The Truth is Out There: ‘Educated fo’ Bollocks. Uni’s Just Institutional Daylight Robbery’. Universities in Crisis? What’s New?

Simon J. Charlesworth

Abstract

This chapter considers a variety of materials that make clear the absurdity of educational processes in divided societies in which institutional processes relating to the public value of economically powerful groups take precedence within a state apparatus that must constitute the appearance of an equality that is everywhere disavowed via the effects of different distributions of capital. What is clear is that those whose social conditions mean they require the most educational action get the least, and that the education of the poor tends to be poor education.

Keywords

status difference – class relations – education of the poor – un-employment – auto-biography

I am loath to engage in biographical detail concerning a system that is as impersonal and de-realising as the English system of higher education. When the appearance of a ‘system’ is materialised via abstracted administrative processes involving little co-presence, then it’s very difficult to even validate the reasons for an individual’s treatment, not even one’s own. As one academic expressed it, ‘I don’t know that you’re the best example to base a general argument on’. Singularity of trajectory masks the effects of trajectory as the individual, separated from the conditions that make visible the reasons for their being, can no longer validate their experience as an effect of the de-realising process they endured.

1 Occupying the Disadvantaged

I entered university via Rotherham College of Arts and Technology (RCAT), which, historically, educated local people for the available employment but by the 1980s, with local industry gone, its function was eroded and it became a place where the most disadvantaged were occupied. The nature of the experience emerges in the following:

University connects to nothing. It connects us only with instability. It's just an unofficial dole office. It amazed me after School how many People I later saw in the Rotherham dole Office and then again later at RCAT and then later again in the dole office.

Connection requires involvement. Involvement requires the management of transitions so that individuals can project successfully via forms that physiognomically regenerate dispositions that inhere in belonging and if there is no organisation of transitions, then there is no connection, no realisation, no experience of being-situated, of being-there, nothing for the individual to achieve integration or coherence via, and they experience the same de-structuring of their existence arising from their being 'nothing there' no 'there' for them to experience being via, beyond the absence they experience via being displaced. The physiognomic regeneration of the sense of positions via ways of being realised that constitute different relations to being arising from experiences of a different interpersonal medium, a different 'there'; a different 'world'; are fundamental aspects of institutional processes that situate individuals very differently, transposing different statuses into differences of competence whose grounds are effaced by the anonymity used to obscure the nature of what is occurring. A generic administrative process can be used to materialise the appearance of public functions that mask differences of treatment; differences of trajectory; different forms of transition arising from recognitions, which constitute different ways of being-there so that some experience a realisation that embeds dispositions, while others undergo an absence of any interpersonally realising process; and their CVs manifesting their insignificance via breaks in ascent. Subtle human distinctions, and different modalities relating to the nature of being-there, are realised via mediums of interpersonal contact rooted in the perception of difference. For example:

I was a scholarship boy ... That means that I was constantly pushed out of comfort zones, but perfectly equipped to adapt and cope. Primary school,

Independent school, uni, Cambridge, law. All part of a consistent trajectory. Each confirming the bias. I'd venture to suggest that the reason you didn't benefit from it is because you were 'in Cambridge' rather than 'at Cambridge' for the time that you were there.

Differences of status can be casually rearticulated via different ways of being situated arising from perceptions of difference that surreptitiously contextualise individuals in relation to a different experience of being-there, of presence.

The education of the poorest tends to be affected by the same limiting parameters that, in turn, constitute the meaning of being-from such areas, the education they receive as stigmatising as the conditions they try to escape via it: 'Rotherham leaves no one ... You can't escape by leaving. It marks you. You are always "from Rotherham"'. Being 'from Rotherham' arises from processes of differentiation that render individuals legible so that they are subject to circumscriptions, which constitute them objectively. The circumscription arising from these processes obviously leads those who experience barriers, whose sense they bear, to encounter perceptions of this sense, mediated via others, as one professor said: 'When I talk to you, I never get the sense that you know anything outside Rotherham'. The paradox is that the educational process forces you back onto the domestic sphere because it doesn't connect you with anything publicly because of the way such people refract the appearance of their function via institutional relationships that are private. You are forced back onto whatever your familial resources are because the process connects with nothing, especially resources: you have to turn yourself into a resource in order to experience any viability and once you lose the ability to function as a resource-bearing-administrative-entity, contact ceases. When you have to develop a project to secure financing to purchase a PhD via an administrative process these people associate their names with, then judgements of parochialism are not made because they require you to do whatever you can in order to produce a thesis they can judge. This academic didn't say this when being paid to read my thesis on Rotherham for Cambridge University Press. In a world constituted via the effaced monopoly of elites, any deviation becomes significant. I have an autism spectrum disorder, which impairs me interactionally, one indication being poor eye-contact, and at one interview, as I looked away, the professor clicked her fingers in front of my face, snapping: 'If you look away when you answer questions, you'll never get a job'. At another I was asked, 'Can you deal with the social aspects of being a fellow?' One can appreciate the difficulties that the discrepant face in an institutional economy dominated by the forms of the valued.

2 Administration Refracts the Appearance of a Process

For the students I knew, possible futures, like the nature of the educational processes available, were never discussed because there was, 'now't the'er'. The type of education available required us to project via a vacuum. There was no organisation of transitions and no involvement in anything beyond abstracted administrative processes that involved little by way of co-presence: form-filling across distances and then the production of documents that materialised the appearance of a process that objectified others. Everything is so temporally distant that you end up forgetting what your reason was for ever starting because any opportunity to do anything is displaced so far into a future you must perform a series of miracles to ever realise that you experience your attempts to project via the meaninglessness of a decontextualization that constitutes the insignificance of what you are doing:

University made me less hopeful than before I went. It disenchanted me and took a lot of my enthusiasm away. It was meaningless. Made me look bad before I even got going in life. I never knew actually what future I was studying for, I only knew it seemed a better option than the dole. I did it not to go back to that shit hole office in Rotherham. I had ideas but they died on the way. I was doing more before I studied than when I left, just lost the connections to do anything and ended up stuck.

We see the structuring constancy of absence, experienced as meaninglessness via the physiognomically materialised effects of non-mediation and un-realisation. These problems with 'looking bad' are effects of objectivizations rooted in the nature of the process itself. Poorer students have little control over their self-objectification because they have little power to situate themselves so that they can develop appropriately via relational processes that objectify them. It is the exact opposite of what education should provide and of what elite education does. The same, public, valuationary processes are constitutive of your objectivity within education and the processes of claiming and studying are analogous, involving abstracted, de-realising, administrative mediations.

Institutions were appropriated by a generation who used an administrative shell, whose labour was largely carried out by secretaries, to materialise the appearance of processes that involved almost nothing beyond self-education. Little wonder many say, 'Ah dun't know what yer pay fees fo'. Anyone who has been through it can appreciate the logic manifest in the words of one PhD student:

There is loads of teaching available, if you are a PhD student at Cardiff, all you have to do is sign-up. It's easy work you don't really have to teach anything, you just have to make sure the students have filled in the forms properly to submit their essays and that's about it.

Given that the appearance of a process is materialised via administrative acts, it's not surprising that academics would council, 'just make sure you hand something in': provided students submit, the appearance of a process is materialised. Whilst I was, as one professor said: 'lucky to be here', because it was 'very difficult for English students to get money'; a comment made to evade an obligation manifest by the fact that he continued, 'it isn't like you're very unusual; it's not like you're a black woman', which overlooked that, as a post-graduate student, I accessed nothing beyond a self-generated process that objectified those who associated their names with the administration of the products of my labour.

The problem your education forces you to resolve is the overcoming of the provision and mediation of nothing via a labour itself struggling with the effects of the absence of anything making self-constitution reek of the absence constitutive of its form. At one interview one professor noticed, 'there's nothing on your CV'. We can appreciate the importance of extra-curricular culture or what one application form called an 'impressive co-curricular activities record', that is: middle class culture because working class culture is classed as doing-nothing even when a student is forced to attempt to constitute it as 'research' because they access no sphere of practice via a university process that requires them to constitute the illusion of their own education in order to realise the illusion of the 'research practice' of those who experience the authenticity of their own commitments via association with the administration of student labour (see the chapter by Donskis in this volume). When your educational process reduces to minimal contact and to strategies of evasion and displacement that obscure a withholding born of the inability of academics to involve you because of the way institutional space is used to constitute exclusive forms, that operate via tacit reference to the generic processes that materialise the appearance of a 'public' system, then, is there, really, a system there? If involvements constitutive of experiences of being competent are not forthcoming, then, is the underlying condition constitutive of unemployment, devaluation, being addressed or does education merely become another form of its public inflection? Without income, you are not viable because nobody will engage with you unless you have the capacity to attach money to yourself. Once you lack significance, how do you mediate access? Approaching a research group, I was told, 'We don't have anyone available to do this'. If you

belong to an insignificant group, how are you supposed to attract research funding, and by what means?

The devalued have bad luck because they can't connect. Processes degrade as academics exploit individuals via ever more abstracted interpersonal processes and individuals find it more difficult to connect themselves and come to bear the sense of absences that are effects of an insignificance that the process reproduces as the sense of processes are extorted via relationships that involve little situating of individuals and no opportunity for them to accede to a self-composure arising from being-realised in relation to interpersonal forms that disclose possibilities so that they accede to an experience of capacity arising from experiencing being subject to such actualising moments and, thereby, able to sustain a hold on forms because they experience their physiognomic regeneration.

As the process available to one becomes insignificant, the degradation is manifest via inabilities born of insignificance and, lacking contextualisation or realisation, one struggles to represent oneself conversationally because one doesn't access the grounds of representational forms of intentionality. If one doesn't access, interpersonally, disclosures, which constitute aspects whose sense one bears via experiences of being significant, of counting to others, then one's expressivity will manifest the sense of a will-less-ness born of an inability that is an effect of degradation. What can one say about one's person when one's objectivity leads one to be unable to access any public sphere, which itself is an effect of an objectivity made determinate via experiences arising from ways of being rooted in the interpersonal forms of such significances? The very same judgements are made about them, throughout, concerning a social experience devoid of objectification in which they are perceived (usually via communicative relations that are abstracted and electronically mediated) via an absence that is itself an effect of being-perceived to lack aspects required to solicit contact. If you are not socially viable then the ways of being arising from being-perceived to lack legitimate forms physiognomically regenerates the grounds of a sense incorporated via experiences of being subject to such dynamics. Attempting to mediate opportunities, I had to wait eight years for a response from a professor who said, 'I sense that you lack the experience of everything ... that conducting research in an applied social science field ... involves'. What are being perceived are effects of a reality as the sense of relational processes is born via expressivities arising from being situated via precisely such mediations. If individuals are perceived to bear the sense of an absence of capacity, as an effect of absences of opportunity, then how are they to accede to the interpersonal conditions constitutive of being competent? Notice how objectivities function as absolutes precluding opportunity

and thereby eternalising the condition reproduced via the recognition of an incapacity born of a condition arising from impoverishment: 'you lack the experience of everything' and notice how this alludes to a global sense indicating the absence of a fundamental relation constitutive of the sense: involvement in a world: 'you lack the experience of everything', the professor senses the absence of a totality of relationships that subtend functionality. This is testament to the way individuals face circumscriptions arising from experiences of being-perceived via expressive physiognomies rooted in institutional forms that constitute legibilities that only further reconstitute precisely what education is supposed to address: absences of opportunity. Given the sense arising from expressive physiognomies rooted in the absence of connection, the absence of realisation, the absence of the interpersonal grounds constitutive of intentional states that presume such conditions that render individuals capable of appropriating forms via modalities rooted in realisations arising from disclosures which constitute capacities for projection that physiognomically regenerate the sense of such temporally and spatially sustained personal properties, can we really consider people subject to such conditions educated?

The absence of the interpersonal conditions constitutive of intentional states that arise from involvement in a circumscribed sphere of legitimate encounter is perceived via the professor when he observes, 'I sense that you lack the experience of everything ... that conducting research in an applied social science field ... involves', given that such a criteria debars me from accessing any context that might allow me to appropriate the forms constitutive of the sense of such an objectivity, how can a decontextualized education address the deficits arising from structural dislocations arising from institutional command of the instruments of objectification? Products of educationalism, who self-finance a process of self-education bereft of anything but the solitary task of producing the forms which materialise the appearance of institutional processes devoid of anything beyond the administrative actions that materialise the appearance of functions bereft of any interpersonal reality, are not being prepared for anything. If the education leaves individuals perceived by the same sense of absence characteristic of unemployment then in what sense have the poor been educated? The process merely legitimates discrimination by hiding a condition that is personalised by the charade of provision which, robs individuals of any authority in the face of what they are perceived to be as effects of a mutilating process that provides access to nothing. Individuals are exposed to responses which constitute the inert pressure of the order of things, operating via the inscription of differences whose forms are imbibed via disclosures which trigger responses that manifest the 'subterranean complicity that a body slipping away from the directives of consciousness and will'

maintains ‘with the violence of the censures inherent in the social structures’ (Bourdieu 1999: p. 170) so that it appears individuals exclude themselves. You are exposed to an order awareness of which leads to exclusion, reclassification merely legitimates differences via appearing to provide opportunities that are as spurious as the administrative process constitutive of their illusion is vacuous. The greatest discrimination individuals’ face arises via the conditions constitutive of different actualities so that individuals face experiencing being realised in relation to forms that constitute different possibilities. The power of destiny arises from the social magic whereby some are consecrated and others condemned to futures proposed by a collective perception that ensures that the very fabric of being constitutes realities that are difficult to countermand because negation precludes opportunity: once you are perceived to lack required forms, you cannot situate yourself so as to accede to the conditions of possibility that those forms make accessible, you can’t be subject to the disclosive conditions of modalities and remain enmired in an incapacity that is a really attributed effect of forms whose physiognomic materialisation constitute you objectively. Perceptions of the sense of the absence of required characteristics should always alert us to a deprivation of the conditions required to satisfy intentional states because personal characteristics have temporal, spatial and interpersonal conditions, if individuals are perceived to be useless, then it is a failure of the institutions that underpin the economy. Cognitive barriers are social barriers: the practice of difference: the recognition and disclosure of the sense of different forms has cognitive effects because it constitutes sense appropriated via being subject to processes that not merely circumscribe but actualise.

The real issue of competence concerns the forms of involvement constitutive of the acquisition of forms via actualisation and this becomes ever more remote as educational functions replace what becomes ever more mediated: employment. Without involvement there isn’t a ‘there’ experienced and a fundamental medium of disclosure is absent, which explains why the devalued articulate an absence they experience being constitutive of them, as there being ‘nothing there’, nothing they experience via being-there: no ‘there’ for people to experience being via. The fundamental fabric, interpersonally constituted, of meanings experienced via being subject to disclosures, which realise us, is affected by devaluation. It is possible to use abstracted administrative processes to materialise a commitment experienced via association, whilst neglecting individuals and one-to-one processes obscures the way distinctions are materialised. As one PhD student describes:

From my experience, there are far too many PhD students coming through, with at least 10 people per job ... The contact time on the PhD

is so poor. I have become quite numb to how bad it is ... In social science departments like these 'work' is like a mirage.

As another PhD student described:

It was interesting ... for me to discover how unhappy most postgrads feel concerning the quality of supervision ... Last night, we all sat around ... discussing our various experiences of academia. It appears to me that the whole system is flawed ... and that we are all ... victims. One guy resigned from his PhD in his final year and has gone it alone ... He had major conflicts with his supervisor (female ... social psychologist) and has no publications to help him get a job. So, he's hunting round for a position as research associate and is completely shattered by the whole situation... You need money to pay for the degrees, you need money to pay the conference fees ... money to travel, to live away and eat when you struggle to pay your rent.

The censures individuals face in a system in which access is mediated via prestigious, exclusive forms, not competencies whose manifestative conditions remain unavailable, causing pain implied in simultaneously developing needs that cannot be satisfied, emerges clearly in the words of another PhD student:

... Academia is quite a terrible joke. It is a closed shop system for the ones who play by the rules... It is so terrible that I cannot laugh anymore at it. It just sickens me. So, I avoid the theme at all. I am so hurt with Academia that I refuse to hear and talk about it ... I refuse to talk on academic subjects because it is useless and only does me harm.

The devalued just face the same conditions via institutional reclassification. As one person put it, 'All Ah did was pay to bi in a buildin' fo' three years, thi' taught mi absolutely nothin' an' Ah learned absolutely nothin.' If people aren't involved in anything realising or consequential, are deficits born of dislocations themselves economically rooted in the interpersonal-institutional processes that subtend resource-access being addressed?

3 **If You Are Rich Enough, You're Clever Enough: the Marks of Intelligence Are Bought**

Getting onto a PhD I had to develop a project, unaided, in isolation and then secure one of twenty-four Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) awards.

When I finished, I didn't get a single interview in two years. When individuals can't even get interviews, how can they be expected to adapt? If your process reduces to self-teaching and submission of work, how can you compete with those involved? Despite achieving three minor-miracles: securing an ESRC award, publishing my PhD, and getting a Cambridge fellowship, a professor of sociology at a nearby university wrote via email:

From your point of view, I suspect that one of the biggest difficulties that you face at the moment is a combination of your age, and the fact that you haven't been in 'proper' employment for a long time ...

What is disturbing is that a professor of sociology is one of the few people who might take my work seriously. When a professor of sociology can say, 'having a first-class degree doesn't mean very much these days', then you realise those instituting the charade know the reality: when the best-case scenario is worthless, people are wasting their time. It is clear that the context students exist in relation to affects the significance of their production: that their class position constitutes their objectivity as an effect of institutionalised differences that constitute legibilities that practically refer to the sense arising from the way such forms are instantiated. The reason this matters is that it is both an effect of public value and a manifestation of the conditions constitutive of competence: being socially valued and recognised constitutes the disclosive conditions for the forms required to function. This is why 'experience' counts in selection criteria because it functions as a guarantee of conditions which satisfy intentional states yet this is precisely what is unavailable and, whilst education is supposed to function as a parallel institutional apparatus, it clearly can't.

For those who can't access the legitimating and humanising processes of employment-specific training that are the preserve of those on elite trajectories, outside 'the specifically scholastic market, a diploma is worth what its holder is worth, economically and socially; the rate of return on educational capital is a function of the economic and social capital that can be devoted to exploiting it' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 134). As another product of RCAT narrates:

I realise my degree was basically just humouring people to process them and get them out the other side. Three years not on the dole stats. It was just the same as being unemployed, nothing much to do, no reason to be anywhere, nowhere to go, no money. When I finished, I was in a worse hole than if I'd not done it. Better off getting a trade ... I should have joined the army ... Least I'd not be stuck and I'd have some worthwhile skills. I can't do ow't with the shit I did at university, total waste of time.

It's a fraud. It is the dole, it's a fraud and it's becoming more and more the norm too ... People are studying until they are like thirty and then ending up doing un-paid work as 'experience' ... all it is is the dole with a false hope at the end as bait and now I'm cleaning bogs part time ... I'm just sick of going to work knowing it won't even pay the rent. No Motivation. It's like that Soviet saying 'they pretend to pay us, we pretend to work or should we say 'they pretend to educate us, we pretend we've got a future'. Most of it is like someone sticking an obstacle in front of you and asking you to pay for the ladder to get over it.

Manifesting the effects of such conditions, and calling from a phone box in Rotherham while on benefits, the external examiner of my PhD berated me, 'it's ok for you to deny the value of education, it isn't like you've been rotting on the dole', maybe because he was too eager to realise his own commitment to education via constituting me as a 'great example of the success of second-chance education' via a process that involved no personal contact so that the reference he wrote for me was so inadequate as to be ineffectual because such people are paid for judging people outside of contact or access to any sphere of practice other than one that narcissistically realises them and their sense of a system via the administered judgement of the labour of others who access none of the institutional relationships that objectivise them. Letters of reference are inadequate because there is little that academics can claim about individuals they have little contact with: they have the same problems that the subjects of the 'education' have, lacking access to anything, individuals are unsure as to characteristics whose interpersonal conditions are not satisfied for them leaving them confused and insecure. Letters of reference have always been a problem for me because I was never introduced to any sphere via education so, consequentially, nobody knows me, let alone knows what capacities I might be capable of manifesting were any process available to me that might elicit human qualities. The truth was well articulated by one academic: 'I actually couldn't write you a reference because there isn't anything, I could honestly say I believed you were fit to do'. Is there really much of a difference between rotting on the dole and living the same form of life in a city under the guise of being educated?

Generally, what those from non-standard trajectories get is non-specific education bereft of contextualisation, which directly reproduces the meanings they experience being via an aimless, pointless, existence that education simply reproduces. Any detailed elucidation of labour market criteria that they will confront via education is ignored, as the words of one academic make clear:

Well don't say Sociology is shit – they don't need to hear it. They're starting a social science degree of some kind – sociology, education, etc. – and that will just demoralise them. And they won't have any way to connect to ideas about social science research funding. Most of them don't even know what class is – they don't recognise it. Of course, it is a dead end for the majority. I know it's not open and equal – you only have to look at the majority of people in lectures to know that.

What is interesting here is the spontaneous connection of the link between social science and a general education degree: 'a social science degree of some kind – sociology, education, etc.', the 'etc.' manifests how interchangeable the areas are since they are financed via the general malaise that feeds those without determinate educational choices onto general degrees which entrench the dislocation manifest by the acknowledgement that 'they won't have any way to connect to ideas about social science research funding'. What are they being educated for?

I'd like to consider the extent to which educational space reduces to economic imperatives. The words of one academic seem relevant:

... It's run now by business people, something terribly corrupt has happened, there's no respect for scholarship, it all about getting money, that's the main criteria now, if you can bring money into the departments then they'll have you ... We had a dreadful meeting the other day with our head of department, he called us in and said we didn't have enough post-graduates, that we didn't have enough on the MA that we needed to get more doctoral students, he said we need to get a lot more overseas students, that's what it's all about now, they want to get these overseas students, they pay these huge fees, you see, nobody cares if they're any good ... it's all a business now, it's like in America ...

How all this affects university selection processes is clear in the following:

I am intrigued by your somewhat strange academic career to date... Just to repeat what it says in the advertisement concerning the sort of person we are looking for, it would be someone who has published ... in the area of culture, has obvious promise and potential as well as relevant teaching experience. It would seem, from what you have said, that your research might fall under the heading of culture, but that remains unclear. I should stress, however, that preference would be given to an active researcher (preferably with grants) above someone who is simply a scholar/writer.

Notice how the term 'active researcher' reduces to those who can successfully procure grants and we can see the reduction and devaluation manifest in the 'above someone who is simply a scholar/writer', the valuationary dynamics constituted spatially manifest distinctions operationalised via networks that make available such objectivities. Valuationary processes constitute spatial divisions that circumscribe individuals determining the meanings they experience being via forms, which disclose such objectivities, actualised via such processes. Studying from a bedroom clearly doesn't count, negating my work. If you belong to a non-literate group, how do you avoid appearing to be 'simply a scholar/writer' and if these categories manifest the real schema constitutive of value in the academic field, how would someone in such conditions ever operationalise contacts? Looking at an application process for the University of Coimbra, I found the following, 'CES gives priority to those applicants who already have connections to research networks'. This is to be expected since private networks in the public sphere are the source of validation and valuation that function as guarantees of a competence rooted in recognition of forms that assure individuals, and institutions, of the individual value that functions as a guarantee of competence because it is a constitutive condition. There are issues concerning access to the interpersonal grounds of competencies: elite students usually access direct mediation, realisation, and contextualisation, and lower-class students experience educational processes consisting of dislocation, abstracted mediation, and de-realisation that constitute differences in expressive physiognomy. For the poor there is a problem with objectification because of a decontextualization that the education reproduces. What is valued is labour arising from employment and labour producing its own income via grants. And yet the devalued cannot situate themselves institutionally so that the form of their labour is affected by their dislocation: how can they direct their consciousness appropriately without a shared horizon of disclosure arising from involvement? Without access to the same nonintentional or pre-intentional conditions that enable intentional states, how can they constitute appropriate forms? This is the devalued face, the re-articulation of the sense of a barrier that arises from the continuous perception of a difference that re-constitutes a barrier whose perception is evident in the sense of my academic career as 'strange'. That the discernment of difference, that legibilities are inextricably constituted via the way space is used to materialise the sense of such forms via deviation from a modal trajectory is manifest by: 'I am intrigued by your somewhat strange academic career to date'. In a system whose processes are instituted with so little engagement with the poor and in which income can be transmuted into early-arrival, we see how easily class differences can be legitimated by a mass system whose anonymity obscures the processes

constitutive of differences in objectivity relating to different ways of being-there, different forms of treatment, and different lineages constituted via different contextualising mediations privately materialised. Bourdieu makes the important point, 'Individual corruption only masks the *structural corruption* (should we talk about corruption in this case?)' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 17), the corruption is legitimated as part of the constitution of the public realm. All one has to do in order to select the privileged, is to select the best: those with the cultural tokens manufactured in this domain in order to objectify the dominant who pay to access the private spaces of the institutional sphere in order to access exclusive forms that operate via tacit reference to the mass of students undergoing generic processes whose significance arise from the use of such space to constitute such distinctions.

Because valuationary processes are institutionally private: relating to the exclusive forms that manifest the interpersonal effects of recognitions which physiognomically regenerate the sense of differences incorporated via experiencing being privy to such recognitions, the devalued are cut-off from the spheres whereby the elites produce the objectifications required to access employment. The institutional machinery of objectification is financed via a mass process that materialises the sense of its legitimacy, but, if you look at the interpersonal processes occurring, it is not legitimate because it involves the de-legitimation and invalidation of those who lack economic capital. What these spatial divides do is lock the devalued outside of channels of legitimation and leave them unable to solicit contact, leaving them without any sphere of actualisation, and, thereby, no experience of efficacy or viability. This is why 'experience' is such a key differentiator: without access to a context of realisation, how can individuals accede to a sense of possibility? 'Public' institutions can be commandeered by groups who surreptitiously subvert the institutions' imperatives to satisfy their own needs. Moreover, there is a contradiction between the way value is constituted via the institution of exclusive forms via access to private networks that require recognition and mediation, and the generic, anonymous process that lower-class students undergo, devoid of direct mediation because they function as a foil for the elaboration of character, narcissistically, like props, part of 'the proven games and tricks of the theatricalization of pedagogic action' (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 96) used situationally, by academics to enact commitments that their practice disavows. The results are a monopolisation of resources because of the spatial divisions constitutive of the sense of the positions underpinning the objectivities individuals experience being materialised.

There were academics I was infrequently in contact with throughout my postgraduate study, yet never was I invited to speak. Upon completion of

my PhD, never was I invited to speak, and never did I ever present any material at any point during my 'education'. The readers who read my thesis for Cambridge University Press never enquired into my situation; no one acted to involve me: I was trapped on benefits in a condition perpetuated via such processes. The reason it is like this is because individuals are used as objectifying nodes via relational processes in which people manifest concern to one-another without students even being privy to the processes. All decisions on my book were made without contact with me, and I never had contact with anyone involved except over the phone. Most of my postgraduate education reduced to conversations over the phone because there was no context of co-presence. When I published the book, one of the academics who dealt with me as an undergraduate, invited me to speak, although this was never finalised. Contacting one professor, upon completion of my PhD, I was ignored, when the book came out, I contacted him again and he responded. This raises the question: do academics take the certificates seriously or do only exclusive forms count because of the ubiquity of credentials that finance the apparatus of objectification they appropriate under the guise of a universal good they subvert via their own private use of institutional space? When the few points of contact arising from a process that is anonymously constituted can't involve you in anything, how do you accede to the objectifying 'experiences' arising from modalities rooted in recognitions that are clearly unavailable because of the generic nature of what is available: the behaviour of those who institute the processes clearly manifests that they don't take seriously either the process or its products. The issue is not merely how do you become objectified when you can't access any interpersonal sphere beyond form-filling and submitting written-work, but how can you develop?

In reality, what happens is that one condition is merely perpetuated because the educational process continues it because of the way the reclassified unemployed function as resources, aids for the elaboration of character and sources of disclosure, which constitute forms appropriated via being subject to such relational mediations for those who experience being capable of instantiating the sense of forms because they are subject to such possibilities because they are contextualised, relationally, via the extortion of the sense of a process out of associating their names with the non-contextualised labour of others. The fact that individuals can undergo these processes without access to experiences of being situated in relation to the conditions of possibility of representational forms of intentionality that presume recognitions which in turn constitute opportunities to emerge from the insignificance of a process, whose generic nature is manifest by the absence of access to any such possibilities – this fact manifests the way individuals are subject to the grounds

of judgements which are materialised effects of significances which become crystallised by conditions of existence arising from aspects that arise via the interpersonal constitution of such processes which subtend the forms of intentional life individuals experience via being subject to experiences of being circumscribed via such conditions. Individuals are subject to ways of being-perceived that physiognomically regenerate differences of objectivity born of a contestation that competition merely exacerbates, so that, for the poorest, education is not a break-from unemployment but a continuation of its essential forms via other mediations. Human beings need to be contextualised and interpersonally realised for them to accede to the grounds of actualities that constitute them capably via an experience of the meaning-of-being-there, realised and contextualised, via disclosures which physiognomically materialise the grounds of possibilities that they experience being actually able to appropriate because they experience the availability of the forms constitutive of such objectivities. How can people compete when they cannot experience the interpersonal grounds of actualities as possibilities of their being-for-others?

Without actualisation, individuals find themselves experiencing the chaos of abortive projection as they face the frustration of un-realisation, unable to extend their corporeal schema, and accede to a fuller experience of being more self-composed because they experience their flesh being imbibed with the sense of interactional forms that intersubjectively donate capacities whose sense they grasp via being subject to such modalities as possible aspects of their being-for-others. Without access to a sphere of practice, the processes of valuation individuals are subject to are identical with unemployment, they endure the same experience of ostracism characteristics of the anonymity of those unable to signify themselves appropriately and engage with informal abstracted communicative mediations in which they are ignored because they are insignificant because they lack access to the spheres of existence that constitute objectivities arising from recognition. Without immersion in a sphere of disclosure that constitutes not merely a horizon but the very conditions of intuiting appropriate responses, how can individuals synchronise the form of their labour?

The problem is that different ways of being-perceived constitute different ways of being-there so that individuals are not involved in the same space, different relations of involvement which constitute subtle differences in objectivity that are responsively manifest: 'That's one thing I notice. I can't socialise in those groups ... it's like they tag you as a scrubber before they even speak to you. The way people interact is completely different and you can't fake it either; it's like you are giving off a smell or something as a sign'. Without experiences of being involved via the same disclosive forms, individuals do not face

the same nonintentional or pre-intentional conditions that enable intentional states and, consequentially, hold different beliefs about the nature of reality. The devalued are exploited not merely economically but symbolically, that is existentially, they are, essentially, victimised via educational processes that derive an experience of being competent for those who do little beyond associate their names with the administration of their labour, and their disappropriation is perpetuated by processes that extort the sense of forms whilst exploiting them economically. A world in which the poor must skill themselves places an undue burden upon them because they cannot contextualise themselves in order to provide themselves with the opportunity to accede to mastery of forms whose grounds remain unavailable. The devalued lack the means to elicit recognition and solicit contact. Without engagement, they lack access to the interpersonal fabric constitutive of competence; education is supposed to function as an analogue of contextualising mediations, but the problem is it tends to reproduce the same spatial processes that constitute the problem.

Education as a class process is obvious: it is a way of keeping people out of the labour market, increasing competition for positions, and making money out of the competition for the symbolic forms required to access employment. It is a process that only makes more valuable forms relating to elite trajectories, and competition suits dominant groups because the worthlessness of credentials has had the effect of pushing the criteria of value back onto the social criteria that credentials used to guarantee, '*unification benefits the dominant, whose difference is turned into capital by the mere fact of their being brought into relation*' (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 83). The process whereby educational institutions function as mediators between groups and the labour market, is becoming manifest, as one Cambridge academic confided:

All they want is that we filter them out; they'd be happy if we never taught anything; all they want is as many prestigious Cambridge students as they can get; and they just want us to act as a sorting mechanism and to filter out the thousands of applications that we get and filter them down and give them a rubber stamp saying these are good enough people to come out of Cambridge. So, they're not interested in what we teach them ... (S: Yes, but how do you know that, how do they show it?) They show it by the fact that they're happy for the degree to get shorter and shorter: at first it was three years, then it went down to two years, then it went down to twelve months, now it's nine months; it clearly shows that they don't value the learning because they're happy for us to reduce content.

As a postgraduate student describes:

One of my Chinese friends, she is doing a course which was supposed to be 2 years but now 10 months, and she has to produce 40k in 10 months. Those stupid Master's level students write primary level English, and they get Master's degrees easily because they pay the money for the course. I can only say that the society is totally unfair. I see that poorer kids study hard and get unemployed. These rich kids didn't go to class and get decent jobs ... I just heard from my friend today that Greenwich universities are full of rich kids paying 20k per year for a stupid MBA certificate; the ranking of that university is even worse than mine. They get 15% commission fee for taking one student, PhD supervisors. And, yes, if you can bring even one Master's student (self-funded), you get 15% from his/her tuition. That is how it works in my university. That's why there are many university application agencies that are helping students to apply for free.

As the process of turning income differences into symbolic differences is rationalised, its logic becomes manifest. What this does is secure the transfer of forms of capital via tethering achievement to income: the rate of exchange on symbolic forms arises via private institutional processes, accessed via income: validation is a class process. Sadly, the devaluation that ensues only further empowers those rich in economic capital who have the means to access the institutional machinery of objectification that secure a return. The reality is captured by the words of one academic:

They give you a place if you agree to pay the 8000 or whatever the ridiculous sum is per year, but from that point onwards, they just don't care what happens to you. In fact, I have witnessed how they accept overseas students who barely speak any English, to do a PhD, just because they are paying the full overseas fee. They obviously are not overly concerned about the academic standard these students are going to achieve.

As one overseas student describes the reality:

Personally, I prefer to do my degree overseas than stay in China. There are two reasons behind this: learn English and get rid of the junk teachers in China. Cameron thinks international students can boost British... According to the Education department of China, over 100,000 Chinese students are currently studying in the UK. But I assure you, 80% of them are there only for the degree, they bunk the class, buy luxury sports cars, sometimes try to bribe teachers ... There is no chance that we will make friends with native students. They put all Asian students in the same

cohort. 90% in my class are Indian, rest of them are from Pakistan, Cambodia, and Thailand, etc. I can tell from teachers' eyes that we are second-class students in the uni ... Thus, it is very hard to get a grade above B for us ... Even my work was perfect, they will still give me a B- with the comment 'you need to practice your English' ... Universities in UK want more Chinese students. My tutor told me that the 'management team want me to have some international PhD students in order to raise more money. But I will feel bad if I accept low quality proposals, so I refused'. On the flight back to Beijing, I talked to a few passengers who are doing their PhD in the UK. Their stories shocked me: they did not have any proposals or interviews, they went through the 'back door' (pay money and get the offer letter) ... Anyway, the way that universities treat us and the way we survive are both sick and meaningless. Once you surrender to the money, you compromised with the quality. The students know it is a deal, they pay the money and they can get a degree. So English degrees, are they any good? I see students who just party, party, party, look down on others, they just do as well as anyone, so family and connections are important. Just imagine if the population structure in university is exactly the reflect of the society, 10% rich and 30% mid class and 60% working class, they the rich won't bully and ignore the majority. And ideas and creativity will bloom. Now it's like only the rich go to university, and they don't fucking care about study. They ... act like overlords.

The function described here used to be served by lower-class students who were treated this way. For many lower-class young people, university was a process of being denied recognition without anything being provided that might constitute qualities anyway. At the end of my first year I was summoned to see one academic who suggested I needed remedial lessons in English, even though, as another academic, after my PhD, in a letter of reference, noting deficiencies in my mastery of grammar, wrote, 'UK universities don't run freshmen English Language courses', his own description exhibiting how colonised the institution was by the terms of the dominant American clientele and also manifesting the absence of any means to address the deficits via which they perceived lower class students. After asking about a low grade from another I was told 'I'd like to tell you it's worth more but it isn't. I've seen students like you before they usually go on and get a two-two'. People who teach little in disciplines offering few opportunities to acquire skills, could easily justify poor grades, in terms of 'the sources you used'; although generally no reasons were given and none sought in an anonymous, impersonal, process that, throughout, instead of concerning the affirmation of qualities elicited via involvement,

arose from a negation rooted in barriers the education was supposed to address but merely reproduced. This is why most of the young men I studied with in Rotherham went on to get two-tuos at a time when there was nothing they could use degrees for. On entry to postgraduate study, having no supervisor, I went to see a potential supervisor and had to talk about my intellectual preferences, expressing a negative opinion, the academic said 'is it too abstract for you?' which manifest, not merely, a prejudicial perception based on a judgement of an expressivity arising outside of any access to any kind of display of competence, but also negligence because the comment showed what was also manifest by me having no supervisor, a lack of effort on the part of the department I was entering: any glance at my CV would have indicated that I studied philosophy before university.

4 Economic Imperatives Affect the Form of the Process

It can hardly be surprising that this international trade in credentials effects a difference between the universal and the particular, or, between the international and the local, and a key schema constitutive of value becomes an individual's relation to these: the poor are mired in locality by the very valuationary processes that degrade them. As Bourdieu puts it, 'the "new economy" ... is global and those who dominate it are ... international, polyglot and polycultural (by opposition to the locals, the 'national' or 'parochial')' (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 33). We should not therefore be surprised that in the institutions that the rich use to constitute the international realm, via which their experience of actualisation is constituted, issues to do with locality, indeed, the 'national' itself, become degraded, as a trans-national class constitutes itself internationally in relation to representations of the world so that they produce the interpersonal conditions of validity for by constituting referential practices that allow them to accede to experiences of being competent via the use of categories embedded in a horizon disclosed via their use of cultural spheres to materialise such possibilities. We should, not, therefore, be surprised that there is a relation between the syllabus, the personnel, and the clientele:

Anything to do with locality is sullied, polluted; the institution won't go near it. There are two posts in the pipeline here and the emphasis is on international things, stuff to do with international media. (S: And what benefit will that have for your students?) Nothing, but it's just about the international focus of the department.

The department must have an international focus because they want to focus on topics that are of interest to the modal group. There is thus an inherent bias in recruitment. One of the hidden mediations being satisfied here is the need for those with economic capital to be validated, their dispositions affirmed, via institutional agents who disclose forms that regenerate their expressive physiognomy because they are congruent. That these assessments of the suitability of staff are considered is manifest by words from a selection meeting in a Cambridge College in which the following recommendation was made:

His congruence with the life of this college ... his keen interest in international students, he has studied in many different countries, he would suite the life of the college ...

The 'life of the college' has to be physiognomically regenerated as part of the experience of being part of a circumscribed realm of legitimate encounter that universities ensure so that those being consecrated experience belonging and involvement: status, personhood – forms the devalued rarely experience. It is clear that the personnel are the policy from the words of one Cambridge academic:

We're under a lot of pressure on the MBA to get the students, people who are, suitable ... so most students are American ... they are the largest ... group, so people have to be carefully selected to do supervisions ... and it is the same with the materials ... we have to find stuff that is ... suitable for them.

Moreover, given that, whatever discussion is able to take place, takes place within a discursive space dictated by the syllabus, how can this *not* affect the educational experience of lower-class students? The absurdity is well captured by the words of one person:

I'm exhausted. I'm so behind now my times running out to finish the assignment. I've had virtually no sleep, and I have to work tomorrow again, and I just think I want to cry. I can't get my head around infrastructures of transnational civil society, etc., all a load of old toss – I can see every part of the argument, it's basically common sense, and there's never a real conclusion to draw! Just more questions!... When people ask 'where did you go to university?' I will answer – my bedroom! That doesn't sound good does it? I have been to three tutorials in five years – a complete

waste of time – the last one was last year and it was like watching paint dry!

There is no relation between the towns, villages, and the universities. This affects the experience of studying because working-class students cannot be engaged in relation to the phenomenal realities that their lives issue from. They are assessed in relation to schemas of classification that issue from a different relation to a reality that is alien because they aren't privy to its constitutive grounds.

5 Distorted Communication and Bankrupt Education

British universities, as communicative spaces capable of responding to the resonance that societal problems have found in the private sphere, have been in crisis for decades. We see why, at the heart of the communicative relations constitutive of the pedagogic processes at the core of the institutions, there is systematic deceit, which means that recruitment has to carefully screen out people of integrity in order to protect the institutional interests constitutive of the space. Given that those with the money to travel internationally have access to a global experience of the world, we should not be surprised that they want to study things that have an international aspect. Luckily for them, having the income that British universities desire, a syllabus is being compiled by people who have acceded to position via the same trajectory, as one academic's CV shows:

Organizing the setup, course-design, curriculum, and validation of a Postgraduate Course ... the MA in International Cultural Studies to become the MA in Globalisation, Identity, and Technology.

Institutions are producing courses that are constituted around schema that relate to the forms of disclosure arising from a social position that the appropriation of forms arises via, so that the mobilisation arising from the economic power that the institutions recognise by offering such administered products ensures that a hidden mediation of competence is the actualisation involved in experiences of being-validated via the operationalisation of a culture able to naturalise itself via sedimenting itself in the classificatory practices of those who institute the charade. There is a symbiotic relation between clientele and producers of the forms because the recognition of the needs of those with capital leads institutions to select agents able to produce appropriate forms

because they have a constitutive relation to the grounds of the competence: shared lifestyle. The key technologies, which identities arise via, are those systems of institutional relations that veil class relational processes. What is interesting is how the clientele affect the terms, via which the course is drawn up; it seems that, when significant groups are being catered for, then their need for consecration must be recognised via careful attention to the schema used to constitute a sense of optics arising from an international position that actually precludes any local function because these positions are being repressed by the economics of the institutions, manifest by the fact that, on the course, there isn't a single British student. As one overseas student confided:

My friend is very disappointed here because the lecturers are from overseas and speak with foreign accents ... She wanted to be taught by people with good English ... I don't know any English students; all are from overseas.

As the system organises around favoured clienteles, tutors must be selected to mirror the clientele, and the whole exercise collapses into the false culture of a multicultural charade. As one overseas student described the reality, 'The Indian lecturers suck; they speak worse English than me; when I talk fast, they don't understand me. We even have Pakistani guest lecturers; they don't even know what they are talking about. All the case studies they gave us are like *Apple* and *Coca Cola*, everyone knows them'. 'Waste of time', or as another student observed, 'the foreign lecturers are the worst', yet the institutions need to accommodate individuals whose expressive physiognomy mirrors the significant clientele, and they must teach materials constituted via schemata that are common to the position of outsiders that the dominant are, relative to the cultures they are condemned to spectate, thus constituting the grounds of sense of the optics that render sensible a pedagogic exercise rooted in estrangement that is common to a de-contextualised process that makes a virtue of the necessity of an understanding arising from nowhere except the artificial conditions of the excess competition that makes closures constitute the reality of the multitude.

Our universities can develop courses that allow wealthy overseas students to study their own cultures, with tutors who are far removed from any of the personal realities of those cultures, and can produce courses that produce symbolic capital; whereas when it comes to our own indigenous students from poorer families, in equally distant regions of social space, the universities simply force upon them an irrelevant syllabus. An institutional system that serves the needs that those with wealth have to transmute their income into

instituted distinction for carrying out routinised ideological processes in administrative sites that exchange private wealth for public distinction is clearly exactly what they want. And a university system that renders the culture of the wealthy constitutive of knowledgeability is perfect. You don't need to be well read; you just need to transmute your own culture into an ideological product administered through a routinized assessment. What is more important in the space is the culture of affluence that is shared: a knowledge of airports and multiplying fluid identities so that your identity is realised in precisely the ways analysed by cultural theorists, so that you don't even need to think because your cognitions issue from an experience of being realised appropriately because you share the position inscribed by those constituting intellectual culture: exchanging private wealth for public culture and constituting an institutional culture that objectifies one-another in the process. In reality, what these mobile students are offered is the opportunity to constitute their experience via frameworks that, in being operationalised, are then validated: cognition is an effect of realisation in relation to a culture whose incarnation is part of its developmental conditions. We find traces of this organisation in conferences like this: 'Transnational Anthropologies: Convergences and Divergences in Globalised Disciplinary Networks' where:

The papers in this panel analyse how professional as well as personal engagements of anthropologists with a variety of mobilities (e.g., migration, trans-local fieldwork, and global academic exchange via conferences, visiting programs, and online networks) strategically positions them within the social sciences to ethnographically describe, critically assess, and theorise the current 'mobility turn'.

Because the international rich now 'migrate' internationally and network so as to produce the forms they require to objectify themselves in relation to students condemned to locality, they can now organise conferences on their transnational intellectual practices, objectifying a 'turn' toward the issue of mobility, and then make this a delineating organisational possibility excluding the resourceless and constituting their experience as something they can be expert upon. In other words, competence is an effect of status differences that relate to ways of being that constitute possibilities that are effects of appropriations of space used to produce such modalities. What we see is the way in which those with resources segregate and interpersonally constitute the terms of their existence, objectifying their existence via a command of the public realm they constitute as a resource begetting distinction; they also constitute the legitimate terms of perception of their own objectifications: they are *never*

constituting capital as part of an accumulation strategy: no, they are producing advances in our understanding of processes they are 'strategically' positioned to describe because this is their chosen mode of existence turned into an income-generating lifestyle, a vocation.

Academics are more familiar with most of the major cities in the western world than they are with poor areas in the cities in which they work. This might be why they are happier interacting with international students than with those who live in the villages that surround the cities in which they work. The poor are offered an impoverished experience of their own possibility because they cannot be realised in relation to a culture constituted in distinction to them. Academic staff perceive international students as manifesting a broader range of culture and greater intelligence. Knowing nothing of the intra-worldly aspects of lives in localities, they are unable to engage with poorer students whose silence is merely enlightened self-interest and who are perceived to manifest a discomfort born of an inability to acculturate to a superior culture, as one postgraduate student described:

The problem is that a lot of these intellectuals, this petite-bourgeoisie that reigns over the academia, is full of pretentious bullshit and actually very ignorant ... Once I was presenting a work ... on migrant construction workers and ... trying to describe ... those workers' mode of living in terms of a sociology close to Bourdieu's terms linking them to a phenomenology of migrant daily experience. And this American lady, this academic 'expert', just said: 'Well, that's nice, but you should just leave the theory and tell us all about those gory aspects of the everyday life and work of the construction workers; that's what people want'. And I said that she told that because she didn't have the means to access what we were trying to say, since she didn't know shit about the working class, and she hadn't read shit about the concepts and the authors... I was obviously 'rude', but I couldn't contain myself ... The problem with the young poor ... is exactly that of 'the attitude' ... They can't appear ... without exactly being that self-fulfilling prophecy, without showing themselves as exactly as the others think they are ... The bodies, the clothing, the words, the talking out loud, the way they look to the ... the middle classes, they're all things that denounce them and underline their background and their 'inappropriate' way of being.

If you create an economy based on hidden unemployment, in which educational institutions repress social positions while reproducing their interpersonal grounds, then what you do is create a lot of burdened, hopeless people

amidst a game that is rigged in favour of those who have the income to transfer economically into other forms of capital and thereby materialise the appearance of a system in which class differences are irrelevant because institutions are used to obscure complex mediations that produce the objective grounds for the miscognition of class because of the autonomy of institutional processes secured by the financing of a mass system that offers increased security for the privileged, at the expense of an increased burden of debt and despair for the poor who find their routes into worthwhile *public* forms of existence, ever more difficult to attain. Instead of clarity, foresight, and well-being, we have confusion, antipathy, and malaise.

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