

**Divided and dividing
discourses: conflicts with and
for Inclusion. Getting down
and dirty!**

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Why are you here?

- ▶ To ask questions?
- ▶ To seek answers?
- ▶ Seeking a safe space to ask 'difficult' questions?
- ▶ To share your confusion with or certainties about inclusion?
- ▶ To meet new colleagues/friends?
- ▶ To find new ideas and research connections to take your work (scholarship and teaching) forward?
- ▶ To enjoy some yummy food and cakes?
- ▶ All of the above?!

Defining Inclusion?- a difficult task.

- ▶ Isn't it about equality of opportunity for students with disabilities?
- ▶ What about ethnic minorities, mature students, working class, first in the family, LGBT.....?
- ▶ Isn't it to do with 'widening participation' and addressing 'Diversity'?
- ▶ Can one stand back from/work/learn/educate without use of institutionally defined labels or references?
- ▶ *Inclusive education is political, a transformatory process for all participants. Social justice, acceptance and promotion of diversity inform its practices. Political in nature and purpose, institutionalised binaries of 'normal' and 'other' are critically explored and related outcomes or changes in practice regularly reviewed.*

Gibson, (2015, p2)

Katie Hughes: A story about habitus

- ▶ The social inclusion meme
- ▶ Colonised policy and practice resulting in replication of insiders and outsiders.

▶ **The story of Katie's Dad**

- ▶ Therefore we might wish to consider how Universities reproduce, locate and regulate insider and outsider students?
- ▶ We might want to think about habitus, hegemony and how these become real in the student lived context.
- ▶ *There is an incipient question to ask about whether contemporary universities are capable of righting social wrongs at all?*

Hughes, (2015, p.304)

Starting from a painful position: **Painful stories**

Student stories-

- ▶ *I was a workaholic, I was a bum sucker, I was, you know, everything under the sun because I used to go and sit with the one to one support but that's how I got through (Gibson and Kendal, 2010,p. 191)*
- ▶ *even though this school takes pride in the diversity of its students , they don't always act that way. (HEA- Cyprus)*
- ▶ *So until starting university I was just, this is what I was, now I've been labelled and categorised and I've got 'special needs' office chasing me every second day (HEA-NZ)*
- ▶ *'[when] changing my name [I encountered] the bureaucracy of university forms. 'Civil partnership' wasn't on there- driving license, passport, marriage certificate but Civil Partnership certificate wasn't on there. [...] it's the point that not putting that on there makes me feel I'm not equal, I'm not the same. I'm not valued' (HEA-UK)*
- ▶ *the university's response to mental health seemed to be 'the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff as opposed to that awareness at the beginning. (HEA- UK)*
- ▶ Perhaps you have similar stories?

'Inclusion' in H.E-the impact

- ▶ Those in the most advantaged areas are still three times as likely to participate in HE as those in the most disadvantaged areas [...] (UK's Social Mobility and Child Poverty commission report, 2013, p.5)
- ▶ *the re-privileging of certain institutions, courses, academics and students. (Burke, 2012, p.32)*
- ▶ A dominant discourse? Neoliberal not social justice
- ▶ It has been argued that enabling education for all, responding to different 'Voices' and working within a social justice discourse for IE does not fit in such a world (Davies and Bansel, 2007).
- ▶ Another critical gaze upon this field- Roger Slee (2008) and IE's 'epistemological conflict'-- on the tension and epistemological conflict of inclusion- ties to earlier argument on why it doesn't work

Bare pedagogy?



Bare pedagogy:

Bare pedagogy is a political and social practice that mirrors the **economic neo-Darwinism of neoliberalism**. It places an emphasis on winning at all costs, [...] Within this pedagogy, **compassion is a weakness** [...] Bare pedagogy strips education of its public values, critical contents, [...] the **destruction of the social state**. Students are treated as **customers** and learning is all too often defined in instrumental terms while **critical knowledge is relegated to the dustbin**.

Giroux (2010, p.185-186)

Market-driven competitiveness:

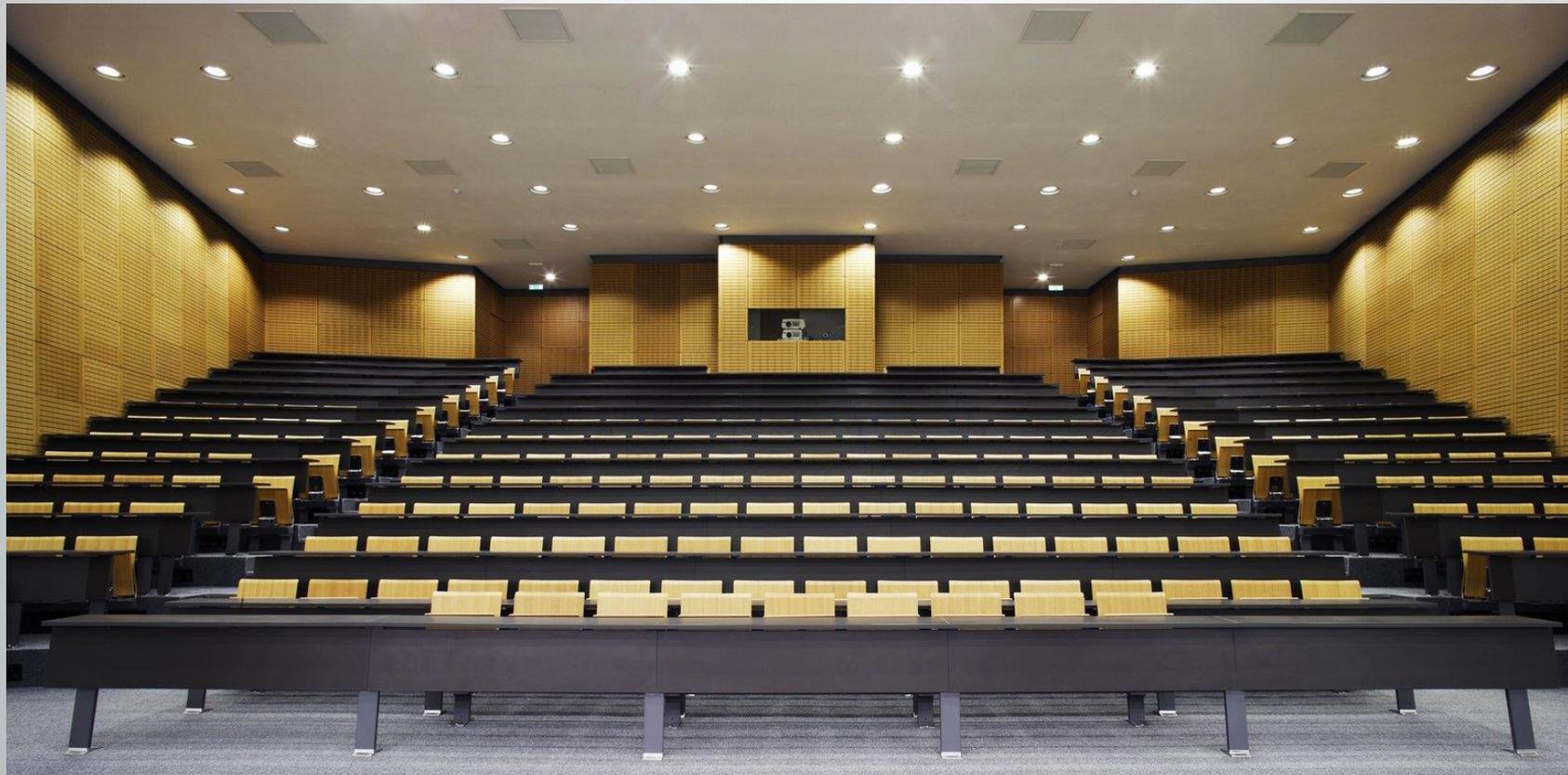


Militaristic goal-setting:



Bare pedagogy in action!

▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhiCFdWeQfA>



Bare pedagogy

- ▶ A pedagogy devoid of the essential Ps:

Politics, **P**hilosophy, **P**ower (Questions of- where manifest and impact)

- ▶ I'm embarrassed to go ask for extra time. Sometimes I ask, but once, a teacher ask me for a proof. I don't like this. (Cyprus)
- ▶ It feels okay to label yourself because that is within your choice and control, but it doesn't feel so good when someone else labels you (PSU)
- ▶ personally for me, and I've picked up from a few others...but not sure who to be angry and frustrated at, whether it should be the lecturer, the university, the world [laughter from group] (Plymouth)
- ▶ **How can a discourse for social justice operate meaningfully and with sustained impact in such a place?**

Widening Participation – a social justice imaginary?

- ▶ *The emergence of the ‘knowledge’ or ‘information’ society was accompanied by an expectation that HE would contribute to developing the nation’s competitiveness in the global economy and simultaneously facilitate and enhance social cohesion and equality.*

Watson (2013, p.412)

- ▶ *The strategy, in enlisting higher education, is to supplant the importance of the industrial economy – now dominated by China, India and other rapidly developing nations – with a knowledge economy in which OECD nations claim to excel. [...] The expansion of higher education in OECD nations, from mass to near universal participation is thus informed by a neoliberal logic.*

Gale and Hodge (2014, p.689)

Examples of the social justice imaginary:

- ▶ Student counselling and doctors and disability assist seem **really disconnected**. You're going through one and then the other and the other, **you have to gather all the evidence for all of them**, and pass it on to your personal tutor. It's a pain to explain to the student counsellor what you explain to the doctors. If you talk to one why can't they pass it on? **(UK)**
- ▶ 'Some of us don't know our rights, and **therefore we don't ask for them**'. **(Cyprus)**
- ▶ *I think **diversity creates stereotypes**- it's still labelling and not celebrating it or letting it just be.* **(UK)**
- ▶ "it was a friend[...]and we were hanging out and he happened to say the n-word to me directly, in a **negative**, like direct way and **I have never felt that**, never been called that throughout my whole entire life[...]it was kind of a **shocking** instance, and when it happened I kind of **didn't know what to do** **(U.S.A)**
- ▶ Well **I've always thought of myself as normal until coming to university** because I am 'mature student', 'solo parent' and I've had 'dyslexia'. So until starting university I was just, this is what I was **(NZ)**
- ▶ 'I have an illness which forced me to stop my studies for a semester. Ever since, I have to follow the courses in a different order and I don't have a steady group of classmates. **I feel that I don't belong in the class because of my illness**. I can't make friends easily and find other students to work with'. **(Cyprus)**
- ▶ Basically, we need to feel that we belong in this university, [...], communication should be easier. I should not **send ten emails and go to the Students' Welfare Department ten times** in order to be assisted. **(Cyprus)**

The role of relationships, the need for compassion and connectedness.

Exclusion:

- ▶ No dialogue/joint problem solving for issues
- ▶ No knowledge of students
- ▶ Perceived lack of care
- ▶ Perceived 'gap' between students and lecturers
- ▶ Institutions/management continue to use a 'one-size fits all' approach
- ▶ Tendency to form groups, potential to exclude
- ▶ Disconnect between departments/management
- ▶ Lack of transparency
- ▶ Silencing

Inclusion:

- ▶ Support, understanding, time from academic staff
- ▶ Advocacy by member of staff
- ▶ Respect what learners need
- ▶ Voice, having view heard
- ▶ Sharing and hearing stories
- ▶ Sense of community
- ▶ Building opportunities for all to take part in events
- ▶ Relationship with one key member of staff
- ▶ Appropriate disclosure by staff on issues related to course they have strong views on

What did our students have to say about specific practical changes?

- ▶ Scheme in place to ensure tutors know about students with additional needs and students know that their tutors know.
- ▶ Place value on “the importance of the relationship student holds with personal tutors, lecturers”.
- ▶ Need for all degree programmes to address the question of diversity and rights as part of their curriculum.
- ▶ Less bureaucracy and forms, more consideration and transparency given to what data is collected and why.
- ▶ Need for ‘diversity’ to have a more visual presence on campus.
- ▶ A student buddy system in the first year.
- ▶ Need for continuing conversations, stories and debates.
- ▶ Students should be involved in all aspects of what a Uni does to be inclusive and understand diversity.

Links to publications on university 'diversity' matters.

- ▶ It is not WP per se that causes drop-out. The problem is rather *a lack of attention to the needs of a more diverse student population and a lack of a student-centred approach* in designing and delivering HE programmes (Quinn 2013, p.3)
- ▶ A norm is how we are immersed in life...the phenomenological attitude in reflecting on previous attitudes is thus a new style...Husserl argues that such a new attitude is theoretical: it must at least in the first instance be totally unpractical (Ahmed 2012,p.174)
- ▶ [...] by *starting from a platform of questions, seeking dialogue* and understanding for social justice, not packaged answers to be 're-' and/or mis-interpreted by colonisers and policy makers, this may *enable a wider social understanding of diverse lives and positions*, creating a foundation where cultures of difference take centre stage and from where effective inclusive pedagogic developments may grow. (Gibson 2015 p.884)

Getting down and dirty??!!

- ▶ How do we endeavour to move this forward?
- ▶ How do we re-envisage our work as educators for social justice and 'inclusion'?
- ▶ How do we challenge bare pedagogy?
- ▶ Where do the answers come from?

Getting down and dirty??!!

- ▶ *There isn't one answer [...] how to solve issues....Listening to other people's stories, even when they are completely different to yours, just makes you realise you're not the only one having problems. (UK)*
- ▶ *Everyone seemed to have the experience of being ignored/not listened to by someone (UK)*
- ▶ *What does it mean to 'become student'- the importance of hearing stories and **listening** to what is being said. (Deleuze 1990; Goodley, 2007; Baskerville, 2009)*
- ▶ *Vickerman and Blundell, (2010, p.21):*

[...] pre-course induction support, commitment by HE institutions to facilitating barrier free curricula, consultation with disabled students, institutional commitment to develop support services and embedding of personal development planning.

Getting down and dirty??!!

- ▶ students give input into curriculum content and planning
- ▶ students take part in teaching
- ▶ students are encouraged during induction weeks and thereafter to share aspects of their individuality and individual education stories
- ▶ space is given to engage with all our journeys to higher education and thereafter, i.e. 'becoming student'
- ▶ assessment is more than examination or traditional forms of writing
- ▶ students and academics co-design, carry out and present education research projects
- ▶ focus is made to value student writing and connections made with UG and education journals for their publications
- ▶ graduates return to share their graduate stories encouraging and inspiring students
- ▶ in sum, where relationship and knowing you is both valued and clearly experienced in ways which can be observed by others looking in.

Getting down and dirty??!!

- ▶ Becoming student project this year- addressing questions and impact of cultural capital and 'knowing what' then 'becoming part' of the academic world.
- ▶ Bringing final year students to present their research to national education conferences annually- 'becoming peer'.
- ▶ Speaking to and with new students during induction week.
- ▶ Students teaching on core first year modules- sharing their stories.
- ▶ Publishing their work in national 'Transformations' journal.
- ▶ Having their ideas listened to and engaged with when making curriculum changes.

The result?- what are we striving for?

- ▶ 'a community of 'diversity' becoming a community of equals'.
- ▶ Educators, as learners and with learners, need to get down and dirty.
- ▶ If you are not part of the solution then you are part of the problem.

Student thoughts:

- ▶ “The effort being made to find a solution, and **listening to voice is more important** than trying to find a one-size fits all solution. Just trying in the first place is important”. (UK)
- ▶ “Just being listened to, **having my voice heard**, that’s a start.” (Cyprus)
- ▶ “**being involved in the process** more” “try to work our way through it” (UK)

So, is it possible?

- ▶ Returning to Hughes question
- ▶ **Yes**– but it is about how we do it, who we do it with and where it takes place
- ▶ *When will people who feel rejected... when will they feel accepted? When are they going to be able to participate equally? When will the society be ready to accept them? But these are theoretical questions with no clear answer. (Cyprus, HEA)*

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