available at <https://bsapforum.com/2017/05/22/reflections-on-the-bsa-pre-conference-postgraduate-day-2017>. Accessed 3 Mar 2018.
- Levecque, K., et al. (2017). Work Organization and Mental Health Problems in PhD Students. *Research Policy*, 46(4), 868–879.
- Lynch, K. (2010). Carelessness: A Hidden Doxa of Higher Education. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 9(1), 54–67.
- Mazzei, L., & Jackson, A. (2012). Complicating Voice in a Refusal to "Let Participants Speak for Themselves". *Qualitative Inquiry*, 18(9), 745–751.
- McRobbie, A. (2015). Notes on the Perfect. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 30(83), 3–20.
- Moore, N. (2016). *Fundamentals 2: Sociological Concepts, Evidence and Skills*. Module Handbook 2016/2017, University of Edinburgh, School of Social

- and Political Science Sociology. Available at http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/212935/Fundamentals_2_Handbook_Revised_Oct_2016_2017.pdf. Accessed Aug 2018.
- Mudge, S. L. (2008). What Is Neo-liberalism? *Socio-Economic Review*, 6, 703–731.
- Pang, A. S. K. (2016). *Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less*. London: Penguin Books.
- Peabody, R. (2014). *The Unruly PhD: Doubts, Detours, Departures & Other Success Stories*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pearce, R. (2018). *Of Memory and Mourning: The Hidden Origins of an Academic Editorial*. Available at <https://ruthpearce.net/2018/02/02/of-memory-and-mourning-the-hidden-origins-of-an-academic-editorial/>. Accessed 6 Mar 2018.
- Pereira, M. (2016). Struggling Within and Beyond the Performative University: Articulating Activism and Work in an “Academia Without Walls”. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 54, 100–110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2015.06.008>.
- Pereira, M. (2017). *Power, Knowledge and Feminist Scholarship: An Ethnography of Academia*. London: Routledge.
- Res-sisters. (2017). ‘I’m an Early Career Feminist Academic: Get Me Out of Here?’ Encountering and Resisting the Neoliberal Academy. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being and Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges* (pp. 267–284). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Santos, A. C. (2014). Academia Without Walls? Multiple Belongings and the Implications of Feminist and LGBT/Queer Political Engagement. In Y. Taylor (Ed.), *The Entrepreneurial University* (pp. 9–26). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shepherd, J. (2011, April 20). Tuition Fees 2012: All Universities to Charge Undergraduates at Least £6000. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2011/apr/20/tuition-fee-charges-universities-2012>. Accessed 27 Feb 2018.
- Thwaites, R., & Pressland, A. (2017). Introduction: Being an Early Career Feminist Academic in a Changing Academy. In R. Thwaites & A. Pressland (Eds.), *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences, and Challenges* (pp. 1–28). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wakeling, P. (2016). *Measuring Doctoral Student Diversity: Socio-economic Background*. Research Councils UK. Available at <https://pdfs>.

- [semanticscholar.org/1d3a/e8421c5f9c300a2044e790128cd910264c6a.pdf](https://www.semanticscholar.org/1d3a/e8421c5f9c300a2044e790128cd910264c6a.pdf). Accessed 5 Aug 2018.
- Warwick Anti-Casualisation. (2016). *Teaching Diaries Survey*. Available at <https://warwickanticasualisation.wordpress.com/teachingdiariessurvey/>. Accessed 28 Feb 2018.
- Way, L. (2017). Here's Some Scissors, Here's Some Glue, Now Go Make a Zine! A Teacher's Reflections on Zine-Making in the Classroom. In G. D. Smith, M. Dines, T. Parkinson (Eds.), *Punk Pedagogies* (E-Book) (pp. 144–155). New York: Routledge.
- Weeks, K. (2011). *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wolff, J. (2015, April 21). Doctor, Doctor ... We're Suffering a Glut of PhDs Who Can't Find Academic Jobs. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/apr/21/phd-cant-find-academic-job-university>. Accessed 31 July 2018.



The Imperial/Neoliberal University: What Does It Mean to Be Included?

Lou Dear

Introduction

This chapter examines literary experiences of higher education in the UK. The writers analysed here, Diran Adebayo and David Dabydeen, consider themselves outsiders to elite educational institutions. Both write about being admitted (included or otherwise) into Oxford University. The *Rhodes Must Fall* movement began at the University of Cape Town in 2015 and swiftly spreading to other universities in South Africa and then to Oxford. What emerged was a movement which highlighted the institutional structures complicit in colonial knowledge production, and the underrepresentation and oppression of Black and minority ethnic students. The calls to decolonise Oxford inspired my focus on writer's accounts of Oxford University. Whilst geographically specific, their experiences shed light on the experience of being included in imperial/neoliberal higher education institutions across the globe.¹

L. Dear (✉)

University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK

e-mail: Lou.Dear@glasgow.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_5

Their accounts nuance our thinking on ‘widening access’, but also highlight the social, political, intellectual and emotional cost of being included.

Dadydeen’s *The Intended* (2005) and Adebayo’s *Some Kind of Black* (1996) offer insight into the ways race, gender and class influence educational processes and demonstrate the psychic damage caused by assimilation into educational institutions *as they are*. The texts reveal the ways in which universities admit ‘diverse’ bodies, and simultaneously, destroy alternative ways of thinking and being. They describe the tribulations of access to education, adding nuance to our understanding that access ‘is not simply a bureaucratic procedure, but shows how spaces are orientated toward some bodies [...] accessibility and inaccessibility are also a result of histories that congeal as habits or shared routines’ (Titchkosky in Ahmed 2017: 109). This chapter does not propose that Dadydeen and Adebayo offer a series of autoethnographic truths, which easily translate into a diagnostic of the British higher education system. However, their writing does texture our understanding of inclusion, exclusion, assimilation, navigation and rejection of imperial higher education institutions. The texts, and my reading of them, may invoke feelings of resonance with institutional inclusion and exclusion, or feelings of complicity. The novels offer readers a visceral understanding of the violence of imperial institutions; an analytic frame which is different but equally as important as an empirical understanding. Through themes and metaphor (I pick up on themes of relationships and kinship in this chapter) the texts move beyond diagnostic towards a curative sense of what decolonisation takes, and what it feels like. In other words, as Sylvia Wynter (2009: 53) prompts us, we must consider what texts *mean* is inseparable from what they *do*, and of course then, what the interpretation of texts command us to *do* rather than simply *accumulate* (individual academic capital) from their interpretation.

This chapter picks up important themes in this collection: namely, the tensions between internationalisation, diversity and widening access and participation. Who is included in the imperial/neoliberal university and for what reason? What does access and inclusion into the university mean and what does it cost for those traditionally excluded? And what do the

movements and theorists of decolonisation bring to the debates over the tension between internationalisation, diversity and widening access and participation? I choose to use ‘imperial/neoliberal’ university to flag the continuing importance of the imperial history of the university to its current political/economic formulation as neoliberal (Dear 2018).

The Politics of ‘Inclusion’

In the context of higher education and beyond, feminists of colour reveal the ways that diversity is co-opted by power and institutions as a way of managing conflict and containing dissent (Mohanty 2003; Puwar 2004; Ahmed 2012). Indeed, in response to demand for substantive structural change by *Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford*, the University of Oxford invested in diversity and public relations campaigns (Oxford University 2017). Sara Ahmed has developed a sustained theoretical account of the politics of diversity and inclusion whereby, ‘Diversity is often used as shorthand for inclusion, as the “happy point” of intersectionality, a point where lines meet’ (Ahmed 2012: 14). This tension is all the more evident in British universities today (when diversity and inclusion come into conflict), whereby the diversity heralded by internationalisation threatens domestic widening access targets.

At the University of Glasgow, international student numbers have risen from 2320 in 2008 (11% of all students) to 5751 in 2017 (21% of all students) (University of Glasgow 2018). This means a greater diversity of students, but also potentially fewer places for targeted access students living in Scotland.² This tension begs the question who is included in the imperial/neoliberal university and for what purpose? Mohanty argues that diversity ‘bypasses power as well as history to suggest a harmonious empty pluralism’ (Mohanty in Ahmed 2012: 13–14). Ahmed also writes about the connection between diversity, institutional whiteness and the mainstreaming of institutionalised racism. Dadydeen and Adebayo confront their readers with the sometimes-brutal reality of their access to elite higher education. Reading their novels in the context of contemporary education tensions and debates provokes consideration as to what are the benefits of inclusion and access without decolonisation.³

The Politics of 'Access'

In many parts of the world, access to elite higher education institutions is conceived of as a panacea for social mobility and societal change. The British government indicators for social mobility include, 'higher education participation in the most selective institutions' (UK Government 2015). The link between an elite education and social mobility is express. Westminster and the devolved governments continue to emphasise widening access to higher education as a strategic priority.⁴ But despite renewed impetus, significant progress on widening access—especially into elite institutions—is questionable.⁵ This has been exacerbated by the fee increases in England and Wales (and to a lesser extent Northern Ireland), and cuts to college funding in Scotland.⁶

Widening access to higher education for disadvantaged groups is quantified by access and entry to higher education institutions, retention during studies, attainment and the quality of progression into the labour market after graduation. In terms of entry, the gap in progression rates between students from state and private schools to elite institutions widens rather than closes year on year. In England, the gap was 43 percentage points (UK Government 2017: 1). Many of the most disadvantaged students targeted for widening access programmes are the most likely to drop out (UK Government 2014); 10.3% of Black students drop out of university, compared to 6.9% for the whole student population (Social Market Foundation 2016: 7). Black graduates are already three times more likely to be unemployed within six months of graduation than their white peers (Higher Education Academy 2012: 4). The literary analysis herein gives us some idea why this might be the case.

This chapter focuses on the political, cultural, intellectual and emotional dimensions of 'inclusion' and 'access'. *Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford* argue that decolonisation goes beyond iconography and representation. This chapter adds weight to the argument that numeric equality and representation of marginalised groups in higher education is only part of the story, and without radical transformation of institutional environments, curriculum, pedagogy etc. widening access is a vaunted concept.

Decolonising Oxford?

And what I realised the moment I got to Oxford was that someone like me could not really be part of it. It's the peak of the English education system. [...] one was coming also not just to England, but to the heartland of the English, the pinnacle of the English class system, the high point of English education and experience [...] that was a very profound shock. (Stuart Hall in Akomfrah 2013)

In 1951 Stuart Hall won a Rhodes scholarship. Leaving Jamaica to study English at Oxford University, he went on to become a founding figure of the New Left, an architect of Cultural Studies and an influential figure in British left politics. However, in an interview conducted in 2007 he stated that he felt,

much less at home here [Oxford] now than I did when I came. [...] I have lived here for 57 years but I am no more English now than I ever was, [...] In the back of my head are things that can't be in the back of your head. That part of me comes from a plantation, when you owned me. I was brought up to understand you, I read your literature, I knew 'Daffodils' off by heart before I knew the name of a Jamaican flower. You don't lose that, it becomes stronger. (Hall in Adams 2007)

In this chapter Oxford becomes the symbolic epicentre of the Western imperial schooling. *Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford* fixed attention on Oxford, as do the Rhodes Scholarships. However, it is not my intention to make Oxford University an exception, or to be considered so very different to other imperial institutions, be it Cambridge, Coimbra or Columbia. Oxford University has been extensively written and rewritten in English. In *The English University Novel*, Mortimer R. Proctor states that 'by the end of the nineteenth century [...] the novels about Oxford and Cambridge were so numerous that they clearly represent a striking literary phenomenon' (1957: vii). A phenomenon, of course, with a narrow focus: nineteenth and twentieth century English literature. Representations of Oxford are profligate and inspired many admirers and detractors.

In their analysis of race, inequality and diversity in British higher education, Claire Alexander and Jason Arday make it clear that the whole higher education sector (not just Oxford and Cambridge) are implicated in elitism and institutionalised racism:

University institutions have themselves proved remarkably resilient to change in terms of curriculum, culture and staffing, remaining for the most part ‘ivory towers’ – with the emphasis on ‘ivory’. (2015: 4)

In his survey of the rise of education systems in England, France and the US, Andy Green (1990) singles out England as the most explicit example of the use of education by a dominant class to secure dominance over subordinate groups. Education for those outside the ruling classes was designed to contain and pacify, not educate and liberate (Reay 2001). In an age of mainstreamed widening participation programmes, diversity agendas and inclusion indicators, notions of education as an express feature of social, political and economic pacification could be viewed as dated. Dabydeen and Adebayo describe how their pacification and alienation occurred within elite higher educational institutions. In an age of neoliberalism, the education sector is on the one hand opened up to privatisation and corporatisation and on the other increasingly important to national economic growth and state border control. In this chapter I seek to connect thinking on the political economy of education, internationalisation, inclusion and widening access, to imperial history and decolonisation. I ask what the movements and theorists of decolonisation offer in terms of seizing back control, agency and impetus within the imperial/neoliberal university? In doing so, I tease out the relationship between the Eurocentric curriculum, institutionalised whiteness, and its benefactor and most gifted student, finance capital.

The Cost of Inclusion

David Dabydeen’s first novel *The Intended* (1991) is an account of a writer’s journey from Guyana, through London, to be educated at Oxford University. Dabydeen’s own life took him at just eighteen to

study at Cambridge, yet the character in his novel goes to Oxford, perhaps to establish critical distance while drawing parallels to his own experience. Dabydeen's novel brings race and class into focus; the psychic damage that the conscious act of assimilation into the elite higher institution inflicts on a young person. The text reveals the ways that the university whilst allowing certain (disciplined) 'diverse' bodies to enter, simultaneously, destroys alternative ways of thinking and being, in particular, the knowledge born of community and kinship ties.

The Intended is narrated in four parts, beginning and ending in London. The unnamed narrator relays experiences from Guyana, London and Oxford. The novel communicates different perspectives from the immigrant community of Balham, London in the 1980s; themes include, identity, community, the pursuit of social mobility through education, survival, and the impact of the imperial university on a vulnerable young person. The refrain running throughout the novel—of memory and community—comes from Auntie Clarice in Guyana, who sends the protagonist off to England with this phrase, 'you is we, remember you is we' (Dabydeen 2005: 32). At this point the writer belongs, his identity is his community (Glasser 1999).

The community of Balham he finds himself in is different and initially alienating. The protagonist reflects affectionately on the Asian diasporic community in London:

It was the re-grouping of the Asian diaspora in a South London school ground. Shaz, of Pakistani parents, was born in Britain, had never travelled to the sub-continent, could barely speak a word of Urdu and had never seen the interior of a mosque. Nasim was more authentically Muslim, a believer by upbringing, fluent in his ancestral language and devoted to family. Patel was of Hindu stock, could speak Guderjati; his mother, who once visited the school to bring her other son, wore a sari and a dot on her forehead. I was an Indian West-Guyanese, the most mixed up of the lot. (Dabydeen 2005: 8)

But it is the protagonist's relationship with Rastafari Joseph which has the most depth. Joseph's personality, his interests and fate, acts as a foil to the protagonist. The drama of escaping the squalor of Balham whist

holding on to the 'we' is complicated by their friendship and literary engagement. The protagonist is on the road to Oxford, whilst Joseph succumbs to his seemingly inevitable fate as a Rastafari, illiterate, homeless, care-leaver from Balham. The novel leaves Joseph disturbed and vacant drawing pictures in the mud in a squat. Their joint readings and different engagements with Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, function metaphorically in the novel. Their readings texture discussion on education, inclusion and survival. On Sunday's in his bedroom, the protagonist replicates a classroom with his friends:

Joseph would tag along now and again to listen to us analysing Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The two of them sat on the bed and I, the professor, took the chair. I would select key passages from the text, read them aloud and dissect them in terms of theme and imagery, as I had been taught to do by our English teacher. (Dabydeen 2005: 70)

Despite being unable to read the text himself, Joseph rejects their interpretation of Conrad and offers his own. He makes the boys repeat the section of the book detailing the encounter with Black people.

You been saying is a novel 'bout the fall of man, but is really 'bout a dream. Beneath the surface is the dream. The white light of England and the Thames is the white sun over the Congo that can't mix with the green of the bush and the black skin of the people. All the colours struggling to curve against each other like rainbow, but instead the white light want to blot out the black and the green and reduce the world to one blinding colour. (Dabydeen 2005: 72)

In this passage, Dabydeen connects white supremacy with intellectual and spiritual homogenisation, and schooling caught up in the inculcation of whiteness. Joseph has a way of interacting with and knowing the text which is different to his friends. The passage contrasts instinct and experiential interpretation with the scholasticism of formal schooling. The protagonist rejects Joseph's 'crazy exegesis', and in doing so, we see the beginnings of the colonisation of his brain through 'correct'

interpretation and disciplinary—compartmentalised and controlled—thinking. Joseph continues:

‘And don’t you think,’ he said, ‘that when Marlow say nothing about Kurtz in the end, is because nothing left to say, because Kurtz become nothing? He become a word, just a sound, just the name ‘Kurtz’, like the colour ‘black’? Conrad break he down to what he is, atoms, nothing, a dream, a rumour, a black man. I know what Kurtz is. When I was in borstal I was rumour. They look at me and see ape, trouble, fist. [...] And all the time I nothing, I sleep and wake and eat like zombie, time passing but no sense of time, nothing to look out of the window at, nothing to look in at, and no ideas in my mind, no ideas about where I come from and where I should be going. You can’t even see yourself, even if you stand in front of mirror, and you seeing is shape. But all the time they seeing you as animal, riot, nigger, but you know you is nothing, atoms, only image and legend in their minds’. (Dabydeen 2005: 74)

Joseph recounts the conditioning violence of the institution. Reducing him to little more than a monosyllable (echoing the reduction of Conrad from Konrad Korzeniowski), the weight of history and racism, denying him the autonomy of ideas and the ability to know himself and where he has come from. The protagonist is perplexed and intrigued at the way his friend weaves his personal history into the text. But he cannot afford Joseph’s imaginative flight to consume him even if he wanted it to: ‘I wished for a moment that I had the freedom of his ignorance, his irresponsibility. As it was I had essays to compose in the normal way, proper books to read, exams to take, a future to chart out. I couldn’t afford to take the risks as he could’ (Dabydeen 2005: 115). The potential of intellectual endeavour as a transformative process is quashed into the necessities of inclusion into an institution and therefore survival.

Joseph maintains that ‘black people have to have their own words’ (Dabydeen 2005: 107). To the narrator at this point in his life and education, black words cast him back to the proverbs of Guyana. As his life becomes harder and his journey more isolating, his will to assimilate becomes stronger, and his desire towards more disciplined and ‘civilised’ knowledge increases:

No wonder they're treated like animals, I heard myself thinking, distancing myself from all this noisy West Indian-ness, and feeling sympathy for the outnumbered whites [...] I'm dark-skinned like them, but I'm different, and I hope the whites can see that and separate me from that lot. I'm Indian really, deep down I'm decent and quietly spoken and hard-working and I respect good manners, books, art, philosophy. I'm like the whites, we both have civilisation. If they send immigrants home, they should differentiate between us Indian people and those black West Indians. (Dabydeen 2005: 127)

Shaz calls him out on his gravitation, 'You are just pretentious with all that book talk. All you want is to imitate the white people, because you are ashamed to be like me, ashamed that people will call you a Paki' (Dabydeen 2005: 142). The narrator positions his survival as tied to assimilation to white society, institutions, ways of being and knowing. The idea of holding on to tradition, kinship and choice (between his worlds) dissipates throughout the novel as the grip of poverty strengthens.

Shaz and the narrator visit Joseph in his squat. Joseph writes with a stick in the muddy floor. After the narrator reads the word 'cocoon' out to him, he says 'That's what I been writing all day, waiting for you to come and interpret' (Dabydeen 2005: 139). At this point the narrative flashes forward to a scene in Oxford:

I couldn't see, not for years, not until the solitary hours in Oxford University library trying to master the alien language of medieval alliterative poetry, the sentences wrenched and wrecked by strange consonants, refusing to be smooth and civilised, when Joseph returns to haunt me, and I begin to glimpse some meaning to his outburst. He stalks me even here, within the guarded walls of the library where entry is strictly forbidden to all but a select few, where centuries of tradition, breeding and inter-breeding conspire to keep people of his sort outside the doors. I am no longer an immigrant here, for I can decipher the texts, I have been exempted from the normal rules of lineage and privilege; yet he, an inveterate criminal, keeps breaking into the most burglar proof of institutions, reminding me of my dark shadow, drawing me back to my dark self. (Dabydeen 2005: 139–140)

The narrator eschews the identity of an ‘immigrant’ in order to become a don. John Agard’s poem, ‘Listen, Mr. Oxford Don’ opens, ‘Me not no Oxford don / me a simple immigrant’; Agard remains himself but uses the language of the establishment against its violence (Agard 1985: 44). At this turning point in Dabydeen’s text, he claims to have ‘been exempted from the normal rules of lineage and privilege’, his key to doing so is ‘deciphering the texts’ (Dabydeen 2005: 139–140). However, the communal interpretation of Conrad alerts us to the manner and price of this admission. Joseph’s creative exegesis does not grant him admission, the access codes are predetermined, disciplined, and foretold. Deciphering means leaving behind Guyana and Balham, it means ultimately the protagonist’s refashioning by imperial subjectivities. According to this interpretation, the university does not (cannot?) accept difference; access depends on assimilation into white society, curriculum, pedagogy etc. This brings us back to Andy Green’s point about the purpose of the English education system: to liberate or to ensure dominance over subordinate groups (1990).

The narrator recognises that Joseph’s half formed attempted work is similar to his half formed self, constantly being broken down by police, institutions, poverty, and ‘the condition of blackness’ (Dabydeen 2005: 140). The narrator imagines Joseph self-immolating, ‘purifying himself of all the shame and desire by burning off his black skin, once and for all cracking and peeling it off, so that when the fire died there was mostly molten flesh, meat that could have been that of a white man [...] Or perhaps he wanted to burn like a Hindu corpse to show us Asians that he was no different from us, that he was not an inferior being, that ‘you is we’, as Auntie Clarice had said’ (Dabydeen 2005: 140). Out of this communion with his friend, the narrator begins to write:

[...] in the broken way that he spoke, the broken way of the medieval verse, paying no attention to sense or grammar, just letting the words shudder out and form themselves. I am spell-bound by his memory, I write in fits of savagery, marking the pages like stripes [...] when I look at what I have written I am utterly depressed. It is a mess of words, a mere illusion of truth. Joseph would have done better. His confusions held some meaning. (Dabydeen 2005: 141)

The narrator abandons himself to history, memory and the creative process, the violence of it reminiscent of tortured slaves. In doing so the psychic rupture in the face of the university environment is clear:

I suddenly long to be white, to be calm, to write with grace and clarity, to make words which have status, to shape them into the craftsmanship of English china, coaches, period furniture, harpsichords, wigs, English anything, for whatever they put their hands and mind to worked wonderfully. Everything they produced was fine and lasted for ever. [...] We are mud, they the chiselled stone of Oxford that has survived centuries and will always be here. (Dabydeen 2005: 141)

Throughout, the narrator has sought assimilation to the values and knowledge of the white institution to survive Balham and Guyana. But as he sits within it he is consumed by a sense of his own difference and inferiority. As he sits in the antiquated and carefully preserved library his emotions towards his friend shift:

I begin to despise Joseph, his babbling, his half-formed being, his lack of privilege, his stupid way of living and dying. I will grow strong in this library, this cocoon, I will absorb its nutrients of quiet scholarship, I will emerge from it and be somebody, some recognisable shape, not a lump of aborted, anonymous flesh. (Dabydeen 2005: 141)

His struggle, like Joseph's, is for survival first and foremost. But it is also a struggle to survive with something of the 'we' left intact. The narrator carves a path away from Balham towards the stability and safety he craves throughout the novel. But the pain of this assimilation is rendered acutely. What is also evident is the price of inclusion is loss: of his friend, of his community, but also something of himself. In the end, Joseph must be renounced, Balham must be left behind, Auntie Clarice's 'you is we' must be broken. The privileged cocoon of Oxford fosters his individual survival at the expense of his kinship ties and sense of belonging.

The theme of an elite or imperial education elevating the individual at the expense of their community is developed by many writer's reflecting

on an imperial education from Ralph Glasser (2006) writing at the end of the industrial revolution in the slums of the Gorbals to Tsitsi Dangarembga (1988) writing throughout the period of decolonisation in Zimbabwe (Dear 2017). In many cases, the writers force reflection on the curriculum, pedagogy and institutional space of educational institutions as expressly formulated to destroy collective revolutionary agency. Dabydeen's work offers a number of analytic inroads into the themes of this collection of essays: the psychological and emotional cost of inclusion into elite higher education institutions for those traditionally excluded; insight into the necessary process of individual assimilation; the relationship between ingratiation of the individual and the breakdown of intellectual, emotional and spiritual ties with their communities, kin and alternative systems of knowing and being. These themes are picked up and elaborated by Adebayo in his novel on Oxford.

Inclusion and the (Im)Possibility of Relationships

Diran Adebayo builds on this sense of isolation and destroyed kinship in *Some Kind of Black* (1996). He chooses to texture these themes by revealing the impossibility of human relationships in the symbolic imperial centre. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon devotes much thought to the possibility of ethical human relationships in a situation where colonialism has destroyed social relations. Building on the work of Lewis Gordon (2000), Nelson Maldonado-Torres suggests that Fanon is 'the paradigmatic philosopher of love; or perhaps better [...] a loving philosopher [...] who think and writes out of love' (2008: 93). He elaborates,

He [Fanon] was doing a war against war oriented by 'love', understood here as the desire to restore ethics and to give it a proper place to trans-ontological and ontological differences. (2007: 256)

What Maldonado-Torres claims is that Fanon was countering not only anti-black racism in Martinique or French colonialism in Algeria, but the force and legitimacy of an entire historical system (Western/

European modernity) which utilised racism and colonialism to naturalise the 'non-ethics' of perpetual war (2007: 265). Part of the modus operandi of this system was the fragmentation of social relations and human relationships. As such, the reclamation of these relationships would be crucial to overcoming colonialism and this state of perpetual war guaranteed by European modernity. Fanon writes,

Today I believe in the possibility of love; that is why I endeavour to trace its imperfections, its perversions. [...] it is our problem to ascertain to what extent authentic love will remain unattainable before one has purged oneself of that feeling of inferiority or that Adlerian exultation, that overcompensation, which seems to be the indices of the black *Weltanschauung*. (1986: 42)

The conclusion of *Black Skin, White Masks* has been read as a meditation on the revolutionary agency of love (relational ethics):

It is through the effort to recapture the self and to scrutinize the self, it is through the lasting tension of their freedom that men will be able to create the ideal conditions of existence for a human world. Superiority? Inferiority? Why not the quite simple attempt to touch the other, to feel the other, to explain the other to myself? Was my freedom not given to me then in order to build the world of the *You*? (1986: 42)

Adebayo attempts a fictional diagnostic of the (im)possibility of human relationships, crucially not only *in a colonial or postcolonial situation*, but under the conditions of life/death demarcated by and in Western/European modernity or 'the contemporary configurations of globalization' (Bhabha in Fanon 2004: xiii). The naturalisation of this state of war 'does not simply refer to the continuous exercise of war [...] [but refers] to discourses and practices of racialization and their many combinations with other forms of difference. [...] and the death ethic that is part of it find their most radical expression in the relations between those who appear to be naturally selected to survive and flourish and other who appear to be, according to the dominant narratives of modernity,

either biologically or culturally decrepit' (Maldonado-Torres 2008: xii). Adebayo's stage to explore denatured social and sexual relations is the very seat in which those values were forged and continue to be inculcated; Oxford University.

Like Adebayo, his protagonist, Dele, shares a Nigerian background and an undergraduate education at Oxford University (Oyedeji 2005: 348). The tone and content of his novel suggest that he is very much 'writing back' to the university and the social and political consequences of his education. The audience for this novel is also quite clear, as it directly and graphically depicts the racism present at the university, and also the corruption of social and sexual relationships the environment enables.

In *Some Kind of Black* the context of Oxford University is sketched through Dele's encounters and relationships with fellow students and also through his engagement in student politics and societies. Dele's attendance at student parties seems to be one of his principal activities at Oxford, but finally 'set the seal on Dele's disaffection with his Oxford career' (Adebayo 1996: 36). Adebayo links the classism and racism of his fellow students within a history of settler colonial imperialism:

Tabitha engaged in a tireless quest for *Lebensraum*. She and her empire of kissy-kissy friends were set to graduate and keen to seal contacts for life. The five-year plan was to recreate the same scene in west London's Notting Hill. Her place had the usual nods to downward mobility that no cool posh girl these days could do without: a Student Loans Company policy plastered prominently on the kitchen wall, a Can't Pay/Won't Pay sticker defiantly underneath, and guests in their polished Doc Martens and lumber jackets. (1996: 22)

Tabitha's 'rag week's slave auction' is the final straw for Dele, as compliant fellow Black students join 'four members of the university's rugby team' to be sold to the highest bidder (Adebayo 1996: 36).⁷ Dele deals with his outrage at the racist behaviour of his fellow students by turning his attention towards potential hook ups.

Is that really how he'd been coming these past three years for Tabitha to think she could run that slave fuckery past him? [...] his eyes finally settled on the girl he'd liked from before and he ambled over. Her mouth was wide and her lips full for one of the Caucasian Persuasion. This was the only hint of wantonness about her person, for everything else came across starchy. Her tones were Home Counties clipped, like she thinks her shit don't stink. (Adebayo 1996: 25)

In *Colonial Desire*, Robert Young makes the connection between theories of race, class and gendered desire, arguing that the,

ambivalent axis of desire and aversion [is] a structure of attraction, where people and cultures intermix and merge, transforming themselves as a result, and as a structure of repulsion, where the different elements remain distinct and are set against each other dialogically [...] This antagonistic structure acts out the tensions of a conflictual culture which defines itself through racial ideologies. (1995: 19)

Dele experiences both desire and aversion towards Helena. Adebayo glibly weaves together Dele's shame over the slave auction and his will to avenge this racism by a sexual encounter with Helena. 'He wanted to fuck Helena, he wanted to fuck English history, like some horn of Africa' (Adebayo 1996: 38). *Some Kind of Black* sits within the literary tradition of Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (1969) which sketches the psycho-social, sexual-political dimensions of the legacies of colonialism.

The context Dele and Helena are in makes their relationship dysfunctional from the outset. Their ability to act freely is curtailed, and instead they become representations of a group, engaged in power struggle:

He worried that if he told the whole truth, about his home life and the rest, it would lead to such a shift in the balance of power. It would have been an invitation to Helena to respond to him on the level of pity or sympathy [...] He was too proud to let it come to that. Fuck it. [...] No, it was best that he and Helena dealt with each other with a quickness and done. (Adebayo 1996: 37)

Dele's desire is 'quickness and done', but Helena prolongs their affair by her unwillingness to have penetrative sex with him. Instead, Adebayo achieves political effect by his awkwardly detailed description of their predicament. The racialised dynamics of their power play is foregrounded:

She was forever touching his lips, or running her hand down regions of his soft, smooth body, as if trying to come to terms with the sheer negritude of it all. [...]

He liked looking at her back, though. Front-on he had to contend with the blue veins that ran through her hands like fault-lines, the individual qualities of her face and speech. But her back was a smooth slab of alabaster and he could hug up to it, inhale its perfumes and make play with images of an incoherent revenge. (Adebayo 1996: 37)

There are echoes of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* here, as Marlow encounters 'a cold and monumental whiteness' when meeting Kurtz's wife (2008: 182–183). Adebayo sketches out the theatre of objectification between his characters. Helena comments, 'All I'm saying, Del, is that before you get inside me I need to get inside you' (Adebayo 1996: 37–38). Although, Dele and Helena have a drunken reconciliation, their affair remains 'unconsummated'. This is important because it is a marker that Adebayo denies the possibility of this kind of closure or reconciliation. In later relationships with white women, he clarifies the entanglement of his current and future relationships with history and his past experience:

He couldn't stand the vulnerability their affair made him feel; the sense that the power of judgement hung over him [...] He found it harder to disentangle Andria from the humiliation of his family, and who knew how many small humiliations had escaped his knowledge, beginning with his father in his schooldays. And all that just set him thinking about Oxford again — just thinking about it made him feel faint. He just wanted to draw a fat red line under that whole period. Hadn't he said that Helena would be his last, even before all this? He wanted no intimate connection with those people anymore. (Adebayo 1996: 190)

The crucial link to the context of Oxford is offered again, as his attempts to disentangle his relationships from history comes up against the monument of the city. He wanted 'no intimate connection with those people', but of course, Dele could form no intimate connection with anyone at Oxford. The novel alludes that the context precluded such a possibility.

Even more insightful is that Dele also finds meaningful platonic relationships impossible in Oxford. He describes his encounters as 'a series of grotesque cameos' and his friendship with other Black students in particular as conditioned by the contextually created conditions of hierarchy and proximity to power (Adebayo 1996: 163).

After three years of sharing his senses and flexing across the city, Dele was now the undisputed number one negro. For sure there had been some competition along the way [...] the problem with his rivals, Dele reflected as he pulled on his smoke. They were all too speaky-spoky, as Oxford as yards of ale. But most students didn't want to hear that. No, sir! Be they Chelsea girls or strident left-wingers, they wanted danger, they wanted to play away just once in their lives. It was best to homey the hell out of them, indulge their romance of the real nigga! (Adebayo 1996: 19)

Amongst the few Black people at Oxford, Dele positions himself within a competitive hierarchy. Acknowledging the imposition of class, he says 'Well, there were the bloods who laboured at the British Leyland plant and lived on the big estates down Cowley way, on the east side, but they didn't count in the student scheme of things' (Adebayo 1996: 18–19). The town and gown divide at Oxford makes connection, kinship and community outside his comprehension. Inside the university, at the Black Students Discussion Group, Dele rejects the intellectual competitiveness of his Black peers. 'There was a certain wanky air of self-satisfaction bubbling under the surface at these Black Chats. Folk felt that whatever the problems had been out there, *they* had overcome them, they must be the *crème de la crème*' (Adebayo 1996: 21). After finding no community, Dele adopts the only other mask that seemed to fit.

Dele had developed a range of comic roles. He'd been a fool, he'd made few close friends, he could see that. He was unhappy although he was having a nice time. (Adebayo 1996: 22)

He is admitted, even included, but only as the fool and as a foil to other's expectations and desires. Adebayo's Oxford is one in which human relationships, political, social and sexual are bedevilled by race politics and more specifically, the race, gender and class politics of Oxford. 'But it hadn't been minstrelsy, more some toxic problem of self-presentation' (Adebayo 1996: 163). Adebayo is able to communicate and expand a familiar thread running through literature on those coming to Oxford, admitted, even included, but feeling outside and forever altered. Trapped in a seemingly interminable charade with hierarchy, power and proximity, Dele is an outsider in Oxford, but into his community in London, 'a true insider' (Adebayo 1996: 163). After his politicisation at the hands of police brutality, he is mocked by his peers:

It's interesting that the speaker himself admits that his time at one of Anglo-Saxon England's great seats of learning taught him nothing at all about the real world outside 'White people will be shaking your hand while pissin' on your feet!' (Adebayo 1996: 92)

Towards the end of the novel, weighed down by his inability to form relationships, Dele comments, 'He couldn't square the circle. He had always been some kind of black' (Adebayo 1996: 190). This communicates his feelings of indeterminacy, not wholly Black, because of his schooling at Oxford; vaunted by a sense of placelessness. This recalls Dabydeen's narrator losing Guyana and Balham. In addition to being a stage on which the theatre of Dele's not-quite-belonging is set, the characters appear to lose their agency in the face of the structured charade that is Oxford. As elaborated by both Adebayo and Glasser the city, the university, takes on agency in the protagonist's disempowerment. In *Some Kind of Black* the university environment does not just reflect wider patterns of racism in society, but the university becomes a microcosm in which the intellectual, interpersonal and structuring politics of racism are magnified.

I chose to contextualise Adebayo's work within the politics of inclusion and access in order to further elaborate empirical data on widening access, and as a feature of that retention, attainment and quality of progression into the labour market after graduation. UK Government research (2014) reminds us that those entering the university from historically disadvantaged communities targeted by widening access programmes are still the most likely to drop out, particularly Black students. Furthermore, Black graduates face more employment barriers after graduation than their white peers. After reading Dabydeen and Adebayo it is not difficult to see why this might be the case. However, the progression and barriers they describe into higher education will not be surmounted solely by representation, although this may be part of the solution. My argument here is that more attention to the social movements and theorists of decolonisation is key to wider comprehension of the problems they describe and broader and more meaningful institutional change.

Conclusion

Dabydeen focuses on the curriculum, pedagogy and community as he recounts his own transformation at the hands of an imperial schooling. He is currently a prolific writer, academic and former Ambassador to China for Guyana. Dabydeen's *The Intended* highlights what is gained from an imperial schooling, and what is lost at the same time. He makes the link between literary interpretation, the discipline of the humanities and the inculcation of institutional whiteness. His 'choice' to take what was on offer, and thereby survive the poverty of his early life, required him to leave behind his identity, traditions and community. Cecil Rhodes' Rhodes scholarships, endowments and other activities intended 'the establishment, promotion and development of a Secret Society, the true aim and object whereof shall be for the extension of British rule throughout the world' (Rhodes 1899). Reading Dabydeen brings into focus the idea that if Westernised elite education aspires to be anything other than Rhodes' 'Secret Society' it must look root and branch at the institutionalised learning environment rather than

simply looking to the diversification of personnel. This analysis has been brought to the fore by *Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford* amongst others.

Adebayo's Oxford is not bereft of Black community but still the protagonist cannot form the relationships and community he needs to survive the Oxford experience without psychic rupture. His account foregrounds race and sexuality as he attempts to recount the everyday racism and colonial mentalities which dominate the imperial centre. In *Season of Migration to the North*, Salih depicts a social world entirely conditioned by history and the colonial encounter: 'While in the throes of fantasy, intoxication and madness, I took her and she accepted, for what happened had already happened between us a thousand years ago' (1969: 146). Adebayo approximates this in contemporary Oxford. His character can muster neither the self-esteem nor the strength of kinship bonds to resist the structured drama of the university world. Both authors examine characters that have been included into Oxford University; both felt the need to write back to the imperial institutions they themselves had access to.

The Westernised imperial university as a globalised and neoliberal entity has raised new questions and tensions about access and inclusion. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) over 4.1 million students study outside their home countries, this is predicted to rise to 8 million (of a total 262 million worldwide) by 2025 (2015: 3). Top destinations for students are in the global north, top destinations for branch campuses are in the global south. Amidst this carnival of financial capital driven by students from the global south, diversity has become a commodity. The tension between widening access to the university for marginalised domestic groups and internationalisation, sharpens our attenuation to the 'empty pluralism' of the imperial/neoliberal university. Dabydeen and Adebayo show us something of the bedrock of imperial homogeneity that the diverse student body hits up against. However, their texts open a conversation about what higher education is like for some students and, potentially, what it should be like. Groups like *Rhodes Must Fall*, *Why Is My Curriculum White?* and *Unis Resist Border Controls* continue to demand answers to institutionalised racism, colonial knowledge production, and its relationship to underrepresentation. Their progress will inform a holistic (rather than tokenistic) view on access and inclusion.

Notes

1. The ‘imperial/neoliberal’ university refers to a hegemonic development of European institutions in tandem with imperial state power and neoliberal capitalism. As the imperial/neoliberal university becomes a global institution, as ‘a place of authoritative knowledge, certified knowledge’, it becomes ‘the heart of epistemic violence’ (Pillay 2015). Teaching occurred at Oxford from around the eleventh century making it one of the oldest universities in the English-speaking world. The university’s own statistics reveal its entrenched elitism: just three prestigious private schools and two elite sixth form colleges produced as many entrants to Oxford and Cambridge as 1800 state schools and colleges across England (The Sutton Trust 2014).
2. In 2015–2016, 14.0% of Scottish domiciled full-time first-degree entrants to university were from the 20% most deprived areas (Scottish Funding Council Report on Widening Access 2017).
3. In the context of decolonial studies and the advent of the term ‘coloniality’ (Quijano 2007: 168–178). Decolonisation has come to mean more than that process and the establishment of nation states after formal colonisation ceased. Decolonisation (as groups like *Rhodes Must Fall* use it) has come to mean the attempted unravelling and relinquishing of coloniality—and perhaps therefore forms of imperialism too—that is the active opposition and destruction of the structures, conditions and lived experiences of colonialism’s legacy.
4. The Scottish government instigated a Commission on Widening Access which produced a *Blueprint for Fairness* (2016).
5. ‘Those from the most affluent areas are three times more likely to directly enrol from school to HE than their peers living in the most economically disadvantaged areas’ (Sosu et al. 2016: 9).
6. See McCaig (2006), Havergal (2016).
7. Adebayo’s account (published in 1996) is reminiscent of the *Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford’s* 2015 campaign against the Oxford Union for their advertisement of the ‘Colonial Comeback Cocktail’ specially conceived of for a debate on British reparations to the former colonies. The group stated: ‘This casual approach to offensive imagery exemplified the care-free way that the Union engaged with colonial history, an attitude that was rarely challenged in Oxford tutorials and lectures, in the Oxford community, and in the national discourse’ (*Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford* 2015).

References

- Adams, T. (2007, September 23). Cultural Hallmark. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2007/sep/23/communities.politicsphilosophyandsociety>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Adebayo, D. (1996). *Some Kind of Black*. London: Virago.
- Agard, J. (1985). *Mangoes & Bullets: Selected and New Poems, 1972–1984*. London: Pluto Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2012). *On Being Included*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Akomfrah, J. (2013). *The Stuart Hall Project*. Smoking Dogs Films [Online Film]. Available at <http://player.bfi.org.uk/film/watch-the-stuart-hall-project-2013/>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Alexander, C., & Arday, J. (2015). *Aiming Higher: Race, Inequality and Diversity in the Academy*. London: Runnymede Trust.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2004). 'Foreword', F. Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth* (R. Philcox, Trans.). New York: Grove.
- Conrad, J. (2008). *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dabydeen, D. (2005). *The Intended*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press.
- Dangarembga, T. (1988). *Nervous Conditions*. London: The Women's Press.
- Dear, L. (2017). Epistemology and Kinship: Reading Resistance Literature on Westernised Education. *Open Library of the Humanities*, 3(1), 10, 1–22.
- Dear, L. (2018). *Colonialism, Knowledge and the University*. Ph.D. thesis, Unpublished, University of Glasgow.
- Fanon, F. (1986). *Black Skin, White Masks* (C. L. Markmann, Trans.). London: Pluto Press.
- Glasser, R. (1999). *The Ralph Glasser Omnibus: Growing Up in the Gorbals, Gorbals Boy in Oxford, Gorbals Voices, Siren Songs*. London: Lomond Books.
- Glasser, R. (2006). *Growing Up in the Gorbals: The Ralph Glasser Omnibus*. Edinburgh: Black & White Publishing.
- Gordon, L. R. (2000). *Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought*. New York: Routledge.
- Green, A. (1990). *Education and State Formation: The Rise of Education Systems in England, France and the USA*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Havergal, C. (2016). Can Scotland Carry on with Its Free-Tuition Policy. *Times Higher Education*. Available at <https://www.timeshighereducation>.

- [com/features/can-scottish-higher-education-carry-on-with-its-free-tuition-policy](#). Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2), 240–270.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2008). *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity*. London: Duke University Press.
- McCaig, C. (2006). The Retreat from Widening Participation? The National Scholarship Programme and New Access Agreements in English Higher Education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41, 215–230.
- Mohanty, C. T. (2003). *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Oxford University. (2017). More Than 20 New Portraits Commissioned to Reflect Oxford's Diversity. Available at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2017-03-30-more-20-new-portraits-commissioned-reflect-oxford-universitys-diversity>. Accessed 31 July 2018.
- Oyedemi, K. (2005). Prelude to a Brand New Purchase on Black Political Identity: A Reading of Bernadine Evaristo's *Lara* and Diran Adebayo's *Some Kind of Black*. In K. Sesay (Ed.), *Write Black Write British: From Post Colonial to Black British Literature*. Hertford: Hansib.
- Pillay, S. (2015). Decolonizing the University. *Africa Is a Country*. Available at <http://africasacountry.com/2015/06/decolonizing-the-university/>. Accessed 29 Nov 2016.
- Proctor, M. R. (1957). *The English University Novel*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Puwar, N. (2004). *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Oxford: Berg.
- Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2–3), 168–178.
- Reay, D. (2001). Finding or Losing Yourself? Working-Class Relationships to Education. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 16(4), 333–346.
- Rhodes, C. (1899). *Will and Condilcs of the Rt. Hon. Cecil John Rhodes* [Website]. Available at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/Rhodes-Confession.htm>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford*. (2015). *Colonial Comeback Cocktail*. Available at <https://rmfoxford.wordpress.com/2015/05/28/colonial-comeback-cocktail/>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Scottish Funding Council. (2017). *Report on Widening Access*. Available at http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/statisticalpublications_sfscst082017/SFCST082017_SFC_Report_on_Widening_Access_201516.pdf. Accessed 31 July 2018.

- Scottish Government. (2016). *Blueprint for Fairness: Final Report of the Commission on Widening Access*. Available at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/blueprint-fairness-final-report-commission-widening-access/>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Sosu, E. M., Smith, L. N., McKendry, S., Santoro, N., & Ellis, S. (2016). *Widening Access to Higher Education for Students from Economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds: What Works and Why?* University of Strathclyde. Available at <https://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/57923/>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- Salih, T. (1969). *Season of Migration to the North*. London: Ibadan Heinemann Educational.
- Social Market Foundation. (2016). *On Course for Success? Student Retention at University*. Available at <http://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/UPP-final-report.pdf>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- The Higher Education Academy. (2012). *Black and Minority Ethnic Student Degree Retention and Attainment*. Available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/bme_summit_final_report.pdf. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- The Sutton Trust. (2014). *Race to the Top*. Available at <http://www.suttontrust.com/newsarchive/race-top/>. Accessed 31 July 2018.
- Titchkosky, T. (2011). *The Question of Access: Disability, Space, Meaning*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- UK Government. (2014). *Learning from Futuretrack: Dropout from Higher Education* (BIS Research Paper No. 168). Available at https://www.hecsu.ac.uk/assets/assets/documents/Futuretrack_BIS_Learning_from_future-track_dropout.pdf. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- UK Government. (2015). *Social Mobility Indicators*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-indicators/social-mobility-indicators#higher-education-participation-in-the-most-selective-institutions-by-type-of-school-or-college-attended>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- UK Government. (2017). *Widening Participation in Higher Education, England, 2014/2015*. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/635103/SFR39-2017-MainText.pdf. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- UNESCO. (2015). Facts and Figures: Mobility in Higher Education. Available at <http://en.unesco.org/node/252278>. Accessed 2 Aug 2018.
- University of Glasgow. (2018). *QlikView Student Headcount Profiles for the University of Glasgow*. Available at <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/planning/qv/dom/d1/>. Accessed 31 July 2018.
- Wynter, S. (2009). Después del hombre, su última palabra: sobre el posmodernismo, *les damnés* y el principio sociogénico. In W. Mignolo (Ed.), *La teoría política en la encrucijada descolonial*. Ediciones Del Signo: Buenos Aires.
- Young, R. (1995). *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London: Routledge.



Black Scottish Writing and the Fiction of Diversity

Churnjeet Mahn

On a Saturday afternoon in September 2018, after leading an anti-Faslane protest,¹ Jackie Kay, the Scottish Makar (national poet of Scotland) came to Edinburgh to act as a panellist at a one-day conference called *Resisting Whiteness*. She spoke optimistically about race and sexuality in Scotland, contrasting some of the stories of her youthful struggle to feel Scottish, Black, a lesbian, against her current status and experience in a Scotland keen to distinguish itself as more progressive and inclusive than England. Kay openly discussed raising her son in London and Manchester, places she argued offered a richer environment for Afro-British identity. But now Kay was firmly back in Scotland, talking about Scottish Blackness with ease and confidence. Kay's sleight of hand managed to seamlessly bring together an older narrative of a more hostile or challenging Scotland for a Black woman, with a contemporary account of possibility and hope without critically questioning how and why this change was possible. In this chapter, I am interested in the rhetorical gestures and silences required to reconcile

C. Mahn (✉)

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK

e-mail: churnjeet.mahn@strath.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_6

different accounts of Black Scottish experience, one that can understand how older racisms can change, adapt and erupt into the present to maintain the whiteness of key cultural assets, in this case, the study of literature. The discussion layers contemporary debates around race in UK literary studies, with literary criticism on race and Scotland, and the experiences of students studying themes of race and nationality, to understand some of the difficulties in raising race as an issue in the Scottish classroom.

In January 2017 Meera Sabaratnam issued a clarification around the SOAS ‘decolonise the curriculum’ campaign led by students: ‘You may have recently read false news reports that SOAS students have called for the removal of white philosophers such as Plato and Kant from their reading lists. It bears repeating that *these reports are untrue*—they are calling for a greater representation of non-European thinkers, as well as better historical awareness of the contexts in which scholarly knowledge has been produced’ (Sebaratnam 2017). This theme continued as in October 2017 a media furore broke out over a discussion around ‘decolonising’ the English Literature curriculum at the University of Cambridge (Demianyk 2017). A conversation about an inclusive curriculum was reported in *The Daily Telegraph* as ‘Student forces Cambridge to drop white authors’, a strapline which the paper later corrected and apologised for. The arts and humanities have had a particular challenge when it has come to protecting its canons of knowledge, and have been reluctant, or unable, to think beyond Eurocentric aesthetic assumptions and values. The containment of diversity within the curriculum (which often sits at odds with university agendas to use diversity as a promotional tool) has been a delicate balance between acknowledging the importance of postcolonial theory and its developments, without dismantling the histories, values and aesthetic judgements which guarantee the whiteness of English Literature. Diversity has often acted as an additive in English Literature teaching in the UK which demonstrates the inclusive and diverse nature of literature, a sleight of hand which allows English Literature to universalise its aesthetic standards rather than challenging or radically refiguring what they might be. The calls for decolonising the curriculum, whatever that may mean, have been various and with quite divergent aims. But what makes each demand

distinct is the moment they belong to, a moment where the politics of race threatens to dilute the value of universalized (white) literary and philosophical knowledge which, in turn, is attacked as unreasonable political correctness.

The apparent threat of diversity in these contexts has superficially become synonymous with the straightforward sacrifice of quality and value (through the suggestion that white thinkers or writers must be ejected from the curriculum). But the moment and challenge to curriculum diversity, and their appearance in the media is illustrative of the way racial politics and activism has become focalised by political events and movements in the UK. Scholars have begun work on tracing the ways in which the debates around Brexit triggered and reworked older forms of racism, bringing them into contact with new contexts which could give the appearance of measured and uncontroversial sentiments such as overpopulation or balancing the economy (Bhambra 2017).² This has coincided with a visible growth in discussions of Black culture and postcolonialism in UK academic culture, from the introduction of new degree courses, to a growing connected awareness of the range of Black social and academic activism in the UK through social media platforms.³ However, the evocation of the 'UK' in this context, generally means England.⁴ Scotland, through the fashioning of its own version of a progressive civic nationalism, has posed its own challenges to ideas and debates around race and immigration.

During and after the Brexit campaign, I've been congratulated several times for living 'on the right side of the border'. A public perception of less racism and a welcoming approach to refugees and migrants in Scotland has been an important part of a national discourse which has been highly selective in its evidence (Davidson et al. 2018), 'there's no problem here' has been a mantra in circulation for decades (Singh 1999) which is dependent on the circulation of some national myths about Scotland: Scottish people are friendly and welcoming, and Scotland is a left-wing nation with an inherent bent towards social justice informed by its experience of inner-city poverty and effective 'colonisation' by England. I am interested in the extent to which this distinction fosters a different debate about what 'decolonising' the English Literature curriculum might look like in Scotland. This chapter

is a reflection on the contemporary politics of teaching black writing in a Scottish university classroom, especially when delivered by a person of colour who is expected to embody an authentic minority experience. More specifically, it discusses the experience of teaching Jackie Kay's novel, *Trumpet* (1998) to two first-year cohorts in a major Scottish university, from designing the lecture and seminar questions, to the discussion and feedback of students.

Decolonising Scottish Writing

What is Black Scottish literature being decolonised from? England? A white canon? There is a growing body of criticism charting a distinct experience of race in Scotland, especially in the context of a civic nationalism which has been antagonistic to some UK-level policy and campaigns which have become conjoined with debates about racism.⁵ A sub-category of critical writing has emerged in Scottish Literature and Scottish History, which addresses Scotland's distinct role in empire, and the potential relevancy of reading Scotland as a postcolonial nation. As Michael Gardiner has argued, 'Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature are less separate trends or two sets of texts, than intricately related and often conjoined critical positionings in relation to a much longer history, which has as one its main objects a critique of the jurisdiction of the imperial mode of British state culture' (Gardiner et al. 2011: 1). The story of Scottish exceptionalism is overwrought but in the knotty relationship between Scotland and postcolonial studies there is a meaningful division that defies the well-honed, convincing and thoughtful arguments to Scotland's entanglements with the postcolonial: whiteness. By expanding on, and borrowing from, postcolonial theory and studies, Scotland becomes a vantage point from which to critique the British state while displacing responsibility for social problems, such as racism (Davidson et al. 2018). Through this, Scottish postcolonial studies can undertake a critique of the British state without contending with whiteness in the same way as postcolonial studies of British writing.

Graeme Macdonald makes an argument about how/why ‘Black Scottish’ has become an important category in literature in the past 20 years, ‘if the earlier generation of black British writing argued for legitimate inclusion within the expanded realms of British culture, then devolutionary *Scottish* black and Asian representation appears at a time when the unity and coherence of “British” in “the British novel” is under increasing scrutiny, partly as a result of the pressure placed upon it by the devolution of the Scottish novel’ (Macdonald 2010: 85). By sequencing together the devolution of the Scottish novel and an emergence of a distinct Scottish Black Minority Ethnic (BME) representation in art and culture, there is an invitation to imagine a solidarity which strategically erases the potential conflict between these positions and, I would argue, tends to underplay and reduce the complexity of national and transnational narratives that can be evoked within Black writing which travels across borders to connect with other bodies of thinking unconnected to Scotland; indeed, some of these connections (in terms of critiquing whiteness, the Global North or the history of colonialism) would be antagonistic.

In this chapter I consider some of the challenges of talking about race in Scottish university classroom, especially when the text being studied is set in Scotland or about being Scottish. Like Gardiner, it is not my intention to contribute to a debate about whether or not Scotland can be read as postcolonial in relation to the British state, rather, my question is about the conditions required to mobilise a history of black activism and black intellectual thought in a nation which may refuse an explicit ethnic basis for nationalism despite having an implicit one. Remi Eddo-Lodge in *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People About Race* (2017) offers a compelling account of the whitewashing of racism:

Structural racism is never a case of innocent and pure, persecuted people of colour versus white people intent on evil and malice. Rather, it is about how Britain’s relationship with race infects and distorts equal opportunity. I think that we placate ourselves with the fallacy of meritocracy by insisting that we just don’t *see* race. This makes us feel progressive. But this claim to not see race is tantamount to compulsory assimilation. My blackness has been politicised against my will, but I don’t want it wilfully

ignored in an effort to instil some sort of precarious, false harmony. (Eddo-Lodge 2017)

To what extent does postcolonial solidarity in the Scottish context rely on the erasure of racial difference to qualify for of national solidarity? While the street names of Glasgow act as testimonies of histories of slavery and racism (Jamaica Street, Tobego Street) and a statue to Lord Roberts, the nineteenth century colonial administrator, stands prominently overlooking the University of Glasgow, is it possible to take seriously the claims that Scotland is any more or less progressive in its racial politics than England? Or is this whitewashing of racism part of the terms for making space for ethnic minorities within the discourse of Scottish nationalism? To think of this question another way, does the inclusion of Scottish texts by an author of any ethnic origin have the potential to decolonise English Literary studies in Scotland?

A significant body of Scottish literary criticism around issues of colonialism has focussed on the status of Scotland as a kind of colony, or experiencing social consequences analogous to other colonised nations. The 'minority' status of Scotland within the Union of the United Kingdom has been the focal point for the rejuvenation of Scottish literature in the twentieth century. Being British and Scottish, or in the case of *Trumpet*, being Black Scottish and Black British, is a recurring contradiction explored in Scottish literary criticism. Early twentieth century writers from Edwin Muir to Hugh MacDiarmid engaged with some kind of fundamental loss at the heart of Scottish culture: what does it look like to be a minority nation in a union? The fashioning of a distinct tradition of Scottish writing, especially in Scots and English, has involved identifying a distinct quality that cannot be predicated simply on language.

A key recurring concept for Scottish literature in the twentieth century has been the 'Caledonian Antisyzygy', the duelling of opposites and core contradictions that prevents it from presenting a unified face, which was defined as a characteristic of the Scottish psyche and writing by Gregory Smith in 1919: 'the literature [of Scotland] is remarkably varied, and that it becomes, under the stress of foreign influence and native division and reaction, almost a zigzag of contradictions.'

The antithesis need not, however, disconcert us. Perhaps in the very combination of opposites—what either of the two Sir Thomases [...] might have been willing to call “the Caledonian antiszygy” (Smith 1919: 4). Smith’s formulation undergirds a perspective on Scottish Literature which is entirely based on variety and contradiction. Expansive and inclusive to the point of being vacuous, it has provided the means for Scottish Literature to refuse any singular anchoring tradition and canon of writing in favour of reading multiplying threads of Scottish writing. From Highland vs Lowland, to intense religious discord and the contradictions of egalitarian politics versus the realities of class and inequality, the Caledonian Antiszygy has been a useful way for critics to pack together the fact that Scottish identity celebrates a struggle with itself that has come to act as a powerful mythology, whether or not it is a valid or relevant reading of Scottish culture.

When it comes to understanding the character of Scottish culture and writing in the wake of migration and increasing diversity in the late twentieth century, versions of the Caledonian Antiszygy are deployed to understand the inclusive, capacious, diverse, and contradictory character of Scottish fiction. And this, in itself, carries an intense contradiction. For a country so fixated on its history and heritage, the bar to qualify for Scottishness is relatively low. As Willy Maley says in his discussion of Leila Aboulela’s *The Translator* (1999), a novel by a migrant to Scotland set in Scotland:

Scotland, at the heart of Sudan’s colonial history, fittingly provides the context for one of its most significant contemporary literary works. *The Translator* belongs to Scottish as much as it does African literature. When asked in an interview about being designated a ‘Scottish Arab writer’, Aboulela expressed her satisfaction with *The Translator’s* designation as a Scottish novel [...] What this designation means in a postcolonial context is, of course, globally fashioned. The novel’s publication history and its author’s biography exemplify ways in which transnational contexts shape the parameters of Scottish Literature. (Maley 2011)

Maley acknowledges Scotland’s influence in different forms of African colonialism to evidence a long history of Scottish participation in

colonialism. And while there is much to be researched on how these connections have 'shaped the parameters' of Scottish writing, where is the corresponding discussion about how Scottish intervention in colonialism has shaped the parameters of other cultures and traditions? Bashabi Fraser, a migrant to Scotland who has written extensively about BME writing in Scotland suggests that, 'New Scots are transcultural writers who can move across boundaries of nation and write with a deep consciousness of a global reality of interconnectedness' (Fraser 2016: 234). This view is optimistic when it comes to the stories and histories of racism, gender, and especially class.

I was an undergraduate student at a large Scottish university and studied English and Scottish Literature. Throughout the entirety of my degree, I did not study a single text by a Black British or British Asian author. Throughout my degree I was one of a few non-white faces in some of the largest subject cohorts of the Faculty. Whether this matters is a question of perspective. I did study the basics of postcolonial literature, but when these were applied to texts, they were primarily in colonial contexts, for example the writing of Chinua Achebe; in the context of north American civil rights, bringing in Audre Lorde and bell hooks; or in discussions of Scotland as a nation that had been subjected to postcolonial violence after the loss of its sovereignty. To be 'well-read' was to be well-versed in a tradition that was overwhelmingly white, middle-class, and apart from the odd expedition, confined to the Global North. By the time I was a graduate student teaching English Literature, I idealistically believed it was my duty to bring some intellectual activism into my teaching. I asked at an English committee meeting if we could introduce a Black British or British Asian text into the undergraduate curriculum. In a department that had approximately 40 members of staff, not including graduate teaching assistants, I was one of the few ethnic minorities in the staff and student body combined. I received a kind response but ultimately it was decided that there was no suitable text that could be included on the curriculum at the expense of other English Literature (for which we can read predominantly white with odd references to Black American or African).

After I received my Ph.D. I moved to the south-east of England in 2008 where it was impossible to ignore issues of race in the curriculum.

Our student body was diverse, issues of race and migration played out visibly and violently from the rise of Islamophobia after the 7/7 attacks, to the riots in South London in 2011, not to mention the escalation of tension between communities and the police. Reading texts like Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* in the classroom was impossible without reference to the life experiences of students and the diversity of nearby London. In 2015 I moved back to Glasgow shortly after the Scottish Independence Referendum, which had taken place the previous year. Devolution and independence had become the key cultural framework within which to debate the social and cultural issues around inequality, social justice and identity. Debates around race in Scotland have not been focalised and politicised in the same way as parts of England, and while the English and Scottish Literature university curriculum has become more diverse than before, the staff make-up of English and Scottish Literature departments is still overwhelmingly white, with some of Scotland's largest English Literature departments having no BME staff on permanent contracts. There may be an appetite for talking about Scotland's diversity in culture and literature, but there is little or no interest in questioning why the undergraduate, graduate and academic experience of English and Scottish Literary Studies in Scotland is so white.

Black Scottish or Black British Writing?

In a curriculum where making space for Scottish texts is a consideration in a programme of reading dominated by English writing, Jackie Kay has found herself onto a series of university courses in Scotland as the premier example of Scottish Black writing. For the rest of this chapter, I want to consider Jackie Kay's role in Black British or Black Scottish writing, and then consider this in coordination with student's responses and feedback to ideas around the opportunities and limits of thinking about the distinctiveness of Black Scottish writing. Jackie Kay is currently Scotland's Makar, or national poet. She was born as a mixed-race child in Scotland and adopted by a white couple and raised in Glasgow. Her first novel, *Trumpet* (1998) draws on the life of the American jazz

musician Billy Tipton (1914–1989) who was born female but who lived the majority of his life as man, a ‘secret’ discovered upon his death. Her novel’s protagonist, Joss, follows a similar trajectory in his life but he is mixed-race, and the story is set between Scotland and England. The novel is told through a series of perspectives from Joss’s wife, to his son, a coroner who takes care of his body and a journalist writing about the sensation around Joss’s death. Joss makes an appearance towards the end of the novel, from beyond the grave, where he reflects on his own heritage and journey. The entire novel is structured around the evasion and refusal of any stable categories and relies on a pervading dissatisfaction with the labels and prejudices which delimit people’s lives. Writing 18 years after the novel’s first publication, the Scottish writer Ali Smith has reflected on the ways in which *Trumpet* made a distinct contribution to writing in Scotland while being part of a recognisable tradition of Scottish writing:

There had certainly never been a Scottish book like it, yet it came from the Scottish tradition of honouring the margins, the vernacular and the ordinariness of things and lives (an ‘ordinariness’ that is always extraordinary). It came from a literary tradition of shapeshift itself, one that finds voice in unauthorised, unexpected forms and places; one often concerned with the search for a communal form, a tradition that can be traced in writers such as Lewis Grassie Gibbon, Hugh MacDiarmid, Nan Shepherd, Willa Muir, Alasdair Gray, Liz Lochhead, James Kelman. It came from such tradition and expanded it with influences from international black writers such as Audre Lorde, Jamaica Kincaid, and especially Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison. Plus, it said things about and for that Scottish tradition, and about and for a wider British tradition as well, concerning gender and ethnicity, that had never been said before. (Smith 2016)

Smith creates a mixed genealogy for Kay but does not address the ethics or possibilities of connecting different kinds of marginalised positions (marginalised from what, by whom?). Her laboured genealogy does not question how different margins may connect and who benefits from marketing or positioning these ‘margins’. In terms of the possible points

of connection between a Scottish and ‘international black’ tradition, ideas around the unexpected and/or unauthorised are hardly unique in any literary culture. Smith’s observations are valuable not as evidence of a parallel between the history of African-American or Caribbean writing and Scottish writing, however, they are valuable in terms of evidencing the will to make that connection. Discussing her own literary traditions, Kay has reflected on the problem with locating her voice in fiction:

When *Trumpet*, her first novel, was published in 1998, Kay became one of the most prominent of a small number of women writers of African descent in Britain. The poet Jean ‘Binta’ Breeze and novelist Joan Riley both emigrated from Jamaica and published here in the 1980s. Unsurprisingly, it was to African-American writers – Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Maya Angelou – that Kay turned as a young woman, and the poet Audre Lorde, who told her she didn’t have to deny her Scottishness in order to be black. ‘It’s a strength! You can be both!’ Kay says in a hearty approximation of Lorde’s accent. ‘That was an amazing thing to hear. So I stopped feeling like a sore thumb and realised that complexity could bring something, that there are advantages as well as disadvantages’.

(Rustin 2012)

Kay claims her Scottishness through a playful approximation of a difference that is not anchored in a historicised and politicised challenge to, and writing back, to a national(ist) politics which has harboured racism, whether historical or contemporary. In other words, while Lorde wrote with the backdrop of Black civil disobedience and activism, and Jean ‘Binta’ Breeze and Joan Riley arrived in an England which experienced major race-related riots in the 1980s, Kay’s depiction of Scotland and race moves in and out of a dialogue with a British or American/Caribbean experience which does not challenge Scotland’s own specific contribution to empire or discourses of racism.

Trumpet introduces a proliferating series of identity categories (which it goes on to critique), from lesbian and trans to Scottish and Black. In designing two lectures for *Trumpet*, the challenge was to introduce and explain the biopolitics of the text without getting ‘stuck’ in identity politics, something Kay has commented on frequently:

Kay says she was ‘bogged down’ in identity politics for a long time, and worries that the labels and categories it created – ‘lesbian writer’, ‘black writer’, ‘Scottish writer’ – can become a drag. ‘You want to be open about being gay – why would you not be open about being gay? But you don’t want to be defined by it,’ is how she expresses the conundrum. ‘You never have control over how much the volume goes up or how much flavouring goes in. Ultimately I’m a writer and I don’t want my work or my characters to be constrained by the fact of me. I think a lot of writers feel like that’. (Rustin 2012)

Trumpet is a novel which resolutely refuses a sustained engagement with any single thread of identity politics (what it may mean to be Scottish or black or queer) and instead situates itself at a confluence which uses music and reconciliation as strategies to demonstrate the inadequacies of understanding identity as a definition rather than a process of making or becoming. The text is split into a series of diverse perspectives which run through Joss’s family, and the media and medical reception to his death. While Joss’s voice enters the narrative towards the end of the text, the narrative structure is dependent on refracting him through frameworks of intimacy, medical-legal language and prurient media interest to displace the narrative. Joss’s absence is a refusal to realise an authentic voice that can account for, or explain, the categories of race, gender, and sexuality that come into play. Through refracting Joss through other perspectives, some of the contradictions and impossibilities of his life are brought into sharp relief through the description of a wife who loved her husband, and a son who comes to view his father’s body as a lie and betrayal. Jack Halberstam describes a different kind of authenticity that this narrative structure can reveal:

In a flurry of investigative zeal, Kay’s novel shows us that a life carefully written by its author, owned and shielded by loved ones, may suddenly stand exposed as a lie. The beauty of Kay’s narrative is that she does not try to undo the life narrative of a passing man; rather, she sets out to honor it by weaving together a patchwork of memories from Joss’s survivors, but mainly his wife, and making that patchwork into the authentic narrative. (Halberstam 2005: 59)

Kay does show some of the 'undoing' of Joss's life through Coleman's emotional and violent rejection of the 'truth' about his father which leads to him cooperating with a journalist, who herself, is part of a broader metaphor of exposure than runs through the text. Joss's post-mortem neatly brings together social censure around passing with the undermining of easy(?) equations between the body and gender (ed) truths: 'Doctor Krishnamurty felt as if she was removing skin, each wrapping of bandage that she peeled off felt unmistakably like a layer of skin. So much so that the doctor became quite apprehensive about what kind of injuries the bandages could be hiding' (Kay 1998: 43). Through the transfiguration of gauze to skin, the injury to the memory of Joss's life as a man is implied through the removal of the bandages. The negative media and social attention Joss's death garners layers with this scene to produce a kind of literalised excoriation through the demand to expose the apparently real body of a woman and negate the reality of a man's life.

When Joss does speak to the reader at the close of the text, he recalls a life which involves following traces back in time that slip into an attempt to recall and reclaim the stories of a land he did not belong to. Speaking of his father he comments: 'But he couldn't remember what he wanted to remember. He would read many books to see if they might remind him of what he wanted to remember: the hot dust on the red road, the jacaranda tree [...] The trouble with the past, my father said, is that you no longer know what you could be remembering. My own country is lost to me now, more or less all of it, drowned at sea in the dead of a dark, dark night' (273). Joss recounts his own experience of racism alongside an identification with Scotland and being Scottish which becomes the only home available as a past life of his father is as far as a past world. Coordinating the loss of an imagined African heritage with the contrasting fit of a sense of Scottish belonging, if not heritage, becomes another way in which the text interrogates the assumptions made about bodies and lives.

Being Scottish in the text, on one level, operates within the parameters of progressive nationalism with the lacuna of Joss's heritage being filled by his life and upbringing in Glasgow. However, Matt

Richardson reads more resonance in the absence: 'Primarily, Kay's work suggests that people of African descent in the United Kingdom find a precarious (im)balance between their relationships to blackness and black identity and their Scottish or English or Welsh identities. Ultimately, Kay's work suggests that to be black and Scottish is to be absent from the national historical imaginary' (Richardson 2012: 364). Richardson's writing belongs to a tradition of American writing which reads cultural outputs alongside politicised and cultural experiences of race. The history of that political consciousness in Scotland, of solidarity between people of colour against the forces of racism or histories of colonialism and imperialism are absent in the text. While Kay may riff off Audre Lorde or be categorised at times as a Black British writer, there is something about her dimension as a Scottish writer which deemphasises a political or explicit historical consciousness of race. For critics such as Carole Jones, 'Embracing the openness in Scottish literary culture enables an aspiration to more queering representation and queer readings that productively challenge the boundaries of our notions of community, identity and the human' (Jones 2016: 195). What is the cost of the embrace? The discussions of race in Kay's work often reroute her through Black British or Black traditions of writing that exist within a well-defined consciousness of race that has been accompanied by activism. Kay's critique of race and nationality is not as nuanced as her critique of sex and gender. This produces an ambivalence in the text around the relationship between Scotland and racism: is this a British (or English) problem which reaches into Scotland, or is there something distinct about its manifestation in Scotland? If openness and ambivalence have become trademarks in Scottish writing, then *Trumpet* is an excellent example of a text which embraces and refuses all kinds of progress:

When the century turns. Everybody turns like people in a progressive reel dance. Some turn over a new leaf, some turn a blind eye, a deaf ear, some turn the long barn tables, some slip back, sliding towards the old tongue. When the pendulum of the old clock's big hand moves forward, somebody always turns it back. Somebody who resents progress or is irritated by it or decides all change is false. (Kay 1998: 272)

Prejudices old and new recur in rhythms. In a text self-aware of its effects, time, music, and movement become the guarantors of change without a promise of something 'better'. This discussion forms the basis of the two lectures on Jackie Kay that I deliver to students, and which have become an entry point into gathering student responses to the question of race and Scotland.

In the Classroom

Trumpet was introduced on the Level 1 English Literature curriculum at the University of Strathclyde in 2016 in an attempt to create a more inclusive reading list. Kay is the only non-white author to appear in the primary reading for Level 1 students. Most humanities faculties in the Scottish university system will allow students to take subjects as core or minor subjects so our cohort is made up of students who have chosen English Literature as their degree, or joint-degree subject, and students who may have an interest in studying literature at a pre-honours level, with no obligation to take the subject to graduation. This makes Level 1 English Literature (which is taught in the first year of a four-year degree) a more diverse group of students in their interest level and commitment to studying English. Students are predominantly from the west coast of Scotland with a significant number living in Glasgow, where part of *Trumpet* is set. Teaching comprises a mixture of lectures and seminars, with first-year lectures having to bridge the gap between secondary, college, and access routes into university-level English.

In order to provide active feedback on student's writing and to encourage debate amongst students, we piloted a student response/feedback mechanism over two years. The format was the same for all texts: students would be asked to take responsibility for collectively writing up/summarising seminar discussion in a way that would demonstrate different perspectives (through representing the various views of individual students) as well as a good knowledge of the text (through providing evidence from *Trumpet* through quotes or analysis). For the two weeks on *Trumpet*, the student feedback was structured in response to a series of questions around eight key terms, two of which focussed on

race and nationalism. While other questions focused on form, technique, and transgender representation, for this chapter I am interested in the way students explicitly addressed issues of race and nationalism in the Scottish context. The extracts used in the following discussion are from responses to seminars held over two sessions (2016–2017 with 129 students and 2017–2018 with 139 students). Divided into smaller groups of approximately 12, students were asked to produce a collective response to 8 questions over two seminars which were then summarised and produced as a written reflective reading log. Each cohort (2016–2017 and 2017–2018) produced 11 substantial responses (22 in total) ranging from 200 words to 1000 words, with 10 responses explicitly addressing the following two questions:

1. Think about the role of ‘identity’ in the text. More specifically, what makes this text Scottish? Is Scotland important for the text?
2. In the interview, Kay discusses the importance of black writers in creating a different kind of voice. Why is Joss Moody’s race significant in the text? How is ‘blackness’ or ‘black culture’ represented?

As this work was not assessed and in a very different format from marked assessments (essays and exams), students approached the task of summarising seminar discussion with a language less critical than their assessed work. Students were asked to read a range of secondary material including interviews with Jackie Kay and the article by Matt Richardson discussed earlier in this chapter. Students were made aware of two perspectives on this issue through lectures and this secondary reading, namely, that reading Kay in a Scottish or British or Black continuum presented different kinds of political challenge. The majority of responses attempted to take a critical stance by referring to statements Kay had made, or analysing sections of the text. However, this was disrupted in two ways. Students who identified Scotland as more inclusive or progressive than England, moved towards personal language around friendliness and openness with less direct evidence from the text. Students who identified Scotland as racist, or having a problem with race, moved towards more abstract references beyond the text and Kay.

The 10 direct responses to the questions on Scotland and race produced an extremely broad range of responses. While a single student within one of the group responses called Scotland's culture 'white supremacist', the most common view (5 out of the 10 group responses) was that Scotland was important to the text because Jackie Kay was Scottish and it would appeal to Scottish readers. While this response deflected the issue of race onto authorship, 3 of the group responses flagged that Scotland was less diverse and therefore issues of race appeared less frequently in public discourse. For example, one group's response included: 'It is a "*Scottish*" novel not only in the use of slang and locations but in the way that some of the characters act. [...] Joss comes across as very Scottish as he seems very nationalist and identifies with Scots, he tells his son to "speak properly" when he picks up another accent other than Scottish.' The students picked up on a series of complex arguments: the conflation of Scots with slang, or the misidentification of Scots as slang is demonstrated through Joss's remonstration of his son's English. The text does not express any nationalist political sentiment, but language choice here becomes read as part of a nationalist project of distinction from and against English and England. The observation about language was extended through to culture by another group discussion: 'We felt that the interactions between characters really showed a Scottishness within the text – the way Joss always withheld [sic] his little Scottish values and refused to lose his accent. The behaviour of the people on Torr, the warmth and "open door" values were really a staple of old Scottish values.'

Despite the majority of students identifying a positive framing of Scottish identity and values in the text, and Joss's attachment to them, students tended to take as fact that Glasgow is less diverse than other large UK cities, equating diversity with more 'progressive' or 'accepting' views⁶: 'Setting of Scotland important as at the time it was not as progressive or multiracial as other parts of the UK such as Manchester or London so gives a different perspective on people'. In this discussion, depictions of racism in the text, combined with the absence of black communities, or a broader consciousness of black lives in Scotland is equated with Scotland being less 'progressive' (thereby reading a critical mass in population and a politicised conflict around race as a platform

to generate 'progression'). This was supported by another comment, 'We felt that the story would work the same if it was set in another city with similar attitudes at the time but not in a more diverse city such as London since people would be more likely to be accepting'. Equating London with acceptance bypasses notions that Scottish civic nationalism automatically produces more inclusive contexts for racial minorities.

The responses did include positions more explicitly critical of Scottish identity in the text, but these were in the minority and tended to include more emotive language: 'Joss's femininity can be seen as threatening to White Scottish masculinity. As soon as it is revealed to the public that he is biologically female joss [sic] goes from being the proud face of a culturally diverse Britain (a façade) and is quickly relegated to the role of the perverted Black who duped the public'. By layering white Scottish masculinity and a culturally diverse Britain, the students appear to disaggregate the intersectional politics of the text, attributing anxieties with whiteness and masculinity to Scotland and racial diversity to Britain. Another position raised its criticism through refusing Scotland's immunity from structural racism or heteropatriarchy: 'Not to say Scottish people or that Scottish culture is patriarchal or racist/transphobic, but it is evident that these ideas still exist at the heart of our institutions, much like those across the majority of Western countries. This intolerant culture may appear non-existent to those who don't experience large scale oppression, but Kay draws upon these ideas in the novel'. In their discussions, the students moved between discourses they identified as 'British' and 'Scottish', often attributing more sentimental or inclusive values to Scotland. The accumulation of affective evidence for Scotland's inclusivity (warmth and openness) in the majority of the student discussions fails to find a way to accommodate to respond to explicit instance of racism in the text, Kay's own recollections of racism, or the material in Matt Richardson's work which directly names a failure in representing black Scottish experience. The affective response to Scottishness provides a means to sidestep real experiences of individual and structural racism in the text through its displacement to other contexts, namely, Britain.

Students, on the whole, did not question how 'Scottish' the text was, but their discussion of its content and politics demonstrated a shifting

view about the location of 'progressive' politics or acceptance around racial and sexual difference. Without a pathway to offer a sustained engagement with literature about race and Scottish Literature, many of the discussions raised in Level 1 simply disappear in the degree, as is the case in many English Literature degrees. In Scotland, the space given to 'Scottish texts' often constitutes its own minority status within the teaching of English Literature degrees which elides other kinds of minority positions which might slide across the borders in messier ways. The study of race in Scottish writing finds itself falling between different gaps which allows Scottish literary criticism to make easier, or less contested, claims to postcolonial conditions that do not have to contend with whiteness, race, and ethnicity in the same way as English Literature from England.

Conclusion

What happens to *Trumpet* after it has been dissected in the class and put back together? Its inclusion within the university English Literature curriculum in Scotland offers a gesture towards a devolved and diverse reading list. But the response from students is an excellent demonstration of the ambivalent ways in which the politics of race are triggered in the context of various intersecting nationalisms. While the postcolonial debate in Scottish studies has been overwhelmingly dominated by white critics, these first-year classrooms have opened a space for Scottish BME students to read about race and racism in a city they knew intimately due to my institution's exceptionally high recruitment from the local area. It can be dangerous to evoke the language of authenticity or authentic encounter with literature, this is not what I want to suggest here, but what I do want to suggest is that some of the more 'provocative' and direct responses we had from students makes an important contribution to our understanding of race in the Scottish context. From the visceral rejection of inclusive nationalism to using language and literary analysis as the foundation for challenging the intersection of ethnic, sexual and national selves, the students on the course articulated some of the contradictions that critics in Scottish Literature have

avoided. However, there is a remaining difficulty in raising questions of race in this context. In the face of accumulated affective responses to a Scottish national project which is often viewed as progressive in distinction to UK politics, the charge of structural racism is too difficult to touch or feel. The strategies for avoiding race or its politicisation in the classroom, and the prevailing efforts in Scottish literary criticism to read Scotland as a historically postcolonial state, works to subdue the power or possibility of Scottish black politics to challenge how we envisage and make national literature.

Notes

1. Faslane is popular name for Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde where the UK's nuclear deterrents are located (Trident missiles). As Scotland's Makar, there were some question as to whether it was appropriate for Jackie Kay to lead the protest.
2. The June 23rd, 2016 Referendum where Britain voted to leave the EU and the September 18th, 2014 where Scotland voted to remain part of the United Kingdom have created two waves of divisive political campaigning. A UN envoy sent to the UK to examine race relations since the Brexit vote argued that racism and racist views had increased in the UK (this was widely reported in the media, see, for example, Dearden 2018).
3. Birmingham City University (BCU) began the UK's first undergraduate degree in Black Studies in 2017 and postgraduate courses such as the Goldsmith's MA in Black British Writing (which took its first cohort in 2015) signal a growing interest in literary and cultural study in British Black cultures. However, it also signals the appetite for some universities to tap into diverse student markets. Goldsmith's Equality and Diversity Report (Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2015–2016) reported that while the average HE BME population was 23.2% in the sector, the average at Goldsmiths was 32.1%. At BCU, student composition figures for 2013–2014 reported that 45% of students were from a BME background (Birmingham City University Staff and Student Profiles 2015). The development of these programmes are important landmarks in British higher education, but they also demonstrate a logic in the market which insulates much of the sector from the imperative to take race

seriously: BME staff and students are far more likely to be interested in content with a BME focus. For two recent detailed discussions of structural inequalities in British higher education specifically related to race, see, Gabriel, D., & Tate, S. A. (Eds.), *Inside the Ivory Tower: Narratives of Women of Colour Surviving and Thriving in British Academia* (2017) and Kalwant Bhopal, *White Privilege, The Myth of a Post-Racial Society* (2018).

4. It is worth noting that Wales and Northern Ireland have their own distinct issues with race and racism in education which are distinct from Scotland's.
5. Scotland has a smaller ethnic minority population than the UK as a whole (on average 4% versus a figure closer to 13% in the UK), but there are significant concentrations of ethnic minorities in Scotland, for example in Glasgow, where approximately 12% of the population is classed as ethnic minorities (based on the 2011 census). Work from Robert Miles and Anne Dunlop (1986) to more recent studies on Scottish nationalism and education, and work on young people and nationalism (Botterill et al. 2016) has highlighted a contradiction in Scotland's approach to understanding the role of race and ethnicity in the nation, namely, inclusive civic nationalism and a common sense idea about Scotland being 'less racist' than England exists in a tense relationship with an expectation of integration and form of allegiance to 'Scottishness'.
6. This is interesting as the policy and sociological evidence gives the opposite impression: the smaller presence of ethnic minorities has made Scotland more tolerant.

References

- Bhambra, G. K. (2017). Brexit, Trump, and 'Methodological Whiteness': On the Misrecognition of Race and Class. *British Journal of Sociology*, 68(1), 214–232.
- Bhopal, K. (2018). *White Privilege: The Myth of a Post-Racial Society*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Birmingham City University Staff and Student Profiles. (2015). Birmingham City University. Available at <https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/birmingham-city-university-staff-and-student-profiles-2015-ver-2-130905972901408134.pdf>. Accessed 28 March 2019.

- Botterill, K., Hopkins, P., Sanghera, G., & Arshad, R. (2016, November). Securing Disunion: Young People's Nationalism, Identities and (In) Securities in the Campaign for an Independent Scotland. *Political Geography*, 55, 124–134.
- Davidson, N., Linpaa, M., McBride, M., & Virdee, S. (Eds.). (2018). *No Problem Here: Understanding Racism in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Luath Press.
- Dearden, L. (2018, Friday May 11). Racism Has Become More Acceptable Since Brexit Vote, United Nations Warns. *The Independent*. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/brexit-racism-religious-intolerance-united-nations-special-rapporteur-a8348021.html>. Accessed 1 June 2018.
- Demianyk, G. (2017, October 26). Daily Telegraph Admits 'Decolonise' Cambridge Curriculum Story Was Wrong as Student Lola Olufemi Condemns Newspaper. *Huffington Post*. www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/telegraph-lola-olufemi_uk_59f1fe0fe4b077d8dfc7eaf9. Accessed 2 Jan 2018.
- Eddo-Lodge, R. (2017). *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Equality and Diversity Annual Report. (2015–2016). Goldsmiths, University of London. <https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/about-us/about-goldsmiths/Equality-and-Diversity-Annual-Report-2015—2016.pdf>. Accessed 1 June 2018.
- Fraser, B. (2016). The New Scots: Migration and Diaspora in Scottish South Asian Poetry. In S. Lyall (Ed.), *Community in Modern Scottish Literature* (pp. 214–234). Leiden: Brill.
- Gabriel, D., & Tate, S. A. (Eds.). (2017). *Inside the Ivory Tower: Narratives of Women of Colour Surviving and Thriving in British Academia*. London: Tretham Books.
- Gardiner, M., MacDonald, G., & O'Gallagher, N. (Eds.). (2011). *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Halberstam, J. (2005). *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press.
- Jones, C. (2016). From Subtext to Gaytext? Scottish Fiction's Queer Communities. In S. Lyall (Ed.), *Community in Modern Scottish Literature* (pp. 179–195). Leiden: Brill.
- Kay, J. (1998). *Trumpet*. London: Picador.
- Macdonald, G. (2010). Scottish Extractions: "Race" and Racism in Devolutionary Fiction. *Orbis Litterarum*, 65(2), 79–107.
- Maley, W. (2011). Conversion and Subversion in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* and Leila Aboulela's *The Translator*. In M. Gardiner,

- G. MacDonald, & N. O’Gallagher (Eds.), *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives* (pp. 185–197). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Miles, R., & Dunlop, A. (1986). The Racialization of Politics in Britain: Why Scotland Is Different. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 20(1), 23–33.
- Richardson, M. (2012). “My Father Didn’t Have a Dick”: Social Death and Jackie Kay’s *Trumpet*. *GLQ*, 18(2–3), 361–279.
- Rustin, S. (2012, April 27). A Life in Writing: Jackie Kay. *The Guardian*. www.theguardian.com/books/2012/apr/27/life-writing-jackie-kay. Accessed 2 Jan 2018.
- Sebaratnam, M. (2017, January 18). Decolonising the Curriculum: What’s All the Fuss About? *Study at SOAS Blog*. www.soas.ac.uk/blogs/study/decolonising-curriculum-whats-the-fuss/. Accessed 2 Jan 2018.
- Singh, G. (1999). *Racism and the Scottish Press: Tracing the Continuities and Discontinuities of Racialized Discourses in Scotland*. Thesis Submitted to the University of Leicester.
- Smith, A. (2016, January 16). Rereading Jackie Kay. *The Guardian*. www.theguardian.com/books/2016/jan/16/rereading-trumpet-jackie-kay-ali-smith. Accessed 2 Jan 2018.
- Smith, G. G. (1919). *Scottish Literature, Character and Influence*. London: Macmillan.



In Defence of Safe Spaces: Subaltern Counterpublics and Vulnerable Politics in the Neoliberal University

Chris Waugh

Introduction

Higher education in the United Kingdom¹ faces a significant threat to its very being, according to many media and academic voices. This refers not to significant budgetary cuts to higher education funding (Adams 2017: n.p.), nor the alarming growth in mental health problems among undergraduate students (Denovan and Macaskill 2017: n.p.), but instead the ‘threat’ of requests for safe spaces, trigger warnings, and other student led ‘interventions to make learning environments more accessible for students who have experienced trauma’ (Byron 2017: 117).

Hostility towards these ‘interventions’ takes numerous forms, including condemnation from British Prime Minister Theresa May (Mason 2016) and actor and comedian Stephen Fry (Bowden 2016), citing an erosion of free speech on campuses. Prominent media responses have described the growth of safe spaces as part of a desire to ‘scrub

C. Waugh (✉)
Leeds, UK

campuses clean of words, ideas, and subjects which might cause discomfort and give offence' (Lukianoff and Haidt 2015: n.p.), and that safe spaces themselves are contrary to the very idea of the University (Travers 2017). Some institutions have formally come out against safe spaces and trigger warnings: notably, a senior member of the University of Chicago made it clear that the University 'do[es] not condone the creation of intellectual Safe Spaces,' in a letter to incoming undergraduates (cited in Byron 2017: 120). More recently, the UK Universities Minister, Jo Johnson MP, called on the Office for Students (OfS) to champion free speech on campuses, and launched a consultation, citing that 'there are still examples of censorship where groups [on campuses] have sought to stifle those who do not agree with them' (Department for Education and Johnson 2017). Hostility towards 'student interventions' has spread into the policy and statutory framework of Higher Education.

While the anti-safe spaces discourse is powerful and pervasive both inside and outside of the University, there are examples of counter-discourses and resistance. Feminist academia has long debated the issue of safe spaces (Martínez-San Miguel and Tobias 2014). Student led initiatives to safeguard safe spaces, and the theoretical work of Sara Ahmed (2010, 2014, 2015), seeks to defend the principles behind safe spaces, and problematizes the dominant discourse, and what it implies about students as agents. This chapter is my attempt to draw on those counter-discourses, and contribute towards the reframing of the discussion around safe spaces and the role they play in student resistance. Primarily, this involves examining safe spaces and student subjectivity through the lens of vulnerable politics. As subjects, students in neoliberal universities are expected to embody traits of resilience; Allen and Bull (2017) identify the pervasiveness of psychological discourses around 'grit' and the ability of subjects to 'bounceback' in HE, a discourse which often divorces student subjectivity from the social and medical realities of trauma (ibid.), and often removes responsibility from the University and places it firmly on the students (Binnie 2016; Ehrenreich 2010). Indeed, some Universities made this psychological discourse explicit, such as the University of Edinburgh, which offers its students a 'building resilience' online toolkit (The University of Edinburgh 2018).

Student subjects are expected to be resilient to the what is present to them as the 'harsh threats and dangers of life', to respond with overcoming rather than vulnerability, and thus those subjects who are not perceived as resilient—those who call for safe spaces, for example—are denigrated and belittled. The neoliberal model of academic subjectivity—where individual solutions to structural problems are emphasised—is held above all else in questions of student welfare.

As both an activist and a social movement researcher, the concept of safe spaces has long interested me. My research focuses on gender discrimination and sexual violence within socialist movements, many of which are ideologically hostile to gendered ideas of vulnerability. Safe spaces, in some ways, are an attempt to explore this vulnerability. Over my academic and activist life, I have found myself frustrated and dismayed by the 'cookie cutter' nature of dominant discourse on safe spaces in Universities, which repeat the same, tired, superficial arguments about censorship, 'cry-baby' students, and the imminent collapse of Higher Education as we know it. Many of these come from self-professed advocates of 'free speech,' and yet—contrary to how I have always understood the principles of free speech—there is little to no attempt to understand the perspectives, experiences and standpoints of those who campaign for safe spaces, nor the vulnerabilities those individuals and groups experience. As such, in this chapter I will consider the role of safe spaces in Universities, and why they are important (if often flawed) spaces for the politics of vulnerability and concurrent resistance.² This chapter will draw on Judith Butler's work³ on vulnerability (2006; Butler et al. 2016), and Nancy Fraser's writing on subaltern counterpublics (1990). Additionally I will draw on blog resources, created by student activists who participate in safe spaces in Universities in the UK and USA, and explore their critiques of safe spaces in practice.

I contend that safe spaces represent an often clumsy—but still vital—attempt to create counterpublics for marginalised groups. These counterpublics serve two purposes; firstly, they provide spaces for groups to recuperate, reconvene, and create new strategies and vocabularies for resistance. Secondly, the presence of these counterpublics makes visible collective and individual traumas which disrupt neoliberal narratives of self-resilience.

In the subsequent section, I will offer a concrete definition of ‘Safe Spaces’, distinct from (but not unconnected to) ‘No Platform’ policies and ‘Trigger Warnings.’ I shall then, drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed (2010, 2015), explore the relationship between safe spaces and the notion of a neoliberal student subjectivity (Lewis et al. 2015), and argue that the critique of safe spaces is, in part, a critique of students who reject narratives of resilience.

Defining Safe Spaces

Popular discourse around safe spaces in Higher Education tends to elide several student led ‘interventions’ into one homogenous whole; thus, it is worth drawing some distinctions in the first instance. ‘Safe Spaces’ are often linked to ‘No Platform’ policies. ‘No Platform’ policies refer to a refusal to provide a platform, or stage, to an ideas which may be considered harmful, or contribute to the marginalization of oppressed groups (O’Keefe 2016). Originating as a tactic in the anti-fascist movement (Barrett in Kirk and McElligott 1999), No Platform for Fascists was adopted by the National Union of Students (NUS) in 1974 (O’Keefe, *ibid.*), where, under pressure from feminist and LGBTQA activists, its scope expanded to cover misogyny and transmisogyny (*ibid.*). No platforming is also significant to the Palestinian Solidarity Movement, especially in the context of UK Universities (Sheldon 2016: 176–178). Notable recent cases of No Platforming being used against non-fascist organisations and speakers include at Cardiff University and Cambridge University in 2015, against Germaine Greer, responding to transphobic statements made in her past work (see O’Keefe, *ibid.*; Page 2015).

‘Safe Spaces’ on the other hand, arose initially from student LGBTQA movements (Waldman 2016). Safe spaces can be defined as ‘a place where usually people who are marginalized to some degree can come together and communicate and dialogue and unpack their experiences’ (Amenabar 2016). Safe spaces can also be traced back to the feminist consciousness raising groups in the 1960s and 1970s. These more explicitly separatist spaces were create to provide a woman

a forum to discuss one another's lived experiences, free from the physical and psychological threat of men (Mackinnon 1982; Combahee River Collective 1977; Kravetz 1978). The exact 'space' aspect of safe spaces varies hugely; Harris contends that sex positive zines, websites and comics act as a safe space for young women trying to reclaim their sexuality and desires from capitalist commodification (Harris 2005: 42). Byron notes the use of a 'safe space' set up as a breakout room during a Brown University debate about sexual assault on campus, thereby allowing students and attendees to receive support from peer educators and health staff if needed (Byron 2017: 2). Ho (2017) draws the distinction between 'emotional' and 'academic' safe spaces; the former provides 'students the opportunity to feel secure in times of distress and dysfunction, and they also provide a sense of community,' with an emphasis on respectfulness and discretion in language. On the other hand, academic safe spaces refer to the ability of a speaker to make others feel uncomfortable, but that the risks are 'safe' within the framework of academic debate. For Ho, popular discourse has conflated the two forms of 'safe space,' implying that students wish for the politics of the former to encompass whole campuses (*ibid.*).⁴

Safe spaces, in short, can be fluid and localised to different contexts, synchronous or asynchronous spaces. It is worth emphasising that no space can be entirely 'safe'; the creation of such spaces in an ongoing process, rather than an absolute guarantee. Yet, in considering safe spaces in Universities, we also need to consider the student subjectivities which are connected to these spaces. To say that there is a pervasive hostility towards student subjectivities connected to safe spaces is to put the matter mildly; Spiked Magazine, for example, ranks Leeds University Union (LUU) as Red on a traffic light scale of student led censorship. This ranking cites as censorious policies—among other things—LUU's 'We've Got Your Back' Campaign, which promotes the Union's Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment and aims to make Leeds University Campus a 'safe' space for students, via tools and mechanisms for students to report harassment (Spiked 2017). A similarly warped argument was made at my alma mater, Cambridge University, after the announcement of compulsory consent workshops. These were framed as censorious and removing individual free choice

(Sehgal-Cuthbert 2014: n.p.). As outlandish as these responses are, they articulate a broader sense of student subjectivity: the students who would desire ‘Safe Spaces’ (or, at least, to make campuses ‘safer’ spaces within the politics of safe spaces) are a threat, an enemy of the university. In the next section, I shall explore in more detail the relationship between student subjectivities and safe spaces.

Theorising Safe Spaces and Subjectivity: Against (or for) Neo-liberalism

Bracke identifies a clash between the ‘Look I Overcame’ narrative and a ‘culture’ of trigger warnings and safe spaces on University campuses (Bracke 2016). For Bracke, the former narrative epitomises an enforced character trait of resilience within neoliberalism. In a neoliberal world, Bracke asserts, resilience has become the new security; subjects are expected to expect precarity, and respond by ‘minimizing impact and erasing traces’ (ibid.: 58; Ahmed 2015) of it. Defence against harm is replaced by response, and a response that manifests as a ‘form of self-sufficiency,’ a ‘fantasy of mastery’ (ibid.); if grief and mourning possesses a transformative power on the self, as Butler (2006) have argued, then resilience is anti-transformative: it forces subjects to turn away from the mourning process, and restore themselves to a level of normalcy (Bracke 2016: 59).

The ideal student subject is expected to display a certain level of resilience towards ideas and concepts which may be ‘unsafe’ if they are to achieve their potential on campus. This subjectivity is by no means new, and the prioritising of a certain emotional toughness, the ability to separate lived experience from discussion, and the implication of enhanced productivity, can find its roots as far back as Weber’s Protestant ethic. This dynamic is also gendered, drawing a distinction between a masculine rational knowledge (linked to productivity) and a feminine emotional feeling (Hacker 2018). Indeed, as Gill (2007) has contended, resilience is integrated into neoliberal subjectivity outside out of Higher Education. Neoliberal femininity, for instance, is characterised by the

‘imperative that one’s sexual and dating practices...be presented as freely chosen’ (ibid.: 154, underlined in original) whilst being subjected to disciplinary practices in terms of the female body. Such a femininity constructs a binary opposition where only ‘discursively allowed’ alternative is the ‘prude,’ which causes the ‘eradicating of a space for critique’ (ibid.: 152). One can either accept neoliberal subjectivity, or be relegated to a position of stigmatised outsider, problematic and counter to the values of society. Indeed, such ideas about vulnerability and resilience are profoundly gendered, as Phipps has argued (Phipps 2014: 38). As I shall argue below, we can see the development of a similar counter-subjectivity—that of the vulnerable, or censorious student, or ‘killjoy’ (Ahmed 2010)—in the neoliberal discourse on safe spaces in Higher Education.

Popular discourse suggests that younger people, especially students, are ‘too sensitive,’ easily offended, and millennials in general are branded with the insult ‘snowflake’, with the term being particularly prevalent as a taunt used by the ‘Alt-Right’ movement (Campbell and Manning 2015; Nicholson 2016; Lock 2016). The prevailing wisdom of these perspectives is that older generations possessed thicker skin than millennial students, and thus displays of vulnerability are linked to immaturity. Vulnerability equates to a lack of agency, and moral failing, a charge placed firmly against students in particular. As Ahmed puts it ‘the idea the students have become a problem because they are too sensitive relates to a wider public discourse that renders offendability as a form of moral weakness’ (2015: n.p.). Ahmed here reiterates a point made in her book *Wilful Subjects* (2014) about a politics of dismissal, which attributes problematic status to the student, or protest, as signifier of a decay in moral standards and values. The elision of offendability with vulnerability lessens the weight of the latter; it implies that to display vulnerability is representative not of legitimate trauma, but more of an inability to process uncomfortable information.

Criticism of safe spaces and concern about vulnerability and subjectivity does not solely come from Conservative elements and the political Right. Halberstam wrote of the tendency towards trigger warnings and safe spaces in contemporary Queer movements:

Hardly an event would go by back then without someone feeling violated, hurt, traumatized by someone's poorly phrased question, another person's bad word choice or even just the hint of perfume in the room. People with various kinds of fatigue, easily activated allergies, poorly managed trauma were constantly holding up proceedings ... Others made adjustments, curbed their use of deodorant, tried to avoid patriarchal language, thought before they spoke ... and ultimately disintegrated into a messy, unappealing morass of weepy, hypo-allergic, psychosomatic, anti-sex, anti-fun, anti-porn, pro-drama, pro-processing post-political subjects. (2014b: para. 3)

It is worth noting that Halberstam is not explicitly talking about safe spaces in Universities. While they allude to Trigger Warnings as 'reductive...responses to aesthetic and academic material' (ibid.: para. 7), their critique fits along broadly generational lines, distinguishing between the gender radicals of the 1980–1990s who 'began to laugh, loosened up, [and] got over themselves' and the present where 'it is becoming difficult to speak, to perform, to offer up work nowadays without someone, somewhere claiming to feel hurt, or re-traumatized' (ibid.: para. 6). In this, we can see a parallel to the critique of safe spaces in Universities.

For Halberstam, safe spaces contribute to a redefinition of trauma and its effects. Trauma becomes like a pulled muscle, something which hurts when used, and rises to the surface at the slightest provocation. Halberstam contends that instead of empowering survivors of trauma against neoliberal ideology, this instead buys into neoliberalism, which 'precisely goes to work by psychologizing political difference, individualizing structural exclusions and mystifying political change' (2014b: para. 10). Furthermore, Halberstam contends that this approach disincentives seeking structural change through resistance, focusing instead on 'competitive narratives about trauma' (ibid.: para. 12). Halberstam's concern is that safe spaces (taken in isolation) undermine the character of activist subjectivity, and by extension, strategies for resistance.

Halberstam later clarified their argument in response to criticism and correspondence with younger queer activists (Halberstam 2014a; Duggan 2014). However, Halberstam tacitly shares some of the tropes of their discourse. Anti-safe spaces voices often discursively construct

the figure of the student as problematic, whining, censoring and fragile—one can also perceive this figure in Halberstam's initial article.⁵ In doing this, there is a clear implication about the relationship between student subjectivity and the role of vulnerability in Universities.

The Figure of the Student and the Politics of Vulnerability

This section considers the discursive creation of this student subjectivity in more detail. I draw on the work of Sara Ahmed to explore how the 'problem student' has been created as a bogeyman to neoliberal educational discourses; subsequently, drawing on Butler, I challenge this discourse, and what it implies about vulnerability and its place in Higher Education.

Implicit in any discussion of safe spaces is the figure of the student. As Ahmed puts it, 'problem' students are positioned, by a series of speech acts in public and academic writing, as 'a threat to education, to free speech, to civilization; we might even say, to life itself' (Ahmed 2015: para. 1). The figure of the student becomes the pivotal figure in a generational war, one which paints the other side with broad brush strokes, and—depending on one's stance—sees young people as fragile and weak, and/or old people as conservative and too fragile to accept societal progression (Serano 2014). This generational distribution of fragility has become so second nature that it is a kind of *doxa* in certain literature on young people (Fox 2016).

What makes the figure of the 'problem student'—that is, the 'the consuming student, the censoring student, the over-sensitive student and the complaining student' (Ahmed 2015: para. 3)—striking is the conflation between the role of trauma, humour (or, more precisely humourlessness) and vulnerability. Halberstam's characterisation of the 'weepy', 'unappealing,' and 'anti-fun' (Halberstam 2014a) student activist clearly suggests humourlessness, a suggestion made even more explicit by Halberstam's frequent invocation of Monty Python comedy sketches to illustrate their arguments. The allegation that a subject 'can't

take a joke,' or that offensive speech is 'just a joke,' ties into prohibition of humourlessness, a tactic often used in the politics of dismissal (Hunt 2016). This prohibition of humourlessness does not just apply to student subjectivity; McRobbie (2004) demonstrates how post-feminist media discourse dismisses feminism and feminist ideas as being unable to 'get the joke' as a means of delegitimizing feminism. Accusations of humourlessness carry considerable weight in terms of legitimising others; jokes do not exist as isolated utterances, but tie into total social situations (Douglas 2002: 93), and the telling of jokes represents a 'public affirmation of shared beliefs' (Mintz 1985: 75). Thus to reject what is framed as a 'joke'—and be positioned as 'humourless'—is to face ostracism from others, by proactively refusing to accept what is presented as a joke.

This lack of humour ties into a foregrounding, by the 'problem student' discourse, of trauma as a competitive act. Halberstam evokes the 'Four Yorkshiremen' Monty Python sketch as representative of '... hardship competitions, but without the humour... set pieces among the triggered generation' (Halberstam, *ibid.*: para. 5). The problem student uses trauma as part of an emotional, politicised race to the bottom, a positioning of the self as 'most vulnerable' in a particular context. Such actions have been argued to be antithetical to radical goals, and amount to little more than 'reification of identity [leading] to infinite particularism' (Lopez 2017: para. 6). Serano takes issue with this perspective, seeing this critique as a generational attack on young activists, which generalises well-meaning attempts to make movements more accessible (*ibid.*: para. 25). Central to all of these arguments is fierce disagreement about the role that vulnerability can play in resistance. My assertion here is that these prevailing voices simplify vulnerability—especially the vulnerability of students—into something experienced, something debilitating, and something that should be stamped out by resilience and the 'freely chosen' neoliberal student subjectivity. In doing so, the nuanced connection between vulnerability and resistance—which is, as I shall argue later, an important motivation behind student safe spaces—is simply ignored.

Vulnerability is often conceived as a form of passivity,⁶ or something that reduces or denies agency. This leads to the regularity with which

vulnerability is disavowed—consider the way in which hegemonic displays of masculinity incorporate dismissal of vulnerability in the self and vulnerability of others into its own mechanisms of power (Connell 2002; Seidler 2010). That said, vulnerability is not homogenous, and can have different uses in different contexts. For example, faux vulnerability can be deployed strategically by dominant groups as means to delegitimise resistance to their authority—for instance, the way that heterosexual groups claim to be under attack from a militant LGBTQA ‘gay agenda’ (Sears and Osten 2003); or how Neo-Nazi organisations concoct a theory of ‘white genocide’ to attack activism and resistance on the part of People of Colour (Ferber 1999: n.p.). Dominant powers can also deploy the real vulnerabilities of other groups to further a reactionary agenda and cement their own power: an example of this can be seen in the former UK Independence Party’s leader Nigel Farage’s claim that Islam represents a threat to women’s autonomy and sexuality (Alexander 2017: n.p.).

When vulnerability is linked to resistance, it is often thought of as the act of resisting vulnerability (exemplified by the neoliberal ‘Look I Overcame’ narrative). What is overlooked is what Butler identifies as resistance as a ‘*social and political form* that is informed by vulnerability, and so not one of its opposites’ (Butler et al. 2016: 25, italics original). Vulnerability, in this sense, is not essentially passive or active, but operates within ‘a tactical field’ (ibid.: 7). There is some evidence that this line of thinking has been applied to theorising safe spaces. Byron, for example, argues that when viewed through the lens of Queer Theory, safe spaces and trigger warnings bring trauma into the classroom, or refuse to ignore pre-existing trauma. This ‘queers’ the perceived purpose of educational spaces, opening up the detached, neoliberal space to the ‘potential academic value of [traumatic] experiences and feelings’ (ibid.: 3). Implicit within in this is the capacity for traumatic experiences to become a tool for resistance.

In line with Butler, I call for a reclaiming of vulnerability from neoliberal discourses, in order to produce counter discourses and vocabularies around safe spaces and Universities. Doing so would allow, following Foucault, for an ‘insurrection of subjugated knowledges’ (Foucault 1980: 990) and arm students with tools and skills for

enacting new strategies of resistance on campuses. With this in mind, I will now consider how safe spaces might contribute towards a tactical use of vulnerability as a form of resistance. To explore this question, we need to consider the position of safe spaces within a wider public sphere.

Safe Spaces as Subaltern Counterpublics

Popular and academic debate around freedom of speech and censorship orientates itself around a liberal democratic conception of ‘the public sphere.’ As envisaged by Habermas (1991), the public sphere is an arena ‘...of the discursive relations, a theatre for debating and deliberating rather than for buying and selling’ (Fraser 1990: 57). Furthermore, the public sphere is ‘made up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state,’ thus offering an extra-state site of discussion and debate (*ibid.*). Conflicting ideas, verbalised as part of debate, links free speech intrinsically to the character of the public sphere (Roberts 2003), and accordingly any perceived attempt at censorship is seen as antithetical to its purposes. While No Platform policies are often cited as an attack on free speech and freedom of debate (Pells 2016), critics of safe spaces tend to frame them as ‘self-censorship’ (Garton Ash 2016), or as a refusal to engage properly with the public sphere, resulting in intolerance and separatism (Rose 2017).

As counterpoint to this theorisation of a single Public Sphere—with self-censoring agents inside it—I turn to the work of Nancy Fraser, whose work (1990) offers a critique of the Habermasian approach. Fraser (*ibid.*) argues against the idea that there is one sole ‘public sphere’ of which we are all part. While there is a ‘public sphere’ each individual and group forms their own ‘counterpublics’ where the rest of the actors in the public sphere are not, necessarily, welcome—your home, for example, is a counterpublic in this sense. Fraser argues that social movements, feminist organisations and the like, function as counterpublics for people with some shared political aim or experience of discrimination. These counterpublics, however, are not separatist

organisations but spaces for recuperation, a place where individuals and groups can think about how best to face the issues in the public sphere; by Habermas's definition, the public sphere is an exclusive space, where certain voices dominate, while counterpublics allow for inclusivity. In this sense, one might make a comparison between the counterpublic and the psychiatric idea of the 'therapeutic community' (Clark 1977). Fraser singles out particular counterpublics formed by vulnerable and subordinated groups as 'subaltern counterpublics' which are 'parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs' (Fraser 1990: 67).

Key to Fraser's sense of subaltern counterpublics here is that they provide space for formulating new vocabularies of dissent. Fraser writes that the 'feminist subaltern counterpublic' (a counterpublic built from journals, social movements, festivals, films and literature) created a space for the invention of new language to describe women's experience, identifying 'sexism', 'the double shift', 'sexual harassment'; this language allowed feminist women to 'recast our needs and identities' which, far from limiting engagement, contributed towards 'reducing... our disadvantage in official public sphere' (1990: 67). In short, a feminist counterpublic allowed for the greater engagement with feminist politics in the public sphere.

Drawing on Fraser's conceptualisation, I argue that safe spaces can thus be understood as engaging in a form of counter-discursive dissent by arming subordinated groups with new terms, new methods by which to theorise oppression. The power in this comes from a disruption of the supposed 'objectivity' of everyday oppression. Resisting normalisation of dangerous ideas, such as the race baiting and crypto-fascism of the Trump administration, is a noted tool of dissent (Williams 2016). The existence of safe spaces draws attention to the unnerving reality that sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia and the like are prevalent and often present themselves as objective, as fact, as 'the way the world works' (Young 2015) or what Bourdieu calls *doxa* (Bourdieu 1990). In doing so, safe spaces 'expand discursive space... assumptions that were previously exempt from contestation will now have to be

publicly argued out' (Fraser 1990: 67), as well as equipping members of subordinated groups with the language to begin their own strategies of resistance.

Safe for Whom? Safe Spaces and Their Flaws

Thus far I have proposed that—through turning to the work of Butler and Fraser—it is possible to produce new understandings of safe spaces. Additionally, it is possible to rethink those who defend and participate in safe spaces without accepting the dominant view of these agents as fragile, censorious, or a threat to the idea of the University, or democracy and the public sphere more broadly. However, Fraser cautions against the blind belief that subaltern counterpublics are always necessarily a positive element, and can, in fact, perpetuate their own internal exclusions and discriminatory practices (Fraser 1990). With this in mind, I now consider some of the limitations of safe spaces in facilitating resistance. In doing so, I bring in the knowledge, accounts and critiques generated by students who have participated in safe spaces movements in Higher Education. These voices—ignored outright by the dominant neoliberal discourse—offer some notes of caution about safe spaces. I turn to these voices, as they reflect the experience of those who have not dismissed safe spaces outright, but instead have tried to implement safe spaces in their Universities. Thus these perspectives offer something which governmental and media voices cannot. I contend, however, that while these critiques highlight the often imperfect nature of safe spaces, they do not detract from the vital, broader motivations of the project.

It is worth briefly discussing the methodology for gathering this student data; while there are numerous accounts of discuss in student media around safe spaces (both pro and against), it is difficult to ascertain whether the author or authors had actively participated in safe spaces activism.⁷ Furthermore, searching Google for blogs and articles about student safe spaces generally return newspaper articles that are critical of safe spaces. It should be stated that my purpose was not to use student blogs or student media articles exclusively, but to merely locate

the voices of students—this has necessitated locating student voices in mainstream blogs, newspaper articles and academic article. Due again to the difficulty of finding relevant data, I have utilised some accounts from students outside the UK, and tried to ensure input from undergraduates and postgraduates.

Asam Ahmad (a US postgraduate) sees ‘call out culture’ as concurrent with the rise of safe spaces (2015). This refers to the idea of publicly naming or identifying patterns of oppressive behaviour and language. I suggest this can be seen as an extension of the role of safe spaces in arming activists and students with new vocabularies, the tools needed to challenge oppression. However, there is an increasing concern among student activists that ‘calling out’ has, instead of being a means to draw attention to inequality and oppression, become a performative exercise for activists to display intellectual superiority over others (Hetti 2017). Increasingly, and especially on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, calling out becomes ‘a public performance where people can demonstrate their wit or how pure their politics are. Indeed, sometimes it can feel like the performance itself is more significant than the content of the call-out’ (Ahmad, *ibid.*: para. 2). The end result of calling out can often result in ostracism from a community, a judgement on an individual’s entire being, a disciplining of speech and action which eerily mirrors the prison industrial complex (Ahmad, *ibid.*: para. 3). Individuals are banished and disposed of, rather than engaged with as complex individuals, with their own stories, narratives and capacity for mistakes. Ahmad is not alone in this criticism—Wilson (an Edinburgh University student), recounts how she fell afoul of safe spaces policies while raising a hand in a student union meeting (2016). While Wilson emphasises her support for safe spaces, she describes the incident as ‘farcical’ and ‘bizarre,’ as well as noting the abuse she had received on social media following the incident. It’s also worthy of note that Wilson’s defence of safe spaces was largely co-opted by anti-safe spaces voices in the mainstream media (Gosden 2016; Wyatt 2016); Wilson’s own experience of safe spaces was largely ignored, and her situation instead became an example of the harmful nature of safe spaces (Wilson 2016).

A common aspect of call out culture is that an offender is told to 'educate themselves' (Tatum 2014). Again, this is not problematic in principle, and one might conceive of safe spaces as place for such education. However, the issue lies with the method by which individuals are 'called out' and told to 'educate themselves.' Dzodan (2014) identifies the issue as being a performative matter; 'calling out' can often be used as a means to 'legitimize aggression and rhetoric violence' but 'Unlike bullying, *a call out is intended for an audience*' (italics in original: paras. 25 and 26). The moral undertones of this are relatively explicit—a 'lack of education' is now viewed as a matter for an individual to rectify, but as a claim of moral failure, that '*you have been found wanting ...[by]... someone who thinks they are more righteous, better, more politically engaged than you*' (ibid.: para. 27). Such accusations of immorality strike at the core of an individual, rather than targeting a particular act, leaving them marked in the eyes of the wider community. What should be a constructive method of reflexivity becomes a method for disciplining and potential exclusion, even within spaces that are meant to be for learning and forming strategies (Volcano 2012; Serano 2013: 281–300).

An additional concern is whether a distinction exists between 'safe' and 'same' spaces. As noted earlier, early consciousness raising groups tended to be homogenous; this is not, in any sense, a negative thing, and there is plenty of evidence to suggest that 'group only' spaces can be beneficial, fruitful and helpful to activist communities (Pennington 2012; Serano, *ibid.*: 287–288). However, there is also a danger of excess homogenisation, leading to the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes within the group, and a space being known as 'safe' because those stereotypes are met (Serano, *ibid.*). This can lead to exclusion from the supposed safety of those who do not meet such stereotypes. A notable example of this was the decision by the UK based Radical Feminist Collective to exclude transwomen from their annual conference, drawing considerable criticism from the wider feminist movement (Laura 2012; Stavvers 2012). Student activists have raised concerns about exclusion in safe spaces; Lewis (a Ph.D. student at Manchester University) suggests the need for a 'permanent revolutionary tension' between what is defined as 'us' and 'them' to prevent safe spaces from becoming exclusionary 'heterotopias' (Lewis 2012).

The evidence above of the possible toxic or even exclusionary nature of some safe spaces raises a question of what 'safe' is meant to mean in safe spaces, and for 'whom' these spaces are meant to be safe. Lewis et al. (2015) draw a distinction between being 'safe *from*,' and 'safe *to*,' in their analysis of women's only feminist spaces. Being safe *from* allows members of a marginalised group to be shielded from everyday oppression they might experience in the public sphere such as 'threats of sexual violence and harassment' (ibid.: 5). Being safe *to* refers to when participants in a safe space to be 'fully human...enabling dialogue and debate which enabled learning and understanding' (ibid.: 7); in order to be able to participate in the public political sphere, in order to have the tools and strategies to navigate a hostile, mainstream environment, safe spaces need to provide the 'cognitive and emotional expression... [which] is an important part of feeling fully human' (ibid.: 10).

The implications of a lack of dialogue, of the creation of new hierarchies, of toxicity, for safe spaces in Universities are troubling to say the least. If safe spaces are meant to be sites for forming new vocabularies of resistance on campus, those vocabularies need to accept that within marginalised groups there are different positionalities and connections. Safe spaces are not meant to be 'calm and cuddly,' but instead 'an arena for engaging in constructive conversations... [an] intrinsically challenging,' environment, which requires difference and engagement (Lewis et al. 2015: 8). Failure to allow this limits the possibilities of 'discussions about power, privilege and oppression' (Koyama 2000 in Stryker and Whittle 2006: 123). If, as Orwell asserts in *Politics and the English Language*, political transformation must begin 'by starting at the verbal end' (Orwell 2013), then vocabularies of resistance, formulated in safe spaces, cannot perpetuate the same (often gendered) hierarchies and inequalities of speech which pervade the public sphere (Fraser 1990: 63).

Conclusion: Activism as Balancing Act

On 2nd January 2018, the UK Department for Education appointed the right wing British journalist Toby Young as a non-executive board member of the newly created OfS, a body created to ensure accountability in Universities, which has the power to fine or sanction

institutions. The appointment was greeted with immediate criticism, citing Young's lack of qualifications (Rawlinson and Luxmore 2018), his public lewd, sexist and homophobic tweets and articles (Butterworth 2018), his attendance of eugenicist conferences, and the parallel lack of representation for the NUS on the OfS (Foster 2018). Young, a self-professed 'free speech advocate,' has positioned himself as a critic of 'snowflake culture' (Foster, *ibid.*), and was set to be a key figure in British educational policy under the current Conservative administration. Though Young eventually stepped down in ignominy, his original appointment speaks volumes about the ideological trajectory of HE policy in Britain. With this in mind, it is not a huge leap of logic to assume that in the coming months, the dominant discourse on safe space which I identified earlier will become more prevalent, and loud enough to be cacophonous. All the more reason, then, for the intervention staged in the current document.

In this chapter, I have argued that safe spaces have been consistently misrepresented—by media, governmental and academic voices—as censorious, separatist, and contrary to the pedagogical values of the University. Concurrently, the students who campaign for, or set up, safe spaces on University campuses display a form of vulnerability that, like safe spaces, is denigrated. The discourse around these students is scathing in its criticism, yet superficial in its analysis. Vulnerability can be a vital part of resistance, and safe spaces offer the necessary counterpublics where new generations of student activists—facing an increasingly marketised, atomised and neoliberal Higher Education sector—to collectively and constructively create the vocabularies of resistance. Further research could set out to explore, through qualitative data analysis and ethnographic research, the practical strategies and pitfalls of setting up safe spaces on UK campuses. Furthermore, collaborative work with student activists could allow for the broadening of existing strategies of resistance in the wider political arena.

Acknowledgements The author would like to thank Lucy Wilkins, without whom this work would have been impossible.

Notes

1. This chapter focuses on safe spaces in UK Universities. This is motivated by the increasing animosity towards safe spaces and student resistance in UK legislation and media discourse, which suggests an urgent need to engage in critical discussion about campus activism. This is not to say that safe spaces are a contentious issue in the UK alone (see Hacker 2018).
2. It is worth reiterating that while this chapter explores the politics of safe spaces in the United Kingdom—due to their political contentiousness and the familiarity of this context to the author—the policing of ‘acceptable’ behaviour on campuses is a more widespread phenomenon; Hacker (2018) among others notes the normalisation of masculine standards of behaviour and emotional among both students and academics in an Israeli University; similarly, Byron (2017) notes a similar issue on US College campuses. While this chapter focuses on the UK, it is hoped that the conclusions and theoretical analysis will be relevant to more global contexts.
3. Since work on this chapter began, controversy has surrounded Butler, and other high profile leftist academics such as Žižek and Spivak, regarding their defence of Avital Ronell. Ronell, a philosopher at NYU, who is currently accused of inappropriate sexual advances and harassment of one of her Ph.D. students. An open letter, signed by Butler, defended Ronell on the grounds of her academic contributions, and furthermore appeared to blame the alleged victim of the assault for ‘malicious’ intent towards her. Butler later explained that she was merely criticising Ronell’s suspension from her position (Butler 2018). This has done little to prevent ongoing debate about Butler’s defence of Ronell and how this sits with her feminist politics (Leiter 2018; Pearl 2018). The implications of the Ronell case, and Butler’s support for it raises too many questions to be answered here, but aspects of the open letter do appear to clash with Butler’s own work on vulnerability.
4. Since safe spaces are heterogeneous, it is difficult to give a typical example of one, though for illustrative purposes I will use the example of Manchester Students Union’s safe spaces Policy (Manchester University Students’ Union 2016). The policy places prohibitions on ‘discriminatory language and actions’ which safeguards ‘freedom of speech’ while

opposing the ‘incite[ment of] hate’ on grounds of religion, sexuality, gender identity, disability, race, and other protected characteristics. The policy further has a process for visiting speakers (necessitating content warnings, if appropriate).

5. It’s worthy of briefly noting that Halbertsam, like Butler, has become embroiled in the case around Avital Ronell. Halberstam used Facebook to brand blogs such as ‘Leiter Report’ (which published articles critical of the academic support for Ronell) as ‘right wing.’ More tellingly, Duggan (2018) published a post on Halberstam’s blog which argued that emails exchanged between Ronell and her accuser could be seen as ‘queer intimacy’ rather than as abuse; Halberstam later promoted the post on Twitter, calling it ‘clear [and] politically savvy.’ Any sense of the vulnerability of Ronell’s accuser is absent from this take on events, with Duggan emphasising his relative wealth and economic privilege. The defence of Ronell bears some uncomfortable similarities to Halberstam’s critique of safe spaces—a dismissal of vulnerability as part of a broader apparatus of neoliberalism.
6. Passivity itself a topic of interest for feminist scholars—Halberstam (2011) theorises ‘radical passivity’ as not the simple acceptance of societal roles, but a refusal to be as ‘...other ways of thinking about political action that don’t involve doing or dying’ (p. 130). Political power for resistance arises from simply ‘being’ without label, category or acceptance.
7. Examples of such articles by students include Okundaye (2016) and Malshmann and Oakley (2016). While these articles provide interesting insight into safe spaces, they offer no evidence that the authors had been involved in organising safe spaces, nor any personal reflections on their own experiences of such spaces.

References

- Adams, R. (2017, June 7). UK Universities Fall Down Global League Tables After Budget Cuts. *The Guardian*.
- Ahmad, A. (2015). *A Note on Call Out Culture*. Briarpatch. Regina, Saskatchewan: Briarpatch Incorporated.

- Ahmed, S. (2010). Killing Joy: Feminism and the History of Happiness. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 35, 571–594.
- Ahmed, S. (2014). *Willful Subjects*. Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2015, June 25). *Against Students*. Feminist Killjoys [Online]. Available from <https://feministkilljoys.com/2015/06/25/against-students/>. Accessed 8 Aug 2017.
- Alexander, H. (2017, June 4). Nigel Farage Says London Blighted by “Wholly Muslim Areas” as He Defends Trump’s Response to Attack. *The Daily Telegraph*.
- Allen, K., & Bull, A. (2017, October 3). *Beware of the Positive University: WonkHE Higher Education: Policy, People and Politics* [Online]. Available from <http://wonkhe.com/blogs/beware-of-the-positive-university/>. Accessed 4 Jan 2018.
- Amenabar, T. (2016, May 19). The New Vocabulary of Protest: What Students Mean by Terms Like ‘Safe Space’. *The Washington Post*.
- Barrett, N. (1999). The Anti-Fascist Movement in South-East Lancashire, 1933–1940: The Divergent Experiences of Manchester and Nelson. In T. Kirk & A. McElligott (Eds.), *Opposing Fascism: Community, Authority and Resistance in Europe* (pp. 48–62). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Binnie, G. (2016, August 18). Struggling Students Are Not ‘Lacking Resilience’—They Need More Support. *The Guardian*, Thursday.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bowden, G. (2016, April 11). Stephen Fry Speaks About the Erosion of ‘Free Speech’ on Student Campuses in Controversial Rubin Report Interview *Huffington Post*.
- Bracke, S. (2016). Bouncing Back. Vulnerability and Resistance in Times of Resilience. *Vulnerability in Resistance*, 52–75.
- Butler, J. (2006). *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.
- Butler, J. (2018). Judith Butler Explains Letter in Support of Avital Ronell—Letters—Blogs—The Chronicle of Higher Education. *Chronicle.com* [Online]. Available at <https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/letters/judith-butler-explains-letter-in-support-of-avital-ronell/>. Accessed 28 Sept 2018.
- Butler, J., Gambetti, Z., & Sabsay, L. (2016). *Vulnerability in Resistance*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Butterworth, B. (2018, January 3). Labour Calls for Government to Fire Toby Young Over ‘Misogyny and Homophobia’. *PinkNews.com*.
- Byron, K. (2017). From Infantilizing to World Making: Safe Spaces and Trigger Warnings on Campus. *Family Relations*, 66, 116–125.

- Campbell, B., & Manning, J. (2015). The New Millennial 'Morality': Highly Sensitive and Easily Offended. *Time*. New York City: Time Inc.
- Clark, D. H. (1977). The Therapeutic Community. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, *131*, 553–564.
- Collective, C. R. (1977). A Black Feminist Statement. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *42*, 271–280.
- Connell, R. (2002). The Social Organization of Masculinity. In S. M. Whitehead & F. Barrett (Eds.), *The Masculinities Reader* (1st ed.). Cambridge: Polity.
- Denovan, A., & Macaskill, A. (2017). Stress and Subjective Well-Being Among First Year UK Undergraduate Students. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *18*, 505–525.
- Department for Education, & Johnson, J., MP. (2017). *Jo Johnson Calls for Free Speech to Be Protected on Campus*. gov.UK [Online]. Available <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jo-johnson-calls-for-free-speech-to-be-protected-on-campus>. Accessed 3 Jan 2018.
- Douglas, M. (2002). *Implicit Meanings*. London: Routledge.
- Duggan, L. (2014). *On Trauma and Trigger Warnings, in Three Parts*. Bully Bloggers [Online]. Available from <https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2014/11/23/on-trauma-and-trigger-warnings-in-three-parts/>. Accessed 3 Jan 2018.
- Duggan, L. (2018). *The Full Catastrophe*. Bully Bloggers [Online]. Available at <https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2018/08/18/the-full-catastrophe/>. Accessed 28 Sept 2018.
- Dzodan, F. (2014). *Come One, Come All! Feminist and Social Justice Blogging as Performance and Bloodshed*. Libcom.org [Online]. Available <https://libcom.org/library/come-one-come-all-feminist-social-justice-blogging-performance-bloodshed>. Accessed 16 Aug 2017.
- Ehrenreich, B. (2010). *Smile or Die: How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World*. London: Granta Books.
- Ferber, A. L. (1999). *White Man Falling: Race, Gender, and White Supremacy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Foster, D. (2018). Free Speech Works Both Ways—As Toby Young Is Finding Out. *The Guardian*.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*. Pantheon.
- Fox, C. (2016). *I Find That Offensive!* London: Biteback Publishing.
- Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. *Social Text*, *25*, 56–80.

- Garton Ash, T. (2016, September 16). Safe Spaces Are Not the Only Threat to Free Speech. *The Guardian*.
- Gill, R. (2007). Postfeminist Media Culture. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10(2), 147–166.
- Gosden, E. (2016). Student Accused of Violating University ‘Safe Space’ by Raising Her Hand. *The Telegraph* [Online]. Available at <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/03/student-accused-of-violating-university-safe-space-by-raising-he/>. Accessed 1 Oct 2018.
- Habermas, J. (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hacker, D. (2018). Crying on Campus. In Y. Taylor & K. Lahad (Eds.), *Feeling Academic in the Neoliberal University: Feminist Fights, Flights and Failures*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Halberstam, J. (2011). Unbecoming: Queer Negativity/Radical Passivity. In B. Davies & J. Funke (Eds.), *Sex, Gender and Time in Fiction and Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Halberstam, J. (2014a). *Triggering Me, Triggering You: Making Up Is Hard to Do*. Bully Bloggers [Online]. Available from <https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2014/07/15/triggering-me-triggering-you-making-up-is-hard-to-do/>. Accessed 3 Jan 2018.
- Halberstam, J. (2014b, July 15). *You’re Triggering Me! The Neo-liberal Rhetoric of Harm, Danger and Trauma*. Bully Blogger [Online]. Available from <https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2014/07/05/you-are-triggering-me-the-neo-liberal-rhetoric-of-harm-danger-and-trauma/>. Accessed 8 Aug 2017.
- Harris, A. (2005). VII. Discourses of Desire as Governmentality: Young Women, Sexuality and the Significance of Safe Spaces. *Feminism & Psychology*, 15, 39–43.
- Hetti, T. (2017). “Call Out Culture” Is Toxic and Problematic. *Affinity Magazine*.
- Ho, K. (2017). Tackling the Term: What Is a Safe Space? *Harvard Political Review* [Online]. Available <http://harvardpolitics.com/harvard/what-is-a-safe-space/>. Accessed 8 Aug 2017.
- Hunt, C. J. (2016). *“It’s Just a Joke”: The Subtle Effects of Offensive Language*. Melbourne [Online]. Available <http://theconversation.com/its-just-a-joke-the-subtle-effects-of-offensive-language-62440>. Accessed 15 Aug 2017.
- Koyama, E. (2000). *Whose Feminism Is It Anyway?* Portland: Emi Koyama.
- Kravetz, D. (1978). Consciousness-Raising Groups in the 1970s. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 3, 168–186.

- Laura. (2012, May 17). *There's Nothing Radical About Transphobia*. The F Word Blog: Contemporary UK Feminism [Online]. Available from https://www.thefword.org.uk/2012/05/theres_nothing/. Accessed 16 Aug 2017.
- Leiter, B. (2018). *CHE Article on the Letter Defending Professor Ronell*. Leiter Reports: A Philosophy Blog [Online]. Available at <http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2018/06/che-article-on-the-letter-defending-professor-ronell.html>. Accessed 28 Sept 2018.
- Lewis, S. (2012). *Being Secure in the Space of Occupation: Notes from a Student-Led Experiment in New York*. openDemocracy [Online]. Available at <https://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/sophie-lewis/being-secure-in-space-of-occupation-notes-from-student-led-experiment-in-n>. Accessed 28 Sept 2018.
- Lewis, R., Sharp, E., Remnant, J., & Redpath, R. (2015). 'Safe Spaces': Experiences of Feminist Women-Only Space. *Sociological Research Online*, 20, 9.
- Lock, H. (2016, March 10). Student Protests: Are Young People Too Sensitive These Days? *The Guardian*.
- Lopez, D. (2017). *The Beginning of the End of Identity Politics? Red Flag*. Melbourne: Socialist Alternative.
- Lukianoff, G., & Haidt, J. (2015). How Trigger Warnings Are Hurting Mental Health on Campuses. *The Atlantic*. Boston, MA.
- Mackinnon, C. A. (1982). Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 7, 515–544.
- Malshmann, E., & Oakley, A. (2016). On Safe Spaces and the Ethics of 'Clickbait' Journalism. *The Cambridge Student* [Online]. Available at <https://www.tcs.cam.ac.uk/editorial/0034993-on-safe-spaces-and-the-ethics-of-clickbait-journalism.html>. Accessed 1 Oct 2018.
- Manchester University Students' Union. (2016). *Safe Spaces Policy*. Manchester.
- Martínez-San Miguel, Y., & Tobias, S. (2014). *Safe Feminist Spaces: Reflections About the Institute for Research on Women at Rutgers-New Brunswick*. Springer: The Entrepreneurial University.
- Mason, R. (2016, September 14). Theresa May Criticises University 'Safe Spaces' for Shutting Down Debate. *The Guardian*.
- McRobbie, A. (2004). Post-Feminism and Popular Culture. *Feminist Media Studies*, 4, 255–264.
- Mintz, L. E. (1985). Standup Comedy as Social and Cultural Mediation. *American Quarterly*, 37, 71–80.
- Nicholson, R. (2016, November 28). "Poor Little Snowflake"—The Defining Insult of 2016. *The Guardian*.
- O'Keefe, T. (2016). Making Feminist Sense of No-Platforming. *Feminist Review*, 113, 85–92.

- Okundaye, J. (2016). On the Vitriol Against Safe Spaces. *Varsity Online* [Online]. Available at <https://www.varsity.co.uk/features/10685>. Accessed 1 Oct 2018.
- Orwell, G. (2013). *Politics and the English Language*. London: Penguin UK.
- Page, C. (2015, January 23). Transphobic Feminism: An Oxymoron. *Varsity*.
- Pearl, S. (2018). When a Queer Feminist Professor Is Accused of Harassment. *Lilith Magazine* [Online]. Available at <https://www.lilith.org/blog/2018/08/when-a-queer-feminist-professor-is-accused-of-harassment/>. Accessed 28 Sept 2018.
- Pells, R. (2016, April 25). NUS 'No Platform' Policy Goes 'Too Far' and Threatens Free Speech, Peter Tatchell Warns. *The Independent*.
- Pennington, L. (2012, December 6). Feminism, Men, and Women-Only Spaces. *The Huffington Post*.
- Phipps, A. (2014). *The Politics of the Body: Gender in a Neoliberal and Neoconservative Age*. Cambridge: Wiley.
- Rawlinson, K., & Luxmore, S. (2018, January 3). Doubts Cast on DfE Claims of Toby Young's Qualifications for Watchdog Job. *The Guardian*.
- Roberts, J. (2003). *The Aesthetics of Free Speech: Rethinking the Public Sphere*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Rose, F. (2017, March 30). Safe Spaces on Campus Are Creating Intolerant Students. *The Huffington Post*.
- Sears, A., & Osten, C. (2003). *The Homosexual Agenda: Exposing the Principal Threat to Religious Freedom Today*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman.
- Sehgal-Cuthbert, A. (2014, May 20). Letter: Teaching Consent: A Dangerous Game? *Varsity*.
- Seidler, V. J. (2010). *The Achilles Heel Reader: Men, Sexual Politics and Socialism*. London: Routledge.
- Serano, J. (2013). *Excluded: Making Feminist and Queer Movements More Inclusive*. Berkeley: Seal Press.
- Serano, J. (2014, July 13). Regarding "Generation Wars": Some Reflections on the Recent Jack Halberstam Essay. In *Whipping Girl* [Online]. Available from <http://juliaserano.blogspot.co.uk/2014/07/regarding-generation-wars-some.html>. Accessed 15 Aug 2017.
- Sheldon, R. (2016). *Tragic Encounters and Ordinary Ethics: Palestine–Israel in British Universities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spiked. (2017). *Free Speech University Rankings 2017* [Online]. www.spiked-online.com. Available http://www.spiked-online.com/free-speech-university-rankings/profile/leeds#.Wk0N5IVl_cs. Accessed 3 Jan 2018.

- Stavvers. (2012, May 29). *Shelia Jeffreys: Another Angry Woman* [Online]. Available from <https://stavvers.wordpress.com/2012/05/29/sheila-jeffreys-rad-fem2012-and-the-imaginary-trans-conspiracy/>. Accessed 16 Aug 2017.
- Stryker, S., & Whittle, S. (2006). *The Transgender Studies Reader*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Tatum, E. (2014). Getting Called Out: Why Acknowledging Oppression Matters More Than Your Hurt Feelings. *Everyday Feminism*.
- The University of Edinburgh. (2018). *Building Student Resilience Model* [Online]. Available <https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/levels/academic-transitions-toolkit/building-student-resilience-model>. Accessed 2 Jan 2018.
- Travers, R. (2017, February 13). University 'Safe Spaces' Are a Dangerous Fallacy—They Do Not Exist in the Real World. *The Daily Telegraph*.
- Volcano, A. (2012). Police at the Borders. In C. B. Daring, J. Rogue, D. Shannon, & A. Volcano (Eds.), *Queering Anarchism: Addressing and Undressing Power and Desire*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.
- Waldman, K. (2016). What Science Can Tell Us About Trigger Warnings. *Slate.com* [Online]. Available http://www.slate.com/articles/double_x/cover_story/2016/09/what_science_tell_us_about_trigger_warnings.html. Accessed 5 Aug 2017.
- Williams, Z. (2016, November 15). The Dangerous Fantasy Behind Trump's Normalisation. *The Guardian*.
- Wilson, I. (2016). Safe Spaces Are Not Demanding Very Much. *Huffington Post* [Online]. Available at https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/imogen-wilson/safe-spaces_b_9618468.html. Accessed 27 Sept 2018.
- Wyatt, C. (2016). Student Subjected to 'Safe Space' Vote Simply for Raising Her Hand. *HuffPost UK* [Online]. Available at https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2016/04/01/safe-space-gesture_n_9592090.html. Accessed 1 Oct 2018.
- Young, P. (2015). Safe Spaces as Resistance. In *Brown Political Review*. Rhode Island: Brown University.



Public Sociology and Social Movements: Incorporation or a War of Position?

Eurig Scandrett and Elaine Ballantyne

Introduction

Neoliberalism provides a framework for understanding the stage of capitalist development throughout the world, although both the means by which neoliberalism is mediated, and its impact, are diverse (Harvey 2006). This applies to the forms of capital accumulation, the types of social movement resistance, and the ways in which the state is diverted from social welfare and employed for surveillance and repression. It also applies in the university sector through processes of privatisation, commodification of knowledge, competitive individualism, exploitation of new areas of social life and governmentality of both students and employees.

E. Scandrett (✉) · E. Ballantyne
Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh, UK
e-mail: EScandrett@qmu.ac.uk

E. Ballantyne
e-mail: EBallantyne@qmu.ac.uk

Whilst university governance has largely colluded in—if not embraced—these neoliberal developments, there have been sites of resistance within the higher education sector from the perspectives of liberalism (Collini 2012), critical education (Crowther et al. 2005), feminism (Thwaites and Pressland 2017) and Autonomist (Hall and Winn 2017) as well as more orthodox Marxism (Perselli 2011). Much critique of the neoliberal university locates the problematic within the boundaries of the university itself—its academics, staff, students, pedagogy, management, governance or political economy. However, one of the ways in which academics have sought to resist this process is through engaging with social movements outwith the university: movements ‘from below’; movements opposing neoliberalism and its impacts. Examples of such academic-movement engagement exist throughout the world (see for example the Popular Education Network [Crowther 2013], *Interface* journal). Social movements are understood in the sense used by Cox and Nilsen (2014) as collective participants in historical processes of social movement over the contestation of human needs and aspirations: ‘we define social movements as a process in which a specific social group develops a collective project of skilled activities centred on a rationality – a particular way of making sense of and relating to the social world – that tries to change or maintain a dominant structure of entrenched needs and capacities, in part or whole’ (Cox and Nilsen 2014: 57).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse several examples of academics working within the neoliberal university engaging with social movements, to assess the extent to which such activities constitute resistance to the neoliberal attack on universities. The context of these examples is in Scotland, with its ‘uneven and tension-loaded balance between the enduring legacies of Scottish social democracy and the influences of neoliberal economics’ (Scott and Mooney 2009: 379) and in which nationalist imaginaries form contested spaces for masking class inequalities (Law and Mooney 2012; Mooney and Scott 2016). Whilst the particularities will vary between contexts, the underlying pressures of neoliberal mediation and resistance to it are global and so it is hoped that general insights can be drawn from a theoretical analysis of these

concrete examples. Three examples will be explored, of collaboration with social movements by academics at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, most of which are documented elsewhere (see for example Scandrett 2017). The movements involved include feminist, environmental justice and mental health service user/psychiatric survivors' movements. The analysis of these will draw on theoretical concepts derived from Gramsci, and in particular the work on lifelong education as categorised by Ettore Gelpi at UNESCO in the 1970s and 1980s, when neoliberalism was in the ascendancy (Gelpi 1979, 1985).

Gelpi's understanding of lifelong education is useful here since he locates pedagogical opportunities in social conflicts which expose structural rifts in societies and also motivate learning amongst those collectively struggling for human dignity and political emancipation. Moreover, Gelpi's analysis transcends debates about institutional location and pedagogical practice so, in contrast to some others who emphasise the political nature of educational practice (Illich 1971; Freire 1972). Gelpi provides a means of addressing the question of emancipatory education even in the context of neoliberal universities despite all the pressures towards commodified curriculum, productivity-driven pedagogy and managerial exploitation. Gelpi argued that educational practice is always political and always has a potential to be a liberating practice through political engagement (Griffin 1983; Scandrett et al. 2010).

The final part of the essay will draw on Antonio Gramsci's concept of the 'war of position' to analyse the nature of resistance to neoliberalism of public sociology practice with social movements. In particular this final section critically examines the counter-argument that, contrary to the wishful thinking of radical academics, academic engagement with social movements constitutes the incorporation of movements into the university and thus to the discipline of neoliberalism, rather than practices of resistance. Gramsci's analysis allows us better to understand the role of lifelong education as defensive resilience, as well as an opportunity to challenge neoliberalism, providing opportunities to 'dig in' and protect hard won positions under attack, whilst providing occasional spaces to progress the agendas of subaltern movements.

Pedagogical Practice

Feminist knowledge in many ways provides a model of university-movement relations as feminist academics have played a significant role in the praxis of the women's movement and the theorisation of its epistemological production. Women's studies, gender studies and sexual politics courses have been important spaces of struggle since the 1970s and have made important contributions both academically and in advancements in the movements for gender equality (Delamont 2003; Thwaites and Pressland 2017). However, aspects of the women's movement have been criticised for a 'dangerous liaison with neoliberalism' (Fraser 2013: 14), somewhat to the neglect of radical demands for gender equality, especially with feminism's 'cultural turn' (Jackson 2001; Fraser 2008, 2013). Meanwhile, subject to the pressures of neoliberalism, many universities have also abandoned women's studies programmes. At the same time, feminists have provided a significant critique of the gendered nature of neoliberal programmes of austerity, surveillance and dispossession (Connell 2011; Smith 2008), and incorporation of the demands of the women's movement into state governance has made improvements to the lives of women despite the damage of neoliberalism (Scottish Government 2010).

Gender Justice and Violence involves a university-movement alliance through a partnership between Queen Margaret University (QMU) and Scottish Women's Aid (SWA). SWA is a social movement organisation which operates as a policy, campaigning and training organisation on behalf of local women's aid groups who provide direct support and refuge for women escaping domestic abuse. The course is taught by feminist activists under the auspices of SWA alongside QMU academics. It is offered at undergraduate honours level and the students on the course are a mixture of students of public sociology as well as activists and professionals working in the field of gender-based violence (Orr et al. 2013). The use of dialogical pedagogy seeks to maximise mutual learning between participants. The curriculum is therefore generated through dialogue between activists and academics, feminist practitioners and full time students, both in the curriculum development and in the pedagogical approach.

Our second example is *Environmental Justice*, which started with social movement activists tackling environmental injustices in their local communities or workplaces, and attempted to make university education relevant to their concerns. Environmental justice struggles have been a significantly accelerating aspect of neoliberalism in many parts of the world, due to processes such as commodification of nature, biopiracy, accumulation by dispossession, contradictions in the conditions of production and ecological distribution conflicts (Gadgil and Guha 1992; O'Connor 1998; Harvey 1996; Bullard 2000, 2005; Martinez-Alier 2002; Agyeman et al. 2003; Magdoff and Bellamy Foster 2011), although the incorporation of elements of the movement into the neoliberal project has also been recognised (Carter 2016). There have also been multiple examples throughout the world of university academics engaging with such struggles through research, scholarship, solidarity activism and, on occasion, educational provision (see Harley and Scandrett 2019).

From 2000 to 2006, QMU partnered with the environmental NGO Friends of the Earth Scotland (FoES) to deliver education and support to several communities engaged in struggles against local environmentally damaging activities or neglect and for environmental improvement. The project, Agents for Environmental Justice, has been documented elsewhere (Agents for Environmental Justice and Scandrett 2003; Wilkinson and Scandrett 2003; Scandrett et al. 2005; Scandrett 2007, 2014, 2017). The course was validated by QMU as a Higher Education Certificate delivered primarily by FoES employees with some input from QMU academics, during a series of residential weekend sessions. The participants on the course were activists taking a significant role in their own communities' campaigns against some form of environmental injustice in different parts of Scotland, ranging from opposition to open cast coal mining, waste landfills, industrial pollution and fish farming, through occupational exposure to toxic chemicals, to campaigns for community waste recycling, public sector housing. The course modules focused on themes designed to be relevant to a range of contexts, including the political economy of development; planning and democracy; community development; science for campaigners and media and publicity. Demonstrations of (and critical reflection

on) community engagement were incorporated into the assessments in order to collectivise the learning as much as possible.

A final example comes from the interface between research and pedagogy with the mental health user/survivors' movement. Mad studies is a relatively new area of movement–university partnership, originating in Canada and tentatively spreading in other parts of the world, and *Mad People's History and Identity (MPHI)* is the first Mad Studies course within a University in the UK designed, delivered and evaluated by mental health service users and psychiatric survivors (LeFrançois et al. 2013; Ballantyne and Maclean 2019). The project constitutes a short, six-week course, co-created and delivered in a partnership between Mad identified activists from the mental health service users and anti-psychiatry movement and Mad-positive academics at Queen Margaret University. A collaboration between the University, CAPS Advocacy and NHS Lothian's Health and Well Being Programme, the first fifteen Mad identified students completed the course in May 2014. The course has since been held annually and has become a centre for the development of Mad studies, which offers a learning community and space in which Mad identifying people's experiences are privileged within the curriculum and the students can make sense of, and deconstruct, discourses of madness and challenge the dominant and historical hegemonic discourses of madness. Drawing on the experience of the disabled people's and psychiatry survivor movements, of generating knowledge through a combination of collective experience, political struggle and intellectual analysis, Mad activists and scholars challenge the sources of their exclusion which is both structural and epistemological.

Drawing on these three examples, the analytical resources of Gelpi's concept of lifelong education will be expanded to assess opportunities for challenging neoliberal hegemony.

Lifelong Education in Theory

Ettore Gelpi's work on lifelong education, developed whilst he was director of UNESCO between 1972 and 1993, constitutes a significant insight into the nature of education for resistance in diverse settings.

Gelpi's writings do not so much define lifelong education as provide insights into practice in such a wide range of international contexts of educational provision, academic freedom, democratic space and economic intervention.

...the path from the concept of lifelong education to its realisation is characterised by struggles in social life and educational institutions in such areas as: the type of relationship between formal and non-formal education i.e. dialectical or dependent; the contribution of such non-teaching educators as cultural, social and political movements to education activities; the criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the educational system both internally and externally; the extent to which self-directed learning is encouraged, especially that of a collective nature. (Gelpi 1985: 8–9)

Gelpi's approach is paradigmatically dialectical as this quotation demonstrates. It is focused on the path from the concept of lifelong education to its realisation: it is not defined but rather understood through several indicative characterisations of practice. Rather than issue instructions as to how to develop lifelong education, we are invited to reflect back on 'struggles in social life and educational institutions' in which the characterisations of lifelong education may be discerned: thus, the dialectical relationship between social movement struggles against oppression and exploitation (gender-based violence; environmental injustice; psychiatric exclusion) and the struggles of academics 'in and against' the neoliberal university. Gelpi highlights four 'areas' where lifelong education might be realised in these struggles, and these are also of a dialectical nature and need to be understood in relation to one another.

The first 'area'—the type of relationship between formal and non-formal education—i.e. dialectical or dependent—is posed as a question but implies a preference for the dialectical. Non-formal education, in this context, refers to activities which are structured or deliberative but which do not convey credit or any other formal benefit (or sanction for non-participation). This is differentiated from formal (credit carrying) and informal education (unstructured, incidental, passive learning) (Coombs et al. 1973). In the university, non-formal

education could range from structured educational activities which carry no formal assessment component, through to more deliberative forms of learning which are not incidental, including such activities as extra-curricular training delivered by university or student societies; student union political debates and campaigning workshops; self-directed study circles, reading groups or film discussions; public lectures; rallies and teach-ins by staff unions; assemblies and seminars during student occupations.

In the university, formal education (for credit) is given privilege and priority above non-formal education. Non-formal education however can be more self-directed, collective and democratic. A dialectical relationship between formal and non-formal education is a dynamic struggle in which both forms of education are valued and critically interrogate one another. In the context of the university educator, the default is formal education so effort is required by professional educators intending to implement lifelong education to seek the non-formal and value it. But non-formal education is not restricted to the professional educator and it is as likely to be found outside the classroom as within it—in the socially situated lives of students, as students, but also as workers, parents, artists, activists, religious believers etc.; through support staff as well as academics; and the wider community and political context.

This leads to the second indicative area—‘the contribution of ... cultural, social and political movements to education activities’. Social movements—or in Gelpi’s wider formulation—‘cultural, social and political movements’ (Gelpi 1985: 9)—are significant contributors to deliberative non-formal education. Social movements constitute the deliberate shaping of beliefs, activities, practices, rationalities, cognitive praxis (Eyerman and Jamison 1991) with a view to tackling social concerns, redistributing resources, valuing identities etc. Gelpi’s challenge in the second characteristic of lifelong education is therefore linked to the first dialectically by requiring an assessment of the contribution of these drivers of non-formal education also to formal education. This also raises questions about, not just the quality of education (the pursuit

of which academics are familiar) but rather how effective education is for the purposes of social change which social movements demand.

The third indicative 'area'—'the criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the educational system both internally and externally' (ibid.: 9)—therefore invites a judgement of how well education meets the needs of social movements. Gelpi does not prescribe effectiveness criteria but rather poses the question. Measures of effectiveness in the neoliberal university are a significant source of conflict. In the UK, metrics are imposed which assess effectiveness of research (Research Excellence Framework, REF); teaching (Teaching Excellence Framework, TEF), student satisfaction (National Student Survey, NSS), employability, fair access etc., and other national contexts have comparable metrics and struggles. Gelpi's analysis subverts this tendency: he does not advocate abandoning attempts to assess effectiveness, but poses the question of how we may develop criteria in which effectiveness relates to the dialectic with non-formal education, the contribution of movements and the encouragement of collective self-directed learning. How is academic praxis, through university curricula, pedagogy and research programmes to be made qualitatively accountable to social movement action for historical change.

The fourth indicative 'area'—'the extent to which self-directed learning is encouraged, especially that of a collective nature' (ibid.: 9)—similarly relays a challenge to the professional educator in an academic context. University education is predicated on the delivery of a product—the degree—which bestows advantage to an individual owner (graduate) in the labour market. Learning therefore tends to follow the same model, as an individual pursuit of assessable learning knowledge. Concepts such as 'student centred learning' 'independent study', even when they incorporate collective elements such as group work, invariably privilege individual learning, rather than collective benefit. Moreover, these concepts focus on the learner as a classroom-based student who has successfully 'got into' university, rather than the role of the university in wider social change. Gelpi's challenge is to privilege collective self-directed learning in the praxis of social movements.

Lifelong Education in Practice

Gelpi's conception of lifelong education therefore provides a set of tools with which to interrogate educational practice in Higher Education. The criteria are always dialectically related to movements from outwith the university and educational provision is judged by criteria in dialogue with movements in conflict with the forces of neoliberalism. Here we relate these analytical frames to our examples of university social movement engagement.

Gender Justice

Feminist analyses have their roots as much in the informal education of consciousness raising and political praxis as in academic theory and research—indeed the interpretive strengths of this body of analysis lies in the dialectic between these. This is reflected in the module's curriculum and joint ownership in the university and SWA, an organisation that is part of the movement against violence against women (Dobash and Dobash 2003). Pedagogy and assessment seeks to facilitate self-directed learning, both individual and collective, although students requiring credit are assessed individually. The inclusion of the module within a credit bearing programme provides for greater sustainability, whilst associate students' fees are paid largely by their employer or sponsoring organisation—usually the CPD budgets of public service employers or publicly funded voluntary organisations and there is an option to take the module without credit for 25% of the total fee. This constitutes something of a compromise: non-formal education is somewhat dependent on formal education through the mechanism employed to maximise access. Lecturers from SWA, initially paid through the Scottish Government's strategy to tackle violence against women, are now paid as Visiting Lecturers (VL) through a service agreement between QMU and SWA, ensuring the sustainability of the course for ten years. The threat to this arrangement will come through austerity cuts in the teaching grant from the Scottish Funding Council and the impact on VL budgets and staffing levels overall.

This is a partnership between a university and a social movement organisation, in which the former contributes academic input, credit and access to sociology students, whilst the latter contribute input in the form of lecturers with knowledge and experience from feminist movement praxis, and recruitment of activists and professionals in the field. Within certain constraints of the neoliberal university—contractual vulnerability and individualised credit—the module provides a space in which aspects of that regime can be undermined through life-long education.

Environmental Justice

At first sight this project meets Gelpi's criteria for the practice of life-long education, indeed Scandrett et al. (2010) have essentially argued that it does. There is an accountability to a social movement of environmental justice activists and indeed the course contributed to building that movement. The curriculum is derived from a dialectical relationship between non-formal and formal education, with students and their communities affirming the content in terms of their own struggles alongside the requirements for student accreditation. Most of the contribution to the design, curriculum and method of delivery was determined by social movement organisation Friends of the Earth (Doherty and Doyle 2014) and by the students who themselves are grassroots activists in environmental justice struggles. Effort went into helping the students and their communities understand themselves within the wider environmental justice movement—their historicity. Attention was paid to collective learning through pedagogy and assessment mechanisms, not only amongst the group of students but also amongst their communities affected by the environmental damage. Dialogical methods ensured that non-formal education informed and challenged formal input and vice versa—indeed at various times the students organised collectively, independently of the teaching staff, in order to challenge and shape methods, curriculum and organisation. Thus the effectiveness of the project to the local campaigns was constantly being assessed, in addition to criteria required by the university and funders.

There were compromises with the determinants of the neoliberal university. Learning outcomes, although determined in advance according to regulations, were focused on process rather than content thereby allowing for the curriculum to be negotiated with the activists and new content to emerge through that process of dialogue. Although students were individually assessed, much of the assessments incorporated collective elements, demonstrating community consultation and delivery. Thus, educational techniques designed to reproduce the conditions for neoliberal education—commodified curriculum, individual competitiveness—were somewhat undermined without jeopardising the programme's position within the university. However, the most significant conflict was with the business model which proved to be too much of a challenge to the political economy of the neoliberal university.

The programme was initially funded through a charitable grant from the National Lottery paid to FoES. Attempts to incorporate the course into the publicly funded university encountered QMU's reluctance to endorse social movement education and adopt such approaches within the capped student numbers of the Scottish Higher Education funding provision. Grassroots activists were not permitted to displace the mainstream intake of undergraduates for publicly funded places. Despite the opportunities provided by public funding, for shifting the university towards social movement relevance, the message was: activists are welcome as students so long as they do not displace the 'normal' students. The activist students are regarded as an additional source of income for the neoliberal university, not as a source of knowledge generation.

Mad Studies

Applying Gelpi's analysis of lifelong education, there is a clearly dialectical relationship in *MPHI* between formal and non-formal education. The course is validated by the university but is co-constructed between Mad studies activists and academics for the purposes of studying the subjugated history of this community. Through an integration of pedagogy and research, knowledge is constructed. The course therefore contributes to the movement's own historicity—its self-understanding of

its role in social change—through education/research. The effectiveness of the course is assessed through multiple criteria—self assessment of the participants in the course, the reflexivity of the creators, accountability to the wider movement and to the funding body, peer interviews with the *MPHI* students conducted through participatory research by trained members of the group, the combined rigour of academic justification and political relevance, in addition to the requirements of a validated programme. *MPHI* provided an opportunity for self-directed collective and individual learning.

Whilst the course was dependent on small amounts of funding from NHS Lothian, it was largely resourced through the time allocated to research activity out with teaching responsibilities. The course raised some important questions about what constitutes a Mad positive university, one which honours and legitimates hitherto silenced voices and privileges criteria of inclusion and recognition over selection and competition. In its small way *MPHI* provides seeds of what might undermine the neoliberal university, especially through the public health recognition in the receipt of NHS funding. As such, however, it is also vulnerable to the progressive attack of neoliberalism in both universities and the health service, subject to severe austerity cuts and increasing marketisation.

Mad studies offers counter hegemonic interpretations of mental illness. Laundry and Church (2016) suggest that a Mad positive practice from an insider standpoint within a university would involve challenging sanist assumptions in policies and assuming that all students are Mad unless otherwise stated. The importance of a Mad-positive engaged academic (Cresswell and Spandler 2013) working with Mad-identified scholars in promoting Mad scholarship with the Mad movement is stressed (Church 2013). The role of the engaged academic is political and involves knowing when to be present or when to be absent. This has been apparent in the *MPHI* Participatory Action research project to overcome sanism (Laundry and Church 2016), evidence-based teaching, managerialism and the organisational separation of instructors and subjects that impede alliances with other social movement scholarship (Church 2015). Mad-identified scholars are frequently on insecure low paid part time sessional contracts (Reville 2013; Church 2013)

reflecting a neoliberal culture that values cost cutting and positivist discourses over experiential expertise.

The examples here demonstrate how Gelpi's analysis of lifelong education can be used to analyse pedagogical practice yet also to identify the limitations of—and compromise with—the neoliberal practice of the university. This is demonstrated through the business model, even where, in Scotland, fees are paid by the state from general taxation.

In these examples from within university pedagogy, the better the assessment from the perspective of lifelong education, the more difficult to maintain within the university business model. This is not inevitable, but rather suggests a lack of commitment to lifelong education within the university.

Incorporation or War of Position?

Gelpi's analysis of lifelong education gives social movements a central pedagogical place which provides a form of educator accountability to progressive social change and as a defence against neoliberalisation. This is certainly valuable to committed educators attempting to use their position in the university to promote the agendas of social movements. In the cases outlined, it is clear that the quality of university education is enhanced by the connection to struggles against gender-based violence, for environmental justice and for recognition of Mad people's expertise and experience. However, just as Gelpi asserts that lifelong education 'is characterised by *struggles in social life* and educational institutions' (Gelpi 1985: 8, emphasis added), so the value to the social movements of engaging with education also needs to be demonstrated.

At least some from within these movements have questioned the value *to the movement* of the connection with the university. There is a risk that it diverts energy and focus away from the main concern of the campaigns, especially for activists whose attentions become absorbed in developing the skills and competencies required to meet academic criteria that have not been determined by the movement. Social movement contributions to university education provide useful content for course development, doctoral theses, quality validation, 'enhancement theme'

delivery, impact studies and academic papers, such as this one and others cited here. At the same time, universities continue their function of reproducing the skilled workforce and ideological justification for capital accumulation. This is an important concern, although can be overstated—many of the students and academics involved with this work are also movement activists and the university does provide a place of relative academic freedom to develop movement praxis (at least, compared with other areas of civil society or state).

More significantly however, there is the risk that elements of the movement become incorporated into the university as the latter becomes increasingly neoliberal. Thus, the movement becomes increasingly diverted not by academic criteria, but by the neoliberal criteria of the market and state surveillance. Movement–university relations become part of the marketing of universities fighting for market share, an external income stream, a means through which racialised surveillance and censor of ‘radicalisation’, absorbed into higher education can extend into the movements who have even more to lose (in the UK, at the time of writing, acceptance of students from outside of Europe on a ‘Tier 4’ visa requires increased levels of attendance monitoring by universities, whilst the ‘Prevent’ policy requires academics to report students believed to be susceptible to ‘radicalisation’ or holding views contrary to ‘British values’). Where such relationships between movements and universities end, it is rarely the universities that suffer. The movements who are in a position to participate in university projects may be (or become) only those for whom marketization and state surveillance can be weathered or even welcomed, so exacerbating the distinction between civil society and what some have called ‘uncivil society’—those movements who prevent a genuine challenge to the neoliberal order (see Glasius 2010).

Despite his famous motto ‘pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will’, Gramsci was a far more sophisticated thinker than to offer a simple division between ‘progressive’ or ‘reactionary’, or a ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ prognosis of social change. He embraced the eschatology of an orthodox Marxist, but was also, fundamentally, dialectical in his thinking. His analysis of the war of position provided a hint of how class struggle may be waged in a situation where there are always

contradictory forces at play and the experience is more akin to a long, intransigent siege.

For Gramsci 'The superstructures of civil society are like the trench-systems of modern warfare' (Hoare and Smith 1971: 235). Whilst warning against any over-simplification of the relationship, Gramsci goes on to use the warfare analogy to explain the nature of class struggle in modern, western societies with an advanced and complex civil society.

In war it would sometimes happen that a fierce artillery attack seemed to have destroyed the enemy's entire defensive system, whereas in fact it had only destroyed the outer perimeter; and at the moment of their advance and attack the assailants would find themselves confronted by a line of defence which was still effective. The same thing happens in politics, during the great economic crises. A crisis cannot give the attacking forces the ability to organise with lightning speed in time and in space; still less can it endow them with fighting spirit. Similarly, the defenders are not demoralised, nor do they abandon their positions, even among the ruins, nor do they lose faith in their own strength or their own future. Of course, things do not remain exactly as they were ... (Hoare and Smith 1971: 235)

Under the great economic crisis of late neoliberalism, civil society, including the universities and social movements, are experiencing something analogous to the fierce artillery attack of Gramsci's time. The question therefore is: can the compromised and fragile examples of academic engagements with social movements serve to defend the advances made—culturally and epistemologically, but also politically—by the movements? Is justice for women, for Mad people and for communities affected by pollution, when connected to university curricula, more resilient to the attacks of neoliberalism, less likely to abandon their positions even among the ruins, and less likely to lose faith in their own strength or their own future?

Moreover, Gramsci argues that the war of manoeuvre (the political-economic attack on movements of resistance) gives way to the war of position and ultimately to a kind of siege in which the trench-systems provide the basis for both defence and revolutionary change:

in politics the 'war of position', once won, is decisive definitively. In politics, in other words, the war of manoeuvre subsists so long as it is a question of winning positions which are not decisive ... But when, for one reason or another, these positions have lost their value and only the decisive positions are at stake, then one passes over to siege warfare; this is concentrated, difficult, and requires exceptional qualities of patience and inventiveness. In politics, the siege is a reciprocal one, despite all appearances... (Hoare and Smith 1971: 239)

Despite its crises, and especially the crisis of 2007–2008, neoliberalism continues to be on the offensive, prescribing more austerity, privatisation, individualism, competition and inequality, combined with state surveillance and proscription. However, these attacks are undermined by the war of position built up in civil society. Progressive social movements from below face the double threat of incorporation into the logic of neoliberalism or else state repression. In the face of this attack, a strong trench-system provides a defence against neoliberalism, and a position from which to advance. This is where lifelong education in universities can play a critical role. Where social movements are able to contribute to the curriculum of higher education, it is an opportunity for them to 'dig in', to establish, test and distribute the movement-knowledge it produces and develop challenges to neoliberalism in a partially protected space. Universities are not the only spaces for these 'trench-systems' to be established—nor should they be—but despite their role in reproducing the existing order, they remain distinctive spaces where education, scholarship, knowledge production and exchange are (at least ostensibly) still the widely agreed purpose. At the same time, lifelong education, and the accountability to social movements, help universities to protect that space for critical scholarship which can be of use to movements from below.

In 2010, when the Occupy movement erupted in the form of tent-dwelling activist communities in cities and towns throughout the world, its diffuse demands of radical participatory democracy, a public claim on space, and prefigurative politics were articulated as a direct challenge to the power of financial institutions and the richest and most powerful '1%' of the world's population (Hall 2012). Starting from the

initiative in Occupy Wall Street in the USA (but building on years of occupations and autonomous spaces across the world), many occupations squatted land in or close to financial centres of power as a direct confrontation with these symbols of high finance. In central London, land was occupied in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, beside the financial district of the City of London. In addition to the hundreds of tents in which people lived, there were a few communal tents for the essential services required for the community of a few hundred people—kitchens, toilets, medical support and, a tent university where people gathered for discussions and debates, workshops occurred and visiting academics were invited to give lectures. For this movement's confrontation with neoliberalism, a 'university' of sorts played an important role.

Those of us who work in universities, and are fighting the neoliberal takeover of our institutions, should be encouraged by this. Whilst this social movement at this juncture decided to invent a tent university, others have created different spaces for critical learning. Whilst we still have spaces to defend the knowledge production of social movements and seek opportunities for their advance in confrontation with neoliberalism, the university remains a place where that struggle must occur.

References

- Agents for Environmental Justice, & Scandrett, E. (2003). *Voices from the Grassroots*. Redressing the Balance Handbook Series, No. 4. Edinburgh: Friends of the Earth Scotland.
- Agyeman, J., Bullard, R., & Evans, B. (Eds.). (2003). *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*. New York: MIT Press.
- Ballantyne, E., & Maclean, K. (2019). Mad People's History and Identity: Mad Studies in the University. In M. Breeze & E. Scandrett (Eds.), *Public Sociology Education*. Bristol: Policy Press. Forthcoming.
- Bullard, R. D. (Ed.). (2000). *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality* (3rd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Bullard, R. D. (2005). *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- Carter, E. D. (2016). Environmental Justice 2.0: New Latino Environmentalism in Los Angeles. *Local Environment*, 21(1), 3–23.

- Church, K. (2013). Making Madness Matter in Academic Practice. In B. A. François, R. Menzies, & J. Reaume (Eds.), *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies* (pp. 181–190). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Church, K. (2015). "It's Complicated": Blending Disability and Mad Studies in the Corporatizing University. In H. Spandler, J. Anderson, & B. Sapey (Eds.), *Madness, Distress and the Politics of Disablement* (pp. 261–270). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Collini, S. (2012). *What Are Universities For?* London: Penguin.
- Connell, R. (2011). *Confronting Equality: Gender, Knowledge and Global Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Coombs, P. H., Prosser, C., & Ahmed, M. (1973). *New Paths to Learning for Rural Children and Youth*. New York: International Council for Educational Development.
- Cox, L., & Nilsen, A. G. (2014). *We Make Our Own History: Marxism and Social Movements in the Twilight of Neoliberalism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Cresswell, M., & Spandler, H. (2013). The Engaged Academic: Academic Intellectuals and the Psychiatric Survivors Movement. *Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Protest*, 12(2), 138–154.
- Crowther, J. (2013). The International Popular Education Network: Its Purpose and Contribution *Rizoma freireano • Rhizome freirean*—n. 14. Sevilla: Instituto Paulo Freire de España [Online]. Available from <http://www.rizoma-freireano.org/the-international-popular-education-network>. Accessed 5 Jan 2018.
- Crowther, J., Galloway, V., & Martin, I. (2005). *Popular Education: Engaging the Academy: International Perspectives*. Leicester: NIACE.
- Delamont, S. (2003). *Feminist Sociology*. London: Sage.
- Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (2003). *Women, Violence and Social Change*. London: Routledge.
- Doherty, B., & Doyle, T. (2014). *Environmentalism, Resistance and Solidarity: The Politics of Friends of the Earth International*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Eyerman, R., & Jamison, A. (1991). *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fraser, N. (2008). Mapping the Feminist Imagination: From Redistribution to Recognition to Representation. Chapter 6 in N. Fraser *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (pp. 100–115). Cambridge: Polity.
- Fraser, N. (2013). *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. London: Verso.

- Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin.
- Gadgil, M., & Guha, R. (1992). *This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Gelpi, E. (1979). *The Future of Lifelong Education*. Manchester: University of Manchester Press.
- Gelpi, E. (1985). *Lifelong Education and International Development*. Beckenham: Croom Helm.
- Glasius, M. (2010). Uncivil Society. In H. K. Anheier & S. Toepler (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Civil Society*. New York: Springer.
- Griffin, C. (1983). *Curriculum Theory in Adult and Lifelong Education*. Beckenham: Croom Helm.
- Hall, B. (2012). Occupy the World! In B. Hall, D. Clover, J. Crowther, & E. Scandrett (Eds.), *Learning and Education for a Better World: The Role of Social Movements*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Hall, R., & Winn, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Mass Intellectuality and Democratic Leadership in Higher Education*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Harley, A., & Scandrett, E. (2019). *Environmental Justice, Popular Struggle and Community Development*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Harvey, D. (1996). *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Harvey, D. (2006). *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*. London: Verso.
- Hoare, Q., & Smith, G. N. (Eds.). (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Illich, I. (1971). *Deschooling Society*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Jackson, S. (2001). Why a Materialist Feminism Is (Still) Possible and Necessary. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 24(3/4), 283–293.
- Laundry, D., & Church, K. (2016). Teaching (Like) Crazy in a Mad-Positive School: Exploring the Charms of Recursion. In J. Russo & A. Sweeney (Eds.), *Searching for a Rose Garden: Challenging Psychiatry, Fostering Mad Studies* (pp. 172–182). Monmouth: PCCS Books.
- Law, A., & Mooney, G. (2012). Competitive Nationalism: State, Class, and the Forms of Capital in Devolved Scotland. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 30, 62–77.
- LeFrançois, B. A., Menzies, R., & Reaume, G. (2013). *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Magdoff, F., & Bellamy Foster, J. (2011). *What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know About Capitalism* (p. 187). New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Martinez-Alier, J. (2002). *Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

- Mooney, G., & Scott, G. (2016). Welfare, Equality and Social Justice: Scottish Independence and the Dominant Imaginings of the 'New' Scotland. *Ethics and Social Welfare Scottish Approaches to Ethics and Social Welfare*, 10(3), 239–251.
- O'Connor, J. (1998). *Essays in Ecological Marxism*. London: Guilford Press.
- Orr, L., Scandrett, E., & Whiting, N. (2013). An Educational Approach to Gender Justice. *Concept*, 4(1), 1–4.
- Perselli, V. (2011). A Little Night Reading: Marx, Assessment, and the Professional Doctorate in Education. In P. Jones (Ed.), *Marxism and Education: Renewing the Dialogue, Pedagogy, and Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Reville, D. (2013). Is Mad Studies Emerging as a New Field of Inquiry? In B. A. François, R. Menzies, & J. Reaume (Eds.), *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies* (pp. 170–180). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Scandrett, E. (2007). Environmental Justice in Scotland: Policy, Pedagogy and Praxis. *Environmental Research Letters*, 2, 045002 (7 pp.). <http://stacks.iop.org/ERL/2/045002>.
- Scandrett, E. (2014). Popular Education Methodology, Academics and Emergent Social Movements: Agents for Environmental Justice (Action Note). *Interface: A Journal for and About Social Movements*, 6(1), 327–334.
- Scandrett, E. (2017). Still Spaces in the Academy. In R. Hall & J. Winn (Eds.), *Mass Intellectuality and Democratic Leadership in Higher Education*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Scandrett, E., Crowther, J., Hemmi, A., Mukherjee, S., Shah, D., & Sen, T. (2010). Theorising Education and Learning in Social Movements: Environmental Justice Campaigns in Scotland and India. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 42, 124–140.
- Scandrett E., O'Leary T., & Martinez, T. (2005). Learning Environmental Justice Through Dialogue. In *Proceedings of PASCAL Conference: Making Knowledge Work*. NIACE.
- Scott, G., & Mooney, G. (2009). Poverty and Social Justice in the Devolved Scotland: Neoliberalism Meets Social Democracy? *Social Policy & Society*, 8(3), 379–389.
- Scottish Government. (2010). *What Does Gender Have to Do with Violence Against Women?* Scottish Government and COSLA [Online]. http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2010/02/05102715/0?_ga=2.69801168.111199405.1531913999-1527275236.1531913999.

- Smith, A. M. (2008). Neoliberalism, Welfare Policy, and Feminist Theories of Social Justice: Feminist Theory Special Issue: 'Feminist Theory and Welfare'. *Feminist Theory*, 9(2), 131–144.
- Thwaites, R., & Pressland, A. (2017). *Being an Early Career Feminist Academic: Global Perspectives, Experiences and Challenges*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wilkinson, M., & Scandrett, E. (2003). A Popular Education Approach to Tackling Environmental Injustice and Widening Participation. *Concept*, 13(1/2), 11–16.



Discourses of Dissonance: Enabling Sites of Praxis and Practice Amongst Arts and Design Doctoral Study

Jacqueline Taylor

A Prologue

Ph.D. study occupies a fractional and anomalous space in the university. Indeed, in UK Higher Education (HE), not only do Ph.D. students almost exclusively represent the smallest student population, they also inhabit an uncertain identity somewhere amidst ‘staff’ and ‘student’. Pedagogically, the Ph.D. too inhabits an ambiguous terrain that does not readily cohere with traditional views of ‘teaching and learning’. In this context, this chapter contends that the Arts and Design Ph.D. (in particular that which incorporates artistic practice) inhabits a dissonant terrain that further disrupts normative frameworks of the academe and the landscape of doctoral research itself by encompassing various paradoxes, particularities, peculiarities and complexities. Based on a conceptual model of ‘research-practice-pedagogy’ in which I purposefully bring together the discourses of art practice research, doctoral pedagogy and

J. Taylor (✉)

Birmingham City University, Birmingham, UK

e-mail: Jacqueline.Taylor@bcu.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_9

research training, I draw on two interrelated bodies of research: the first, research concerning art practice research and the second, doctoral education underpinned by my role as Doctoral Training Coordinator in a Faculty of Arts, Design and Media. I propose that such territory can be understood as a multi-dimensional, plural, and heterogeneous topology, which enables transformational, performative and embodied spaces of learning, teaching and becoming to be opened up beyond fixed boundaries. Focusing in particular on non-accredited and fluid spaces of doctoral provision throughout the Ph.D. journey, such a model brings to the fore spaces of praxis and practice normally considered peripheral to the academe (and with it associated risk, creativity, failure and unknowing) as vital in eliciting ‘doctoralness’. Whilst dissonance is normally conceived of as connoting conflict or a lack of harmony, the very dissonance of the Arts and Design Ph.D. is here reconceived as a site of empowerment.

Elucidated through examples at the intersection of research-practice-pedagogy, I argue that rather than resisting educational structures, the very spaces of fracture and dissonance are in fact embraced—by both learner and teacher—to enable an expanded understanding of practice and embodied knowledge as praxis for the researcher, allowing them to inhabit the academe as subjects amongst Arts and Design doctoral borderlands. The Arts and Design Ph.D. is here considered both as a form of para-dox in relation to academia’s doxa and in light of Rolfe’s concept of the *paraversity* as a subversive community of dissensus that ‘exists alongside and in parallel to the corporate university’ (2014: 2). It is acknowledged that there are global, disciplinary and other differences in doctoral programs, as well as nuances in what is understood by the term ‘doctoral’ itself. This chapter is rooted in a UK (and to some extent European) context and therefore positioned in relation to its particular policy frameworks and sector benchmarks. Whilst ‘doctoral’ is understood here as an expanded and porous territory, namely in terms of education, pedagogy and experience, I refer specifically to what in the UK is loosely called the ‘traditional PhD’ (that is, as different to the Professional Doctorate or Ph.D. by Publication) as a qualification. Notwithstanding, the Arts and Design Ph.D. disrupts this very categorization in which it most often falls outside the parameters

of a 'traditional' approach to academic practice and by its very nature challenges the conventions of the doctorate to effectively demonstrate 'doctoralness'. Working in the context of the Arts and Design has afforded me great creativity and flexibility in developing doctoral provision; it is my aim that this chapter provides possibilities for all those invested in (re)conceptualizing time and space in the neoliberal university beyond the contexts I discuss.

Para-Doxa, the Academic Precariat and the Landscape of Doctoral Education

Ph.D. students almost exclusively make up the smallest student population of the university. Indeed, in the 2016–2017 academic year only 4% of the 2.32 million HE students in the UK were studying for a doctoral degree (HESA 2017). This marginal proportion aligns with the global context of Ph.D. study¹ and thus could be said to reflect the doctoral landscape on a wider scale. As the doctorate is the highest qualification available, the small contingent of Ph.D. students is perhaps not unexpected. Yet whilst Ph.D. students are vital to the ecology and economy of the university (in terms of labor as well as intellectual and financial capital), doctoral study seems to be at odds with wider institutional frameworks, processes and logics and inhabits a fractional, anomalous and often precarious space, somewhat 'othered' in an undergraduate-centric paradigm. As Brabazon notes in relation to the prevalence of neoliberalism in HE, doctoral study is often a deeply neglected component of an institution (2016: 19).

The precarity of Ph.D. study is reflected in its necessarily flexible and fluid structure. In the UK, undergraduate and postgraduate programs are governed by credit descriptors that define the expected 'level of challenge, complexity, and autonomy ... on completion of a defined and bounded learning activity such as a module or program of learning' (SEEC 2016: 1). Here, students progress through clearly delineated levels or stages determined by grades according to specific criteria, and that neatly align with regulated temporal frameworks such as the university

academic year. The Ph.D. on the other hand, whilst too defined by various descriptors—most prominently an original contribution to knowledge (SEEC 2016: 13; Quality Assurance Agency 2014: 30)—is not conceived in normative terms of modules, credits or even assignments. It instead culminates in the final viva voce examination after a significant period of independent study in which institutional progression points act as markers that assess doctoral progress rather than credits or modules per se. Ph.D. students also arguably determine their own subject-specific curriculum (signified in the Ph.D. project title). The fluidity and multiplicities of the Ph.D., even within smaller departments, thus could be said to be counter to the normative curricular structure and logic of the university.

The highly individualized nature of the Ph.D. is also reflected in the unique temporal framework of the doctoral journey; the Ph.D. is awarded, essentially, when it is awarded. Whilst there is a definite beginning and end point of the Ph.D., some students may complete before the standard full-time three years, others may take longer. Institutional administrative and procedural structures used to monitor progression and ensure timely completion therefore need to be flexible and reflexive to account for the inherently fluid nature of the Ph.D. For example, it is not uncommon (and possibly preferable for administrative and timetabling purposes) for viva examinations to be scheduled apart from one another rather than for a group of candidates to all be examined on the same day; not only are there multiple and simultaneous durations of individual Ph.Ds, temporally they are also in many ways unpredictable and inconsistent.

If undergraduate and postgraduate programs might be considered structuralist, then Ph.D. study might very well be understood as its unruly poststructuralist counterpart; fluid, multiple, iterative and reflexive. To return to Rolfé's *paraversity*, the Ph.D. could be argued to exist on its own terms as para-dox (2014: 4), running alongside and potentially disrupting the university's doxa. As I later elaborate, the Arts and Design Ph.D. arguably further fractures any sort of singularity and normativity within the Ph.D. itself in which what denotes 'thesis' and 'viva' for instance might take alternative forms. Yet, it is important not to romanticize the Ph.D. as inhabiting a space entirely removed from the neoliberal university: as well as being para-dox it also enacts a paradox

in that at particular moments it too is complicit in a neoliberal agenda. Indeed, the increasing emphasis on timely Ph.D. completions to meet funding obligations and sector requirements means that such a closely regulated doctoral timeframe (with more doctoral candidates and completions) commodifies the Ph.D., providing metrics for funding, ranking and other purposes. This is echoed in concerns that a managerial approach to completion rates mean performance indicators of efficiency are proxy for the quality of Ph.D. submissions, training and supervision (Park 2005: 194). As Brabazon spells out: ‘Beginnings matter. Endings matter more. The number one priority for a PhD student, supervisor and university is a rapid completion, examination and graduation’ (2016: 24).

Ph.D. students themselves can also be perceived as anomalous by inhabiting an ambiguous and uncertain identity in the university. In the UK, this is arguably in part because Ph.D. students are often grouped under the broad category of Postgraduate Researcher or ‘PGR’.² Such a label risks homogenizing Ph.D. students under a singular identity, ‘other’ to students on undergraduate and taught postgraduate programs, as well as ignoring the specificities of the Ph.D. in terms of descriptors and frameworks. In addition, those undertaking the Ph.D. navigate multiple and ambivalent roles: they are both ‘student’ and ‘researcher’ expected to actively contribute to the university’s research environment alongside staff ‘peers’ such as early career researchers and professors. The ambiguity of identity is confounded as funded Ph.D. students are ‘employed’ by the university, for example via funding bodies or teaching fellowships. However, they are neither quite students nor academic staff (as employees) in the normative sense and often there is a lack of access to benefits such as maternity and sick leave. Moreover, many Ph.D. students are simultaneously employed as staff in hourly-paid, sessional teaching and research roles. However, in an ‘age of casualised academic labour’ (Jones and Oakley 2018: 3), these roles are highly precarious: not only are they extremely competitive, but most often temporary, part-time, zero-hours and include “‘Fellow’ and ‘Associate’ job descriptions invented to describe non-salaried academic posts” (Garland 2014: 74). Whilst assuming the identity of staff, these Ph.D. researchers can be argued to be part of the ‘academic precariat’

where ‘as precarious as this material existence is - arguably because of it - they have little choice not to be’ (Garland 2014: 74).

Within established academic hierarchies, those undertaking Ph.D. study might be considered to be ‘at the top’ as students, contributing to university’s research environment (and shaping teaching agendas). However, whilst students they might also be more adept as researchers than staff whose primary responsibility is teaching and thus directly challenge traditional staff/student hierarchies. Moreover, although some students arrive at the Ph.D. through a fairly linear trajectory—progressing through different levels of the education system—many are professionals highly respected in their own fields. They thus might be more ‘expert’ than staff in their subject area whilst simultaneously being ‘students’; not only does this disrupt epistemological academic hierarchies but Ph.D. students most often have the same privileges as their undergraduate counterparts (i.e. student email accounts and security access). The prevalence of practitioners undertaking research in the Arts and Design also enhances this complexity whereby the very category ‘researcher’ might extend to artist-researcher, designer-researcher, composer-researcher and so-on. Not only do Ph.D. students inhabit a precarious and liminal space in how their identity sits amidst ‘staff’ and ‘student’, but they reveal a complexity in how they are positioned—and often challenge—established power structures amidst the governance of labor and intellectual capital.

The Ph.D. is also pedagogically unique. Whilst the Professional Doctorate incorporates a substantial taught element (Quality Assurance Agency 2014: 30), in the UK at least, Ph.D. supervision traditionally forms the central mode of support. Supervisors together perform a number of roles that are highly fluid changing at different points during the Ph.D.; for example, project manager, enculturation, critical mentor, disciplinary expert, facilitator (Lee 2008). However, whilst Ph.D. supervision is recognized as a form of pedagogy, it does not cohere with ‘teaching and learning’ in the normative sense whereby the teacher teaches and the learner learns; rather than ‘teaching’ relevant subject matter as such, the supervisory team instead could be said to facilitate doctoral thinking. Indeed, as Manathunga notes, team supervision supports students’ engagement with new knowledges that cross institutional,

disciplinary and epistemic boundaries (2012: 29). Whilst the supervisory team might provide subject specific expertise, a successful Ph.D. student also arguably emerges as more of an expert in their area of study through their contribution to knowledge. This disrupts the neoliberal economy of the university in which large numbers of students are the consumers of new knowledge. The Ph.D. in fact, reverses this model; it is the learner that creates new knowledge, in which there are multiple staff supporting one Ph.D. student. In this sense, the Ph.D. embodies a pedagogical para-dox in which precisely by demonstrating 'doctoralness', it eschews traditional understandings of teaching and learning where students act as their own teacher to create both new knowledge and determine their own curriculum of doctoral development.

'Doctoral pedagogy' too remains an ambiguous terrain understood primarily in terms of the Professional Doctorate (Bourner and Simpson 2014; Maxwell 2003) and Ph.D. supervision. However, the increasing emphasis on doctoral training to meet UK policy and sector benchmarks,³ means that institutions are also required to support the development of their researchers, prompting a shift from the Ph.D. being the creation of the doctoral thesis per se. To follow Park, there is a distinction between the Ph.D. as a product and the Ph.D. as a process (Park 2005: 198). Unlike the doxa of teaching as understood in undergraduate programs, doctoral training provision for the Ph.D. tends to be both non-accredited and elective, instead running throughout the Ph.D. in a more fluid manner to develop the 'knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and ... realise their potential' (Vitae 2015: 1). Such courses are often run by Graduate Schools (or similar) to cohorts of doctoral students or PGRs across the university and provide generic rather than discipline specific research training alongside Ph.D. study. This is often complemented by training that is accredited in the form of a concurrent qualification (such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods) in addition to the Ph.D. proper; structurally and pedagogically, it is both part of the Ph.D. yet at the same time separate to it. However, the paradigm of *training* researchers tends to adopt a rhetoric of a 'how to' approach, for example centered on research methods, preparing to submit the Ph.D. thesis and careers development in preparation for an increasingly competitive job market. Whilst these

skills and behaviors are vital in preparing Ph.D. researchers and doctoral training is now recognized as important in supporting researchers alongside supervision, it does not necessarily elicit doctoral learning on a deeper and transformative level.

A Dissonant Terrain? Practice *in, as, through,* and Research in the Arts and Design

As we can see, the Ph.D. inhabits a distinct yet equivocal space within the university; structurally, pedagogically, hierarchically, spatially and temporally. Whilst alternative spaces are often made to accommodate doctoral study, they nevertheless are often precarious as well as less visible or at odds with the university at large. Within the discourse of doctoral study itself, I would argue that the Arts and Design Ph.D. occupies an even more uncertain and unruly territory even within the meta-structures, processes and protocols of smaller faculties or departments. This is in part due to the significant increase in practitioners undertaking Arts and Design Ph.Ds, and in particular in those incorporating artistic practice *as* research, which encompasses certain particularities, peculiarities, tensions and complexities. In my own institution, this is evident through an increase in practitioners undertaking Ph.D. study prompted by their own practice and directly informing this practice upon completion. There has also been an increase in practitioners undertaking research in which practice forms a key part of the research enquiry. It is also the latter, that I would argue is invariably more messy, complex and difficult to comprehend both by Ph.D. researchers themselves but also by the academe and has been the subject of much debate over the past decade (Barrett and Bolt 2007; Gray and Malins 2004; Macleod and Holdridge 2006; Nelson 2013; Sullivan 2005; Wilson and Van Ruiten 2013).

The increase in Ph.Ds incorporating practice has resulted in a myriad of terms being used (see Fig. 1), something that Teikmanis usefully refers to as ‘typologies’ of artistic research (2013: 163).⁴ This has largely been driven by a need to define what is a relatively emergent research

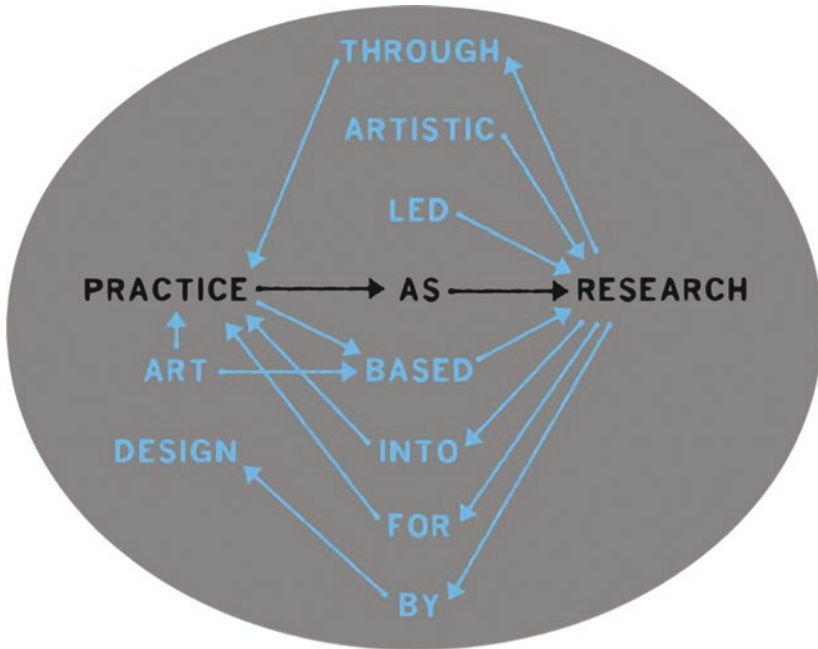


Fig. 1 Typologies of practice as research, Paul Norman and Jacqueline Taylor (2018)

paradigm and which often rethinks the very boundaries of research and the Ph.D. itself. For example, the designation ‘practice-led research’ (Mottram et al. 2007) is often used in the UK and is the term employed by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the primary funder of Ph.D. research in the Arts and Design. ‘Practice-based research’ (Candy 2006; Rubidge 2004) is also frequently used across institutions and more recently ‘practice as research’ (Nelson 2013) has been adopted as a more overarching term. The multiplicity of terms varies by discipline, institution and in different global contexts. Moreover, many of these terms have been subject to critique even by Arts and Design researchers themselves. Indeed, as Emlyn Jones argues, ‘practice-based research is too loose a term to be useful’ (2006: 228). In addition, as I have argued elsewhere there are also contradictory definitions amongst the same terms (Taylor 2018). The multiplicity and divergence

of these typologies themselves in fact encapsulates the inherent slipperiness and instability of the very discourse of Arts and Design research. Precarity and dissonance might be seen in positive and empowering terms, to echo Rolfe's notion of para-dox and the *paraversity*, in that: 'Dissensus is not dissent ... thinking in parallel is to keep discussion and debate open and alive precisely by avoiding coming to agreement' (2014: 4). Dissensus as a practice and dissonance as a condition (perhaps an alternative habitus) highlights the very richness of Arts and Design research and its commitment to thinking alongside and in parallel to multiple ways of working. It could be said to be dissonant in itself, let alone to wider research, institutional and pedagogic structures and discourses.

In the context of this chapter, I use the term 'art practice research' to encompass and acknowledge the multiplicity of approaches and terminology used to refer to research incorporating creative practice in the Arts and Design. Eschewing practice-led or practice-based here removes any potential simplistic reading of practice leading or being the basis for research but instead positions the two as having a mutual relation (Taylor 2014). Whilst the discourse of such research has emerged very specifically out of the artistic disciplines (in particular, performance, creative writing, dance and fine art), both 'Arts & Design' and 'art practice research' are considered here as expanded fields including architecture, curation, jewelry, design and theater to name just a few. I contend that art practice research can in fact be defined precisely by its resistance to be defined and by its fluidity, multiplicity and heterogeneity in which practice is highly nuanced and individualized (Taylor 2018). Indeed, many students undertake research in relation to their creative practice. Practice may more explicitly refer to the creative practice and artistic work *as* the research itself. It may *lead* to research or be the *basis* for the research enquiry. Practice might also refer to methods, the articulation of the thesis and the final submission itself. The practice might, following Candy, result in the production of a creative artefact or end product as the basis of a contribution to knowledge (2006: 3). Equally, practice might be understood as a process imbricated with the research in which the end object (or indeed performance, artifact or design) are not

important. It can also extend to one's professional creative practice and associated discourses, for example as a designer, curator or performer.

Frequently, the art practice research Ph.D. requires the parameters of what constitutes 'thesis' to be expanded in order to most appropriately articulate and position the practice in question. A solely textual submission might suffice even though practice has been vital in the production of new knowledge. Equally, the Ph.D. often deviates from this tradition taking many different forms encompassing textual, material, visual, sound or performance-based elements. Writing too may take different forms that enact the argument embodied in the thesis; for example, Hayley Newman's thesis (2001) took the form of a self-interview which she identifies as a performance in itself. The viva voce examination too might also include an exhibition or exposition and incorporate practice alongside the submitted thesis or that reconceptualizes the physical properties of the traditional thesis. It is therefore difficult to generalize on the position of practice in the art practice research Ph.D. as it is unique to its doctoral and creative context. Arguably precisely what is doctoral is articulating, positioning and critically grounding the practice itself.

As the Ph.D. is primarily defined as a contribution to knowledge, the incorporation of practice *as* or *part of* the research also raises epistemological tensions and ambiguities. In particular, there has been much written about praxical, embodied, tacit and material knowledge bound up in art practice research (Bolt 2007; Vincs 2007). The unknown has also been identified as a crucial part of the artistic process, yet it is commonly understood as a negative lexicon as *uncertain*, *invisible* and *incomprehensible* (Fisher and Fortnum 2013: 7). Within the doxa of 'research' and the 'doctorate' it is thus at odds with both the academe and the communication of new knowledge required by the Ph.D. To follow Haseman, the 'material outcomes of practice represents research findings in their own right' (2006: 104). As a result, such research has been argued to be thorny in that its goal is not primarily communicable knowledge (Frayling 1993: 5). Indeed, the AHRC themselves note that practice-led research prompts 'vexatious' epistemological and ontological questions (Mottram et al. 2007: 11). Developing mechanisms to make visible and effectively communicate this knowledge thus become

especially important, rather than assuming that artefacts (and their processes, performativities and materialities) articulate themselves. Art practice research could be said embody a para-dox in that this necessary self-reflexivity means some element of dissonance is in fact a condition of the research itself.

To add to this complexity, there is no one established method to undertake art practice research; rather, Ph.D. students are often required to appropriate various methodologies to come towards new knowledge by knitting together new ways of working from across paradigms, approaches and fields. My experience in working closely with Ph.D. students in the Arts and Design has revealed that the methods that emerge from research incorporating practice often embody the conceptual and theoretical ideas being grappled with. For example, a painter exploring ideas concerned with liminality might inhabit and push the boundaries of various methods to conceptualize a liminal methodological space, in turn thinking through and providing new insights that feed into the research. Most likely, this is because practice also functions as praxis; that is, a lived and embodied experience and its knowledge emerges through its practicing. This further highlights the precarious epistemological nature of art practice research. Indeed, as Sullivan points out, art practice is not necessarily captive to existing frameworks of knowledge but instead open-ended and exploratory reflexive action, and encourages a working from the unknown to the known where 'serendipity and intuition ... direct attention to unanticipated possibilities' (2009: 48). Such a process too resonates closely with the performativity of research in which the practitioner-researcher tends to dive in and commence practicing to see what happens (Haseman 2006: 101–102). Methodologically and epistemologically then, art practice research presents a direct challenge to and is dissonant with established value systems of research and knowledge production and does not sit easily within the wider landscape of doctoral study.

In addition, many Arts and Design Ph.D. researchers negotiate multiple identities beyond those of 'staff' and 'student' as outlined previously but which the ambiguity and precarity of this identity is enhanced as it extends to creative, professional, practitioner and academic. Many could be argued to aspire to be 'para-academics' rather than 'academics'

per se in which they position themselves both inside and outside academia on their own terms (Taylor and Vaughan 2016) through purposefully maintaining an array of creative and professional activities in addition to or as research. Interestingly, the para-academic as a broader term has been conceptualized as being aligned with the concept of the *paraversity* and para-doxa in which 'para' signifies an ongoing and transformational process (Wardrop 2014: 15) that enables mobility 'in/outside and – in spite of – the academe' (Garland 2014: 78). The traditional narrative of linear 'progress' for Ph.D. students relating to assumptions of an academic career is disrupted by the position of the para-academic in general but also in the more multifaceted aspirations of Arts and Design researchers in which practice (and practicing) are complexly intertwined with and inflect traditional understandings of academia. Moreover, progress from one academic category to another is precarious, whereby the traditional perspective of the postdoc as a transitional role from Ph.D. to academic lectureship is changing in response to fewer permanent jobs (Jones and Oakley 2018: 3).

I would argue that by its very nature the art practice research Ph.D. challenges the conventions of the Ph.D. itself as part of its 'doctoralness' is in testing out, justifying and making valid appropriate and robust methods, modalities of articulation, the forms that the thesis may take and epistemologically grounded relations between theory and practice. There are a great many risks for the researcher (and supervisor) in undertaking such practice as what is 'new' also extends beyond the knowledge gained through the intellectual enquiry itself. This also extends to the examination of the art practice research Ph.D., where to follow Elkins, the 'problem' of evaluating such doctoral study can only be solved if examiners move beyond strict disciplinary boundaries and their normal interpretive habits and that whilst this makes such research exciting, it is also exactly what ensures that it cannot be commensurate with other degrees (2009: 163). As a result, the Arts and Design Ph.D. forms a complex and contested territory, elusive for those who do not know how to go about it or what it comprises (Nelson 2013: 4). Echoing Elkins above and considering the descriptors outlined previously as conventionally underpinning undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and even those of Vitae's Researcher Development Framework,

it is interesting to note that Wilson raises concerns about attempts to confine art practice research to a set of descriptors as it risks obscuring the many fields of practice it might encompass (2008: 2). I would like to argue that the unruly, incongruent and troublesome nature of the Arts and Design Ph.D. forms a discourse of dissonance. One underpinned by tensions between on the one hand producing, framing and articulating practice *as* research as robust, rigorous and valid (not just practice as practice and artists doing what they do) and on the other retaining its integrity as emergent, experimental, cross-disciplinary, performative, innovative and individualized. Rather than resolving these tensions, they are instead a very quality of Arts and Design research and crucial in claiming recognition as research within dominant frames while at the same time troubling or reworking those frames.

Research-Practice-Pedagogy

There are huge implications for how the Arts and Design Ph.D. can be conceived pedagogically. In particular in reconciling how it might function as a productive para-dox with the dominant paradigm of Researcher Development and the centralized structures of the Graduate School model which favor generic provision, training *how to do* research or gaining certain skills based on assumptions of career trajectories, identities and academic aspirations. My own institution comprises four Faculties: 'Arts, Design and Media', 'Business, Law and Social Sciences', 'Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment' and 'Health, Education and the Life Sciences'. Whilst the university's Doctoral Research College is a centralized structure that provides some university-wide research training, doctoral education is developed on a local level in each Faculty; whilst there is indeed porosity between this provision it is able to be developed and adapted to its disciplinary contexts. The Faculty of Arts, Design and Media encompasses the largest cohort of Ph.D. students at the university. Whilst numbers fluctuate, there are around 160 students working within and across eight specialist disciplinary schools of Art, Architecture and Design, English, Fashion and Textiles, Jewelry, Media, Music and Performing Arts (the Royal

Birmingham Conservatoire) and Visual Communication. The boundaries of these disciplines are highly permeable; indeed, a Ph.D. student working in the area of design might easily find themselves in the Schools of Art, Architecture and Design, Fashion and Textiles, Jewelry or Visual Communication depending on their research. In addition, cross-disciplinary supervisory teams provide fertile ground for Ph.D. students to work across multiple Schools and under the University's STEAM agenda, which encourages cross-disciplinary collaboration between the Arts and STEM subjects, a number of Ph.D. students also work across faculties.

Arts, Design and Media Ph.D. students thus form an extremely diverse cohort. There are a number of students who do work in fairly traditional projects and draw on established methods and approaches. Yet the vast majority undertake research that deals at least in some part with the messiness of practice; from those approaching their artistic practice *as* research, in which creative work is submitted as part of the thesis, to practice forming part of the research process and practitioners undertaking more 'theoretical' Ph.Ds that interrogate an other's practice. Many actively critique established research paradigms, conceptions of knowledge and the thesis itself. Whilst the discourse of the art practice research Ph.D. has emerged specifically from areas of performance, creative writing, dance and fine art as I have discussed, Arts, Design and Media students appropriate and draw on elements of art practice research in relation to their own contexts. The Ph.D. as incorporating creative or artistic practice is not set up as separate to the 'traditional' Ph.D. Rather, all research is approached as part of a spectrum in which there are different nuances of practice to avoid setting up a binary between research involving creative practice and that which does not, and risk 'othering' practice against more traditional research. Within the context of the Arts, Design and Media then, Ph.D. students can be seen to inhabit a dissonant terrain. On the one hand, they disrupt the cohesion and 'purity' of art practice research found in discrete disciplinary areas such as the visual arts or performance. On the other hand, areas such as Media and Cultural Studies, which might otherwise draw heavily on conventions within the Social Sciences, are themselves disrupted with the positioning and framing of practice as crucial to the research.

For the last five years, I have developed doctoral education in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Media at my institution as an academic (or indeed artist-researcher or para-academic). Doctoral provision is underpinned by two primary areas of pedagogic practice: the 'Postgraduate Certificate in Research Practice' (PGCert), a formal accredited course for Ph.D. students and 'The PGR Studio,' a non-accredited and more fluid space of provision throughout the Ph.D. journey. The PGCert is a mandatory course for all new Ph.D. students across the university. It has a university-wide course structure underpinned by a set of learning objectives relating to the theoretical, methodological and practical dimensions of the research, as well as critical reflection of the development of the researcher. Whilst administered centrally by the university's Doctoral Research College, its development and delivery is entirely devolved to each of the university's four faculties. This has afforded a unique and crucial opportunity to develop the course specifically in the context of the Arts, Design and Media that exposes the complexities and dissonance of art practice research alongside the many nuances of research practice extending beyond the arts into areas of professional practice (for example, journalism, curation and museology) and where practice might function heavily but not manifest in and through the creation of artistic work *per se*.

The PGCert runs over a ten-week period and includes a mixture of seminars, talks and smaller group workshops. These cover the principles of research, such as positioning oneself as a researcher (in terms of literature and within wider communities of practice), developing research questions and ethics. Importantly, in the very first week there is a focused session on praxis and practice making this aspect of research visible from the outset in reference to the discourse and complexities of art practice research I have previously discussed. Rather than limit this discussion to the first week, it is unraveled as a thread to be unpicked throughout the course so as to provide another—potentially contrary—lens for students to approach their research. Grounded by this discussion, the definition of 'literature' for example, is critiqued as potentially also including compositions, exhibitions and artistic work. Longer interactive workshops are facilitated by two members of the core course team, who (deliberately) represent different approaches to these

principles themselves and thus do not always agree. Colleagues and I act as provocateurs to encourage students to unthink what they think they know, challenge assumptions and actively critique both emergent and more established ways of working to push epistemological boundaries and the various doxa intertwined with the fields, paradigms and practices in which they are working.

Sessions interrogating the ‘principles of research’ are followed by talks by invited researchers centered upon an exploration of these principles in practice alongside those focused on ‘methods in practice’. The ethos of provocation and indeed eliciting critical sites of paradox is continued in these sessions. Rather than teach researchers *how to do* research, the talks instead aim to *expose* students to the multiplicities of approaches that peers—from professors to fellow Ph.D. students—have developed. These could themselves be said to purposefully represent a sense of dissonance whereby ‘the practice of dissensus is a commitment to thinking alongside and in parallel to another with no pressure to reach agreement’ (Rolfe 2014: 4). Talks range from creative approaches to using fairly traditional methods, such as using archives and ethnography, to performance-lectures that enact alternative forms of articulation, writing and dissemination, for example research *about* and *through* art writing articulated via art writing, and everything in-between. Within broad methodological themes such as ‘working with participants’ and ‘dealing with the performative, reflexive and experimental,’ speakers that explore established ways of working are deliberately juxtaposed against those that embrace, question and push the boundaries of art practice research to prompt critical discussion. The facilitation of enabling learners to learn how to learn and thus do doctoral research (in the most part by the doing itself through sites of praxis in the course and critical reflexivity) is arguably here what elicits doctoralness itself. In doing so, the PGCert establishes an inter/multi/cross/trans-disciplinary and cultural Arts, Design and Media community and critical collaborative collective that brings researchers together from smaller disciplinary schools (themselves split geographically across the City over a number of sites). The course at once sits within and respects the parameters of the university-wide course structure and the academe, yet at the same time it is purposefully dissonant

and sets up the conditions to challenge and rupture the normative structures and conventions of both research and researcher development through facilitating sites of praxis enacted through debate, conflicting points of view and by pushing pedagogical boundaries themselves.

This provision is complemented by The PGR Studio, which forms doctoral provision throughout the entire Ph.D. journey, as well as facilitating routes into and out of Ph.D. study. It is an experimental, creative and practice-based space that resonates across all the academic schools and disciplines in the faculty (though not specifically for practice-based researchers). Studio here can be seen as a generative space associated with new thinking and the cross-fertilization of ideas removed from the power structures of the university and might be interpreted in any number of contexts such as writing, film, visual art, theatre, music, radio. Importantly, The PGR Studio is not a physical space per se; that is, an actual studio with a fixed location inhabited by Ph.D. students. Whilst indeed a number of institutions do have spaces for Ph.D. students, these are difficult to secure and often under threat as space allocation is instead prioritized for undergraduate students as the dominant student population and consumers of the university. These spaces also tend to be in the form of PGR hubs for all postgraduate researchers and are often university-wide spaces situated in Graduate Schools or equivalent. There has been much written about the importance of community in the formation of identity, particularly for practitioners transitioning to being doctoral researchers (Hockey 2008: 117). Whilst there are benefits to the crossdisciplinarity afforded by university-wide doctoral cohorts found in Graduate Schools, there is a risk that this undermines the richness of more delineated communities of practice that are inflected by the specificities and complexities of discourses such as art practice research and their potential as a pedagogic space. Indeed, if a Ph.D. student in the area of music composition is located within a Conservatoire, they are too positioned amongst peers in their field that can facilitate their integration into a research community and enhance their professional identity formation within that particular field. The fluid nature and conceptualization of The PGR Studio as a spatiality is thus open, inclusive and porous yet disrupts the potential

homogenization of students under the label of ‘PGR’ in their physical habitus within the university; rather it enables them to be embedded into the academe as an expert on their own terms.

As a faculty-wide entity aimed at students across Arts, Design and Media, The PGR Studio facilitates *opportunities* and *moments* within its spatiotemporality for crossdisciplinarity, as well as the unknown, creativity, experimentation and risk. Provision is nomadic and takes place across multiple sites both within, outside and on the peripheries of the physical university in which students across different schools are brought together. There is also an online space (comprising a professional website and growing social media presence) and so the spaces of learning and teaching that are opened up are multiple and fluid. Across these spaces doctoral learning might be explicit but more often than not is embodied, tacit and praxical. The PGR Studio does not cohere with the logic of the academe in that it is not-quite-a-course and not-quite-a-program, yet at the same time this is arguably precisely what affords a great amount of freedom in which The PGR Studio can exist on its own terms both within and against the structures, processes and understandings of research in the university. In many ways, it embodies the very concept of the *paraversity*. To refer to one of its online hashtags, The PGR Studio is ‘a safe place for unsafe things’; thus the para-academic may very well cohere, in their very incoherence, to *become* doctoral. Structurally this facet of doctoral education can be seen to resonate with the dissonance of art practice research in which its very dissonance creates spaces of learning, teaching and becoming for the Ph.D. researcher.

Rather than running a program of events ‘on the ground’ normally found within Researcher Development provision, I have developed a conceptual framework of ‘research-practice-pedagogy’ that underpins Arts, Design and Media doctoral education. As I have argued elsewhere, this framework can be understood as a multidimensional, heterogeneous, plural and fluid topology (Taylor 2018). Structurally, it is malleable and comprises various components and interrelations that remain unaffected by reflexivity and flux amongst its parts. As I will elaborate, a multiplicity of transformational, performative and embodied spaces of learning and teaching are opened up through formal, informal, implicit

and explicit pedagogic events. Such a topology allows for an element of reflexivity, performativity and the emergence of relevant provision subject to repeated adjustment like the qualities of art practice research itself. Rather than separate provision for those explicitly engaged with artistic research, all of The PGR Studio's activities are underpinned by an ethos that all research, regardless or not of its relation to practice, is indeed research and its relation to practice represents a spectrum of approaches. In developing an expanded understanding of doctoral training *as* pedagogy, this lens enables doctoral education to be approached as embodying, celebrating and acknowledging the nuances of practice in the context of the Arts, Design and Media and thus as enfolded into the fabric of the topology of research-practice-pedagogy as signified in the imbrication of these normally separate fields.

This *Is* Research: Opening up Sites of Praxis and Practice

The provision facilitated by The PGR Studio incorporates a mixture of workshops and explicit training alongside happenings, events and 'stuff' that encompass more performative and tacit spaces of doctoral learning. In the same way that it is acknowledged that there is a plurality of ways to understand practice as part of the Ph.D., there are a plurality of activities to meet the needs of such a diverse cohort. Indeed, training opportunities (i.e. how to use particular referencing software) are set alongside workshops including articulating research through spoken word, Ph.D. writing retreats exploring different aspects of the writing process with space to write, and viva survival where students, viva 'survivors' and an experienced viva examiner navigate different aspects of the viva through a discursive and interactive format. Rather than having strictly social events per se, happenings, events and 'stuff' enable Ph.D. researchers to engage with aspects of Researcher Development via social and/or creative means. They could in many ways be seen to form an alternative habitus as a site of learning. For example, pop-up 'Coffee & Chats' take place across various coffee shops on site as well as those peripheral to the campus. Researchers are invited to meet and chat; this

provides a way to interact with peers in what can otherwise be a potentially isolating experience and thus enhances wellbeing. At the same time, it is a way to share information on the ground and often promotes discussion around the Ph.D. experience itself in which students can listen, share experiences and connect with peers in their wider research environment and thus enhances the skills of researchers such as networking and knowledge exchange. As part of a larger and more formalized framework, there is also a peer mentoring scheme (see Fig. 2) that runs throughout the year where Ph.D. researchers at different stages in the Ph.D. are paired with one another. This provides both psycho-social

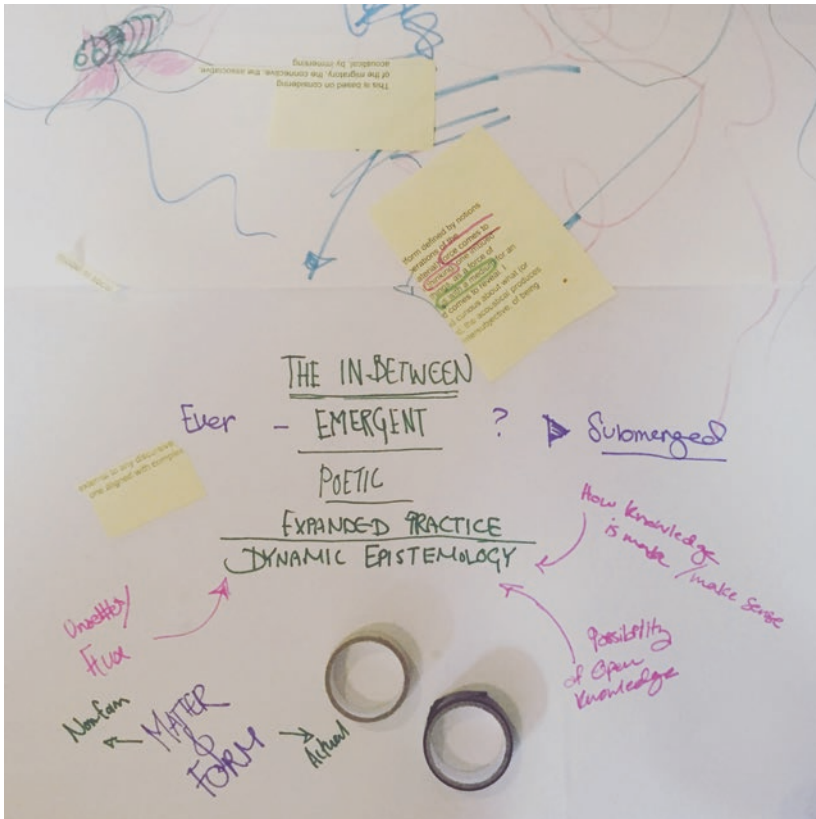


Fig. 2 Images gathered from participants as part of the Arts, Design & Media Ph.D. mentoring scheme

support in addition to the supervisory team but also enhances the skills of mentees and mentors (Boulton et al. 2015). These events also subvert the normative neoliberal logic of being too busy to care for oneself by opening up time and space for ‘radical care’ (Hawkins 2018).

More structured and formalized happenings that at the same time are spaces of fluidity are also set up, such as a mid-year Ph.D. festival in which students share their work in progress in the form of pecha kucha-style talks, provocations and poster presentations lasting no more than five minutes each. Students are invited to apply via a proposal including a single image and what they will present in under 280 characters (akin to a tweet). Rather than teaching Ph.D. students *how to* present their work, think creatively, write proposals or indeed *about* disseminating their research as tends to be adopted in Researcher Development Programs, the conditions are set up where this happens practically and students learn by doing, as well as learn about learning by learning. Moreover, the festival—called Inside//Out—provides a platform for researchers to get ‘inside’ ideas ‘out’ there, thus enacting, making visible and celebrating the different methods, modes of articulation and approaches to research in the Arts, Design and Research through its performative utterance. Indeed, previous events have included research in the field of experimental opera articulated through the medium of opera and research exploring the body in film art and virtual reality incorporating an actual virtual reality experience. The sheer creativity of the event is embodied in participants receiving festival wristbands on arrival, as well as coffee vouchers, pizza and drinks in red party cups (even for those who consider themselves to be undertaking ‘traditional’ research) and facilitates a generative space that embodies the potential of ‘studio’ itself that also enables criticality, socialization and community-building.

The pedagogic possibilities afforded by the festival are enacted on a larger scale through the PGR Studio annual conference, encapsulated in previous themes such as ‘Research Matter(s)’ and ‘Beyond Borders?’ (see Fig. 3). The conference, attracting around 100 delegates including Ph.D. students within and beyond the university, and from within and beyond the UK, is conceived as a significant curriculum event similar to the Arts and Design degree show. The conference rethinks the



Fig. 3 Selected images of speakers at ‘Beyond Borders: Approaches and Pathways to Arts, Design and Media Research’ conference, July 2017

conventional conference format and provides a vital platform for students to experiment intellectually, as well as in the dissemination and form of the research itself. ‘Curriculum’ as conceived here—as well as ‘teaching and learning’—thus does not cohere with that of the

neoliberal university; spaces are set up for Ph.D. students to expand their sense of doctoralness through being exposed to, questioning and dismantling various conventions and thus arguably learn without being taught as such. Underpinning this provision is something I have called a 'hidden employability curriculum'. Rather than teaching students *how to* apply for, chair or organize conferences (to enhance one's employability as a researcher), these activities enable sites of practice and praxis. These activities can be comprehended in a temporal sense in that they are scheduled and can be understood as discrete entities. Yet it is within this temporal framework that multiple spaces are opened up that facilitate nuances of teaching and learning on an ontological and epistemological level. Indeed, for Atkinson, flexible teaching-learning spaces—or pedagogic events—not wholly contained by learning outcomes accommodate unpredictable or unexpected directions in learning where both learners and teachers take risks, and form real learning through a new or changed ontological state (2013: 138).

Crucially, all of this work is approached *as* research; through pilot projects, action research and mechanisms such as surveys and interviews to elicit data in its various forms, for example through visual images, social media, narratives and the 'stuff' itself. Indeed, in the 'Beyond Borders' conference (2017), a special journal issue was created in the space of a day including creative work made during or in response to the conference itself (Hamilton and Raine 2017). This unveiled and captured valuable data from participants that revealed its pedagogical dimension; as one participant, a visiting Ph.D. student from a Nigerian University stated in the journal: 'It will be a summer to remember ... when I stepped over the intellectual border into a new world of possibilities.' In order to effectively approach this work as research, The PGR Studio comprises a staff-student team who are all active researchers engaged with the different nuances of practice and represent different disciplines. This includes two members of staff (including myself) and the employment of Research Assistants from the Arts, Design and Media faculty who are current or recently completed Ph.D. students. This system to some extent challenges the concept of the academic precariat as outlined previously in establishing paid recognized positions

that enhance the employability of students and postdocs in an increasingly competitive market and where applicants are mentored through the process (i.e. in workshops and through feedback). Moreover, rather than enforcing a top-down approach, working in collaboration with Ph.D. students and postdocs themselves (who have in turn collaborated with other Ph.D. students to develop events) means that PGR Studio provision is informed and shaped by its community itself and maintains its grassroots ethos. Evidencing, theorizing and conceptualizing this work, and disseminating it in the sector does not necessarily mean that permission has been granted to do certain things. Rather, I have been emboldened to do them anyway with the knowledge that this evidence supports a pedagogy which is dissonant, disruptive, messy and unruly in a positive way. In another sense, such evidence also justifies failure and testing things out. After all, this *is* research.

Following Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger 1957), humans are innately driven to hold attitudes and beliefs in harmony to create cognitive consistency. By nature, we try to remove dissonance. Indeed, operationally, administratively, financially and otherwise, dissonance would create conflicting processes as well as behaviors and attitudes. The university would be in chaos. Rather than resisting educational structures, I would like to propose that thinking about dissonance as underpinned by the intertwining of research-practice-pedagogy, can be thought of in positive terms and as a site of empowerment; for Ph.D. researchers themselves, the Arts and Design Ph.D. and in developing doctoral pedagogy that acknowledges and respects structures yet at the same time politely disrespects them. This relates to Atkinson's 'Pedagogy of the not known' (which he also notes could be called 'Pedagogy against the state' or 'Pedagogy of the event') whereby learners and teachers are positioned as pedagogical subjects through specific discourses and practices that constitute learning and teaching in which they are formed, regulated and normalized (2013: 136). Following Atkinson, in order to challenge the power of the norm when it is no longer useful we must shift from the subject as an *effect* of discourse to being formed critically *in relation to* norms. Rather than teaching *how to do* research, the framework I have developed and its activities and spaces value

community, collaboration, mess and crossdisciplinarity in which students as subjects—understood pedagogically on an epistemological and ontological level—actively shape their own paradigms of learning and development. Within the terrain of doctoral education I have laid out, pedagogic events can be seen to enable not just learning and teaching, but also becoming—and on an onto-epistemological level—whereby embodied experiences enable the self to be organized, recognized and constituted within this framework no longer understood as norms (Atkinson 2013: 139).

In reference to credit descriptors as defining what is expected of a learning outcome in terms of ‘a defined and *bounded* learning activity [my emphasis]’ (SEEC 2016: 1) as discussed previously, doctoral education in the Arts and Design can instead be understood as defined and *unbounded*. I contend that the Arts and Design Ph.D. could perhaps be said to comprise doctoral borderlands and is underpinned by a counter-cartographic logic (Rogoff 2000: 75). It instead purposefully occupies a spatiotemporality not defined or separated by boundaries, territories or indeed dichotomies (such as practice-led/non-practice-led); neither conforming to nor totally in opposition to narratives of linearity or dominant epistemologies, but a fertile space of criticality and of creativity. Indeed, to follow Rolfe, the para-doxical is not inside/outside the orthodoxical university, the perversity doesn’t exist ‘in space’ as such—it operates like a rhizome and is connected with anything other, entangled with as many people and projects as possible (Rolfe 2014: 4). It could be understood as a space where ‘rules’ exist differently on their own terms in relation to the wider institution. There is a disruption to the norms, structures and assumptions. Yet for Arts and Design Ph.D. study this disruption promotes rigor, facilitates criticality and could indeed be said to be doctoral.

Notes

1. Whilst it is difficult to disaggregate numbers of doctoral students in the US based on publicly available data, Australia has the same proportion of doctoral students as the UK at 4% (Australian Government Department of Education and Training 2016). In Europe the percentage

- is slightly higher for example, with 2015 figures in Germany at 7%, and Sweden at 5% (Eurostat European Union Statistical Office 2015).
2. Postgraduate Researcher or PGR encompasses a broad range of research-oriented degrees at postgraduate level and above, including Masters of Research (MRes), Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Ph.D. by Publication and the Professional Doctorate (ProfDoc).
 3. Quality Assurance Agency, Arts and Humanities Research Council, Research Councils UK, Vitae, The Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers.
 4. These include practice-led research, practice-based research, research through practice, research for practice, research into practice, art-based research, art practice as research, research by design, art practice research, research-led practice, practice as research.

References

- Atkinson, D. (2013). The Pedagogy of the Event. In E. Fisher & R. Fortnum (Eds.), *On Not Knowing: How Artists Think* (pp. 136–145). London: Black Dog Publishing.
- Australian Government Department of Education and Training. (2016). <https://www.education.gov.au/selected-higher-education-statistics-2016-student-data>. Accessed 20 May 2018.
- Barrett, E., & Bolt, B. (Eds.). (2007). *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*. New York: I. B. Tauris.
- Bolt, B. (2007). The Magic is in Handling. In E. Barrett & B. Bolt (Eds.), *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (pp. 27–34). New York: I. B. Tauris.
- Boulwood, A., Taylor, J., & Vaughan, S. (2015). The Importance of Coffee: Peer Mentoring to Support PGRs and ECRs in Art & Design. *Vitae Occasional Papers: Research Careers and Cultures, CRAC, 2*, 15–20.
- Bourner, T., & Simpson, P. (2014). Action Learning and the Pedagogy of Professional Doctorates. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning, 4*(2), 122–136.
- Brabazon, T. (2016). Winter is Coming: Doctoral Supervision in the Neoliberal University. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies, 3*(1), 1–34.

- Candy, L. (2006). *Practice Based Research: A Guide*. Sydney: University of Technology. http://www.mangold-international.com/fileadmin/Media/References/Publications/Downloads/Practice_Based_Research_A_Guide.pdf. Accessed 6 Mar 2015.
- Elkins, J. (2009). *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*. Washington, DC: New Academia Publishing.
- Emlyn Jones, T. (2006). A Method of Search for Reality: Research and Research Degrees in Art and Design. In L. Holdridge & K. Macleod (Eds.), *Thinking Through Art: Reflections on Art as Research* (pp. 226–240). Oxon: Routledge.
- Eurostat European Union Statistical Office. (2015). *Tertiary Education Statistics*. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Tertiary_education_statistics. Accessed 25 May 2018.
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Fisher, E., & Fortnum, R. (2013). *On Not Knowing: How Artists Think*. London: Black Dog Publishing.
- Frayling, C. (1993). Research in Art and Design. *Royal College of Art Research Papers*, 1(1), 1–5.
- Garland, C. (2014). Emboldened and Unterrified. In A. Wardrop & D. Withers (Eds.), *The Para-Academic Handbook: A Toolkit for Making-Learning-Creating-Acting* (pp. 71–80). Bristol: HammerOn Press.
- Gray, C., & Malins, J. (2004). *Visualising Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art & Design*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.
- Hamilton, C., & Raine, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Riffs: Experimental Writing on Popular Music—Beyond Borders Special Issue*. <http://riffsjournal.org/issues/special-edition-beyond-borders-july-2017/>. Accessed 17 Jan 2018.
- Haseman, B. (2006). A Manifesto for Performative Research. *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy*, 118, 98–106 (issue theme ‘Practice-led Research’).
- Hawkins, H. (2018). *On Mentoring—Reflections on Academic Caring as a Feminist Practice*. <http://www.gfgrg.org/on-mentoring-reflections-on-academic-caring-as-a-feminist-practice-by-harriet-hawkins/>. Accessed 1 Mar 2018.
- Higher Education Statistics Agency UK. (2017). <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/11-01-2018/sfr247-higher-education-student-statistics/qualifications>. Accessed 22 May 2018.
- Hockey, J. (2008). Practice Based Research Degree Students in Art & Design: Identity and Adaption. In R. Hickman (Ed.), *Research in Art and Design Education: Issues and Exemplars* (pp. 109, 120). Bristol: Intellect.

- Jones, S., & Oakley, C. (2018). *The Precarious Postdoc: Interdisciplinary Research and Casualised Labour in the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Durham: Hearing the Voice.
- Lee, A. (2008). How are Doctoral Students Supervised? Concepts of Doctoral Research Supervision. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33, 267–281.
- Macleod, K., & Holdridge, L. (Eds.). (2006). *Thinking Through Art: Reflections on Art as Research*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Manathunga, C. (2012). Supervisors Watching Supervisors: The Deconstructive Possibilities and Tensions of Team Supervision. *The Australian Universities' Review*, 54(1), 29–37.
- Maxwell, T. (2003). From First to Second Generation Professional Doctorate. *Studies in Higher Education*, 28(3), 279–291.
- Mottram, J., Rust, C., & Till, J. (2007). *AHRC Research Review: Practice-led Research in Art, Design and Architecture*. London: AHRC.
- Nelson, R. (2013). *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Newman, H. (2001). *Locating Performance: Textual Identity and the Performative*. Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Leeds.
- Park, C. (2005, July). New Variant PhD: The Changing Nature of the Doctorate in the UK. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 27(2), 189–207.
- Quality Assurance Agency. (2014). *UK Quality Code for UK Higher Education*. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>. Accessed 24 Oct 2013.
- Rogoff, I. (2000). *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Rolfé, G. (2014). We Are All Para-Academics Now. In A. Wardrop & D. Withers (Eds.), *The Para-Academic Handbook: A Toolkit for Making-Learning-Creating-Acting* (pp. 1–5). Bristol: HammerOn Press.
- Rubidge, S. (2004). *Artists in the Academy: Reflections on Artistic Practice as Research*. Australian Arts Council. <http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/artists-in-the-academy-reflections-on-artistic-practice-as-research>. Accessed 21 Feb 2017.
- SEEC. (2016). *Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education*. <http://www.seec.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/SEEC-descriptors-2016.pdf>. Accessed 2 Feb 2016.
- Sullivan, G. (2005). *Art Practice as Research: Enquiry in the Visual Arts*. London: Sage.

- Sullivan, G. (2009). Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-led Research. In R. T. Dean & H. Smith (Eds.), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (pp. 41–65). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Taylor, J. (2014, July). From ‘or’ to ‘and’: l’écriture féminine as an Approach to Fine Art Research. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 13(3), 305–313 (Sage Publishers).
- Taylor, J. (2018). Research-Practice-Pedagogy: Establishing New Topologies of Doctoral Research in the Arts. In R. Prior (Ed.), *Using Art as Research in Learning and Teaching: Multidisciplinary Approaches Across the Arts* (pp. 91–108). London: Intellect.
- Taylor, J., & Vaughan, S. (2016). A Different Practice? Professional Identity and Doctoral Education in Art & Design. In V. A. Storey (Ed.), *International Perspectives on Designing Professional Practice Doctorates: Applying the Critical Friends Approach to the EdD and Beyond* (pp. 127–142). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Teikmanis, A. (2013). Typologies of Research. In M. Wilson & S. Van Ruiten (Eds.), *SHARE: Handbook for Artistic Research Education* (pp. 162–169). Amsterdam: ELIA.
- Vincs, K. (2007). Rhizome/MyZone: A Case Study in Studio-Based Dance Research. In E. Barrett & B. Bolt (Eds.), *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (pp. 99–112). New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Vitae. (2015). *Researcher Development Framework*. Cambridge: Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Limited.
- Wardrop, A., & Withers, D. (Eds.). (2014). *The Para-Academic Handbook: A Toolkit for Making-Learning-Creating-Acting*. Bristol: HammerOn Press.
- Wilson, M. (2008). *The ‘State of Play’ in Practice-led Research in Art, Design and Architecture*. Brighton: AHRC/CHEAD.
- Wilson, M., & Van Ruiten, S. (Eds.). (2013). *SHARE: Handbook for Artistic Research Education*. Amsterdam: ELIA.



An Embodied Approach in a Cognitive Discipline

Jennifer Leigh

This chapter draws from a study funded by the Society of Research into Higher Education which used a range of creative research methods to explore embodied academic identity. My background before becoming an academic was as an accredited somatic movement therapist and educator (ISMETA 2017) and yoga teacher (BWoY 2010). Although I continued with my own movement practices, I struggled with the tensions between them and everyday academic life. I wanted to find out from other academics who self-identified as having an embodied practice how they reconciled this with their academic work and their identity as an academic, whether they experienced similar tensions, and whether their practice impacted positively on their feelings of wellbeing and if so, how. The study had full ethical approval from the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Kent. I took a reflexive and autoethnographic stance throughout as I was conscious of my own investment and story within the research and felt that it was important to be honest

J. Leigh (✉)

Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Kent,
Canterbury, UK

e-mail: J.S.Leigh@kent.ac.uk

© The Author(s) 2019

M. Breeze et al. (eds.), *Time and Space in the Neoliberal University*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15246-8_10

and open about the effect this had on the collection and analysis of the data. I have approached this chapter from an embodied and philosophical perspective. I am not a feminist scholar, though I have found that my approach to research and embodiment resonates with much feminist work through its focus on affect, and the sensory and the embodied self. The participants reflected on whether their embodied practice impacted on their personal wellbeing and if so, how. I consider different understandings of wellbeing and argue that an embodied practice will impact positively on personal wellbeing, however ability to engage with a practice can be constrained by illness, injury, work practices and the like. In addition, the type of wellbeing the participants felt from their practices is different from the vision of wellbeing that can be 'given' in a corporate sense by an institution.

Embodiment/Disembodiment

Currently the academy could be described as a disembodied place. Universities privilege working environments devoid of emotion and physical presence (Bloch 2012). Learning, teaching and research are often disconnected activities that focus on the cerebral rather than the physical, emotional or sensory. Reports of mental health and disability from students and staff are increasing as people fold under the pressures placed upon them (Gill 2010). Could an explicitly embodied perspective shed light on this situation? Embodiment is itself a contested term (Sheets-Johnstone 2015), and whilst the concept is found across many disciplines it does not have a defined meaning. For example, sociologists often use embodiment to describe how people use their bodies to represent themselves at an individual or cultural level (Shilling 2012), and some might argue that we are all embodied because we all obviously *have* bodies, and by extension everything we do is inherently embodied.

Whilst this predominantly constructionist view of embodiment focuses on embodied experiences and emotion work, it tends to ignore the body as physiology (Freund 1990). Phenomenology attempts to rectify this, however it can identify the body as an object (see for example Merleau-Ponty 2002; Young 1980). An alternative understanding sees

embodiment as both a state of being and a process of learning about the self (Leigh 2012). Embodiment can be understood as an on-going process of bringing conscious self-awareness to and about the body and can be exemplified by somatic movement education and therapy practices. The idea of bringing conscious self-awareness to and about the body means to become aware of the thoughts, feelings, sensations, images and emotions that are present within us, to reflect on them, and to use this knowledge to inform our actions and choices. By extension, any practice that increases this conscious self-awareness is an embodied practice, such as dancing, running, and martial-arts. In the West, somatic movement practices, therapy and bodywork approaches have been written about and practiced since the early twentieth century (Todd 1937). These encompass a range of specific practices such as Authentic Movement (Adler 2002), Integrative Bodywork (Hartley 2004), Feldenkrais (1981) and yoga (Iyengar 1966; Pattabhi Jois 1999; Rosen 2002) among others (Johnson 1995).

The term 'bodywork' is also contested. The use in connection with movement therapy implies an element of touch that may include, but is not limited to, massage or physical therapy: 'a variety of manipulative therapies' (Juhan 1987: xix). This definition of bodywork is distinct from the sociological use to mean work on the body by way of exercise, tattoos, piercings and the like (Crossley 2006). Bodywork meaning hands-on work on the body would instead include work to affect the body's capacity for and awareness of movement and choice of movement facilitated through touch. Such work operates under the premise that by affecting the nervous system through tactile stimulation and movement it is possible to influence the organisation of the mind and body, and the relationship we have with the environment around us: 'movement is the unifying bond between the mind and body, and sensations are the substance of that bond' (Juhan 1987: xxv). Moving the body through different positions, and using it differently, can affect our emotional attitude (Cacioppo et al. 1993). Most embodied practices have at their core an implicit or explicit philosophy of acceptance and non-judgement, with the therapeutic approaches understanding that it is only once we accept where we are that we can allow change (Hartley 1989). These philosophies also safeguard the notion that we do

not need to be ‘whole’ or ‘healthy’ in order to be embodied or increase our sense of embodiment. Being embodied is about being aware of ourselves, not about reaching some kind of bodily perfection and is accessible to anyone regardless of illness or disability. Understood in this sense, embodiment seeks to fully bridge the gap between the Cartesian mind-body dualism and provides a dialogue between constructionist and physiological understandings of the body. Those who engage in bodywork and embodied practices thus aim to access a greater level of self-awareness. Embodiment is becoming an important idea impacting multiple aspects of academic work across many disciplinary fields (Leigh 2019). This research project explored what happened when academics incorporated these kinds of practices into their lives, and the affect it had on their academic work and their feelings of wellbeing.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a ‘funny’ concept, apart from a lack of consensus over how it is spelt, there are many discourses over what it actually means and who is responsible for it. The UK National Account of Well-being (2012) defines it as a dynamic thing, a sense of vitality that people need to undertake meaningful activities, to help them feel autonomous and as if they can cope. However, as Richard Bailey puts it, ‘many of these discussions take it for granted that wellbeing equates to mental health’ (Bailey 2009: 795). Popular, government and institutional communications and directives in turn seem to conflate mental health with being ‘happy’, or with factors that are personal, and to do with whether life is going well for the individual or not. James Griffin (1986) explicitly connects wellbeing with happiness, similar to Aristotle’s idea of it being the fulfilment of human nature (Barrow 1980). Philosophically, wellbeing can be associated with either a hedonistic ‘desire fulfillment’ whereby it is achieved when an individual has sated their desires, or as a more objective theory which judges whether things are good for people or not (Parfit 1984). This latter view is one which sometimes results in lists of factors that indicate wellbeing or quality of life (Nussbaum 2000), and quantitative measures of wellbeing (Sen 1999). However, quality of life

should be seen as a dimension of wellbeing rather than be conflated as the same thing (Dodge et al. 2012).

The concept of satisfaction fulfillment is interesting, as there is the need to differentiate between types of satisfaction, as not all activities are meaningful, and satisfying all types of pleasure may in turn not contribute to wellbeing (McNamee 1994). This is particularly relevant with respect to the types of activities pursued by my academics. Wellness or wellbeing is not just the absence of illness, but an active and ongoing pursuit of something (Blei 2017). Some individuals living with disability or chronic illness may not experience the absence of illness or pain, however that does not mean that they have no wellbeing (Hedva 2016). Interestingly, whilst regular physical activity has been shown to raise emotional wellbeing as measured quantitatively (Steptoe and Butler 1996) there are concerns that poor physical health impacts negatively on emotional wellbeing and impairs ability to participate, so this association may be spurious. However, it is generally accepted that encouraging active lifestyles helps to establish positive health habits and contributes to wellbeing.

Post-industrial society is damaging to the body and soul (Blei 2017). In the neoliberal drive to control employees, create productive labourers and ideal consumers, wellbeing has become another measurable commodity and tool of governance. Dominant discourses of wellbeing (institutional, governmental, health) articulate neoliberal individualism and responsabilisation for wellbeing. In other words they say that wellbeing is an individual responsibility, putting the emphasis on individual decisions, behavior, and choices and do not take into account structural determinants like wealth or class.

Research has shown that embodied practices can act as a counter-balance to the dominant Cartesian mind/body disconnect, which views the body as a machine or tool in which to carry the intellect or mind around. Embodied practices could also raise the 'set-point' of wellbeing for an individual (Dodge et al. 2012), so that they have a better balance between their psychological, social and physical resources and the challenges that they face. As a consequence some embodied practices, or techniques derived from embodied practices (such as mindfulness) have been co-opted by employers and

universities to form part of ‘wellbeing’ programmes designed to reduce the structural problems in the sector with overwork, stress and burn-out to individual responsibilities around developing resilience and the ability to ‘manage time’ (Gill and Donaghue 2016). These co-opted techniques often ‘focus on various forms of self-management’ (ibid.: 97) and do not incorporate the aforementioned philosophies of self-acceptance that characterise embodied practices. Instead, they appear to be utilised in relating wellbeing to the imperative to be a ‘good’ productive neoliberal worker. Practices that increase awareness and the quality of consciousness have been reliably shown to have a significant role in increasing wellbeing (Brown and Ryan 2003). Embodied practices such as yoga, mindfulness, and Authentic Movement, a structured dance form that draws on Jungian principles (Adler 2002), contribute to wellbeing through enhancing this sense of present awareness and a wholeness of mind, body and spirit (Bacon 2015). However, we should be aware of how access to embodied practices can be structured and stratified, accessible only to those with the time and money to pursue them.

Wellbeing is often measured quantitatively, with the imperative to be ‘well’ or ‘happy’ (Ahmed 2010) seen as an outcome. In this research study, where I was looking for embodied answers to research questions, I needed to consider how I might go about collecting different (more embodied) data.

Methods: Embodied and Creative Research

I decided to use a range of creative and embodied approaches with my participants that resonated with my background of studio and bodywork. I felt that it was important to take a creative approach to this study, as interviews and transcripts of interviews would not capture the richness or sensory experiences of the participants. I wanted my body, and the bodies of my participants to be present within and throughout this research (Ellingson 2006) and use research methods that see the body as a place of inquiry (Snowber 2016). I was interested in how and why an embodied practitioner processes and reflects

on issues around their identity, and it did not make sense to send out a survey, a questionnaire, or to sit on chairs and carry out a standard interview.

When I called for participants through email, twitter and word of mouth to take part in the study I asked for academics who had an embodied practice to contact me. I did not specify what I meant by an embodied practice, and instead invited those who self-identified as having one to take part. I did not want my own understanding of what an embodied practice was, and what it meant, to colour the data, although I took an autoethnographic approach and my own emotions, feelings and thoughts are present throughout. I met with 12 academics working in the UK with a range of seniority, from PhD student to full Professor. They came from a variety of disciplines including sociology, anthropology, education, dance, drama, music, and maths. The practices that they shared with me were also varied, including meditation, martial arts, yoga, dance forms such as Authentic Movement and Contact Improvisation, rock climbing and running. I decided to meet with participants individually, for around 2 hours. Each meeting took place within a studio space, away from office space, and the participants were invited to reflect on their practice with access to a range of high quality arts materials. I used movement as a research tool by asking participants to share their practices with me. The meetings were filmed, and my data included the video footage, the visual art, mark-makings and collage work produced by and with the participants, and my own reflective journal.

Creative research approaches do not privilege language, and instead focus on the affective, the embodied experience, and the relationships formed with the world. The term covers a huge range of often arts-based or arts-informed approaches (Kara 2015). They move beyond the interview more commonly associated with social science research methods (Brown and Danaher 2017), and have been described as an enabling methodology (Gauntlett and Holzwarth 2006). They can be used to 'disrupt the habitual' and elicit change and empathy (Lapum et al. 2011: 102), explore identity (Gauntlett 2007), and promote engagement and empowerment of young people (Lyon 2016). They are associated with activist research, and ways to address power-imbalances

between researcher and researched by democratising research practice (Kara 2017), although it should be noted that they are not automatically emancipatory (Milne 2012). Responses to my research approach varied, although my call explicitly stated that I would use creative research methods. Some participants asked not to be shown on screen in any dissemination. However, all agreed to meet outside of a conventional office space, and commented positively on the experience of a meeting in a different space to the one that they generally inhabited. Some people felt threatened by the presence of art materials, and chose not to engage with them. Art has a history of being used therapeutically (Cox et al. 2010) and as a method of reflexivity (Lahman et al. 2010). Artistic representations can be used to increase empathy (Lapum et al. 2011). In addition, creative approaches to data collection can increase the haunting, or affective nature of the data that we disseminate to others (Wilson 2018). People who perceive themselves to be 'good' at drawing or art may be attracted to using these media (Lyon 2016), however the converse is also true as was seen here. In this study I offered the creative approaches alongside more traditional interview questions, and so if a participant chose not to engage with the art materials it did not exclude them from the research. It did make me mindful that in future projects I should offer alternative creative approaches that are less intimidating in addition, for example the use of objects as tools for metaphorical representation.

Creative approaches increase the richness of research data (Brown and Leigh 2019), and have perhaps influenced even common interviews becoming more sensitive to affect and the positionality of the researcher (Clegg and Stevenson 2013; Brown and Danaher 2017). Positionality is the idea that who we are, our personal views, values, history and location in time and space influence how we understand the world. As researchers, our positionality will impact the questions we ask, the ways we choose to gather data, and the ways we analyse and draw meaning from it. No research is objective and value-free, we cannot remove ourselves and our positionality from it (Latour 1999). Qualitative research in particular calls on us to be reflexive (Denzin 2010). Reflexivity is often confused or conflated with reflective practice. Reflective practice requires us to reflect on, or to think about, what is happening either in

the moment (Schon 1987), or later. Reflexivity asks us to do this and take a step further in order to choose how we want to act and to change those actions on the basis of our reflections (Bleakley 1999). Being reflexive in an embodied manner asks us to be aware of the information from our body, our senses, our emotions, and to use our kinaesthetic awareness along with our thoughts in order to inform our actions (Leigh and Bailey 2013).

Reflexivity, visual and sensory ethnography (Pink 2007, 2009) and autoethnography are all associated with more creative approaches. Autoethnographers want research to encompass rigour, theory, analysis, emotion, therapy and include personal or social phenomena; they 'take a different point of view towards the subject matter of social science' (Ellis et al. 2011: 274). I chose to use aspects of autoethnography in this study because I wanted to share in my participants' practice, and give them the opportunity to reflect creatively and make connections between what might be different aspects of their lives. Such approaches are associated with a constellation of theoretical approaches including new material feminists such as Carol Taylor (2017), and posthumanist researchers such as Karen Barad (2007). However, my own theoretical framing, whilst strongly philosophical, mirrors more the therapeutic, person-centred and practical stance of Carl Rogers (1967). Practically, my theoretical and methodological approach is somewhat of a bricolage (Denzin 2010), patchwork or 'Pick'n'Mix' drawing on what works and knits together in order to achieve my goal which in this case is exploring embodied research questions.

It is hard to do justice to the complexity of analysis when it comes to the embodied and creative data. The analysis was approached on different levels, using Maggie Maclure's conception of focusing on those data that 'speak' most and are most exciting (MacLure 2003), fully accepting and embracing my positionality within the project. In practice this meant reading and re-reading transcripts, looking at images and drawings, watching video footage, and immersing myself in the multimodal data and acknowledging the emotional feelings and bodily sensations I experienced before drilling down into the ideas and themes that felt as though they resonated through the different modes of data.

Findings

Wellbeing

In some ways the data were very straightforward when it came to wellbeing. Every participant, regardless whether their embodied practice was yoga, a dance form, martial arts, meditation, climbing or running, and no matter what their relationship to it or the connection their practice had to their academic work was, stated clearly that their embodied practice contributed to their personal wellbeing. Every participant saw their practice as part of who they were, it formed part of their identity.

This things (sic) makes me happy, yeah, I like doing that. (Lecturer in Maths, climbing)

I would always prioritise it. (Professor of Sociology, running)

This resonated with me, in that I would also say that my embodied practice contributes positively to my sense of wellbeing. It is part of my identity and my understanding of who I am in the world. The academics talked of the difference between their experience of personal wellbeing and the more institutionalised version they associated with wellbeing initiatives. I asked them what they thought wellbeing was, and what it meant.

I think in those corporate terms it just feels like having a bit of a glow, but it feels like... if I think about what wellbeing is. There's something about being fully me and fully present. (Associate Lecturer in Drama, dance and running)

It's like this really funny thing wellbeing. Big corporations roll out wellbeing classes, like having their own therapy treatment or a hand massage but does that give you wellbeing? I don't know...my understanding is it's something that you have to do for yourself rather than something that can be done to you... You can't be given wellbeing. (Lecturer in Education, Yoga)

INT: *staff wellbeing is important so let's have a wellbeing day and you rolled your eyes there...*

RESP: *I just find all that intensely irritating, it's like they've ticked that box whereas actually all the things we were talking of before are wellbeing... this emphasis on employability and outcome measures and results changes the nature of education and it changes the nature of universities... So to have a wellbeing day things like that really irritate me actually because life doesn't you don't have a wellbeing day and then oh yeah we all feel better it doesn't work like that. Having time to feel that you're doing your job properly rather than feeling that you're constantly doing everything badly because you're doing so much, that undermines wellbeing.* (Professor of Sociology, running)

These views mirror the argument that wellbeing is not something that can be easily given to staff or students by well-meaning initiatives such as 'holistic' massages, pet stroking days or the like. Such initiatives, such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England's 2017 Catalyst Funding Call to promote wellbeing in post-graduate research students (HEFCE 2017) equate wellbeing with mental health and often offer solutions designed to enhance mental health robustness, or increase enjoyment of life without acknowledging the structural issues such as overwork or casualisation that are endemic in the academy. Recently I found myself delivering a session to post graduate research students at my university on 'balancing research, teaching and life'. I was struck by the irony of this, as my co-facilitator and I had been exchanging emails about the session at 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. in the previous days, and I arrived for the session itself hot and out of breath having run from nursery drop-off to meeting after meeting to get there. Rather than modelling a work-life balance to these aspiring academics, we were instead embodying the overwork, stress and fatigue that appears to be endemic (Acker and Armenti 2004) along with the expectation that academic work does not stop when the office day ends. We were giving in to the idea of performativity within academia (Pereira 2016).

Such ways of working and practices are not inclusive to those of us who are unable or unwilling to work at this level or pace.

Female academics particularly seem to make sacrifices for their work (Currie et al. 2000), and fatigue, burnout and ill health seem common (Currie et al. 2000; Gore 1999; Kolodny 1998). I have since been asked to contribute to a ‘wellbeing’ week for postgraduates later this year, and I have expressed my concerns that what I have to offer may not be ‘on message’. Whilst I believe that individuals need to find out and explore what wellbeing means to them and how they might find it, I do not agree that wellbeing is consequently the burden of the individual. Rather than applying wellbeing techniques more judiciously, getting better at wellbeing, in order to address the cultural and environmental constructs that cause us to be unbalanced and overworked (Gill and Donaghue 2016) we need to actively fight to change the governing structures and culture of the work (and study) place.

Whilst there is an assumption that an increased sense of wellbeing leads to increased happiness, better mental health and resilience, they are not the same thing. In contrast in this study the participants reflected on what their personal wellbeing meant to them, and what it looked like. One participant drew their idea of wellbeing, and the things that fed into it, such as their embodied practice (see Fig. 1). The image represents the aspects that contribute to their personal sense of wellbeing, and how they interact with each other. Some aspects are labelled, and some are not. The overall sense of the image is dynamic, with an ebb and flow reminiscent of water which in turn echoes the blue pastels they chose to draw with. This image evolved as the academic talked about their relationship with their wellbeing, with what they wanted and aspired to, for, and from it.

Another participant described their experience of what wellbeing meant to them:

What is wellbeing? Really comfortable with yourself, feeling physically and mentally and emotionally comfortable with yourself and source of pleasure as well I suppose... (Professor of Sociology, running)

When this participant talked about their embodied practice, I was able to see their physical response and described it.



Fig. 1 'Wellbeing' (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance)

INT: *I can see your whole face changes when you're thinking about that and your eyes light up and a huge smile on your face, I guess that's what it means to you, it was prioritising yourself as well which is quite hard if you're a parent, particularly a single parent... you tend to be at the bottom of the pile, don't you?*

This physical response towards something that makes an individual happy can be used when working with trauma (Carroll 2009). Just talking and thinking about such an activity will induce feelings of warmth and happiness, and knowledge of positive triggers can be used to walk away from and work around traumatic issues. Interestingly, the activities first identified by an individual asked to think of things that make them feel happy, that give them wellbeing, are not always the ones that evoke this identifiable positive body response. A whole body response to embodied practice and the positive aspects of it was something that was echoed by other participants.

It's the fact that you are, your mind and your body is present together and it's the power of yourself, so it's that kind of conscious awareness that you have, you can tap into the power of your own body and all of the power of your own body. (Lecturer in Education, yoga)

It is authenticity. (Associate Lecturer in Drama, dance and running)

This participant went on to say

Moving for me is a way of feeling alive... There is this kind of inertia that settles, I feel like I sit down and I can't move, I'm just really heavy... it feels absolutely essential and I also feel like if on any particular day I don't move in some way then I'm just not awake, I'm not really there. (Associate Lecturer in Drama, dance and running)

Their embodied practice was essential for them to feel alive and present in the world day-to-day. It was both energising and calming. My own response to describing what my wellbeing means to me is similar—in that it is through movement and conscious awareness of movement that I reconnect with my body and my creativity, and am reminded of who I am and who I want to be. Similarly, a martial artist related:

I know that embodied practice isn't always all about physical health as people often think but there's something to that... it makes you think about and use your body in ways you rarely have call to do when you're teaching or sitting at your desk writing. (Lecturer in Sports Studies, martial arts)

This feeling of using their body was something that this martial artist expanded on:

I do think there is something to...knowing what your body can do... that feeling of your own power I think is quite unique to martial arts... I think it's different in that sense that it's tapping into something we treat as different, you know we socially construct fighting as being this really essentialised masculine activity... if there's anything that would keep me doing martial arts... it's probably that.

This participant spoke of how using the body in powerful ways disrupted the normative gender identities we generally inhabit. It confirmed masculinity for men, and gave power and affirmation to women who were not expected to take power and be aggressive in these ways. The idea of wellbeing was more than just the physical body or mental health though. For those whose practice was with others, the social aspect was also important.

I think basically in terms of health, fitness-wise it's a good thing to be doing... I think it's socially good for me, to meet people who are different to me, we spend a lot of our lives in little bubbles, with our very academic friends and middle-classness and all the rest of it. (Lecturer in Sports Science, martial arts)

This social activity was present for some of the participants whose embodied practice was running as well. However, it was not present for all participants. The idea of making meaningful connections with others was a theme for many though. Some then talked about what their embodied practice brought to them in terms of their wellbeing, and how it balanced aspects of their academic work.

I think I learned more how to take care of myself... I think despite everything, how stressful it can be or how shitty this last term was, I still know how to find pleasure in it all somehow, you know? I know how to go have a conversation with a colleague that's kind of fun when I need it, stuff like that. (Lecturer in Dance, dance)

Meditation introduces balance because it offers something different... meditation would provide a balance to whatever you do... it sort of centered, gave you a sense of focus and you didn't have a sense of rush and immediate urgency... You could also say well it would counterbalance all the intellectual stuff you do anyway. (Professor of History and Religious Studies, meditation)

It is clear that these academics believed that their practices contributed to their positive experiences of wellbeing as a balance or counterweight

to the pressures they faced in their work lives. Their practices were overwhelmingly beneficial and necessary to them. They were not engaging in techniques or applying strategies that allowed them to self-manage a crisis of overwork (Gill and Donaghue 2016). These academics (and I) used their embodied practices to increase their sense of who they were, to understand themselves better, and to allow themselves the room to choose what came next (Hartley 2004). A sense of wellbeing resulted from their practices, but was not the driving force behind them. Rather than solely inhabiting the performative university as described by Maria do Mar Pereira which is 'profoundly toxic' (Pereira 2016: 104), these academics were seeking to carve out spaces to rest, and to be in the present. However, their embodied practices were not always accessible to them, they had periods where they were constrained.

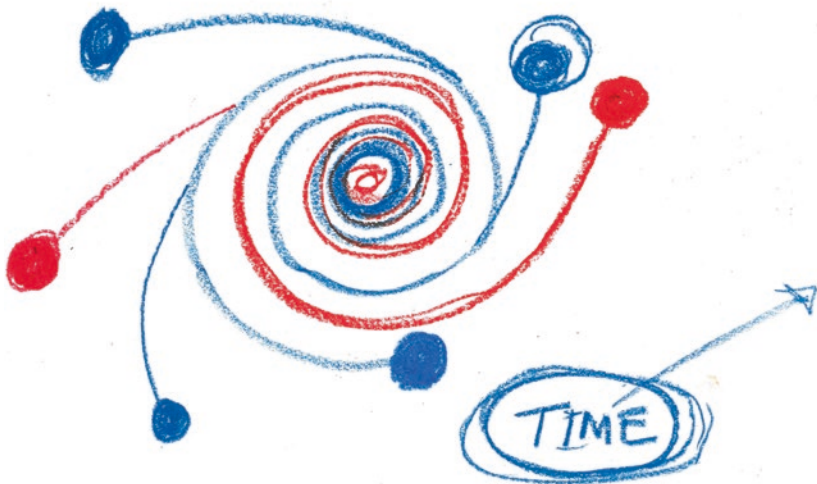


Fig. 2 'Constraints on wellbeing' (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance)

Constraints

These academics believed that their embodied practices gave them wellbeing even if their practice was not always accessible to them due to illness or other constraints. One academic drew their response to the constraints around their practice and wellbeing—with time being the primary one (see Fig. 2). In contrast to their earlier representation of wellbeing, this image uses two colours, both blue and a vibrant red weaving around each other in a spiral. Whilst the shapes are still organic, the lines are harder, more static and less dynamic. The spirals are both in consort and opposition to each other. The word ‘time’ is more fluid, surrounded by wistful circles, evoking the wish to have more time to spend on practice and wellbeing.

Some of the participants reflected on the relationship towards their practice when it was constrained or absent. Most participants talked of how their relationship to their practice changed over the years, with it sometimes taking more of a backseat or prominent position within their lives.

I'm not practicing as much as I'd like to... its contribution is as a kind of prompt and a reminder of what I need to do not to restore but to recalibrate my wellbeing. At the moment I don't feel like I have wellbeing. I feel like I'm kind of torn... I'm not in my body the way I'd like to be. (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance)

I think it's really key, I mean I'm not always very good at returning to it... I'm not always very good at sort of connecting with my body practice when I'm in a very difficult place but I do recognise that it is – and connecting, reconnecting with it won't always take me out of there – but I still think that it is hugely important to my wellbeing. (Associate Lecturer in Drama, dance and running)

I so don't do it at the moment it's hard to grasp. I guess an embodied practice, when I get around to do it, keeps me healthy and alive and less depressed! What does it mean to me? It's been my life! (Professor of Dance, dance)

They spoke yearningly of wanting to have more of a connection to their body and to their practice. If we return to Bloch's (2012) idea of the academy as a place devoid of emotion, then it makes sense that these academics are voicing the tensions they feel between the desire they have to have an embodied practice integrated into their life and the environment in which they work where it is not given space or support. This was something that resonated strongly with me, having had experience of ill health and work pressures that led to my practice of yoga and movement reducing from six times a week to a few times a month. Without my practice, I lost a sense of who I was, where I was and what I had to say. My practice is tied to my ability to construct my academic work, although before starting this research project, it was separate to the areas that I was teaching and writing about.

For my participants their practice and the ways in which it impacted on both their identity and attitude to work remained present, however active they were within it. Some of the academics had clear connections between their academic work and their embodied practice.

My work sprang from the practice. (Professor of History and Religious Studies, meditation)

There used to not be a separation for me between art and life. (Professor of Dance, dance)

It's absolutely connected to my practice as an artist. I think all of my work comes out, all the work I make comes out of that sense of embodiment that I get from moving, and you know the whole thing about being present is about you know a learning a kind of awareness of sensation that I found in my practice... In my teaching I definitely bring it in. (Associate Lecturer in Drama, dance and running)

For one participant their embodied practice was not only connected to their academic work, but had actually transformed their research and practice.

It genuinely meant a whole shift in my life... I found a kind of wider community... an interest in the body and movement and playfulness improvisation and people who I just found really interesting... I was much more in the real world rather than the kind of academic world. (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance)

Another said that their practice ‘*midwifed my PhD*’ a phrase that I loved, because it spoke to me of the connection, the labour and work that went into both the practice and the thesis.

However, for other participants their embodied practice, at least initially, was something they kept very separate from their academic work.

No it's really antagonistic, one is really indoor and completely not mobile, it's just in your mind, exploring... it doesn't seem like I'm balancing both. (Lecturer in Maths, climbing)

One interesting aspect of these two hour meetings was that through the process of reflecting on their embodied practice and sharing it with me, every academic began to see the links between their practice and their academic work. These were either subtle, for example character traits of compassion, patience, or resilience that they valued within their academic work and saw as being learnt or originating from their practice; or clearer links between their approach to teaching, or the ways in which they prepared themselves to write or research. Initially when I began to analyse the data I thought that the participants would be divided into two groups, those that had a clear connection between their practice and work, and those that did not. However, this was not the case. On some levels, all the participants made these connections for themselves, however disparate they initially thought they were. When given the space, time and the opportunity to reflect on their identity and work and to make sense of their experiences they were able to see how things interconnected.

For all participants there were tensions between an embodied practice and academic work. Given the nature of the current neoliberal university (Gill 2010) this is hardly a surprise. Most often these tensions were between the implicit or explicit ethos of an embodied practice to be

non-judgmental, accepting and present, as opposed to the competitive, measures driven academic world.

I think my perspective is that some people resist really hard, 'we've got to fight this tooth and nail, mustn't let the bureaucrats take over and fight the power and fight the discourse' and all the rest of it... in that context, part of the trying to integrate some of the martial arts stuff into what I'm teaching, the embodied moving lessons and stuff I've shown you in that book chapter, you know it wouldn't be entirely accurate to say that it's got nothing to do with that. (Lecturer in Sports Science, martial arts)

However, the participants remained positive about their relationships with both their embodied practice and their academic work, whether that was the individual, consensual relationship they had with academia, awareness of the role they played in supervising PhD students who wished to combine their embodied practice with their research in Practice-as-Research (Barrett and Bolt 2010; Trimmingham 2002), or in idealised dreams of how they might combine the two in the future.

Yeah there's pressure... publications... completing the PhD and stuff like that but because those things are so wrapped up with my artistic work and my passions and stuff and I don't have a problem with that... I feel like I have a consensual relationship with academia! (Lecturer in Dance, dance)

I understand it and I'm supervising people who are putting practice first in their PhD so I really understand what they're doing and can support that. I guess you're right, I guess there isn't that many of us and I know all my artist friends are still very anti-academia... they don't want to mix the two worlds. The artists are not interested in doing PhDs. (Professor of Dance, dance)

So ideal world would be I can take all that I know about academic practice and embodied practice and live it as an embodied action. (Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, dance)

Whilst feeling the constraints and pressures of the measured university and overwork (Acker and Armenti 2004; Gill 2010; Pereira 2016) some also felt the impact of ill health and injury as disrupting forces.

It seemed that there were elements of justification and rationalisation for these academics as they tried to make sense of the sometimes opposing demands of their practice and work whilst remaining open to the benefits and ideals of both.

Concluding Thoughts

My participants (and I) acknowledged that embodied practices fed into their academic work and sense of wellbeing. In some ways they acted as antidotes to the working culture that prevails in the academy (Ball 2003), however they resented that these very same practices might be used against them as part of an institutionalised drive to increase their productivity under the guise of increasing wellbeing (Gill and Donaghue 2016). It is not clear whether the positive levels of wellbeing they reported would have been captured on the quantitative measures of wellbeing often associated with mental health and quality of life, as the participants spoke of more esoteric issues of feeling authentic, feeling present and feeling alive than measures such as whether they ate healthily, whether their mental health was good, and whether they participated in physical exercise (Abdallah et al. 2008). Some of the academics were not engaged in any physical activity that contributed towards their wellbeing—their embodied practice was sedentary (i.e. meditation) or they were not currently engaged with it due to constraints on time or health. And yet they reported that their wellbeing was good. This suggests to me that there is a deficit in the most commonly accepted model of wellbeing. Wellbeing is not a matter of ‘collecting’ activities or attributes. Instead it demands a level of consciousness and engagement from participants.

In my study I wanted to bring the bodies of my participants into the research (Ellingson 2006). This meant that I set out to use creative and embodied research methods in order to go beyond capturing just their words, and instead to explore the movements, thoughts, feelings, sensations and images they associated with their embodied practice and their academic work. The constraints of academic outputs means that in this chapter I am limited to sharing the words and

a few images, however, my research has also resulted in a video essay made in collaboration with a filmmaker (Blackburn 2017) which shows the emotion, affect and haunting nature of the data I captured (Wilson 2018).

My experience has shown that these methods are ideal for capturing these more esoteric ideals and experiences (Brown and Leigh 2019). My participants were not limited by options or preconceived ideas about responses. Instead, they were given the freedom to explore their own responses and reflections, to change their minds, and to express themselves in their own modes—be that by way of movement, emotion, drawing or mark-making. This allowed them to be active in co-producing knowledge, which is vital when participants are also academics and cognisant of the processes of research. Whilst the multi-modal data were challenging to analyse (MacLure 2003) they give a richness and depth to accounts of individual experiences. With a topic such as this, seeking to explore embodied experiences, creative approaches to research are a natural fit.

I believe that embodied practices are different from other physical activities. What differentiates them from other activities that might be thought to enhance wellbeing? This study suggests that it is the conscious self-awareness that the participants bring to not only their practice, but to other aspects of their lives. There is no over-arching definition of what an embodied practice is, or how one might practise it. It is not dependent on including social activity, though it may do. It is not dependent on moving the physical body excessively in the pursuit of physical fitness, though it may include this. It is not dependent on preventing injury, and it is not the sole preserve of the fit, the healthy, the able-bodied. It is not a guarantee that a practitioner will not suffer from poor mental health—and yet it may well offer an awareness around this and thus lead to enhanced feelings of personal wellbeing and balance. Embodied practices are not the only route to promote wellbeing. For example there is research showing that singing in a choir leads to increased wellbeing (Livesey et al. 2012), and this is something I personally experience. However, the wellbeing I get from singing in a choir is transitory, it is to do with enjoyment and pleasure, it is hedonistic wellbeing. The wellbeing I get from my

own embodied movement practice, as for the participants in this study, is a sense of awareness about who I am and where I am in relation to the world and others within the world. Wellbeing is a word and concept that is used to mean different things to different people, and even within this chapter it has had a variety of uses. The experiences of my participants from an embodied perspective suggest that there is a case for modifying the concept of ‘wellbeing’ further—or using a different concept altogether—to refer to the embodied phenomena we have described.

As can be seen from my small sample, the practices an individual is drawn to may vary. There was a large range of different practices in my study, and what might be an embodied practice leading to increased self-awareness for one person might not be for another. Running is a perfect example of this—for some people it is a purely physical experience about pounding the road or treadmill, listening to music and losing oneself in the experience. For those who ran in this study, it was about an awareness of self, of breath, of the moving living body and being outside and surrounded by nature. Similarly, yoga can be competitive and injurious, or it can bring about balance and acceptance. It is the intention of the person practising as much as the activity or practice itself that is important. This idea of intention comes back around to Barad’s (2007) idea of posthumanism, linked as it is to physics and quantum theory. In order to promote personal wellbeing, I think it is worth returning to the words of the participant who called for less pressure, more time, and more space within the academy. Institutions need to recognise the structural constructs that cause the ill health, burnout and fatigue in the academy. As well as tackling these, they should provide opportunities for staff and students to pursue embodied practices or social activities within the work day. This would allow individuals to pursue and find those practices that resonated most with them, without impinging on their family or out-of-work time and commitments. In this way the institution would promote wellbeing in fact as opposed to paying lip-service to the idea, and in return would have happier, and more productive and fulfilled staff.

References

- Abdallah, S., Steuer, N., Marks, N., & Page, N. (2008). *Well-being Evaluation Tools: A Research and Development Project for the Big Lottery Fund*. London: Centre for Well-Being, New Economics Foundation.
- Acker, S., & Armenti, C. (2004). Sleepless in Academia. *Gender and Education, 16*(1), 3–24.
- Adler, J. (2002). *Offering from the Conscious Body: The Discipline of Authentic Movement*. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions.
- Ahmed, S. (2010). *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bacon, J. (2015). Authentic Movement as Well-being Practice. In V. Karkou, S. Lycouris, & S. Oliver (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook for Dance and Well-being*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bailey, R. (2009). Well-being, Happiness and Education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 30*(6), 795–802.
- Ball, S. (2003). The Teacher's Soul and the Terrors of Performativity. *Journal of Educational Policy, 18*(2), 215–228.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Barrett, E., & Bolt, B. (Eds.). (2010). *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*. London: IB Tauris & Co.
- Barrow, R. (1980). *Happiness*. Oxford: Martin Robertson.
- Blackburn, C. (2017). *Althaea Films* [Online]. Available at: <https://sonderfilm.wordpress.com/>.
- Bleakley, A. (1999). From Reflective Practice to Holistic Reflexivity. *Studies in Higher Education, 24*(3), 315–330.
- Blei, D. (2017). *The False Promises of Wellness Culture* [Online]. Available at: <https://daily.jstor.org/the-false-promises-of-wellness-culture/>. Accessed 1 June 2017.
- Bloch, C. (2012). *Passion and Paranoia: Emotions and the Culture of Emotion in Academia*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.
- Brown, A., & Danaher, P. (2017). CHE Principles: Facilitating Authentic and Dialogical Semi-structured Interviews in Educational Research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education, 42*(1), 76–90.
- Brown, K., & Ryan, R. (2003). The Benefits of Being Present: Mindfulness and Its Role in Psychological Wellbeing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(4), 822–848.

- Brown, N., & Leigh, J. (2019). Creativity and Playfulness in Higher Education Research. In M. Tight & J. Huisman (Eds.), *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research* (Vol. 4). Emerald: Bingley.
- BWoY. 2010. *The British Wheel of Yoga* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bwy.org.uk/>. Accessed 19 July 2010.
- Cacioppo, J., Priester, J., & Berntson, G. (1993). Rudimentary Determinants of Attitudes. II: Arm Flexion and Extension Have Differential Effects on Attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65(1), 5–17.
- Carroll, R. (2009). Self-regulation: An Evolving Concept at the Heart of Body Psychotherapy. In L. Hartley (Ed.), *Contemporary Body Psychotherapy: The Chiron Approach* (pp. 89–105). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Clegg, S., & Stevenson, J. (2013). The Interview Reconsidered: Context, Genre, Reflexivity and Interpretation in Sociological Approaches to Interviews in Higher Education Research. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 32(1), 5–16.
- Cox, S., et al. (2010). Tipping the Iceberg? The State of Arts and Health in Canada. *Arts & Health*, 2(2), 109–124.
- Crossley, N. (2006). *Reflexive Embodiment in Contemporary Society*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Currie, J., Harris, P., & Thiele, B. (2000). Sacrifices in Greedy Universities: Are they Gendered? *Gender and Education*, 12(3), 269–291.
- Denzin, N. (2010). *The Qualitative Manifesto: A Call to Arms*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The Challenge of Defining Wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222–235.
- Ellingson, L. (2006). Embodied Knowledge: Weiting Researchers' Bodies into Qualitative Health Research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 16(2), 298–310.
- Ellis, C., Adams, T., & Bochner, A. (2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research*, 36(4), 273–290.
- Feldenkrais, M. (1981). *The Elusive Obvious*. Capitola, CA: Meta Publications.
- Freund, P. (1990). The Expressive Body: A Common Ground for the Sociology of Emotions and Health and Illness. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 12(4), 452–477.
- Gauntlett, D. (2007). *Creative Explorations: New Approaches to Identities and Audiences*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Gauntlett, D., & Holzwarth, P. (2006). Creative and Visual Methods for Exploring Identities. *Visual Studies*, 21(1), 82–91.
- Gill, R. (2010). Breaking the Silence: The Hidden Injuries of the Neoliberal University. In R. R. Floods & R. Gill (Eds.), *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections* (pp. 228–244). Abingdon: Routledge.

- Gill, R., & Donaghue, N. (2016). Resilience, Apps and Reluctant Individualism: Technologies of Self in the Neoliberal Academy. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 54, 91–99.
- Gore, J. (1999). Unsettling Academic/Feminist Identity. In L. Christian-Smith & K. Kellor (Eds.), *Everyday Knowledge and Uncommon Truths: Women of the Academy* (pp. 17–23). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Griffin, J. (1986). *Well-being*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Hartley, L. (1989). *Wisdom of the Body Moving*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Hartley, L. (2004). *Somatic Psychology Body, Mind and Meaning*. London: Whurr Publishers.
- Hedva, J. (2016). *Sick Woman Theory* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.mask-magazine.com/not-again/struggle/sick-woman-theory>.
- HEFCE. (2017). *HEFCE Catalyst Fund: Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing for Postgraduate Research Students* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2017/CL,402017/>.
- ISMETA. (2017). *ISMETA About ISMETA* [Online]. Available at: <https://ismeta.org/about-ismeta>.
- Iyengar, B. K. S. (1966). *Light on Yoga*. London: HarperCollins.
- Johnson, D. H. (1995). *Bone, Breath and Gesture*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Juhan, D. (1987). *Job's Body*. Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press.
- Kara, H. (2015). *Creative Research Methods in the Social Sciences: A Practical Guide*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Kara, H. (2017). Identity and Power in Co-produced Activist Research. *Qualitative Research*, 17(3), 298–301.
- Kolodny, A. (1998). *Failing the Future: A Dean Looks at Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Lahman, M., et al. (2010). Poking Around Poetically: Research, Poetry, and Trustworthiness. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(1), 39–48.
- Lapum, J., et al. (2011). Employing the Arts in Research as an Analytical Tool and Dissemination Method: Interpreting Experience Through the Aesthetic. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 18(1), 100–115.
- Latour, B. (1999). *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Leigh, J. (2012). *Somatic Movement and Education: A Phenomenological Study of Children's Perceptions, Expressions and Reflections on Their Sense of Embodiment Through Movement*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham.

- Leigh, J. (2019). *Conversations on Embodiment Across Higher Education: Teaching, Research and Practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Leigh, J., & Bailey, R. (2013). Reflection, Reflective Practice and Embodied Reflective Practice. *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*, 8(3), 160–171.
- Livesey, L., Morrison, I., Clift, S., & Camic, P. (2012). Benefits of Choral Singing for Social and Mental Wellbeing: Qualitative Findings from a Cross-national Survey of Choir Members. *Journal of Public Mental Health*, 11(1), 10–26.
- Lyon, D. (2016). Researching Young People's Orientations to the Future: The Methodological Challenges of Using Arts Practice. *Qualitative Research*, 16(4), 430–445.
- MacLure, M. (2003). *Discourse in Educational and Social Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- McNamee, M. (1994). Valuing Leisure Practices: Towards a Theoretical Framework. *Leisure Studies*, 13(4), 288–309.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2002). *Phenomenology of Perception*. (C. Smith, Trans.). Oxon: Routledge.
- Milne, E.-J. (2012). Saying 'No!' to Participatory Video: Unravelling the Complexities of (non)Participation. In E. Milne, C. Mitchell, & N. deLange (Eds.), *The Handbook of Participatory Video*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Nussbaum, M. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Parfit, D. (1984). *Reasons and Persons*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pattabhi Jois, S. K. (1999). *Yoga Mala*. New York: North Point Press.
- Pereira, M. (2016). Struggling Within and Beyond the Performative University: Articulating Activism and Work in 'Academia Without Walls'. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 54, 100–110.
- Pink, S. (2007). *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Pink, S. (2009). *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: Sage.
- Rogers, C. A. (1967). *A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. London: Constable.
- Rosen, R. (2002). *The Yoga of Breath*. Boston: Shambhala Publications.
- Schon. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Commodities and Capabilities*. New Delhi: OUP India.
- Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2015). Embodiment on Trial: A Phenomenological Investigation. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 48, 23–39.

- Shilling, C. (2012). *The Body and Social Theory* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Snowber, C. (2016). *Embodied Inquiry: Writing, Living and Being Through the Body*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Steptoe, A., & Butler, N. (1996, June 29). Sports Participation and Emotional Wellbeing in Adolescents. *The Lancet*, 347, 1789–1792.
- Taylor, C. (2017). Rethinking the Empirical in Higher Education: Post-qualitative Inquiry as a Less Comfortable Social Science. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 40(3), 311–324.
- Todd, M. E. (1937). *The Thinking Body*. New York: Dance Horizons.
- Trimingham, M. (2002). A Methodology for Practice as Research. *Studies in Theatre Performance*, 22(1), 54–60.
- Wellbeing, U. N. A. O. (2012). *What is Wellbeing* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.nationalaccountsofwellbeing.org/learn/what-is-well-being.html>.
- Wilson, S. (2018). Haunting and the Knowing and Showing of Qualitative Research. *The Sociological Review*, 66(6), 1209–1225.
- Young, I. (1980). Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body and Comportment Motility and Spatiality. *Human Studies*, 3, 137–156.



Aesthetic Education and the Phenomenology of Learning

Jonathan Owen Clark and Louise H. Jackson

In recent years, a volume of scholarship has emerged in educational and social theory regarding the entwining of ‘accelerated’ cultures, the ideology of neoliberalism and the effects of these on idiomatic and historical practices within (Western) higher education (see as examples, Gibbs et al. 2015; Alhadeff-Jones 2017). This scholarship has concentrated on a number of ways in which the time, rhythms and temporality of life, and educational life in particular, have been transformed and often distorted by political and economic interventions, resulting in a profound change to the priorities and stated goals of higher educational institutions (see for example Gill 2009; Vostal 2014, 2016 exploring notions of the ‘accelerated academy’ and the ‘slow’ university movement). The globalised aspects of increased digitisation, accelerated flows of capital and data, and rates of privatization have seen many

J. O. Clark (✉) · L. H. Jackson
Trinity Laban, London, UK
e-mail: J.Clark@trinitylaban.ac.uk

L. H. Jackson
e-mail: l.jackson@trinitylaban.ac.uk

universities repositioned as sites of economic production for ‘knowledge economies’, characterised by new norms of accelerated work, consumerism, bureaucracy and efficiency. In terms of temporality, a common theme has been how objective measures of imposed time do damage to the various timescales or ‘heterochronicities’ of subjectively lived or experienced time inhabited by both teachers and learners. Other accounts have focused on the effect of neoliberalist tropes on the university and its relation to knowledge, as well as social aspects of the transformation of individual and collective interaction, and the nature of educational practices themselves.

Let us present some initial examples of these tendencies within contemporary higher education that are forms of diagnoses of some of the more pernicious effects of neoliberal ideology on the temporality of pedagogical spaces. In the literature, we can see accounts of how educational institutions have constructed temporal narratives that are ‘structured into hegemonic historical metanarratives of the elite that subordinate the narratives of marginalised students’ (Rossatto 2005: 30) through the compartmentalising of time and space ‘wherever small modules are produced, and where standard systems of measurement are deployed’ (Raunig 2013: 29). This is despite the fact that the university is simultaneously and idiomatically posited as ‘also a place of indivisible, endless, boundless modulating, a place of the appeal to modulate knowledge and the self’ (ibid.). As a more concrete example, a tendency to foreclose this state of potentiation through an emphasis on standardization is perhaps most simply exemplified through the use of the timed assessment, which Davidson (2017) claims ‘reflects the outmoded production model of learning that confuses standardization with high standards ... where it is no longer enough to think’ (107–108).

Bennett and Burke (2017) similarly assist this project of deconstructing normative assumptions relating to the conceptualisation of time within education, while Raunig (2013) contextualises this as part of the continued regimentation and subjection to discipline that learners undergo via the ‘fragmenting of the period of study, from the division of studies into multiple autonomous segments, through the compounded admission and knock-out exams, all the way to the striating of individual seminars, (which) make students permanently start over from

the beginning' (ibid.: 32). Gielen and De Bruyne (2012) rearticulate this hybridisation and fragmentation within the context of a 'made-to-measure' European arts education where 'the transfer of knowledge and the learning process are literally custom-made to fit models and competencies, which in turn are neatly divided into precisely calculated hours of contact - a well-calculated mediocrity' (2012: 3). These enforced compartmentalisations of learning tempo and duration suggest not only the accelerated academy and a lack of what Traenor (2007) described as 'a distressing lack of idle time... [little] time for meditation, prayer, idling, and creative absent-mindedness' but also, therefore, why 'many students do not reflect critically on their views of time; passively allowing their temporal subjectivities to be shaped detrimentally' (Rossatto 2005: 31).

Within the discipline of critical pedagogy, this same tendency is reframed as the construction of the future as being a 'pre-given', resulting in what Davidson (2017) theorises as a collision between the training of unique and singular individuals and processes of 'machine-like' standardisation, particularly vis-a-vis a trajectory of learning as automata (107–108) through both the mechanical repetition of the present and an assumption of inevitability. To follow this troubling account through to perhaps its logical end, Giroux (2014: 491) memorably describes educational institutions as becoming 'dead zones of the imagination', reducing them to 'anti-public spaces that wage an assault on critical thinking, civic literacy and historical memory', which continues what he previously described where an openness for potentiality and the transgression of norms are unobtainable, because 'the historical insights necessary for the development of a collective critical consciousness' are absent (Giroux 2011: 21).

As a counter-tendency however, other commentators see opportunities amidst the transformation of the temporality of pedagogical space for the potentiation of opposing strategies (Alhadeff-Jones 2017), whilst others adopt a necessary historicised corrective, pointing out that universities themselves have been both the producers and victims of acceleration and technological determinism (Vostal 2016). But amidst what has become admittedly a pessimistic landscape, one idea, central to what will follow in this essay, is the construction of a further

counter-tendency to neoliberalisation within institutions, through what can best be described as a 'suitable aesthetic education' (Spivak 2012). As an initial way of framing this, we can see a link with the alternative construction of learner futures. Founding educational institutions upon curricula that prepare students for an 'unknowable future' is, according to Eisner (2004: 6) unsound. Examples of how these unknown futures are currently named include nebulous notions of the 'knowledge' or 'gig-economy'. Eisner suggests that the best-prepared students are those enabled to deal effectively with the present. One way to do this is to use the arts as a regulative ideal for education, partly because of the potential for engagement with the perceptual and sensuous that may imaginatively inspire the individual to engage more independently with learning, and partly because 'the forms of thinking the arts stimulate and develop are far more appropriate for the real world we live in than the tightly right-angled boxes we employ in our schools in the name of school improvement' (Eisner 2002: 11). Similarly, Rautins and Ibrahim (2011) suggest that the 'arts are a kernel space in what we call a critical pedagogy of the imagination' (28), where the imagination is posited as a site for potentiation and the generation of possibilities, facilitating the idea that students can develop 'the capacity to reach beyond conventional ideology to engage in free, unpredictable and internalised thought' (27).

Similarly, imaginative possibilities and correlative educational spaces represent a way in which 'voice, consciousness, community, pluralism and the human condition' can reconfigure the world around us (Rautins and Ibrahim 2011). Imagination is cultivated as a facilitated and explicitly humanist outcome of an aesthetic higher education, and one that engages with the receptive possibilities of art (see Clark and Jackson 2017). The role of an aesthetic education, we will claim, is inextricably linked to both temporal and spatial subjectivity and consciousness, and functions as a key form of the social imaginary. In what follows, we will explore how internal, external, and pedagogical time can be explored, with examples given of resistance drawn from arts training within the wider higher education sector, influenced by our own experiences of teaching and researching the Arts within universities and specialist arts Higher Education Institutions in the UK,¹

in order to understand what some (for example Wang 2010) suggest is the fundamental role of temporality in a transformative education.

In this chapter, we seek to explore these issues further, problematising temporality as a site of neoliberal performativity embedded in educational enactments of time and constructing a type of metanarrative that perhaps links and grounds attempts to critique this performativity, and from a phenomenological perspective. We will explore: acceleration and globalization and their manifestation within higher educational manifestations of time and space; phenomenological considerations of temporal and spatial consciousness and their idiomatic distortion under neoliberalism; the relation of the phenomenology of meaning-formation and aesthetic experience; an approach to aesthetic education that exposes and make visible neoliberal narratives, such as the cult of 'entrepreneurship', that are temporally suppressive and foreclosing; explore transgressive strategies within arts education, such as 'polylogical pedagogies' (Blake and Stearns 2015) that could provide a way of resisting and fracturing the temporal suppression of both learners and educators.

Phenomenological research in education is nothing new of course, but much research in this area tends to split into two distinct types of methodological category. The first category uses phenomenology primarily as a method for the capturing and qualitative analysis of the first-person experiences of learners and those working within education (see for example Langeveld 1983). But the second tendency, and the one to be adopted here, involves asking what phenomenological theory, seen as a discourse of philosophy proper, has to say about the foundational nature of certain types of educational experience.

As will be perhaps familiar, phenomenology studies the ways in which the world, objects and phenomena 'show up' in subjective experience, and attempts to isolate the essential or 'eidetic' aspects of all varieties of our experience via a process of 'phenomenological reduction', a method of bracketing that seeks to specify invariant features of a given modality of experience via a process of comparison.

And we can apply this same process to work towards a model of learning itself, seen as a process with its own temporality, and which moves from an initial motivation, or meaning-*intention*, through a

temporal process of meaning-*formation* itself, and ultimately to the production and consolidation of knowledge. The advantage of phenomenological methodology in this context is that it allows for strong normative claims to be made about the nature of learning per se, whatever the specific educational or learning context, and from both inside and outside institutional structures. This is in line with the central claims made within phenomenological thinking about the interlinkage between different aspects of our lived experience. Phenomenology, particularly in the late work of Husserl, theorises a concept of 'lifeworld' that is the overarching context or social milieu, which, at any given moment in history or location, connects the subjective, intersubjective and larger societal and cultural levels of human organisation. And we may speak of the levels which similarly intersect within learning and educational experience, where the personal learning history of an individual comes into contact, and often conflict with, larger societal structures imposed from above within educational institutions.

But as an initial exemplification all of these themes, which can be thought of as located at the intersection of the subjective and the cultural, let us examine some key aspects of the writing of Paul Virilio (2000, 2006, 2012). His work can be read as examining the coupling theories of speed, temporality and accelerationism with phenomenological thinking about the character of subjective experience. This author has written prolifically on the integration and transformation of a number of critical issues that originate in the work of the mid-century phenomenologists, most notably Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. In particular, Virilio's work can be read as an account of the effects of technological determinism on the individual, resulting in the alteration and transformation of core aspects of human 'being-in-the-world', including the phenomenality of human presence, the nature of our temporal and spatial experience, and the patterns and historicity of intersubjective and social exchange.

Of fundamental importance for our purposes is how Virilio analyses what phenomenology can teach us about the way that we *orient* ourselves in the world, both spatially and temporally. Fundamental to this is a sense in which both time and distance are *horizoned*. Briefly, our experience of the present is not like a temporal sequence of isolated

'nows' but has a type of windowing, temporal reach or stretch. Our experience of the present is subject to a process of ongoing temporalization in which the sense of 'just past' (or retention) is part of our experience of the present, which it informs and sustains. The present 'becomes' past, which in turn feeds back and furnishes the present with expectations about the future, which are called 'protentions'. And we can think of this sense of time consciousness as the most primitive form of the *historicity* of the individual, or the way that human subjects have an innate historical 'being' that is fundamental to the activity of consciousness. But where we get from the merely temporal to the genuinely historical is in terms of the second level of historicity, that of environment, culture and social grouping. This resides in the way that individual human subjects enter into historical communities, each with its own historicity; we experience history through the way we are defined by others and share common projects and goals in historical 'we-communities'.

To summarise, our individual experience of time is structured in the present moment as a window of past retentions and future protections, and this immediate experience is supplemented by a *horizon* of temporal experiences of recollection, memory, remembrance, and narratives concerning the nature of our social and collective historical past that we inherit through culture, and which relativise our temporal experience into other horizons of deep history (for an extensive account, see Carr 2014). And in an entirely similar fashion, the way we make sense of our immediate surroundings and its limits merges with a horizon of larger spatial orientation, which comprises the larger orbits of environment and habitat, and reaching ultimately to the whole of the planet itself, seen as the structural limit or ground of our spatial awareness.

And it is precisely these types of structures, familiar in phenomenological writing since their foundation in the work of Husserl, that interest Virilio, albeit in an updated technological context. In a series of volumes, Virilio (2000, 2006, 2012) provides an integrated account of time, space, and the subjective body and ego as seen in orientation with the world, suggesting that communicative technologies have made radical alterations to all of these. The experience of the world as changing in real time through accelerated media and digital communication

has replaced the historical space of immediate embodiment, as it is now possible to experience a simultaneity of presence anywhere, and at any time, resulting in a necessary compression of spatial distances and horizons. Bodies, due to the speed of communications and transportation mechanisms, are reduced to states of inertia, resulting in a similar suspension and compression of the possibilities of movement and embodiment. And our ideas of the social and historical that centred on the idea of common sociality and community, based around shared human presence, have similarly given way to a 'hypercentration' (Virilio's term) of contemporary individualism, a regress to a type of individual inertia caused by the ubiquitous technological availability of knowledge and information.

This methodology is indicative of the way the rest of this essay is structured. The core idea is that what we might term the phenomenology of learning is also structured, in terms of a particular type of horizoning process, which involves the formation of a meaning space involving both selection and potentiation, and which has a type of temporality of its own that is linked to individual and communal historicities. And in a similar vein to the above, we will see what happens to this space, and the learning and knowledge that supervenes from it, under the influence of accelerationism, globalisation and neoliberal capitalism. And crucially, we will also interrogate how an exemplification of this meaning space exists within art and aesthetic experience, highlighting the need for a suitable *aesthetic* education, constructed by various authors in a range of disciplines, from pedagogical to postcolonial theory, as a necessary antidote to the current tendencies within the UK higher education context towards increased processes of standardization, abstraction and instrumentality.

In addition, we will examine what phenomenological theory can tell us about both the idiomatic nature of learning per se, and its intrinsic temporality and horizoning. In doing so, we will adopt an approach derived from a non-exegetical integration of phenomenology with several other disciplines, including social constructivist educational theory, pragmatist philosophy and the newer disciplines of enacted or embodied cognition and psychology.

We take as axiomatic the idea that learning is fundamentally about the acquisition of knowledge through a learning process that involves the construction, for the individual learner, of *meaning*. Going further, we can posit that knowledge is constructed in a shared learning environment comprised of meaningful experiences and interaction with others, uses prior knowledge to make sense of new knowledge, and is based on how connections arise that join and connect cumulative and sedimented aspects of a learner's whole experience and social intersubjective exchange. We can condense this into saying that learning is formed against a backdrop of both an individual and communal *historicity* of all educational and learning experiences in general. For John Dewey (1916, 1998), and along the same lines, learning is a process comprising both an initial experience coupled with its subsequent consequences; consequences that feedback into the experience itself, and change its temporal character:

When an activity is continued into the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflected back into a change made in us, the mere flux of experience is loaded with significance. We learn something. (Dewey 1916: 139)

Husserl, in a similar vein, posits that thinking is a process of *meaning-intention* that results in knowledge or *meaning-fulfilment*. And meaning itself, for Husserl, is the co-created sense one makes of objects and phenomena through the interaction of the subject with its environment. Meaning is therefore *constructed* by the learner through experiences of phenomena, and the consequences derived from forming connections and interactions between these experiences.

But we will also stress in this essay that the word meaning here is meant in an extended sense. Meaning is not just something conceptual and propositional, it is not something that can be merely stated or articulated in language. All aspects of sensory *qualia*, our ability to form mental imagery, our feelings and emotions, and combinations of these can give rise to connections and interactions between past, present and future experience that are *intrinsically* meaningful to us, and are not in general either linguaform or conceptual (for more on this,

see Johnson 2006). As an example, the temporal experience of approaching the problem of successfully execution a set of choreographic instructions often involves 'solving' the sequence via the cumulative comparison of the effects of certain shifts in bodily equilibria and balance, and derived from an individual historicity of embodied knowledge. None of this can be articulated without loss through language: it must be shown and felt, and not just spoken.

But to return to our main theme, the most prescient definition of the phenomenological process of meaning-formation is, for us, given by Niklas Luhmann. Again, following Husserl, Luhmann thinks that meaning relates directly to an initial intentionality (there is a 'such and such' in the field of consciousness), and that this, as a consequence, necessarily creates a *horizon of possibilities* in what we will call a *meaning space*:

The phenomenon of meaning appears as a surplus of references to other possibilities of experience and action. Something stands in the focal point, at the center of intention, and all else is indicated marginally as the horizon of a 'and so forth' of experience and action. In this form, everything that is intended holds open to the world as a whole, thus guaranteeing the actuality of the world in the form of accessibility. (Luhmann 1995: 60)

Meaning, in this phenomenological reading, is something that operates at any time in the gap between the actual and the possible, hesitating between the two, in the process of meaning-fulfilment. We can also see how this process generally possesses *factual*, *temporal*, and *social* dimensions. Let us give an account of these, applied in an educational context. The first dimension, that of the factual, refers to the finition of the process of meaning-formation; something is established in the meaning space, ending the state of meaning-formation. The temporal aspect of meaning, in an educational sense, can be interpreted dually as the inherent temporality needed to navigate meaning-formation in the present, a process with its own rhythms, coupled with a recourse to a deeper temporality, namely that of the historicity of total individual learning experience. The social dimension refers to the essentially intersubjective

aspect of meaning-formation; the fact that all meaning construction is subject to the contingent approval of the social other.

We want to stress here how this meaning space, as described above, is inherently *dynamic* and has its own shifting temporal character, which has to be negotiated by an individual with reference to their own unique past. And we will suggest later that this it is precisely the dynamic, temporal and uniquely individuated nature of meaning-formation that is ossified and foreclosed through neoliberal systems of education that focus on standardisation, measurement and economic quantification. The 'surplus' of potential inherent in any meaning space is unquantifiable and ungeneralisable due to its subjective character, with the effect that the temporal and social aspects of meaning-formation are bracketed in favour of its factual dimension, which resulting damage to the process seen as a whole.

The central claim we will make in this section is that it is possible to connect the phenomenological model of meaning-formation given earlier to related and entirely congruent ideas contained within the discipline of aesthetics, especially regarding the accounts given in the discipline of the phenomenology of the aesthetic experience of artworks. A secondary motivation is that, despite this, accounts of the progressive nature of art and aesthetic education often proceed without reference to these internal debates within aesthetics and philosophy of art, and again, what we offer is a type of meta-narrative that might link these approaches together. The key point we will make is that a consideration of the philosophical literature on aesthetics gives us a way to connect the phenomenology of meaning-formation with the nature of aesthetic experience, something that motivates and grounds the assertion that arts education can be afforded a progressive societal value. By way of an introduction to this, let us recap some important and pertinent themes in aesthetics, particularly those emerging from pragmatist and phenomenological aesthetics, together with critical theory, and couple these with an account of the important theme in the literature of 'aesthetic negativity'.

For Dewey, art is an exemplary form of meaning-making, a kind of condensation and exemplification of the processes of meaning-intention and fulfilment. And it is precisely this capacity of art that motivates

Dewey's linkage of art and aesthetic education with the educational process per se. The experience of art is therefore not simply one modality of experience, but epitomises experience in its most general form: in aesthetic experience, we reveal experience as such. Why is this exactly? And why is this relevant to a discussion of 'aesthetic education'? In Dewey's pragmatist thinking, the reception of art, rather like a temporal and individual educational process, involves the making of intrinsically meaningful and transverse connections between form, expression, communication, sensory *qualia*, images, emotions, value and purpose and is therefore 'charged with meanings' and is a 'union of the precarious within the settled'. Art becomes a microcosm of a theory of meaning recast as a 'matter of relations and connections grounded in everyday organism-environment coupling or interaction' (Johnson 2006: 265). Recall that the meaning of something is its relations, actual and potential, to other qualities, events and experiences, a connection to past and future experiences and actions. And the key point is that this notion of the equivocation between depotentiation and potentiation, or between selection and further possibility that is characteristic of general experience is *exemplified* in aesthetic experience. And it is this openness to possibility that simultaneously therefore becomes a condition for a suitable 'aesthetic education', an openness that is becoming increasingly threatened within contemporary educational institutions. In the conclusion to this essay, we will examine how accelerationist tendencies within neoliberal higher education have fundamentally reduced the temporal experience of meaning-formation and learning that are exemplified in aesthetic experience, and hence in aesthetic education itself.

But to preface this, let us look more fully at the phenomenology of the reception of art. In aesthetic experience, what an artwork presents to us is not in general instantly accessible to us; the encounter with it implicates a search for meaning in the work that begins a processual cycle encompassing both the initial encounter and its subsequent consequences. Furthermore, this a process that equally typifies, in pragmatist thinking, the temporality of a typical learning experience. As Dewey remarks:

A thing is more significantly what it makes possible than what it immediately is... an intellectual sign is not taken immediately, but is referred to something that may come in consequence of it. (Dewey 1998: 105)

We can now see that there is an exemplification in aesthetic experience of the actual-possible duality implicated in all acts of meaning-formation, as we defined it earlier. And this pragmatist assertion about art resonates with similar views in aesthetics deriving from critical theory, particularly regarding the capacity of art to generate what has been called 'aesthetic negativity'. The foundation for this negativity can be explained in simple terms by virtue of the essential duplicity of art; the fact that an artwork, by being art at all, manifests an 'as such' quality. It is always potentially something other than it appears to be, and this 'transcendence' or potential to be other, in particular its potential for renewed historical evaluation and interpretation, means what art *is* can never be reduced to simply its material support or object of immanence, and is an operator of collective encounters and historicity. Seen this way, art is:

Essentially predicated of a world, a world of spectators, of a historicity of sense, and of a corporeal, personal and collective existence. That is the content, the idea, or the sense of the work of art including everything it motivates, permits, and promotes; the reality proper to what is said about it, and what only supervenes from it: ideas, but also sensations, emotions, acts, encounters, worlds. (Sepp 2010: 60)

And it is this supervenance in particular that concerns us here. The habitual processes of recognition or repetition of the everyday are contrasted in artworks and the aesthetic experiences that they occasion via the *processural* negation of the automatic. The aesthetic is differentiated from the non-aesthetic via this processuality, which contains a logic of its own that undermines conventional attempts at iterative understanding (see Menke 1999). Although aesthetic experience must start with these processes of identification, or initial decisions as to an artworks 'meaning', aesthetic negativity equates with the way that it is an experience of the negation or the subversion of our attempts at

understanding. Or to put it in concise terms, aesthetic experience negates the *automaticity* that is the hallmark of non-aesthetic experience.

We understand and inhabit the world around us through the constant application of habits and norms. We can cast this type of 'automatic understanding' semiotically as the non-processural and unproblematic binding of the two sides of the representative sign, (the Saussurian signifier and signified), by means of networks of codified contiguity. This is the immediate matching in everyday or non-aesthetic experience between material (sounds, gestures, marks on a surface) and immaterial content or meaning. We see a red light, a signifier, and interpret this through learning and experience as an instruction to stop (the meaning, or signified). But in contrast, aesthetic experience involves an interminable 'vacillation' between the two poles of the sign. When we experience modernist artworks, our attempts at understanding them are confronted with an initial asignifying materiality that must be given a reading in order to make sense, via the selection in the material of meaning-related signifiers. In Menke's terms: 'For the question concerning aesthetic signifiers, the primordial fact is that signifiers are produced by an operation of selection on a given material, in view of the meaning to be represented' (ibid.: 53). Note that there is an implicit assumption at work here: that the starting point for an aesthetic experience is an unavoidable attempt at *meaning-formation* as described in the terms presented earlier. And the problem with artworks and their specific aesthetic framing is that no definitive rules or conventions can be established vis-à-vis the appropriate selection of signifiers in the material, so that:

In the realm of art, the signifier oscillates between the two poles, which in automatic understanding are firmly linked: those of material and meaning. Since the signifier cannot be definitively identified, but is lost in endless hesitation, aesthetic experience breaks the bridge joining the two sides of semiotic representation. (ibid.: 54)

Aesthetic experience is the processural enactment of this vacillation or oscillation within the meaning space(s) generated by an artwork. We see in aesthetic experience a self-subversion or sequential deferral of the

usual attempts at signifier formation. This aesthetic deferral manifests itself in three different ways. First, effectuated signifiers that are already automatically selected ‘counter-effectuate’ themselves, leading to a potentiation of material as yet unselected in the meaning space. Second, there is a disruption to contexts that usually provide criteria for settling non-aesthetic disruptions of meaning. Third, aesthetic experience, ‘frames’, or quotes non-aesthetic contextual assumptions from the outside, with the result that these contextual assumptions become ambiguous, and signifiers acquire ‘an unsublatable indeterminacy’ (ibid.: 60).

For example, and to make this all perhaps a little less abstract, let us apply this to an attempt to form an ‘articulating reading’ of say, a modernist painting. Once a different series of features in the painting—such as contextually or historically familiar forms—are identified as potentially significant or meaning-bearing, then the selection operation automatically undermines itself. This is because the act of making the selection necessarily *excludes* other forms and other connections between forms that are left over the selection: ‘aesthetic experience makes its signifieds significant’ (Luhmann 2000; Notes to §1). The attempt at the isolation of signifying features relevant to meaning causes its own opposite: the attempt at depotentiation only leads to renewed potentiation. This is just a distillation of the process of horizoning and selection-potentiation that we described previously, in a condensed and ceaseless form: aesthetic experience *exemplifies* the ‘openness’ and lack of foreclosure in the passage from meaning-intention to meaning-formation *as such*. And to return the discussion now to education, we can see that it is precisely this lack of foreclosure that makes aesthetic experience, and its implicit temporality, into a type of critical counter-model to neoliberalised systems of education.²

We can also radicalise this account of aesthetic autonomy, or the uniqueness of art vis-a-vis other domains of human activity as indefinite meaning-deferral, in terms of its implications for educational, and indeed all other rational discourses. This model of the aesthetic has a potential ubiquity of application, including to all other forms of non-aesthetic understanding. It is also precisely this reason that we propose that so many authors, including Dewey himself, coupled with the

work on arts education to be examined in the next section, see in aesthetic education a way out of the impasses of abstraction, automation and standardisation. The deferral of automatic meaning-formation in aesthetic experience does not foreclose its temporal and social aspects, seen as a general process. Instead, aesthetic experience provides a model for how automatic and habitual norms of experience and understanding can be undermined. This, of course, gives art a type of political and ethical importance, and arguably also explains why it is simultaneously under threat within academic curricula, a question to which we now turn in the next section.

In the last two sections we examined both the phenomenology of meaning-formation, and how it is connected to the phenomenology of aesthetic experience. In this section we will look at two related issues. Firstly, we investigate how neoliberalism has idiomatically implicated the narrowing, contraction and ultimate ossification of 'open' spaces of meaning-formation, learning processes, and eventually knowledge-production per se, as described within the pragmatist and phenomenological methodology developed earlier. Secondly, we see how this process has led to several different types of *defence* within recent literature of both the necessity of a university education providing the means to maintain the openness of meaning spaces, including maintaining the potential within their horizons for instrumental critique and critical thinking, but also in terms of a renewed focus on the value of liberal arts or 'aesthetic education'. What we offer here is a way of linking all of these tendencies together in a phenomenological reading. But to commence with the former question, we can now ask how both neoliberal and accelerationist tropes within higher education have essentially *truncated* experiences of meaning-formation and learning, or how the essential horizons accompanying any act of meaning formation, which have their own modes of temporality, have begun to be foreclosed. Let us isolate a number of aspects of this process.

Firstly, we can say that neoliberalised educational structures have implicated and necessitated the reduction or truncation of the tripartite structure of meaning-formation, described earlier as factual, temporal *and* social, to a reductionist focus on solely its *factual* aspects. Higher education has become viewed primarily as an essentialist form

of knowledge exchange between ‘provider’ and student that is intended to service a community of consumers of a product, that prepares them, post-graduation, for a state of immediate economic productivity.

This has led inevitably to processes of instrumentalisation and abstraction taking hold within higher education, that tend to reduce or foreclose the significance, and the temporal investigation by a learner of the *surplus* of possibilities in any given meaning situation and meaning space. Abstraction is of course necessary; it is the goal idiomatically of a specifically natural-scientific process of knowledge formation, but in relation to other modes of thinking, becomes an ‘anatomised epitome of just and only those traits which are of indicative and instrumental import’ (Dewey 1998: 106). Abstraction can be seen as one of the ultimate goals of meaning-formation, but is not in itself ever coextensive with all of its crucial aspects, each with its own temporal singularity, implicated in the individual process of meaning-intention and meaning formation. Self-evidently, processes of over-generalised abstraction do a type of damage to the way that these temporal processes, as is often claimed in critical pedagogy, most successfully begin with reference to a learner’s unique historicity or temporal horizon of prior meaning-formation. The tendency therefore is to reduce higher educational exchange as if it were modelled solely on conceptual and propositional theories of meaning and truth, which in turn are founded on models of abstraction and generalisation (see Johnson 2006). Several recent authors have followed up this particular variety of foreclosure within the neoliberal university, speaking of the ‘emphasis on the actuality, without the need for potential’ (Biesta 2017a: 18).

Similarly, the essential instrumentality of educational exchange posited here reduces what some authors, with obvious reference to the work of Emmanuel Levinas, see as the importance of a suitable ‘time for other’, which we can see as a further truncation or foreclosure of another aspect of the meaning-formation model explained earlier, namely a reduction of its essentially *social* aspects. The social and intersubjective aspects of learning within a community of fellow learners are undermined, leading to a type of cult of individualism (Biesta 2017a: 18). The phenomenon of instrumentality also doubles as a particularly pernicious effect of the pre-emptive threat experienced by the

student-as-consumer due to the presence of an ongoing debt burden. Students are forced into a type of 'double bind' whereby in order to succeed, they feel that they need to essentialise their learning experience as a type of protection of their investment in higher education. In arts training in particular, this has led to a reducing of curricula to vocational and specialist training, at the expense of otherwise necessary contextual or pedagogical instruction that places arts practice within a contemporary critical and political frame.³

In drawing some initial conclusions therefore, we can claim that neoliberalist traits are not just inimical to idiomatic and historically evolved varieties of higher educational practice, but meaning formation and learning per se, as articulated in our pragmatist and phenomenological model. This also happens because the idiomatic 'surplus' within any given meaning space, as we have seen earlier, is resistant to generalisation, is unique and subjectively singular, and rests on a foundation of historicity derived from an individual learner. This same surplus aspect of meaning formation cannot be quantified or generalised, or ascribed a monetary value, and therefore is ignored or elided within instrumentalised systems of consumer-driven higher education.

But this is not all we can say here. These same processes have led to several other types of further foreclosure within students that have become naturalised within neoliberal economies, such as a fundamental reduction in the importance and necessity ascribed to private study time, in favour of a reified view of the primacy of contact hours. This forecloses the necessary temporality of negotiating meaning within an individuated field of both actuality and possibility. This perhaps has an origin in economic fundamentalism, given that it resembles the logic of the *securitisation* of financial products, whereby packages of an asset are split off from the whole, and auctioned separately for their economic value. This is especially prescient, given the time of writing, given the proposed introduction by the UK government of contracted and shortened university degree courses.⁴

But to continue now to the second major aim of this section, we can propose a foundation for the motivation within much recent literature that positions an aesthetic and liberal arts education as a useful and vital corrective to all of these neoliberal educational tendencies.

For example, several recent authors have constructed models, based on historical precedents, for an appropriately updated and contemporary 'aesthetic education' that comes in several different versions, and is often posited as being transferable to other disciplines.

Firstly, we can suggest that the aesthetic capacity for potentiation and the resistance of foreclosure has revealed itself in many specific strategies within arts educational practice, such as the ubiquitous employment of self-reflective writing, and the use of journals or learning diaries. But generally these are poorly employed, and actually do little to position the individual in a transformative process, promoting instead a type of internalisation and inwardness much more related to the neoliberal social imagery, rather than a genuine integration and reconnection of prior experience and historicity. Instead, more closely related to what we argue for here, is the *Currere*, a writing method of autobiographical exploration developed by Pinar in the 1970s for educators and students that enables the incorporation of such individual experience and its temporal stretch within the curriculum (Jung 2016). Wang (2010) applies this method within teacher education as a way of enacting a transformative educational process through the way in which it enables the connection between knowledge and experience formatively constructed at school, autobiographical histories, and critical incidents, and to understand the importance of the temporality of this sequence. The *Currere* intersects across these, and involves 'identifying the disintegration of the self; seeking a way to reverse this process through connecting the preconscious or inner world; and ... emphasizing the importance and primacy of an individual's awareness and capacity to engage in the integration process' (Jung 2016: 28).

A further example of this tendency includes the work of Orr and Shreeve (2017), which investigates the notion of aesthetic 'ambiguity' or 'vagueness' within arts pedagogy and curricula. Exploring the 'stickiness' of art and design education, the authors isolate ambiguity and uncertainty as key elements of what makes arts education distinctive; summarising it as being messy, uncertain, embedded with unseen values, elastic, embodied and enacted, and troublesome and challenging, in a manner similar to that of the argument of Gielen and De Bruyne (2012). However, we would contend that the frame for this

‘stickiness’ itself tends to reproduce a certain conservative economic rationality, whereby the assumption of vocational employment is seen as an end in itself, with aesthetic vagueness serving only as a vehicle to its facilitation. This leads to another type of instrumentality, where a being-for-employment replaces the more authentic value of a being-in-itself. This variety of aesthetic education traps the arts in a value-exchange relationship, ignoring the dominant politic that is simply reproduced within the class or studio. Gunn (2016) counters this tendency with an opposition to an aesthetic education motivated by the socio-economic, generalist agendas of the creative industries; the reproduction and contradiction contained there rests on the student becoming the proprietor of commodity (see Močnik 1999), in this case in terms of the arts becoming a normalised ambiguity rather than a transgressive strategy. More promising is the version of aesthetic uncertainty promised by Gielen and De Bruyne (2012), where the arts education genuinely reflects the idea that ‘capitalism doesn’t know how to deal with the immeasurability of the educational process’ (9), and that a ‘good art education values uncertainty more than certainty’ offering eight different forms of this uncertainty ranging from ‘escaping forward’ to ‘dismasurement’.

This comparison of various strategies for a ‘suitable’ aesthetic education of course reflects a wider problem about aesthetic *valorisation* more generally (see Rautins and Ibrahim 2011; Eisner 2002). Much of this discussion problematises: the performative reproduction of structural oppression maintained within artistic artifacts; the cultural conventions of their consumption, and the educational practices that continue to reproduce their exponents through the distribution of ‘acceptable’ knowledge. This contemporary problem can be traced back to the historicity of aesthetic education itself, which through Dewey, can be traced back to various projects of the Enlightenment. Aesthetic education, as foregrounded by Dewey, understands art not as a leisure activity, or social gilding, but in relation to how consummatory experiences have transformative power in human life (Väkevä 2012: 102) The dominance, however, of the fine arts within aesthetic education replicates an ‘epistemological colonialism’ (Bradley 2012). Both Väkevä and Bradley expand on this, observing that isolation and

compartmentalisation is a trap whereby the fine arts are privileged, held up as some kind of extraordinary material, or manifestation of the pinnacle of human endeavour. Most defences against the reduction in recent times of, in particular, music education, focus on the peculiarity of the experience the arts can provoke. In many ways, music and the fine arts in this context generate something similar to a 'salvation' pedagogy, where the sole purpose of the arts-based educator is to correct the presumed deficit of either the individual or society through exposure to 'great works of art'. Further to this, Bradley deconstructs colonial aspects of aesthetic education, in particular the inside/outside dichotomies embedded within valuations assigned to works of art. This inside/outside partition leads to the prohibitive injunction that 'indigenous expressions could not be considered art' (2012: 418) and even 'synergistic' approaches, that are designed to unify arts-based educators, foreclose possibilities of genuine differences in perspective that may co-exist (420).

Similarly, multicultural music education may follow a traditional aesthetic education, using a 'common elements' approach, reducing socio-cultural context via the portrayal of music as stand-alone pieces, 'to be learned for their own sake' leading to an exoticism within the curriculum, coupled with the centrism of the European canon through implicit comparison of experience (Bradley 2012: 425). As a way of navigating this, Bradley suggests certain questions music educators must always ask, including 'what aspects of the status quo do our philosophical assumptions and actions in music education replicate? How instead might those processes help students understand who they are in the world in ways that break down barriers of race, gender, and class, and resist heterosexism and ableism' (429). This requires attentiveness not just to the art itself but to the students and their role in knowledge production, in what Bradley describes, recalling Freire, as an 'epistemological curiosity'. So, when Spivak describes the vital need for a 'suitable aesthetic education' (2012) these are some of the tensions that need to be foregrounded and navigated, in particular by those who invoke the arts and their performativity as an assumed good. In particular, this requires a 'letting go' of what is known, not attempting to create new theories of arts education, but to shine 'new light on the

interconnections between art, artists and pedagogy' (Biesta 2017b: 156) This suitable aesthetic education then is necessarily polylogical, engaging with how the arts 'produce sensation, and to thus extend the levels by and through which art can penetrate subjectivity' (Cole 2017: 26).

This leads us to suggest further polylogical pedagogies, which derive from a general evolution of the dialogic relationship promoted in critiques of monological educational structures, which can be derived from an aesthetic education. Monological forms of education persist within what has been described in critical pedagogy as manifesting in the relationship between student and teacher, whereby the student is an 'empty vessel' to be filled with the knowledge of the teacher, functioning as a typical mechanism of governmentality and systemic oppression. Critical approaches to education that utilise critical pedagogies can lead to increased critical consciousness of both student and teacher, but institutional structures (for example the 'lesson', the 'classroom', or as we saw above, the 'timed assessment') still 'trap' students and teachers through 'required intra-actions' (Hickey-Moody and Kipling 2015: 62).

Polylogical pedagogies are arrived at through various positionalities, including feminism and new materialism. The first suggests ways of noticing rather than ignoring ethical, political, cultural dimensions and instead understanding embodied polylogical social practices that go beyond the personal, for example by identifying ethnic, racial, class, gender, and religious orientations, and as a counter to the relativism of identity politics, leading to questions of how a sense of self informs what is maintained 'inside' and what is left 'outside' (Royster and Kirsch 2012: 94–95). And new materialist approaches relocate that which is inside and that which is outside to the extent that the other becomes neither excluded or removed (Blake and Stearns 2015: 80). This is suggested as an evolution of Freire's 'pedagogy of the oppressed' into a 'pedagogy of possession', where teaching is founded on openness to both the social other and difference. In other words 'that which is inside yet radically other can be nurtured through which this other... is not ejected or rejected, but rather embraced as a condition of both positive existence and resistance' (80). For example, by decentering the concept of the teacher as an affecting body, replaced

instead with students and teachers as parts of material networks that intra-act (Hickey-Moody and Kipling 2015: 77), the teacher as designer of the original frame is required to negotiate the inside-outside nexus more explicitly; pedagogy as a polylogical social practice is, within the arts, a ground for exploration. Polylogical pedagogies therefore develop and maintain a 'cultural humility' (Tervalon and Murray-Garcia 1998).

A 'suitable' aesthetic education then is, in contravention of the processes of abstraction and generalisation described earlier, a preservation of the indistinct, individuated and horizoned space of potential. Spivak (2012) identifies in arts education, particularly through the preservation and reproduction of the indigenous literary arts, a mechanism for the preservation- against globalised capitalism and its accelerated flows of information, capital and data- of the phenomenology of the feeling and emotive subject, coupled with the possibility for new potentialities of critical thinking, that lie beyond the reach of financial logic. This is done by negotiating further the idea of 'double binds', for example the incommensurability of being a learner and a consumer that we described earlier.

In addition, Louis Menand (2010) has described, within what he terms the contemporary 'marketplace of ideas', how the surplus of meaning hidden in a political situation can reveal the contingency of the status quo, and offer possibilities for its transgressive alteration. And this claim is similar to those made by others, including Martha Nussbaum (2010), who claims that because of the difficulty in quantifying easily the role the arts and humanities play in people's lives, their contribution becomes elided or even dangerously hidden. Wendy Brown (2015) similarly theorises in detail how the health of the liberal arts is co-extensive with the health of democracy in itself. What we want to suggest in closing is that it is arguable that in all of these various types of defence, we can see a common thread or intersection which links to the earlier material: in all cases there is a resistance to the reduction and foreclosure of all of the aspects of the essential processes of dynamic meaning-formation, and involving all of its facets, including the historical, temporal and social.

Notes

1. Specialist Arts Higher Education Institutions mean, in a UK context, a conservatoire, drama or art school, with small numbers of students, which generally offer vocational training in one or two art forms only. Students are accepted via a highly competitive audition process, and curriculum is delivered by practitioners who, in the main, occupy hybrid or portfolio careers themselves as artists, actors, and musicians, whilst also teaching.
2. It is precisely here that the argument resembles numerous other accounts in European philosophy, namely: the celebrated ‘horizoning’ of meaning [*Sinn*] in Husserl; the ‘defamiliarization’ [*ostranenie*] inherent in art, particularly the estrangement of the word in modernist poetry (Viktor Shklovsky); the concept in Luhmann’s work of a ‘unity of difference(s)’; some passages in Deleuze (1969: 116): ‘it [the production of sense [*sens*]] makes of the product something of a producer at the same time as it is produced’. What unites all the accounts is the co-extensivity of a type of selection with its own opposite.
3. Of particular relevance here is the proliferation of varieties of ‘entrepreneurial’ training, both for arts students and others, which is seen a solution to a situation of student precarity. Elsewhere, we have critiqued this approach, arguing that the term ‘entrepreneur’ manifests itself with neoliberalised higher education as a kind of elaborate construction with opposing and contradictory features that confuse the ahistorical with the historical, and the universal with a particular—see Clark and Jackson (2018).
4. In the England, the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 outlined the apparent need for accelerated, two year degree programmes that provided the same volume of teaching as would be found in a traditional three year programme, by teaching occurring throughout the year rather than confined to terms or semesters. These two year programmes are suggested to save the individual student £5500 in course fees and enable them to enter work a year earlier. The government consultation on this closed in February 2018. The rhetoric surrounding this proposal focuses on the learner starting and finishing as quickly as possible to enable entry to the workplace, therefore reducing both the debt of the student and the loan from the taxpayer.

References

- Alhadeff-Jones, M. (2017). *Time and the Rhythms of Emancipatory Education*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Bennett, A., & Burke, P. J. (2017). Re/Conceptualising Time and Temporality: An Exploration of Time in Higher Education. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 1–13. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2017.1312285>. Accessed 3 Jan 2018.
- Biesta, G. (2017a). What if? Art Education Beyond Expression and Creativity. In C. Naughton, B. Biesta, & D. R. Cole (Eds.), *Arts, Artists and Pedagogy* (pp. 11–20). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Biesta, G. (2017b). Walking the Museum: Art, Artists and Pedagogy Reconsidered. In C. Naughton, B. Biesta, & D. R. Cole (Eds.), *Arts, Artists and Pedagogy* (pp. 147–156). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Blake, C., & Stearns, J. (2015). Art, Resistance and Demonic Pedagogy: From Parasite Capitalism to Excommunication. In A. Hickey-Moody & T. Page (Eds.), *Arts, Pedagogy and Cultural Resistance New Materialisms* (pp. 79–94). London: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Bradley, D. (2012). Good for What, Good for Whom? Decolonizing Music Education Philosophies. In W. D. Bowman & A. L. Frega (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education* (pp. 409–433). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, W. (2015). *Undoing the Demos*. New York: Zone Books.
- Carr, D. (2014). *Experience and History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Clark, J. O., & Jackson, L. H. (2017). Aesthetic Education, Critical Pedagogy and Specialist Institutions. In R. Hall & J. Winn (Eds.), *Mass Intellectuality and Democratic Leadership in Higher Education* (pp. 113–126). London: Bloomsbury.
- Clark, J. O., & Jackson, L. H. (2018). Ideology in the Academy: The Case of the Entrepreneur. *Journal for Critical Education Studies*, 16(1).
- Cole, D. R. (2017). Dicing the Meat: Bacon in the Middle of an Arts-Based Sandwich. In C. Naughton, B. Biesta, & D. R. Cole (Eds.), *Arts, Artists and Pedagogy* (pp. 21–30). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Davidson, C. (2017). *The New Education*. New York: Basic Books.
- Deleuze, G. (1969). *Logique du sens*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education*. London: Simon and Brown Books.

- Dewey, J. (1998). *Experience and Nature*. Dover: Dover Books.
- Eisner, E. (2002). *What Can Education Learn from the Arts About the Practice of Education?* Online Available: http://pages.uoregon.edu/koopman/events_readings/coast_group/PNWPrag_2010_secondary.pdf. Accessed 25 Jan 2018.
- Eisner, E. (2004). Preparing for Today and Tomorrow. *Educational Leadership*, 61(4), 6–10.
- Gibbs, P., Ylijoki, O., Guzmán-Valenzuela, C., & Barnett, R. (Eds.). (2015). *Universities in the Flux of Time*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Gielen, P., & De Bruyne, P. (2012). *Teaching Art in the Neoliberal Realm: Realism Versus Cynicism*. Amsterdam: Valiz.
- Gill, R. (2009). Breaking the Silence: The Hidden Injuries of Neo-Liberal Academia in Flood. In R. Ryan-Flood & R. Gill (Eds.), *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. London: Routledge.
- Giroux, H. (2011). *On Critical Pedagogy*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Giroux, H. (2014). When Schools Become Dead Zones of the Imagination: A Critical Pedagogy Manifesto. *Policy Futures in Education*, 12(4), 491–499. Available: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2014.12.4.491>. Accessed 30 Jan 2018.
- Gunn, V. (2016). Prophetic Nomadism: An Art School Sustainability-Oriented Educational Aim. *International Journal of Art and Design*, 35(3), 316–326. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jade.12121>. Accessed 26 Jan 2018.
- Hickey-Moody, A., & Kipling, A. (2015). Dorothy Heathcote: Practice as a Pedagogy of Resistance. In A. Hickey-Moody & T. Page (Eds.), *Arts, Pedagogy and Cultural Resistance New Materialisms* (pp. 59–78). London: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Johnson, M. (2006). *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Jung, J.-H. (2016). *The Concept of Care in Curriculum Studies: Juxtaposing Currere and Hakbeolism*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Langeveld, M. (1983). Reflections on Phenomenology and Pedagogy. *Phenomenology + Pedagogy*, 1(1), 3–5.
- Luhmann, N. (1995). *Social Systems*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Luhmann, N. (2000). *Art as a Social System* (E. M. Knodt, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Menand, L. (2010). *The Marketplace of Ideas*. New York and London: Norton.
- Menke, C. (1999). *The Sovereignty of Art: Aesthetic Negativity in Adorno and Derrida*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Močnik, R. (1999). After the Fall: Through the Fogs of the 18th Bumaire of the Eastern Springs. In M. Sprinker (Ed.), *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx* (pp. 110–133). London: Verso.
- Nussbaum, M. (2010). *Not for Profit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Orr, S., & Shreeve, A. (2017). *Arts and Design Pedagogy in Higher Education*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Raunig, G. (2013). *Factories of Knowledge*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).
- Rautins, C., & Ibrahim, A. (2011). Wide-Awakeness: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Imagination, Humanism, Agency, and Becoming. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 3, 24–36.
- Rossatto, C. A. (2005). *Engaging Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of Possibility*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Royster, J. J., & Kirsch, G. E. (2012). *New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition and Literacy Studies*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Sepp, H. R. (Ed.). (2010). *Handbook of Phenomenological Aesthetics*. Berlin: Springer.
- Spivak, G. C. (2012). *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Tervalon, M., & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). Cultural Humility Versus Cultural Competence: A Critical Distinction in Defining Physician Training Outcomes in Multicultural Education. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 9, 117–125.
- Traenor, B. (2007). *Slow University: A Manifesto*. Available: <http://faculty.lmu.edu/briantreaenor/slow-university-a-manifesto/>. Accessed 5 Apr 2017.
- Väkevä, L. (2012). Philosophy of Music Education as Art of Life: A Deweyan View. In W. D. Bowman & A. L. Frega (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education* (pp. 86–110). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Virilio, P. (2000). *Polar Inertia*. London: Sage.
- Virilio, P. (2006). *Speed and Politics*. Los Angeles: Semiotexte.
- Virilio, P. (2012). *The Administration of Fear*. Los Angeles: Semiotexte.
- Vostal, F. (2014). Academic Life in the Fast Lane: The Experience of Time and Speed in British Academia. *Time & Society*, 24(1), 71–95.
- Vostal, F. (2016). *Accelerating Academia: The Changing Structure of Academic Time*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wang, H. (2010). The Temporality of Currere, Change, and Teacher Education. *Pedagogies*, 5, 275–285. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480x.2010.509469>. Accessed 25 Jan 2018.



Response-Ability: Re-E-Valuing Shameful Measuring Processes Within the Australian Academy

Melissa Joy Wolfe and Eve Mayes

Introduction

The entrepreneurial knowledge maker¹ is *affected through measurement*; she is touched, and simultaneously, she differentially affects and touches what she is impelled to measure as the ‘impact of standards reach deep into the ontological matter of everyday working life’ (Brøgger and Staunæs 2016: 228). The relational forces of the ‘touch’ of measurement impact on not only her capacity to respond, but shape the way she is able to respond. The knowledge maker is incited to craft her work and self, abiding within the material-discursive measurements of the *already given* aspirational knowledge-making that calls her. Processes of *evaluation* simultaneously produce and exclude, cutting both ways.

M. J. Wolfe (✉)
Monash University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
e-mail: melissa.wolfe@monash.edu

E. Mayes
Deakin University, Geelong, VIC, Australia
e-mail: eve.mayes@deakin.edu.au

In this chapter, we seek to rethink concepts of measurement as objective numerical value through the paradigm shift (Barad 2007; St. Pierre 2013a, b, 2017; Jackson 2017) away from both quantitative and qualitative research systems. We arrive at a 'post-qualitative' turn that allows productive consequences to materialise through 'experiments in in/determinacy' (Barad 2012: 208). New materialist inquiry entails the analysis of materialising events (Barad's intra-actions²) and the consideration of how *things* come to be, rather than scrutinising the properties of things. We discuss evaluative and measurement processes as affective assemblages, with materialising affective affiliations (Rasmussen 2014) that are entanglements of power with our academic selves. Sellar (2015) has noted that 'researching affect implies researching with affect and thus acknowledging the unavoidably constructive or creative dimension of research' (142). Our creativity moves to re-conceptualise evaluative *measurement* as 'a form of touching' (Barad 2012: 208) where '*[t]ouching is a matter of response. Each of 'us' is constituted in response-ability. Each of 'us' is constituted as responsible for the other, as the other*' (Barad 2012: 215 emphasis in original). Our generative methodology implicates us as researchers in the research process with what Lisa Blackman (2007) has named 'embodied hauntology' (26), where we have endured experiences, have passionate attachments (Wolfe 2017b) and have something more to say. Writing as early career researchers in tenured positions at two Australian universities,³ we explore two personal vignettes associated with evaluation of research outputs, teaching, and performance management processes in higher education, in order to think through ways *shame* interpellates our academic selves.

Shame has previously been discussed in relation to evaluation in higher education. Loveday (2016) has linked the 'classed and gendered conditions that coalesce' (1141) in the production of shame through evaluation for higher education staff and students, so that 'shame becomes misrecognised as a classed and gendered problem of individuals, rather than a symptom of inequality' (1143). Brøgger and Staunæs' (2016) analysis of shame examines how educational *organisations* may also feel shame through performative evaluation processes against pre-determined standards, and pass on this shame to individuals in and through governance practices.

Like Brøgger and Staunæs' (2016), we have found Silvan Tomkins' re-working of the concept of shame to be generative, and have extended this work using the conceptual resources of Barad (see also Mayes and Wolfe 2018). Shame, according to Tomkins (1995a, b), is understood as fundamental to the self. Tomkins explains that shame is 'feelings of inferiority [rather] than of guilt' (1995a: 397) and thus is a powerful affect as it cannot be diminished through action. According to Tomkins, shame is *sensed* as inherent to self and results in inactivity, as the perceived transgression is given no specific attribute. Tomkins re-defines shame as an affect that only ever exists in relation *with* interest. As Sedgwick and Frank explain: '[w]ithout positive affect, there can be no shame; only a scene that offers you enjoyment or engages your interest can make you blush' (1995: 520). After Tomkins' auxiliary movement of interest-shame, and in engagement with Barad's concept of 'response-ability' (Haraway 2016; Barad 2007), we consider shameful *evaluation* processes within higher education, putting to work our prior theorisation of shame-interest as one affect (see Mayes and Wolfe 2018; Wolfe 2017b). The shame produced through 'evaluation' events thus becomes a matter of interest (Mayes and Wolfe 2018). We consider the stultifying affect of shame and attempt a playful reworking, to a more affirmative capacity for new knowledge making. We become attuned, where attunement 'is both a mode of responsiveness to this locale...and the capacity to respond' (Blackman 2007: 31).

The next section outlines our thinking with measurement and evaluation and the usefulness of thinking with affective assemblages. We then further interrogate our conceptual standpoint/s to include affect and in particular the affect shame-interest. We conduct an experimental *playing with patterning* of two sample vignettes—we flatten these encounters and think with the notion of capacity-building response-ability to consider ways these accounts *can be* affirmatively otherwise. Throughout we consider ways things come into relation as performative and productive *within* our thinking in the virtual here and now, in this very chapter the virtual reader engages with.

Measurement and Evaluation

Evaluation is the assessed pre-empted value of a bounded *thing* that is measured. Evaluations are usually abstracted and expressed as a number (unrelated to context) or as qualitative data coded to a number. Measurement is the deemed quantified level of assessment, most often reduced to a number. Both evaluation and measurement represent ‘values’ or worth and significantly do not account for the apparatus of measurement. What we highlight here is ways the selected *apparatus of measurement* impacts significantly on the material outcomes of the measure (cf. Sellar 2015). Apparatuses, according to Barad (2007), are material-discursive practices, they include the measuring tool and the researcher observer, which are inextricable from the bodies that are produced through the measuring. As knowledge makers, we are inseparable from the entangled assemblages that we speak through; research outcomes only materialise from the measurements conducted within the research. They were never simply there to begin with. Researchers are of the world and are limited by our own research horizons. They perform a relational self within both research credentials and a prescribed academic language that set limits to knowledge. Once researchers critique these boundaries, they may be able to action material-discursive practices in new ways that interfere in the world, to become productive, political and of consequence.

Evaluation, as measurable and ‘evidence based’—understood to be measuring the one reality through objective quantifying methods—is pivotal in the neoliberal university. Much has been written about globalised contemporary shifts in the measurement and evaluative practices of academic work: the “‘metricization” of the academy’ (Burrows 2012: 355) that systematically compares individuals, departments and national and international institutions as a qualitative reduction to numbers (see Peseta et al. 2017). Selwyn (2015) notes ways educational institutions ‘function increasingly along “data driven” lines’ (66): digital data have become ‘a core element of managerialist techniques of accountability, auditing, evidence-based management, “evidence based” practice, effectiveness’ (72). There are metrics for everything: student evaluations of teaching, numerical quantification of research

outputs, research impact (journal indexing), tallying of grant funding etc. Processes of measurement work through and across *multiple temporalities, devoid of context*, enabling and blocking particular modes of relationality. What comes to matter is reconfigured in the very marking or rather making of time. Marking time is the process of becoming as materialisation, the process of enfolding, where the past and the future are enfolded in the present becoming.

These highly visible measurements publicly evaluate and circulate the productivity of the *individual academic knowledge maker into numbers* with material consequences: impact on tenure, promotion, grant approvals and general preferential treatment; they impact on modes of living for academic knowledge makers. These measurements, often of impossible standards (Taylor and Gannon 2018), have ‘discursive accompaniments: failure to measure up, failing to count, cutting and letting go, what the numbers say’ (Ocean and Skourdoumbis 2016: 442). Claims of metrics’ ‘neutrality’ betray the masculinist, white, heteronormative logics where autonomy and competition are privileged, where individuals are responsible for their own success/failure (Ahmed 2012). The entrepreneurial academic knowledge maker is encouraged to take up these metricised logics in practices of simultaneous self-promotion and self-surveillance (Hey and Bradford 2004). The measured knowledge maker thus emerges through a spacetime-mattering (Barad 2007). The practices researchers enact *with* the university are productive and ‘practices of knowing are specific material engagements that participate in (re)configuring the world’ (Barad 2007: 91). Systems reproduce what they measure and ‘rather than encourage difference, they trap us in the *given*, the myth of [positivist] Science’ (St. Pierre 2013a: 226).

Affective Assemblages

We call into question, spurred along by others (St. Pierre 2013a, b; MacLure 2013; Jackson 2017; Mazzei 2017), not only what counts ‘as “data”, but our relation to those data’ (MacLure 2013: 660) that evaluate us, and that we generate to evaluate ourselves *in relation* to others. Evaluation data are not benign and objective; *data does*. We explicitly notice

what is *felt* by the researcher (and participants and reader) in relation to the data rather than what is deciphered through qualitative coding and thematic analysis based on words as ‘*quasi-numbers*’ (St. Pierre 2013a: 224).

In this chapter, we re-evaluate evaluative processes employing a Baradian ethic, thinking with the notion that, ‘measurement is surely a form of touching’ (2012: 208). We use the concept of ‘response-ability’ as entanglement, in order to highlight the co-constitution of evaluation processes. This in turn enables a re-evaluation, a possibly affirmative opening up of capacity through shifting relationality. This methodology moves to ‘capture various affective reconfiguration[s] of education’ (Staunaes 2016: 65) and enacts ‘knowledge production... as performative’ (Staunaes 2016: 66) where we analyse ‘*tendencies* with the purpose of reconfiguring the world’ (Staunaes 2016: 67, emphasis in original). Our conceptualising is a way of creative thinking and we conduct thought experiments as a way of playing with other worlding (Haraway 2016). The two vignettes recount shameful personal encounters in the academy, as an illustration of ways the entrepreneurial knowledge maker is affectively incited to craft her work and her *self* to ensure she becomes, as reductively measured—a particular *type* of knowledge maker; a body that fits the system, a body that matters. Processes of *evaluation* simultaneously produce and erase, cutting both ways (Barad 2007). To think these evaluative processes with entanglement, we are required to abandon linear thought and move to diffractive thinking where ‘any type of epistemological individuality is being composed... taking place: *only* as contractions in a surface’ (Dolphijn 2016: para. 14). We attempt to action new thinking through the concept of response-ability. The task here is to think how capacity for new ‘thinking’ can be increased, as enabling responses not yet thought. Beausoleil (2015) explains that ‘we experience situated knowledges as universal truths’ (4) and this is not only an epistemic violence that erases but one of affective violence (Hook and Wolfe 2017). Beausoleil (2015) compels a shift in ‘the ethics of encounter from epistemological to affective terms: in a word, it demands a dispositional ethics that construes responsibility as responsiveness’ (6).

Affect is not a thing, it is a relation, a touching that cannot be captured. Affective assemblages that produce the university continually

move and shift in relation. Puar (2007) argues that by foregrounding the notion of assemblage, attention falls on ways ontology is entangled with epistemology, and affect works *in conjunction* with ‘representational economies, within which bodies interpenetrate, swirl together, and transmit affects and effects to each other’ (205). She clarifies that the entities that intersect are the body (not the subject) and population (206). Bennett (2010) develops the concept of an agentic assemblage to convey that ‘an actant never really acts alone. Its efficacy of agency always depends on the collaboration, cooperation, or interactive interference of many bodies and forces’ (21). To study assemblages is to map unforeseen, divergent and productive relations in motion rather than to discover essences (Puar 2012).

Re/Conceptualizing Measurement and Its Affects

Affective shifts have been critically described as by-products of the neoliberalist university, with accompanying calls to resist these practices (Olssen and Peters 2005).⁴ We do not take for granted ‘neoliberalism’ and are wary, like Grealy and Laurie (2017), of explanations of contemporary university practices that suggest that neoliberalism is a ‘universalising ideology’—as ‘something that happens *to* people in institutions rather than something that happens *through* people in institutions’ (Grealy and Laurie 2017: 464, emphasis in original). Fox and Alldred (2018), after Bruno Latour, also raise concerns about overarching sociological accounts of ‘social structures’, ‘systems’ or ‘underlying mechanisms’ like ‘neoliberalism’ to ‘make sense of perceived patterns’ (6). For them, ‘[w]hat has appeared structural or systemic to sociologists is rather a product of reproduced affect economies or intra-actions between assembled relations’ (8). We concur with Fox and Alldred’s claim that a ‘materialist sociology’ should ‘analyse forces and social relations, power and resistance from within the immanent, relational micropolitics of events, activities and interactions themselves’ (7).

We are not much interested in what measurement *is* but are interested in what it *does*. The apparatus utilised in assessment matters; it will impact what comes to matter (two-fold). Measurement acts as the *making*

of difference and thus the maker of exclusions. Evaluative measures must include the apparatus of observation as this is not/cannot be separated from the subject of observation (Barad 2007). This discussion seeks to make sense of the infinite void of exclusions in *all* measurement acts—and the ethico-political possibility of making otherwise (Barad 2012: 216).

Rather than suggest that academics are being beset by dis/comforting affects of metricisation in the ‘neoliberal university’, we are interested in *our own entanglement with* these assemblages. Knowledge makers engineer their value through engaging and affiliating within boundary making processes: ones that reward pre-defined knowledge practices and thus exclude others. Thus, academics *become* determined with the university assemblage, not separate from it. We (consciously and/or unconsciously) re-orient our pedagogical interests, language and practices moving to maximise our recognition and capacity to act within these affective and affiliating assemblages.

We suggest that metrics *do* something affectively, beyond just generating a reductive mode of shame that inhibits the capacity to act. Brøgger and Staunæs (2016) suggest that although ‘[s]hame profits from the positive investment in the object that activates the shame, and is felt as an exposing affect’, shame ‘is also an affect which produces action’ (230). Our work here attempts to generate new relations within academic spacetimematter (Barad 2007) configurations by understanding our stories differently through ‘relational (re-)threading[s] of new places, affects and subjectivities’ (Charteris et al. 2016: 42). Affects are not passive—in Spinoza’s (1994) sense of the word—as if measurement practices and their affects are foisted on the inert academic subject. *We are affected*, but we also *affect* measurement practices. *We* are invested in university assemblages, we are named, we identify, we affectively affiliate, and we belong. There is an incitement to persevere—that perpetuates these modes of relating to ourselves, each other, our institutional workplaces, and the world. Our compliance is rewarded with the drive for recognition, promotions and tenure (see Brøgger and Staunæs 2016). Burrows (2012) describes this as ‘our own knowing collusion with a joyless bureaucratic auditing process’ (364) but we prefer to think of it more as an affective incitement to belong, maintain recognition and a livable life (Wolfe 2017b). We continue to consider ways shame-interest (Mayes and Wolfe

2018) are simultaneous co-constitutive: how and why we come to be interested in the very thing(s)/numbers that constrain our flourishing (Berlant 2011); how interest-shame co-habit everyday routinised modes of enacting our academic subjectivities.

Metrics, as indicators of institutional worth, make us viable knowledge makers—they simultaneously enable and constrain, shaming us and inciting our interest. Chubb et al. (2017) describe the simultaneity of ‘despair and despondency’ with ‘commitment and/or love for what [we] do’ (556). The analysis that we seek surrounds simultaneous and entangled affects, not as two but one multiplicity—attraction/repulsion, shame/interest, hope/fear. As Grealy and Laurie (2017) write:

Pressures to conform to metric cultures may feel compelling because individuals are already compelled by other commitments. These may involve a love of reading and writing, a sense of fulfilment in the classroom, a pleasure in mentoring future academics, a desire for social status or simply the habitual comforts of working in a familiar and supportive social environment. (465)

Yet, this affective simultaneity may not always *feel* affirmative. As we affectively invest these measurement practices, dividends may be felt at times, for some, but may be experienced by others as ‘cruel optimism’—where the optimistic promises of the university are desired but become an obstacle to one’s flourishing (Berlant 2011; Lipton 2017).

In the next section, we examine ways our evaluative practices may generate shame that is apprehended as personal. We think shame-interest in indeterminate Baradian superposition⁵ where shame-interest as one affect is multi-directional, ambivalent and arbitrary; it is *made* determinate only in the event (Mayes and Wolfe 2018) of the material-discursive action of measurement.

Vignettes as Affective Assemblages That Matter

In the vignettes below, we attune to *evaluation-events* where we participate in the evaluative practices within the Academy and where we interact with numbers in a constrained manner. These evaluation events, as

sense-events (Springgay and Truman 2017) are not passive data that are considered sedimentary, they remain open and lively. We think in virtual movements that digress from what appears as *is*, to consider what might be, as imagined justice-to-come (Barad 2010). We think concepts, dynamically action-ing thinking as ontological (Dolphijn 2016). As self-identified knowledge makers, we live our theories. Here we consider ways experience can become affirmatively generative. To make this shift, we flatten two personal vignettes, experimenting with(in) the event (rather than just re-counting the experience felt) to speculate on alternate outcomes (Springgay and Truman 2017). We place these encounters *within* a measuring assemblage patterning in-action that intrinsically situate knowledge makers as entangled with, and responsible (in-action) for outcomes. We attune to affective flows, forces and intensities, as relationality that comes to matter. We focus on the relations or affections that always contain alternatives (unthought), as Barad (2007) would argue, indeterminate entities (Wolfe 2017a). We (Wolfe and Mayes) as knowledge makers can interfere and become responsible in order to enable greater capacity as ‘thinking/making/doing’ (Springgay and Truman 2017: 4) or even feelingthinking/making/doing. We do not seek to ‘uncover’ underlying ‘structures’ or ‘logics’ of measurement and evaluation in contemporary universities, but rather examine these events as moments of potential and consider where something else could be feltthought/created/done differently, that may re-modulate the situation. What we attempt is to create interference patterns, or new patterning into the problematic sense-making practices that we not only utilise but that bring us to being. A spacetimeattering (Barad 2007).

Vignette #1—Melissa Becoming a Measured Academic

I sit in the auditorium of a large stadium at an international educational conference. I have been a full-time academic for twelve months. There is a buzz in the early morning crowd as they anticipate the renowned academic about to take the stage. I take my seat where I can get a good view, maybe three rows from the front and five seats in from the aisle to allow other delegates to move in. The plastic seat is cold and hard causing me to shift around, trying to get comfortable. The air-conditioning has been put into overload

*and it is freezing despite the heat of Melbourne summer. I am reading the program and planning out my day – nervously thinking about my own presentation later that afternoon. A hard working, competent and well-respected colleague from the same University gruffly sits down next to me. I greet her warmly. This particular academic I believed was instrumental in my success at securing a tenured position due to her strong reference regarding my teaching in her Unit and I considered her a friend and mentor. She turns to me without a greeting and curtly blurts, ‘how many publications did you get last year?’ I blink, **feeling** unnerved by her tone and answer dumbly, ‘errrr three’. She looks straight ahead at the empty stage, raising her eyebrows and disapprovingly murmurs – ‘mm’. Then nothing – silence. She does not ask about my research or even what my publications are reporting on. I feel ashamed. My cheeks burn.*

Reconceptualising shameful *evaluation* in higher education processes and practices with the concept of ‘response-ability,’ the shame of ‘evaluation’ is noticed within the intra-action, as a matter of interest and focus. By speaking our now ‘flattened’ shame (below), we can account for the patterns materialising effects of our ‘identity arising from ongoing activities’ (Bryant 2016: 33). We can notice the stultifying effect of shame. This is what happens when we flatten the event, and we examine what bodies and what affections arise from the intra-action (Wolfe and Rasmussen 2019; Bryant 2016).

Phenomenon (no particular order) *Becoming: Academic A- Academic B –stadium-cold chairs-cold-conference-presentation-publications-public-performance standards-promotions-tenure-esteem.*

Affective Affiliations (no particular order) *Becoming: un/friendship-mentor-in/debt-colleague-professional-competition-dis/respect-interest/shame-un/ belonging-vulnerable-nervous-un/love-un/care-un/sync.*

Academic A has been interested to engage intellectually—she has turned to greet her senior colleague-mentor, anticipating and interested in the reciprocation of a warm greeting—and feels shame when her colleague-mentor confronts her instead with a question about her number of publications. Academic A is compelled, in this spacetime-mattering

relation, with its past, present and future relations of power, to give an account of herself—in numerical terms that translate her worth. ‘Three’—is what she *is* in this equation—the question incites the measuring apparatus that cuts her together and apart in numerical terms. Uttering ‘three’, in this particular context is generative of shame: shame at the number, and shame in relation with her colleague-mentor. Shame in what this number brings to bear on both academics as the number generates a competitive rather than collaborative relation. Academic A blushes and does not respond further; her capacity is diminished as she is ‘touched’ affectively through the measure.

Melissa’s shame in this event is politically interesting; it is *a matter of interest. Now we rethink it as an affirmative opening up of capacity for new collaborative knowledge making.* In this informal everyday encounter within a measurement assemblage of becoming, Melissa is affected and brought into being in particular ways. She is not shamed by her three publications but by the affective relation of those three publications (as autonomously measured) and ways they bring her into being *with* another academic (who she cares about) and who may or may not have produced three publications. Through rethinking and flattening the event she can now realise that, in this particular affective assemblage, she would have felt shame irrespective of the number of papers she produced. The apparatus is in full force to incite her to never feel good enough in relation to these measures. Melissa also affects through the measurement apparatus. Her response, her utterance ‘three’ affects Academic B. But this ‘three’ never belongs to Melissa; it is an affective force of mattering brought into being through the assemblage. The ‘three’ abstracts and excludes contextual factors: teaching load, acts of service, and extra-institutional labour. Melissa understands, now, that it is also not Academic B’s disapproving voice she hears, as ‘the utterance is not treated as the product of the individual, but of the assemblage’ (Mazzei 2017: 4). Utterances are always collective and emerge through relationality. The assemblage’s relational force interferes in a negative way, falsely situating individual components as always autonomous. The measure of research publications segments; it makes a cut of difference; it makes and creates. Melissa now notices the forces (the patterns) inciting her to accept autonomy, refusing her entanglement, that

reduce her capacity to affirmatively respond. The work on these pages is her other, her response-ability, a re-patterning as a reciprocal building response-enabling move. This work calls to attention the forces of the measuring assemblage.

Vignette #2—Eve's Student Evaluations of Teaching

My first teaching Trimester, I am cautious about the end-of-semester Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET)⁶. I do not see the pedagogical utility of them; they seem to be mostly used as a tool to insidiously infect the individual academic knowledge maker with anxiety to perform. I have previously written about their imbrication with the subject position of the student-customer. (Mayes 2018a, b)

I don't explicitly encourage students, towards the end of the Semester, to complete the formal end of trimester SET, ignoring the influx of machine-generated reminder emails. After the semester has finished, I find myself opening an email and a link to the SET. My stomach is tight. I am pleasantly surprised and relieved to see the number 100. One hundred percent student satisfaction with the course and with me as a lecturer. I smile, I respond by copying and pasting the comments into my upcoming Performance Review document. I note that only four students completed the evaluation. I am no statistician, but I know that this low sample size makes the results (within the measurement assemblage) invalid. The university measurement assemblage does not count these four students. I repeat to myself that these metrics don't mean anything (but I feel good, I now have value, even if measured as invalid).

The following year, with a different cohort, I similarly neglect to remind students to complete the end of semester SET. As I open this cohort's formal evaluations, I remind myself not to invest too much into these measurements or comments. But I am interested to see them. The numbers are now quite different. What had I expected? Seven students have responded, and it seems that some were not 'satisfied'. Indeed, there are a number of 'strongly disagrees'.

My flesh flushes. Am I ashamed? I am, again, surprised, but now my anxiety increases – I attempt to justify my now unvalued self. I evaluate my professional practice and effort in a practice of 'self-responsibilisation' accompanied

by 'an unarticulated but felt sense of somehow never being good enough/working hard enough' (Taylor and Gannon 2018: 2). I had refined the course, attempting to challenge and encourage students, and I assessed this cohort as particularly responsive to the course content. These seven evaluation responses negate my felt sense and satisfaction of the semester's pedagogical intra-actions and my worth. I remind myself of the critiques that I have written, but this does not shift the shameful sensations resting with me.

I don't open my upcoming Performance Review document this time. I don't want to become this shame.

Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET) are part of the apparatus that materialises different accounts of the academic knowledge maker, fluxing feelings, and differential responses. The apparatus includes the SET questions, as well as apparent 'observers': students, educators, institutional superiors. There is no stable academic knowledge maker 'being' that is independent of her intra-actions with students, their completion of the SET, and institutional responses and uses made of these evaluations by the individual academic knowledge maker and others. These evaluations are completed by the student in dynamic, distinct affective assemblages that cannot be known in advance, nor retrospectively. Each SET response cannot be disentangled from its material-discursive, affective and temporal arrangement—its spacetime-mattering (Barad 2007).

Each SET response materialises different e/affect that are not predictable nor stable. Regardless of Eve's skeptical pedagogical stance towards SET, she feels, in different times and configurations, differentially interested and shamed, attracted and repulsed by them, simultaneously. These feelings include a stultifying mode of shame—a sense of not having 'satisfied' the insatiable student customer (Nixon et al. 2016). But these phenomena and their affective affiliations (Rasmussen 2014) exceed an account of shame as stultifying (alone).

Phenomenon (no particular order): Becoming; Lecturer-Student-Student evaluations-Performance Review-Promotion-protocols-measures-value-numbers-computer-algorithm.

Affective affiliations (no particular order): Becoming: cautious/relief-nervous/relaxed-careful-interest/shame-un/belonging-un/satisfied-non/action-un/professional-in/valid-un/loved-dis/belief-un/worth.

In the first year, she is pleasantly surprised and interested in affirmative responses, and simultaneously feels shame that she has bought into the logics of the entrepreneurial academic knowledge maker (who copies and pastes positive student comments into a Word document for performance review ‘evidence’ of ‘quality’ teaching). In a later encounter with another conglomeration of SET responses, her earlier interest is met with comments that sting—they hurt; they make her flush with shame that she was ever interested (cf. Boswell 2016). The surprising intrusion of shame-interest belies her ‘suspicious critique’ of ‘neoliberal’ higher education ‘reforms’ (Stern 2012: 387). These SET responses are ambivalent: they are compelling and repulsive, simultaneously. The measurement touches. They enable new thought—perhaps, of what might be done differently, but they simultaneously dis-enable, through stultifying pedagogical relations-in-formation. These SET responses materialise the phenomena of the thoroughly evaluated educator, with fluxing affective affiliations (Rasmussen 2014) in different configurations.

Could this shame-interest be creatively reworked into an affirmative opening up of capacity for new knowledge making? Recognising shame-interest might enable a reworking of it, rethinking and re-feeling shame-interest as a different slant on the same thing. Pedagogical intra-actions surrounding the evaluative event (where the students are sent the SET link by the university) may be thought and felt differently—through, for example, conversations about what such evaluations can simultaneously enable and constrain. Such pedagogical intra-actions could be understood to be ‘interested’ in improving the educators’ later evaluation (through making students aware of their potential negative consequences), or to shame students for hastily-written critiques. But they may be more than interested (and shame-inducing); educators and students may interrogate contemporary apparatuses that touch them and that they are touched by. Could educators and students collectively inquire into what evaluative

apparatuses can do, and respond differently, beyond critique (alone)? Could they shift understandings of student-educator as autonomous subjects, and acknowledge and apprehend their discursive-material-affective intra-relationality with each other, as well as with numbers, measurement practices, and the world?

Concluding Discussion: Shame—As Response-Ability

The affective economies of the neoliberal university are re-produced, yet potentially reconfigured, moment-by-moment, as evaluative practices affect and are affected. Selwyn (2015: 79) has called for ‘the need to recognise – and then act against – the ‘politics of data’ in education’. However, maintaining a stance of critique (alone) against evaluative practices suggests that we stand apart from these evaluative practices that materialise shame-interest. This stance will not suffice. In this chapter we have, instead, examined how we are part of the evaluative apparatus, entangled with the numbers which are of/for us. We have disentangled the ‘material affects that derive from repeated, routinised and habituated patterns of interactions, memories, experiences and outcomes that encourage marketised behaviours’ (Fox and Alldred 2018: 321). Such analysis of ‘interrelation’ is the ‘precondition of politics’ (Beausoleil 2015: 7), to be attended simultaneously by (re)theorising. Barad (2012) purports that theorising is a way of being open to the world’s liveliness—to be curious, surprised and to wonder, where ‘[t]heories are living and breathing reconfigurings of the world’ (207) and where the world experiments on itself. The task, then, becomes to interfere and intervene into not only our practices, but also our habits of thought and feeling, with the ‘pulse and pause of attentiveness’ (Beausoleil 2015: 2). It is to ‘embrace the creative effects that can be produced by performance data in its relation to affective sense-making’ (Sellar 2015: 143).

We have attempted this creative task of theorising, interference and intervention through ‘disrupt[ing] data-writing’ so that ‘attunements

can emerge' (Taylor and Gannon 2018: 20). We have played with, flattened, and re-patterned our accounts in an attempt to disrupt and create new more affirmative attunements within our academic lives, as spacetime-mattering (Barad 2007). We have felt, noticed, thought, created and done, creating alternate perspectives on past encounters to make these encounters matter differently. We have not *found* anything new, as there is nothing to find, but we have articulated and re/created how matter comes to matter through evaluation and measurement processes within knowledge making assemblages. We hope to have illustrated ways differences can get made and how as academic knowledge makers we encourage practices of becoming response-able for our encounters within assemblages—response-able to build capacity for ourselves and others—to feelthink/create/do differently.

Notes

1. We have used the term knowledge maker here instead of academic to highlight the way knowledge is generated through performance.
2. Intra-action is different from interaction where entities are considered distinct prior to the encounter: intra-action reminds us of the ontological inseparable nature of all entities in the world. The encounter as an intra-action is productive as a boundary-making process and determines the materialization of objects and subjects. The participants in this study are a product of encounter with an education system that is a field of forces where entities remain forever entangled.
3. We acknowledge that we are situated in comparatively privileged positions, at major Australian universities, and in secure employment. Our attempt to write and theorise shame and evaluation as feminist academics does not attempt to generalise: gendered subjectivities are traversed by intersecting racialised, classed and sexual identifications, further differentiated by the global stratifications of higher education, employment conditions (casual, permanent/tenured), age, (dis)abilities, chronic illness and caring responsibilities.
4. It is worth noting that there is a plurality of theories of the logics of neoliberalism—from those influenced by Michel Foucault's lectures on neo-liberal technologies of government that foreground new modes of

- subjectivity-formation and ethics, and Marxist accounts that stress the whittling away of collectivized labour (see Flew 2014; Grealy and Laurie 2017).
5. Superpositions are not mixtures of particles with determinate properties but are the entanglement of matter. The value of matter is indeterminate until measured and the apparatus of measurement impacts the value that materializes.
 6. In Australia, the 2011 formation of the regulatory body Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) following the Review of Australian Higher Education (Bradley et al. 2008) bolstered the use of Student Evaluation of Teaching data (Tucker 2013). These evaluations frequently take the form of Likert scale responses to statements about teaching and learning, and open-ended comments elaborating on these responses. Student Evaluations of Teaching have become a dominant means of evaluating teaching effectiveness, managing performance and informing instructional decision-making (Richardson 2005).

References

- Ahmed, S. (2012). *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. London: Duke University Press.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Barad, K. (2010). Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/Continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come. *Derrida Today*, 3(2), 240–268.
- Barad, K. (2012). On Touching—The Inhuman That Therefore I Am. *Differences*, 25(5), 206–223.
- Beausoleil, E. (2015). Embodying an Ethics of Response-Ability. *Borderlands*, 14(2), 1–16.
- Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Blackman, L. (2007). Researching Affect and Embodied Hauntologies: Exploring an Analytics of Experimentation. In B. T. Knudsen & C. Stage (Eds.), *Affective Methodologies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Boswell, S. S. (2016). Ratemyprofessors Is Hogwash (but I Care): Effects of Ratemyprofessors and University-Administered Teaching Evaluations on Professors. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 56, 155–162.
- Bradley, D., Noonan, P., Nugent, H., & Scales, B. (2008). *Review of Australian Higher Education: Final Report*. Canberra, A.C.T.: Dept. of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
- Brogger, K., & Staunæs, D. (2016). Standards and (Self)Implosion: How the Circulation of Affects Accelerates the Spread of Standards and Intensifies the Embodiment of Colliding, Temporal Ontologies. *Theory & Psychology*, 26(2), 223–242.
- Bryant, L. R. (2016). Phenomenon and Thing: Barad's Performative Ontology. *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* (30), 133–144.
- Burrows, R. (2012). Living with the h-Index? Metric Assemblages in the Contemporary Academy. *The Sociological Review*, 60(2), 355–372.
- Charteris, J., Gannon, S., Mayes, E., Nye, A., & Stephenson, L. (2016). The Emotional Knots of Academicity: A Collective Biography of Academic Subjectivities and Spaces. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 35(1), 31–44.
- Chubb, J., Watermeyer, R., & Wakeling, P. (2017). Fear and Loathing in the Academy? The Role of Emotion in Response to an Impact Agenda in the UK and Australia. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(3), 555–568.
- Dolphijn, R. (2016). Critical Naturalism: A Quantum Mechanical Ethics. *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* (30), 145–151.
- Flew, T. (2014). Six Theories of Neoliberalism. *Thesis Eleven*, 122(1), 49–71.
- Fox, N., & Alldred, P. (2018). Social Structures, Power and Resistance in Monist Sociology: (New) Materialist Insights. *Journal of Sociology*, 54(3), 315–330.
- Grealy, L., & Laurie, T. (2017). Higher Degree Research by Numbers: Beyond the Critiques of Neo-Liberalism. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(3), 458–471.
- Haraway, D. J. (2016). *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hey, V., & Bradford, S. (2004). The Return of the Repressed?: The Gender Politics of Emergent Forms of Professionalism in Education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 19(6), 691–713.
- Hook, G. A., & Wolfe, M. J. (2017). Affective Violence: Re/Negotiating Gendered-Feminism Within New Materialism. *Journal of Gender Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2017.1340151>.

- Jackson, A. Y. (2017). Thinking Without Method. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417725355>.
- Lipton, B. (2017). Measures of Success: Cruel Optimism and the Paradox of Academic Women's Participation in Australian Higher Education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(3), 486–497.
- Loveday, V. (2016). Embodying Deficiency Through 'Affective Practice': Shame, Relationality, and the Lived Experience of Social Class and Gender in Higher Education. *Sociology*, 50(6), 1140–1155.
- MacLure, M. (2013). Researching Without Representation? Language and Materiality in Post-qualitative Methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 658–667.
- Mayes, E. (2018a). The Ontological Plurality of Digital Voice: A Schizoanalysis of Rate My Professors and Rate My Teachers. In D. Cole & J. Bradley (Eds.), *Principles of Transversality in Globalization and Education*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Mayes, E. (2018b). Student Voice in School Reform? Desiring Simultaneous Critique and Affirmation. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2018.1492517>.
- Mayes, E., & Wolfe, M. (2018). Shameful Interest in Educational Research. *Critical Studies in Education*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2018.1489871>.
- Mazzei, L. A. (2017). Following the Contour of Concepts Toward a Minor Inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417725356>.
- Nixon, E., Scullion, R., & Hearn, R. (2016). Her Majesty the Student: Marketised Higher Education and the Narcissistic (Dis)Satisfactions of the Student-Consumer. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2016.1196353>.
- Ocean, J., & Skourdoumbis, A. (2016). Whose Counting? Legitimizing Measurement in the Audit Culture. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 37(3), 442–456.
- Olssen, M., & Peters, M. A. (2005). Neoliberalism, Higher Education and the Knowledge Economy: From the Free Market to Knowledge Capitalism. *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(3), 313–345.
- Peseta, T., Barrie, S., & McLean, J. (2017). Academic Life in the Measured University: Pleasures, Paradoxes and Politics. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(3), 453–457.
- Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Puar, J. K. (2012). 'I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess': Becoming-Intersectional in Assemblage Theory. *philoSOPHIA*, 2(1), 49–66.
- Rasmussen, M. (2014). Affecting Affiliations: Queer Relationality and the Boy in the Dress. *Methodological Affects: Considering Research Emotion in Qualitative Research*. Symposium—American Educational Research Association.
- Richardson, J. T. E. (2005). Instruments for Obtaining Student Feedback: A Review of the Literature. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 30(4), 387–415.
- Sedgwick, E. K., & Frank, A. (1995). Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins. *Critical Inquiry*, 21(2), 496–522.
- Sellar, S. (2015). A Feel for Numbers: Affect, Data and Education Policy. *Critical Studies in Education*, 56(1), 131–146.
- Selwyn, N. (2015). Data Entry: Towards the Critical Study of Digital Data and Education. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 40(1), 64–82.
- Spinoza, B. D. (1994). The Ethics. In E. M. Curley (Ed.), *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Springgay, S., & Truman, S. E. (2017). On the Need for Methods Beyond Proceduralism: Speculative Middles, (In)Tensions, and Response-Ability in research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417704464>.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2013a). The Appearance of Data. *Cultural Studies: Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 223–227.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2013b). The Posts Continue: Becoming. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 646–657.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2017). Haecceity: Laying Out a Plane for Post Qualitative Inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417727764>.
- Staunaes, D. (2016). Notes on Inventive Methodologies and Affirmative Critiques of an Affective Edu-Future. *Research in Education*, 96(1), 62–70.
- Stern, M. (2012). "We Can't Build Our Dreams on Suspicious Minds": Neoliberalism, Education Policy, and the Feelings Left Over. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 12(5), 387–400.
- Taylor, C. A., & Gannon, S. (2018). Doing Time and Motion Diffractively: Academic Life Everywhere and All the Time. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2017.1422286>.
- Tomkins, S. (1995a). *Exploring Affect: The Selected Writings of Silvan S. Tomkins*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press; New York, Paris: Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme.

- Tomkins, S. (1995b). *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader* (E. K. Sedgwick & A. Frank, Eds.). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Tucker, B. (2013). Development of a Student Evaluation Quality Culture: The eVALUate Experience at Curtin University. Enhancing Student Feedback and Improvement Systems in Tertiary Education. In Commission for Academic Accreditation (Ed.), *CAA Quality Series; 5* (pp. 16–33). Abu Dhabi, UAE: Commission for Academic Accreditation.
- Wolfe, M. J. (2017a). Refracting Schoolgirls: Pedagogical Intra-actions Producing Shame. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 38(5), 727–739.
- Wolfe, M. J. (2017b). Affective Schoolgirl Assemblages Making School Spaces of Non/Belonging. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 25, 63–70.
- Wolfe, M. J., & Rasmussen, M. L. (2019, forthcoming). The Affective Matter of School Uniforms: The [School] Dress that is and Does. In B. Dernikos, N. Lesko, S. McCall, D., & A. Niccolini (Eds.), *High Passions: An Affect and Education Reader*. Duke University Press.

Index

A

- Acceleration 251, 253
Activism/activist 3, 8, 9, 39, 49,
50, 57, 58, 66, 79, 80, 121,
123, 126, 129, 132, 145, 146,
150–153, 156–158, 160, 161,
172–174, 176, 179, 180, 182,
183, 185, 227
Ahmed, Sara ix, xi, 4, 32–34, 45, 51,
58, 59, 77, 94, 95, 144, 146,
148, 149, 151, 226, 281
Art 29, 85, 102, 123, 191, 192,
200–210, 212, 227, 228,
252, 256, 259–264, 267–270,
272
Audit 5, 11
Autoethnography/autoethnographic
7, 17, 84, 94, 221, 227,
229

C

- Casualisation 8, 20, 67, 70, 71, 73,
231
Class viii–xi, 17, 22, 24, 48, 54–56,
79, 94, 98, 99, 108, 110, 111,
125, 126, 137, 170, 184, 225,
268–270
Classroom xiv, 23, 47, 53, 84, 100,
120, 122, 123, 127, 133, 138,
153, 176, 270, 285
Collegiality 7, 14–28, 30, 31, 33–36,
38–40, 66, 68, 86
Colonialism 105, 106, 114, 123–
126, 132, 268
Community 9, 65, 66, 78, 81, 82,
99, 104, 110–114, 132, 147,
155, 157, 158, 173, 174, 176,
180, 186, 192, 207, 208, 212,
215, 216, 252, 256, 265

Creative methods [xii](#)

D

Decolonisation [3](#), [9](#), [94–96](#), [98](#), [105](#),
[112](#), [114](#)

Diversity [4](#), [8](#), [9](#), [11](#), [50](#), [57](#), [72](#), [87](#),
[94](#), [95](#), [98](#), [113](#), [120](#), [121](#),
[125](#), [127](#), [135](#), [136](#), [138](#)

Doctorate/PhD [74](#), [85](#), [192](#), [193](#),
[196](#), [197](#), [201](#)

Doctoral/PhD Students [10](#), [66](#),
[67](#), [70](#), [72](#), [73](#), [87](#), [191–198](#),
[201–204](#), [206–210](#), [215](#), [216](#)

E

Early career [v](#), [viii](#), [xii](#), [8](#), [17](#), [48](#), [67](#),
[195](#), [278](#)

Embodied/embodiment [10](#), [16](#), [19](#),
[21](#), [29](#), [34](#), [77](#), [192](#), [201](#), [202](#),
[209](#), [212](#), [216](#), [221–227](#), [229](#),
[230](#), [232–243](#), [256](#), [258](#), [267](#),
[270](#), [278](#)

Ethics [11](#), [105](#), [106](#), [128](#), [206](#), [282](#),
[294](#)

Evaluation [11](#), [20](#), [26](#), [27](#), [46](#), [47](#),
[56](#), [261](#), [277–282](#), [285–287](#),
[289–291](#), [293](#), [294](#)

F

Feminism/feminist [xii](#), [6–8](#), [14–17](#),
[23](#), [35–39](#), [43–45](#), [47–55](#),
[57–59](#), [65–69](#), [73](#), [76–84](#),
[86](#), [87](#), [95](#), [144](#), [146](#), [152](#),
[154](#), [155](#), [158](#), [159](#), [161](#), [162](#),
[170–172](#), [178](#), [179](#), [222](#), [229](#),
[270](#), [293](#)

G

Gender [viii](#), [x](#), [xi](#), [5](#), [6](#), [16](#), [23](#), [26](#),
[30](#), [33](#), [35](#), [43](#), [44](#), [46–48](#),
[50–53](#), [55–59](#), [94](#), [111](#), [126](#),
[128](#), [130–132](#), [145](#), [150](#), [162](#),
[172](#), [175](#), [235](#), [269](#), [270](#)

H

Hierarchy [ix](#), [28](#), [85](#), [110](#), [111](#)

I

The imperial university [99](#)

Inclusion [9](#), [19](#), [44](#), [80](#), [94–96](#), [98](#),
[100](#), [101](#), [104](#), [105](#), [112](#), [113](#),
[123](#), [124](#), [137](#), [178](#), [181](#)

Institutionalised racism [95](#), [98](#), [113](#)

Intensification [2](#), [8](#), [27](#), [28](#), [39](#), [66](#),
[67](#), [70](#)

Internationalisation [9](#), [16](#), [94](#), [95](#),
[98](#), [113](#)

L

Lifelong education [9](#), [171](#), [174–176](#),
[178–180](#), [182](#), [185](#)

M

Measurement [11](#), [27](#), [250](#), [277–286](#),
[288](#), [289](#), [291–294](#)

N

Nationalism [8](#), [121–124](#), [131](#), [134](#),
[136](#), [137](#), [139](#)

P

Pedagogy 8, 9, 43, 44, 49–53, 55, 57–59, 80, 84, 96, 103, 105, 112, 170–172, 174, 177–180, 182, 191, 192, 196, 197, 209, 210, 215, 251, 252, 265, 267, 269–271

Postcolonial 8, 120, 122–126, 137, 138, 256

Postcolonial literature 8, 122, 126

Power v–ix, xi, xiii, xv, 5, 19, 23, 27, 30, 32, 35–38, 40, 46, 48, 49, 51–53, 56, 57, 83, 95, 108–111, 114, 138, 148, 153, 155, 159, 162, 185, 186, 196, 208, 215, 227, 234, 235, 240, 268, 278, 283, 288

Praxis 10, 172, 176–179, 183, 192, 202, 206–208, 214

Privilege xi, xii, 5–7, 9, 30, 33, 50, 53, 67, 69, 78, 87, 102–104, 159, 162, 174, 176, 177, 181, 196, 222, 227, 269, 281, 293

Productivity 8, 24, 25, 73–76, 81, 84–86, 148, 171, 241, 265, 281

Q

Queer/queering 6, 43, 47, 51–53, 130, 132, 149, 150, 153, 162

R

Race xiii, 8, 8, 9, 22, 23, 26, 36, 94, 98, 99, 108, 111, 113, 119–123, 126–130, 132–135, 137–139, 152, 155, 162, 269

Racism xiii, 4, 8, 72, 77, 78, 95, 101, 105–108, 111, 113, 120–124, 126, 129, 131, 132, 135–139

Reflexivity 158, 181, 207, 209, 210, 228, 229

Resilience xiv, 9, 144–146, 148, 149, 152, 171, 226, 232, 239

Resistance xii, xiv, 9, 17, 22, 23, 35–38, 47, 67, 68, 79, 82, 83, 86, 144, 145, 150, 152, 153, 156, 159–162, 169–171, 174, 184, 200, 252, 267, 270, 271, 283

S

Safe spaces xiv, 9, 51, 143–162

Shame 103, 108, 278, 279, 284, 285, 287, 288, 290–293

Social movements xv, 9, 112, 154, 155, 170, 171, 176, 177, 182, 184–186

Solidarity xiv, 8, 25, 32, 67, 84, 123, 124, 132, 146, 173

Stress xi, 2, 124, 226, 231, 257, 259, 294

Students ix–xi, xiv, 2, 4, 6, 7, 7–9, 29, 32, 33, 43–59, 65–67, 71–74, 80, 83–87, 93, 95, 96, 98, 107, 110, 112, 113, 120, 122, 126, 127, 133–139, 143–149, 151–153, 156–162, 169, 170, 172, 174, 176–181, 183, 191, 193–197, 200, 202, 205–212, 214–216, 222, 227, 231, 240, 243, 250–252, 265–272, 278, 280, 289–291, 294

T

Teaching x, 4, 5, 8–10, 16, 17, 20,
25, 26, 31, 32, 40, 43–52, 55–
59, 66, 71, 75, 77, 78, 81, 84,
85, 114, 120, 122, 126, 133,
137, 175, 177–179, 181, 191,
192, 195–197, 209, 212–216,
222, 231, 238–240, 252, 270,
272, 278, 280, 287–291, 294

W

Wellbeing 10, 33, 46, 47, 66, 211,
221, 222, 224–226, 230–237,
241–243

Widening participation 9, 98

Writing xii, 2, 4, 6, 8, 23, 26, 68,
69, 72, 73, 75, 83, 84, 86, 94,
102, 105, 107, 122–129, 132,
133, 137, 138, 145, 151, 175,
183, 200, 201, 205, 207, 208,
210, 238, 254, 255, 266, 267,
278, 285, 292