Resisting the Violences of "Market Normalisation": The Importance of Critical Pedagogies for Critical Criminology

Andrea Beckmann[a]

Abstract

The neo-liberal re-positioning of the educational-explorative realm to a vocational market-confinement has already impacted quite heavily on the educational sector in England and Wales and is now being imposed on a European wide scale. However, global as well as European students' protests illustrate that resistance to this ideology is gathering pace, and not only involves students and academics but also reaches wider parts of societies. This paper seeks to demonstrate the need for critical pedagogical practices that seek to sensitise students to the modes of current "conditions of domination". It further suggests critical criminologists to foster and engage in a process of public, intellectual, and intercultural exchange of ideas about education and educational institutions away from merely rationalistic, one-dimensional and profit-orientated ambitions toward a multitude of exchanges about meanings and purposes of such important socio-cultural and political institutions and processes that shape "subjectivities", inter-subjectivities and thus entire socio-cultural and political spheres. Such processes and active engagements are crucial to the agenda of critical criminologists, and perhaps most importantly, vital to the continued existence of a critical criminology that understands itself as proper ideology critique.

Keywords

Academic capitalism, corporate culture, subjectivities, critical criminology, desubjectification

This article seeks to critique the imposition of neo-liberal ideology on higher education (HE) on a transnational scale (frequently referred to as "globalism") and the accompanying destructive reign of the "new managerialism" in institutions called "universities". While its specific focus is on the contexts of HE in England and Wales, it will broadly engage in a "critical criminology" (De Haan 1990) that challenges dominant ideologies, discourses, and practices that can be seen as having the potential of limiting human creativity and expression, thus as establishing "conditions of domination" (Foucault 1976) specific to a "historical field".

As neo-liberal capitalism increasingly re-constitutes HE as a vocational market-confined space (Beckmann and Cooper 2004, 2005; Beckmann, Cooper, and Hill 2009), this oppressive context calls for the increasing involvement of critical criminologists, not only in terms of publishing ideology-critical pamphlets, articles, and books (in increasingly difficult contexts due to the disciplinary exercises of the Research Assessment Exercise

[a]University of Lincoln, UK

Correspondent Author:
Andrea Beckmann, University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, Lincoln, LN6 7TS, UK
E-mail: abeckmann@lincoln.ac.uk

[RAE]/Research Excellence Framework [REF] complex) but also in terms of engaging in critical pedagogical practices that sensitise students to the contemporary "historical field".

This "historical field" in which knowledge production currently takes place, exerts a constraining impact and is destructive to diverse socio-political and cultural mores (not least critical reflexivity, imagination, and empathy), which are essential to critical criminology.

The teaching of critical criminology as ideology critique in conjunction with critical pedagogies allows for the (re-)appropriation of HE as a (semi-)public space for the articulation of shared and contested sentiments about the context of "marketization", its relation to public education, as well as the moulding of "subjectivities". In this context, the prescribed "common sense" of the marketization of public education is fundamentally challenged and the consequences of the commodification of education are exposed and critically discussed.

European students' protests illustrate that resistance to the totalizing market ideology not only involves students and academics but also reaches wider parts of societies. This points to the crucial importance of generating spaces for public, intellectual, and intercultural exchanges of ideas of education beyond crude rationalistic, one-dimensional and profit-orientated ambitions as educational processes shape "subjectivities", inter-subjectivities and thus social-political and cultural spheres.

THE "HISTORICAL FIELD": THE "MARKET MANTRA" AND THE "NORMALISATION" OF "CORPORATE CULTURE"

The logic of "academic capitalism" (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004) commodifies knowledge and transforms universities and educational praxis into spaces and modes of service-delivery in a "historical field", in which the "public good" is becoming increasingly defined exclusively in economic terms

(Rhoads and Torres 2006). As the interrelationships among the university, the state and the "market" are becoming reconstituted, technologies, business, and so-called "hard sciences" are pushing social and cultural aspects of Western capitalist-consumer societies to the margins of acknowledged relevance.

The WTO and its Council for Trade in Services had much praise for the British government for having promoted "greater market responsiveness" and an "increasing openness to alternative financing mechanisms", particularly in HE (Rikowski 2001: 28). The recommendations of the 2010 Browne Review—*Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education*, as well as the subsequent *White Paper*, continue this problematic development, signalling: "… an end to public funding for all subjects except 'priority' areas such as science and technology" (Baker 2010: 6), threatening the sustainability of the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

Moore (2009: 243) observed about the UK's deployment of: "… higher education to create an army of employable subjects/citizens who are proselytised as having the skills [to] be able to participate effectively in the increasingly privatised global chains of commodity production and services".

The micro-physics of power, discourses, and practices of new managerialism attempt to legitimate the complete restructuring of the public sector along neo-liberal lines—leading to a shift in power relations from professionals to management (Beckmann and Cooper 2004), whereby managerial "information" and strategic-competitive rationalities increasingly come to supersede reflexive and critical forms of understanding in HE.

As part of the social sciences, criminology is therefore also under threat but even given its potential to survive, criminological knowledge, a "non-neutral form of power": "… has never been (and cannot be) separated from the prevailing or dominant values of the society of which it is part" (Barak 1998: 10-11) The implications of such "market normalisation" on

criminology in HE would certainly not foster the continuation of critical criminological agendas.

"… the Bologna Process is an example of a specifically neo-liberal way of governing. No longer is such governing done via legislation, but rather by various techniques of persuasion and tactics of manipulation. Thus the higher education reforms are marketed and sold as a fait accompli (Fejes 2005)" (Lock and Lorenz 2007: 7). Implementation is all that is apparently left to do in the context of so-called Western democracies that submerged themselves in carefully selected but hyper-media displayed celebrations of "Arabic spring" in order to re-inforce their own claims to legitimacy.

The contents of the reforms "… translate the principal dogmas of the managerialist cult" (Lock and Lorenz 2007: 7), and impose the "marketization" of HE. The implications of this imposition are profound as they result in a transformed space and meaning given to HE. "Universities" are becoming part of the wider context of corporate culture with all the associated practices of, e.g., competitive "performativity" in favour of "free" educational and intellectual exploration.

This shift is existentially threatening important possibilities of socio-political and cultural participation, innovation and vision that could and should be fostered in educational spaces. Giroux elaborated on the devastating broader effects of corporate culture:

> … as corporate culture extends even deeper into the basic institutions of civil and political society, there is a simultaneous diminishing of non-commodified public spheres—those institutions engaged in dialogue, education, and learning—that address the relationship of the self to public life, social responsibility to the broader demands of citizenship, and provide a robust vehicle for public participation and democratic citizenship.[1]

THE VIOLENCES OF "MARKET NORMALISATION"

What characterizes power is the fact that it is a strategic

relation that has been stabilised through institutions, so the mobility in power relations is limited, and there are strongholds that are very, very difficult to suppress because they have been institutionalized and are very pervasive in courts, codes and so on. All that means that the strategic relations of people are made rigid. (Foucault 1976; Halperin 1995: 86)

Neo-liberal managerialism assumed authorizing and legitimizing power in "universities" and operates via and relies on macro- and micro-management processes in order to subjugate critical reflection and ethical concerns, both by academics as well as students (Beckmann and Cooper 2004, 2005; Beckmann et al. 2009).

Despite of a profound lack of demonstrable evidence of its own success (Taylor 2002), new managerialism survives through continuous shape-shifting processes that, under the guise of "restructuring", ensure its continued dominance.

One violent consequence of this process of "market normalisation" is that the quality of "university" education is declining and becoming less diverse as entire courses and many well-loved modules have been axed despite of academic concerns and in violation of meaningfulness due to that new managerial "market" strategies and positions within institutions often are not filled in accordance to merit or suitability but with a view to improve REF scores, etc. "[I]n the last 25 years education has increasingly been defined by policy makers along the lines of its economic functions, with a reduced emphasis on its cultural, social and political contributions,…" (Ozga and Deem 2000; as cited in Alexiadou 2001: 414).

This "colonisation of life-worlds" can be seen to facilitate the "normalisation" of a broad adaptation of people's subjectivities to so-called "market requirements". Rhoades and Slaughter (2006; as cited in Rhoades and Torres 2006: 105) described parallel processes in the context of the US: "Colleges and universities, and participants in them, came to be disciplined, in a Foucauldian sense, by the logic of the private marketplace". This of course has profound

implications for the study and research in the realm of the "crimes" of the powerful.

MYSTIFYING AND CONSTITUTING "REALITY"

A Foucauldian understanding of resistance through "practices of freedom" implies the challenging of traditional modes of what is socially constructed and allowed to be counted as "knowledge", as well as the traditional modes of authorizing and legitimizing power thus an engagement with "the metaphysics of presence" (Kincheloe and McLaren 1998; as cited in Denzin and Lincoln 1998: 264).

Apart from the vested interest and power of capital, it is the language of neo-liberal managerialism that colonizes Western capitalist-consumerist "life-worlds". In this context, it is unsurprising that: "The World Bank has been one of the main culprits in spreading an objectivist and apolitical notion of 'knowledge production'" (Stewart 2007: 141). From a critical criminological perspective, it is important to consider the bio-political implications of "apoliticalisation".

Biopolitics operate via processes of internalisation (Foucault 1976), therefore the language-use of people as well as their underlying meanings and effects are crucial to take into account: "Neoliberalism eliminated the ties that protected society from the economical dynamics of competition; therefore an effect of biopolitical branding was produced in the collective mind-body" (Berardi 2009: 189). The implications are profound as socio-political/cultural spaces for genuine inter-subjective exchanges, one of which used to be HE are being eroded.

As the language of managerialism colonizes the "life-worlds" of educational spaces, it is important to reflect upon the meaning and function of language as it serves not only to express one's thoughts and transmit information, but also to enable the definition of "… one's identity, group loyalty, relationship to interlocutors, and understanding of the speech event"

(Lucas 2001: 1). Lock and Lorenz (2007: 4) explained the impact of managerialist language in the "life-worlds" of HE: "The language might itself be laughable, but it is now the shared language of those who command and is imposed on those whom they command".

Slogans like "knowledge society" (economization of "knowledge"), "employability", "mobility", "lifelong learning" (as security of employment and social welfare have been systematically dismantled), and "quality assurance" are characteristic for the language used in the Bologna inspired reforms. In this context, "quality assurance" for example can be demystified as having "… little to do with any kind of real-life quality but is an operationalization of the managerialist notion of accountability to stakeholders" (Lock and Lorenz 2007: 7).

Trust in professional integrity, based existentially on ongoing social exchanges and experience, is substituted with modes of "quality" monitoring and endless trails of meaningless but time and paper consuming audits. One of the operations of the bio-political processing/branding is represented by: "The tyranny of audit cultures inscribes academic subjects into discursive practices of accountability and conditions the over-production of administrative functionaries, whose job is to keep track of the bureaucratic madness that such systems generate" (Rossiter 2010: 67).

As the objectifying gaze of corporate greed (recast as "corporate survival" in the context of the present capitalist crisis) is internalised, new disciplinary regimes emerge as:

> Everything one does must be measured and counted and only the measurable matters. Trust in professional integrity and peer regulation has been replaced with performance indicators. There is a deep alienation in the experience of constantly living to perform. It leads to feelings of inauthenticity and a culture of compliance, as externally controlled performance indicators become the constant point of reference for one's work… (Lynch 2006: 7)

Lock and Lorenz (2007: 1) explored the recent changes in HE by examining them in the context of more general shifts in political life. "… the 'commercialization' of higher education and research means in reality their hyper-bureaucratization, via the imposition of so-called evaluation, assessment and accreditation schemes, the latest avatars of the managerialist ideology".

Academic freedom, while being structurally under profound threat in current times, is dear to all of us and has many aspects:

> In part, it meant being free to choose one's research agenda and to follow it through. In part it meant being trusted and being given the space to manage the pattern of one's own working life and to determine one's own priorities… that individual freedom was a function of academic control of the professional arena of teaching and research; and that these were the conditions [one] needed to work and therefore the conditions in which [one's] academic identity was grounded. (Henkel 2004: 28)

The context of "market normalisation" destroys the possibility of both academic freedom and academic integrity, as frequently the relationship between the epistemological beliefs people are holding and how and what they teach are becoming utterly disjointed due to new managerialist pressure to conform to "market" requirements.

This is an especially worrying development for critical criminologists as they witness an increasing de-professionalisation of colleagues, some of whom are giving in to the pressure to engage with short-term driven bit-applications without any proper context for reflection. This has very destructive effects especially with regards to the ethical dimension of academic work and the pursuit of critical criminology as: "Ethics is less a calculation than something that follows from being addressed and addressable in sustainable ways…" (Butler 2009: 181).

The training in quantitative methods, now a core-element of the "employability" and "skill" agenda, reproduces a specific idea of "science" that is limiting especially in the social sciences as it functions to "subjugate knowledge" by being disproportionately applied.

Additionally, the consequences of training students increasingly and mandatory in statistics need to be reflected upon, too, as these techniques are of course most widely used by the powerful in manipulation of the less powerful. Thus, there is a likelihood that students will end up using these "skills" to perpetuate and/or conceal socio-political relationships of inequality and injustice.

The teaching of the "skills" agenda can be seen to represent an initiation process to the reductionist "market mantra" and associated practices that are in the present context given the status of what is considered "reasonable", "rational", and "true" thereby delimiting meaning. For critical criminologists, it is fundamental to deconstruct such representations of so-called objective "truth" and authority.

The current "micro-physics of power" (Foucault 1976) foster cultures of opportunism and docility (Beckmann and Cooper 2004, 2005; Beckmann et al. 2009) and is in danger of turning an engaging, relational process called teaching (Brownlee 2004) into a mechanical process whereby the creative and consequential aspects of the educational process are increasingly restrained and structurally abolished.

While increasingly desperate staff pander to the immediate needs and prejudices of the providers of research funds and manufacture publications of frequently dubious quality and relevance to meet their quotas, they are further: "… called upon to monitor and transform the personal and subjective capacities of the students. They are… [to be], individualized and made responsible" (Baker, Brown, and Fazey 2006: 42). In contrast to previous eras, the outcome of the education process—"the educated subject"—is now stipulated *apriori*. As mentioned elsewhere (Beckmann and Cooper 2005), the subjectivity of students is discursively constituted as "Homo

rationalis", representing the continued and intensified domination of a technological rationality in HE now "augmented" by the economic mantras of the "market".

This process is shaping the subjectivities of students who are constituted as: "… subject of spectacle and object of surveillance, citizen and thug, worker and manager, present donor of labour time and future donor of capital, agent of change and prey" (Bousquet 2010).

The working remit of academic staff therefore now implicitly and increasingly explicitly includes the adjustment of student/consumers to the perceived requirements of the so-called "free market".

Criminological knowledge is, of course, a product of ethics and notions of justice (Barak 1998), which can be seen to be fundamentally brutalised and violated in terms of system critical HE educators and students who have their consciousness sacrificed (even if they do not conform as the entire system is geared toward "market normalisation") in such a corporatized environment.

DE-NORMALISING THE CORPORATISATION OF HE—THE IMPORTANCE AND POSSIBILITIES OF ENGAGING WITH CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES IN TEACHING CRITICAL CRIMINOLOGY

"Pedagogy in the critical sense illuminates the relationship among knowledge, authority, and power" (Giroux 1994: 30).

The aforementioned constitution of the "educated subject" anchored in "distant data" (Christie 1997), according to the perceived needs of a "free market", leads to feelings of alienation, and, as the author wants to suggest in the context of critical social sciences, especially critical criminology, it hinders the important development of critical reflection upon and of empathy with constituted "others".

This article aims to demonstrate the increased importance of using critical pedagogy in the teaching of criminology students in contemporary times if we wish to maintain a critical criminology agenda and students who are capable of engaging with it. Similar to Barton et al. (2010), this article contented that enabling the development of a critical and reflexive consciousness had to be a central part of the teaching of critical criminology in HE.

A banking-system of education (Freire 1970), intensified by corporate culture in combination with disciplinarian regimes such as the REF, is "… implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression" (Kincheloe and McLaren 1998; Denzin and Lincoln 1998: 263), aiming to ensure the maintenance of this status quo.

In order to challenge such "othering" practices that are frequently rather implicit to the operations of power in HE, critical pedagogical practices should highlight and facilitate mutuality. In contrast to the alienating and ideological discourse of neo-liberal managerialism:

> Sociologically, mutuality refers to the development of an affinity for the self and the other and their interrelationships. This does not mean that mutuality is about sentimental declarations of unity, idealism or utopianism, nor does it imply clinging to internalized authority figures. Rather, mutuality involves empathetic acts of putting oneself in the place of others, and then reflecting openly and critically about these relationships. As such, empathy has also been thought of as both a form of receptivity and as vicarious introspection. (Barak 2005: 146)

Phenomenological approaches facilitate the possibility of fostering empathy and an epistemological position close to many of the main principles of feminist postmodernism takes care to be sensitive to the contextual, situational, and personal interpretations of "lived experiences" as they are defined by people themselves. These ways of engaging students are enabling them to develop empathy with "others". Therefore it is crucial to use educational spaces for the resurrection of "subjugated

knowledge":

> … in critical classrooms scholar-teacher researchers uncover erased (subjugated) knowledges, produce and help their students produce new knowledges, and develop the ability to study and question mandated knowledges. British education scholar Ivor Goodson (1999) describes such scholarly acts of classroom teaching and learning as a form of moral witnessing. Moral witnessing insists that the world is still under construction and that no knowledge is finalized, complete unto itself. (Kincheloe 2005: 14)

The linking of education to wider socio-political and cultural mores as well as a position of mutuality is also fostered by radical plural feminists who also engage in emancipatory practices. In this context, Foucauldian discourse and postcolonial insights are used to promote understandings that allow for mutual, shared understandings of the world (emphasizing "both/and") that do not deny diversity and the complexities of micro- and macro-dimensions of politics.

> If educators are to function as public intellectuals, they need to provide the opportunities for students to learn that the relationship between knowledge and power can be emancipatory, that their histories and experiences matter, and that what students say and do counts in their struggle to unlearn priviledges, productively reconstruct their relationships with others, and transform, when necessary, the world around them. More specifically, such educators need to argue for forms of pedagogy that close the gap between the university and everyday life. (Giroux 2008: 144)

Practically this position requires the engagement with intellectual activism which implies a refusal to adopt abstractions that pre-define who one is as well as the strategic deployment of plural identities around contingent issues.

"Critical revolutionary pedagogy, for me, adopts a perspective that knowledge is praxis; it is transforming action" (McLaren 2006: 125).

This understanding of critical revolutionary pedagogy does not only suggest employing critical theory as an emancipatory device, reconceptualizes theory as a form of discursive action and/or the fostering of a new understanding of theory and its place in both socio-political and intellectual life but requires an altered understanding of critical thought (theory) in relation to teaching and students. Thayer-Bacon argued that "we need to re-describe 'critical thinking' to highlight the creation of knowledge as a trans-active socio-political process with others" (Thayer-Bacon 2000: 6), wherein students are "social beings-in-relation-with-others, not… isolated individuals" (Thayer-Bacon 2003: 246).

This relational understanding of students and teaching is based on a relational epistemology that "embodies fostering caring relationships that both highlight our limitations and contextuality, and show how much we also share in common" (Thayer-Bacon 2003: 255).

This epistemology is in total contrast to the dominant discourse on HE in which teaching is: "… a technical performance… This technicist, allegedly apolitical discourse… the politics of its agenda reside… precisely in its disavowal of any connection between politics and university teaching and learning" (Walker 2002: 45).

Another important aspect of a critical pedagogical practice is the resurrection of the affective, emotional and embodied dimensions of "lived experience" within educational spaces back onto the agenda of relevance. The author would argue that this is especially important in the context of critical criminology as labels of "deviancy" as well as "normality" do have fundamentally emotional-affective consequences.

To raise students' consciousness about structural inequalities and alert them to the implications these have, it is crucial to involve them at an emotional-affective level.

"Ontologically, critical pedagogy is not only a theory of being but also a theory of becoming" (Walker 2002: 50). Therefore the impact of corporate

culture with its delimitation of meaning, as well as the enforced loss of the "social", "political", and emotional spheres, needs to be challenged.

While there is of course never a total determination of human beings by the environment, the way in which people give meaning to the world is closely connected to the "historical field" of a specific context as:

> … formative learning occurs in childhood both through socialization (informal or tacit learning of norms from parents, friends, and mentors that allows us to fit into society) and through our schooling. Approved ways of seeing and understanding, shaped by our language, culture, and personal experience, collaborate to set limits to our future learning. (Mezirow 1991: 1)

The proliferation of "capitalist-materialist ambitions" and of a rationalist and instrumental world view influences individual perceptions and expectations, as well as "meaning perspectives, or generalized sets of habitual expectation, act as perceptual and conceptual codes to form, limit, and distort how we think, believe, and feel and hope, what, when, and why we learn" (Mezirow 1978: 34).

Giroux's (as cited in Giroux and Shannon 1997) notion of performative pedagogy or the pedagogical as performative praxis is important in this context as it facilitates the exploration of people's performances in spaces in order to critically contextualize and contest the dominant "order of things" or in other words dominant forms of symbolic production.

These of course encompass cognitive and affective dimensions and constitute personal frames of reference. This is important to take into account as another catastrophic consequence of the "marketization"/corporatisation of HE is the increasing degrees in which pedagogical and critically reflexive modes of relating to knowledge production are displaced and/or structurally abolished via the managerialist implementation of the "skills" agenda:

> Another tool in the box of managerialist enterprise in higher education is represented by a marketing and implementation of modules that generate so-called "transferable skills" which facilitate the micro-management of both the educators and the educated while they… promote the basic category error of conflating such fundamentally different activities as education and training and seek to reduce the status of the former to the latter… Training is undoubtedly an important part of any advanced economy, but the overwhelming supremacy of its terms in education today is steadily eroding away any basis from which the managerial approach can be criticised. If we all accept that we're trainees rather than educated people then the path to power of the managerial cadres is unobstructed. (Taylor 2002: 33)

Critical reflection enables criminology as ideology critique to contextualise and demystify the training in "transferable skills" mythology as being based on a fundamental implicit acceptance of the current status quo of neo-liberal "market" domination masquerading as "neutral" information as de facto data. In this context, it is useful to refer to Pavlich who encourages the development of criminology inherently based on deconstructive critiques and "… mobilize(s) oppositional experiences that challenge the claimed necessities of specific 'realities'" (Pavlich 2001: 162).

This demystification of the claimed necessity of neo-liberal capitalism and for "skill" training for the price of a "good job" in the global economy is crucially relevant for critically engaged criminologists as the very possibility of increased social justice is at stake: "… those countries that have adopted a neo-liberal agenda of social, political and economic reforms, including the UK and the United States… have experienced the race to inequality" (Brown 2003: 155).

For critical intellectual activists, it is of upmost importance to continually reveal contradictions in dominant discourse as the "global knowledge economy" would appear to require creative and innovative thinkers, while evidently the current framework of HE and its delimited discourse and resulting practices foster the production of "docile bodies" (Foucault 1976), as demonstrated and further

elaborated in other contexts (Beckmann and Cooper 2004, 2005; Beckmann et al. 2009).

Newfield (2010) addressed the central and crucial contradiction that lied at the heart of the claims for the necessity of HE transformation in the context of the so-called "global knowledge society". "American leaders are preoccupied with reducing public expenditures on higher education and with lowering the cost of each degree produced. They are containing and cheapening the research and educational systems on which they say the future of their economies depend" (Newfield 2010: 10). This is of course only a contradiction if one assumes that the goal is to generate improved conditions for the mass of the population. "If instead we posit that the political and business leaders of the knowledge economy seek a smaller elite of knowledge-based star producers, hence the unceasing cheapening of public higher education in the U.S. and elsewhere makes more sense" (Newfield 2010: 11).

The destruction that the transformation of HE entails not only involves a restrained and corrupted production of knowledge and the colonisation of academic and student "life-worlds", but also continues to encourage an increase in dehumanization as now: "… individuals themselves can be recapitalized—made more employable, have their self-esteem raised, their networks strengthened and their employability enhanced" (Baker et al. 2006: 50). Such decontextualised and dehumanised language-use and mystification operate of course on the benefit of the global capitalist empire as in this context:

> Capital can buy fractals of human time, recombing them through the digital network. Digitalized info-labor can be recombined in a different location, far from the one that produces it… from the cognitive workers' perspective the work done has a fragmentary character: it consists in fractions of cellular time available for productive recombination. (Berardi 2009: 191)

Berardi (2009: 192) underlined the degree of de-personalisation at an individual and socio-political level: "… Capital no longer recruits people, it buys packets of time, separated from their interchangeable and contingent bearers. De-personalised time is now the real agent of the process of valorization, and de-personalized time has no rights".

CONCLUSIONS

Students' awareness of the oppressive "conditions of domination" in HE (Beckmann and Cooper 2004, 2005) has become more evident through the widespread student protests in recent years in which students and diverse other groups in their support exerted their resistance to the "marketization" and commodification of HE and education in general.

In genuinely democratic societies, such events should be regarded as stimulations for cross-cultural debates and as urgent invitations to exchange ideas and experiences of the impact of neo-liberalism on educational "life-worlds". The events of the Educational Strike 2009 as well as the ongoing protests by academics, students, and many other concerned people globally demonstrated the need for open public debates and expressed the shared ambition toward a radical democratization of all areas of life and a turn against a sole for-profit orientation. However, this ambition for a radical democratization of all areas of life stands in deep contrast to the imposed "order of things" in neo-liberal capitalist countries.

"[P]olitical regimes under the influence of neo-liberalism do not need secret police to contain serious dissent: they can do it much more efficiently, effectively and unobtrusively through 'market discipline'. In this way, the critical function of universities is tamed. And it all seems so natural" (Wall 2002).

While critical programmes—the Social Sciences, the Arts and the Humanities—are not directly shut down, they are starved of public funding. Universities run as profit-oriented businesses had no short-term

stake in funding such programmes and, as Lynch (2006: 8) pointed out, "not least because such fields of research and theory are often critical of the values and operational systems of profit-driven interests".

Apathetic pragmatism and instrumental opportunism are considered to many staff and students as a mode of survival in a socio-political and cultural context in which the "marketization" of public education has become a naturalized ideology that has been pushed to the status of "common sense" (Fairclough 1989). Schmidt (2000: 4) who has experienced the consequences of managerialism in the context of the US reflected on the implications of such regimes for the very possibility (or lack thereof) of democracy: "A system that turns potentially independent thinkers into politically subordinate clones is as bad for society as it is for the stunted. It bolsters the power of the corporations and other hierarchical organisations, undermining democracy".

Apart from the obvious alienation and dehumanization of interrelationships in HE that is a consequence of the transformations addressed in this article as well as the increasing burdens of debts, many students show signs of anxiety, stress, and depression (Baker et al. 2006). However, instead of responding to these clearly destructive symptoms of neo-liberal rule by changing the system toward a more humane and less objectifying one, one can observe the promotion and political embrace of the notion of "entrepreneurship" (Beckmann et al. 2009) as a mode of salvation/survival for individuals within competitive markets.

The notion of self-entrepreneurship, however, can be seen as an invitation to new forms of slavery:

> The soul… must now follow functional paths in order to become compatible with the system of operative exchanges structuring the productive ensemble… The immaterial factory asks [us] to place our very souls at its disposal: intelligence, sensibility, creativity and language. The useless body lies flabbily at the borders of the gamefield: to take care of it and entertain it, we put it through the commercial

circuits of fitness and sex. (Berardi 2009: 192)

As a deconstructive critic, the author feels obliged and considers that the only professionally integrated position is in correspondence with the academic, ideological, ethical, and political identity to engage with what Foucault called "desubjectification". "… through various types of insubordination, critics may partially remove themselves from the ordinary, taken-for-granted flows of social life to problematize and oppose specific realities. Here, critics engage a politics of truth by uncoupling themselves from specific subjections and by projecting themselves out of the limits of what is" (Pavlich 2001: 163).

The current limits of what is are certainly not conditions that allow for meaningful engagement and critical reflection that are the mere basics for the education of critical criminologists as:

> Commodified pleasures, hyper-competitiveness, greed, a growing divide between the rich and the poor, and horrific suffering commingle in a society that has stopped questioning itself, allowing public issues to dissolve into a sea of talk shows, advertisements, and celebrity culture. Important issues about politics, power, war, life, and death get either trivialized or excluded from public discourse as a market-driven media culture strives to please its corporate sponsors and attract the audiences it has rendered illiterate. (Giroux 2008: 164)

Walters (2007; as cited in Barton et al. 2007) commented on the increasing commodification of criminology as well as the rise of embedded criminological genres and asked critical criminologists to avoid the lure of relevance. Instead critical criminologists should engage in a criminology of resistance, which is critical of contemporary forms of governance, challenges the existing socio-political order, engages in counter-hegemonic discourses, and promotes alternative visions.

> Critical pedagogy (Freire 1970; Giroux 1988; McLaren 1994) enables the development of students to question and challenge the dominant power relationships and offers

participatory modes of education and learning. The same holds true for feminist pedagogy that focuses more on "gender" and feminist theory and promotes counter-hegemonic practices, the development of critical thinking (Lather 1991; Walsh 1996; Morley 1999), and amongst other participatory teaching and learning strategies, the sharing of life-histories (Middleton 1993) which facilitates the breaking down of the hierarchy between educator and the educated. (Beckmann and Cooper 2005: 486)

The same managerial systems that undermine professional autonomy exclude the genuine cultivation of intellect and exclude questions of socio-political justice, destroy the very meaning of education and degrade the students' body, continue their macabre simulations of HE at an even more sinister level when they suggest that engaging in so-called HE will predictably lead to better job opportunities:

> The cuts spared the corporate end of higher education while squeezing its mass base. The dominant result is that the multitude of newly minted graduates, with poorer skills, more debt, and less exposure to citizen-building fields (whose own confidence has been severely damaged), cannot expect to have democratic control of their society, but must aspire to slots that will be doled out according to the political and economic leaderships' interpretation of economic conditions. (Newfield and the Edu-factory Collective 2009: 180)

It is evident then that neo-liberal capitalism attempts to reshape human beings, their relationship to each other, as well as championing an utterly problematic and totally impoverished vision of humans:

> Neoliberalism represents an attempt to build the homo oeconomicus: an anthropological model incapable of distinguishing between one's own good and economic interest. At the origins of the liberalist vision there is a reduction of human good (ethical and aesthetic good) to economic interest, and the reduction of the idea of wealth to that of ownership. The idea of wealth is separated from the pleasure of free enjoyment and reduced to the accumulation of value. (Berardi 2009: 190-191)

This article tried to demonstrate that one way in which this bio-political vision is operationalised is via the education and HE systems.

Note

1. Retrieved from http://www.henryagiroux.com/online_articles/vocalization.

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Bio

Andrea Beckmann, Ph.D., senior lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, University of Lincoln; research fields: politics of the "body", critical criminology, critical pedagogy, "sexualities", critical theory.