



Imagining Universities of the Future

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- **Re-energise the (stale) normative vocabularies that:**

- ✓ **conceptualise**
- ✓ **critique**
- ✓ **promote**

HE in international policy architecture.

Do These Excite/ Delight You?



- ✓ **quality assurance**
- ✓ **globalisation**
- ✓ **knowledge economy**
- ✓ **innovation**
- ✓ **teaching and learning**
- ✓ **widening participation**
- ✓ **internationalisation**
- ✓ **civic engagement**
- ✓ **digitisation**

Disqualified Discourses



- **UK priorities (2008) for the next 15 years:**

- ✓ **innovation, knowledge transfer /exchange (techno-science?) and wealth creation.**

- ✗ **not inclusion and equalities.**

Emphasis on:

- ✓ **knowledge liquification and optimisation**

- ✗ **not power/knowledge or knowledge as pleasure.**

The Morphology of the University of the Future?



- Are universities reduced to delivery agencies for government-decreed outcomes (Young, 2004)?
- Are policy priorities commensurate with aspirations/ desires of students/ staff or rapidly changing economic landscape?
- Are current discourses limiting creative thinking about the future of HE?

Why Re-Imagine Higher Education?



Major site of:

- ✓ cultural practice
- ✓ identity formation
- ✓ knowledge formation and dissemination
- ✓ symbolic control.

Caught between:

- ✓ archaism
- ✓ hyper-modernisation

Is the Present the Future That We Imagined in the Past?



- Did the left/ counter hegemonic advocates predict the scale of neo-liberal driven change?
- Did the traditionalists predict the industrialisation and massification of HE?

Grievable and Ungrievable Losses

(Butler, 2004)



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Discourses of melancholia, crisis, loss, damage, contamination, and decay in higher education.

- **the university in ruins** (Readings, 1996)
- **the 'degradation' of academia** (Nisbet, 1971)
- **the university 'in crisis'** (Sommer, 1995)
- **the death of autonomy** (Dill, 2001)
- **proletarianisation** (Dearlove, 1997)

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New Times?



- Difference conceptualised as disparagement e.g. 'non-traditional students', feminisation.
- Transformation driven by neo-liberal policies rather than academic imaginary.
- Tensions between desire, desiccation and distributive justice.

Tension 1: Texts, Technology and Tectonics

(Coercive) Creativity, Productivity and Performance



The UK:

- **1%** of the world population
- **2nd** most important producer of scientific and scholarly research in the world
- Accounts for **4.5%** of the world's spend on science
- Produces **8%** of the world's scientific papers
- **13%** of the most highly cited.
- Wins **10%** of internationally recognised science prizes
- Produced **44** Nobel prize winners in the last **50** years.
- UK academics produce **16** research papers for every **\$1m** invested compared with the **10** produced in the US and the **4** in Japan

(Crewe, 2004).

Knowledge Monopoly?



- Academic life/ quality is measured via production of texts (and enterprise).
- Is this commensurate with changing literacies, new constituencies and new modalities of communication?
- Are we in danger of creating thought lakes and word mountains?
- What is not being measured/ produced/ interrogated *e.g.* equity, employment conditions, emotional labour?

New Ecology of Knowledge?



- Sacred/ profane binary of knowledge disrupted by new 'just-in-time', 'wiki' knowledge producers.
- Technological literacy is producing new academic identities:
 - ✓ *Millennials*
 - ✓ *Digital Natives*
 - ✓ *Generation Y*
 - ✓ *MySpace Generation*
 - ✓ *i-Generation*
 - ✓ *Net Generation*
 - ✓ *You Tube Generation.*

(Howe and Strauss, 2000; Prensky, 2001; Markiewicz, 2003; Irvine, 2004; Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005; Hempell and Lehman, 2005; Day, 2007; Nussbaum, 2007).
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The Tectonic University



- HE is still largely literary in structure.
- If HE is transformational, what and who is being transformed?
- Is there a mismatch between ideal/imagined students and new constituencies in terms of:
 - ✓ quality assurance
 - ✓ assessment
 - ✓ knowledge codes
 - ✓ systems of representation
 - ✓ narratives
 - ✓ modes of identification?

Tension 2: Everywhere and Nowhere: Speed, Space and Striving

Networks and Nomadic Subjects



- Academic hyper mobility (Kenway, 2004);
- Academics in state of 'continual animation' (Ball, 2008: 54);
- Diffusion of bodily and textual selves into multiple locations;
- Cosmopolitanism, nomadism and spaces of transition;
- Expectations of performativity involve a mix of individualism and relational/ inter-dependency (Lynch, 2009);
- Generative potential of the global;
- Parochialism = cognitive dispossession.

Borders, Barriers and Boundaries



- Elite western higher education from urban geographies transmitted into rural (post-colonial) low-income countries.
- Democratising of knowledge or de-territorialisation of hegemonies?
- Nationalised knowledge in a globalised world.

New Competitions



- **Secure knowledge niches have been destabilised** (Appadurai, 2006).
- **Innovative ideas and practices coming from both outside the North and outside of the academy** (Santos, 1999).
- **Knowledge transfer/exchange as disruption of centres and margins** (Biesta, 2007).
- **Barriers dissolved between public and private** (Ball, 2008).

The Underbelly of the Global Beast

- **Hyper-modernisation of global, entrepreneurial, corporate, commercialised universities and speeded up public intellectuals on the move.**
- **Underpinned by domestic/ private archaism of under funding, poor quality employment environments and conditions, and casual research labour.**

Tension 3: Enterprise, Excellence and Equity

What Signs of Quality are Valued and Performed?



- **‘Student voice’/ democracy/ empowerment = consumption practices and service-level agreements?**
- **Criteria for best practices = the intellectual field, or client satisfaction?**
- **Are quality discourses culturally specific?**

Quality and Equality



- Does quality incorporate an understanding of equality?
- Are there separate policy trajectories for quality and equality?
- Is quality a disembodied/ socially decontextualised discourse?
- Is quality associated with elitism and exclusionary practices?
- Are different structures of inequality intersected?

More Means Less: Massification as...



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- **Meritocratic equalisation**
- **Contamination**
- **Redistributing an unquestioned 'good'**
- **Dilution**
- **Challenge to elitism**
- **Pollution**
- **Alignment of macro (neoliberal) and micro level aspirations**
- **Social Engineering**
- **Reinforcement of social stratification processes**
- **Threat to quality and standards**

(Naidoo, 2006; Walkerdine, 2003).

Unequal Geographies of Knowledge



Student enrolment worldwide:

- ✓ 13 million in 1960
 - ✓ 82 million in 1995
 - ✓ 137.8 million in 2005
-
- ✓ 24% globally
 - ✓ 5% in Sub-Saharan Africa
 - ✓ 1% in Tanzania

(UNESCO, 1998; UNESCO, 2007).

Who Are All These New (Turbo-charged) Students/ Consumers?



- **Global Gender Parity Index of 1.05** (UNESCO, 2007).
- **Unevenly distributed across regions and disciplines.**

In 2007 there were more women than men in:

- ✓ **Northern America**
- ✓ **Western Europe**
- ✓ **Central and Eastern Europe**
- ✓ **Latin America**
- ✓ **Caribbean**
- ✓ **Central Asia**

There were more men than women in:

- ✓ **East Asia**
- ✓ **Pacific**
- ✓ **South and West Asia**
- ✓ **Sub-Saharan Africa**

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Widening Participation in Higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania



Measuring:

- Sociological variables of gender, age, socio-economic status (SES)

In Relation to:

- Educational Outcomes: access, retention and achievement.

In Relation to:

- 4 Programmes of Study in each HEI.
- 2 Public and 2 private HEIs.

(Morley, Leach and Lugg, 2008)

www.sussex.ac.uk/education/wideningparticipation

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Equity Scorecard 1: Access to Level 200 on 4 Programmes at a Public University in Ghana According to Age, Gender and Socio Economic Status (SES)

Programme	% of Students on the Programme						
	Women	Low SES	Age 30 or over	Mature and Low SES	Women and low SES	Women 30 or over	Poor Mature Women
B. Commerce	29.92	1.66	5.82	0.00	1.11	0.28	0.00
B. Management Studies	47.06	2.94	6.30	0.00	1.68	3.36	0.00
B. Education (Primary)	36.36	8.08	65.66	8.08	2.02	21.21	2.02
B. Sc. Optometry	30.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Equity Scorecard 2: Access to Level 200 on 4
Programmes at a Public University in Tanzania
According to Age, Gender and Socio Economic Status**



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Programme	% of Students on the Programme						
	Women	Low SES	Age 30 or over	Mature and Low SES	Women and low SES	Women 30 or over	Poor Mature Women
B. Commerce	32.41	8.59	1.13	0.16	0.32	0.0	0.0
LLB. Law	56.18	13.48	0.0	0.0	5.06	0.0	0.0
B.Sc. Engineering	25.05	11.65	1.36	0.0	1.36	1.17	0.0
B. Science with Education	11.20	28.00	4.80	1.6	0.80	0.0	0.0

‘Now’ Universities Built on Yesterday’s Foundations



- Hyper-modernisation of liquified globalisation, measurement of quality and standards and students as consumers.
- Archaism of current constructions of the ‘ideal’ student/ experience, unequal participation practices.

The University of the Future Needs to...



- Reclaim higher education as a think tank, producer of critical knowledge, social criticism and policy driver.
- Develop a sociology of absences.
- Find new conceptual grammars for theorising quality, pedagogy, and participation that incorporate understanding of identities, affective, aesthetic and non-textual domains.
- Not just focus on knowledge transfer, but de-parochialise research - geographically and theoretically.
- Be aware of new generational power geometries.
- Acknowledge, as well as a booming knowledge economy, the possibility of a dystopic knowledge recession.

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cheer>



ESRC Seminar Series: Imagining the University of the Future

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