
Part 1

Perspectives and theories

'Spatializing' the sociology of education

Stand-points, entry-points, vantage-points¹

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Introduction

This chapter explores the implications of an absence of a critical spatial lens in the conceptual grammar of the field of the sociology of education. I argue that it is not sufficient to simply bring a spatial lexicon to our conceptual sentences (as in 'geographies' of classroom emotions; the school as a 'place'; communities of practice). This is to fetishize space, leaving a particular medium of power, projects and politics – space – to go unnoticed. Rather, to apply a critical spatial lens to the sociology of education means seeing the difference that space, along with time and sociality – the two privileged angles of view in modernity – makes to our understanding of contemporary knowledge formation, social reproduction and the constitution of subjectivities (Massey, 2005: 62; Soja, 1996: 71). By tracing out the ways in which space is deeply implicated in power, production and social relations, I hope to reveal the complex processes at work in constituting the social relations of 'education space' as a crucial site, object, instrument and outcome in this process. A 'critical' spatial lens in the sociology of education involves three moves: one, an outline of the ontological and epistemological premises of a critical theory of space; two, the specification of the central objects for enquiry to education and society; and three, bringing these theoretical and conceptual approaches together to open up an entry point for investigation, a vantage point from which to see education–society phenomena anew, and a standpoint from which to see how education space is produced and how it might be changed.

Move 1: a critical theory of space

Space is a highly contested concept in social science. Here, I will introduce the core vocabulary for a critical socio-spatial theory drawn from the leading theorists on space, including Lefebvre (1991), Soja (1996), Harvey (2006), Massey (1994), Smith (1992), Brenner (2003) and Jessop *et al.* (2008). This vocabulary, which has been developed over time and as a result of a series of spatial turns, offers us a set of theoretical and empirical concepts with which to work. The following assumptions are key: that, ontologically, space is social and real; that spaces are social relations stretched out; and that space is socially produced.

Epistemologically, space can be known through particular categories of ideas, as 'perceived', 'conceived' and 'lived' (Lefebvre, 1991), or as 'absolute', 'relative' and 'relational' (Harvey, 2006). These two framings will be developed in this chapter. Spaces are dynamic, overlapping and changing, in a shifting geometry of power (Massey, 1994). The organization of socio-spatial relations can take multiple forms and dimensions. This is reflected in a rich spatial lexicon that has been developed to make sense of the changing nature of production, (nation)state power, labour, knowledge, development and difference. Key concepts in this lexicon are 'territory', 'place', 'scale', 'network' and 'positionality'. These concepts are pertinent for the sociology of education, which has, as its central point of enquiry, on the one hand, the role of education in (re)producing modern societies, and on the other hand, an examination of transformations within contemporary societies and their consequences for education systems, education experiences, opportunities and outcomes.

An ontology of space

French philosopher Henri Lefebvre and British-born geographer David Harvey are both viewed as having transformed our understanding of space, from a largely geometrical/mathematical term denoting an empty area, to seeing space in more critical ways: as social, real, produced and socially constitutive. Lefebvre's intellectual project explicitly works with and beyond the binary of materialism and idealism. What marks out Lefebvre's meta-philosophical project is his concern with the possibilities for change by identifying 'third space' (Soja, 1996: 31), a space of radical openness. In other words, Lefebvre's approach is concerned, not only with the forces of production and the social relations that are organized around them, but *also moving beyond* to new, an-Other, unanticipated possibilities.

The introductory essay, 'The plan', in *The production of space* (1991) is regarded as containing Lefebvre's key ideas. Lefebvre begins by arguing that, through much of modernity, our understanding of space was profoundly shaped by mathematicians, who invented all kinds of space that could be represented through calculations and techniques (Lefebvre, 1991: 2). To Lefebvre, what was not clear was the relationship between these representations (mental space) and 'real space' – '... the space of people who deal with material things' (Lefebvre, 1991: 4).

However, Lefebvre was unhappy with pursuing an analytics of space centred on either continental philosophy or Marxism. He regarded this binary pairing as part of a conceptual dualism (conceived/idealism versus lived/materialism), closed to new, unanticipated outcomes. Lefebvre was particularly critical of the way continental philosophers, such as Foucault and Derrida, fetishized space, so that the mental realm, of ideas, representations, discourses and signs, enveloped and occluded social and physical spaces. To Lefebvre, semiology could not stand as a complete body of knowledge because it could not say much about space other than it was a text; a message to be read. Such thinking, he argued, was both political and ideological in that its science of space concealed the social relations of (capitalist) production and the role of that state in it (Lefebvre, 1991).

This did not mean Lefebvre embraced Marxism unproblematically. Though Lefebvre's project aimed to reveal the way the social relations of production projected themselves onto space (Lefebvre, 1991: 129), he was critical of the way Marxist theorists on the one hand fetishized temporality, and on the other hand reduced 'lived space' to labour and products, ignoring the complexities of all spheres of life (such as art, politics, the judiciary) and their attendant social relations. A more expansive idea of production was embraced to take account

of the multiplicity of ways in which *ideas are produced, humans are created and labour, histories are constructed and minds are made* (Lefebvre, 1991: 70–72). For Lefebvre,

social space subsumes things produced; and encompasses their relationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their (relative) order and their/or their relative disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence or set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object.

(Lefebvre, 1991: 73)

Similarly mindful of the need to avoid fetishizing space over time and vice versa, theorists such as Harvey (1989) and Massey (1994: 2) refer to 'space–time' to emphasize the integral nature of space and time, while Massey (1994) and Rose (1993) have advanced theoretical projects around gender as a social relation that is also profoundly spatially organized.

The twin ideas of 'space' and 'production' are central to Lefebvre's analysis. Using an approach he calls 'analysis followed by exposition', Lefebvre's project is to make space's transparency and claim to innocence opaque, and therefore visible and interested. A 'truth of space', he argued, would enable us to see that capital and capitalism influence space in practical (buildings, investment and so on) and political ways (classes, hegemony via culture and knowledge). It is thus possible to demonstrate the role of space – as knowledge and action – in the existing capitalist mode of production (including its contradictions), to reveal the ways in which spaces are 'produced', and to show that each society had its own mode of production and produces its own space. Furthermore, if – as he argued was the case – the transition from one mode of production to another over time entailed the production of new spaces, then our analyses must also be directed by both the need to account for its temporality *and* also its spatiality.

Harvey, in an essay entitled 'Space as a keyword' (2006), draws upon a Marxist ontology of historical materialism and, like Lefebvre, seeks to understand processes of development under capitalism. However, Harvey's central focus has centred upon capitalist temporalities and spatialities, specifically the contradiction between capital's concern to annihilate space/time in the circuit of capital, and capital's dependence on embedded social relations to stabilize the conditions of production and reproduction (Harvey, 1982, 1989). Nevertheless, for both writers, the production of space, the making of history and the composition of social relations or society are welded together in a complex linkage of space, time and sociality, or what Soja has called the trialectics of spatiality (1996).

Epistemologies of space

If epistemology is concerned with how we know, then the question of how to know space is also complicated by the multiple ways in which we imagine, sense and experience space. We travel through space, albeit aided by different means. We also attach ourselves to particular spaces, such as places of belonging, giving such places psycho-social meaning. Lefebvre's theoretical approach is to unite these different epistemologies of space. In other words, in order to '... expose the actual production of space ...' (Lefebvre, 1991: 16) '... we are concerned with logico-epistemological space, the space of social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias' (Lefebvre, 1991: 11–12). These claims led Lefebvre to identify and develop three conceptualizations of space at work all of the time in relation to any event or social practice: spatial practice (the material, or *perceived space*); representations of space (or conceptualized

space, or *conceived space*); and representational spaces (it overlays physical space and is directly lived through its associated images and symbols; or *lived space*) (Lefebvre, 1991: 38–39). Like his meta-philosophical embrace of idealism and materialism, Lefebvre's epistemology is never to privilege one spatial dimension over another, for instance conceived space over lived space. Rather, the three dimensions are part of a totality, a 'trialectics of being' (Soja, 1996: 71).

Harvey's epistemology of space is somewhat different. Though both agree upon the materiality of space, which Harvey calls 'absolute space', while Lefebvre refers to it as 'perceived space', Harvey offers two alternative concepts to make up a somewhat different tripartite division: that of 'relative space' and 'relational space'. Applied to social space, space is relative in the sense that there are multiple geometries from which to choose (or not), and that the spatial frame is dependent upon what is being relativized and by whom (Harvey, 2006: 272). So, for instance, we can create very different maps of relative locations depending on topological relations, the various frictions enabling movements through space are different, the different spatio-temporal logics at work, and so on. The idea of 'relational space' is intended to capture the notion that there are no such things as time and space outside the processes that define them. This leads to a very important and powerful claim by Harvey, of internal relations. In other words, 'an event or a thing at a point in space cannot be understood by appeal to what exists only at a particular point. It depends upon everything that is going on around it . . . the past, present and the future concentrate and congeal at a certain point' (Harvey, 2006: 274). This point is particularly pertinent for a critical theory of education and society, for it is to argue that it is critical to see 'events' in relation to wider sets of social, economic and political processes.

The spatiality and geometry of power

In the arguments advanced so far, the idea that space is a form of power is implicit. Doreen Massey (1994: 2005) makes this explicit. Not only is space social relations stretched out, but these social relations constitute a 'geometry of power' (Massey: 1994: 4). This is a dynamic and changing process. This implies a plurality (Lefebvre, 1991) or a ' . . . lived world of a simultaneous multiplicity of spaces' (Massey, 1994: 3), of uncountable sets of social spatial practices made up of networks and pathways, bunches and clusters of relationships, all of which interpenetrate each and superimpose themselves on one another (Lefebvre, 1991: 86). This multiplicity of spaces is ' . . . cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one-another, or existing in relations of paradox or antagonism' (Massey, 1994: 3). To insist on multiplicity and plurality, argues Massey, is not just to make an intellectual point. Rather, it is a way of thinking able to reveal the spatial as 'constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales, from the global reach of finance and telecommunications through the geography of the tentacles of national political power, to the social relations within the town, the settlement, the household and the workplace' (Massey, 1994: 4).

Massey's (2005: 147) relational politics of space is also more in tune with Lefebvre's, of a framing imagination – like 'anOther' – that keeps things more open to negotiation, and that takes fuller account of the 'constant and conflictual process of the constitution of the social, both human and non-human' (2005: 147). In Massey's view (2005: 148), this is not to give ground to the modernist project, of no space and all time, or the postmodern project, of all space and no time, but to argue for configurations of multiple histories, multiple entanglements, multiple geographies, out of which difference is constituted, and where differences count.

The organization of spatial relations – a methodology

Jessop *et al.* (2008) take up the challenge of advancing a methodology for studying spatial relations. They propose a lexicon that includes key concepts such as 'territory', 'place', 'scale', 'network' and 'positionality'.

'Territory' refers to the boundaries that constitute space in particular ways, as differentiated, bordered areas of social relations and social infrastructures supporting particular kinds of economic and social activity, opportunity, investment and so on. Territories are arenas to be managed and governed, with the state and the boundaries of the nation state particularly important throughout the twentieth century (Harvey, 1982: 390, 404). Territories are filled with normative content, such as forms of identification. Interest in the idea of territory and processes of territorialization emerged when attention turned to the assumption that political power was established around national boundaries by nation states, and that these boundaries also served to define societies as 'nationally bounded'. The unbundling of the relationship between territory and sovereignty since the 1980s has resulted in changing spatialities of statehood (Brenner, 2003), the changing basis of citizenship claims (Robertson, 2009) and forms of subjectivity. Territory, as a spatial form of organization, can be read as absolute (a material thing, as in a human resource complex), as conceived (e.g. a map of a region) and as lived (e.g. attachment as a Canadian). It is relative in that the movement within and across territories, for instance, will be different, dependent upon where and how one is located. It is relational in that it is not possible to understand particular territories without placing them in their past, present or emergent futures.

'Scale' represents social life as structured in particular ways, in this case relationally, from the body to the local, national and global (Herod and Wright, 2002). This structuring of social life is viewed as operating at the level of the conceived and the material; in other words, that scales, such as the national or global are real enough; they are also powerful metaphors around which struggles take place to produce these social relations. Extending Lefebvre's insights into the social production of space, Smith (1990) has termed this the 'social production of scale'. Work on scales, their recalibration and re/production, have helped generate insights into the making of regions (scale-making), the global, the reworking of the local, and strategic bypassing of the scales (as in scale jumping) and so on. Scales themselves may shift in importance as a result of processes that include new regionalisms, globalization and decentralization. There have also been important critiques of scale advanced by writers such as Marston *et al.* (2005) for the conceptual elasticity of the concept and, more importantly, the privileging of vertical understandings of socio-spatial processes, rather than vertical and horizontal. Marston *et al.* (2005: 420) are at pains to point out that the power of naming (as in representations of space) should not be confused with either perceived or lived spaces. This is an important point and emphasizes the value of ensuring we keep these epistemologies distinct in our analysis.

'Place', on the other hand, is constituted of spatialized social relations and the narratives about these relations. Places, such as 'my home' or 'my school', only exist in relation to particular criteria (as in 'my school' draws upon criteria such as formal learning, teachers and so on), and, in that sense, they are material, they are social constructions or produced (Hudson, 2001: 257), and they are lived. Massey argues that place emerges out of the fixing of particular meanings on space; it is the outcome of efforts to contain, immobilize, to claim as one's own, to include and therefore exclude (1994: 5). 'All attempts to institute horizons, to establish boundaries, to secure the identity of places, can in this sense be seen as attempts to stabilize the meaning of particular envelopes of space-time' (Massey, 1994: 5). Amin puts this relational argument a

little differently: that place is '... where the local brings together different scales of practice/social action' (2004: 38) and where meanings are constituted of dwelling, of affinity, of performativity (Amin, 2004: 34). From the perspective of production, places are '... complex entities; they are ensembles of material objects, workers and firms, and systems of social relations embodying distinct cultures and multiple meanings, identities and practices' (Hudson, 2001: 255). Importantly, places should not be seen as only whole, coherent, bounded or closed, though they may well be (Hudson, 2001: 258). Rather, we should *also* see places as potentially open, discontinuous, relational and as internally diverse, as they are materialized out of the networks, scales and overlapping territories that constitute this space-time envelope (Allen *et al.*, 1998: 55–56). For Hudson (2001: 258), the degree of 'closedness' or openness is an empirical question rather than an a priori assertion.

More recently scholars, influenced by the work of Castells (1996), have advanced a relational reading of space that '... works with the ontology of flow, connectivity and multiple expression' (Amin, 2004: 34). In this work, social relations stretch horizontally across space (implicitly questioning scale – as in local to global – as the main organizer of place). The metaphor representing this idea is the 'network'. The project is not to focus on spatial hierarchies, as is implied in the idea of scale, but on the transversal, the porous nature of knots and clusters of social relations. The idea of 'the network' has become particularly appealing and powerful in thinking about interspatial interconnectivity – for instance in governance systems, inter-firm dependencies, communities of participants and so on. And while this way of conceiving space has a materiality about it, as we can see with, for instance, communities of Internet game-players, the organization of a firm, or a network of experts, it is a way of representing spatial organization. Most importantly, however, the idea of the network is to press the temporality of spatial formations: as 'temporary placements of ever moving material and immanent geographies, as "hauntings" of things that have moved on but left their mark in situated moments in distanced networks that cross a given place' (Amin, 2004: 34). The reason for pressing this way of reading (network versus scale and territory) is, for Amin, a question of politics: it relates, not only to the scope and reach of local political activity, but also what is taken to count as political. This is a particularly important point for understanding current developments in education, particularly higher education, as local entities, such as universities, stretch their institutional fabrics across space.

For Shepherd, 'positionality' is a corrective to the fascination with networked relations, which tend to overlook '... the asymmetric and path dependent ways in which futures of places depend on their interdependencies with other places' (2002: 308). Positionality within a network is dependent upon which network one participates in; it is emergent and contingent rather than pre-given; and it describes how different entities are positioned with regard to one another in space/time. Positionality is relational, it involves power relations, and it is enacted in ways that tend to reproduce and/or challenge existing configurations. For Shepherd (2002: 319), the idea of positionality is critical in calling attention to how connections between people and places – such as the World Bank in Washington and the African economies, or members of a household – play a role in the emergence of proximal and geographic inequalities. Similarly, drawing locales and their pre-capitalist forms of production into circuits of capitalist production (for instance, bringing pre-capitalist/pre-modern tribal relations in Samoa into capitalist colonial networks of relations) draws these actors into new social relations of power and inequality. Finally, the conditions for the possibility of place do not necessarily depend upon local initiative but, rather, with the interactions with distant places. For example, education provision in Cyprus is partly shaped by Cyprus's relations with the European Commission, while member states of the World

Trade Organization are differently positioned with regard to the centres of global power, so that negotiating education sectors will be differently experienced as a result.

The importance of Jessop *et al.*'s (2008) intervention is to advance an approach that overcomes the privileging of one spatial form of organization over another – e.g. scale over other spatialities: the result of what they argue are different turns that unfortunately display all of the signs of '... theoretical amnesia and exaggerated claims to conceptual innovation' (p. 389). For Jessop *et al.*, it is important to see that these processes and practices are closely linked and, in many cases, occurring simultaneously, and propose a way of reading these together. This is important and clearly offers sets of readings of events that are not limited to one spatial form of organization.

Move 2: the conceptual grammar of the sociology of education

The question of how to lay out the conceptual grammar of the field is a particularly challenging one. One way is to work at a particular level of abstraction so as to enable the possibility of translation across the different ontological and epistemological traditions that are brought to bear on the education and society relationship. Dale's (2006) work on 'the education questions' is particularly valuable here. There are three levels of questions. Level 1 focuses on the practice; level 2 on the politics of education; and level 3 on the outcomes of education. In opening up these three levels we can then begin to place key approaches, topics, issues and debates that have taken place over time and space and in relation to particular kinds of social relation and forms of social reproduction. These questions are specified in four ways:

- 1 *Who is taught what, how, by whom, where, when; for what stated purpose and with what justifications; under what (school/university classroom) circumstances and what conditions; and with what results?*
- 2 *How, by whom, and at what scale are these things problematized, determined, coordinated, governed, administered and managed?*
- 3 *In whose interests are these practices and politics carried out? What is the scope of 'education', and what are its relations with other sectors of the state, other scalar units and national society?*
- 4 *What are the individual, private, public, collective and community outcomes of education?*

In relation to *who is taught what, how, by whom, when and where*, we immediately can see that learning opportunities are differentially experienced, and different kinds of learning are acquired. This has been a major field of concern for sociologists such as Bourdieu (1986) and his argument that various forms of capital (cultural, economic and social) are differently mobilized and realized through learning experiences in the home, in schools and in the wider society. Similarly, Bernstein's (1990) work on pedagogic discourse and its relationship to class, codes and control links pedagogy to wider processes of social reproduction. There is a considerable literature on the ways in which social relations, such as gender, race, sexuality and old colonial relations (cf. Arnot and Reay, 2006; Gillborn and Youdell, 2006; Smith, 2006), are produced through what is taught to whom, and where.

Concerning the questions of *'how, by whom and at what scale are these things problematized, determined, coordinated, governed, administered and managed?'* and *'in whose interests are these practices and politics carried out?'*, this is broadly the province of governance (cf. Dale, 1996). Sociological research around this question has concerned itself with the emergence of markets as a mechanism of coordination (cf. Gewirtz *et al.*, 1995; Ball, 2007; Ball *et al.*, 1996; Levin and Belfield, 2006);

the rise in importance of international organizations, such as the OECD, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, in shaping education agendas within national states (Rizvi and Lingard, 2006; Robertson *et al.*, 2002); the emergence of private companies in providing education services (cf. Ball, 2007; Hatcher, 2006; Mahony *et al.*, 2004); and how new economic sectors are being produced, bringing education more tightly into the global economy (cf. Brown and Lauder, 2005; Guile, 2006; Kamat *et al.*, 2004).

Finally, in relation to the question about *outcomes* as a result of these projects and processes as they are mediated through education, we begin to see very clearly that particular identities are produced, families advantaged or excluded, classes constituted, genders reproduced, populations privileged and so on through education. Here, concepts such as social mobility, social inheritance, social stratification, social class, cultural consumption, citizenship, identity and community are facets of those wider social relations: the result of how knowledges, power and difference are also constituted through a multiplicity of differentiated education spaces.

Move 3: spatializing the sociology of education

In this final section, I want to reinforce the point I made in my introductory remarks: that the sociology of education is spatially rich in the metaphors used to name and understand social processes and relations, but analytically and theoretically weak in accounting for the difference that space makes. Adopting a critical spatial analytic, of the kind I have outlined above, means taking seriously the following propositions in relation to the sociology of education: that

- 1 social relations are *latent in space* and reproduced through systems such as education;
- 2 education spaces are a product;
- 3 education spaces are *produced*;
- 4 *education spaces are polymorphic*;
- 5 *education spaces* are dynamic geometries of power and social relations; and
- 6 education spaces and subjectivities are the outcome of a dialectical interaction.

There are any number of possible routes through, and reworkings of, the sociology of education in relation to space, time and sociality. It should also be noted that the different levels of education questions are likely to be worked out using particular combinations of concepts from the spatial lexicon outlined above.

For instance, absolute and perceived education spaces, such as a school, are simultaneously territorial (with boundaries that include and exclude) and networked (connected territories or nodes). We can use the two different epistemologies advanced by Lefebvre and Harvey above, together with the different forms of spatial organization outlined above, to generate a grid, as below with illustrative processes content.

Given the exigencies of length, I will only develop two examples from the education questions above to show what this might mean: first, 'tracking' students into different education groups, and second, processes of decentralization/marketization in education governance (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2). Typical organizational processes in which almost all schooling systems differentiate learners in some way in the education system are through spatial practices such as 'grouping', 'tracking' or 'streaming', or through the provision of different kinds of schooling experience, such as private versus public schools, or vocational schools versus comprehensive schools.

Table 1.1 'Tracking': spatial stratification

	<i>Spatial practice</i> [perceived space]	<i>Representations of space</i> [conceived]	<i>Spaces of representation</i> [lived]
Absolute space	particular knowledges/ lessons delivered to 'tracked' student; classroom	class groups/ability/ year levels/school types; school prospectus; school uniform;	aspiration; feelings of worth/ lessness; belonging; withdrawal; resistance and rebellion
Relative space	different levels of student development; local school ecology; school mix (of social classes; cultural backgrounds)	'ability' as innate intelligence/tracks and grades as reflecting capabilities; public-private school contrasts; inspection reports;	anxiety over resources need to produce competence; 'nothing here for us-we always fail; reject schooling as 'un-cool' failing/ successful school
Relational space	School as a system of reproduction over time; performance in the education system	Re/production of failure; 'meritocracy'; social stratification	being a competent learner; the working class ; class strategies such as voice, exit and choice; white flight

Table 1.2 Decentralisation/markets: spatial governance

	<i>Spatial practice</i> [perceived space]	<i>Representations of space</i> [conceived]	<i>Spaces of representation</i> [lived]
Absolute space	movement of responsibilities to new nodes outward and upward; downward; new sectors	local development plans; partnership plans; sub-contracting/outsourcing; school development plans; local visions; markets	anxieties over opportunities for choice; greater organisational responsibilities without power to affect necessary changes; surveillance; performativity
Relative space	Different geometries of governance relations that cut across scales; rescaling;	local development, social capital, community expertise, partnership; public/private; third sector [networks]	differential choices; different inspection regimes; different feelings of involvement by wider community
Relational space	policy frameworks that operate at multiple nodes; competitiveness	global discourses of choice, markets, self management, entrepreneurialism; neo-liberal political project	desires of consumer; entrepreneur; flexible; anxiety about responsibility for one's future

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Foucault and education

Inés Dussel

It is somewhat paradoxical to devote a chapter to an author who insistently challenged the authority of proper names and who called for a dismantling of the "author function" as part of his critique of the essentialist view of the subject.¹ Yet, Foucault's name has become unavoidable for social theorists in the last thirty years, and his place within the sociology of education cannot be questioned—however problematic it remains, as will be discussed later. Not only was he a prolific writer, with fifteen books published during his lifetime (1926–1984), and several more, along with over 360 articles, chapters and interviews, collected and printed after his death,² but, in some respects, it could be argued that he continues to be so, as several of his courses at the Collège de France are still waiting to be edited and published, and new interviews and collections appear periodically. He has also been the subject of innumerable books and articles, with which whole libraries could be filled.

Although he did not consecrate an entire book, nor even a complete text, to the question of education, his impact on educational thought and particularly on the field of the sociology of education has been substantial. This fact is most remarkable considering that his philosophy is a bitter pill to swallow for educators, as it shakes most of the grounds on which modern schooling has been built: truth, knowledge, vocation, enlightenment, or salvation. Not surprisingly, his denunciation of the injustices committed by educational institutions has turned his work into a cornerstone for critical pedagogy since the mid 1970s.³ For example, in the Anglo-speaking academic field, Stephen Ball (1990) edited a thoughtful compilation on the uses of Foucault's work for educational policy and sociology, and Tom Popkewitz (1991) produced a political reading of the rhetoric of educational reform and change, and of pedagogical discourse, based on Foucault's texts. These few examples show the extent to which Foucault's work has helped renew the topics and methodologies of educational thought.⁴

What is most important is that his political stances on education have extended in the educational field well beyond critical pedagogy. After Foucault, it is difficult to state undauntedly that education is concerned solely with doing good to people and promoting social progress. It is not unusual to listen to undergraduates or teachers speaking about the relationship between schools and the production of disciplined bodies, or to refer to histories of education in terms of genealogies. At least in continental Europe and Latin America, it has almost become

commonplace to quote bits and pieces of *Discipline and punish* to denounce the fact that schools discipline (in the sense of repress) children (Foucault, 1995).

To become such a widely recognized author has not been without consequences. It could be said that the discomfort originally caused by Foucault's work has, more times than would be desirable, been domesticated and turned into a comfortable reading position (as was observed by McLeod, 2001). This chapter intends to argue against this taming of Foucault's work into a "safe knowledge strategy" and its conversion into a conceptual apparatus that already knows what it is going to find. Maybe it is about time to ask if the once-discomforting Foucaultian interventions can still be sharp and poignant, and if the knowledge they produce is useful for "cutting" our current ways of understanding education as a social action (Foucault, 2003b).

In the field of the sociology of education, this kind of domestication has led to Foucault's work being read as somewhat flat sociological descriptions. Let's take, for example, the book that has become part of the "vulgata" of educational sociology. Castro (2004b), author of an impressive book on Foucault's vocabulary, defies such a reading: "*Discipline and Punish* is not a book on sociology: it does not describe a society but an ideal." Something similar was asserted by Foucault in an interview conducted shortly after the publication of the book: "If I had wanted to describe 'real life' in the prisons, I indeed wouldn't have gone to Bentham." (Foucault, 2003a: 253) He immediately added that to assume that ideals are not part of reality is to hold a very poor notion of the real, but he certainly did not think that, when writing *Surveiller et punir*, he was producing the ultimate work on the sociology, or even the history, of the prison or of schooling.

This reading of Foucault's complex and multilayered work as plain sociological descriptions is one of the reasons why his inclusion within the field of the sociology of education remains problematic. Also, his texts refuse to comply with the classical rules of sociological work that prescribe detachment and neutrality, and renounce the possibility of finding "social" (namely, pre-discursive) truths and causes in a "real world" that is supposed to exist outside discursive practices (an assumption shared by critical sociological traditions).

On the other hand, many of his gestures have been welcomed by those seeking to renew sociological practices, especially when he looked for regularities and patterns of social discourses that simultaneously accounted for singularities, when he sought to problematize and historicize what we conceive of as "the social," and when he rejected prescriptive and judicial positions about social events. He intended to "address 'practices' as a domain of analysis, approach the study from the angle of 'what was done'" (Foucault, 2003c: 4). Foucault's value for sociologists might well be the opposite of the flat descriptions we are currently offered: his work enables us to open up what we think the social is, and to interrogate the totalizing discourses of the social sciences.

Taking as its point of departure this problematic relationship between Foucault's work and the sociology of education, this chapter proposes an overall discussion of his texts around three concepts that can help unfold this tension in different directions. Those three concepts are power, body, and critique. In this piece, there is no intention to exhaust a far-too-vast *oeuvre*, not only because of its magnitude but also because it would be impossible to account for all the exegesis and critiques that have been raised about these main concepts. Another important point for this *International Handbook* is that the reading of Foucault is tied to national traditions and problematics, in many more ways than could be accounted for in these pages. Variations in the role of the state, of scientific discourses, and even the traditions of teaching produce disparate readings of Foucault that would need a closer scrutiny.⁵ More humbly, the chapter aims at

producing a few troubling effects on what we think we already know about Foucault and its value for a sociology of education, and will do so using less well-known texts that, hopefully, might still tell us something poignant about these highly navigated topics.

Power

Power has been a major theme in Foucault's work. Following Edgardo Castro's annotated vocabulary (2004a), "power" appears 7,276 times throughout all his French texts, while "knowledge" appears 4,025 times, and "body," 3,554. However, power is an elusive concept for the French philosopher. He stated that it should not be considered a substance but a relation; that it is microphysical and multiform, and operates in multiple games that have their own historicity (Foucault, 1983). There is no single power that can be located at a given place; it is some sort of an analytic grid or logbook that helps us understand how subjects relate to each other and how institutions are organized. It is a relationship that can be exercised from outside inside and from inside outside (Foucault, 1983). Power is not a zero-sum game: we all have some kind of power, not necessarily comparable to others. Another basic trait is that power is repressive as much as it is productive; power obliges, but also incites, mobilizes. It is embodied and enacted in our bodies and in our discourses:

Governing people . . . is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants; it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which impose coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself.

(Foucault, 1997b: 182)

At some point, Foucault (1997a: 51) provides a definition of power as "a whole series of particular mechanisms, definable and defined, which seem likely to induce behaviors or discourses." This capacity to "conduct the conduct," to influence others, is as marvelous as it is dangerous, and produces effects that have to be closely monitored. Foucault says, in a suggestive essay on the value of rebellion, that,

The power that one man exercises over another is always perilous. I am not saying that power is evil by nature; I am saying that, owing to its mechanisms, power is infinite (which does not mean to say that it is all powerful; quite to the contrary).

(Foucault, 1999: 134)

In this essay, he asserts that a proof that power is not totally oppressive is that there are human beings who revolt. And these revolts are the ones that allow history to become such, and not a determinist evolution. Foucault pictured those revolts as the anonymous rebellions of "abnormals," of outcasts, of those in the margins, but precisely because of that, the most heroic kinds of revolt. He considered that one should always have

to be respectful when something singular arises, to be intransigent when power offends against the universal . . . It is always necessary to watch out for something, a little beneath history, that breaks it, that agitates it; it is necessary to look, a little behind politics, for that which ought to limit it, unconditionally.

(Foucault, 1999: 134)

A little beneath history and a little behind politics: Foucault urges us to look *in other places*, and these other places are not defined *loci* (margins or centers) but are continuously redefined in terms of the game. The sociology of education, informed by a Foucaultian framework, should be thought of as a mobile and historical cartography, and not as a static picturing of an already defined topography.

How do these ideas resonate in the sociology of education? I would like to focus on the critique of teaching as an oppressive social power, an important part of the Foucault “vulgata” already mentioned. George Steiner, usually not very passionate about Foucault’s thought, appraises the philosopher’s contribution to thinking about pedagogical relationships, and especially about the figure of the Teacher.

No matter how simplified it has become, Foucault’s point of view is still relevant. Teaching could be considered as an exercise, open or hidden, of power relations. The Teacher has a psychological, social, and physical power. S/he can reward and punish, exclude and rise. Her authority is institutional, charismatic or both at the same time. She is helped by the promise or the threat.

(Steiner, 2003: 13)

Steiner affirms unapologetically that Teachers (with a capital T) have a power that should be operated for good reasons. Yet similar statements about teachers always exercising some sort of power over their students, that exams are disciplinary institutions, and that authority always carries with it a risk have led some educators to incline themselves to a sort of pedagogical abstention, or to become wary of any type of education that has been equated to imposition and authoritarianism.

Foucault’s references on teaching reject this abstentionism and point to the need to understand, historically and sociologically, the discourses that have shaped teaching as a position of power.⁶ In one of his last texts, he said that authority is not condemned to be useless or authoritarian:

[the pedagogical institution] has often been rightly criticized . . . [Yet] I see nothing wrong in the practice of a person who, knowing more than others in a specific game of truth, tells those others what to do, teaches them and transmits knowledge and techniques to them. The problem in such practices where power—which is not in itself a bad thing—must inevitably come into play is knowing how to avoid the kind of domination effects where a kid is subjected to the arbitrary and unnecessary authority of a teacher, or a student put under the thumb of a professor who abuses his authority. I believe that this problem must be framed in terms of rules of law, rational techniques of government and ethos, practices of the self and of freedom.

(Foucault 1996b: 447)

In this text, Foucault invites the reader to think about education as a social and historical practice that involves power relations but that can be none the less a training exercise in the paradoxes of freedom, and that seeks to expand its limits through new experiences. Sociology, then, is not reduced to what the social actually is, but includes how it turned to be that way, and also what it can be if different ways of thinking are introduced.

Body

The second concept that will be reviewed is the body. Foucault insists repeatedly, clearly in *Discipline and punish* but in many other texts as well, that power is exercised first and foremost on bodies, and that is precisely the source of its materiality. The body is the surface on which this game is played, on which power is produced and repressed. The body is the surface upon which the law is written, patterns of normality are shaped, and relations of subjection and obedience are founded (Nievas, 1998).

As with power, Foucault conceives of bodies, not as mere substances (although their materiality is never questioned), but as the effects of discourses of power that have their own historicity. His many writings on the topic intend to open up sociological and historical perspectives on the body, yet this movement does not reduce the body to being the effect of a transcendental and already determined context. For example, in *Discipline and punish*, he goes from the inside to the outside: from the discourses on disciplining bodies to the more general regularities for organizing space and time, individuals, or power grids. It is not because of a given context that the body is produced in particular ways, but it is through understanding the minutiae of everyday monastic rules or apprenticeship regulations that one can learn something about a given epoch.

Following Foucault, Brazilian historian Denise Bernuzzi Sant’Anna wrote that the body is a polysemic text in which biology, psychological expressions, cultural anxieties and phantoms, and history get mingled. The body is

a mutant memory of the laws and codes of each culture, a register for the solutions and for the technological and scientific constraints of each time . . . The body has not ceased to be fabricated throughout time.

(Bernuzzi de Sant’Anna, 1995: 12)

This idea of fabrication clearly speaks about social and educational processes. One of the great merits of Foucault’s work has been to reframe the history and present of pedagogy as the history and present of an intervention on bodies. In the twentieth century, pedagogy and education were dominated by rational pedagogies, with echoes from Calvinist pedagogies—even in Catholic countries such as France or Spain—that conceived bodies as the site of sinful inclinations or, in the modern scientific version, pathologies and illnesses.

Foucault’s work has rendered visible the phenomenal concern about bodies in educational institutions. As British sociologist Philip Corrigan (1988) said, one usually forgets what schools made “with, to, and for my body.” Schools sought to produce a total transformation of students’ bodily behavior, through rules and regulations that prescribed social performances, appearances, and moral scales and that established “normal” patterns as well as deviations. Notions of decency and decorum, cleanliness and filthiness were tied into political, economic, and moral categories, and constructed power relations that had pervasive effects (cf. Vigarello, 1988). This construction persisted for many decades. In her reflections on bodies and schools, a contemporary Brazilian educator, Guacira Lopes Louro (1999), recalls the struggle with the educational authorities over the regulation of attire, particularly over the donning of uniforms, which apparently expropriated the students of their bodies and turned them into an indivisible part of the school community. These struggles condensed issues of authority and knowledge in schools that were far from marginal to their educational aims.

Against this mode of subjectivation through rigid patterns, pedagogies of sexual freedom or the “express yourself” type flourished in the 1960s and 1970s (Vigarello, 1978). Foucault’s work is very helpful also to counterbalance the influence of a certain naïf-romanticism on the natural qualities of bodies. Peter Cryle (2000), in an insightful essay on “The Kama Sutra as curriculum,” provides good arguments to discuss the idea that the natural and the spontaneous are outside discourse, and that any teaching of bodily behaviors goes against the authenticity and freedom of one’s own. Cryle points to the different modes of relationship to the body that are present in the Kama Sutra, whose sequence of exercises could even be conceived as a curriculum for erotic pleasure. Desire and pleasure, then, are never outside discourse; they are social practices that have been shaped by discourses that have their own historicity.

A sociological reading of Foucault’s thought about bodies in schools could also point to the new discourses that are being stated on contemporary bodies. Studies on aesthetic patterns, diets, surgeries and medical treatments—including the increasing pharmacopodia which children’s psychology is turning into—fashion, style, tattooing, piercings, are all important to understand how bodies are inscribed in and by power, and also where disruptions and revolts emerge.

Critique

The third point of this overview of Foucault’s work and its value for the sociology of education will deal with the notion of “critique.” Foucault was an acid critic of intellectuals’ pretentious claims of detachment and objectivity. According to his view, all the building of modern social science had served for producing discourses of truth on human beings, knowledge, and society that had resulted in subjections and domestications. He was especially critical of leftist intellectuals who, in the name of socialism and revolution, never abandoned their claims to dictate what is good, just, and true for the rest of their human fellows, and were never self-critical about their complicity with institutional powers, be it the Party, the University or the State. He also attacked the idea of revolution, as he disbelieved in the synchrony of ruptures: there is no such limit as a revolution, but a series of transformations, and these transformations are not held together necessarily by any unifying principle or meaning (Castro, 2004a).

However distant he felt himself from the figure of the “critical intellectual,” Foucault never gave up the role of critique and established, at least in some of his writings, a clear affiliation with what is usually known as the “progressive tradition” in social theory, particularly with Marxism and the Frankfurt School, although always escaping any re-introduction of the sovereign subject. In an entry on his own name that he prepared for a *Dictionnaire des philosophes* in the early 1980s, Foucault defined himself as heir to the critical tradition of Kant and decided to call his intellectual project “a critical history of thought” (in Rabinow and Rose, 2003: 1). In this respect, there are clear links between his project and the sociology of school knowledge and of educational discourses.

But there are other echoes of his view of “critique” that could point to different links and directions. In a conference delivered at the French Society for Philosophy in 1978, Foucault dealt with the notion of “critique” in a more consistent way. To the question of “what is critique?” he answered that it is an action, an instrument that “oversees a domain it would want to police and is unable to regulate” (Foucault, 1997a: 25). Rooted in the legacy of Enlightenment and in an attitude that has both come along with, and gone against, the political objectives of governing subjects, the art of critique has sought to be an act of defiance, of

opposition; a way of changing the government, of seeking a form of escaping it or displacing it. Critique is

A kind of cultural form, both a political and moral attitude, a way of thinking, etc. and which I would very simply call the art of not being governed or better, the art of not being governed like that and at that cost. I would therefore propose, as a very first definition of critique, this general characterization: the art of not being governed *quite so much*.

(Foucault, 1997a: 29)

The locus of critique is not a neutral or safe space. There is no place that can be preserved from power/knowledge strategies, and, in these games, we are all participants, we all take sides and are complicit to one or another power play.

Also, the subject who criticizes and intervenes, the subject of politics, is not a sovereign subject that could be defined a priori. Once again, Foucault was a master of discontinuous thought and of a politics that continually has to recreate itself. In an interview performed around politics and problematization, he discussed his own participation in collective movements:

“we” must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result—and the necessarily temporary result—of the question as it is posed in the new terms in which one formulates it . . . For example, I’m not sure that at the time when I wrote the history of madness, there was a preexisting and receptive “we” . . . Laing, Cooper, Basaglia⁷ and I had no community, nor any relationship; but the problem posed itself to those who had read us, as it also posed itself to some of us, of seeing if it were possible to establish a “we” on the basis of the work that had been done, a “we” that would also be likely to form a community of action.

(Foucault, 2003d: 21)

There is not a sovereign subject of revolt, nor is there one of critique, but communities of action. This comment also points to the fact that, as feminist and post-colonial critics have emphasized some years later building upon some of Foucault’s insights,⁸ critique is always a situated action that is to be localized in specific conditions and be engaged as a passionate activity, slanted and biased, that seeks to point out what the cost is of being governed in those ways, but also seeks to imagine which other forms would be possible so that we can reduce injustice and enlarge our margins of freedom.

To think around a situated critique implies a different relationship to temporality. In another interview conducted in 1978, Foucault manifested:

one of the most destructive habits of modern thought . . . is that the moment of the present is considered in history as the break, the climax, the fulfillment, the return of the youth, etc. . . . One must probably find the humility to admit that the time of one’s own life is not the one-time, basic, revolutionary moment of history, from which everything begins and is completed. At the same time, humility is needed to say without solemnity that the present time is rather exciting and demands an analysis. We must ask ourselves the question, What is today? In relation to the Kantian question, “What is Enlightenment?” one can say that it is the task of philosophy to explain what today is and what we are today, but without breast-beating drama and theatricality and

maintaining that this moment is the greatest damnation or daybreak of the rising sun. No, it is a day like every other, or much more, a day which is never like another. (Foucault, 1996a: 359)

Today is a day unlike any other day. One cannot sleep over one's own certainties, nor perform critical acts that repeat themselves and say nothing new. There is no definite or just solution to all social problems, but the important thing is that the question (of madness, of imprisonment, of power) remains open for a new strategy to emerge (Potte-Bonneville, 2007: 260). A just appraisal of Foucault within the sociology of education would be one that does not turn his work into a comfortable position, but one that keeps its vitality and poignancy. To think about schools and power after Foucault should imply daring to see what of his "art of impugnation" is helpful to think about this present, to grasp what it tells about ourselves as subjects of knowledge and as bodies, but also to see what discomforts us enough to build new communities of action in order to think and act differently about schools, knowledge, and power.

Notes

- 1 See, especially, "What is an author?" (Foucault, 1977). He was particularly wary of the kind of analysis that searches for a unifying principle within a certain *oeuvre* and that explains that principle in terms of the author's persona.
- 2 I have followed Bert (2004), who provides a thorough bibliography of Foucault.
- 3 Of course, Foucault's inscription in the field of critical pedagogy has not gone unchallenged. He has been labeled as a "young conservative" (Habermas, as quoted by Fraser, 1996), and it has been said that his work is characterized by an "absence of historicity, of individual agency, and of politics, in short" (Schrage, 1999). But also his work has been turned into a critical intervention against many of the assumptions stated by critical theories (see, for example, Popkewitz and Brennan, 1998; Tamboukou and Ball, 2003; Baker and Heyning, 2004). While it is important to understand these dissents and nuances, and this chapter clearly sides with the second type of intervention and not with the first type of reading, that path will not be pursued in these pages.
- 4 Among the earlier works can be noted Anne Querrien's thought-provoking genealogy of elementary schooling, which was oriented by Foucault himself (Querrien, 1976), and Georges Vigarello's erudite history of the corrections (dressage) of the body as the genealogy of a pedagogical power, ranging from the sixteenth- to the twentieth centuries (Vigarello, 1978). Valerie Walkerdine (1988) used Foucault's critique of liberal rationality to put into question the primacy of educational psychologies to explain the acts of knowing. More recent scholarship includes Baker and Heyning (2004), Jardine (2005), Olszen (2006, first edition in 1999), and Peters and Besley (2007).
It should be noted that the bibliography on Foucault/education is enormous and exceeds the few Anglo, Spanish, and French references I will be providing. Some other works are cited in the chapter, but I acknowledge that my selection is not fair to the numerous efforts made by many scholars to bring Foucault's work closer to the educational field. Apologies to all of them.
- 5 I thank Tom Popkewitz for pointing this out to me.
- 6 Popkewitz (1998) and McWilliam (1999) provide insightful Foucauldian readings of teaching.
- 7 All members of the anti-institutionalization movement in psychiatry in the 1960s.
- 8 This relationship has not been without tensions. Ann P. Stoler (1995) provides a good discussion on Foucault's silence on imperialism and colonialism. Spivak (2008) uses Foucault wisely to interrogate contemporary spectacles of punishment but also Middle East projects of modernization and westernization. Fraser (1996) and the collection in which it is included are but a few of the many examples that could be provided about these tensions.

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Education and critical race theory

David Gillborn and Gloria Ladson-Billings

Introduction

CRT's usefulness will be limited not by the weakness of its constructs but by the degree that many whites will not accept its assumptions; I anticipate critique from both left and right.

(Taylor, 1998: 124)

One of us recently gave a keynote lecture that formed the centerpiece for a conference dedicated to new approaches to understanding race/racism¹ in education. The address focused on Critical Race Theory (CRT), a relatively new approach pioneered by scholars of color in US law schools in the 1970s and 1980s, which has grown quickly since its introduction into US educational studies in the mid 1990s (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995) and is now an increasingly popular approach that is building an international profile (see Hylton, 2008; Lynn and Parker, 2006; Taylor *et al.*, 2009). At the end of the lecture the chairperson invited questions, and a White professor, sitting on the front row, raised his hand. Once invited to speak, the man stood, turned his back on the chair and speaker, and addressed the audience for several minutes on the "danger" posed by CRT. It was, he explained, a retrograde step in the search for educational equity because it gave primacy to race and diverted attention from the "real" issue, which, he informed us, was social class inequality as diagnosed by his chosen version of Marxism. After a spirited exchange and several other questions, the session came to a close and, as the audience began to filter out, a Black woman practitioner approached the podium to ask the lecturer a question, explaining that she didn't like to ask it in front of the whole audience. Before she could pose the question, however, the White professor strode to the lectern and physically positioned himself between the questioner and the lecturer, keen to explain more about his view of the current state of social theory. The incident reminds us of similar episodes reported by Trina Grillo and Stephanie Wildman, who describe some of the "guerilla tactics" used by Whites to "steal back the center" (1991). By arguing that race/racism be placed at the forefront of social critique, CRT challenges the assumed right of White people to see *their* perspectives and *their* interests placed center stage, and, hence, CRT has not been universally welcomed as an addition to critical theory in education.

Despite its detractors, CRT has rapidly established itself as one of the most important strands in contemporary educational theory. It has done this partly by focusing on the vital link between social theory and social activism, as David Omotoso Stovall (2006: 257) notes:

Arguing across conference tables is useless. For those of us who are concerned with the social justice project in education, our work will be done on the frontline with communities committed to change . . . neither race nor class exists as static phenomena.

Stovall is one of the leading writers in the new wave of critical race scholars who are taking forward CRT as both an academic discipline and a practice of resistance—praxis. The approach continues one of the basic assumptions of the foundational work in CRT, that is, that theory provides a set of *tools* to be applied and *ideas* to be used and refined. In this sense, social theory is always work in progress. But this does not mean that CRT is any less serious about the importance of theory—quite the contrary. From its very first iteration, critical race scholars have staked a claim to the conceptual importance of their work. The foundational critical race theorist, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, for example, recalls how she and colleagues identified a form of words that could be used to describe (and provide a rallying point for) the new ideas they were developing as they began to organize what was to become the first ever CRT workshop (held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in July 1989):

Turning this question over, I began to scribble down words associated with our objectives, identities, and perspectives, drawing arrows and boxes around them to capture various aspects of who “we” were and what we were doing . . . we settled on what seemed to be the most telling marker for this peculiar subject. We would signify the specific political and intellectual location of the project through “critical,” the substantive focus through “race,” and the desire to develop a coherent account of race and law through the term “theory.”
(Crenshaw, 2002: 1360–1361)

This practical and strategic orientation reflects a perspective that Derrick Bell terms “racial realism”: an approach that foregrounds an understanding of how the world really operates, rather than fetishizing some idealized notion that bears little resemblance to the lives and experiences of oppressed people (Bell, 1992). The real-world focus of CRT should not be seen as in any way lessening its claim to be taken seriously as a major innovation in social theory. As Crenshaw notes, from the very start CRT has encountered a patronizing attitude from academics who find its focus on race/racism distasteful and/or threatening. The foundational critical race scholars refused to be intimidated by such attacks:

. . . interference dovetailed with criticisms that were beginning to emerge from Stanford quarters in the form of a counter-critique to our earlier work, characterizing it as essentialist. Whether intended or not, in that critique some of us heard a crude characterization of our work as theoretically unsophisticated and politically backward.
(Crenshaw, 2002: 1357)

The roots of critical race theory

In many ways, CRT has its roots in the radical diasporic writings and resistances of previous centuries, including actions by enslaved African peoples (see Baszile, 2008; Bell 2004; Du Bois

1975, 1990; Mills, 1997, 2003). Contemporary CRT is a direct outgrowth from debates within US legal scholarship in the mid 1970s and 1980s. It began as a radical alternative to dominant perspectives, both the conservative “mainstream” and the ostensibly radical tradition of critical legal studies (CLS), which—in practice—treated race as a peripheral issue and foregrounded a concern with economic disadvantage (see Bell, 2005; Crenshaw, 2002; Crenshaw *et al.*, 1995; Delgado and Stefancic, 2001; West, 1995).

Key foundational CRT scholars include Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Lani Guinier, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia Williams. Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate (1995) first introduced CRT into education in the mid 1990s, and since then a growing number of educators have begun working with these ideas (see Dixson and Rousseau, 2006; Lynn and Adams, 2002; Parker, 1998; Solórzano, 1997; Stovall, 2006; Yosso, 2006; Yosso *et al.*, 2004). CRT now spans numerous disciplines, and the work often crosses epistemological boundaries (see Tate, 1997) and is also building an international presence, including work in the UK (Gillborn, 2005, 2008a; Hylton, 2008) and Australia (McDonald, 2003; Moreton-Robinson, 2004).

The tenets of critical race theory

From its earliest formulations, CRT has generally been united by a dual concern to understand and oppose race inequality. In an influential statement of the approach, Crenshaw and colleagues state:

Although Critical Race scholarship differs in object, argument, accent, and emphasis, it is nevertheless unified by two common interests. The first is to understand how a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained . . . The second is a desire not merely to understand the vexed bond between law and racial power but to change it.

(Crenshaw *et al.*, 1995: xiii)

Within CRT, the term “White supremacy” is used in a particular way that differs from its usual understanding in mainstream writing: whereas the term commonly refers to individuals and groups who engage in the crudest, most obvious acts of race hatred (such as extreme nationalists and Neo-Nazis), in CRT the more important, hidden, and pervasive form of White supremacy lies in the operation of forces that saturate the everyday mundane actions and policies that shape the world in the interests of White people:

[By] “white supremacy” I do not mean to allude only to the self-conscious racism of white supremacist hate groups. I refer instead to a political, economic, and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.

(Ansley, 1997: 592)

Many critical race scholars view White supremacy, understood in this way, as central to CRT in the same way that the notion of capitalism is to Marxist theory and patriarchy to feminism

(Stovall, 2006). This perspective on the nature and extent of contemporary racism is one of the key defining elements of CRT.

The centrality of racism

CRT begins with a number of basic insights. One is that racism is normal, not aberrant, in American society. Because racism is an ingrained feature of our landscape, it looks ordinary and natural to persons in the culture.

(Delgado and Stefancic, 2000: xvi)

CRT views racism as more than just the most obvious and crude acts of race hatred; it focuses on the subtle and hidden processes that have the effect of discriminating, regardless of their stated intent. In the political mainstream, "racism" tends to be associated with acts of conscious and deliberate race hatred; discrimination is assumed to be an abnormal and relatively unusual facet of the education system. In contrast, CRT suggests that racism operates much more widely, often through the routine, mundane activities and assumptions that are unquestioned by most practitioners and policymakers, e.g. through the design of the curriculum, the operation of certain forms of assessment, and the selection and training of teachers who overwhelmingly replicate dominant cultural norms and assumptions about race and racial inequality (Ladson-Billings, 2004).

Critical race theorists do not view racism as a simple or unchanging aspect of society. CRT challenges ahistoricism by stressing the need to understand racism within its social, economic and historical context (Matsuda *et al.*, 1993: 6). The notion of "differential racialization" refers to the constantly changing and malleable nature of racist stereotypes. For example, a group once seen as conservative and conformist might be redefined as competitive and threatening at another time, e.g. Japanese workers in the US and "Asian" groups in the UK during the twentieth century.

The focus on racism in CRT does not operate to the exclusion of other forms of social inequality. Indeed, a key aspect of CRT is a concern with "intersectionality," that is, an attempt to analyze how racism operates within and across other axes of differentiation such as social class and gender (Crenshaw, 1995; Gillborn and Youdell, 2009; Tate, 1997).

A critique of liberalism

CRT portrays dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, color-blindness, and meritocracy as camouflages for the self-interest of powerful entities of society.

(Tate, 1997: 235)

Another distinctive theme is CRT's critique of liberalism. In the education system, for example, racism is figured in the distribution of material and educational resources and even in teachers' notions of "ability" and motivation (Gillborn, 2008a). In this situation, the adoption of color-blind approaches (which refuse to acknowledge racial reality) and an emphasis on supposed "merit" (as measured by dominant assessments) may appear open and equitable, but the playing field is not level. Minoritized students are more likely to attend poorly funded schools with less highly qualified teachers and, because of socio-economic inequalities, they are less likely to enjoy additional educational resources at home (Ladson-Billings, 2006a). Under such unequal conditions, a color-blind insistence on a single "merit" standard will not only ensure that race inequalities continue but also present them as fair and just.

The call to context (experiential knowledge and storytelling)

CRT places a special importance on the experiential knowledge of people of color. There is *not* an assumption that minoritized groups have a singular or "true" reading of reality, rather there is recognition that, by experiencing racial domination, such groups perceive the system differently and are often uniquely placed to understand its workings.² Richard Delgado (1989) is one of the leading advocates of the need to "name one's own reality." Inspired by the scholarship of Derrick Bell and the centuries old traditions of storytelling in minoritized communities, Delgado argues forcefully for the use of narrative and counter-storytelling as a means of presenting a different reading of the world, one that questions taken-for-granted assumptions and destabilizes the framework that currently sustains, and masks, racial injustice. This approach makes CRT an easy target for those who are willing to oversimplify and seize the opportunity to accuse the approach of merely inventing its data, but such criticisms misunderstand the nature of counter-storytelling and ignore the fact that most CRT "chronicles" are tightly footnoted, so that detailed evidence is marshalled to back up each substantive part of the argument:

CRT scholars are not making up stories—they are constructing narratives out of the historical, socio-cultural and political realities of their lives and those of people of color.

(Ladson-Billings, 2006b: xi)

A revisionist critique of civil rights progress (the interest convergence principle)

Detractors have sought to present CRT as disrespectful of civil rights campaigns and their victories, but this misreads the approach. CRT is not critical of the campaigns or the people who sacrificed so much to advance race equality (Crenshaw *et al.*, 1995). Rather, CRT examines the limits to reform via law and policy making, and shows how even apparently radical changes are reclaimed and often turned back over time. A key element here is the concept of *interest convergence*. Put simply, this view argues that advances in race equality come about only when White elites see the changes as in their own interests. Derrick Bell (2004: 59), who coined the interest convergence principle, summarizes the idea like this:

Justice for blacks vs. racism = racism.

Racism vs. obvious perceptions of white self-interest = justice for blacks.

It is important to note that interest convergence does not envisage a rational negotiation between minoritized groups and White power holders, where change is achieved through the mere force of reason and logic. Rather, history suggests that advances in racial justice must be won, through protest and mobilization, so that taking action against racism becomes the lesser of two evils for White interests. For example, the moves to outlaw segregation in the 1960s are usually thought of as a sign of enlightenment and a landmark civil rights victory. But they must be understood within the context of the "cold war" and the US's need to recruit friendly African states (Dudziak, 1988):

"No such decision would have been possible without the world pressure of communism" which made it "simply impossible for the United States to continue to lead a 'Free World' with race segregation kept legal over a third of its territory."

(W.E.B. Du Bois, 1968, quoted in Bell, 2004: 67)

The moves to bring about desegregation would not have happened without the civil rights protests *and* a wider geo-political context that made continued violent suppression impractical. Furthermore, the gains themselves have rarely lived up to the politicians' rhetoric. The obvious signs of segregation—such as separate toilets and lunch counters—may have gone, but the reality of ingrained racism continues in economic, residential, and educational terms. It has been argued that more African Americans now attend segregated schools than they did in 1954 at the time of the Supreme Court decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001: 33). Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (2001: 24) describe the process like this:

after the celebration dies down, the great victory is quietly cut back by narrow interpretation, administrative obstruction, or delay. In the end, the minority group is left little better than it was before, if not worse. Its friends, the liberals, believing the problem has been solved, go on to something else . . . while its adversaries, the conservatives, furious that the Supreme Court has given way once again to undeserving minorities, step up their resistance.

Landmark victories may actually come to operate in ways that protect the racist status quo: these are sometimes known as “contradiction-closing cases,” which operate like a safety valve to provide a solution when the gap grows too large between, on one hand, the liberal rhetoric of equal opportunities and, on the other hand, the reality of racism.

[contradiction-closing cases] are a little like the thermostat in your home or office. They assure that there is just the right amount of racism. Too much would be destabilizing—the victims would rebel. Too little would forfeit important pecuniary and psychic advantages for those in power.

(Delgado, 1995: 80)

Landmark cases such as the *Brown* desegregation case in the US and the *Stephen Lawrence Inquiry* in the UK (Macpherson, 1999) appear to have addressed blatant race inequalities, but in reality little or nothing changes.³ Indeed, such cases are sometimes used as yet another weapon against further reform because they:

allow business as usual to go on even more smoothly than before, because now we can point to the exceptional case and say, “See, our system is really fair and just. See what we just did for minorities or the poor.”

(Delgado, 1999: 445)

Myths and misunderstandings: beyond the stereotypes of CRT

Like any new perspective, CRT has been subject to a range of responses and critiques. Some of the engagement has been positive and constructive, pushing critical race scholars to clarify their arguments and develop further analyses. Other of the responses, however, have sought to reassert traditional assumptions (in the guise of “scientific rigor”) or dismiss CRT as misguided or simplistic. As we have noted above, CRT offers a view of the world that is fundamentally at odds with mainstream assumptions, and so it is no surprise that the approach is often misunderstood. In this section we address three of the most common myths.

Myth 1: CRT assumes that race is the only thing that matters

Despite its central focus on racism, CRT does not insist that race is always the single most important factor in every situation. CRT argues that race/racism is always relevant to an understanding of wider social inequalities, but it is not the only element. Indeed, race inequity often cannot be fully understood in isolation from other axes of differentiation, such as class and gender. As Stovall (2006: 252) notes:

Vital to this misinterpretation is the semantics of referencing CRT as a critique solely of “race.” In no CRT literature is there a claim to the unanimity of race. The critique has and continues to be one of the functions of White supremacy and the complexities of race.

Myth 2: CRT sees all White people as a homogeneous mass of privileged racists

Detractors sometimes argue that, by identifying the underlying forces that legitimate and support White supremacy, CRT imagines all White people to be the same: in fact the criticism betrays a one-dimensional reading of CRT. Critical race scholars do not think that White people are uniformly privileged and racist, nor that all Whites benefit equally from White supremacy. Such a position is patently ludicrous, especially in view of the fact that foundational CRT writers have repeatedly noted how interest convergence usually operates to defend White elites at the expense of lower-class Whites (Bell, 2004). However, CRT *does* show how even working-class and poor Whites draw advantage from their Whiteness (Harris, 1993). Whites do not benefit *equally*, but they do all benefit from Whiteness to some degree (McIntosh, 1992). For example, when the attainment of the most economically disadvantaged White students in the UK dipped marginally below that of their Black peers, the media responded with stories blaming “the race relations industry” and claiming that neo-Nazi groups would gain an electoral advantage. The stories failed to mention that White students continued to out-perform virtually every minoritized group among the 86 per cent of the school population not counted as living in poverty (Gillborn, 2008b). Hence, even for the White students living in greatest poverty, their race means that the media perceive a national scandal if their achievement is not greater than similarly disadvantaged, minoritized peers.

Myth 3: CRT promotes hopelessness and despair by saying that things can never change

Derrick Bell (1992: ix) recalls an incident when he was challenged at a public reading of his work:

“Professor Bell, you have achieved much despite racial discrimination. How dare you now deny our children the hope that they may enjoy a success like yours?”

The author responded that “it was the society and not me” that closes down opportunities for African Americans; he did not create the situation, he “simply chronicled what society had done and was likely to do” (Bell, 1992: ix). In fact, far from promoting a sense of hopelessness, CRT insists on the vital importance of active resistance against racism. Bell argues that a total

victory over racism may prove elusive but sees a duty to combat injustice (against *all* oppressed groups) as a central component of what he calls “a life fulfilled” (Bell, 1992: xi). The history of racism and education in the UK, for example, clearly demonstrates that all meaningful advances in race equality have come about as a result of community action (Tomlinson, 2008). Antiracist activism may never entirely remove racism, but, in the absence of resistance, it is certain that racist inequity would worsen. As Frederick Douglass observed more than 150 years ago: “If there is no struggle, there is no progress . . . Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will” (quoted in Crenshaw, 2002: 1372).

Delgado and Stefancic respond to the accusation that CRT is a theory of despair by asking, “Is medicine pessimistic because it focuses on diseases and traumas?” (2001: 13). Indeed, Delgado turns the accusation on its head and identifies the lie at the heart of liberal perspectives that appear optimistic but disguise the true scale and nature of contemporary racism:

Suppose I am sent to an inner city school to talk to the kids and serve as role model of the month. I am *expected* to tell the kids that if they study hard and stay out of trouble, they can become a law professor like me. That, however, is a very big lie: a whopper. When I started teaching law sixteen years ago, there were about thirty-five Hispanic law professors, approximately twenty-five of which were Chicano. Today, the numbers are only slightly improved . . . Despite this, I am expected to tell forty kids in a crowded, inner city classroom that if they work hard, they can each be among the chosen twenty-five.

(Delgado, 1991: 1228, original emphasis)

Continuing debates and unresolved issues

CRT is gaining increasing attention but it is by no means a finished and settled set of approaches. CRT is a living and changing perspective, not a monolithic structure. There are, for example, many spin-off movements from traditional CRT, including critical race feminism and “LatCrit”—a version of CRT that focuses on the particular experiences and struggles of Latina/o communities (see Delgado and Stefancic, 1998; Dixson and Rouseau, 2006; Solórzano and Yosso, 2001; Wing, 1997). Although CRT in the US began with work that often focused on the position of African American communities, it is not the case that CRT adopts (or has ever supported) a simple racial binary perspective that views the world as divided between Whites and a unitary racial Other.

There are many important debates within CRT about the best way of conceiving its work and, in particular, the most effective means of moving things forward through a critical praxis, i.e. a combination of theoretical analysis and applied practical strategies of resistance (Lynn and Parker, 2006). Many of these debates raise issues that are relevant to a number of different perspectives and are by no means unique to CRT. For example, there is discussion about the level of group-identification/abstraction that is appropriate for different analytic and political purposes: sometimes it may be best to organize around a collective signifier that includes numerous minoritized groups, while at other times a more specific identity may be preferred (national, linguistic, or religious).

There is a continuing concern within CRT to understand the numerous, complex, and changing ways in which race/racism intersects with other axes of oppression, such as class, gender, disability, and sexuality. This concern with *intersectionality* is especially strong in critical

race feminism (Wing, 1997; Youdell, 2006). Indeed, building on Crenshaw’s work, UK scholars Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix (2004) argue that intersectionality itself can provide a useful focus that offers numerous advances on current single-issue thinking. As Crenshaw (1995) argues, rather than viewing intersectionality as a kind of problem to be solved, the best way ahead may be to use intersectionality as a key means of understanding how White supremacy operates and how to mount effective resistance.

Notes

- 1 There is no consistent and meaningful biological basis for the group categories that human societies name “race.” Although it masquerades as natural and fixed, “race” is a socially constructed category that changes from one society to another and even varies over time within the same society (see Mason, 2000; Mills, 1997; Omi and Winant, 1993). The social construction of “race” differences is *always* associated with raced inequities in some form (Leonardo, 2002); consequently, the notion of “race” inevitably carries racist consequences, and race/racism become categories that are mutually dependent and reinforcing.
- 2 This echoes Howard Becker’s observation about the importance of “outsider” perspectives to critical sociological analyses (Becker, 1967).
- 3 For a detailed account of the Stephen Lawrence case, showing how apparently huge advances in equity law have been marginalized and ignored, see Gillborn (2008a: chapter 6).

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4

The ethics of national hospitality and globally mobile researchers¹

Johannah Fahey and Jane Kenway

Introduction

In a globalized world, talent is increasingly mobile, and therefore hospitality emerges as an important concept that can be used to consider the ethics involved when a nation-state welcomes privileged foreigners as guests. In this chapter, we seek to engage with the politics of foreignness and the ethics of national hospitality. We use such notions in our discussion of the Singaporean government's 'foreign talent' (highly skilled foreigners) policy rhetoric as a means to problematize the relationship between the host nation, its citizens and guests. More specifically, we draw on Derrida's ideas about conditional and unconditional hospitality to examine the hospitality ideal and the ideal figure of the foreigner articulated within such discourse. This inquiry is situated more broadly in our ongoing political, epistemological, ontological and ethical analysis of both moving policies on researcher mobility and of mobile researchers themselves (Fahey and Kenway, 2008; Kenway and Fahey, 2008).

The knowledge economy

The idea of the knowledge economy has come to dominate the policy lexicon of transnational organizations and governments in many places around the world (Kenway *et al.*, 2006). Knowledge economies are 'directly based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information' (OECD, 1996: 7). Concerns about their economic power and status in the global knowledge economy have led most nations and regions into an intensifying competition for highly accomplished 'knowledge workers', now often called 'talent'. The increasing international mobility of talent has resulted in fears about 'brain drain' and about how to harness the expertise of 'highly mobile' talent. Brain drain/gain/mobility policy discourse is concerned with the implications of such mobility for the nation-state's or region's techno-scientific knowledge and innovation and creative capacity and thus ultimately the implications for its position in the global economy.

The extent to which a nation-state or region is negatively affected by the global movement of talent depends largely on its position within global geographies of power and knowledge.

There is a well-documented 'brain drain' from many 'developing to developed' nations, with little compensating 'regain' in terms of people and knowledge for the so-called 'sending' country (Lowell and Findlay, 2002). However, such nation-states are not the only ones expressing concern and seeking to attract and retain mobile, highly skilled talent. Many places are assessing their geopolitical situation and developing strategies both to prevent the loss of talent and to harness the talents of the globally mobile.

We seek to enhance the debates about the ethics of globally mobile policies on high-skills mobility and of mobile people themselves. Ethical questions are not usually high on the policy agenda, except when associated with the drain of highly skilled individuals from developing countries to developed countries and the disastrous consequences of such asymmetrical mobility for developing countries. While these debates are crucial and deserve much more attention, it is also the case that other ethical issues arise with regard to different geopolitical locations and the place-specific manner in which they participate in this global domain.

We focus here on Singapore and its state-led policy initiative to recruit and retain highly skilled 'foreign talent'.² Given the scope of our interests in this paper, we will talk generally about debates in Singapore on foreign talent (high-skills knowledge workers) and more specifically about how such discussions apply to university researchers (who are a significant sector of the knowledge economy).

Singapore

Singapore is the smallest nation (a city-state) in South East Asia, has no natural resources and therefore relies on people or 'human capital' as a key economic resource. However, owing to its small population of approximately 4.59 million (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2008), it has a limited pool of 'local talent'. Therefore, Singapore's success in the knowledge economy is dependent on its being able to recruit talent from elsewhere to develop a globally competitive work force. In 2006, Singapore's intake of foreign talent represented 13.4 per cent (about 90,000 people) of Singapore's total non-resident population (Yeoh, 2007a). In global terms, it is uniquely positioned as a tiny nation, with a highly competitive economy (the sixth wealthiest country in the world in terms of GDP per capita), contending with other, much larger nations within the region, including China, India and Australia. More than this, it is precisely because of Singapore's geographical location, as an intersection point between these larger nations, that it is emerging as a significant knowledge hub within this region.

Now an independent republic, Singapore was once a British colony and, upon achieving independence from Britain, it became a part of Malaysia (1963–1965) before being expelled from the federation. The ruling People's Action Party (PAP) has been in power since Singapore's first compulsory elections in 1959, and many commentators have suggested that Singapore is a procedural rather than a true democracy (Mauzy and Milne, 2002; Mutalib, 2003): 'the development of Singapore as a nation-state through government decisions tends to be conflated with the party's directives' (Ho, 2006: 388).

As Singapore relies on the recruitment of foreign talent, there is much emphasis within its state-initiated policy discourse on the country and its citizens being 'open', 'accommodating', 'big-hearted' and 'welcoming' towards talented foreigners (Singapore Government, 1997; Lee, 2006). It is important to acknowledge, however, that Singapore's purported policy 'openness' towards foreigners stands in marked contrast to its rigid political system. In this respect, Singapore's state-initiated foreign talent policy can be viewed as paternalistic (Mauzy and Milne, 2002), where the state as 'host' represents its citizens.

Hospitable nations

In a world where the highly skilled are increasingly on the move, countries such as Singapore must position themselves as 'hospitable' nations if they are to attract (and retain) globally mobile talent and thus compete in the global knowledge economy. When someone is hospitable, the ethics of such an act tend to remain unquestioned. However, given the nature of Singapore's highly paternalistic political system, the government's policy-initiated hospitality does invite a consideration of ethical issues.

Within brain drain/gain/mobility debates, we advance thinking by entering from a different ethical perspective. We offer a new conceptual apparatus that may help to broaden the debate so as to ensure that ethics is not quarantined as an issue that relates to poor countries alone. We move from considering brain mobility to thinking about hospitality. Rather than considering the ethics of loss and gain, we are interested in the ethics of the host and the guest. As opposed to thinking about such debates in terms of competition between more or less developed nation-states, we are interested in the ways in which policy-sanctioned hospitality is mobilized within a nation-state, particularly in terms of the kinds of politics, values and judgements that underpin such governmental generosity.

Furthermore, when considering the status of the foreigner, we also mobilize an alternative perspective to frame ethical questions. Debates concerning foreigners are often informed by either a negative view of the foreigner as a threat (i.e. terrorists, refugees) or a positive view of the foreigner as a supplement (i.e. founders, immigrants) to the receiving nation-state (Honig, 2003). Discussions about the politics of foreignness largely emerge from within the field of political theory, where issues of immigration, citizenship, democracy and national identity are framed in terms of the ways in which nation-states can either secure their borders against, or more generously accommodate, such foreigners within the boundaries of the host nation-state (Guiraudon and Joppke, 2001; Ngai, 2004). In these discussions, the legal status of foreigners is a key subject, particularly in relation to issues of civil and political rights (e.g. the rights to asylum) (Benhabib, 2004). Overall, many ethical issues arise around identity, difference and belonging when considering the relationship between states, citizens and foreigners.

One way to conceptualize this relationship is in terms of hospitality, particularly in terms of the ways the host nation-state makes the foreigner feel welcome and the responsibilities that the nation-state as host has to the foreigner as guest. Clearly, these issues become particularly pressing in relation to vulnerable foreigners who have been forcibly displaced.

Kant first posed the question of hospitality in the context of international relations in *A project for a perpetual peace* (1796). Derrida's theory of hospitality (1995, 1999, 2000, 2001; and see Borradori, 2003), which informs our expanded discussion below, is a reworking of *Perpetual peace*. And in his recent work he discusses a hospitality of laws and nations and focuses on France and its hospitality to foreigners (i.e. illegal refugees). Through his notion of 'unconditional' hospitality, he conceptualizes a form of hospitality that operates outside all rules and laws.

While Derrida's argument focuses on the most disempowered of all globally mobile people, our argument operates from the opposite end of the spectrum and considers the ethics of hospitality in relation to globally mobile talent or privileged guests. Examining Singapore's recruitment and retention policy strategies involves investigating the relationship between the nation-state and foreign talent and entails considering the ethical nuances of 'the invitation' and its acceptance.

The Singaporean government is seeking to do its best by those at home by bringing foreign talent to Singapore and therefore building the economy. And, in its role as host, the Singaporean

government offers an encouraging welcome to foreign talent. Notably in policy discourse, foreign talent is represented as a supplement to the nation-state, and there is much emphasis on getting away from the 'foreigners-them, locals-us' attitude (Singapore Government, 1997: 13). There is no doubt that the Singaporean government fulfils its role as host, but a complicated ethical regime governs hospitality when it is being offered to a privileged population such as foreign talent. In this context, the onus is not placed solely on the host (as it is in the case of vulnerable foreigners); rather there is also an onus on the guest to fulfil certain responsibilities.

Hospitality

In broad terms, hospitality refers to the relationship between a guest and a host. It also refers to the act or practice of being hospitable, of welcoming guests, visitors or strangers, with liberality and goodwill. We focus on Derrida's theory in particular, as his foundation for understanding this concept is based on the interchangeable and intertwined relationships between ethics and hospitality (1999). His notion of hospitality allows us to interpret Singapore's foreign talent policy discourse not simply in terms of a general idea of hospitality, but in terms of the connection between hospitality, the politics of foreignness and the limits of an ethical engagement with the foreigner.

Unconditional and conditional hospitality

When trying to conceptualize 'hospitality', Derrida acknowledges a fundamental paradox that turns on 'conditional' and 'unconditional' hospitality (2000; Borradori, 2003). When the host of the house, country or nation extends an invitation to a guest, it is through this invitation that they also demonstrate to the guest that they are in control of the property or territory. In other words, in order to be hospitable one must have the power to host. But the host must also have some control over the people who are being hosted. Hospitality fails when the guests take control of the house. If the host is no longer in control, they are not being hospitable to their guests (Derrida, 2000). According to Derrida, this kind of hospitality is 'conditional', as it is dependent on imposing certain limits on guests. And as hospitality always involves placing limitations on guests, hospitality is inherently inhospitable.

Alternatively, 'unconditional' hospitality involves no limitations and an abandonment of control. It requires extending a welcome to all in need of hospitality, instead of making judgements about who will and who will not receive that hospitality (Borradori, 2003; Derrida, 2000). Paradoxically, it is through such 'unconditional' hospitality that the very possibility of hospitality is defeated: it becomes impossible to host anyone at all, precisely because there is no ownership or control. 'Unconditional' hospitality is not possible, but for Derrida the very notion of hospitality relies upon this concept and is inconceivable without it. We will now use this paradoxical framework to examine Singapore's hospitality.

Singapore's hospitality

'Singapore Vision 21' is Singapore's key policy strategy focused on attracting foreign talent. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong launched it in 1997 (Singapore Government, 1997), but it is still operational today, as evidenced by recent references to the initiative in ministerial speeches (Lee, 2006). When discussing Singapore's foreign talent policy discourse, we draw primarily

on the 'Attracting talent vs looking after Singaporeans' section of the 1997 Singapore 21 report (S21), but also on more recent ministerial speeches.

Derrida maintains that 'tolerance is actually the opposite of hospitality' (in Borradori, 2003: 127), because merely tolerating someone means limiting one's welcome by retaining control over one's home or territory. Significantly, in the S21, the policy discourse operates according to Derrida's distinction between hospitality and tolerance. And given the emphasis on welcoming as opposed to merely tolerating foreigners, when taken at face value the S21 (Singapore Government, 1997: 22) could be read as offering a kind of unconditional hospitality:

Ultimately it is not enough to 'tolerate' foreigners because they are of use to Singapore. We must welcome them, make them feel at home and that they belong here. To be welcoming to foreigners requires an open mind and a big heart . . . Singapore must retain an open and hospitable attitude.

However, the motivations for such overt hospitality in policy discourse may be based on the fact that, while the government sees foreign talent as a welcome addition to the nation-state, Singaporean local talent and citizens more broadly are more ambivalent about such foreigners. As such, this policy rhetoric could be viewed as a kind of propaganda, promoting the figure of the idealized foreigner as a means to convince citizens that foreign talent is not a threat to their livelihood.

Despite the rhetoric, we are therefore not suggesting that the S21 is an example of unconditional hospitality. For, as Derrida maintains, unconditional hospitality is in fact impossible: 'no state can write it into its laws' (in Borradori, 2003: 129). Rather, we are interested in the conditional hospitality that arises from the 'hospitality ideal' articulated in Singapore's foreign talent policy rhetoric. Examining the ways in which this policy rhetoric is played out in practice may enable a more complex understanding of the ethical and political responsibility the Singaporean government shows towards foreign talent and its own talented citizens.

Foreign talent

'Foreign talent' is the term used in Singaporean policy discourse to describe highly skilled, globally mobile individuals: 'people who have certain internationally marketable experiences and skills' (Singapore Government, 1997). The profile of foreign talent in Singapore shows that they come primarily from Malaysia, China and India, but also Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Britain, Europe, South Africa, Canada and the US (Brooks, 2002). Of the over half a million (600,000) foreign workers employed in Singapore, around 90,000 of these are highly skilled foreigners with degrees, professional qualifications or specialist skills, who hold employment passes (and can therefore apply for permanent residence) (Eng Fong, 2006). It is these skilled foreigners with university degrees who are our focus.

In terms of Singapore attracting 'research talent', as a small nation-state that is seeking to create a global presence, it scales up its policy by focusing on institutions rather than individuals. Recognizing that it is a relatively insignificant nation on a global scale, Singaporean research institutions seek to collaborate with globally significant international research institutions and faculty members to build up the nation-state's global status and networks and to become more attractive to globally mobile researchers.

By 2010, the facilities for the Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise (CREATE) will consist of a number of world-class research centres that will have intensive research collaboration with Singapore-based research institutions. For example, an existing initiative is the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology. In policy discourse, international research institutions such as MIT are thought of as 'talent magnets' (Singapore Government, 2008 online), drawing talent to Singapore from all over the world.

This 'geo-institutional realignment' (Olds and Thrift, 2005: 280) of predominantly US elite research institutions in Singapore has geospatial implications. It is by amassing foreign research institutions within Singapore that the nation-state seeks to compete with other great attractors in Asia, namely India and China. By seeking to become a significant knowledge hub within the region, Singapore is trying to position itself at the centre, rather than on the edge, of Asia. According to government policy discourse, 'CREATE offers a multi-national, multi-disciplinary research enterprise unlike anything known till now, strategically located in the heart of Asia, at the nexus of East and West' (National Research Foundation, 2008).

But just as Singapore tries to engage Asia, it also tries to transcend Asia (Koh, 2005), motivated by its small-nation aspirations to insert itself, via CREATE, into a *global*, networked environment. The Singaporean government is savvy about the geopolitical position of countries and regions and Singapore's own location within the globe and the region. It understands that 'many US and European universities are eager to establish a presence in Asia in a way never contemplated before because of the keen awareness of the rise of Asia and the increasing shift of global dominance towards Asia' (National Research Foundation, 2008). It is this formidable foreign institutional presence that the Singaporean government uses to consolidate Singapore's geopolitical standing, in a bid to become a global knowledge hub attracting and retaining world-class research talent and thereby curbing their global circulation.

Foreign and local talent

Policy discourse suggests that 'besides bringing valued skills, knowledge and ideas, the foreign talent's vigour provides powerful motivation for us [i.e. Singapore] to continually strive for higher standards . . . Their example can make us aware of the dangers of being complacent' (Singapore Government, 1997: 2). Ong maintains that foreign talent 'are increasingly coded as exemplars of intellectual capital and risk-taking behaviours' (2005: 339). Therefore, on the basis of the subtle contrast between driven foreign talent and 'complacent' citizens in the statement above, we suggest that this 'coding' is reinforced through an implicit suggestion that local talent do not have sufficiently entrepreneurial skills to compete in the knowledge economy.³ In other words, in policy discourse, receptiveness is extended towards foreign talent, not simply to supplement a small population, but also because they are seen as being vital in providing the skills and know-how Singaporeans lack (Yeoh and Huang, 2004).

Hospitality at home

How then do we begin to think about the ways in which such discourse constructs the relationship between foreign and local talent in terms of hospitality? Let us suppose that hospitality dictates that, when one welcomes guests, these guests are not received at the expense of those who are in residence. The lack of generosity the Singaporean government shows towards local talent in such discourse, with the implication that local talent is in some way

deficient, becomes an issue of ethical import, particularly when considering the reasons why local talent might favour complacency and conformity over risk-taking.

James Gomez is one of the 6,000 Singaporean citizens that the Singapore government consulted for its S21 report. In terms of critical thinking, creativity and business, he believes that it is the interventionist policies of the PAP government over the last few decades that have created 'an apathetic and non-risk taking culture' because 'people were criminalized and persecuted for voicing alternative political points of view and as a result conformity has become ingrained as a consequence of coercion' (Gomez, 1999). Therefore, while policy discourse draws attention to the 'dangers of being complacent', it does not highlight the reasons why such complacency among its citizens may exist.

Sen (1999) describes 'the Lee Thesis' (after Lee Kuan Yew, the former prime minister of Singapore, who formulated it succinctly) as the idea that 'basic civil and political freedoms ... hamper economic growth and development' (1999: 148). However, he disputes such claims, arguing that there is no empirical evidence to support them. Gomez's statement draws attention to the trade-offs that have been made in Singapore between national economic development and citizen compliance. He demonstrates how the restriction of citizens' basic civil and political freedoms in Singapore have impacted on their critical and creative thinking, and this is particularly pertinent as this lack of 'risk-taking' or entrepreneurial skill has become one justification for inviting foreign talent to Singapore.

Derrida states 'the host remains master of . . . the nation' (1999: 67). Indeed, Derrida argues that it is on this proviso that the nation is able to offer hospitality. In Singapore, the rigid political system curtails dissenting political views; therefore there is no doubt that the Singaporean government is the master of the nation, particularly when it comes to maintaining control of its citizens. But, if the ways in which the host nation controls its citizens are ethically questionable, then is it in a position to offer hospitality to guests – particularly as the Singaporean government denies its citizens some of the liberties that guests are allowed?

As suggested, we do not seek to imply that the hospitality that Singapore extends to its guests is unconditional, but at the same time there are nuances to conditions within conditional hospitality. In this context, the host does not impose 'his' mastery by insisting that the guest follow the practices and laws of the territory. Foreign talent does not have to abide by the same laws, rules and conventions as Singaporean citizens. In fact, the S21 says attracting foreign talent 'involves removing obstacles to the entry of talent. Regulatory mechanisms can be loosened. Rules should be simplified' (Singapore Government, 1997: 16). Foreign talent are also offered fast-tracked employment passes, subsidized housing, education and healthcare and tax incentives (Singapore Government, 1997). Not surprisingly, offering this kind of hospitality to privileged guests impacts on those at home.

Citizens at 'home'

Among Singaporean citizens, 'there is significant resentment regarding the privileges [offered] to attract foreign talent' (Ho, 2006: 393). In terms of considering the nuances of the invitation to foreign talent, the Singaporean government extends its generosity to foreign talent, but such generosity is offered at the expense of local talent. The favouritism that the Singaporean government shows to foreign talent, where the government is more accommodating of its guests than of its citizens, makes its own citizens feel neglected. Therefore, the fundamental ethics of this hospitality, where citizens may benefit economically, but at the same time feel sacrificed for the sake of foreigners, and make sacrifices politically, must be questioned.

The S21 states that 'above all, citizenship is about belonging to a place, having a sense of ownership and calling it home' (Singapore Government, 1997: 13) And yet, as a consequence of feeling like 'second-class citizens' (Singapore Government, 1997: 12), some residents feel displaced in Singapore (Ho, 2006). According to Ho, 'the mobility of foreigners into Singapore can have a detrimental impact on whether citizens feel that Singapore is home' (2006: 397). A further corollary of destabilizing citizens' feelings of belonging to the nation-state is that they feel more inclined to migrate to other countries. In fact 'the higher the education among Singaporeans, the more they appear disenchanted with Singapore being a caring society or a good place to make a living and raise a family' (Ooi *et al.*, 2003: 6). And yet, local talent migrating permanently to other countries is exactly what the Singaporean government is seeking to avoid, and in its policy rhetoric there is an emphasis on local talent developing 'a deep-seated sense of belonging – or rootedness – to Singapore' (Singapore Government, 1997: 1).

Foreigners at 'home'

At the same time, the Singaporean government seeks not only to attract, but also to 'root' foreign talent to Singapore. And yet those guests that do choose to linger do not necessarily mingle with their hosts. Foreign talent often reside in 'expat-enclaves', and this not only creates a sense of isolation for them but also prevents them from becoming fully immersed in the Singaporean community (Brooks, 2002).

Of course, despite the fact that many talented foreigners do call Singapore home, for the most part, foreign talent's long-term commitment to the nation remains in doubt. Even when Permanent Resident (PR) status and Singaporean citizenship are offered as enticements, they do not guarantee that foreign talent will stay (Yeoh, 2007b). As they are 'flexible citizens' (Ong, 1999) who have the credentials to remain globally mobile in the knowledge economy, foreign talent are free to enjoy the privileges that Singapore affords them and then leave the country. 'In fact, attaining Singaporean citizenship or Permanent Resident status may confer a higher degree of potential mobility on them, enabling them to gain entry more easily as tourists and immigrants in other gateways around the world' (Yeoh, 2007b: 55).

In terms of the ethics of hospitality, this draws attention to the obligations, if any, that constantly mobile foreign talent have to a host nation such as Singapore. It is precisely because foreign talent are guests, because Singapore is not their home, that particular liberties are bestowed upon them. And by accepting the Singaporean government's hospitality, foreign talent are able to accumulate educational credentials and experiences that further enhance their educational and class privileges in a global labour market. Ironically, offering PR status or citizenship to foreign talent does not necessarily make foreign talent stay in Singapore; rather it enables them to be mobile. And this leads us to think about the obligations involved when accepting an invitation. Clearly, constant mobility does not necessarily serve to cultivate territorial responsibilities. But, in terms of the guest's ethical responsibilities, is this precisely what the host nation and its citizens require?

Broader implications

Our analysis has implications for the ways in which the sociology of education and of knowledge develops a global research imagination (Kenway and Fahey, 2009). Ethical issues must be at the forefront. In this context, the concept of hospitality has considerable potential.

What, for example, might 'hospitality' mean in different places? And what might the ethical implications of such hospitality be? It directs us to think about whether a host nation has to have a demonstrated record of generosity towards those at home, and at the very least fulfil its moral obligations to its citizens, in order to be in a position to welcome privileged guests from abroad. Are there certain ethical responsibilities placed on privileged guests if they accept a host's invitation? In terms of brain mobility debate more broadly, in a globally mobile world, host nations need to ascertain the kinds of territorial loyalty that can be expected from constantly mobile guests. Does the host nation have any ethical expectations with regard to privileged guests? Do the constantly mobile and constantly hosted develop any territorial responsibilities? Or do they just float free of these? In other words, what is an ethics of mobility? And what is an ethics of place?

Notes

- 1 This paper arises from an Australian Research Council grant for the project *Moving ideas: mobile policies, researchers and connections in the social sciences and humanities – Australia in the global context (2006–2009)*.
- 2 In terms of ethical issues, related research literature on foreign talent tends to focus on the inequalities between unskilled and skilled foreigners (Eng Fong, 2006; Ong, 2004; Yeoh and Huang, 2004). We focus solely on skilled foreigners or foreign talent.
- 3 We acknowledge that the Singaporean government's Internationalization Strategy (1997) encourages Singaporeans to work overseas as a means to enable them and the Singaporean nation to become more globally competitive. Here we are referring particularly to local talent that stays in Singapore.

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Towards a sociology of the global teacher

Meg Maguire

Introduction

Education will always be a cause for concern, a focus for debate, a problem to be resolved, because it is one of the basic mechanisms through which human life is reproduced.
(Scott and Freeman-Moir, 2000: 8)

The teacher is the key actor in the process of educational transformation.
(Tedesco, 1997: 23)

In an internationally competitive marketplace, education plays a critical role in helping each nation to create and maintain a competitive edge – or so the argument goes. Thus, in response to aspects of the globalisation discourse, attempts have been made to conform educational provision to the ‘needs’ of capital in many international settings. Many nations, aware of international comparisons such as TIMSS and PISA, have been spurred on to reform their educational provision and raise their measurable levels of attainment. What has emerged is a new set of public policy demands for efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and flexibility – what Ball (2008: 41) has described as a ‘generic global policy ensemble’ – aimed at reforming public sector education provision.

In this chapter, I will explore what these demands mean in relation to the (re)construction of the teacher and of teachers’ work. The chapter starts with a brief discussion of globalisation and its influence on education policy. It then explores some of the ways in which attempts have been made to reconstruct the teacher and the work of the teacher in the light of these policies. Nonetheless, drawing on some examples of teacher education reforms, I argue that the construction of the teacher is always context-dependent – the teacher is produced out of local histories, cultures and politics. These ‘differences’ play out in the ways in which relationships between globalisation and education policy continue to evolve.

Contextualising the global teacher

Many of the claims currently being made about the need for educational reform rest on the assertion of there being a ‘new world order’: the globalisation thesis (Green *et al.*, 2007; Held *et al.*, 1999; Waters, 1995). What is meant by globalisation is contested: there are ‘strong’ versions that are based on the premise of the emergence of an almost inevitable world market that displaces the role and influence of the nation-state in decision-making (Ohmae, 1990, 1996); there are other versions that suggest that globalisation can produce ‘new pressures for local autonomy’ (Giddens, 1999: 13). At its most general, however, globalisation implies a world where time/space compression reduces the ‘constraints of geography’ (Waters, 1995: 3) and where economic, cultural and political changes have become interwoven and inter-dependent, fuelled and sustained by communication and technological developments (Olssen *et al.*, 2004).

Globalisation is a discursive as well as a material set of practices. That is, discourses of globalisation make possible certain ways of thinking, acting and being, and they displace or conceal alternatives. The world watches the Olympic games ‘as it happens’; the international community experiences the fall-out from the melt-down in the sub-prime US housing markets; the wide-spread circulation of blockbuster Hollywood (and increasingly Bollywood) movies – all these material outcomes demonstrate the interconnectedness and convergence of the contemporary world. These ‘events’ are amplified and circulated as illustrations of the reach of globalisation. In the UK, the impact of globalisation discourses, specifically in terms of economic theories and imperatives, has been profound (Barber and Sebba, 1999). For example, the (then) UK Prime Minister Tony Blair put it like this:

We are going to live in a market of global finance and there will be investors that decide to move their money in and out of countries. Even though we’re living with a very serious economic problem . . . we have also derived enormous benefit from greater international trade, from the absence of protectionism and the absence of control exchange.

(Blair, 1998)

The iteration and reiteration of the globalisation thesis and its ubiquitous claims appear to have influenced education policy and provision across the world. While Ball (2008: 25) warns that ‘the idea of globalisation has to be treated with care’, a point that cannot be fully dealt with in this chapter (but see Ball (2008) and Gewirtz (2001) for further discussion), the impulse of globalisation in terms of education policy is evident virtually everywhere. In many nation states, education policy is being articulated and constructed in response to the apparently irresistible discourses of globalisation that assert the ‘need’ for infrastructural and economic reforms to support and enhance international competitiveness.

Education has been repositioned as a vital tool for creating and maintaining economic prosperity and for retaining a competitive edge in world markets. According to Olssen *et al.* (2004: 13), ‘it is imposed policies of neoliberal governmentality, rather than globalization as such, that is the key force affecting (and undermining) nation-states today’ (see also Colclough, 1996). As Ball (2008: 53) asserts, ‘Education policy is increasingly subordinated to and articulated in terms of economic policy and the necessities of international competition’.

Whatever one’s explanation of what is propelling international educational reform-making (globalisation and/or neo-liberalism), dominant discourses emphasising the economic aims of education currently seem to have displaced alternative discourses (Winch and Gingell, 2004).

The outcomes can be seen in current international preoccupations with raising standards and measured attainment, making state education more accountable in relation to internationally derived targets and ensuring that curriculum and pedagogy are managed in order to 'deliver' these demands. What is being given primacy is the production of a labour force that, at least in the West, 'matches' the demands of a de-industrialising, post-industrial world, although the relationship between globalisation and education reform is currently articulated in the policy statements of virtually all governments around the world.

While the impact of a 'new world order' has undoubtedly influenced educational reforms, economic globalisation has not been experienced as a homogenous phenomenon. Within the unfolding changes of late capitalism, it is evident that changes in capitalist relations and policy production are tempered by the specificities of local histories and cultures (economic, political and social) and are recalibrated over time. To take the English context as a case, in the wake of the international oil crisis of the 1970s, the neo-liberal policy response emphasised the need for market forces (competition and school autonomy) to counter the educational 'crisis' of 'under-achievement' and 'poor' teaching that had allegedly contributed towards an economic downturn. By the 1990s, policy now included deregulation and 'choice' as part of government attempts to raise school standards and make schools more accountable and business-like, although, paradoxically, some forms of teacher preparation became tightly prescribed and highly centralised (Furlong *et al.*, 2000). Currently, there is a focus on a 'for-profit' element in state education (Ball, 2007) and an approach towards individualising and personalising provision (Clarke *et al.*, 2007). To some extent, these moves have also been reflected in a series of changes in teacher 'training'. All these different policy shifts are still firmly set within the regulating discourses of economic necessity and of the need for international competitiveness.

Reconstructing the global teacher

Contemporary teacher education reform, and concomitantly the construction of a 'new' teacher for the 'new world order', is predicated on a range of suppositions: that schools have failed in the past, owing, in some part, to inefficient and incompetent teachers, and that policymakers and governments are best placed to determine what makes an 'effective' teacher and a 'good' school (Fischman, 2000). In consequence, teacher reforms have been enacted that set out precisely what it is that teachers are to do, as well as how they are to be assessed (Maguire, 2002). There is some separation in the literature between work that considers policy developments in pre-service, initial teacher education (for example, see Acedo, 2007; Bales, 2006; Phelan and Sumsion, 2008) and research into the construction of the teacher via reforms that have attempted to reconstruct schools (Ball, 2003). In this chapter, I will deal with both literatures – for they offer a set of overlapping and integrated arguments that work towards new narratives of the teacher. In what follows, I want to explore this matter in terms of three aspects: these are regulation and control, standards and, finally, performance and accountability.

One way of ensuring teacher quality is to reform teaching at source by regulating and controlling pre-service teacher education. Many nations, including the US, UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and countries in Europe and in the Asia-Pacific region, now seek to manage recruitment and pre-service training through the generation of lists of competencies that have to be met before the teacher can be licensed to practice in schools (Fitzsimons and Fenwick, 1997). And many of these competencies include prescriptions about what constitutes 'best

practice' that intending teachers are expected to adopt and perform in the practicum element of their course. The emphasis in these restructured courses is arguably on 'teacher-proofing' classroom practice. Thus, the emphasis, more and more, is on successful in-school experience, technical skills such as teaching literacy through centrally prescribed methods, behaviour management, familiarity with testing regimes etc. Other matters, for example, those of commitment, values and judgement are frequently sidelined, made optional or simply omitted; teacher education is constructed as a skill, and any political complexity is bleached out of the agenda (Cochrane-Smith, 2004). Put simply, the teacher is reconstructed as a state technician, trained to deliver a national curriculum, in the nation's schools. Alongside this competency-based model of the technical skills-based teacher is a market model of the 'flexibilisation' of teaching work, a move towards individual contracts and pay negotiations, including the use of non-qualified teachers and teaching assistants – where the teacher is positioned as part of the contracted labour force rather than as a professional partner in the process of education.

In many ways, the English case is the most acute example of this reforming movement (McPhee *et al.*, 2003). Regulation is managed through the production of a curriculum for teacher education, the generation of criteria against which teacher 'competence' is measured and frequent inspections of the teaching courses and providers. Controls are built into the initial training and are carried into the early years of teaching in order to maintain a culture of high expectations, attention to national targets, and a concentration on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In this way, a very particular version of the 'teacher' is made up. The emphasis is on compliance with competencies rather than with thinking critically about practice; focusing on teaching rather than learning; doing rather than thinking; skills rather than values. This regime is maintained (and justified) by the regular production of local, national and international league tables that exert pressure to raise the stakes and raise the game at every opportunity (Barber, 2001; Barber and Sebba, 1999). In this way, the pressures of regulation and control in producing the teacher are inserted into, and circulated through, the state school system.

These systems of regulation and control are glued together by the production of sets of data about the achievements of children and young people all around the world. Nation-states (and their various ministries of education) regularly compare themselves with one another (Shorrocks-Taylor *et al.*, 2000). Economists assess international profiles of educational attainment in their attempts to review the capacity of 'human capital stocks' (Barro and Lee, 2001). The preoccupations with standards and raising standards are powerful, internationalised discourses that are realised in target setting. The capacity to meet (or not) these targets in turn becomes the measure of success and a lever in assessing and raising the performance of the individual child, the teacher, the school and thus the nation-state's educational achievements.

At the heart of this, in the everyday world of practice, teachers may well face a personal and professional set of tensions. In meeting the targets, they may sometimes have to 'teach to the test' and sideline any other pedagogical concerns, such as aesthetic, moral, social or any wider cognitive goals. In this reorienting and reworking of the 'teacher', alternative identities such as those based on a commitment to the common good or to different sets of values and dispositions (for example, developmentally and culturally sensitive curricula) are displaced. In working to 'mediate' complex and sometimes contradictory values in their practice, teachers may find themselves caught up in struggles around professional judgements and a new way of being. Ball (2003: 218) writes of teachers being caught up in a new 'culture of competitive performativity', where there is the potential to be graded as 'successful' and 'outstanding'. But 'being' and 'doing' this new type of entrepreneurial teacher, whose targets and 'aspirations' are governed by national testing schemes, can produce feelings of what Ball (2003) calls

'inauthenticity'. This new teacher, measured and evaluated through techniques such as monitoring, the production of documentary 'evidence' of effective planning for teaching, performance reviews, appraisals, inspections and the like, may become professionally conflicted: 'commitment, judgement and authenticity within practice are sacrificed' at the altar of measurable outcomes (Ball, 2003: 221).

Education policy making has been driven by the need to ensure that young people are being equipped with the means to contribute to, and compete in, a world without borders. At their most simple, calls for teacher accountability are demands for teachers to be answerable for making demonstrable improvements in their students' learning. 'Each teacher assumes responsibility for creating a classroom where students can master school knowledge at an appropriate pace and with a high degree of challenge' (Lieberman and Miller, 1999: 22). Thus, a battery of accountability techniques has been developed to monitor, assess and evaluate the degree to which teachers meet these responsibilities, mainly through testing the children and students that they teach. There are inevitable tensions: teachers may concentrate on testing rather than comprehension; teachers may feel pressured to attend to targets that they may construe as being inappropriate (Ball's 'inauthentic' teacher); teachers may offer what they believe to be a limited and diluted curriculum. Teachers may simply become overwhelmed by accelerating demands and additions to their work roles (Bartlett, 2004) and may leave the job altogether. All these pressures have been well documented (Fuhrman and Elmore, 2004; Lambert and McCarthy, 2006). Nonetheless, 'holding schools to account' (Wilcox and Gray, 1996) is a key policy strategy in reforming the teacher and the work of the teacher.

There is a wealth of evidence that charts an international reforming tendency towards reconstructing the teacher to 'fit' the needs of a globalising economy, the 'world-class' teacher. This signals a form of policy convergence, a move towards making up a global teacher who is at once a 'professional classroom manager, an expert providing "high quality" client services in "more for less" times' (McWilliams, 2008: 35). The reconstructed teacher is produced out of sets of recipes for action, systemic rules, technologies of performance and routine classroom actions that are designed (by others) to 'deliver' quality and 'assure' high standards. The teacher is reconstituted as a technical 'risk manager' who, in McWilliam's terms (2008: 36), makes 'learning outcomes more visible, calculable and thus more accountable' in a context where, to some extent, any competing versions of the teacher have been erased.

Recontextualising the global teacher

While there may be a set of overarching principles and conditions that influence policy production – globalisation and neo-liberalism, for instance – these 'rarely, if ever, translate into policy texts or practice in a direct or pristine form' (Ball, 1998: 126). In terms of the reconstructed global teacher who, so far, has been cast as an entrepreneurial manager rather than an organic intellectual, we need to ask, is this everywhere the case? To what degree has education been conformed to the needs of the international/national marketplace? To what extent has this chapter presented an altogether pessimistic and determinist view of the global teacher? In recontextualising the global teacher, I now want to consider some points of difference that are interwoven into the making up of the teacher, which are context dependent and are produced out of the specificities of local histories, cultures and politics, in particular issues of supply and demand, 'flexibility' in teacher production, and geopolitical distinctions.

One of the most intractable differences relates to the complexities and local distinctions that shape the supply and demand of teachers. In parts of the US, areas such as Michigan, Louisiana, and in cities such as New York, it is increasingly difficult to recruit and retain teachers (Steadman and Simmons, 2007). In Mississippi, although there are calls for 'quality' teachers, the shortage is so acute that the state has been forced to introduce emergency licensing. In part, this shortfall of teachers is to do with the relatively low salaries and status of teachers in the state. Mississippi has responded by introducing emergency one-year licences to teach for individuals whose school district will vouch for them. New York City has created the Teaching Fellows programme to recruit those interested in a career change into teaching in challenging schools. Both of these approaches place the intending teachers in classrooms in high-need schools while they are learning to become teachers. In terms of the Mississippi experience, one problem lies in the way in which the licence can be easily extended, without much support for professional development or interventions from teaching colleges. In NYC, the Teaching Fellows programme offers college accreditation and in-school mentoring, but the retention rates are low. Both schemes place would-be teachers in challenging classrooms with, in the main, 'disadvantaged' children. In the UK, there are similar teacher training programmes that aim to fill the same sorts of gap (Ross and Hutchings, 2003).

Although some aspects of some of these 'alternative route' schemes have been positively rated – for instance the NYC route and Teach First in the UK – they all report problems with teacher retention rates. There are also issues for 'challenging schools' that have to manage with higher than average levels of teacher turnover and inexperienced and less well-qualified teachers. There are additional issues of social justice related to 'high-need' students being taught by teachers (however well intentioned and however good their first degree) who are learning on the job and not staying long. In terms of the construction of the global teacher, these emergency schemes signal a degree of flexibility and perhaps disposability that surrounds the recruitment of the teacher; it also highlights a 'crisis' in the supply side of teaching – at least in certain parts of the world. One outcome of these shortages has been the creation of a 'global market' in teacher recruitment (Menter, 2008).

The production of these 'emergency' flexible teachers speaks to the tensions involved in the (northern-hemisphere) public sector labour market, as well as in some of the normalising discourses that surround the production of the teacher – perhaps that anyone can do this work. In terms of the labour market, less competitive salaries and poorer work conditions have limited recruitment to teaching. Another factor that compounds teacher shortages in some countries is that, in many nations, until relatively recently, teaching provided an early opportunity for women to undertake professional work (Anker, 1998). Currently, 'the teaching profession has to compete with many other attractive and prestigious job options' now open to women (Tedesco, 1997: 29). Working in the public sector may be less attractive – although, in periods of economic downturn, recruitment to jobs that look secure frequently goes up. Simultaneously, in the public sector there is an awareness that the new educational professional is an entrepreneurial individual, someone who seeks performance-related rewards, who is compared with and compares him/herself against his/her 'colleagues'. Many of the dominant and normalising discourses that currently surround 'being a teacher' speak of being open to change and the 'developing professional' as a lifelong project – even where, paradoxically, a view of teaching as a career for life has been eroded. The 'enduring' sense behind this lifelong project of constant improvement may not be something that new graduates feel particularly drawn towards.

Teaching as a profession has been repositioned as a responsibility towards producing the requirements for the labour markets of the future and, inevitably, what McWilliam (2008: 41)

calls the culture of 'enterprise [that] has come to replace a more long-term culture of public service'. Yet, for more and more emergent graduates in northern-hemisphere nation-states, teaching is becoming a short-term occupation, perhaps a first step beyond university. Thus, while there are discourses of lifelong processes of learning to teach, the reality is frequently one of high teacher turn-over. In the UK, for example, what fuels this movement out of teaching are high levels of stress and burn-out, as well as emotional dissatisfaction with some of the policy demands to which teachers have to demonstrate compliance (Smithers and Robinson, 2005).

In other parts of the world, supply and demand issues are differently experienced. In less/differently economically developed countries and transitional countries, there are problems in recruiting teachers for state-funded schools. This is less so in some fee-paying private schools, where teacher salaries and working conditions may be better – although it depends on the school itself (Kitaev, 2007; Thakur, 2008). There can also be difficulties in staffing schools in rural and less accessible areas within northern-hemisphere settings, as well as in less economically privileged locales, some of which may be populated by minoritised communities (Whatman, 2002). There may be difficulties in getting and holding on to teachers for particular phases of schooling. For instance, in some parts of the world, a basic school-leaving certificate may enable someone to become a primary teacher; however, the subject knowledge demands of the secondary curriculum make it more complicated to prepare and retain secondary school teachers (Mulkeen *et al.*, 2007).

In neo-liberal times, one consequence of deregulation and national shortages has been the emergence of the 'migrating' teacher – the teacher who can move to a place where his/her skills are in short supply. This can sometimes mean that the West 'imports' teachers from countries where teachers are in short supply, even when, as in the UK, there are protocols in place to limit this process (Morgan *et al.*, 2005). However, the cultural norms of his/her initial training and his/her own schooling may not sit easily with those of the new setting; in Menter's words (2008: 224), 'when a teacher migrates . . . it is likely that significant processes will ensue that affect her professional identity'. Professional identities that are formed largely from a 'service ethic', for example (Menter, 2008: 224), may be less compatible with a teacher identity dominated by the need for compliance with lists of competences, skills and outcomes. A teacher identity that is formed in the expectation of having to teach through a rote-based pedagogy may experience disruptions in an inner-city, 'hard to teach' school setting. Yet, the international movement of people (such as teachers and international students) produces new spaces in which to construct identities that are 'intercultural with multiple cultural defining points' (Rizvi, 2000: 223) – what Rizvi calls a 'new global generation'.

In the reconstruction work that is taking place in the making up of the teacher, there are other points at issue. In a setting that is characterised by shortages in teacher supply, who is and what is a teacher is being called into question. For instance, in England, the production of the teaching assistant (TA) and the higher-level teaching assistant (HLTA) means that teachers are supported by other adults who, in the case of the HLTA, will act as a specialist assistant for certain areas of the curriculum and who will sometimes lead classes, supervise in the teacher's absence and 'assess, record and report on the progress of children' (see <http://careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/helpwithyourcareer/jobprofiles/profile>). The production of these assistants (Kamen, 2008) may well add to the richness of the classroom for children and students; however, at a maximum salary of £16,000 for a TA and £18,000 for a HLTA, these people will sometimes be acting as teacher-substitutes on a much lower salary, an exploitative situation. Their education and training may concentrate on policy directives and compliance rather than

a capacity to make informed pedagogical judgements. However, while the UK/English government argues that a 'more flexible workforce will help to reduce the bureaucratic load on teachers', freeing them up to teach, the UK teacher unions have been 'deeply suspicious of these developments, suspecting that these less well-paid staff' may be used to replace teachers (Menter, 2008: 223).

And what then of the organised teacher? What role do teacher unions play in this making up or contesting of the neo-liberal, globalising teacher? Although concerns are being expressed about the intensification of teachers' workloads and the 'unjust criticism by politicians' of teachers (OECD, 2004: 39, cited in Jones, 2008: 54), the capacity of teachers to assert control over their working lives has been eroded in many parts of the world (but see Compton and Weiner, 2008). In a neo-liberal world, teachers experience a 'loss of capacity for self-definition, both in the workplace and in the political sphere' (Jones, 2008: 56). In terms of some European trends, Jones notes the ways in which Greek, Catalan and French teachers have been able to mobilise public support in defence of public education. In contrast, he details the way in which the English unions' focus on teacher salary was less able to engender popular support and paved the way for more overt control of teachers.

One of the best-known examples of challenges to neo-liberalism in education is the Citizen School movement in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where the intention is to 'build support for more progressive and democratic policies there in the face of the growing power of neo-liberal movements at a national level' (Gandin and Apple, 2002: 260). These schools are grounded in an approach that requires and enables the full participation of the school staff, parents, administrators and students in decision-making. Teachers make up half of the membership of the school council; the other half is made up of parents and students. The school council makes decisions about the curriculum and resource allocation and elects the principal. In these schools, teachers, parents and students are working together to build a different school and a more democratic society where the curriculum is negotiated and starts from the histories, cultures and politics of the local community. What this demonstrates is a different way of 'doing school' and of being a teacher.

Reshaping the teacher – complexities and costs

In this chapter, I have argued that neo-liberal and globalising impulses are having discernable outcomes in reshaping the work of the teacher in many parts of the world. In this final section, I want briefly to discuss some points that are raised by this work. In speaking of 'the world' or 'international change', there is sometimes a tendency for northern-hemisphere researchers to concentrate on northern-hemisphere cases, frequently the UK, the US and Australia, that then stand as a proxy for the 'global world'. Here, I have tried to draw on a wider range of work on teachers in an attempt to avoid this problem, but there is always a danger of superficiality when speaking of distinctive contexts in a short piece. Teaching is a complex, diffuse and differentiated occupation. Internationally, there are wide variations in entry qualifications, the duration of pre-service education and in the status and salaries of different 'types' of teacher. For example, the teacher of elite groups may bear very little resemblance to the teacher of the poor within the same national setting. The preparation, status and salary of the early-years teacher and the specialist secondary school teacher might be very different. Teachers in a national state sector might differ from those in the fee-paying sector in the same setting. Thus, there can be dangers of essentialising and homogenising what it is to be a teacher.

While global neo-liberalism is influencing what it means to teach and be a teacher, 'the future has not been written and no one can ever claim a definitive understanding of the current relationships between globalization, the state, education, and social change' (Morrow and Torres, 2000: 53). Markets and states are prone to failure (Jessop and Sum, 2006). There are differences in outcomes, as well as some 'big and small struggles and victories' (Robertson, 2007). One way towards 'coping' with the ways in which neo-liberal policies differently inflect the construction of teacher in different contexts is suggested by Lingard (2000), who argues for an approach that simultaneously recognises global changes in terms of their 'vernaculars'; that is, the localised and sometimes distinctive ways in which these changes are configured and rewritten into national settings.

Nevertheless, the encroaching privatisations that are being inserted into education policy more widely (Ball, 2007), as well as into the reconstruction of the teacher and the work of the teacher, seem set to continue. It may well be the teachers of the poor and the disenfranchised, wherever they are located (in the global cities of the northern hemisphere, in the favelas and shanty towns of the southern hemisphere), who are most immediately subjected to the imperatives of neo-liberal reforms that are forced upon them by international agencies. More generally, the cost of being made up as the new global teacher, wherever this is taking place, may be the 'existential redundancy' (Rutherford, 2008: 16) of the professional, ethical and decision-making teacher.

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Codes, pedagogy and knowledge Advances in Bernsteinian sociology of education

Ursula Hoadley and Johan Muller

Introduction

The intractability of working-class failure has remained an unresolved issue for the sociology of education over the last forty years. Although some inroads have been made in understanding how inequality is engendered through schooling (and through pedagogy in particular), in ongoing developments in curriculum policy globally, knowledge, or 'the what' of schooling, is perennially left out, even as global achievement comparisons such as TIMSS and PIRLS (Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study) highlight its salience. The policy trend towards expressing the objects of learning in generic, outcomes or skills-based terms in curricula systematically avoids an engagement with knowledge. Curriculum studies and sociology of education in the twenty-first century cannot continue to avoid interrogating what children know and don't know. Thus far, it has been silent on the issue. In what follows, we offer a broad outline of the development of the sociological theory of Basil Bernstein, explaining how the development of his ideas across a period of forty years has progressively generated theoretical resources to explore not just how students learn, but what they learn. This theory has brought the question of the what and the how of teaching and learning to the forefront. In this way, Bernstein's theory offers a theoretically informed approach to the awkward question of the intractability of unequal schooling outcomes.

Code theory

Pedagogy is a formal, state-controlled medium for specializing the consciousness of young people. Code theory provides a grammar for an analysis of how consciousness is differentially specialized. For Bernstein, this grammar was necessary to explain the difference between middle-class and working-class success in schooling.

'Code' refers to an orientation to organizing experience and making meaning. The initial work on codes examined the relation between social class, maternal modes of control and communicative outcomes (Bernstein and Brandis, 1970; Bernstein and Henderson, 1969;

Henderson, 1970). Through this early work, Bernstein sought to investigate how different forms of socialization acted differentially upon the speech forms acquired and used by different social classes. These different kinds of language were hypothesized to have differential potential for learning at school. In order to analyse speech patterns, a linguistic theory had to be selected. Bernstein (1973: 73) describes how he deliberately decided not to use Chomsky's transformational grammar, which was dominant at the time, as this theory divorced linguistics from semantics and it was thus not appropriate to a study where the major point of the enquiry was about the relationship between the social structuring of relevant meanings and the form of their linguistic expression. Halliday's linguistic theory, on the other hand, satisfied the requirements created by the sociological aspects of the thesis, as it put forward a set of interrelated linguistic contexts in which the child is socialized into language. Bernstein selected four of these contexts: regulative, instructional, imaginative and interpersonal, and related them to Hasan's (1968) theory of cohesion, whether speech stands apart from its context so that the meanings are made explicit, or whether speech is a part of the context, so that it is necessary for the speaker to refer to the context of the speech or to the speaker's situation to understand the speech. This led to the working out of his concepts of elaborated and restricted codes.

In their original 'sociolinguistic' form, restricted codes are associated with particular grammatical and syntactical forms (generally simple, incomplete), as well as with more implicit meanings; elaborated codes are associated with the accurate grammatical and syntactical regulation of what is said, and with explicit meanings (Lee, 1973). The elaborated code allowed thus, by definition, the generation of context-independent meanings; the restricted code, contextual meanings. Further experiments consolidated the concepts. Hawkins (1969), for example, used a series of four pictures of boys playing with a ball, kicking the ball through a window and being scolded by an adult. He asked middle-class and working-class children to describe the pictures. He found that, for the middle-class children, verbal communication was explicit and could be understood without heavily depending on the context. For the working-class children, on the other hand, meaning was implicit and context-dependent, and relied largely on the listener's prior knowledge of the narrative content.

The theory showed that elaborated and restricted codes were realizations of particular control relations in the homes of children. The work of Cook-Gumperz (1973), in particular, gave empirical support to Bernstein's distinction between three modes of control: personal, positional and imperative. In middle-class homes, personal forms of control were largely found; in working-class settings, imperative modes predominated; and positional control was found in mixed-class families. Crucially, the personal and positional modes could overlap linguistically (Halliday, 1978: 82–83).

The concept of code underwent change and refinement. Whereas code, in the work discussed above, was used to refer to features of language only, in later work it was refined to refer to the principles of solidarity and communication regulating social life, what Diaz (2001) called the 'meaning matrices'. It is through these matrices that we select what is relevant to us in any given context, and with them that we organize experience. In this way, codes become the grids by which consciousness is specialized.

By this redefinition, elaborated codes refer to the prioritizing and deployment (or recognition and realization) of context-independent meanings, and restricted codes refer to the recognition and realization of context-dependent meanings; here, language is the *linguistic realization* of the code, rather than the code itself. One of the main studies exemplifying this shift was an experiment reported by Holland (1981). In this experiment, seven-year-old working-class and middle-class learners were shown pictures of different foodstuffs and were asked to group them

however they wanted. They were asked the reasons for their groupings. They were then asked to group the food a second time and to again provide criteria for the grouping. The experiment showed that working-class children mostly used context-dependent principles for their sorting, in that their groupings referred to personal and particularistic meanings (e.g. 'I like those things'; 'That is what mother cooks for breakfast.'). which generally referred to everyday use. They did not change their principles for sorting the second time, demonstrating a single (restricted) coding orientation. Middle-class children were found to respond to the task first by referring to general, non-context-dependent principles (e.g. a food category), and, in a second grouping, to more personalized, local meanings. They thus demonstrated two coding orientations, elaborated and restricted, where context-independent meanings were privileged for the school context. Thus different social class groupings were shown to display different coding orientations. It was argued that the focus of the child's selections were not a function of the child's IQ or cognitive power, but rather a difference in the recognition and realization rules used by the children to read the particular context (the school), make selections (around what is appropriate given the context) and realize a particular text (their groupings of the food).

Bernstein's work was criticized for describing the restricted code, and, hence, working-class language, as deficient. Bernstein (1996: 182) rejected this interpretation, explaining that '[c]odes arise out of different modes of social solidarity, oppositionally positioned in the process of production, and differentially acquired in the process of formal education'. Restricted codes are necessary in convivial modes of everyday life, but the school requires an elaborated code for success. This means that working-class children have a double hurdle to clear, namely acquiring both the specialized knowledge of school, as well as the coding orientation with which to realize this acquisition.

Pedagogy – sociological studies of the classroom

Bernstein developed a conceptual language to describe the elaborated code of the school, based on the core notions of classification and framing. Classification refers to the organizational aspects of pedagogy, the way in which *power* activates certain categories – of school subjects, agents, discourse and space. Framing, on the other hand, refers to the interactional aspects of pedagogy, the way in which knowledge is selected, sequenced, paced and evaluated in the classroom, regulating the moral order of the classroom and who has *control* over it. The distinction between power and control, unique in the discipline of sociology (but see Douglas, 1966), allows for the description of the making (power) and the potential unmaking (control) of the social reproduction of inequality.

The early Bernsteinian studies of classrooms used the concepts of personal and positional relations and elaborated and restricted codes to describe the structure of pedagogy. Cooper (1976) and Edwards (1981) attempted to show differences between different types of classroom in terms of the social relations of control and the associated codes. The focus was on comparisons between different social class groupings of students. This work led Bernstein to clarify the particular meanings attributed to codes. He maintained that codes vary across universalistic/particularistic, context-independent/context-dependent and embedded/disembedded meanings continua (1996: 162). He also pointed out that, although there is a relation between forms of control and orientations to meanings, an elaborated code may be realized under either positional or personal modes of control. This has recently been given empirical support in work identifying optimal pedagogies for working-class student success (Lubienski, 2004; Hoadley and Ensor, 2009).

Through these studies, the distinction between the moral order and the instructional order of the school and classroom was clarified. Bernstein's work had originally distinguished between an instructional dimension to pedagogy and a moral dimension, in the early terms 'expressive' and 'instrumental orders'. These aspects were brought back in the theorizing of classification and framing. In particular through the work of Pedro (1981), 'instructional' and 'regulative' discourse came to describe the transmission of specific instructional knowledge and skills, embedded in the normative moral order, or regulative discourse of the school. Pedagogic discourse was thus defined as an instructional discourse consisting of a number of dimensions, embedded in a regulative discourse.

At the level of the classroom, the instructional discourse was operationalized through describing strong or weak framing relations over selection, sequence, pace and evaluative criteria. The regulative discourse was examined by describing hierarchical control relations between transmitter and acquirer as operationalized through modes of personal and positional control. Strong framing relations were deemed to display modes of imperative/positional (that is, teacher) control, while weak framing was deemed to display personal (that is, learner) control. The hierarchical rules focused on the verbal elaboration between teachers and students. Bernstein in this way brought classroom processes to the fore in the sociology of education. In a key paper, Bernstein (1981) sketched a model for understanding pedagogic discourse and reproduction. This broad theoretical work continues to inform and has been developed by the work of a number of researchers concerned with explaining pedagogy in different contexts.

Most notably, the ongoing work of the Sociological Studies of the Classroom at the University of Lisbon (ESSA) (for example, Morais and Neves, 2001; Morais *et al.*, 2004) has focused on the micro processes in the classroom to explore the 'relations present in the context of reproduction of the pedagogic discourse' (Neves *et al.*, 2004: 280). The various authors show that specific aspects of pedagogic practice favour the development of the elaborated coding orientation required for learning context-independent school knowledge. Pedagogic modalities, designed in terms of success demonstrated in experimental studies, were then tested by trained teachers with learners from different social class backgrounds.

Key to this successful modality is 'explicating the evaluative criteria as the most crucial aspect of a pedagogic practice to promote higher levels of learning of all students' (Morais, 2002: 568). Making the evaluative criteria explicit consists of

clearly telling children what is expected of them, of identifying what is missing from their textual production, of clarifying the concepts, of leading them to make synthesis and broaden concepts and considering the importance attributed to language as a mediator of the development of higher mental processes.

(Morais *et al.*, 2004: 8)

The authors show how schooling *can* make a difference, and specify in what ways. Here is the crux of their argument, and the impetus for theirs and others' work:

When family codes and practices are in continuity with school pedagogic codes and practices, acquisition of the recognition and realisation rules appropriate to school contexts is facilitated by the elaborated orientation brought in by children. Similar power and control relations in the family and the school permit more efficient access to recognition and realisation rules in school contexts. This immediately gives an advantage to children whose processes of primary socialisation are regulated by pedagogic codes similar to school codes. In general, these children tend to come from higher social or

dominant ethnic groups. However, this situation can be altered by school pedagogic practices whose characteristics permit access to the school coding orientation.

(Morais and Neves, 2001: 213–214)

In addition to explication of the evaluative criteria, weak framing over pacing is identified as being crucial for facilitating access to school knowledge for working-class learners, creating the opportunity to individualize the rate of acquisition. In research into literacy pedagogy for 'indigenous learners', Rose (2004) likewise specifies the dimensions facilitating a weakening of the negative relation between social class and educational achievement: a weakening of the framing of pacing and sequencing rules, and a weakening of 'the framing regulating the flow of communication between the school classroom and the community the school draws on' (p. 106).

These findings have been confirmed elsewhere in studies that draw on the fine-grained and rigorous methodologies for coding and analysis of data developed by the ESSA group. What Davies and Fitz (forthcoming) have called the 'anatomising of pedagogy' has led to a clear statement of what is important in the 'how' of pedagogy. In beginning mathematics, 'explicit evaluation criteria improve achievement gain for the sample, particularly teachers' use of error to provide explicit feedback on incorrect answers' (Reeves, 2005) and also for pedagogic disciplines where the criteria are traditionally tacit, such as cabinet making – 'criterial rules are very strongly framed throughout' (Gamble, forthcoming) – and in high school art – 'criteria need to be agreed upon, specified and made explicit' (Bolton, 2006: 73). Bernstein had said it clearly prior to this crop of empirical outcomes: 'We can see that the key to pedagogic practice is continuous evaluation' (Bernstein, 1996: 50). What allowed for comparability across a range of contexts was a common theoretical language, sufficiently developed for its empirical application and operating at a level of abstraction that allowed for commonalities to be discovered across the diverse settings of its application.

The differential pedagogic modalities that are deployed for different learners are an enduring concern across a broad range of contexts. Dooley (2001) examined the adaptation of pedagogy for Taiwanese migrant students in a state secondary school in Australia. She is particularly interested in the teacher–student relations realized in particular forms of classroom interaction. The main finding of the study was that differential pedagogic types were made available to Taiwanese, Chinese and other Asian students, compared with local students.

Singh (2002) examined the structuring of English curricular knowledge and forms of teacher–student interaction in secondary school classrooms in Queensland, Australia. Arnot and Reay (2004) focus on framing in the analysis of pupils' participation in their learning and on the consequences of contemporary pedagogic practice in a middle-class and working-class school in the United Kingdom. Hoadley (2008) shows how the gap between the school and the home for working-class learners is detrimentally closed by working-class teachers, who deploy a pedagogic modality akin to the restricted code orientation that students enter the school with. All these studies not only give empirical support to the theoretical account of the inner logic of pedagogy, thereby revealing the structuring of inequality, but also suggest how that inequality might be pedagogically reversed.

The weight of the empirical evidence underlines the futility of current curriculum policy debates, most notably in the USA, South Africa and Australia, between 'learner-centred' approaches and the 'back to basics' lobbies. What works instead is a mixed pedagogy, especially for working-class students. The studies show what the mix should look like, and in all cases explicit evaluation is critical. We show below, in the subsequent development of the theory and the empirical work that has been generated by the framework, the issue of evaluation remains central to the theory.

The pedagogic device

In 1996, Bernstein published a terse and somewhat enigmatic statement of his theory in terms of what he called the 'pedagogic device'. This was an ambitious attempt to capture the role of education in the sociological big picture, reaching from social structure to individual consciousness. The pedagogic device consists of a hierarchical relation between three sets of rules – distributive, recontextualizing and evaluative – that together describe the process of the transformation of knowledge from the field of production of knowledge, to the field of recontextualization, to the field of reproduction in the classroom. In short, it is a description of the structure by which knowledge is transformed into pedagogic communication. The introduction of the device highlighted a number of important conceptual relationships in its attempt to offer a more abstract and general unified theory. It also introduced a number of important issues that had been somewhat neglected in the development of the theory.

Two issues are singled out here. The first is the issue of knowledge, which is elaborated further below. The distributive rules distribute different types of knowledge to different social agents. Knowledge types or structures, the 'what' of education in the field of production (the university), had as yet been insufficiently adumbrated. How these knowledge structures related to curriculum structures, or the recontextualized knowledge found in schooling, had also so far received limited attention. A second issue raised in the pedagogic device concerned the third level of rules – the evaluative rules. Bernstein talks about the device being 'condensed' in the evaluative rules. By condensation he means that, at this level (of the classroom, and through acquisition) it is possible to see what the work of the device has been – in other words, in terms of the distribution of what knowledge to which social groups. The 'what' of the distributive rules and the control over the process of transmission through the recontextualizing rules result in differential specialization of consciousness through acquisition. It is at the moment of evaluation that we see the extent to which the distributive rules (both in terms of instructional knowledge and social norms) have been realized. The evaluative rules bring the 'what' (classification) and the 'how' (framing) into a final relation to each other. They condense the device. It is only at the point of evaluation that we can see the mutual operation of the distributive rules and the recontextualizing rules. But what of the knowledge to be distributed? The theory had yet to describe how it differed in form, and its curriculum and pedagogical implications.

It is these two aspects of the pedagogic device – the question of knowledge structure introduced through the distributive rules and the acquisition dimension that inheres in the evaluative rules – that offer fruitful directions for future research. We discuss the first issue briefly below.

Knowledge and the curriculum

The notion of the evaluative rules raises the question: evaluations of what? The answer – of the knowledge to be acquired – has mostly been avoided. Muller (2007) has argued that in any discipline there are a specifiable, necessary minimum set of incremental steps that must be pedagogically traversed, and each requires the necessary explicit evaluation. How to think about the 'what' of education entails turning to how this specification might be accomplished.

It was only late in his career that Bernstein turned to the question of what knowledge was, its structure and its social base. He draws a strong distinction between two basic classes of

knowledge: mundane or everyday knowledge, and esoteric or universal, principled knowledge. These two classes of knowledge are intrinsic to language, and they exist in all societies, even though their content may vary historically and culturally. A direct relation between meanings and a specific material base is termed horizontal discourse. In horizontal discourse, meanings cannot transcend their immediate context and so always refer to everyday or mundane contexts. Vertical discourse, by contrast, requires systematic ordering principles for the generation of meaning. The knowledge 'bits' fit together in a time and space not given by a specific context.

There are two forms of vertical discourse. They differ, first, by their form of conceptual advance (by their 'verticality') and, second, by their form of objectivity (their 'grammaticality'). As to the first: some knowledges tend towards robust, conceptually justifiable advances. Their knowledge structure is determined by their ever-advancing conceptual spine, which tends towards unity (which does not mean that there is only one conceptual spine in the knowledge structure: see Wignell, 2007). The curriculum implication of this type of conceptual advance is that these disciplines in their mature form develop long 'hierarchies of abstraction', which are best learnt in sequence under the guidance of specialists (mathematics and science are the most obvious examples). We may say that these disciplines are, in a specific sense, concept-rich. It is not that they necessarily involve large numbers of concepts. It is that they have long sequences of hierarchically related concepts. Getting stuck at any rung of the hierarchy usually means that conceptual learning stops. Other knowledges tend towards advance through variation or diversification of concepts; this, however, is less about concepts than it is about different contents or content-clusters, although there is usually a macro-conceptual organizing principle (the 'past' (or more abstractly time) for history and 'space' for geography, for example) involved. Still others develop practically, by developing new skills. Practical development may refer to new practices within traditional manual crafts such as cabinet making or to new forms of conceptual practice such as software development or website design. Concepts, content and skills are embedded in each knowledge structure, but their relative salience is what differentiates them.

There has been a range of exploratory empirical work in relation to different knowledge structures and their pedagogical and distributional implications. Reeves and Muller (2005), for example, consider what a knowledge structure of mathematics looks like when translated into the South African school curriculum. Christie and Macken-Horarik (2007) reconstruct 'verticality' in subject English in the Australian curriculum. More broadly, Young and Gamble (2006) and Wheelahan (2007) examine issues of skills and their orderings in vocational education curricula, and Maton (2005) has been concerned with sociology and its weak grammar knowledge structure. Moore (2007) and Young and Muller (2007) consider the humanities and the question of knowledge growth in horizontal disciplines. This work has opened up the question of the relations between knowledge structures and their corresponding curriculum structures. School mathematics is not the same as the knowledge structure of the discipline of mathematics. What kinds of limit to recontextualization do the latter place on how the curriculum structure of mathematics is constituted? Two recent, edited volumes (Christie, 1999; Christie and Martin, 2007) show the substantial work and theoretical resources that the work of the systemic functional linguists has to offer in this regard. Interestingly, this returns the theory to its former strong links to the sociolinguists during the development of code theory. Again, based on the initial work of Halliday's functional grammar, the work offers fruitful ways in which specialist forms of knowledge can be identified and explored, connecting the linguistic object of study with the Bernsteinian sociological focus on social structure.

The verticality of a particular knowledge structure places limits on its progression, sequencing and pace. This is the link to pedagogy: the more hierarchical a particular discipline, the more restriction on these dimensions of framing. Perhaps future research could involve a greater exploration of knowledge structure in relation to pedagogy. This might include both its moral and instructional content.

In conclusion: there have been significant methodological advances in this tradition, especially with regard to developing external languages of description to describe *transmission*. Perhaps a next stage of research might be to shift the focus to the evaluative rules, in order to develop similar methodologies for describing acquisition. It is at this level that an expanded notion of both instructional and regulative discourse can be considered, one that can take proper account of the distributive rules for different knowledge structures.

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Social democracy, complexity and education

Sociological perspectives from welfare liberalism

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In the second half of the nineteenth century, in the period after John Stuart Mill, and into and including the first third of the twentieth century, a group of philosophers, sociologists, economists and journalists systematically adapted classical liberal arguments to make them relevant to the appalling social conditions generated by the development of capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their writings contained distinctive models of society, of human nature and of change that are relevant to sociologists studying education in the twenty-first century. My aim throughout this chapter will be to work through the arguments of the new liberals, accepting those that meet the tests of a critical interrogation as being relevant to twenty-first century global capitalism, and adapting or rejecting them as is appropriate. Although some of their arguments will be found wanting, I will argue that their original ideas in defence of social democracy can be restated in terms of developments in science and philosophy over the century since they wrote. Developments in post-quantum complexity theory, within both the physical and social sciences, will enable us to reground social democratic arguments and state them in a more plausible way for the twenty-first century.

The sociology of John Atkinson Hobson

In the last decades of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century, the economist John Atkinson Hobson advanced a justification for the welfare state complementing the contributions of T.H. Green and L.T. Hobhouse. In a way similar to Hobhouse's 'harmonic principle', Hobson's analysis of individual and society was facilitated methodologically by the organic model of social structure. The organic model was analogical in that it likened society to a 'social organism'. In utilizing such an analogy, Hobson invoked comparisons with the Hegel and German Idealism, which created alarm among classical liberals. In developing his conception of the organic view, Hobson was influenced by John S. Mackenzie, whose book *An introduction to social philosophy* (2006), originally published in 1890, developed a coherent conception of the organic to challenge both the monadistic view (of classical liberalism and Leibniz) and the monistic view, which asserted the priority of the whole over the parts (Idealism). The organic

view sees the individual as determined by social conditions. In this sense, the relation of individual to society is an 'intrinsic one' (p. 150). Society is not a mere aggregate of separate individuals, nor is it a mechanist (dualist) or chemical combination of them. The evidence that it is not a monistic system is that, if that were the case, as society changed, so the parts would change almost simultaneously. This is not to say that there is not an aspect of the monadic and an aspect of the monistic, which operate at different times and places, in different contexts, for there are mixed modes; just as complexity does not completely displace mechanism, but rather should be seen as supplementing or extending it. Further, although we are all penetrated and constituted by our surroundings, this does not mean that we are all the same. As MacKenzie put it, there is no contradiction between social determinism and the independence of the individual:

That there is no contradiction between the independence which is now claimed for the individual and the fact of his social determination, becomes evident when we consider the nature of that determination and of that independence. That the individual is determined by his society, means merely that his life is an expression of the general spirit of the social atmosphere in which he lives. And that the individual is independent, means merely that the spirit which finds expression in him is a living force that may develop by degrees into something different.

(2006, p. 158)

Hobson's use of the organic metaphor is compatible with Mackenzie's and, like Mackenzie's, it has received stringent criticism. As R.N. Berki (1981: 193–194) notes, Hobson was frequently characterized as an idealist, and his idealism was 'born of the endeavour to comprehend political reality in *unitary* terms'. Although Hobson claimed to reject the monistic doctrine of Idealism, in that he rejected prioritizing the force of the whole over the parts, he was idealist in the weaker sense that he still saw society as a unified whole. Such a whole, in his sense, was merely a system of interactions, and unity was represented as not incompatible with difference. Besides, Hobson did not see unity itself as of value, but recognized specific normative criteria drawing on Ruskin's concept of *life* as determining the conditions for inclusion and exclusion from the whole. The common good is thus represented by Hobson as a unified development of the whole society, which contrasts with those aspects that are dysfunctional, evil, or represent what he termed, following Ruskin, *illth*. This is the sense in which David Long detects idealism in Hobson's approach, for he 'idealistically condemned present arrangements for failing to come up to the standards of his rational ideal' (Long, 1996: 16).

Although not problem-free, Long concludes that 'the organic analogy remains a useful start for a holistic analysis of society and Hobson's use of the analogy was certainly progressive for his time' (1996: 16). One must not expect too much from an analogical method of course. It must be seen, as is true for all analogies, as comprising both likenesses and unlikenesses. Human societies are in some ways like living things but in others not. For classical liberals, the analogy does not do justice to the issue of the claimed independence of individual consciousness. One can also criticize the analogical weighting given to uneven influence of the central organs over other parts of the body. Yet, in that it differentiates a particular form of unity from those types characteristic of monism, monadism, chemical integration or mechanical solidarity, it presents a certain viability, even given its analogical limitations.

One possible sense in which the organic model can be criticized was its implications for conservatism. Although Hobson wrote against the politics of conservatism, John Allett (1990:

74) argues that 'there is a significant conservative aspect to Hobson's thought'. In Allett's view, 'Hobson's conservatism is centred in his sociology' (p. 76). As he puts it:

Hobson's interest in conservatism is limited primarily to its usefulness as a corrective (not an alternative) to liberal individualism. There are occasions, however, when he engages in a kind of high moralizing about supra-individual forces of restraint that threatens to propel him beyond liberalism and its ultimate commitment to the self-directing personality.

The entailment of conservatism cannot simply derive from the axiom of interdependence, or from the recognition of society as structure separate from its parts, but must reside in privileging unity or harmony above what is normatively required by life. While Hobson would have disputed any such charge, appealing to the independent normativity of his notions of *life* and *illth*, it may be that the model of organicism exerts, as Allett sees it, an independent pressure for unity and the status quo at the expense of justice or equality implied by a model of democratic socialism.

To the extent that the organic analogy coerces undue support for unity, I want to suggest that complexity theory can offer a more nuanced model in order to theorize the relations between individuals and social structures, as well as to theorize conception of causality, change or evolution, creativity, originality, agency and much else besides. Indeed, I will claim, it provides a revised model for social science and especially for educational research. Although Hobson recognized certain complexity formulations, in most senses the organic analogy still conforms to the prevailing notions of Enlightenment science in its focus on closed, deterministic and integrable systems. In contrast, complexity theory represents a shift from matter-based to an energy-based physics, and offers a non-reductionist conception of the relationship between parts and whole that stresses the open nature of systems and where difference and unity are paired in a new and novel manner.

Complexity theories thus provide better models that enable an avoidance of conservative priority on unity or the status quo, do not prioritize the whole over the parts, or the spiritual over the material, and are compatible with recent post-quantum traditions in science as they have developed in the twentieth century. Although having roots in ancient Chinese and Greek thought, versions of complexity theory are a relatively new field of scientific enquiry, and are perhaps one of the most notable new developments since the advent of quantum theory in the early 1900s. Such theories are not only compatible with materialism, but are systemic, or holist, in that they account for diversity and unity in the context of a systemic field of complex interactional changes.

In his book *Complexity and postmodernism*, Paul Cilliers (1998: viii) defines complexity in the following way:

In a complex system . . . the interaction constituents of the system, and the interaction between the system and its environment, are of such a nature that the system as a whole cannot be fully understood simply by analysing its components. Moreover, these relationships are not fixed, but shift and change, often as a result of self-organisation. This can result in novel features, usually referred to in terms of emergent properties. The brain, natural language and social systems are complex.

Cilliers presents a useful contemporary summary and update of complexity research. Complex systems interact dynamically in a non-linear and asymmetrical manner. Interactions

take place in open systems through 'self-organisation' by adapting dynamically to changes in both the environment and the system. Self-organisation is an *emergent* property of the system as a whole. An emergent property is a property that is constituted owing to the combination of elements in the system as a whole. As such, it is a property possessed by the system but not by its components.¹ Cilliers (1998: 90) defines 'self-organisation' as 'the capacity of complex systems which enables them to develop or change internal structure spontaneously and adaptively in order to cope with or manipulate the environment'. Such systems are not in equilibrium because they are constantly changing as a consequence of interaction between system and environment, and as well as being influenced by external factors are influenced by the history of the system (1998: 66). Cilliers identifies social systems, the economy, the human brain and language as complex systems.²

In the recent history of science, the work of Ilya Prigogine (1980, 1994, 1997, 2003; Prigogine and Stengers, 1984; Prigogine and Nicolis, 1989) has advanced the field of post-quantum complexity analysis at the macroscopic and microscopic levels, based in non-equilibrium physics, linked to the significant work of the Solvay Institutes for Physics and Chemistry. Prigogine received a Nobel Prize in 1977. Like Nietzsche and others before him, he translated the effects of a theory of becoming, based on a Heraclitean idea of ceaseless change, providing a post-quantum understanding of the universe in terms of dimensions of chance, self-organization, unpredictability, uncertainty, chaos, non-equilibrium systems, bifurcation and change. Prigogine's central contribution was to non-equilibrium statistical mechanics and thermodynamics and the probabilistic analysis of dissipative structures (2003: 45, 82). His main ideas (expressed non-mathematically) were that 'nature leads to unexpected complexity' (2003: 8); that 'self-organization appears in nature far from equilibrium' (p. vii); that 'the universe is evolving' (p. 9); that the messages of Parmenides (that nothing changes) must be replaced by those of Heraclitus (that everything always changes) (pp. 9, 56); that 'time is our existential dimension' (p. 9); that 'the direction of time is the most fundamental property of the universe' (p. 64); that nothing is predetermined (p. 9); that non-equilibrium, time-irreversibility, feedback, non-integration and bifurcation are features of all systems, including evolution, which is to say that our universe is full of non-linear, irreversible non-determined processes (p. 59); that life creates evolution (pp. 61, 65); and that everything is historical (p. 64).³ Writing over the same period as Michel Foucault,⁴ he was concerned to analyse *irreversible processes* that generate successively higher levels of organizational complexity, where the complex phenomena are not reducible to the initial states from which they emerged. His work has been especially important for understanding changes within open systems,⁵ for theorizing time as a real dimension,⁶ and for theorizing interconnectedness as a 'characteristic feature of nature' (2003: 54).⁷ Of especial relevance, his work theorizes the possibilities of chance as the outcome of system contingencies.⁸

Prigogine speaks highly about Henri Bergson. Although, in his famous debate with Einstein, Bergson clearly misunderstood relativity theory, he was right about the issue of time, says Prigogine (2003: 61). For Bergson (1998), time was a real dimension, and, contrary to classical views, he saw it as irreversible: 'We do not *think* real time. But we *live* it, because *life* transcends intellect' (p. 46). The irreversibility of time dictates the impossibility of turning back, as well as the irreversibility of decisions and actions. The broader view is one of life and the universe as changing, where time means creation and elaboration of novel and original patterns. It enables an understanding of how each individual is shaped by his/her society and yet unique. In such a conception, where duration represents the real dimension of time:

consciousness cannot go through the same state twice. The circumstances may still be the same, but they will act no longer on the same person, since they find him at a new moment in his history. Our personality, which is being built up each instant with its accumulated experience, changes without ceasing. By changing, it prevents any state, although superficially identical with another, from ever repeating it in its very depth. That is why our duration is irreversible.

(Bergson, 1998: 5-6)

New actions will take place at new times. Life changes constantly, and new states are never precisely repeated in identical form. In drawing from Bergson, Prigogine (2003: 20) notes how such a thermodynamic vision once again makes individual agency pivotal. Independence develops, not apart from the system, but in and through the system.

Such a complex analysis, which retains a conception of individual agency within system parameters, was also centrally important for Hobson. In order to give his theory normative anchorage, though, Hobson utilizes a philosophy of life. It was certainly Hobson's normative vision to promote enhanced well-being and human welfare as central. In accord with life philosophy, it was Ruskin who gave Hobson his concept of social welfare. This involved redefining the concept of wealth away from a concern with exchange, to a concern with its intrinsic worth, or, as Allett (1981: 18) puts it, for its 'life sustaining properties'. In representing individuals as social beings, Hobson echoed the insights of Mackenzie who had written that '[i]t is only through the development of the whole human race that any one man can develop' (Mackenzie, 2006: 180). This is a crucial theoretical axiom from the standpoint of educational analysis, for it formulates the social democratic idea that it is the way we organize the society at large and its institutional structures that is so crucial for the development of each and every person. In such a view, the entire social democratic structure of society is a prerequisite for the application of liberal principles, for uneven development and social inequality negate the significance of liberal ideals such as freedom.

It was because of the inadequacy of representing individuals as solitary atoms that Hobson derived the central importance of social and institutional organization. What frequently went unacknowledged was the assistance that individuals utilized in achieving their plans. To embark on a business initiative, for instance, presupposes sufficient acumen, skills, knowledge, resources, capital and infrastructures, which presuppose their availability in institutional form. Production thus has a 'social element' underpinning it. So, too, does individual development, for each human being could only develop with various familial, educational and community assistance. Once one acknowledges this, one sees that the development of adequate social structures is a *prerequisite* for individual development.

Progress for Hobson was concerned with enhancing well-being, which exalted human welfare as the end or good to be sought after. For Hobson, welfare was a necessary social good. It is through his focus on welfare that he develops his economic philosophy concerned to develop the well-being of all of the international community and all humanity. Work was the medium through which individuals and societies would invest creative energy for production and progress. It was work that generated 'the power to sustain life'.⁹

Hobson recognized that society was more than the separate individuals who comprised it, and that classical liberalism could not adequately theorize the organic relations of individuals within society. It was based on such a view that he advanced his theory of surplus.¹⁰ He theorized surplus as arising through organized cooperation, which was essential to social and economic production. It is through cooperation that individuals produce more than is possible simply as

a function of each individual contribution.¹¹ Cooperation is thus a productive power in Hobson's theory, both productivity and well-being being increased by it.

It was from his theory of cooperation that Hobson developed his theory of underconsumption, which has been his chief contribution to economic theory and was to have a major influence on Keynes. In his classic book, co-authored with A.F. Mummery, *The industrial system*, underconsumption is represented as the manifestation of dysfunctional economic development, which distorts the system of the distribution of wealth and income by creating waste and inequality. Capitalism inherently supports a system of distorted development. The very process by which unproductive surplus was obtained, by business cunning and other strategies of deception, meant that the overall distribution and investment lacked any correlation with what the future of humanity required. Hobson proposed that a rational law of distribution would be in accord with human needs and capacities, thus affirming an affinity with democratic socialism of a distinctively social democratic variety.

Underconsumption was a surplus of production and too little consumption. It was an economy with not enough spending. In Hobson's view, underconsumption results from three principal causes: overproduction, over-saving and unequal distribution of surplus. It was the over-savings aspect that Keynes responded to. For Keynes, Hobson failed to distinguish *savings* from *investment*. In Keynes's theory, it was the distinction between savings and investment that became central to his break from neoclassical economics. Too much saving, in his view, resulted in too little investment, and, hence, the classical adage concerning the virtues of thrift were incorrect from the point of view of benefit to the community. It was for this reason that Keynes favoured public spending and government direction of investment to restore demand in aggregate spending, whereas Hobson advocated a more moral and political argument against unregulated capitalism.

Keynes can, in this sense, be seen as part of a tradition of social democratic thinking that developed from the 1870s to the 1930s. In his later life, he acknowledged a great respect for Hobson's influence. His great contribution to social democracy was his appreciation of complexity dynamics as effecting outcomes that rendered traditional neoclassical conceptions of equilibrium effectively redundant. In this sense, he took Hobson's organic analogy and rendered it more fittingly as a complexity model.

His conception of uncertainty was not seen as something that could be overcome, or that only operated in certain situations, but that arose as a consequence of the complexity created by real time. Because individuals' actions in time created unique patterns, it was theoretically impossible to predict or foretell future events. As he states:

We have, as a rule, only the vaguest idea of any but the most direct consequences of our acts . . . Thus the fact that our knowledge of the future is fluctuating, vague and uncertain, renders wealth a peculiarly unsuitable topic for the methods of classical economic theory . . . [A]bout these matters there is no scientific basis on which to form any calculable probability whatsoever. We simply do not know.

(Keynes, 1937: 213–214)

Keynes proposed, in *The general theory* (1953: 152), that in such a situation the only recourse is reliance on rules or conventions as to how the economy ought to work in order to produce stability through institutional coordination. He thus incorporates post-quantum complexity themes *avant la lettre*. This is especially important in relation to his conception of real time, which underpins his views on ignorance, uncertainty and human agency. His conception of

real time replaces the traditional Newtonian conception, which characterized neoclassical economics as well as standard models of science. As O'Driscoll and Rizzo (1985) explain it, Newtonian time is spatialized, represented as a succession of points (continuous time) or line segments (discrete time) (p. 53), and is characterized by homogeneity, mathematical continuity and causal inertness (p. 54). For Bergson (1998: 338), change, or succession, is not real in the Newtonian theory. When it is conceived as a real additive dimension, no matter how much action reproduces the patterns of the past, any future actions will be unique, for the context of repetition will always vary.

It is this reconfiguration of time through the recognition of complexity that results in the emphasis on uncertainty in Keynes's work. Uncertainty also incorporates novelty, non-repeatability and unpredictability, and also entails indeterminism in decisions. It thus asserts a thesis of creative human agency and imperfect foresight and knowledge. While creative decision-making is possible, it is in relation to a world that is not only unknown but unknowable. Hence, the importance of ignorance means: '[t]he (perceived) unlistability of all possible outcomes' (O'Driscoll and Rizzo, 1985: 62). For Keynes, institutions, although not eliminating uncertainty, attempt to control it. To see Keynes as a complexity management theorist broadens the scope and relevance of his insights from economics to politics, and from politics to education. For all institutions play a crucial role in sustaining life and achieving equilibrium of forces.

Complexity and education

Keynes's arguments for the economy, regarding uncertainty, risk and ignorance as the outcome of complex determinations, are applicable outside the economy narrowly defined, and can be seen to apply to other areas: welfare, various forms of assistance for disability and critical need; matters of urgency or crisis (floods, tornados, tsunamis, hurricanes etc.); health, or education or training.

In this quest for complexity reduction, education is a central institution, as was recognized by John Dewey, who explored the role and function of education in adapting to, and coping with, uncertainty in the environment. For Dewey, education was conceptualized, not as a discipline-based mode of instruction in 'the basics', but according to an interdisciplinary, discovery-based curriculum defined according to problems in the existing environment. As Dewey says in *Experience and nature*, 'The world must actually be such as to generate ignorance and inquiry: doubt and hypothesis, trial and temporal conclusions . . .' (1929: 41). The rules of living and habits of mind represent a 'quest for certainty' in an unpredictable, uncertain and dangerous world (p. 41). For Dewey, the ability to organize experience proceeded functionally in terms of problems encountered that needed to be overcome in order to construct and navigate a future. In terms of learning theory, Dewey used the concept of 'continuity' in order to theorize the link between existing experience and the future based upon the 'interdependence of all organic structures and processes with one another' (1929: 295). Learning, for Dewey, thus represented a cooperative and collaborative activity centred upon experiential, creative responses to contingent sets of relations to cope with uncertainty. As such, Dewey's approach conceptualizes part and whole in a dynamic interaction, posits the learner as interdependent with the environment, as always in a state of becoming, giving rise to a dynamic and forward-looking notion of agency as experiential and collaborative. In such a model, learning is situational in the sense of always being concerned with contingent and unique events in time.

Central to such a complexity approach is that learning must deal with the uncertainty of contingently assembled actions and states of affairs, and by so doing it transforms itself from an undertaking by discrete individuals into one that is shared and collective activity. In terms of navigating a future in relation to economics, politics or social decisions, it places the educational emphasis upon the arts of coordination. It is through plan or pattern coordination that institutions function and that a future is embarked upon. Because in planning one must assume incomplete information due to the dispersal of knowledge across social systems, such coordination can be more or less exact or loosely stochastic and probabilistic in terms of overcoming uncertainty. Because learning is time-dependent, and individuals and communities are always experiencing unique features of their worlds, uncertainty cannot be eliminated. Hence, all that is possible is pattern coordination in open-ended systems, where planning is formed around 'typical' rather than 'actual' features. Such plan or pattern coordination can only be a constructed order. Constructing plans becomes the agenda for education for life in Dewey's sense. Dewey ultimately held to the faith, as Keynes did, that, despite unpredictability and uncertainty, the macro-societal (or macro-economic) coordination of core social problems was possible.

Such a complexity approach is also pertinent for new research in the sociology of education, for such approaches can contribute to the study of non-linear dynamics in order better to understand schooling. Rather than view the social system in the image of traditional social science, inspired by Newtonian mechanics, as a linear system of predictable interactions, the approach of both Hobson and Keynes highlights the emergent character of social systems as self-organizing, non-linear and evolving systems, characterized by uncertainty and unpredictability and emphasizing both determinism and chance in the nature of events. What characterizes an emergent phenomenon is that it cannot be characterized reductively solely in terms of an aggregative product of the entities or parts of a system, understood through linear, mechanistic, causal analysis, in terms of the already-known behaviours and natures of the parts, which are themselves ontologically represented as constants, but must be seen non-reductively in relation to their contingent self-organization in terms of non-linear dynamics, as well as a theory of real time and of emergent phenomena. Schooling in such a view is characterized as a dynamic system whose states change with time through iteration, non-linearity and self-organization. Such an approach does not displace traditional mechanistic linear analyses, such as those that assert correlations between social class and educational attainment, but supplements them. It enables a more nuanced consideration of their variabilities. For the sociology of education, this has the advantage of forging a new reconciliation of the micro-macro issues, enabling a theory of social life where levels of analysis between individual and group, as well as determinism and human agency, can be more accurately assessed. Its mission becomes that of describing and explaining the complexity of systems and their changes, starting from a conception of the whole, while avoiding an exclusive emphasis on atoms or sensations that characterized the old Newtonian paradigm. It offers the scope of supplementing linear mathematical analyses with non-linear mathematical or qualitative analyses for addressing issues of future concern. Theoretically, too, it enables a new approach to the modelling of social systems where the parts of a system interact, combine and modify or change in novel and unpredictable ways, and where the parts themselves may change in the process. In this, it enables us better to understand the role of individuals and of human agency in relation to systems, institutions and cultural patterns; how decisions of the will may introduce into the course of events a new, unexpected and changeable force; how the moral qualities of individuals can alter the course of history; and why, as some older sociological and philosophical approaches tended to maintain, such phenomena as the qualities of individuals or actions in life cannot be

explained solely by general sociological laws of development, social class attributes or cultural patterns. Although individuals are constituted by external social forces, given that time and space individuate those forces, the products of social evolution are inevitably unique and, in addition, through the exercise of imagination, choice operates to forge a conception of freedom quite compatible with the social production of selves. Such an account thus makes possible more historical forms of method, where contingency (both dependent causality, mutability and uncertainty) and novelty, free choice, creativity and unpredictability become integral elements of the research approach, and where top-down forms of deductive reasoning must be balanced by bottom-up analyses of individual or group agency and social interaction.

Finally, to conclude, we can also note that contemporary sociological approaches, such as that of Michel Foucault, contain complexity accounts of change of relevance for extending work in the sociology of education. Foucault's notion of *dispositif*, or *apparatus*, as a 'strategic assemblage' enables a conceptualization of the school within a new pluralist reconciliation of part and whole simultaneously balancing the poles, as he calls them, of 'individualization' and 'totalization'. For Foucault, the *dispositif* was defined as

a resolutely heterogeneous grouping comprising discourses, institutions, architectural arrangements, policy decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophic, moral and philanthropic propositions, in sum, the said and the not-said, these are elements of apparatus. The apparatus is itself the network that can be established between these elements.

(Foucault, 1980: 194)

In this conception, Foucault makes it clear that the apparatus permits a duality of articulation between discourse and material forms that varies contingently and operates in non-linear ways, resisting linear, mechanical, causal explanations of the traditional Newtonian sort. It is in this sense that every form is a contingently expressed compound of relations between forces. Such multiple articulations are indeed essential to his idea of how an entity or construct constitutes its being in time, as well as to his conception of historical change, as well as to his conception of *strategy* as a non-subjective intentionality; that is, as an order that cannot be reduced to a single strategist or underlying cause or actor, but which nevertheless has intelligibility at the level of the society or institutions that emerges from an assemblage of heterogeneous elements, operating contingently and unpredictably within time and space. For Foucault, phenomena such as sexuality, security and normalization constitute such strategic assemblages. In such a model, as for Dewey, the school functions as a stabilizing mechanism that reduces or manages complexity, constituting it as a variably and contingently constituted disciplinary strategy within life itself. Issues such as 'early school leaving', 'employability' or 'the curricula' define the school as such a stabilizing institution, concerned to adapt education to labour market requirements and citizens to society. In such a model, the school is an institution that enables the navigation of an uncertain future.

Notes

- 1 For other forms of emergentist materialism in Western thought, see Bunge (1977), Haken (1977, 1990) and Eve *et al.* (1997).
- 2 For another view of complexity theory, see Kauffman (1993, 1995). Kauffman suggests that, although events can be seen as having antecedent conditions that explain them, in open environments the

possible combinations are unpredictable. Other characteristics of complex systems are that they do not operate near equilibrium; the relationships between components are non-linear and dynamic; elements do not have fixed positions; the relationships between elements are not stable; and there are always more possibilities than can be actualized.

- 3 Prigogine mostly applies these ideas to physical systems, but does sometimes demonstrate their applicability to the social and human world. Discussing his theories of time and irreversibility, he notes how every event (e.g. a marriage) 'is an irreversible event' (2003: 67). The consequence of irreversibility is that 'it leads to probabilistic descriptions, which cannot be reduced to individual trajectories or wave functions corresponding to Newtonian or Quantum mechanics' (p. 75).
- 4 Prigogine's publications date from 1964 until shortly before his death in 2003.
- 5 This involves a different description at the level of physics of elementary processes and a reversal of classical physics which saw systems as integrable, leading to determinism, and premised on time reversibility and equilibrium (as from Newton to Poincaré). Prigogine's approach replaces classical and quantum mechanics in a concern for thermodynamics and probability and emphasizes variables such as noise, stochasticity, irreversibility. Such an approach suggests distinct limits to reductionism.
- 6 In this, he differs from Einstein, who saw time as an illusion, as well as from classical mechanics. He acknowledges debts to Bergson (Prigogine, 2003: 19–20), to Heidegger (2003: 9) and to Heraclitus (2003: 9, 10).
- 7 Interconnectedness means that 'individualities emerge from the global', and counters the idea that 'evolution is independent of environment' (2003: 54).
- 8 Pomian (1990) discusses issues such as determinism and chance in relation to Prigogine's work. Also see Prigogine (1997).
- 9 Hobson adopted a number of Ruskin's phrases, and this is one of them. I cite from Long (1996: 18).
- 10 Surplus was either productive, through labour and cooperation, or unproductive, through rents, interests or profit.
- 11 Hobson gives the example of three persons building a boat to illustrate how, through cooperation, each can contribute to something that individually they could not have produced (see Hobson, 1996: 146–147).

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8

The 'new' connectivities of digital education

Neil Selwyn

The social significance of connectivity

The notion of (dis)connection underpins the organization of all aspects of human life, from the biological and social, to the economic and technological. As such, connectivity has been a central element of societal change throughout history. Key developments in corporeal travel and communications technology, for example, underpinned a steady intensification of the connectedness of everyday life throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Innovations such as the telegraph, railway engine and airplane were associated with fundamental shifts in the connections between people, places, institutions and information. Yet it could be argued that the past thirty years have been subject to a set of especially accelerated and intense shifts in connectivity. A distinct 'imperative to connect' is acknowledged to underpin recent geopolitical, economic and technological shifts of globalization, deriving in no small part from rapid advances in connectivity fostered by information and telecommunications technologies (Green *et al.*, 2005). In particular, the connectivities afforded by the Internet have been foregrounded in popular and academic accounts of late-modern societal change in terms of the 'network society', 'shrinking world', 'digital age' and so on. With these recent articulations of connectivity in mind, the present chapter examines the bearing of Internet connectivity on the processes and practices of contemporary education.¹

This chapter argues that technology-enhanced connectivity merits close consideration from sociologists hoping to make sense of the apparently fast-changing nature of education in the (late-) modern age. In particular, it argues that careful thought needs to be paid to the *networked* connectivities that digital technologies such as the Internet now afford – i.e. the interconnection of people, objects, organizations and information, regardless of space, place or time. As Kevin Kelly (1995: 201) noted at the beginning of the Internet's rise to mainstream prominence, 'the central act of the coming era is to connect everything to everything . . . all matter, big and small, will be linked into vast webs of networks at many levels.' The subsequent integration of Internet connectivity into many aspects of everyday life has prompted popular and political commentators to proclaim networked 'connectedness' as an 'essential feature' of contemporary society (Rifkin, 2000). Even within the relatively sober terms of academic sociology, the notion of networked connectivity is now being touted as an 'organizing framework in which all

institutions, knowledge and relationships are ordered' (Cavanagh, 2007: 24). So, if these claims are to be believed, what are the implications for education in the early twenty-first century? The remainder of this chapter considers how digital technologies such as the Internet are shaping the connectivities of education and learning, and in so doing attempts to unpack the various discourses of novelty and transformation that often pervade discussions of education and technology. In particular, the chapter seeks to challenge the dominant orthodoxy within the education community that Internet connectivity is somehow leading to new and improved forms of education. Having laid out the basis for a critique of connectivity, I conclude by offering some suggestions for future sociological investigations of education and learning in an era of ever-increasing Internet use.

The technologies and conditions of networked connectivity

While the concept of connection has long been a central element of computer science and information systems thinking, the proliferation of the World Wide Web during the 1990s and 2000s has placed networked connectivity at the heart of contemporary technology design, development and use. Using the World Wide Web via the Internet is now part of the fabric of everyday life for many citizens in developed countries – with a present global population of around 1.3 billion users soon set to treble once the capacity for wireless Internet access is extended to the world's 3.6 billion mobile telephone users (Castells, 2008). The Internet (*international network*) was designed to be a global network of connected computerized devices that can communicate with each other and exchange data via a series of software protocols. Unlike previous forms of networked computing, the architectural logic of the Internet was predicated upon 'the interconnectedness of all elements' (Dreyfus, 2001: 10), a condition described by technologists as a 'rhizomatic' connectivity akin to the underground stem systems of plants whose roots and stems are both separate *and* collective. As with these rhizomatic plants, every point on the Internet has the potential to be a recipient *and* provider of information. Perhaps more than any other aspect of its design, it is this interconnected logic that is the defining technical feature of the Internet.

The Internet-based applications of the 1990s, such as email and downloading information resources from web pages, marked a significant step-change in computer users' sense of connection. The subsequent wave of 'web 2.0' tools during the 2000s then led to what many technologists describe as a 'mass socialization' of Internet connectivity (see O'Reilly, 2005; Shirky, 2008). Unlike the 'broadcast' mode of information exchange that characterized Internet use in the 1990s, web 2.0 applications such as Wikipedia, Facebook and YouTube were predicated upon connectivity to openly shared digital content that was authored, critiqued, used and reconfigured by a mass of users – what is termed a condition of 'many-to-many' connectivity as opposed to a 'one-to-many' mode of transmission. Most recently, interest is growing in the development of 'semantic web' technologies that seek to augment individuals' interactions with the Internet via machine-provided artificial reasoning, therefore fostering and supporting 'intelligent' forms of connectivity (see Ohler, 2008). While differing in terms of technical design, all these forms of Internet use share a common sense of individual users being connected to *anything* and *anyone* else on the Internet. In this sense, the individual Internet user can be seen as subject potentially to an 'always-on' state of connectivity.

Of particular sociological interest is how these technical capabilities have informed a range of claims concerning the social nature of Internet connectivity. This is perhaps most evident

in the widely held belief in the Internet somehow being able to 'liberate' the user from social structure and hierarchy, boosting individual freedoms and reducing centralized controls over what can and what cannot be done. For many commentators, the various forms of Internet connectivity described above imply a fundamental reconfiguration of the social. At a macro level of analysis, for example, the 'flattening out' of hierarchies and the introduction of 'networking logic' to the organization of social relations is seen to support the open (re)configuration of society and corresponding underdetermination of organizational structure (e.g. Castells, 1996; Friedman, 2007). Conversely, a micro level 'sense' of connectivity is seen to boost the individualization of meaning-making and action. Here, it is argued that the contemporary condition of enhanced connectivity between individuals, places, products and services has prompted a resurgence of more 'primitive', pre-industrial ways of life. For instance, the Internet has long been portrayed as rekindling a sense of tribalism, nomadism and communitarianism (D'Andrea, 2006; Rheingold, 1994). A range of claims have also been made regarding the role of the Internet in providing new opportunities for informal exchanges of knowledge, expertise and folk-wisdom (Sproull and Kiesler, 1991), supplementing an individual's social capital (Haythornthwaite 2005; Wellman *et al.*, 2001) and even 'breaking down the barriers and separate identities that have been the main cause of human suffering and war' (Mulgan, 1998, cited in Robins and Webster, 2002: 247). Even if we discount the more fanciful and idealistic aspects of such accounts, the majority of popular and academic commentary concurs that Internet connectivity has recast social arrangements and relations along more open, democratic and ultimately empowering lines. As Charles Leadbeater concluded recently:

the web's extreme openness, its capacity to allow anyone to connect to virtually anyone else, generates untold possibilities for collaboration . . . the more connected we are, the richer we should be, because we should be able to connect with other people far and wide, to combine their ideas, talents and resources in ways that should expand everyone's property. (2008: 3)

The educational seductions of Internet connectivity

Amid this broad consensus, the specific *educational* merits of networked connectivity have tended to be expressed through a set of articulations concerning the empowerment of individual learners within networks of connected learning opportunities. Perhaps most prominent is a perception that the Internet offers a ready basis for learning to take place as a socially situated and communal activity. In particular, Internet-based learning is often seen to embody sociocultural and constructivist views of learning being 'situated' within networks of objects, artifacts, technologies and people. The centrality of Internet connectivity to current articulations of sociocultural theories of learning is reflected most explicitly in an emerging theory of 'connectivism' that frames learning as the ability to access and use distributed information on a 'just-in-time' basis (see Siemens, 2004). From this perspective, learning is seen as an individual's ability to connect to specialized nodes or information sources as and when required, and the attendant ability to nurture and maintain these connections. As Siemens (2004) puts it, learning is therefore conceived in terms of the 'capacity to know more' via the Internet, rather than reliance on the accumulation of prior knowledge in terms of 'what is currently known'.

Aside from a prominent role within accounts of the cognitive 'science' of learning, notions of networked connectivity are increasingly prevalent within popular, political and academic

understandings of the social processes and practices of 'doing education'. In particular, the Internet is often described as underpinning the capacity of individual learners to build and maintain connections with various components of the education system – what is presented in policy terms as the 'personalization' of learning. This notion of personalization reverses the logic of education provision, 'so that it is the system that conforms to the learners, rather than the learner to the system' (Green *et al.*, 2006: 3), with learners therefore (re)positioned at the centre of networks of learning opportunities. Within these accounts of personalization, any such repositioning of the individual learner is assumed usually to be contingent on the use of the Internet and other digital technologies. For example, the Internet-connected learner is often celebrated as being no longer the passive recipient of learning instruction but cast instead into an active role of (re)constructing the nature, place, pace and timing of the learning event. As Nunes (2006: 130) concludes, contemporary forms of technology-supported education now:

conflate access and control; transmission in other words is figured as a performative event in the hands of the student, thereby repositioning the student in relation to institutional networks. To this extent, the [student] is anything but marginal; as both the operator that enacts the class and the target that receives course content, the student occupies a metaphorical and experiential centre for the performance of the course.

The perceived capacity of the Internet to enhance the 'goodness of fit' between education provision and individual circumstance has also been promoted as increasing the democratization of education opportunities and outcomes. In this sense, learning with the Internet is portrayed as more egalitarian and less compromised than would otherwise be the case. Through Internet connections, for example, it is argued that learners can enjoy access to a more diverse range of formal and informal learning opportunities, regardless of geography or socio-economic circumstance. Much has also been written about the Internet's capacity to stimulate episodes of informal learning through access to vast quantities of information – what has been described in some quarters as a realization of 'the dream of the universal library' (Kruk, 1999: 138). This democratizing of formal and informal opportunities to learn has prompted much enthusiasm among politicians and policymakers, who see increased connectivity to information, people and resources as a significant means of 'empower[ing] people with new opportunities for the future' (Gordon Brown, 2008), regardless of circumstance or social background. As such, the notion of boundless Internet connectivity corresponds with a number of social as well as educational agendas, not least the enhancement of social justice and reduction of social inequalities.

Towards a critical perspective of Internet connectivity and education

These preceding arguments – and others like them – underpin an established orthodoxy in the minds of many educationalists and policymakers. Here, connectivity via the Internet is seen to offer the basis for a 'transformation' of contemporary education, centred on the actions of the empowered individual learner. Of course, education is not the only domain of social activity where such transformatory expectations are expressed. Indeed, much discussion of the Internet and society centres on assumptions of personalization and improvement where 'the connection between the individual and the social whole becomes increasingly personalized according to

the use of commodities and devices which facilitate this connection' (Holmes, 1997: 38). Against this background, the tendency of educationalists to celebrate individuals' self-determination of their learning via the Internet is perhaps best seen as a constituent element of a wider societal turn towards the networked individualism of everyday life (see Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

While remaining mindful of these wider discursive contexts, I would argue that the transformatory rhetoric currently found within prevailing accounts of education 'in the digital age' is worthy of specific attention from sociologists of education. In particular, there is a need to counter the uneasy and often unconvincing amalgam of theoretical agendas that currently propel much educational thinking about the Internet towards an unwarranted valorization of the individual 'rational' learner operating within an efficient technological network. While the tendency to approach technology-based processes as a closed 'black box' is not unique to education, I would contend that there is a need for educationalists to give due consideration to the socio-technical nature of educational technology use and, it follows, acknowledge the perpetuation of rather more 'messy' social relations and structures. In particular, more thought needs to be given to the apparent continuities, as well as the potential discontinuities, of education in the Internet age, therefore considering 'whether technology-based action simply adds on to existing social relationships or in fact, transforms them' (Gane, 2005: 475). Thus, it is in relation to challenging prevailing expectations of transformation and novelty that sociology of education has a clear and important role to play.

Perhaps the most obvious corrective that sociologists can offer is a refocusing of debate towards the present realities rather than future potentials of Internet-based education. The 'dearly held commitment to the here and now' that characterizes most sociological enquiry (Cavanagh, 2007: 7) allows for further questions to be raised concerning the disappointments, silences and contradictions of educational Internet use. In this sense, issues of inequality and exclusion are perhaps in most need of being (re)introduced into current discussion. Despite an ongoing concern with digital exclusion in disciplines such as communication studies and information science (see Yu, 2006), discussions of the Internet among educationalists have tended to pay little attention to the exclusionary potentials of networked learning. Of course, most educationalists would concur that the notion of *all* learners benefitting from unfettered and equitable connectivity to the same resources is, at best, ambitious. Even as levels of Internet connectivity appear to approach 'universal' levels in some developed countries, inequalities between groups of 'information-haves' and 'information-have-less' remain. These inequalities range from basic abilities to self-include oneself into networks, to subsequent abilities to benefit from these connections once they are established. We are also reminded by sociological studies of Internet use throughout the general population that connectivity should not be seen as a constant state – one is not 'connected for life' once having used the Internet. Instead, individuals often 'dip' in and out of Internet use as life-stage and circumstances dictate (see Anderson, 2005). Thus issues of *disconnectivity* certainly require more foregrounding in current education debate.

The promise of online connectivity to (m)any places and people should also not obscure what sociologists would identify as the continued importance of immediate 'local' contexts in framing learning processes and practices. In this sense, it is erroneous to perceive technology-based learning as somehow 'detached from the spatial condition of common locality' (Thompson, 1995: 32). One particular shortcoming within current descriptions of the Internet and education is the often context-free and abstracted reading of connections between learners, institutions and information. Instead, any instance of online learning is better understood as

being situated within local contexts such as the school, university, home and/or workplace and, it follows, the social interests, relationships and restrictions that are associated with them. This contextualized perspective on the Internet and education allows for recognition of the many compromises of Internet connectivity for the individual learner that are not often acknowledged within education debate. For instance, within schools and universities, the 'official' establishment of Internet connectivities is often centred on concerns and interests of the institution rather than the interests of the individual. This can be seen, for example, in education institutions' implementation of digital technologies to support bureaucratic and administrative concerns, not least significant ongoing investments in student information systems, payroll software and managed learning environments. It could be argued that these priorities leave educational use of the Internet often shaped by 'new managerial' concerns of efficiency, modernization and rationalization of spending costs, rather than specific concerns of learning and learners. Against this background, the shaping of connectivity around the interests of the institution rather than the interests of the individual merits more consideration in analyses of contemporary education.

A further issue highlighted by a sociological reading of connectivity is the enrolment of individuals into bureaucratic networks of surveillance. It has often been argued that the information society is perhaps more accurately seen as a 'surveillance society', with innumerable electronic networks accumulating and aggregating information on individuals' everyday activities and transactions (see Lyon, 2006). Much has been written of the digital extension of Foucault's notion of the Panopticon as disciplinary technology, with electronic networks seen to act as ready means of surveillance, observation and regulation (e.g. Poster, 1995). In an educational sense, therefore, the Internet can be seen as contributing to the internal surveillance of learners within education institutions, alongside the external surveillance of education institutions through the management of performance information. As Hope (2005: 360) concludes, while the practices and processes of education are predicated upon observation and knowledge-gathering about learners, 'technological developments have meant that both the capacity to carry out surveillance and the potential for resistance have grown'. These opportunities to resist and test authority range from the relatively playful ability for students to conceal their informal online activities, to the rather more challenging instances of 'sousveillance', where students (and others) can seek access to proscribed online information through 'hacking' into otherwise restricted administrative systems and databases.

A sociological perspective also raises questions of how digital technologies are shaping connections between education systems and the interests of state, economy, industry and other stakeholders. Perhaps the most prominent manifestation of this element of education technology has been the political use of the Internet as a policy device to align education systems more closely with global economic concerns of national competitiveness and the up-skilling of workforces. Yet, aside from these concerns of economy and nation, the Internet should also be seen as one of the many 'privatizations' of contemporary education (see Ball, 2007). This is evident, for example, in terms of the privatization of Internet use within educational institutions, with school and university use of online content and services becoming a core element of the fast-growing education services industry in most developed countries. Similarly, in many developing countries, information technology networks are now well established as a focus for philanthropic activity and quasi-developmental aid from organizations in the US and elsewhere in the developed world. This is perhaps most apparent at present in initiatives such as 'One laptop per child', where developing nations are encouraged to invest in US-produced laptop computers to 'create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children

by providing each child with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self-empowered learning' (OLPC, 2008). This use of Internet connectivity prompts obvious comparison with what Ball (2007: 125) terms the 'Victorian, colonial philanthropic tradition [of] outsiders behaving as if they were missionaries'. In short, instances such as these highlight the fact that the Internet serves to connect education systems – as well as individuals and institutions – to a wide range of interests and agendas that they may have previously been less directly connected with (see also Michael W. Apple's (2004) discussion of the use of Internet-based tuition by neo-conservative and fundamentalist religious groups in the US to support alternative forms of home schooling outside state control).

Conclusion

This brief discussion hopefully illustrates the contribution that sociology may make in providing a counterpoint to the orthodoxy of optimism that otherwise surrounds the Internet and education. In particular, this chapter has sought to highlight a number of key issues and tensions worthy of further investigation by anyone seeking to make sense of contemporary education. Above all, any discussion of the Internet and education should include consideration of issues such as *disconnection*, *disempowerment*, *inequality*, *commercialization*, *bureaucracy*, *power*, *control* and *regulation*. In providing a 'way in' to unpacking these issues, a sociological perspective on education and connectivity is able to help refocus debate towards the similarities and continuities between the present, ostensibly 'new era' of digital education and education in preceding times. Indeed, many of the issues and tensions highlighted in this chapter lend support to Holmes' (1997: 28) contention that 'computerization and its connectivity are continuations of the social contract by other – if more efficient – means'. With this thought in mind, I would argue that the study of education would benefit from richer understandings of the deep embedding of technology-based practices within the realities of social relations. In this sense, sociologists of education are well placed to re-politicize the debate over technology and education, and refocus discussion away from the presumed transformation of social relations and towards more realistic readings of the technological.

The need remains, therefore, for careful reconsideration of the ways in which educationalists approach the 'promise' of Internet connectivity. In particular, it would seem clear that important discussions of difference need to take place, asking *who* benefits in *what* ways from the connectivities supported by the Internet and other digital technologies. For instance, does the Internet amplify rather than disrupt existing social patterns and relations? Is the Internet acting merely as an instrument of empowerment for the already empowered and therefore furthering the reciprocal relationship between online and offline? Moreover, what are the differences between an individual having connectivity 'done to them', as opposed to being able to 'do' connectivity themselves? What advantages and pleasures (if any) are to be had by being disconnected rather than connected? It is likely that such questions will grow in significance as the twenty-first century progresses and education becomes framed increasingly within a 'register of connectivity' (Wittel *et al.*, 2002: 208). Redressing these tensions through sustained empirical and theoretical analyses should now constitute a next step in a rigorous, sociologically informed rethinking of the connectivities of contemporary education. The prevailing 'imperative to connect' within contemporary education should be accompanied by an attendant imperative to critique as well as celebrate.

Note

- 1 While I remain mindful of the political-economic significance of *non-technology* based connectivity, this chapter focuses primarily on the educational implications of connections afforded by digital technologies – in particular the Internet. Broader considerations of globalization and the 'disembedding' of social systems of late/postmodern society provide the focus for other chapters in this book, such as the contributions from Susan L. Robertson, Roger Dale, Jane Kenway, Hugh Lauder and others.

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A cheese-slicer by any other name? Shredding the sociology of inclusion

Roger Slee

At the age of 82, Mikhail Kalashnikov, the inventor of the AK-47 rifle, first produced in 1947, declared: 'I wish I'd made a lawnmower.' He lamented the destructive deployment of his invention (gasp) and wished that he'd made '... something that would help farmers with their work' (Connolly, 2002). While it is not altogether convincing that a former Russian military officer is taken aback by the malevolent application of his weapon, there have been many instances where well-meaning projects have generated perverse effects. Connolly (2002) instances Einstein. Distraught at his contribution to the development of the atom bomb, he reflected that he should have been a watchmaker rather than a physicist. Grunenthal, the German pharmaceutical company, developed thalidomide as an anti-emetic to assist pregnant women with morning sickness, apparently oblivious to side effects. History is littered with such unintended outcomes.

Surveying the field of inclusive education, we are confronted by the unintended consequences that diminish its record of reform. This chapter is a brief reminder of the importance of the sociology of education to the emergence of inclusive education as an explanatory framework, as well as educational aspirations and practices. I will consider how the appropriation and popularization (Said, 2000) of inclusive education by traditional special education and educational management have resulted in escalating levels of exclusion and increased educational vulnerability. My aim is to expand the objective of inclusive education from the diagnosis of individual student deficits, to be ameliorated through specialist interventions and the fabrication of individual education plans, to a more expansive interrogation of the political economy of schooling as a platform for reconstruction congruent with the challenges of new times in education.

Understanding exclusion?

Exclusion is ubiquitous (Harvey, 1996; Bauman, 1997, 2004, 2008). Educational disadvantage and exclusion may reveal themselves in confronting and obvious forms. Alternatively, they may lurk in, and operate through, the shadowy world of what I loosely call school cultures: an agglomeration of pedagogic practices, curriculum choices, assessment regimes and the

demographic and policy context of schooling (Apple, 2006; Ball, 2008a; Bernstein, 1971, 1996; Unterhalter, 2007). An obvious global manifestation of disadvantage and exclusion is shaped by the economic gulf that divides the so-called *developed and developing* nation-states. The extremes between wealth and poverty reveal educational and social marginalization at a level that is overwhelming. 'Eight million people', writes Jeffrey Sachs, 'around the world die each year because they are too poor to stay alive' (2005: 1). The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, Stephen Lewis, is driven to 'perpetual rage' (2005: 4) when speaking of the extent, depth and causes of the degradation of Africa in the face of the pandemic. He cites the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as architects of continuing immiseration through their insistence on 'conditionality' in the structural adjustment programme that governs loans.

The conditions ranged from the sale of public sector corporations, to the imposition of 'cost-sharing' (the euphemism for user fees imposed on health and education), to savage cutbacks in employment levels in the public service, mostly in the social sectors. To this day, the cutbacks haunt Africa: the IFIS continue to impose 'macroeconomic' limits on the numbers of people (think nurses and teachers) who can be hired, and if that doesn't do the trick, there are financial limits placed on the amount of money that can be spent on the social sectors as a percentage of a country's gross national product (GNP). The damage is dreadful. One of the critical reasons for Africa's inability to respond adequately to the pandemic can be explained by user fees in health care . . . at the heart of structural adjustment policies there lay two absolutes: Curtail and decimate the public sector; enhance, at any cost, the private sector.

(Lewis, 2005: 5–6)

The complicity of the so-called developed world in the continuing plundering of the colonized and marginalized world has been meticulously chronicled (Ball and Youdell, 2008; Emmett and Green, 2006; Jones, 2006). My point here is that there is an obvious and shameful process of educational and social exclusion of staggering proportion. A ' . . . recent recalculation', suggests that, 'there are about 77 million children not enrolled in school and an estimated 781 million adults who have not yet had the opportunity to learn to read and write – two-thirds of them women' (UNESCO, 2007). While such phenomena seem remote, only reaching us intermittently through the light touch of headlines and celebrity causes, there are local 'geographies of exclusion', 'geographies of injustice' (Harvey, 1996; Sibley, 1995).

Harvey (1996) draws our attention to the plight of the twenty-five workers who died and fifty-six others who were seriously injured in the 1991 fire in the Imperial Foods chicken processing plant in the US town of Hamlet, North Carolina, to suggest that poverty and oppression are a part of our local geographies. He draws comparison with the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire of 1911, when 146 employees perished. The 1911 incident led to protests, with over 100,000 people marching through Broadway, and was a precursor to the health and safety laws and regulations. The 1991 incident hardly rated as news, despite the fact that 'the Imperial workers died as the women in New York had: pounding desperately on locked or blocked fire doors' (Harvey, 1996: 336). For Harvey, this incident ought to draw our attention to the conditions in which 150,000 workers in over 250 plants across the 'Broiler Belt' find themselves. They are paid below minimum wages in towns that rely on, and are at the mercy of, this industry. Exploitation is sustained by chronic unemployment, little urban or social infrastructure, impoverished educational provision and the abandonment of hope.

In that same self-described 'developed' country of the West, Kozol (1991, 1995, 2000; Kozol and Ebrary, 2005) has repeatedly diarized pictures of a poverty-enforced apartheid, where African American children are condemned to inferior housing, attenuated education and severely reduced opportunities. In the UK, the Fabian Commission on Life Chances and Child Poverty (Fabian Society, 2006) reported that one in every five children in Britain grows up in poverty, some 3.5 million children (2006: 115). Disaggregating their data, they reveal the disproportionate concentration of poverty on particular groupings within the population. For a child living in a household where there is a disabled parent, the risk of poverty increases from 19 per cent to 30 per cent (p. 119). Forty-nine per cent of disabled people of working age in Britain were employed, whereas, for non-disabled people of working age, the statistic was 81 per cent. Sixty-one per cent of children of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin in Britain are living in poverty (Fabian Society, 2006: 136).

The link between poverty and school failure, disengagement and exclusion has been well documented (Connell, 1993). The complicity of schools in the production of inequality and exclusion, she argues, is longstanding:

Education is not . . . a mirror of social or cultural inequalities. That is all too still an image. Education systems are busy institutions. They are vibrantly involved in the production of social hierarchies. They select and exclude their own clients; they expand credentialed labour markets; they produce and disseminate particular kinds of knowledge to particular users.

(Connell, 1993: 27)

The persistence of unequal educational outcomes contingent on class continues, according to Australian researchers Teese and Polesel (2003: 7): 'The fact that more young people rely on school for jobs or further training does not mean that school is an equally effective path for all.' They go on to say:

Economic marginalization through school is experienced more often by children of manual workers and the unemployed. School has become a link in the re-creation of poverty. This is because, while dependence on completed secondary school has grown, achievement in programmes offered by schools is closely linked with socio-economic status.

(Teese and Polesel, 2003: 9)

Ball (2008b) considers the impact of relentless policy reforms in education in England and Wales through the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Class, he argues, remains a constant feature throughout periods of great policy, demographic and infrastructural changes in education. The neo-conservative policy reform agenda from Thatcher through to New Labour has not resulted in an equalization of 'educational outcomes in terms of labour market access or income', he asserts, ' . . . by many indicators they are more unequal' (Ball, 2008b: 1). Like Bernstein before him, Ball argues that, if we want to intervene in 'the persistence of educational inequality', then the school in isolation from the complex matrix of social relations is not the sole source for effecting positive and enduring reforms. He returns to Bernstein, Bourdieu and to his extensive empirical work to demonstrate how privilege, advantage and disadvantage assert themselves through the mixed markets of schooling (Ball, 2007).

'In effect class and policy and class and educational practices are being realigned' (Ball, 2003: 170). Accordingly, in the now 'ambiguous nature of class reproduction' (Ball, 2003: 178), his research examines a cohort of English middle-class parents who, displaying a mix of confidence and fear, assert their capitals to secure a purchase on their children's futures in and through the education marketplace. A contemporary and pervasive ideology of 'good parenting' (Vincent, 2006) places strain on the family to bring additional resources to assist, first, in the selection of better schools and, second, in the purchase of educational accoutrements such as tutors, technology, after-school programmes, cramming schools (Ball, 2008a). If necessary, they may secure the diagnosis of syndromes and defects to attract additional support or leverage (Slee, 2008). And, 'most families on low incomes or living in poverty are by definition excluded from these possibilities' (Ball, 2003: 177).

Schools, as Connell (1993) observed, are not passive agents in the education marketplace: there exists a perverse reciprocity, a juggling of positional disadvantage and advantage. They reflect and refract social inequalities. Choice is not only the prerogative of some parents; schools too attempt to exert choices. The instruments of testing, inspection and league tables interplay with the intervention of private entrepreneurial interest and divisions between types of school (e.g. city academies, pupil referral units) to form a hierarchy of schools and students.

As schools attempt to improve their profile to attract a suitable clientele, students with poor educational prognoses present a serious risk of failure at inspection (Slee *et al.*, 1998; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). This is illustrated in an interview with Dave Gillborn and Deborah Youdell, who:

discovered the extent of the reach of the standards agenda, and the way in which schools were focussing on the 'D' students and trying to convert them into Cs. They realized the significance of their 'D to C conversion' and its link with the process of 'educational triage' which was going on, a means of apportioning scarce resources to greatest areas of need: 'it was naming what lots of people were living' and it was clear to them that the strategies for triage being operated in schools were producing exclusion for those deemed 'hopeless cases' by concentrating on candidates who could be targeted for upward conversion.

(Allan and Slee, 2008: 38)

Gillborn and Mirza (Gillborn, 2008; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Mirza, 2008) demonstrate that there is little chance involved in the failure of black pupils in England. In the US, Parrish (2002) has chronicled the racialization of special education. Put simply, there is an over-representation of African American students in special education. This is particularly distressing when put into the context of Crawford's (2004) review of labour market statistics. His review of data indicates that children who attend segregated special education are less likely to find employment in the paid labour market.

The causes of exclusion run deep in the architecture of schooling. A priority for researchers in the field of inclusive education is the identification, interrogation and interruption of these patterns of exclusion. To this end, allies must be sought across fields of social research, as the diminution of exclusion and disadvantage cannot be achieved by the classroom teacher alone, the introduction of a new phonics programme to increase functional literacy or the addition of new ways of monitoring the performance of individual schools or local authorities. I am arguing that we ought to resist the reduction of inclusive education to a narrow concern to secure mainstream schooling for disabled pupils. All too often, in the minds of education policymakers, researchers and teachers, inclusive education becomes a default vocabulary for

'the education of (so-called) Special Educational Needs pupils' (Slee, 1996). The exclusion of disabled pupils, however, remains a key item in the broad agenda of inclusive education research. In the next section of this chapter I want to trace the emergence of inclusive education as a field for research and policy activism, identify the unintended consequences of its popularization and then suggest areas for further research to restore integrity to the field.

Misunderstanding inclusion?

As the authors state in the opening pages of *Doing inclusive education research* (Allan and Slee, 2008: 1), inclusive education has become a *catchall* term describing divergent research genres and education practices. 'A troubled and troubling field', it is riven by contest and contradiction, and claims and counterclaims of theoretical authenticity. Instances of this that have attracted attention internationally are seen in Ellen Brantlinger's (1997) considered response to the trenchant critique of inclusion as unscientific and educationally dangerous mounted in Kauffman and Hallahan's (1995) collection of essays, *The illusion of full inclusion*. She draws on Dunkin's (1996) depiction of the types of error common to the synthesizing of education research to demonstrate flaws in Kauffman and Hallahan (1995) and their colleagues' work according to their own criteria for valid research. Their dismissal of inclusive education as ideological and therefore unscientific, she argues, illustrates their incapacity to recognize their own presuppositions and predispositions. In this respect, the debate was not dissimilar to protracted debates through the journals between Martyn Hammersley and Barry Troyna, the former suggesting that *partisan research* (Troyna, 1995) was undermined by its political intent. More recently, Kauffman and Sasso (2006) targeted Deborah Gallagher (2004, 2006) as an object for intellectual derision, once more charging that critical theory and postmodernism, which they use as a blended derogation, attenuates the progress of scientific research.

These debates are not tidy skirmishes over methodology. They represent tactical engagements between different understandings of disability and disablement and correspondingly of the form and objectives of education for disabled students. The emergence of inclusive education as a field of interest within the sociology of education is traceable to the work of scholars and activists such as Sally Tomlinson (1981, 1982), Len Barton (1987), Gillian Fulcher (1989) and Mike Oliver (1990), who between them enlisted Weberian, Marxist and post-structural analyses to explain the oppressive origins and deleterious impacts of traditional segregated education. Applying a sociological lens, it was suggested that disabled people had their vulnerability exacerbated and their marginal social status entrenched by dominant discourses of disability that:

- positioned disabled people as objects of pity and charity;
- romanticized them in tales of triumph over personal tragedy;
- framed them within medical discourses of pathological defectiveness;
- reduced disabled people with fixations with their impairment requiring policy solutions.

Disability studies became simultaneously an alternative explanatory frame and a platform for activism and social reform (Oliver, 1990, 1996).

This work encouraged the new sociology of education to broaden its consideration of educational disadvantage and exclusion to include disabled students. Special educational needs, argued Barton, was a euphemism for the failure of schools to educate all students. As both a

field of research in its own right and an extension of critical sociologies of education, inclusive education sought to advance the rights of all those rendered vulnerable or excluded by cultures and processes of schooling. As Tomlinson (1981), Gillborn (1995) and Gillborn and Youdell (2000) had demonstrated, the convergence between ethnicity, race and disability demanded a more sophisticated analysis of schools as elements of a pathology of educational failure.

Hard-fought-for legislative reform and the expansion of the disability movement and parent groups lobbying for rights of passage for their children insinuated themselves more generally through social discourse. Globally, governments and education jurisdictions modified their language and delivered policy statements about the importance of inclusive education consistent with The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (UNESCO, 1994). Those whom Brantlinger (1997) and Allan and Slee (2008) describe as traditional special educators found themselves in the often awkward position of showing a commitment to inclusive education while not letting go of the paradigmatic foundations for special education knowledge and practices. Following Said's (2000) treatise on the 'taming and domestication' of radical theory in his essay, 'Travelling theory', I will offer two brief points to explain unintended outcomes of inclusive education's newfound popularity.

First is the emergence of more complicated discursive fractures and fault-lines, between and within those described as working either in the field of special education or inclusive education, that generate confusion about the nature and objectives of the research and reform. One of the first sources of confusion is the existence of those who claim to be special and inclusive educators. There has been an uncomfortable elision that has not been sufficiently challenged. The discourse of inclusive education has unwittingly offered a new vocabulary for the practice of traditional special education (Slee, 1993). Indeed, the expensive and glossy (Brantlinger, 2004) special education primers developed for teacher training programmes and special education courses have inserted the words *inclusive education* into their titles and now offer readers a chapter on inclusion and special educational needs. Remarkably, there is no sense of the conceptual irony carried by the linking of inclusive education and special education needs. It is only when pressed to delineate the vagaries of their inclusive language that the caveats and conditions emerge (Slee, 1996). Colin Low (2007: 3) is indicative in his implausible call for 'the banishment of ideology from the field of special education once and for all' and the replacement of the radical calls for full inclusion by 'moderate inclusion'.

A recent example of the dizzying expanse of interpretive latitude is provided in Ruth Cigman's (2007) collection of essays entitled *Included or excluded? The challenge of the mainstream for some SEN children*. The collection was prompted by Baroness Warnock's (2005) *New look* controversial pamphlet for the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain. In this publication, Warnock pronounced inclusion to be 'the most disastrous legacy of the 1978 Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped, Special Education Needs Report' (Warnock, 2005: 22). The leader of the British Conservative Party and a supporter of separate special schooling, David Cameron declared in the House of Commons that this was a 'stunning recantation' (Hansard, 22 June 2005, Col. 825). In his essay in Cigman's text, Ainscow suggests that Warnock's pamphlet was helpful as it moved the issue of inclusion closer to the centre of education debates, but that it had the negative impact of 'encouraging some in the field to retreat into traditional stances' (Cigman, 2007: 128). Indeed, the Warnock pamphlet has resuscitated stalwarts of unreconstructed special schooling, such as Michael Farrell (2008a,b), to speak out against inclusive education as a failed reform initiative, a form of flawed 'politically correct' educational thinking.

Returning to Said (2000), this surge in inclusive education as the Trojan horse for special education is of concern, as special education remains a functionalist imperative. In other words, in its well-meaning interventions to support individual children inside and outside the mainstream of schooling, it provides a sheer veneer to hide the deep cracks in the edifice of mass schooling in the twenty-first century. This observation is not offered as an apology for dogmatism, for adherence to a decontextualized catechism of inclusive education. As Said (2000), Williams (1965) and Giddens (1994) have observed, effective critique is contingent and dynamic. The project of inclusive education therefore may not be best served by pressing for intellectual foreclosure on its definition. Preferable may be a commitment to the ongoing exposure and dismantling of exclusions. This chapter does not resolve the tensions between and within special education and inclusive education; it argues for the necessity of acknowledging the tensions as a source for devising better research questions and policy work. Herein lies a challenge for sociologies of education.

The second major subversion of the inclusive education project is in the development of models for supporting the targets of inclusion. The funding of inclusive education is widely restricted to the establishment of models for allocating 'additional' resources for disabled pupils. Effectively, this has meant devising algorithms that first establish the extent of defect or impairment and then calculate the level of additional resources to be applied to support the education of the child in the regular classroom. The gravity of such models presses diagnosticians to register more serious levels of impairment to extricate more resources. Research has documented escalating levels of diagnosis, particularly in the normative areas of behaviour and attention disorders (Graham and Slee, 2008), together with regional variations (Daniels, 2006) and, as I have mentioned, the racialization of disability (Parrish, 2002).

The most frequent allocation of funds is to provide an adult helper or aide. Recent research registers a growing disquiet with an apparent retreat of teachers from educational responsibility and reliance on the 'aide' to be the *de facto* teacher of the disabled pupil. Notwithstanding the allocation of additional financial support to schools claiming inclusion support, there is little evidence to suggest an increasing capacity of schools to come to terms with the different populations who seek an education. In fact, systemic mechanisms have been established to enable schools to divert students who threaten their examination results profiles to alternative placements (Slee, 1998). Inclusive education policy has thereby generated policies and procedures that jeopardize access, participation and success for increasing numbers of students. Here I return to the beginning of the chapter and to the discussion of the complex structures and pervasive patterns of exclusions. No single site of intervention for reform that targets a particular student identity will of or in itself achieve inclusive schooling. Inclusive education research ought to host a more comprehensive research programme.

Let me suggest that sociology of education may be a platform for the next generation of inclusive education researchers and activists. I offer two reasons here for this. First, the longstanding preoccupation with the structural and cultural formation of disadvantage and privilege provides an opportunity for us to step to the side of the entanglements and vagaries of competing conceptions of inclusion, to approach reform through the analysis and deconstruction of exclusion. It tackles the broader antecedents of educational disadvantage and failure to build a potential beyond functionalist entrapment in individual pathologies. Second, the sociology of education has broad theoretical shoulders, thereby providing the range of analytic tools to engage with the complexity of exclusion. An *ecumenical* posture, where the intersections rather than the constituencies of exclusion become the source of alliance and analysis, assists in the task of revealing layers of identity and the production of vulnerability.

Taking exclusion seriously?

Just as the English satirist Denis Norden suggested that a harp is nothing more than an oversized cheese-slicer with cultural pretensions, a rebadged special education approximates neither a convincing theory of social and educational inclusion, nor a blueprint for inclusive curriculum and pedagogy. The aim is not to demonize special education as the poor relation of the regular school. The two are conjoined and share vital theoretical and structural organs. Inclusive education that proceeds from a willingness first to understand the nature and forms of educational exclusion demands a more careful reading of social theory and critique and a commitment to extensive reform.

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The sociology of mothering

Carol Vincent

The new momism: the insistence that no woman is ever truly complete or fulfilled unless she has kids, that women remain the best primary caretakers of children, and that to be a remotely decent mother, a woman has to devote her entire physical, psychological, emotional and intellectual being, 24/7 to her children . . . The 'new momism' is a set of ideals, norms and practices most frequently and powerfully represented in the media, that seem on the surface to celebrate motherhood, but which in reality promulgate standards of perfection which are beyond your reach.

(Douglas and Michaels, 2004: 4–5)

If we are to understand the significance of class we need to take lay normativity, especially morality, much more seriously than sociology has tended to do.

(Sayer, 2005: 948)

Introduction

Against a background of increased attention being given to mothering roles and responsibilities by policymakers and by the media, this chapter explores the outlines and contours of normative mothering in the affluent Western countries, particularly the USA and the UK, at the beginning of the twenty-first century. I will discuss the discursive power of Intensive Mothering Expectations (IME) (Johnston and Swanson, 2006), and the way in which this particular set of practices and outlook has become universalised as standard. I argue that, far from being a shared experience common to all women with children, mothering practices, including consumer behaviour, are infused by class. I finish with a brief portrayal of two women, who live close together in London, but have strongly divergent understandings and experiences of mothering.

First, a note on the scope and terminology of this chapter. Its focus is social class, but this is only one aspect (albeit a key one) of a mother's identity, and in order to fully understand experiences of mothering it is necessary to also consider how these are gendered and raced. This, however, is a larger project than space allows for here. On terminology: in order to include

fathers, policy documents in the UK use the term 'parents' and 'parenting' (e.g. DCSF, 2007). However, I am going to focus on mothers and mothering. This is not to belittle or ignore the role of fathers, nor the ways in which many men are more actively involved with their children than were their own fathers (see e.g. Dermott, 2008; O'Brien, 2005; Williams, 2008). Rather, my choice of focus is a simple assertion that it is mothers who are generally positioned as retaining the ultimate responsibility for child-rearing in popular discourses and moral understandings, as will be further examined below. Indeed, debates about maternal responsibilities and actions have a long history, as do directives aimed at mothers conveying counsels of perfection. Hardyment, for example, quotes a sixteenth-century didactic poem written in Latin that chides mothers for their laziness and selfishness in using wet nurses (2007: 4).

Intensive mothering

Sharon Hays' (1996) well-known phrase describes the current normative understanding of 'good mothering': an approach that is child-focused, with the mother having the responsibility to care, both intensively and extensively, for all aspects of the child's physical, moral, social, emotional and intellectual development. Intensive mothering, according to Hays (1996: 46), is an 'expert-guided and child-centered', 'emotionally absorbing, labor intensive, financially expensive' ideology in which mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture and development of the 'sacred' child, and in which children's needs take precedence over the individual needs of their mothers. Mother-child interaction is expected to be 'sensitive', whereby mothers talk to their children in a way that features an explicit pedagogy, explained in a reasoning and rational style (Walkerline and Lucey, 1989).

By privileging mothers over other adults, especially fathers, intensive mothering contributes to a situation of unequal parenting, where men's primary contribution to the family remains that of breadwinner, and the adoption of an identity as 'involved father' is virtuous, but optional. Women with children are discursively positioned as mothers first, and then, if they are in paid work, the identity of worker is additional to that. Not necessarily optional – as many women have little or no option but to work – but an addendum (Himmelweit and Sigala, 2002; Vincent and Ball, 2006).

Intensive mothering is an approach (regime might be a better word) that has become reified and normalised as what all mothers should aspire to. Hays points to several contradictions here as mothers in paid employment try to meet the differing demands – the 'cultural contradictions' – of the workplace and home, but always prioritise the moral narrative of 'doing the best for the children' (Hays, 1996: 149). 'Perhaps the strongest indication of the opposition between the logic of intensive mothering and the logic of a self-interested, competitive, rationalized market society is mothers' persistent pre-occupation with the theme of the good mother's lack of selfishness' (Hays, 1996: 168).

In some ways, intensive mothering can be understood as a response to the relative formality of earlier child-rearing styles, such as that promulgated in the 1920s and 1930s and advocated by, for instance, Truby King, where the requirement for routine and order demanded the compliance of the baby and young child to regulation. In response to this formality, the 1950s and 1960s witnessed the rise of psychological, cognitive and popular conceptualisations that stressed the importance of maternal attention and focus on the child (Hattery, 2001). Intensive mothering also seeks to regulate the behaviour of the mother, in her interactions with the child. Daniel Miller claims that White, middle-class women approaching first-time motherhood

commonly adopt an intensive approach. He argues that the result for these women, who have been educated to have a career and have had the experience of exercising a considerable degree of autonomy in their lives, is 'the complete negation of their own previous life project' as 'the infant's constant demands are accepted as essential priorities and at no point should the mother's own desires prevent them from being attended to' (Miller, 2004: 37).

The important point to make here is not to criticise a woman's desire to care for her children, but to draw attention to the power of IME (Johnston and Swanson, 2006). Thus, women in paid work go to considerable lengths to continue mothering intensively (Hays, 1996). For example, Johnston and Swanson cite Garey's (1995) comment that mothers 'weave' an identity that reflects their commitment to employment with their commitment to intensive mothering. Garey studied nurses who chose to work the night shift in order to maintain the image of full-time domestic motherhood during the day. Hattery's (2001) research also included those she refers to as 'pragmatists' and 'innovators', who seek to conform to dominant motherhood ideologies while also being in paid work. Another strategy is that adopted by affluent working mothers who employ at-home care givers such as nannies. Macdonald suggests they are acting out of

the belief that their children deserve and require a consistently present, focused and attentive caregiver at all times. In an effort to emulate the intensive mothering ideal, these mothers hired nannies so that their children could have non-stop quality time in rotating shifts.

(Macdonald, 1998: 41)

Johnston and Swanson (2006), in their own study of mothers with different paid employment commitments and their accompanying orientations to intensive mothering, suggest that mothers construct the meaning of accessibility, maternal happiness and separate spheres differently, on the basis of employment status. That is, they construct and adapt career commitments and mothering ideologies to ensure broadly consistent narratives about good mothering and their own performance of it. It is not the case, therefore, that women offer no resistance to such demanding expectations of motherhood, nor that they do not actively engage with ideas about appropriateness and necessity, but rather, as Tina Miller points out, 'Ideologies of intensive mothering are both drawn upon and resisted, but their dominance and power remains resolute, shaping both engagement *and* resistance' (Miller, 2005: 85).

May (2008) offers another example of IME shaping respondents' self-presentations in her study of Finnish women who were inhabiting the apparently 'spoiled identity' of lone motherhood.

What unites these women [lone mothers] is the dialogue they hold with social norms relating to 'proper' family life . . . The narrators . . . do not refute social norms around the two parent family but attempt to show how, despite at face value appearing to be 'unsuccessful', their families have in fact been 'successful' ones.

(May, 2008: 481)

May asks why 'individuals whose lives are in some way non-normative simply do not discard unhelpful social norms' [which] 'risk exposing them as immoral?' Similarly, Hays questions why, since mothering intensively places such demands on employed women, middle-class professional mothers with much to gain from the workplace, in terms of money, satisfaction and status, do

not simply reconstruct ideas about appropriate child-rearing (1996: 151). Both authors conclude that putting the children first and labouring to ensure their well-being are imperatives for all mothers 'in order to claim a moral self' (May, 2008: 481). Sayer's (2005) discussion of the moral aspects of class is helpful here, as he argues that the avoidance of shame and the pursuit of self-respect either drive us to conform, or to resist and refuse normative values. The latter is particularly hard to do in relation to mothering, owing to fundamental societal expectations about the primacy of a mother's care.¹

Performances of mothering: class biases and professional mothers

Clearly, access to particular cultural and economic resources (e.g. time, money, confidence, an acceptance of a mother's primary and total responsibility for the child, and a particular set of child-rearing goals), all of which are unequally distributed through the population, makes intensive mothering more or less possible.

Studies of child-rearing advice over the twentieth century (Hardyment, 2007; Apple, 2006) illustrate the presumed inability of working-class families to bring up children 'properly', and therefore the urgency of providing them with instruction. This concern remains today, with parenting classes and advisers being a favoured government response within the UK (e.g. DCSF, 2007). Poor working-class women in the US and the UK are also encouraged and coerced into entering the workforce (DWP, 2007; Hays, 2003; Korteweg, 2002). Their capacity to mother their children is devalued when set against their lack of waged income. Indeed, such is the deficit view of 'welfare mothers' that the implicit assumption of policymakers appears to be that children are better off in childcare while their mother works. Although the extent to which mothers from different ethnic and social class groups do recognise and try and live by the tenets of intensive mothering remains an empirical question, what can be asserted is that the 'material and cultural circumstances in which women live their lives' (Miller, 2005) are still overlooked in the moral and practical simplicities of policy and public discourses around mothering. As Kehily notes in her study of UK pregnancy and parenting magazines,

the widely held assumption running through all these magazines is that pregnant women and new mums are between 20 and 45, in heterosexual couples, in stable, long term relationships. The regular features, articles and interactive parts of the magazine conjure up a readership of women with social resources and the ability to exercise choice in their lives . . . There was little discussion of teenage motherhood, single motherhood, parenting in poverty, or women who did not have choice in their lives.

(Kehily, 2008: 4)

Within all of this, mothering is frequently decontextualised and reduced to a series of correct behaviours or tasks (Suissa, 2006). For example, a recent UK policy document, *Every parent matters*, claims,

it's what parents do, not who they are, that makes the difference . . . The evidence that good parenting plays a huge role in educational attainment is too compelling to ignore. It outstrips every single other factor – including social class, ethnicity or disability – in its impact on attainment.

(DCSF, 2007: unnumbered Foreword)

Thus, policies on parenting and the family trade upon unexamined assumptions that normalise the moral possibilities of middle-class living, while the realities of mothering for many working-class families are displaced by easy stereotypes and careless, patronising and damaging generalisations (also Gewirtz, 2001).

Mothering as a personal, intensive and intuitive experience is infused with classed behaviours, values, actions and dispositions. Class is ubiquitous, if less frequently overtly named: what Savage calls the 'everywhere and nowhere quality of class discourse' (Savage, 2005, in Dicks, 2008: 440). The language of class in the UK is composed of largely moral judgements that elicit highly emotional responses from social actors (Dicks, 2008: 440; Savage 2005; Sayer, 2005). This same process also accurately describes the way in which classed behaviour infuses mothering practices. In our preferences, our consumer behaviour, our actions, our values around our children we reveal distinctions and divisions based on social class. One example of this is the food we give our children. Rebecca O'Connell's (2008) study of London childminders illustrates the way in which control of the child through the food that he/she eats is negotiated between mother and childminder. Noting the adherence of some middle-class mothers to organic food, O'Connell cites Goodman and Du Puis's (2002: 17) description of organic food as a 'middle class privilege', a 'class diet'. The (working-class) childminder's resistance to what they perceived as over-priced and over-rated food and their awareness that it was not eaten by 'people like us' were made manifest in their use of the term 'organics' 'as a local working class pejorative term to describe a certain sort of "arty" middle class "incomer"' (O'Connell, 2008: 185). Organic food has come to symbolise a particular facet of good mothering for the affluent middle classes. It is one example of a 'morality tale' told and performed by middle-class mothers (Liechty, 2003: 69), and part of a production of a 'class-cultural space' (Liechty, 2003: 256). Liechty notes such a production is 'accomplished through two conceptually distinct forms of cultural practice: discursive, narrative or linguistic practice on the one hand and embodied, physical or material practice (including the use of goods) on the other' (Liechty, 2003). This class cultural space of mothering has become homogenised and universalised – the practices and discourses becoming not those associated with one social group, but what all mothers *should* do.

An example of this universalisation is the promulgation of what could be called 'professional mothering', a particular approach to meeting IME. Intensive mothering is infused with a discourse of 'expertee-ism'. This is not to say that the advice of apparent experts – in medicine, psychology or child-rearing – is to be slavishly followed, but the responsibility of the mother is to search out such forms of advice and then evaluate their appropriateness to her and her children. This is 'professional mothering', a style adopted by middle-class mothers, who have or have had professional careers and now seek to use their personal and professional skills and resources in bringing up their children. Brooks and Wee (2008), writing about middle-class professional mothers in Singapore, cite middle-class mothers talking about mothering as a 'career', with an evaluative 'end product' of successful and happy children.

One facet of professional mothering is the concern to create the circumstances in which the child's intellectual, physical and creative skills are fully and extensively developed. Bourdieu (1986) argues that, in order fully to understand the distribution of academic capital, we must look at the work done inside the family in the transmission of cultural capital, as this form of capital increases the efficiency of the cultural transmission by the school. I have written elsewhere (with Stephen Ball: Vincent and Ball, 2007) on the volume of activities available to children and their parents: from dance, drama and art, through sport, music and cooking, to more esoteric options such as yoga, life coaching and pottery. These activities are part of an attempt at 'concerted cultivation', as identified by Annette Lareau.

Lareau's recent US study into class-related differences in the 'cultural logics of childrearing' (2002: 772) illustrates the way in which social class informs the 'rhythms of family life'. She identifies the 'cultural logic of middle class parents' as emphasising 'concerted cultivation' of their children. 'They enrol their children in numerous age-specific, organised activities that dominate family life and create enormous labour, particularly for mothers. The parents view these activities as transmitting life skills to children' (2002: 748). Lareau argues that the child-rearing strategies of the working-class and poor parents in her study emphasise, by contrast, the 'accomplishment of natural growth'. 'These parents believe that, as long as they provide love, food and safety, their children will grow and thrive. They do not focus on developing their children's special talents' (2002: 748-749). Lareau is at pains to argue that interacting with children in this fashion is not to be seen as negative, as it gives the children opportunities for unsupervised, unstructured play. Similarly, Gillies (2007) draws on her study of working-class mothers to argue that 'the mothers viewed their role in terms of caring, protecting and loving their children, rather than teaching or cultivating them' (p. 154).

Concerted cultivation involves the buying in of goods and services. Indeed, parental consumption on behalf of their children is another site of class-infused performance of mothering. In a study that looked at the preparation made for babies, including the decorating of a nursery, by pregnant women living in North London, Clarke argues that, 'Pregnancy forms the beginning of a sustained relationship between activities of provisioning, their objects and values, and the construction of "mothering" and "the child"' (Clarke, 2004: 56). She continues,

provisioning an unborn infant requires choices and expertise in an unfamiliar arena where the stakes could not be higher – for every object and every style has attached to it some notion of a type of mothering or a expression of a desired mother/infant relationship.
(Clarke, 2004: 61; see also Kehily, 2008).

Such provisioning² involves the purchase and use of products associated with differently classed lifestyles: particular brands of baby buggies and equipment, clothes retailers (independent shops, chain stores, supermarkets), foods (organic or not), toys (wooden or plastic) Williams' (2006) study of US toy stores gives her plentiful material to discern the status hierarchies of class and race that are being marked out through consumers' decisions over where to shop). This is not simply an individual activity but one through which social networks of similar others can be identified and marked out, a process of deploying loose-fitting but practical signifiers to help us 'place' people in the social world. As Bourdieu argues,

Taste classifies and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects classified by the classification distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar.

(1986: 6)

Having noted the dominance of intensive mothering as a normative construction of mothering style and scope, and looked at the way in which class inflects performances of mothering, I now turn to two brief portrayals taken from recent research projects that feature two mothers who live approximately half a mile apart in London, but within very different material contexts of mothering.

Jill and Mary

Jill and Mary were mothers whom we interviewed for our consecutive research projects exploring middle-class and working-class families' engagement with childcare provision. Their lives and words illustrate the class-related differences in normative presentations of good mothering. They are not at extreme ends of our samples in any sense, either in terms of their financial income, or the ease with which they manage their lives on a day-to-day basis, or their approaches to child-rearing. The differences between them are often small and nuanced – this is not a simple case of rich and poor, although income differentials play a key role (see Vincent *et al.*, 2008, for more detail)

Jill is a Black, Caribbean-origin woman with three children.³ Her oldest two are in their teens, and her youngest started school during the course of the research (4/5 years old). Jill now manages a betting shop, where she has worked for over a decade. She lives in a housing association flat on a small, smart estate and drives a car. She left school at 16 with few qualifications. Mary has two children under 6. She is married to Gary, who is a recruitment consultant. She is educated to degree level, although Gary did not complete his degree. Mary is an artist and lecturer, but was not working at the time of the first interview. By the time of the second, she was running a children's art club. Mary and Mike own their own house and both drive. The family were planning to leave London for the countryside. Despite evidence of changing family structures in the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2001) and elsewhere, the two-parent household, with the woman at home or working part-time, retains considerable discursive power. Jill is clearly aware that her household differs from the 'norm' and appears to regret this 'deviance', saying,

I would like to stay at home, but that's if I had a husband, to stay at home and play that proper role model, I suppose, but it's not . . . it's not real. Not for me.

Friendship networks

One of the differences we found between the working-class and middle-class mothers in our research concerned their friendship networks. In many cases, working-class women derived their primary social support from family, while the middle-class mothers were much less likely to have local family members and had instead, through antenatal groups and other child-focused activity, established networks of similar mothers (see Vincent *et al.*, 2008). Illustrating this division, Mary's networks generated considerable social capital through 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973). This is 'bridging' social capital, although within a socially homogenous group, which provides Mary with a site of information-sharing about schools and nurseries, alerts her to the job she takes, the nanny she shares and then the existence of the small crèche her children attend. The interconnected nature of local middle-class mothers' networks is clear from her comment on looking round primary schools. 'In looking at a state school and you think, I know all these mothers, that's good. I suppose you feel a bit like it is going to be OK. You know, this big step.'

Jill has a much looser network of friends. Working full-time, her main sources of adult support and companionship outside the workplace appear to be her sister and her mother. In the narratives of the working-class women in our research, female relatives play a key role in offering practical support and information.

Approaches to childcare

Jill's youngest daughter attended a state-funded day-care nursery full time since she was 9 months old, and then a state school. Jill has a sense of security that derives from her faith in the state. It is important to her to know that her daughter is with qualified staff, and the staff in state nurseries seem to her to be more regulated than those in private nurseries (which are in any case too expensive) or childminders. This faith in the state has survived despite her two older children being let down, as she sees it, by schools. She is in search of a childcare environment that is safe and reliable and will prepare her youngest daughter for success at school.

Mary does not mention state nurseries, despite the developed network in the area. She uses a nanny-share, a small, parent-run, cooperative crèche for both children, a community nursery for her younger child and a non-selective independent primary school for her elder. She states clearly that she is in search of a childcare environment that is nurturing, intimate and creative. The nanny who looks after both children is not qualified but is seen as having the right personal characteristics to look after babies. Toddlers are understood to need more creative activities, hence the switch to nursery.

Mary's and Jill's 'choices' were again replicated in the wider sample, where working-class mothers spoke mostly of their fear of physical harm and neglect from a carer, which influenced their choice of nurseries as safe, public spaces, open to scrutiny and in which the workers can police each other. The middle-class parents were more likely to emphasise the importance of small, intimate care spaces for the under-threes.

Paid work

Jill's long hours of retail work, including regular weekend work, mean that she relies on her teenage daughter to collect her youngest daughter from after-school club and prepare her tea. She feels strongly that she is absent from home for too long.

Nothing's positive [about work], it is just financial solely. I think the government should have more control on these companies . . . because I think people are forced to work such long hours and they don't get no support from the government and your family completely misses out . . . It's all negative working when you've got young children, because I do have lots of guilty feelings that I'm not there. And you're constantly battling.

Jill is proud of her youngest daughter, who is getting on well at school. This success lessens her anxiety somewhat. 'I used to feel guilty with [older children] because I think I should have been there more because they needed that because of their dyslexia. But what could I do? Nothing much.'

Mary accepted IME by giving up her job, after her second child was born. In compliance with IME, she emphasises her part-time job is carefully arranged so that 'there aren't any downsides', especially not for the children.

[After my second child] I just felt completely overwhelmed by the whole thing and I knew that I was going to be staying at home. And I was happy to do that. But then, you see them becoming more independent and you realise that you'd like some of that independence too. And they need to go off and socialise and be at nursery. Just a little bit. Not full time or anything . . . Neither of them would know whether I am working or not.

During the course of the research, Mary's partner also moved to working at home in order to spend more time with children, although he also had work-related reasons for making the change. Both women see their jobs as a source of income necessary to maintain the family's viability and their own independence, by which they both set great store. Jill aspires to become a midwife, an occupation about which she is intensely enthusiastic ('my passion'). Similarly, Mary's sense of self is not invested in her current paid work, but in her case derives from her own art work.

School choice

Choosing a primary school is a much more nuanced, lengthy and anxiety-inducing process for Mary than for Jill. Mary rejects a nearby school on the basis of its too-basic facilities, lack of friendliness from teachers and an implied concern that the peer group may be too 'rough' for her child. Matching individual children with particular institutions is commonly alluded to by middle-class parents as a mechanism of choice (Ball, 2003; Gewirtz *et al.*, 1995). So she keeps her daughter at the small, alternative, independent school until the family plan to move. 'I've heard from people I know, they hint at [rejected school] being maybe just a little rough around the edges . . . And I looked at my daughter's personality and I looked at the school and I couldn't see them matching.'

As Jill works such long hours, her choice of school is driven by the availability of an after-school club and ease of location for other family members to collect her daughter. Jill sees few differences between schools and generally maintains a hands-off approach, except in times of crisis, commenting, 'I don't go up the school'. Again, this distance is often mentioned by working-class mothers and has been extensively discussed and analysed elsewhere (Gillies, 2006; Lareau, 1989; Reay, 1998; Vincent, 1996).

My point in highlighting these differences between Jill and Mary is not to suggest that one woman is a 'better' mother than the other. Clearly, differences in financial resources underpin many of the distinctions mentioned here, but there are differential resources of social and cultural capital in play as well. As a result, Mary is in a position to live by IME, whereas Jill cannot and, in some ways (e.g. interaction with school), does not wish to. As both nurturer and provider, Jill displays considerable resilience, yet still experiences considerable anxiety over the effect of her absences on her children. This anxiety was heightened by one teenager recently being convicted of illegal activity, and we suggest that, despite her identity as 'good' worker and provider, Jill is aware that the time she spends away from her children means that she is at risk of being positioned as a 'bad' mother, revealing a tension between being in paid employment and being with the children that she cannot resolve.

Conclusion

Lawler describes class as

dynamic; as a system of inequality which is continually being re-made in the large and small-scale processes of social life: through the workings of global capital and the search for new markets, but also through claims for entitlement (and of non-entitlement), through symbols and representations, *and in the emotional and affective dimensions of life.*

(2005: 797, emphasis added)

My argument here is that mothering is one example of a site in which class is realised and reproduced, with those who do not conform to the normative ideal at risk of being exposed as morally insufficient.

The experience of mothering is often presented as a common bond between women, despite the other differences and distinctions in their lives. Yet the expectations established by a normative discourse of intensive mothering are divisive. IME demands from the mother an unremitting focus on the child that many women are unable or unwilling to maintain. It is, of course, easier to work with and around IME if you are affluent and, perhaps, if you have a partner. Explanations focusing on those who do not live by its precepts often slip from structural poverty into cultural poverty, and resistance to IME becomes 'bad' mothering. Although absent fathers are condemned, a particular ferocity informs moral judgement of 'bad' mothers. Middle-class performances of mothering map out and inhabit a class cultural space determined by an 'intensive' approach, one that is both 'sensitive' in terms of the mother's interaction with the child, and 'professional' in her approach to the task of moulding her child. Here is the 'implicit ought' (Lawler, 2005: 801) of mothering, the 'moral boundary drawing' (Sayer, 2005), which lays open non-normative performances of mothering to charges of inadequacy and also, potentially, to a refusal to recognise the mother as a moral self.

Notes

- 1 It is frequently noted that mothers whose care and protection of their children are inadequate are quickly demonised, and to a greater extent than fathers who hurt their children. Recent UK cases include that of Fiona MacKeown (whose daughter was murdered while she was away from home).
- 2 The emphasis on parental consumption on behalf of the child is one aspect of a commodification of childhood, increasingly apparent over the last century. The other aspect is direct marketing to children (Cook, 2000; Kenway and Bullen, 2001).
- 3 Reynolds' (2005) discusses the experiences and understandings of Black Caribbean mothers.

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Rationalisation, disenchantment and re-enchantment

Engaging with Weber's sociology of modernity

Philip A. Woods

Introduction

Max Weber is seen as one of the founders of sociology, making up a triumvirate of 'founding fathers' with Marx and Durkheim. However, this does not capture the scope and ambition, nor the emotional engagement of Weber's scholarly work. What drove him was a demand to address the 'cultural crisis' that was represented by the creation of the modern world (Kettler *et al.*, 2008). Undertaking his research and writing from the late nineteenth century to his relatively early death in 1920, Weber saw at first hand in detailed empirical studies the replacement of traditional agricultural society in Germany by 'a new "employment regime" based on capitalistic wage labour' (Whimster, 2007: 16). The intensity with which he approached his studies led to a number of breakdowns in his health. A large part of that intensity arose from an unclouded recognition of what was being lost with the expansion of modernity, namely a sense of meaning that was embedded in the everyday relationships and activities of human life. This was, however, not a recognition of loss characterised by soft nostalgia. In his immensely varied and historically focused breadth of studies – from Chinese society to the development of capitalism in the West – Weber understood the pervasiveness of issues such as power, and identified how they were differently manifested in different kinds of social order. His was a determination to understand the new, modern society from within the perspective of that society, utilising the rational, scientific approach to increasing knowledge. Crucially, this scientific approach to knowledge of the cultural world had to be appropriate to that world. Hence, Weber emphasised, not only the formulation of concepts, ideal types and detailed empirical analysis of the development of social orders, but also the need for the cultural analyst to exercise *verstehen* (an empathetic understanding of what it is or was to be of and in a certain social order and cultural context) and the necessity of choice in deciding from what angle or point of view to select the focus of study.

This chapter concentrates on his characterisation of modernity through the interrelated conceptualisations of rationalisation and disenchantment, the key challenge it generates (concerning the possibility of freedom in a rationalised social order), and ways in which this challenge may be engaged with.

Rationalisation and disenchantment

Weber is best known for his development of the concept of *rationalisation* as a means of understanding the distinct character of the modern world. Modernity raises instrumental rationality to be the most valued mode of social action, one that pervades social life. The modern social order, according to Weber, is characterised by bureaucratic organisation and procedures, which he analysed by means of the construction of ideal types. Thus, the ideal typical bureaucracy possessed the characteristics of rule-driven behaviour, responsibilities and powers defined by the office of the person and an ordered hierarchy of posts and positions, with authority dependent on where a post-holder fitted into that hierarchy and underpinned by legal-rational authority – that is, ‘the legitimacy of the power-holder to give commands [resting] upon rules that are rationally established by enactment, by agreement, or by imposition’ (Weber, 1948c: 294).

Weber’s analysis was, however, much more than a description of the dominant organisational form of modern society. His compelling interest was in the question of what type of human being is encouraged by different social orders (Hennis, 1988). In what ways do different types of society and culture shape the type of person who lives within them? Modernity is a historically unique social order that gives rise to a distinctive conduct of life which is lived by and continually shaped by a particular person type. The driving question for Weber’s work is an exploration of the ‘inner effect’ on personality (Hennis, 1988: 57).

One of the most famous concepts to emerge from that work is that of the ‘iron cage’. This encapsulates the idea that modern people are trapped in a rationalistic, bureaucratised organisation prison that deprives them of freedom and creativity. In fact, this idea is better rendered in English as the ‘steel shell’ (Wells, 2001). What confines people is not an external ‘cage’, but something much more sinister: a characteristic that has become *part of the person* (as a shell is an organic part of an animal), a characteristic moreover that is forged (like steel) by human beings in modern society and is not a natural or organic product. The implication is that it is alien matter that is insidiously introduced within the human frame for living.

Sociologically speaking, instrumentally rational action is privileged. At the level of personal relationships, ‘traditional and charismatic-style social relations are replaced by technical-rational ones, meaning that relationships with colleagues and students are more impersonal, calculative and formalised, increasingly governed by detailed codes of conduct’ – with staff in universities, for example, becoming employees subject to performance evaluations instead of members of an academic community (Samier, 2005: 87). In terms of Weber’s typology of social action, *zweckrational* (instrumentally rational action) predominates over the other action types: namely, *wertrational* (value-rational action), which involves an overriding commitment to values as a result of prior conscious reasoning or, as Weber puts it, ‘self-conscious formulation of the ultimate values governing’ the action; affectual action – ‘(especially emotional) . . . determined by the actor’s specific affects and feeling states’; and traditional action ‘determined by ingrained habituation’ (1978: 24–25). Samier’s analysis of universities, from a perspective of Weberian public administration, highlights the procedural, performative bureaucratisation trend, which involves the forging of an academic staff as an ‘entrepreneurial and managerially orientated cadre who adopt obedience to bureaucratic authority and performance management’ (Samier, 2005: 81) and the creation of a ‘new entrepreneurial professor’ (p. 82).

Weber’s analysis was weighted with both analytical and normative understandings. That is, he sought to analyse the world of human beings as clearly and in an as unbiased way as possible, undertaking enormous amounts of cultural and historical analyses over his lifetime; at the same time he recognised that where the social scientist applied his energies and the driving research

questions he pursued were the result of choices that are value-laden. He had a *feeling* for his work, as well as the sharp eye of the analyst. Understanding modernity was a pressing challenge because of the fundamental change it wrought in the people who are embedded in its conduct and social structures. Weber was pessimistic about the fate of the individual within the tightening parameters of the instrumental, means-end rationality of bureau-capitalism and the disciplines emanating from the forces of rationalisation, all tending towards ‘a universal phenomenon [which] will make irresistible headway in every sphere of human life’ (Weber, 1978: 1150).

Why it is a crisis and why it should evoke pessimism are only understandable if there is a sense of something of great value being lost in the conduct and the person type of modernity. Thus, the full meaning of the concept of rationalisation is understandable only in relation to another concept pivotal in Weber’s work, namely *disenchantment*. Influenced by Nietzsche, Weber’s view was that, in the modern world, God is dead, and all objective order of value is gone (Hennis, 1988: 158–159). The bearing of the modern person in the rationalised world ‘has been disenchanting and denuded of its mystical but inwardly genuine plasticity’ (Weber, 1948a: 148). The inner capacity for a sense of spirituality and profound meaning has not disappeared, but an understanding and a belief system that pervade the social structures and social conduct life have withdrawn.

Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendent realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and human relations. It is not accidental that . . . today only within the smallest and intimate circles, in personal human situations, in *pianissimo*, that something is pulsating that corresponds to the prophetic *pneuma*, which in former times swept through the great communities like a firebrand, welding them together.

(Weber, 1948a: 155)

In contemporary times, we know that personal spirituality in many countries, as well as persisting individually, is articulated and shaped through an industry of mind, body and spirit publications, diverse kinds of groups and activities and New Age movements, and the growth of corporate and academic interest in the relevance of spirituality and values to organisational life and work relationships. In one sense, this can be understood as a rationalisation of a human impulsion to seek and create meaning, an impulse that the forces of bureaucratic capitalism are able to take advantage of, as with any other actual or potential human demand (commodification). (Another perspective is to see in it a potential for countering the dominance of instrumental rationality, which will be discussed further below.) This rationalisation is manifest, for example, in the systematic (instrumentally rational) attention that business and other organisations are willing to give to the connection between spirituality on the one hand and organisational leadership, management, staff development policies and organisational performance on the other (Casey, 2002; Reave, 2005).

The idea of spiritual intelligence as a capability for problem-solving is an example. Spirituality here is formulated as:

the intelligence with which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, the intelligence with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context, the intelligence with which we can assess that one course of action or one life-path is more meaningful than another.

(Zohar and Marshall, 2000: 3–4)

The point here is not to suggest that rational approaches to meaning are inadmissible. Systematic approaches – both intellectual and practical (through the exercise of meditative techniques for example) – have long been characteristic of religious views of the world, and Weber certainly recognised this. The point is that the most personal and demanding questions of meaning are, in modern society, capable of being embedded in, and dominated and appropriated by, the single-minded focus of bureaucratic capitalism on marshalling the best means to serve the ends of organisational performance and maximisation of income.

This is evident in education. The interest in values and the meaning that educational leaders and staff espouse and live by can be understood as a move from simple instrumentalism to subtle instrumentalism (Woods, 2005): from the former, which treats people as subjects who can be moulded and manoeuvred through direction and sanctions, as means to organisational and economic ends, and as organisational members whose worth and progress is to be measured through tests; to the more finely tuned approach of subtle instrumentalism, which retains the fundamental perspective of people as means to ends, but recognises that moulding, manoeuvring and assessing them requires a great deal more sensitivity to their emotions and motivations. Hartley (2004) sums up this new form of instrumentality in education and sees in this a further unfolding of Weber's rationalisation thesis:

This new 'emotional' discourse has the attraction of appealing subliminally to those who have become disenchanted with consumerism's promise that its goods and services will serve, at last, to render the self at ease and to give life meaning. Put another way: if meaning and emotional satisfaction in life is not being derived from consumerism *outside* of work, then perhaps it can be derived from 'consumerism' *within* work. It is the emphasis on the emotional and on the spiritual that arguably renders the new *emotional leadership* discourse so persuasive . . . At root, as Weber predicted, emotional management seems to be a technical endeavour, born of modernity, set for standardization, to be rendered as objective and measurable, and made ready for audit.

(Hartley, 2004: 592; emphases in original)

The diagnosis of modernity that Weber offers is a conceptualisation characterised by rationalisation *and* disenchantment as mutually sustaining concepts. Too often the latter (the integral significance of disenchantment) is marginalised or given only implicit or cursory recognition in the application of Weber's formulation of rationalisation. However, to do that is to lose the depth of the demand of modernity. That demand arises from the dominance of science – the rational, systematic investigation of the world – as the source of understanding and knowledge. Self-clarification and knowledge, therefore, are 'not the gift of grace of seers and prophets dispensing sacred values and revelations', and this is 'the inescapable condition of our historical situation', one which we cannot evade 'so long as we remain true to ourselves' (Weber, 1948a: 152). As Koshul (2005: 14), in his discussion of Weber's postmodern significance, succinctly puts it:

Plain intellectual honesty and integrity require that we, as moderns, reject all claims of special gifts and grace claiming to provide access to, and possession of, sacred values and revelation because such claims cannot be justified on rational, scientific grounds.

The demand of modernity, unabated as it unfolds and expands globally into what some call postmodern society, is to understand, accept and bear the meaninglessness of the world. What

values and meaning and spiritual significances the moderns embrace cannot have the force and legitimacy of universal, objectively grounded truths. We – in ourselves, our families, social groups and networks – are left to define for ourselves what values and meanings we take to be ultimate (if any at all). Meaning is arbitrary and partial. As a basis for studies of the social construction of knowledge and values, this is liberating. However, as a basis for life, it is unnerving and roots the everyday conduct of living in an existential angst.

Freedom in a rationalised social order?

The challenge put into sharp relief by Weberian analysis is whether some degree of genuine freedom is possible within the rationalising social order of the modern world. Is there a possibility for moderns to be anything more than 'cheerful robots' (Mills, 1970) C. Wright Mills' phrase – cheerful robots – captures perfectly the denuded conception of the human being where the understanding of what is fundamentally to be valued is confined within the scope of rationalised and marketised society alone. In ideal-typical terms, the modern social actor is defined by the 'steel shell', which comes to be a very part of their being. In this section I will consider three responses: the entrepreneurial turn in modern bureaucracy; the individualistic response that is represented by Weber's idea of 'inner distance'; and possibilities for counter-rationality based on explorations of meaning. (Space precludes specific discussion of the postmodern response. See Gane (2002).)

The entrepreneurial turn

The emphasis on entrepreneurs and entrepreneurialism in education and other areas of the public sector (Woods *et al.*, 2007) introduces a complexity to bureaucratic organisation. It is seen as a feature of bureaucratisation and an extension of contractual relations, as in Samier's (2005) analysis for example; but it also launches into bureaucratic organisation an impetus to innovation, change and lateral thinking that is in tension with the certainties and order of rational procedures. Entrepreneurial and bureaucratic rationalities vie with each other – another example of practice being characterised by multiple models, as Weber emphasised, rather than pure ideal types. The imperative for the entrepreneur is to challenge the traditional and bureaucratically honoured ways of doing things and, therefore, to be motivated by their own initiative, conviction and sense of values and purpose. Entrepreneurial activity is characterised by enthusiasm and excitement, which contrasts with the dominance in bureaucracy of 'a spirit of formalistic impersonality: "*Sine ira et studio*," without hatred or passion, and hence without affection or enthusiasm' (Weber, 1978: 225). Weber recognised this subversive, potentially liberating character of the entrepreneur. The capitalist entrepreneur 'is the only type who has been able to maintain at least relative immunity from subjection to the control of rational bureaucratic knowledge' (Weber, 1978: 225).

A more entrepreneurial character is exactly what is being introduced into modernised bureaucracies in education and the rest of the public sector, intensifying pressure on organisational members to commit their *person* to work and the office. The bureaucratic principle that separates the office from the person and calls for an absence of 'personal enthusiasm' is the antithesis of modern leadership discourse in which 'the person is integral to, and a key resource in, the office itself . . . its very material and spiritual embodiment' (Newman, 2005: 720). In education, the idea of a 'new enterprise logic' is having a compelling influence, with schooling

being seen as 'an undertaking that is difficult, complicated and at times risky, often calling for daring activity . . . and is thrilling in its execution . . .' (Caldwell, 2006: 76). A key aim is constant improvement (Ofsted, 2002), by 'constantly generating and increasing knowledge inside and outside the organization' (Fullan, 2001: 8). A more entrepreneurial culture is seen as overcoming the alleged stiffness, lethargy and unresponsiveness of traditional bureaucracy (du Gay, 2000), and the desire to create a more enterprising approach to education underpins the creation of a new kind of school organisation in England – academies – sponsored by businesses and other private people and organisations (Woods *et al.*, 2007). Academies in England are intended to be hybrid (public–private) organisations, where the entrepreneurial spirit can flourish, and which, arguably, bring into organisational form a bureau–enterprise culture that combines the dynamism of that spirit with the values of public bureaucracy (Woods, P.A., 2007).

In this change to a more innovative, entrepreneurial organisational regime, is there a growth of freedom – scope for dilution of the 'steel shell' of rationality? The entrepreneurial maverick has the potential to utilise the relative immunity of the entrepreneur. However, the parameters within which entrepreneurial creativity and difference are encouraged can act to constrain and construct a person type that functions in and for the organisational goals and priorities. This is the burden of the critique of new public management and managerialism – that the freedom it invokes is accompanied by forging an inner disposition, a soul, that defines its values and spirit in terms of gains in measurable performance and enthusiasm for the idea of innovation and change as abstract goods. System and organisational mechanisms and strategies seek 'to reshape the ways in which each individual . . . will conduct him- or herself in a space of regulated freedom' (Rose, 1999: 22). The promised benefits of managerialist culture are founded in an instrumental orientation that values processes, techniques and change, which serve this goal of constant improvement. Entrepreneurialism in this regard is ultimately subservient to the dominant rationalised culture.

The individualistic response of 'inner distance'

Weber insisted that, despite the rationalisation of the modern social order and its disenchantment of the world, an individual could hold on to and express ultimate values. In particular, this is the demand that the true political leader must face up to. In his lecture, 'Politics as a vocation', Weber addresses the normative question of what kind of person one must be to be allowed to wield political power, and what differentiates different power-holders who all claim noble, lofty intentions (Weber, 1948b: 115, 119). His answer is that it is one who is guided by an ethic of responsibility, one who carefully attends to the consequences of policy and to the irreconcilable tensions it involves and who also complements this and who recognises that, at a certain point, the ethic of absolute ends comes into its own. There is a point to hold to the ultimate principle and declare 'Here I stand! I can do no other'.

The capacity that Weber is highlighting here is that of inner distance – that is, a self-conscious adherence to certain ethical values, in the face of the immense daily pressures to conform to a rationalised and disenchanted world, a capability to resist loss of 'personality' under the relentless pressure of the demands of routine. There is, as Schroeder (1991: 62) explains, the possibility for:

an unfettered self which tries to assert its individuality by affirming certain constant values in the face of the impersonal forces which increasingly dominate the modern world.

However, this conception of inner distance is individualistic and dependent solely on the personal resources of the individual. In addition, Weber does not give it any systematic or substantive content to the concept (Schroeder, 1991). As a result, the choice of values, or how we might arrive at that choice, is arbitrary. We can make the 'decisive choice of a leading drive or value' that inner distance demands and that gives direction (Owen, 1991: 84). However, we do not, from Weber's work, have the resources to discriminate between less and more valid choices.

The possibility of counter-rationalities of veridical meaning

As noted above, Weber's construction of ideal types, such as those of bureaucracy and instrumental rationality, were not intended to reduce the real world to one-dimensional concepts. In the practice of social life, people are likely to be moved by multiple cultural conceptions of, and dispositions towards, social relationships. In particular, different types of social or organisational authority are likely to be apparent in practice, rather than pure forms of bureaucratic (legal-rational), traditional or charismatic authority.

In general, it should be kept clearly in mind that the basis of every authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a *belief* . . .

The composition of this belief is seldom altogether simple. In the case of 'legal authority', it is never purely legal . . . it is partly traditional. Furthermore, it has a charismatic element, at least in the negative sense that persistent and striking lack of success may be sufficient to ruin in any government.

(Weber, 1978: 263; emphasis in original)

There is an inner activity that helps to shape that animating belief to which Weber refers. An interesting insight into modern organisations is given by Casey's (2002) international study. This found, in organisations across the world, 'various new forms of self-expressiveness, meaning-making and spirituality' (p. 152), opportunities for time in 'quiet rooms' and the 'gentle arts' of 'spirit-seeking, magic and divination' (p. 155). Casey suggests that organisational members, through this kind of activity and perspective, bring a 'potentially disruptive counterposition to bureaucratic and neo-rationalist organizational management' (p. 75) and that the

current of spiritual and self-expressivist explorations and demands among bureaucratic organizational employees, reveals . . . signs of persons striving for subjectivation – for the accomplishment of becoming an acting subject . . . [and] are efforts toward a freedom not reduced to an instrumental rationality of economic choice.

(Casey, 2004)

There is evidence, too, of the importance of spiritual and deeper meaning making for educationalists – among both religious believers and non-believers – within school organisations (Woods, G.J., 2007).

The possibility for counter-rationalities rests on the potential for inner distance, not simply as an individual phenomenon, but as something that can be developed and nurtured collectively – namely, the idea of *shared inner distance*. People have both inner and social resources for this through multiple sources of identity orientation, which include forms both of social identity and of exogenous points of orientation that represent ideals and values that supersede more

mundane needs and interests (Woods, 2003). One expression of this is through art – and from a postmodernist perspective, radical artistic practices (Gane, 2002) – which subverts instrumental rationality. The capacity for inner distance is not, therefore, simply a withdrawal, but an expansion of the symbolic resources that are allowed to enable social action. Moreover, it is integral to the idea of a rich conception of democracy that infuses society and organisations. Seeking and shaping alternatives to rationalisation are shared, collective activities to which everyone is capable of contributing.

The possibility for counter-rationalities that embrace veridical meaning rests on finding, as other social theorists such as Marx have tried to do, 'some centre in man-as-man which would enable them to believe that in the end he cannot be made into, that he cannot finally become, such an alien creature [the cheerful robot] – alien to nature, to society, to self' (Mills, 1970: 190).

I have argued, engaging with Weber (in Woods (2001), on which this paragraph is based), that there needs to be, underlying sociological study, an appreciation that 'there is a human faculty, however frequently clouded by emotions, social interests and the like, that can on occasions provide social action with that *foundation* that allows us to characterize it as something other than relativism or emotivism' (Woods, 2001: 694), a faculty for intuiting the good and values that have transcendent and universal force. The idea of such a human faculty is the necessary foundation for it to make sense for Weber to express an ethical passion in 'Politics as a vocation' (1948b). That lecture, as Tester (1999) argues, is not 'emotivist' – that is, it does not presuppose that all moral judgements and criteria collapse into expressions of preference and feeling. But there is, nevertheless, a contradiction between Weber's sociological project and his fundamental ethical stance that is not acknowledged in Tester's analysis. Weber's sociology exists in a framework that eschews a foundationalist social analysis allowing for, or specifying, ultimate values or goods for humanity. The only way meaning and values are possible in Weber's philosophical anthropology is through human choice: to this extent, Weber is an existentialist. Although this is consistent with emotivism, it is not emotivism per se. 'Politics as a vocation' is non-emotivist and implies the existence of the kind of human faculty referred to above. But, crucially, Weber did not incorporate this faculty to discern or glimpse truths that are more than feelings or preferences or contingent social constructions into the framework of social action studied by sociology. The failure to incorporate such a faculty diminishes the sensitivity of sociology to the human-ness of its subject of study and to the potential to move beyond the constraints of rationalisation.

Re-enchanting education

The Weberian theme of rationalisation and disenchantment allows us to set up a simple dichotomy for education: two ideal types of formal education. In the first, education acts to form people who fit into a world dominated by instrumental rationality and who carry with them, as part of their essential defining identity, the 'steel shell' that imbues them with the standards of a rationalising and disenchanting society. This takes as the overriding priority of education a need to prepare students for the activities and demands of organisational life driven by calculation and performance. Endres (2006), for example, uses Weber's theory to explain the role of functional activity in modern schooling.

The second ideal type places priority on re-enchantment. Enchantment here is the unfolding of human capabilities to sense that which is true and right, to develop sensibilities to nature

and affective human communication (through art), and to share and enjoy a sense of connectedness with other people, the world and the phenomena and experiences that often attract the label spiritual – in other words, the capacity to sense and create veridical meaning. If the basic Weberian question is what type of person is forged by different social orders, the fundamental educational question that arises from the specific Weberian analysis of modernity is: Which person type is education for? The second ideal type takes seriously the demand to respond to the dominant rationalising context by creating an educational environment that nurtures a different person type. It answers that education is not about creating cheerful robots, but that its aim is to foster persons who are capable of enchantment and of challenging domination by rationalising forces.

Examples of the second ideal type (not necessarily in pure form) are discernible within conventional forms of education. For example, the critical events that Peter E. Woods (1993) found in primary and secondary education – school projects such as plays, concerts, film-making etc., in which adults and students work together – have the features of educational processes that are not reducible to rationalised procedures and outcomes. This is his description of critical events, based on his experience of them through sustained empirical research. Critical events:

have something of the spirit of what Turner calls 'communitas'. The essential characteristic of this according to Musgrove is 'a relationship between concrete, idiosyncratic individuals, stripped of both status and role'. It contrasts with social structure and therefore is sometimes called social antistructure . . . The antistructure is a state of undifferentiated, homogeneous human kindness. 'Communitas' has something magical about it. Outside, above and beyond structure, it has a quality that is both intensely real and intensely unreal. Latent or suppressed feelings, abilities, thoughts, aspirations are suddenly set free. New persons are born and, almost in celebration, a new collective spirit. Uncommon excitement and expectations are generated. All this is something special, though exactly why is difficult to explain. Something is always lost in the attempt. After all, the more successful the magic, the more impenetrable the solution.

(Woods, P.E., 1993: 7)

In this, one can see some of the elements of the three possibilities discussed in the previous section – for example, educational entrepreneurialism (enterprising initiatives by teachers that bring about and make a reality successful, ambitious projects that engage numbers of students and adults); the passion of individuals that critical events attract and that goes beyond (is distanced from) the confines of work aimed at achieving just measurable achievement; the immediacy of artistic expression, enjoyed and appreciated for its intrinsic value, and the social solidarity and collective working that create a kind of democracy of learning in which all contribute and share. Other examples of the second ideal type occur in alternative educational settings (Woods and Woods, 2009).

Concluding remarks

The sociological question is to what extent, in what forms and under what conditions the second ideal type of education occurs in contemporary society. The work of Weber sensitises the sociologist to the complexity of addressing such a question. As Whimster (2007: 189) observes, in 'Weber's historical sociology, outcomes happen for reasons – motivational states and the

pattern of external determination. But how they interact and combine is hard to predict.' In this spirit, it is possible to observe that alternatives and challenges are more likely to be found where there is a condition of relative immunity (from the dominance of rationalisation) arising from an amalgam of structural and subjective factors. The latter include a degree of freedom (as with entrepreneurial actors) to mobilise ideas and resources; awareness of the importance of inner distance from dominant presumptions; a valuing of intrinsic experience and value-rationality; opportunities to engage with others collegially in the task of creating alternatives to the subservience to rationalising forces; and ideational resources, to be engaged with rather than simply ingested, that provide an alternative view of society and human progress.

There are many dimensions to Weber's work, which continue to stimulate and engage sociologists. The significance of his work that this chapter has highlighted is his characterisation of modernity through the interrelated conceptualisations of rationalisation and disenchantment. This analysis of modernity throws into sharp relief the full import and vulnerability of the challenges to rationalisation and disenchantment discussed above, and marks them out as enormously important subjects for study because they (consciously or unconsciously) challenge what Weber (1948a: 155) describes as the 'fate of our age, with its characteristic rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, the "disenchantment of the world"'.

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12

Recognizing the subjects of education Engagements with Judith Butler

Deborah Youdell

Introduction

Among scholars in education sociology and allied areas such as cultural studies, Judith Butler is now a well-known and well-used theorist. Her theoretical work invites us to consider discomfiting matters of gender and sexuality, of sexed and raced bodies, of being human. Throughout, she is concerned with forms of power and what is speakable and what is silenced. While not a part of the education mainstream, this work is a significant influence on and resource for post-structural, queer, feminist, and anti-racist strands in sociology of education, where these ideas invite us to consider “who” gets to be recognized as a person, or subject, in education and how these processes of recognition and refusal take place. In offering these conceptual tools, Judith Butler’s work opens up exciting possibilities for *thinking differently about education and for imagining education and its subjects in new ways*. In this sense, her work offers a set of new lenses through which sociologists of education can make the familiar world of education “strange” (Delamont, 1995).

In this chapter, I offer accounts of Butler’s central ideas concerning the subject, how s/he is constituted and constrained, and how s/he might engage in forms of resistance and politics. I begin by setting these in the context of Butler’s own intellectual and political location and concerns, and go on to show how these have been made use of in sociology of education. In doing this, I illustrate how work in sociology of education has made use of Judith Butler’s ideas to extend the insights offered by Foucault and education scholars influenced by him, and articulated these with feminist, anti-racist, and post-colonial analyses and concerns. Finally, I consider the potential future contributions that Butler’s work might make to the sociology of education.

I first read Judith Butler, in the early 1990s, having been given a photocopy of her chapter, “Imitation and gender insubordination,” from Diane Fuss’s early Queer Studies collection *Inside/out* and, later, a copy of her book *Gender trouble*, both gifts from the same friend. These texts excited and overwhelmed me with the density of their ideas, the further reading in new fields that they demanded, and the conceptual tools they offered. Importantly, these texts promised to help me move past what I felt were the limitations of existing thinking about identity and politics in sociology of education at the time. Fifteen years later, Judith Butler’s ongoing

work continues to offer me significant tools for thinking about educational institutions, the subjects who populate them and the ways in which these might be reconfigured. It is in the spirit of this early labor and ongoing intellectual investment, and pleasure at the purchase that these tools continue to provide in my own work and in the work of others, that I write this chapter.

Who is Judith Butler?

An interrogation of the acceptance in Western thought and societies of a person who is complete and self-knowing and who exists outside relations of power, ideas, language or meaning runs throughout Butler’s work. Her project, or at least one of them, has been to trouble the taken-for-grantedness of this pre-existing, self-contained, rational person, or subject. She does this to expose the constraints that are brought into play through this acceptance of the unitary subject and the political possibilities opened up by this troubling. Offering an account of who Judith Butler is, then, a rather contradictory activity.

I have heard Judith Butler tell a story about an occasion when a speaker at a meeting of activists and scholars concluded with the rebuke “Fuck You Judith Butler!” “Who,” Judith wondered, was this “Judith Butler” to whom “Fuck you” was addressed, and what had “she” got to do with “her”? In her writing, she considers the place of herself in her work, in an intellectual space of ideas and in the world. What does it mean, she wonders, to speak as the “lesbian” in “imitation and gender insubordination,” what are the effects of taking up and speaking under this sign? (Butler, 1991) And “who,” she asks, is the “I” who considers the limits and possibilities of politics and agency in “Contingent foundations” (Butler, 1992)? As Butler herself observes, who she is, her ideas, and the writing she produces are not synonymous, but nor are they wholly devisable. Her writing and her ideas take on new meanings as they circulate, are taken up, are engaged and reworked, they exceed her and are beyond her control. And at the same time, in the call “Fuck you Judith Butler!” a particular reading of the meaning of her work is asserted, and she is constituted as the author of this reading, a constitution that might injure and might be difficult to resist.

That said, the attachment to the illusion of the unitary subject that is one of Butler’s (and my own) objects of study compels me to say something solid. Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature in the University of California, Berkeley. Her location across these two departments is indicative of the inter-disciplinarity of her work, which crosses the boundaries of continental philosophy, literary theory, politics, feminist theory, queer theory, and psychoanalysis. She is also engaged with political movements: for instance, she has been involved in political debates over hate speech legislation and lesbian pornography, as well as transgender activism and the political and psychic meanings of gender reassignment (see Butler, 2004a). These locations begin to demonstrate how Butler’s work is situated in wider intellectual milieux and socio-political movements.

When the book that brought Butler to wide attention, *Gender trouble*, was published in 1990, she was one of a number of scholars working in the US, the UK, and Australia who were developing new analyses of gender and sexuality in these English-speaking contexts by engaging ideas from contemporary French philosophy, psychoanalysis, and feminism, by writers such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva. These engagements can be found in the work of authors such as Deborah Britzman, Bronwyn Davies, Michelle Fine, Elizabeth Grosz, and Valerie Walkerdine. In this sense, Butler’s work can be seen as being part of an intellectual *zeitgeist*, temporally and contextually situated ideas and politics emerging in

response to a particular set of concerns and in the light of a particular set of conceptual resources with which to engage these, and through interrelated but potentially separate endeavors rather than through the work of a given writer. It might be argued, then, that we would have found ourselves somewhere like “here” without Judith Butler, but the conceptual tools her work develops have undoubtedly been profoundly useful for getting us “here.”

Conceptual tools—making subjects

The nature of the person, or subject; the limits of “who” this subject might be; the constraints and disavowals that are intrinsic to particular subject positions; the reasons why we might be attached to forms of subjectivity that appear to injure us; and the potential for subject positions to be resisted or mean something else are all concerns at the heart of Judith Butler’s work. These concerns are connected to feminist, queer, anti-racist, and disability politics that aim to move beyond claims for “recognition” of their group identity and “equality” for their members to a politics concerned to trouble and unsettle notions of fixed identities and the privileges and exclusions that work through these. This is because these “identity politics” are seen as working to constrain group members, at the same time as offering them recognition, and also acting further to exclude others who do not fit the group identity. I say more about these politics later; first I turn to this understanding of the subject.

The work of Foucault provides an important point of departure for Butler and for many education scholars who engage with her work. Foucault’s ideas about power, knowledge, and discourse are key. Foucault (1991) sets the idea of power that is *disciplinary or productive* alongside the more usual conception of power as something that is held by the powerful and wielded over the powerless, in Foucault’s terms *sovereign power*. Foucault (1991) sees this disciplinary power as being produced and having its effects in the micro-circuits of ideas and practice, focusing in particular on the way that institutionalized practices, or technologies, make the person visible and knowable to others as well as to her/himself. Allied to this idea of power as productive is the idea of knowledge as located and partial (Foucault, 2002). For Foucault, knowledge is inseparable from the circulation of power—he posits the notion of power/knowledge to express this and suggests that this is evident and effected in discourse (Foucault, 1990, 1991). In a Foucauldian sense, discourses are multiple and shifting systems of knowledge with varied and potentially porous statuses ranging from what is taken as self-evident and valorized—a “regime of truth”—through to what is unspeakable or ridiculed—“disavowed” or “subjugated” knowledges (Foucault, 1990). Discourse, then, refers to much more than talk: discourses are cited by and circulate in speech and writing, as well as visual representations, bodily movements and gestures, and social and institutional practices.

This understanding of power as productive and implicated in the making of and surveillance of subjects, who are in turn self-surveillant, and the idea that this productive power is itself produced in discourses that make claims to knowledge and so frame what is knowable, are taken up and developed in Butler’s thinking about the subject.

Performativity, subjectivation, and intelligibility

Notions of performativity, subjectivation, and intelligibility all play a significant part in Butler’s work for understanding the contemporary subject and have been drawn on heavily in sociological engagements with empirical accounts of education.

Performativity

A useful starting point for understanding performativity is Butler’s engagement with a debate between Austin and Derrida (see Derrida, 1988). In Austin, performatives are things that are said that *make something happen*, and while illocutionary performatives always have the effect they speak, perlocutionary performatives may not have an immediate effect, may have no effect at all, or may have a different effect than the one expected (Austin, 1962). Austin sees these as failures or “infelicities.” In contrast, Derrida suggests an inherent “contextual break” between the intentions of a speaker and the meaning and effect of a performative; instead of thinking about “infelicities,” he conceives of a space of performative “misfire,” a space where the meaning and the effects of communication might change (see Derrida, 1988). Butler’s use of the idea is guided by Derrida’s reading of the inherent break between performative and effect and the risk and promise of misfire, and situated in a Foucauldian understanding of discourse and relations of productive power. She defines the performative as:

[T]hat discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names.

(Butler, 1993: 13)

And:

Discursive performativity appears to produce that which it names, to enact its own referent, to name and to do, to name and to make . . . [g]enerally speaking, a performative functions to produce that which it declares.

(Butler, 1993: 107)

Such performatives make subjects through their deployment in the classificatory systems, categories, and names that are used to designate, differentiate, and sort people. According to Butler (1990, 1993, 1997a, 2004a), designations such as “boy” and “girl,” “man” and “woman” are performative—they *create* the gendered subject that they name. Furthermore, these performatives do this while appearing to be just *descriptive*. By appearing to be descriptive, they create the *illusion* of genders’ *prior* existence. So, while it appears that the subject *expresses* a gender, this is actually a performative *effect* of gender categorizations and their use. Suturing this idea to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, Butler also offers an account of the performative force of forms of embodiment and bodily practice, suggesting that: “the bodily *habitus* constitutes a tacit form of performativity, a citational chain lived and believed at the level of the body” (Butler 1997a: 155).

Butler’s understanding of the performative has been taken up in a range of work in the sociology of education to make sense of how the discourses of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, ability, and disability circulating in schools and other education spaces might operate as performatives. Reflecting the critique of identity politics concerned with recognition that I indicated earlier, this take-up has been most evident among education scholars whose concern with inequalities leads them to focus on the ways that subject positions marked by gender, class, and so on are constituted and regulated through the everyday practices of teachers, students, and educational institutions. For this reason, the notion of the performative has been particularly useful to those researching practices at the micro level: using detailed ethnographic observations and interviews, as well as readings of popular and cultural artefacts such as films, television, media representations, websites, fashion, and so on to explore how discursive performatives constitute and regulate education’s subjects.

For instance, in a paper in *Gender and education* (Youdell, 2005) I show how the names that students call each other, whether in friendship or judgment, are not simply descriptors with various degrees of accuracy, but are performatives with various degrees of force and with significant implications:

Virgin girls, slapper girls, and other girls

DY (the researcher, mid/late twenties, woman, White)

Molly, Nicola, Diane, Annie, Milli (year 11 students, girls, White)

Sitting in a group around a table in the year base while the rest of the tutor group are in a PSE lesson. The group is debating whether or not particular boys are virgins.

DY: How do you know if people are virgins or not?

Molly: I dunno, because people don't give a shit.

Diane: (*indicating Nicola*) she ain't.

Nicola: (*shouting, high pitch*) I am Diane!

Molly: (*laughing*) she ain't.

DY: How do you know?

Molly: It's just the way she goes round.

DY: What about . . . ?

Molly: (*interrupting*) Puts herself across to boys.

DY: What does she do?

Molly: She goes running up to them and cuddling them and (*impersonating Nicola*) "Oooh."

Nicola: (*screaming*) No I don't!

DY: She flirts a little bit?

Molly: Yes, and she goes, "Ah, I'll have sex with you later if you open the door."

Nicola: (*laughing*) I do not say things like that!

[. . .]

Molly: And [boy] goes "Ok come on then, lets go" and she actually walks up to him and goes "Come on."

Nicola: (*more serious, agitated*) But I'm still joking around, I'm just having a laugh Molly!

Molly: Yeah but people like [boy] and [boy], they'll take it differently and think "Ah, she's a right little slapper" and that. Think about what happened to [girl].

Nicola: Sorry, I ain't gonna spend the night shagging someone if I don't love them and trust them, I ain't gonna shag anyone that I ain't going out with.

(Interview, Youdell, 2005: 260–261)

In the paper, I suggest that this scene illustrates not a contest over the "fact" of virgin/not-virgin, but the very processes of being constituted in these ways. Through the girls' dialogue, it becomes evident that what "counts" here is the meaning that boys will make of Nicola's practices; how they will "take it." And the risk asserted is that certain boys, whose performative namings are understood as having particular authority and force, will constitute Nicola as a "right little slapper." That is, if these boys constitute Nicola as slapper this is likely to have effects, and Nicola will *be* slapper. Molly presents a virgin/whore dichotomy established by boys, yet, in "warning" Nicola of the risks she runs, Molly exposes the role that girls play in policing the boundaries of this dichotomy and implicates girls in the performative constitution of themselves and other girls within its terms. The threat of "slapper" implicit in Molly's

"warning" leads Nicola to concede ultimately that she is not a virgin but that she only has sex with boys if "I love them and trust them," that is, if she is in a relationship. This "admission" may be Nicola's attempt to constitute herself in terms of acceptable heterosexual feminine desire and so differentiate herself from slapper and pre-empt this performative.

This analysis demonstrates how normative hetero-feminine subjects are constituted and regulated in school spaces through the everyday, mundane performative practices of young people and, by extension, exposes the failure of liberal approaches to gender equity to account for either everyday processes or young people's investments in such subjectivities. Readings such as this have been offered by a number of scholars in sociology of education, deepening understandings of how students recognized through particular intersecting categories of gender, race, and so on come to be performatively constituted as such and offering insights into how these performative constitutions are connected to educational inequalities. For instance, Mary Lou Rasmussen's (2006) book *Becoming subjects* draws on Butler's notion of the performative to analyze empirical accounts and cultural artefacts and offer an extensive analysis of the constitution of sexualities in secondary schools. Emma Renold's (2005) book *Junior sexualities* draws on ethnographic data generated in primary school to offer an analysis of the performative constitution of younger children's subjectivities, arguing that gender constitutions are simultaneously constitutions of young sexualities. Ringrose and Renold (2009) use the performative to interrogate the gendered constitution of violence in schools. I have used the notion of race performativity to understand processes of racialization and how particular raced subject positions are tied to particular performative judgments of students by schools (Youdell, 2003). And Sue Saltmarsh and myself (Saltmarsh and Youdell, 2004) and Linda Graham (2007) have developed analyses of the performative constitution of students as "special" and "problematic" in education policy and institutional and teacher practices.

An important development in understanding the performative constitution of students in schools has been in work that unravels the performative constitution, not of single classificatory systems, e.g. gender, or single categorizations, e.g. girl, or obviously entangled subjectivities, such as sex-gender, but of *multiple and intersecting performatives* that make multifaceted subjects and subjectivities. For instance, Mary Lou Rasmussen and Valerie Harwood (2003) explore a range of interconnecting performatives, including race, gender, sexuality, size, and ability, whose injurious effects work together to make schooling untenable for one girl. In a similar vein, my book *Impossible bodies, impossible selves* (Youdell, 2006) examines the ways that constellations of performative categorizations come together in students' and teachers' discursive practices, sometimes colliding and sometimes cohering.

Subjectivation

Butler (1997a, 1997b, 2004a) also makes use of the idea of "subjectivation," sometimes also referred to as "subjectivization" or "subjectification"; an idea that Butler draws from Foucault (1982) and that in turn connects to Althusser's (1971) idea of subjection. According to Foucault, the person is *subjectivated*—s/he is at once rendered a subject and subjected to relations of power through discourse. That is, productive power constitutes and constrains, but does not determine, the subjects with whom it is concerned. In engaging with Foucault's account of the relationship between the subject and power, Butler asserts that:

"subjectivation" . . . denotes both the becoming of the subject and the process of subjection—one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power,

a subjection which implies a radical dependency. . . . Subjection is, literally, the *making* of a subject, the principle of regulation according to which a subject is formulated or produced. Such subjection is a kind of power that not only unilaterally *acts on* a given individual as a form of domination, but also *activates* or forms the subject. Hence, subjection is neither simply the domination of a subject nor its production, but designates a certain kind of restriction *in* production.

(Butler, 1997b: 83–84, original emphases)

Subjectivation, in some sense, can be seen as an extension and elaboration of the idea of performativity, and one that foregrounds the relationship between these constitutive processes and productive power. Indeed, we might understand the discursive performative as being an aspect of, or culpable in, processes of subjectivation. Butler's engagement with the idea of subjectivation has been a more recent turn, and current work in the sociology of education is making increasing use of this notion. In a 2006 special edition of the *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, dedicated to the usefulness of Butler's work in the field, Bronwyn Davies demonstrates how Butler has developed the Foucauldian notion of subjectivation and shows how the notion can be used to interrogate encounters between teachers and students (Davies, 2006). Likewise, in my contribution to the issue, I use subjectivation to analyze how young people named as "Arabic" are constituted within the terms of prevailing anti-Islamic discourses through the practices of teachers and the teachers' incorporation of the young people's own practices (Youdell, 2006b).

Intelligibility

Notions of intelligibility, recognizability, and speakability are useful for thinking about how performative constitutions are constrained and why they are necessarily embroiled in processes of subjectivation. Discursive processes of subjectivation and the discursive performatives involved in these processes have to make sense to work—they have to be "*recognizable*" (Butler, 1997a: 5, original emphasis) in the discourses that are circulating in the settings and moments in which they are deployed.

In my book *Impossible bodies, impossible selves* (Youdell, 2006a), I stress that, in school contexts, being a schoolgirl or boy, being gifted, having emotional or behaviour difficulties "makes sense"—these subjects are intelligible because they cite enduring institutional discourses about who students are and what schools are about. Performatives that do not make sense in the discourses that frame schooling, or that are counter to prevailing institutional discourses, may fail or may act to constitute a subject outside the bounds of acceptability as a student. As I highlighted above, these processes of subjectivation are processes of "restriction *in* production" (Butler 1997b: 83–84, original emphasis). This understanding of the ongoing subjectivation of subjects through discursive performativity enables us to see how schools come to be suffused with exclusions, with what the student-subject cannot be, with who cannot be the student-subject—the "impossible students" and "impossible learners" (Youdell, 2006a). As Bronwyn Davies notes: "[s]ubjects, and this includes school students, who are constituted as lying outside intelligibility are faced with the constitutive force of a language that grants them no intelligible space" (Davies, 2006: 434). These ideas demonstrate that subjecthood—and studenthood—comes with costs. This emphasis on intelligibility intersects with notions of recognition and

mis-recognition from psychoanalysis, bringing into play the subject's unconscious desire to be recognized and, indeed, the necessity of this recognition for being a subject. This extends a Foucauldian notion of subjectivation by offering us tools for understanding further why subjects might take up, and be attached to, subject positions that may appear to injure, disadvantage, or constrain them.

Conceptual tools—political subjects

Understanding students as subjectivated through ongoing performative constitution has at times been interpreted as a pessimistic or even fatalistic move that leaves no space for action or change. Yet spaces for action and change are evident in the work of Foucault and Butler, both of whom emphasize that subjectivation involves subjection to power *and* recognition as a subject—a recognition that includes the subject's capacity to act. In the remainder of this chapter, I detail Butler's conception of *discursive agency* and the *performative politics* this suggests, demonstrating these in work in sociology of education that maps how performatives can be intercepted in order to constitute students differently.

Discursive agency and performative politics

Building on Derrida's assertion that any performative is open to misfire and Foucault's insistence that no discourse is guaranteed, Butler suggests that discourse and its performative effects offer political potential. Returning to processes of subjectivation, Butler stresses that:

the one who names, who works within language to find a name for another, is presumed to be already named, positioned within language as one who is already subject to the founding or inaugurating address. This suggests that such a subject in language is positioned as both addressed and addressing, and that the very possibility of naming another requires that one first be named. The subject of speech who is named becomes, potentially, one who might well name another in time.

(Butler, 1997a: 29)

Butler calls the subjectivated subject's capacity to act within discourse and to subjectivate another "discursive agency." This is not the agency of a sovereign subject who exerts its will. Rather, this agency is derivative, an effect of discursive power:

Because the agency of the subject is not a property of the subject, an inherent will or freedom, but an effect of power, it is *constrained but not determined* in advance . . . As the agency of a postsovereign subject, its discursive operation is delimited in advance but also open to a further unexpected delimitation.

(Butler, 1997a: 139–140, my emphasis)

Agency is, therefore, simultaneously enabled and constrained through discourse. This subject retains intention and can seek to realize this intent through the deployment of discursive practices; however, the effects of this deployment cannot be guaranteed. By thinking of agency as discursive we are able to conceive of a political subject who might challenge prevailing

constitutions as part of a set of self-conscious discursive practices, without assuming a rational, self-knowing subject who exists outside subjectivation.

This understanding of discursive agency allows Butler to imagine insurrectionary practices that would involve:

decontextualizing and recontextualizing . . . terms through radical acts of public misappropriation such that the conventional relation between [naming and meaning] might become tenuous and even broken over time.

(Butler, 1997a: 100)

The sedimented meanings of enduring discourses might be unsettled and *re*signed or *re*inscribed. And subjugated or silenced discourses might be deployed in, and made meaningful in, contexts from which they have been barred. This does not mean that a performative politics is simply a matter of asserting a new meaning, but nor does it render such a politics hopeless: normative meanings are resistant to *re*inscription but they are never immune from it. As Butler writes:

contexts inhere in certain speech acts in ways that are very difficult to shake . . . [but] contexts are never fully determined in advance . . . the possibility for the speech act to take on a non-ordinary meaning, to function in contexts where it has not belonged, is precisely the political promise of the performative.

(Butler, 1997a: 161)

In thinking about education, this suggests that the enduring inequalities that are produced through the performative practices of institutions, teachers, and students might be unsettled. In various ways, my work has been concerned to show how young people in schools are already engaged in practices that can be understood in these terms: everyday practices that resist the normative meanings and ascribed subjectivities of the institution and instead assert and enact meanings and subjectivities of their own. In particular, in relation to students subjectivated in ways that act to wound or exclude—gay students, Black students, Arabic students, disabled or special students—I have detailed not just processes of subjectivation but also practice of resistance, performative politics in action (see Saltmarsh and Youdell, 2004; Youdell 2004a,b, 2006a,b). Yet young people's everyday practices of self do not resemble the organized action of the traditional left or newer movements in identity politics or global coalitions, such as anti-capitalist or eco-activism.

What is pressing to explore in sociology of education at this juncture, then, is whether these performative practices can, need, or should be multiplied and/or corralled in ways that make them more recognizable as political practices; whether we might better reconfigure our understanding of what "counts" as the political; and whether we need more than a performative politics if we are to shift sedimented meanings and enduring inequalities in education and, if so, what understandings of power and political tactics we might take up. These are questions that are currently being explored by education scholars such as Valerie Hey (2006); Emma Renold and Debbie Epstein (2008); Jessica Ringrose (2008); Elizabeth Atkinson and Renee DePalma (2009); and myself (Youdell 2006c, 2010 forthcoming).

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Part 2

Social processes and practices
