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Shedding Light on the Cracks in Neoliberal Universities

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Introduction

Under the ethos of neoliberalism, universities have been transformed. In Australia, the alignment of higher education provision with neoliberalism began in the 1980s, as successive governments advocated the need to boost efficiencies, productive competition and public accountability, all deemed lacking within the system of university self-governance.[1] The economic logic of reform ran counter to dominant conceptions of universities as collegial institutions concerned with public and democratic

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purposes.[2] The dominance of market-driven business models instituted by governments through regulatory regimes and a volatile, mainly lean or declining funding policy environment has similarly reshaped higher education in variegated yet consistent ways in the global north and south.[3]

Twenty years of scholarship on the neoliberalisation of higher education has captured its features in designations such as the *corporate*[4] or *enterprise* university,[5] the *entrepreneurial* university[6] and the overarching descriptor, the *neoliberal* university.[7] All universities are now entrenched in *academic capitalism,*[8] internally distorted by an *audit culture*[9] and governed by *managerialism* that is intensified in internal conflicts over the purpose and conditions of academic work.[10] These shifts and their collateral damage to academic autonomy and professional standing are captured in new designations of the *measured* university[11] and the *toxic* university.[12]

However, there are *cracks* in the neoliberal university that still present opportunities for academics to pursue alternative priorities, resistances and refusals.[13] Seeing through neoliberalism is anchored in the strong traditions and values of academic freedom, autonomy, participatory and cultural democracy and the public good. In this book, as Readings[14] noted, 'dwelling in the ruins' of the university is our starting-point for interrogating, understanding and articulating new ways of seeing the substance and politics of change.

Resisting neoliberalism in higher education: seeing through the cracks and a second volume, on *prising open the cracks*, aim to shed light on how academics are surviving neoliberal changes and working the spaces[15] of managed life in universities. We use the metaphor of *seeing through the cracks* to emphasise the diminished space of "traditional" academic purposes within neoliberalised universities. It references the double meaning of academics seeing neoliberal and authoritarian managerialist processes for what they are; and articulating how we are continuing to find spaces to work in collegial ways that defy neoliberal logic: that is, a logic of bringing closure to non-economic aims of academic work[16]; a logic of seeing ourselves as brands, cost centres and purveyors of education and research.

This collection furthers our understanding of current trends in working conditions under corporate managerialism in higher education in diverse

contexts, with a focus on teaching-research-service academic work alongside critical responses and initiatives. This chapter provides a brief account of how the books came about, then discusses some key features of the increasingly ruthless managerialism that drives universities' internal reshaping of academic work. We then place our focus on resisting neoliberalism within the tradition of critical studies in higher education and explain how seeing through the small "window" of free education in Australia situates our view of academic work. Finally, we introduce the chapters of this volume, organised around the themes of seeing outside-in and inside-out. Throughout this chapter, we refer to 'the university' as a shorthand for the diversity of institutions and to emphasise that our concerns are connected into ongoing struggles over the idea of the university.[17]

Back Story

As our initial work on this volume was conducted in Melbourne, Australia, we respectfully acknowledge the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung of the Kulin who are traditional custodians of these lands and have been for many centuries. We pay respect to the deep knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal community and unique role of the Kulin Nation's living culture in the life of this region. Thinking about the transformation of universities, the cultural protocol of Acknowledgement of Country brings to the fore questions of power, privilege, equity. The colonial establishment of Eurocentric universities deliberately excluded Indigenous people, their knowledge, science and culture[18] and thus entailed the "logic of elimination"[19] that undergirded genocidal massacres, expropriation of lands and resources, Stolen Generations and a school-to-prison pipeline, all carried into the present through widespread societal refusal to acknowledge systemic racism and White privilege. Because neoliberalism is built on structures accomplished through the dispossession, colonisation and the empire building of industrial and corporate capitalism, the issues we raise concerning contemporary universities "must be understood within the context of historical struggles for voice, participation and self-determination"[20] that shaped contemporary universities and continues in the present.

This book and Volume II grew out of several research events conducted at local and national levels. These research activities were very much inspired by the opportunity to work with Professor Antonia Darder, an eminent critical theorist, Freirean scholar, activist and Leavey Endowed Chair of Ethics & Moral Leadership, Loyola Marymount University and Professor Emerita, University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign. As part of a Visiting Professorship at Victoria University, Melbourne, Antonia gave a keynote presentation on *The Legacy of Paulo Freire: The Continuing Struggle for Liberation* and facilitated research discussions at a one-day research symposium for academics, academic teaching scholars and PhD students in the Curriculum and Pedagogy as Complex Conversations (CPCC) Discipline Group. It was after listening to all of the presentations that one of our colleagues commented that we were all in some way engaged in 'rattling the cages' of the academy. This imagery of academics shaking the bars of the institution in protest at an increasing sense of imprisonment sparked the idea of an edited collection of essays about the ways in which our research was engaged in resisting neoliberalism in higher education.

This idea seemed to link very well with ongoing national discussions at the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) about the state of Australian educational research. One of the dominant themes of the 2014 AARE/NZARE Conference in Brisbane was a feeling of grief that educational researchers were struggling to operate in a climate of funding cutbacks, persistent organisational restructuring and declining time for research and writing. In response, the AARE Professional and Higher Education Special Interest Group (SIG) invited a panel of speakers to offer provocations and insights about the troubled space of educational research at the 2015 AARE Conference. While the SIG convenors, Catherine Manathunga and Jan McLean, were convinced it was important to continue critical interrogations of the incursions of neoliberalism into education, the panel was designed to propose ways of moving beyond grief and mourning by investigating whether there were any generative spaces or *cracks* in neoliberalism that could be exploited in the fields of professional and higher education research. It seemed sensible to weave the emerging idea of an edited volume on resisting neoliberalism in higher education into these national debates.

So, when a group of academics from Victoria University had the privilege of joining Antonia Darder on a three-day Education Faculty retreat at Queenscliff by the sea south of Melbourne, we announced that plans were emerging in the CPCC Discipline Group, in collaboration with the AARE Professional Higher Education SIG, to produce an edited collection seeking to exploit generative spaces or cracks in neoliberal universities. Retreaters were invited to offer submissions for this collection and Antonia agreed to write a foreword for the volume. As we engaged in a series of creative, thought-provoking activities with Antonia designed to unearth issues of identity, culture, decolonising practice, critical pedagogy and liberation, we continued to think hard and write about what it meant to be involved in critical resistance to dominant neoliberal discourses in the academy. The proposed book was then discussed at the annual meeting of the AARE Professional and Higher Education SIG and a call for abstracts was issued through the SIG and international networks including those connected with the Academic Identities Conference series. There was such a response from colleagues around the world that the planned single volume became two volumes at the publisher's suggestion.

Neoliberal Managerialism

In this book we focus on how academics are negotiating the internal neoliberal reform of universities, primarily centred on managerialism, the top-down, hierarchical structure of governance and decision-making that is the typical business model adopted by universities.[21] Its predominant form is now line management, ensuring that hierarchical power resides with senior management and facilitates surveillance of academic work. Discussing the vast literature on managerialism is not possible here. Instead, we draw on the literature that articulates key features that we have recently observed and experienced.

Managerialism is both structure and modus operandi. The entrenchment of corporate structures in universities has produced new forms of class and 'rankism'[22] with rarely blurred lines between 'proletarian' academics[23] and the 'managerial elite'[24] who determine institutional strategic

aims, centred on world rankings and local market share. Vice-chancellors (VCs) are re-branded as CEOs and Presidents and are now more likely to be management careerists than academic leaders stepping up. Along with councils and swelling ranks of deputy and pro-VCs, they constitute a governing-strategist class, directing line management, assisted by expensive consultants and lawyers. Alongside their generous remuneration, disproportionate funding has been directed to growing the professional-administrative class.[25] This class includes designers and deliverers who serve the strategists and middle management (especially deans), developing the texts, processes and DIY requirements of policy, procedures, initiatives and audits passed down to academic labourers. In turn, academics are metrically positioned within a hierarchy of status according to managerial determinations of individual success and value to institutional prestige. As institutional "units", academics are readily discarded in ruthlessly pursued restructures deemed necessary for the achievement of *the university's* strategic goals (academics are frequently excluded from strategic discourse, especially the "we" of *the university*), presented within narratives of budgetary constraints and the needs of budget surplus. At the bottom of the hierarchy, casuals, temporary and short contract academics are now typically hired to replace discarded staff deemed excess.

As modus operandi, defining features of managerial regimes include an obsession with academic performance, productivity and their measurement and surveillance through numerous forms of accountability.[26] Audit metrics now reach into every aspect of academic life but most effectually in relation to revenue raising research 'outputs' and 'quality' teaching 'inputs'. Workload allocation is a chief mechanism of academic performance and compliance. As Kenny and Fluck[27] point out, workload management was originally proposed as a protection from overwork yet increasing performance requirements are often decoupled from workload considerations as if all the invisible work that does not count in workload formulae has no bearing on "outputs". As line managers "negotiate" (enforce) workload systems, "words like 'equity', 'transparency' and 'fairness' are trotted out",[28] but analyses of workload configurations point to arbitrary and inequitable allocations. For example, Papadopoulos[29] found academics' experience of workload models and the actuality of the work

(including increased volume of work, enlarged class sizes, development of online studies, unrealistic time allocations for teaching preparation and coordination roles, arbitrary additions to individual responsibilities) fell well short of meeting enterprise agreements' criteria of transparent, reasonable and equitable allocation. Papadopoulos concludes that the gap between model and practice constitutes workload allocations as *mismeasures* of academic work. Hil[30] argues that managers nonetheless "have a stake in ensuring that this empirical device exists, primarily because it allows them to monitor academic staff to the nth degree."

While top-down messages perpetually call for greater productivity, what this means for academics is generally "doing more with less".[31] Kinman[32] summarises the most stressful demands including "long working hours, administrative load, providing academic and pastoral support, complying with quality assurance procedures, pressure to obtain research funding and publish, and managing the volume of emails". These demands are stressful because they are meant to be accomplished despite the constraints of "ineffective management, lack of administrative and technical support, poor communication, rushed pace of work, frequent interruptions, role conflict and limited opportunities for teaching preparation, scholarly work and professional updating".[33]

Performance accountabilities based on the presumption of the need for greater productivity invisibilise the work that is not recognised in the workload device and that is subsumed into the hours of unpaid work performed. For example, a recent National Tertiary Education Union report[34] estimated that Australian university staff work 38 million hours of overtime per year, contributing $2.5 billion to the sector in necessary but unpaid labour. Furthermore, accountabilities based on financial objectives invisibilise the care, collegiality, and political work that inheres in teaching, research and service, work with support or administrative staff as well as professional associations and external communities, including creative and public intellectual work, robust debate, unionism and activism.[35]

How academics negotiate the ever-burgeoning performance requirements is highly differentiated according to position and continuing or casual status. In many universities, "cost-effective educational delivery" is driving the expansion of teaching-only positions and constitutes a

challenge to the normative model of teaching-research-service (professional and community engagement), as well as fundamental ideas and values premised on the reciprocal significance of research and teaching.[36] Casualisation naturalises the expectation of academic work as solely teaching, though there are additional threats to the principle of research as a vital component of academic work. Benchmarks for research output can and are formulated in ways that ensure a continuing reduction in research time. Teaching-research-service academics may struggle to meet grant funding targets, especially in teaching-first workloads, likely shifting them into a diminishing research allocation spiral[37] and providing the kind of data used to justify restricting research allocations to research-only positions. Within some universities teaching is being piled on while time allocated is reduced. This may occur, for example, through shifting postgraduate research supervision from research to teaching allocations or vice versa, with only superficial transparency in these processes.

Early career academics tend to be more vulnerable to exploitation and may find they need to be "super-heroes" to meet institutional expectations,[38] while those who feel comfortable with and are adept at self-promotion may win additional support within a 'stars' system of researcher prestige.[39] Members of the professoriate may accrue greater autonomy as leaders in their fields, though how they lead may place them at risk of losing academic freedom. Professors who use their status to act in solidarity with more junior academics, buffer them from the excesses of managerialism and aim to operate democratically and equitably "can also become targets of academic punishments, if they refuse to acquiesce or reform to neoliberal expectations – irrespective of the quantity, quality, or intellectual reach of their scholarship".[40]

It is unsurprising that academics may love teaching, research and community engagement while finding themselves/ourselves exhausted and questioning whether there is any such thing as work/life balance, whether we can survive the continual bombardment by email, endless forms, reports and "engagement" in strategic planning that is a tokenistic smokescreen for our marginalisation from decision-making, and wondering what happened to the "dream job". Holding to our quality standards that centre on critical pedagogy, fair assessments, meaningful feedback and

time for students outside classes, while juggling research projects and writing deadlines is achieved at personal cost. Many academics have experienced the pressures, thwarted opportunities, punitive accountabilities, and downright bullying of managerialism with increased anxiety, cynicism concerning procedural fairness and fear.[41] Feminist research has highlighted detrimental impacts on personal-professional wellbeing in survivalism, anxieties, ambivalent and fraught emotional labour[42] that has been accompanied by a diminishing assertion of intellectual desire and pleasure.[43] It is at this level of lived experience that we clearly see the "ontoformative" dimensions[44] of managerialism in intersection with neoliberalism's economic, political, ideological and governmental dimensions[45] and subjectivities that are "the starting point for a politics of refusal".[46]

Critical University Studies

The Idea of the University

We locate our two volumes within the field of Critical University Studies (CUS). This literature sits within a broader body of work on the idea of the university. There is no space in this chapter to review the whole history of ideas about the university starting, as most of this literature does, with 12th century Europe and working forward to Cardinal Newman and so on. This body of work is also narrow in its geographical scope, focusing largely on Europe and North America (eg. Perkin[47]). Eurocentric Enlightenment arguments are made that dismiss the significance of Confucian, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Aztec and Incan and Japanese institutions of higher learning as teaching "high culture, received doctrine, literary and/or mathematical skills of their political or religious masters, with little room for questioning or analysis".[48] Pre-12th century European 'monastic schools' are dismissed in a similar manner and no reference is made to the role of universities in the "destruction of the medieval world order at the Reformation".[49] Much is made of the ongoing survival and spread of European universities around the globe via colonisation and the role these institutions had in anticolonial

independence movements in the 'developing' world.[50] There is little reference to the earliest universities in Africa such as Karawiyyinn in Fez (Morocco)[51] and none to Indigenous institutions of higher learning around the globe such as the Whare-wānanga of the Māori people in Aotearoa New Zealand.[52] No reference is made to the destruction of these ancient institutions of higher learning by the forces of European colonisation. This literature is also highly gendered, referencing the ideas and deeds of great white men and ignoring the contributions of women to the production and dissemination of knowledge within universities.

In these volumes we aim to contribute to 'critical university studies' which Jeffrey Williams[53] describes as "a new wave of criticism of higher education", particularly from the 1990s to the present. Some scholars, particularly in the US and Canada, take a wider paradigmatic view of it and incorporate all of critical and poststructural theory within it.[54] For example, Petrina and Ross,[55] celebrating the 15th anniversary of the US journal *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor*, speak of more than a century of first and second wave CUS that has been concerned with preserving academic freedom and the fluctuations in paid intellectual or academic work. We particularly link our work with the critical policy studies of the university by scholars such as Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie[56] and Bill Readings[57] in the US, Raewyn Connell,[58] Bronwyn Davies and colleagues[59] and Simon Marginson and Mark Considine[60] in Australia and Stephen Ball[61] in the UK. We also stand with scholars who have expanded the idea of the critical through the development of feminist-intersectional, queer, postcolonial, Indigenous, anticolonial, critical race, and critical participatory and disability studies. Critical University Studies is significantly enriched by the many contributions of Māori and Aboriginal scholars, especially on Kaupapa Māori research and decolonising methodologies[62] and Moreton-Robinson's[63] Critical Indigenous Studies that deconstructs and theorises the "possessive logics of patriarchal white sovereignty" in Foucaultian and Whiteness Studies.

The field of critical university studies is an interdisciplinary space incorporating scholars from education, history, sociology, literary, cultural and labour studies.[64] Breaking this label down, Williams[65] argues that this work is 'critical' because it takes an "oppositional stance" to the operations of power and injustice evident in contemporary neoliberal

universities. It focuses on the 'university' because it explores 'the idea of the university' as well as the "actual practices and diverse institutions of contemporary higher education" and it is a form of interdisciplinary 'studies', interrogating both the cultural representations of the university and its material realities.[66] The field of Critical Pedagogy and Freirean scholarship[67] has been influential in progressing such aims, tracing how universities have become a "a site of struggle between private commercial interests"[68] and older discourses about the public good. Giroux defines critical pedagogy as more than method or practices; but rather, as "a political and moral project [that] illuminates the relationships among knowledge, authority, and power [and] how knowledge, identities, and authority are constructed within particular sets of social relations".[69] He argues that critical pedagogy is always concerned with enhancing individual and social agency. For academics, critical work often involves moving beyond the academy into the public domain and engaging in scholarly activism or what Petrina calls "scholactivism"[70] and public intellectual work. Williams also argues that critical university studies incorporates "teach[ing] the university" or actively "foregrounding the literary, cultural and social history of the university"[71] in our courses (and in academic development) through the critical exploration of philosophical ideas about the university; of the history of the university (and one that goes beyond a Eurocentric myopia incorporating Europe and North America only unlike much of the literature including Williams[72]); of fiction about the university and of university and government policy documents, reports, statistics and so on. This would also involve getting students (and indeed academics) to examine their own campuses.[73] Applying these ideas to Southern, postcolonial contexts, Sturm[74] illustrates how this would incorporate exploring the Indigenous histories of the land on which universities stand as well as their colonial and present landscapes and trajectories.

Resistance

It is in the context of CUS that we place our understanding of resistance to neoliberalism in universities. In the literature, academic resistance is

theorised from diverse critical perspectives and mainly focuses on contestation of the idea of the university (e.g., opposition to the commodification of education), and ways in which academics refuse the excesses of managerialism through struggle over academic identity, autonomy and 'everyday' self-management.

Anderson[75] draws on Foucaultian, cultural, labour process and organisational studies of resistance, emphasising technologies of power and subjectivities in academic resistance and on Scott's[76] anthropological and historical studies of the "hidden transcripts" of everyday, routine and subtle discursive and enacted resistances that sometimes opens to more public protest. Anderson[77] identified forms of academic resistance including critical intellectual and political work, formal protest and tactics of refusal and partial compliance effective in subverting managerial micro-aggressions and colonisation of critical academic identities. Heath and Burdon's[78] analysis of academic resistances also draws on Foucault's account of resistance in formations of power that is constantly "undermined and re-formed by the resistance of active agents". They argue that subjective and collective activism involves refusal of dominant discourses (e.g., individualism) that operate managerial power. Feldman and Sandoval[79] argue that collective resistance, including union actions, feminist writing collectives and 'alternative' cooperative universities, holds greater prospects of change than individualised resistance concerned with coping and finding ways to work the system, doing little to change it.

The prominence of 'everyday' academic resistance also reflects the weakening of labour movements that has been a ubiquitous feature of neoliberalisation.[80] Labour process resistances such as 'work to rule', strikes and picketing remain part of the academic repertoire and critical scholarship retains a transformative (institutional and societal) platform though collective resistance now more commonly appears progressive or prefigurative than revolutionary. Heath and Burdon[81] draw on prefigurative politics of 1960s social movements, highlighting how academics "create the conditions necessary to conceptualise different futures and acquire the skills needed to bring them about," especially through collegial processes.[82] They argue that larger transformative projects may culminate from many nuanced and specific projects as well as selective

compliance with 'virtuous' changes handed down, entailing ethical and prefigurative forms of resistance. This, we will argue,[83] also entails conservation of long-held ideals of 'the university', as "one of the few spaces left where democratic identities, values and desires can be created".[84]

Feminism has always been inherently resistant in critiquing patriarchal power and politically prefigurative in effecting institutional change. For example, the 'second wave' women's liberation movement gave rise to countering sexist culture across institutions, including sexual divisions of labour 'hidden' in the private realm of families and households, and subsequently inside the state in public service and in education. Indigenous activists were also vocal in the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, resisting "mainstream" history, politics and institutional racism. The politics of self-determination included prefigurative resistance; for example, in taking over the leadership of organisations such as the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, the Freedom Ride's public consciousness-raising and challenge to racial segregation and creation of community-controlled services.[85]

However, critics of prefigurative politics have also argued that transformative resistances are also necessary within social movements, against the fragmentation of ideals into apolitical projects and because the vision may mask inequalities embedded within the movement.[86] In particular, feminist, postcolonial and intersectional theories have complicated the structural analyses of oppression that underpinned earlier movements, bringing focus to the interlocking of class and patriarchy with racialization and heteronormativity[87] and clarifying the need for multi-directional modes of resistance. Academic resistance may then take form in "multidimensional praxis"[88] within "relationships of solidarity … anchored upon ongoing genuine exchanges of both lived and formally studied knowledge",[89] with our colleagues and within external collective projects.

Lugones' metaphor of 'standing in the cracks' speaks to these shifts and shifting resistances. She argues that liberatory work addressing multiple oppressions demands a prefigurative politics operating on multiple levels, linking the personal, social and institutional. She proposes "antistructural understandings of selves, relations, and realities… as a way to think of resisters to structural, institutionalized oppressions".[90] Lugones argues that

resistances are then not merely reactive but emerge prefiguratively in "the tensions, desires, closures, cracks, and openings that make up the social".[91]

Seeing Through the Cracks

In our CPCC Discipline Group discussions of the idea of "seeing through the cracks", we talked about academic work in the context of unmitigated managerialism and the fractures we observed between our understanding of the purposes of academic work and those articulated in the corpspeak that now announced top-down strategies, reconfiguring our work. We also discussed how past and present experience of universities shaped our understanding of what a university education could and should mean. For some of the group, the aim of shedding light on these issues brought to mind the familiar lyrics of Leonard Cohen's *Anthem*: "There's a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in".[92] We had first listened to Leonard Cohen as undergrads, and his bittersweet reflection on life as imperfect yet cause for optimism mingled with the memory of deep and intoxicating conversations at union nights and intimate tutorials (unlike the large classes we now worked with). We would not have been undergrads without the Whitlam Labour government's abolition of tuition fees and introduction of student allowances. Our presence reflected the expansion of higher education that welcomed working-class students.

We see the "window" of the 70s to mid-80s as a small crack in universities' elite tradition, on the back of a decade of widespread social change engendered through mobilisations against the Vietnam war, Aboriginal movements that achieved franchise, Freedom Rides, the broader land rights and Black Power campaigns including the Tent Embassy at the Australian national parliament and Aboriginal-controlled organisations,[93] anti-apartheid, the first migrant resource centres and movements around multiculturalism and 'second-wave' feminism. We were the beneficiaries of the work done by feminist, Marxist, socialist, postcolonial, gay liberation and disciplinary 'radicals' (eg in philosophy, history and education) in establishing a raft of new subject areas such as Women's Studies, Aboriginal Studies and burgeoning "critical" studies that were indicative of the press for equality. There was consciousness of White privilege and

institutional racism emerging in some corners, influenced by external politics including Aboriginal women's critiques of White, middle-class feminism.[94] In this period, alliances were focused both inwardly, aiming to re-shape the university and outwardly by linking with professional groups (eg feminist teaching networks) and movements for social change and social justice. Our personal investment in education was reinforced by open debates around class and sexual politics on campus, including in lecture theatres and tutorials. Even while we harboured similar fears about being imposters and out of our place that working-class feminist academics have written about,[95] our personal aspirations found a place to be realised because the political conditions of the university and academics' politics enabled them.

Universities were far from bastions of equality, but they were sites of struggle where the purposes of learning, knowledge and research could safely be contested. Alliances of 'radical' students and staff did prise open the power blocs of academic boards and professoriates and gained a level of participatory democracy.[96] Naturalised privilege gave way to more representative governance, incorporating principles of academic freedom, autonomy and accountability from below. Participatory and democratic aims were enmeshed with more traditional institutional ideals of education, knowledge production, debate and dialogue, around contested and shared agenda related to public interests and distribution of public goods and benefits.[97] With a visible openness to questioning whose public interests were served by higher education and experiments in how knowledge making and institutional decision-making might be more participatory, this period stands in contrast to the elite tradition of universities and the often token 'inclusion' of the present.

Feminist, queer and postcolonial scholarship continues to complicate class and identity politics embedded and forming through the hierarchical regimes of institutional power, yet there is little in the way of visible or collective democratisation on campus beyond what may be activated by individuals in the tutorial and teaching or research networks. Gender, Indigenous and 'diversity' work has been 'mainstreamed' in many ways and most universities have adopted "widening participation" strategies. However, the neoliberalisation of the university has and is re-making access, rights and equity in its own institutional image. The critical

resistances to elitism and challenges to knowledge ownership that created openings for cultural and workplace democracy are largely erased in contemporary equity strategies that like the rest of audit culture is focused on numbers and compliance. Rather than being a force for further democratisation, widening participation largely maps onto the templates of elitism within universities and reflects the growing rather than diminishing inequalities in civil society.[98]

While many caution against nostalgic comparisons and argue there was no "golden age" in universities, we believe that the dissonance we have encountered in becoming academics is a widely shared history and a necessary resource for questioning power, hierarchy and the closures being brought to workplace and cultural democracy. Historical perspective is critical to imagining "the university" and in our case it serves as an analytic lens for decoding/seeing through the current trends and practices of rampant managerialism. We believe this is necessary as foundational notions of the university as a key site of knowledge making through critical debate and for equitable social change and public good has, under neoliberalism, become "an alternative" or trivialised vision.[99] The dominant rationale of the neoliberal university is an economic project, articulated in narrow definitions of academic work, the instrumental value of study and dollar value of research impact. We believe there is a necessary place for nostalgia because we hold to participatory and democratic workplace goals that have been shaped by the past and are renewed continually as neoliberalism shapes our everyday labour. Historical perspectives are also important intergenerationally in order that younger academics may know that academic work and universities were not always what they are now. When managerialism is rampant and the workplace becomes toxic,[100] "nostalgia" is a political resource for coping, endurance and determination to find ways of enacting these fundamental beliefs.

Overview of the Chapters

The theme of "seeing through the cracks" is developed across this and the second volume. In Part I, *Seeing outside-in*, we use the metaphor to emphasise that academic work is misrecognised and not represented by

the public face of the university as conveyed in the rhetoric of university mission statements, glossy marketing, policies and strategies. Universities' website material makes inspiring claims about transformative directions, as inclusive and engaged agents of educational democracy and as embracing cultures of respect and care for students and staff. These chapters paint a picture of institutional life that seems a parallel universe. Behind the shiny public facade, we see how "traditional" aims are carelessly discarded by the hand of authoritarian managerialism.

The chapters in Part I elaborate on the intensification of academic work and accountabilities in administration, teaching and research. These chapters are autoethnographic, based on lived experience and/or fictionalised accounts of the everyday realities of academics. The authors use a range of analytic approaches to elaborate on the consequences of academic performative functionality in neoliberal universities. In Chap. 2, Roberto Bergami likens contemporary managerial structures to feudal hierarchies with authoritarian regimes ruling from afar and quashing dissent. He argues that rewards accrue to the nobles, and peasants and serfs' work conditions deteriorate as academics are marginalised from decision-making, managers tinker with "quality" and administration trumps teaching and research. In Chap. 3, Martin Andrew's depiction of deteriorated workplace relations takes us deep into a Dantean world. He draws on a medieval play to allegorise an autoethnography of changing academic identity. His study anatomises the "colliding and colluding" "double negative" of unmitigated neoliberal managerialism and workplace toxicity. The details of his journey to hell and back – and beyond – are compelling, alarming and familiar. From betrayal-born/e disillusionment, the academic moves to hope through self-severance and finding space in the "paraversity".

Some chapters speak to a neoliberal quashing of critical pedagogies and colonisation of academic time.[101] In Chap. 4, Mark Vicars employs the practice of parrhesia, to speak freely of rituals of power and psychological, social and emotional dis/ease that is personal and global. His re-stories of "truth, lies and make believe" reveal the damage done by rampant managerialism to teaching roles and relationships with students and colleagues. Managing unmanageable workload and administrative systems that do not work is met with indifference or insinuations of the academic just not

being up to scratch: "There is a sense of if you don't want to die doing your job then you are just not up to it." Mat Jakobi takes us on other "dark tours" in Chap. 5, examining the neoliberalisation and settler colonisation of Aboriginal standpoints in education. Based on his experience as a "dark tourist", visiting a site of genocide in Phnom Penh and similar dark tours of educational and social policy that have wrought great suffering of Aboriginal peoples, Mat analyses his work as an Aboriginal teacher educator in terms of the "dark tour guide". His examination of curriculum, pedagogy and accountabilities situated in whitestream educational commodification, massification and economies of trading the Other, reveals how mandatory Aboriginal studies become rushed "package-tours" and diminish the provocations of this critical work, the dark tour guide's self-determination and whitestream students and colleagues' movement beyond voyeurism. In Chap. 6, Barbara Grant troubles the idea of "career" with an entanglement of ambivalent steps toward, around, away from and not foreclosing the possibility of becoming professor. Barbara weaves "personal" and "tiny stories" with career "litany" and "a mash-up of Unholy Elements" to interrogate this ambivalence, her submission and refusal of academic norms, "treasuring the freedoms" of academic life, and not having it "sprawl into every corner" of her life.

All of these chapters speak to the changed and changing relationships between academics and management and the final chapter in this section (Chap. 7) elaborates on these relations in terms of "precarious management" and precarity in academic life. In the context of changing Nordic universities, Paola Valero, Kenneth Jørgensen and Kristiina Brunila's "Affective Subjectivation in the Precarious Neoliberal Academia" works with "fictional, realistic stories" that open up the "public secrets" of academic life. As people face "the firing squad", subsequent "stabilisation" of their departments by numbers and how-to guides for self-improvement, the authors show how there is a constant ambivalence between anxiety and self-development in the creating of neoliberal subjects through affective subjectivation.

While the chapters in Part I also reveal generative spaces to think and act outside the containment of managerialism and performativity, this is the main focus of the chapters in Part II. In *Seeing inside-out,* contributors further detail constraints of audit managerialism and reveal cracks

between neoliberal spaces of closure and openness. In this context, Dorothy Bottrell and Maree Keating argue in Chap. 8, for a critical resilience that is concerned with surviving managerialism and sustaining political purposes. Critical resilience derives support in collegial groups, feminist networks and union involvement. The value of collective work and voices threads through the chapters in Part II.

The politics of creative 'frictions' are analysed in Chap. 9, with accounts of the project, *Courting Blakness: Recalibrating Knowledge in the Sandstone University* by the curator and influential contemporary artist Fiona Foley, academics Fiona Nicoll (project manager) and Zala Volcic and student volunteer and archivist, Dominic O'Donnell. The large-scale, multidimensional project was a powerful statement of Indigenous sovereignty and a unique resource for the university and broader public. The frictions encountered in mounting the project speak to the racialised politics of university power-brokerage and navigating tensions between "social justice and colonial state control; between collective service and individual achievement in a highly competitive research environment; between visions of education as a private and a public good; and between more or less contained and containing visions of the socially transformative potential of Indigenous art".

In Chap. 10, Peter Westoby and Lynda Shevellar's work in community development orients their methodology of listening to first and second stories of moving beyond survivalism in the managerial academy. Informed by Biradi's theory of colonising the soul and Rose's governing the soul, their everyday academic work navigates suffering through "delicate activism" to generative spaces for further agentic resistances. In Chap. 11, Katarina Tuinamuana, Robyn Bentley-Williams and Joanne Yoo reflect on their involvement in a women's writing group that "hijacked" an "act of compliance" with the research accountability regime. This was a creative feminist space in which to explore the "invisible" work of writing and a generative "third space of collaboration and collegiality".

Chapters 12, 13, and 14 explore the generative spaces of activist work in teacher education. Mary Weaven (Chap. 12) discusses the cultural value of poetry in society and specifically in pre-service teacher education, adopting a Freirean approach to literacy as praxis, in resistance to

the narrow standards and testing approach now normative. Her reflective analysis shows not only the power of poetry to move people but how the juxtaposition of approaches opens students' understanding of how neoliberalism works in education and the teaching profession. Claire Kelly's Chap. 13, reflects on an activist career in teaching, union work and teacher education, through the lens of feminist praxis. She brings biographical experience to teacher education, connecting historical activism with students' contemporary concerns in their placements and prospective work, relating external teacher education requirements with neoliberal re-alignments within the university. In Chap. 14, Jo Williams tackles the neoliberalisation of "community engagement", based on Freire's theory of emancipatory practice. Her chapter analyses the collective work she engaged in with colleagues in school communities and academia, bringing grassroots perspectives and a social justice orientation to collaboration. Jo proposes the components of struggle as including "collective dreaming", community knowledges, memories and vision, processes of conscientisation and building solidarities.

As universities become more closed to non-economic purposes, the chapters of this volume show how academics remain committed to collegial practices and visible and 'invisible' activisms that can be emancipatory and subversive. In the final chapter (Bottrell and Manathunga, Chap. 15) we reflect on the themes of managerial oppression and resistances and consider their interrelationship with processes of silencing and privilege. In this conclusion we highlight the "cracked continuities" of cultural democratisation through individual, collegial and collective resistances.

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