THE METHOD OF DEMOCRACY:

JOHN DEWEY’S CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY

By David Benjamin Ridley

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Department of Social Policy,
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School of Social Policy

College of Social Sciences

University of Birmingham

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Abstract

This thesis argues that John Dewey's theory of collective intelligence presents a unique critical social theory that escapes the dead-ends of Frankfurt School critical theory and speaks directly to the political situation faced today by academics and the public. In Part 1, Dewey's critical social theory is argued to present a 'method of democracy' that proposes a form of 'intelligent populism' as the mode of collective action in contemporary 'political democracies'. Part 2 applies the method of democracy to the contemporary 'problematic situation' of neoliberalism in crisis. It is argued that 'third-wave neoliberalism' in the UK has turned to higher education (HE) as a solution to this crisis, seeking to redirect HE through the TEF, REF and KEF national performance management systems to the needs of a stagnating monopoly capitalist economy. Part 3 explores ways out of the current crisis based on Dewey's theory of collective intelligence. Beginning with the institutional context of social theory today, Michael Burawoy's theory of public sociology is reconstructed as 'democratic sociology' based on a practice of 'co-inquiry' with the public. While Burawoy argues that the 'founding tension' in sociology between professional and radical sociology can be resolved by establishing an 'organic solidarity' within the discipline, the analysis of marketisation presented in the thesis suggests that only by uniting with other academics and the public in the fight against neoliberalism can sociologists avoid co-optation. The method of democracy then provides the basis for a reconstruction of the academic profession on a model of 'democratic collegiality'. Democratic collegiality in turn offers a solution to the contradictions in governance arising from marketisation, pointing to the 'social co-operative' as an ideal form for democratised universities. Finally, Corbynism is argued to be a 'verification' of Dewey's hypothesis of intelligent populism, and the book concludes with an analysis of the Lucas Plan, which offers valuable lessons for activist-academics seeking to help realise this genuine alternative to neoliberalism today.

Dedication

To Helen, who likes dedications

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Introduction

> 'The promise of critical theory as originally formulated was that it had a practical intent, that it could and would lead to political revolutionary action.'
>
> (Bernstein, 1978, p. 206)

What is the role of social theory in contemporary society? What is the role of social theorists as critical intellectuals in contemporary society? Whether explicit or not, critical social theory begins and ends with these two questions and their interrelationship. Originating in Marxism, 'classical' critical social theory insists that Marx's historical materialism holds the correct interpretation of capitalist society – through all its stages and reconstructions – and that if the working class would only see the world through the lens of Marxist scientific socialism, then it would conclude that the only way to achieve economic and social justice and a fair society for all would be to abolish the capitalist system of property-based exploitation, by force if necessary. In the absence of Marxist theory 'gripping' the masses purely by being published, Marxist revolutionary parties conclude that is the job of social theorists to educate the masses in the correct theory of society and lead them to the inevitable revolution. Because of the failure of the masses to take forward the revolution in Germany, the brutal murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and the turn to authoritarianism at the hands of Marxist intellectuals in Russia, the Frankfurt School of Marxist critical theory abandoned revolutionary politics and the possibility of revolutionary collective subjectivity altogether, retreating to a defensive position in which the 'correct' reading of society through theory is used to carve out an ever-shrinking space for critical intellectuals in the academy. However, the Frankfurt School tradition of critical theory thereby only secures its own impotence and confirms the neoliberal dictum that social theory is irrelevant in the age of capitalist hegemony, or, as Francis Fukuyama (1992) famously put it, at the 'end of history'.

But recent history suggests that neoliberal social theorists – not an oxymoron, as the denial of the social is itself a social theory, and neoliberal social theory seeks to answer the above questions in its own, purely negative fashion to justify the rule of society by 'bourgeois' intellectuals – may have spoken too soon in proclaiming the end of history and the death of critical social theory. Since the 2008 Financial

Crisis, David Harvey (2010, p. vii) has noted an 'upwelling of interest' in Marxist critical theory, following a 'not very favourable or fertile period' for Marxian thought since the fall of the Berlin Wall. A whole new generation of academics, students and activists are refuting arguments made by cultural theorists during the golden age of neoliberalism, most notably Jean-François Lyotard, who in his hugely influential book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* insisted that post-industrial – or 'post-modern' – societies are defined by an 'incredulity toward metanarratives' (Lyotard, 1984, p. xxiii). Contrary to such claims, people are returning to what Fredric Jameson in his introduction to the book calls the 'two great myths' of modernism: the 'liberation of humanity' and the 'speculative unity of knowledge' (Jameson, 1984, p. ix). Numerous introductions to Marx's masterwork *Capital* have been published in the wake of the 2008 Crisis, as have new editions of the founding texts of 'Western Marxism' (Jay, 1984): Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*, the works of 'first generation' Frankfurt School theorists Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, and of the critical theorist that led this tradition into its 'second generation', Jürgen Habermas (Wiggershaus, 2007).

This thesis argues, however, that the Marxist tradition of critical social theory, while containing crucial insights regarding the nature of monopoly finance capitalism and the role of culture in securing this system's reproduction, is only of limited use in moving beyond the current crisis of neoliberalism. In particular, unsatisfactory answers to the above questions – specifically the assumption that ordinary people cannot think themselves out of this crisis – have backed this tradition into a corner and have prevented it from finding a practical, politically effective way out of the current situation. As Will Davies (2017, xiii) notes, although the 2008 Crisis 'produced a sense that neoliberalism had suddenly gone off the rails, and a new paradigm would have to be grasped', this 'turned out not to be the case, a matter that became an object of enquiry in its own right'. Even though academics, students and activists are returning to the 'correct' social theory of Marx and Western Marxism, the left has again failed to mobilise the masses to abolish the capitalist system, despite this system going through its worst crisis of both economic reproduction and legitimacy since the 1920s. Of course, Marxist critical theorists can point again to the failure of the working class to fulfil the promise of historical materialism, but this will only – and has already – served to distance social theorists from the struggle by the public against

neoliberal austerity. Furthermore, the retreat to theory in the face of real struggle in the contemporary context of 'third-wave neoliberalism' makes it easier for neoliberal social theorists to point to critical theory as irrelevant, anti-democratic even, thus accelerating the absorption of academia into the culture industry and its mobilisation to solve the current crisis of monopoly finance capitalism.

From a Deweyian point of view, neoliberal social theorists are correct to paint such theory as anti-democratic. As already suggested, the problem with both Classical and Western Marxist traditions of critical social theory is the assumption that ordinary people cannot understand the origins of neoliberal austerity – qualitatively felt through increasing economic and social inequality and insecurity – with the failure of the masses to prove Marxist theory correct by delivering a 'genuine' (i.e. not a USSR or Chinese type) revolution, even with the help of social theorists as 'critical pedagogues' (Cowden and Singh, 2013), only confirming this assumption. In the contemporary context, this assumption not only reproduces the alienation of academic social theory and theorists from frontline struggle, but also prevents critical social theory from understanding the primary form that such struggle takes in this context. While social theorists are dusting off their copies of *Capital*, people at the sharp edge of neoliberal austerity are turning to populist politics to express their anger at the consequences of the 2008 Crisis landing at their doorstep. This anger has been channelled by extreme right-wing and neo-fascist political parties and movements across the world to secure power after being marginalised for 30 years or more within the hegemony of mainstream conservativism. Seeing an opportunity in the crisis and offering simplistic slogans to capture the anger felt by the public against neoliberalism, such populist parties and movements have seen disturbing successes since 2016, most notably the election of Donald Trump in the US and the influence of UKIP on the 'Brexit' vote to leave the European Union in the UK. Again, these developments only confirm the anti-democratic assumptions of Marxist critical social theory, and the conclusion that the masses just haven't understood this theory correctly yet.

For Dewey, however, all theory originates in the qualitative experience of everyday life, specifically in the attempts by human beings to overcome the 'problematic situations' thrown up by the 'rhythmic alternation' of existence as it moves between periods of 'relative permanence' created through human action and the inevitable change of history that disrupts this relative permanence. The role of social

theory is to deal with the social consequences of such problematic situations, and by doing so, improve the capacity of human societies to deal intelligently with the rhythmic alternation of existence. Through social inquiry – the intelligent practice that produces such theory, ranging from everyday problem solving and community activism to professional sociology and governmental social policy – human societies can develop flexible 'collective habits' and foresight to predict and avoid negative consequences in the future and to actively secure positive consequences through social planning. In Dewey's critical social theory, social theorists have no special claim on the methods of inquiry nor the results of such inquiry as social theory. Both inquiry and theory are pragmatic tools available to the public as the collective subject of modern democracies to deal with social problems that arise in everyday life.

What makes both Marxist critical social theory and neoliberalism anti-democratic is the reproduction of an intellectual division of labour in which the public is removed from its most powerful technology for emancipation: social inquiry. Moving away from the 'philosophy of praxis' of Marx and Lukács, Horkheimer reproduces this division of labour by institutionalising critical social theory within the academy. This movement is completed by Habermas, who creates an elaborate 'quasi-transcendental' academic social theory to justify what Dewey simply asserts: the intelligence of practical problem solving and human interaction. Neoliberalism relies on this division of labour for its reproduction, not only de-politicising decisions about what is the best way of organising the economy to secure positive consequences and removing economic planning altogether in favour of a magical price mechanism – this merely describes the logic of the capitalist mode of production – but also creating an equally elaborate system of social manipulation and ideology to further the interests of monopoly finance capitalism. In this system, oligarchic corporations exert their power and influence not only over prices and markets, but also governments, to secure their interests and thereby directly undermining the public's capacity for intelligent self-rule. In this context, the role of social theorists is clear. Social inquiry must be returned to the public so that it can be used by the public to formulate democratic demands to direct intelligent, collective action aimed at emancipation. Furthermore, for Dewey, social inquiry is very the condition of publics emerging out of the need to deal with the problems that arise

out qualitative experience, which outstrip the capacity of individuals to solve on their own. By making critical social theory the property of academics, social theorists are actively preventing the re-emergence of the public, 'eclipsed' by the capitalist/neoliberal division of intellectual labour.

Outline of the thesis

The following summarises the argument of the thesis as it develops through the subsequent chapters, pointing to the theoretical debates with which the thesis engages. Chapter 1 begins with the 'dominant' tradition of critical social theory today (Joas, 1992), the so-called 'Frankfurt School' of critical theory centred on the Institute for Social Research in both Germany and the US, concentrating on the work of its first-generation theorists Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, and second-generation theorist Jürgen Habermas. The Frankfurt School took up the question of why the socialist revolution had not been successful in Germany, and why in the 1930s the German working class turned away from socialism towards fascism. Influenced by the work of György Lukács, whose pathbreaking book *History and Class Consciousness* went against the grain of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy at the time to suggest that revolution could not be assumed to be an inevitable outcome of contradictions in the capitalist system, the Frankfurt School developed in new directions the concepts 'reification' and 'alienation' to analyse the developments of 20th century 'monopoly capitalism'. For Frankfurt School critical theorists, following Lukács (1968), ideology became much more insidious during capitalism's monopoly phase – as capitalist markets are increasingly dominated by multi-national corporations – no longer concerned with projecting idealised images that the working class can easily recognise as ideology, but rather with reproducing the very epistemological structure of the capitalist system within everyday life. With the creation of what they called the 'culture industry', Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) argued that *reification* – literally 'objectification' – increasingly infected the consciousness of and relations between people in capitalist society. To solve the problem of over-production and to manage the increasing *alienation* felt by the reified workers and consumers that reproduce this system, culture – specifically, forms of mass entertainment, films, radio and magazines, created by applying

mass production techniques to communication and the arts – is absorbed into the monopoly capitalist system to create false needs through advertising and to manage dissent through pacification.

While Adorno (1997, p. 427) increasingly theorised popular culture as 'trash', Horkheimer (2002) accused academic social scientists of being complicit in the spread of reification in society. By imitating value-free and instrumentalised natural science, 'positivist' social scientists were reproducing a 'pattern which is, outwardly, much like the rest of life in a society dominated by industrial production techniques' (Horkheimer, 2002, p. 191). Consequently, by abdicating their responsibility for revealing the 'underlying conditions of social order (or chaos)', positivist social scientists were unwittingly affirming the status quo as unchanging and fixed, and thereby denying the possibility of emancipation (Calhoun, 1995, p. 19). Horkheimer pitched critical social theory against both a-theoretical positivism and what he called 'traditional' theory – an alienated form of philosophy, represented primarily by 'logical positivism', which denied the link between theory and practice – in terms of a difference in *reflexivity*. As Calhoun (1995, p. 19) explains, the traditional theorist is 'unable to see his or her own activity as part of the social world, and because he or she simply accepts into theoretical self-awareness the social division of labour within its blinders, he or she loses the capacity to recognise the contingency and internal contradictions of the empirical world'. In Horkheimer's ambitious vision, critical theory, by contrast, through interdisciplinary theoretically-informed empirical research, aimed to show that alienation was the product of the capitalist mode of production, which was itself the product of human action and therefore open to change (Wiggershaus, 2007). Interdisciplinary critical social research, however, was gradually dropped by the Institute for Social Research in practice after it emigrated to the US, due to a lack of funding as well as an increasing ambivalence towards empiricism. As Wiggershaus (2007, p. 3) notes, after publishing only on example of such research – the *Studies on Authority and the Family* – the Horkheimer 'abandoned his programme for an interdisciplinary general theory of society', resigning himself in the end, thanks to the growing influence of Adorno, 'to the role of critic of an administered world'.

As a result, the activity of the Frankfurt School was mainly aimed at 'defetishising' consciousness through critique, and the critique of positivism was seen by Horkheimer as a 'crucial step' towards

overcoming domination (Calhoun, 1995, p. 20). However, by focusing on reification and the critique of positivism, Horkheimer and Adorno reversed the relationship between history and ideology in Marxism, obscuring both the role of reification in the reproduction of capitalism and the role of practice in overcoming reification. By *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, reification had become an epistemological tendency in human thinking, originating in Ancient Greece, accelerating in the Enlightenment, and assuming a crucial function in the capitalist mode of 'domination'. But as this pathology of reason preceded capitalism, becoming a condition of its possibility via the Enlightenment, it became very difficult to see how anyone could do anything to change the situation (Calhoun, 1995). By 'epistemologising' capitalism, Horkheimer and Adorno (1997) had, ironically, reified the concept of reification, contributing to the fetishisation of consciousness that they set out to uncover. Furthermore, by retreating to a position of critique, assuming, like Marxist-Leninists, that intellectuals were the only people capable of overcoming the reification of consciousness, Horkheimer placed critical theory in the very position of alienated 'traditional' theory that he had criticised in his early work. Adorno (2004) eventually turned this alienation into a methodological principle in his 'negative dialectics'. In this deeply pessimistic vision of critical social theory, the purpose of critique was no longer to change the world, but to negate reality, and through this negation, protect the possibility of emancipation and of a world beyond capitalist common sense. After the experience of fascism and the holocaust, during which the Frankfurt School emigrated to the heart of the monopoly capitalist system, the US, the purpose of critical theory was to become a 'message in a bottle' for future generations to carry on the struggle against reification and alienation (Wiggershaus, 2007).

This message in a bottle was received by Jürgen Habermas, who became associated with the 'second generation' of the Frankfurt School in the 1980s. Habermas (1992) in his early work tried to move away from the pessimism of his mentors through an 'immanent' critique of bourgeois democracy. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* by tracing the development of the 'public sphere' from its progressive form within the Enlightenment to its degeneration within 'welfare state capitalism' – another update to Marxist political economy, this time analysing the development of 'monopoly capitalism' within post-WW2 welfarism in the UK and US – Habermas sought to recover the radical

potential of democracy contained in its bourgeois ideal. However, by excluding plebeian and counter-public spheres – a consequence of beginning with and remaining within bourgeois theory, for which exclusion is a necessary condition for the possibility of rational discourse – Habermas in the end reproduced the pessimism of the first-generation Frankfurt School (Fraser, 1990; Negt and Kluge, 1993). In the second half of the book, Habermas (1992, p. 139) traced the destruction of the bourgeois public sphere within the 'totally administered world' of 20th century monopoly capitalism in a pessimist vision almost identical to that of Adorno and Horkheimer's 'culture industry', within which advertising, popular culture and social welfare made the re-emergence of the public impossible. As Joas (2009, p. 211) explains, Habermas, by inheriting a 'critical perspective that assumes cultural decline' and presenting an 'overly idealistic picture of the past' could see 'no more than a debased form of the public sphere in the contemporary era'. Also experiencing fascism first hand – as a member of the Hitler Youth, in fact – Habermas viewed 'every systematic attempt to conceive of collective actors theoretically with enormous scepticism', equating such assumptions with totalitarianism (Joas, 2009, p. 226).

This scepticism towards collective action and the perceived failure of his historical work on the public sphere caused Habermas, like Horkheimer and Adorno, to increasingly retreat into theory. Pursuing the same method of immanent critique, Habermas turned to other aspects of bourgeois philosophy and social theory – hermeneutics, functionalism, language philosophy – to create an elaborate social-theoretical system that would preserve the possibility of non-reified, dis-alienated culture within a 'quasi-transcendental' communicative ideal. For Habermas (1984; 1987), all human communication is aimed at consensus, which in turn assumes a rational structure and certain 'pragmatic' principles on the part of interlocutors. Based on his 'theory of communicative action', Habermas takes up the Frankfurt School theme of reified vs emancipatory reason, dividing within his communicative social theory reality into a 'lifeworld' constituted through non-purposive communication and a 'system' driven by instrumental objectives, which tends to 'colonise' the former. Like Horkheimer and Adorno, Habermas epistemologises the capitalist system, with only a highly abstract, philosophical placeholder for emancipation in the form of the 'ideal speech situation' that all communication aspires to without

realising it. As with the immanent critique of the public sphere, Habermas is left with only an empty ideal that, by excluding all real forms of often faulty communication and non-linguistic collective action, has no hope of connecting with political struggle. As Agger (1998) points out, Habermas tended to get 'swallowed by the traditions from which he draws in order to create dialogue with bourgeois social theorists'. Rather than finding a new foundation for interdisciplinary social theory to carry on the original Frankfurt School tradition, 'the influence of these opposing themes in Habermas' own critical theory has tended to transform it into yet another elaborate, densely argued but politically irrelevant edifice that best resembles an erudite doctoral dissertation' (Agger, 1998, p. 97).

Although never engaging directly with the Frankfurt School, as argued in Chapter 2, Dewey would see this rather Sisyphean attempt by the Frankfurt School to 'save' the socialist revolution in theory as an example of a disappointment with reality that is characteristic of intellectuals. Like Horkheimer and Adorno, Dewey (2012) traced the tendency towards reification in Western philosophy and culture, which he called 'hypostatisation', to Ancient Greece. In the work of classical philosophers, particularly Plato, he uncovered a 'bifurcation of reason' between 'truth-yielding reason' and 'mere experience' (Kadlec, 2006, pp. 530-1). On the one hand, the 'absolute and supreme reality of philosophy afforded the only sure guarantee of truth about empirical matters, and the sole rational guide to proper social institutions and individual behaviour' (Dewey, 1920, p. 23). On the other 'stood the ordinary empirical, relatively real, phenomenal world of everyday experience' with which the 'practical affairs and utilities of men [sic] were connected' (Dewey, 1920, p. 23). Philosophers, then, arrogated to themselves the 'office of demonstrating the existence of a transcendent, absolute or inner reality and of revealing to man the nature and features of this ultimate and higher reality', and by extension, claiming that they were 'in possession of a higher organ of knowledge than is employed by positive science and ordinary practical experience, and that is marked by a superior dignity and importance' to that of practical activity (Dewey, 1920, p. 23). However, as Alison Kadlec (2006) explains, for Dewey this bifurcation hid an ulterior, not necessarily conscious, motive on the part of classical philosophers. Facing the spread of democracy in Ancient Athens, these philosophers – whose philosophising depended on the work of a subordinate class of workers, immigrants and conquered slaves, as well as the household duty of their

politically voiceless wives and children – made themselves into the ‘sole guardians of truth’, thus protecting their social status and sapping the ‘democratic realm of lived experience’ of ‘power to inform or guide critical reflection’ and challenges to’ dominant norms and practices’ (Kadlec, 2006, pp. 531-2).

Kadlec is one of a handful of social theorists that have defended Dewey’s work as a form of critical theory, arguing that his work and that of other pragmatists – Peirce, William James, George Herbert Mead and Jane Addams – represent an alternative tradition of critical social theory, sometimes referred to as ‘critical pragmatism’ (Joas, 1992; Kadlec, 2007; Mitgarden, 2012). These scholars point out that pragmatism has not only been ignored for most of the 20th century but was dismissed by the first generation of Frankfurt School theorists as a particularly contemptible brand of positivism. ‘Pragmatism,’ Horkheimer (1947, p. 50) wrote, ‘in trying to turn experimental physics into a prototype of all science and to model all spheres of intellectual life after the techniques of the laboratory, is the counterpart of modern industrialism, for which the factory is the prototype of human existence, and which models all branches of culture after production on the conveyor belt, or after the rationalized front office.’ Dewey was a particular target for Horkheimer, who saw his insistence on disrobing intellectual labour as practical activity as an affront to speculative, or ‘objective’, reason, which for the early Frankfurt School was the last refuge for critical thought. While Habermas was more receptive to pragmatism, especially Peirce – thanks to his collaboration with Karl-Otto Apel – he inherited his mentors’ distrust of Dewey’s ‘instrumentalism’ (Aboulafia, 2002). Identifying an ‘empiricist’ current in Dewey’s thought – an ascription analogous to that of ‘positivism’ in the Frankfurt School tradition – Habermas (2002) was concerned that the lack of transcendentally secured values brought with it the danger of irrationalism, and therefore fascism. While somewhat extreme, what Habermas reveals in this criticism of Dewey is not so much a weakness in the latter’s social theory, but rather the continued commitment in the former to the ‘bifurcation of reason’ that defines the Frankfurt School tradition, between ‘subjective’ (instrumental) and ‘objective’ (reflexive) reason.

While Dewey’s work, thanks to the critical pragmatist tradition, is gradually being accorded the status it deserves as a critical social theory in its own right – especially in recent Frankfurt School inspired

social theory (Bernstein, 2010b; Bohman, 1999; 2010b; Honneth, 2012; Joas, 1993), which cannot really be brought together as 'third generation' critical theory due to the heterogeneity of their relative social-theoretical positions – another source of misunderstanding has prevented it from assuming its rightful position in critical social theory canon. In his influential book, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Richard Rorty (1979, p. 5) claimed that Dewey was 'one of the most important philosophers' of the 20th century, alongside Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein. For Rorty (1979, p. 5-6), all three philosophers were both similar and important because they 'broke free of the Kantian conception of philosophy as foundational', turning in their later work to a kind of thinking that was 'therapeutic rather than constructive, edifying rather than systematic, designed to make the reader question his own motives for philosophizing rather than to supply him [sic] with a new philosophical program'. Based on a 'strong misreading' of Dewey (Guinlock, 1995), Rorty formulated a 'contextualist' and pseudo-relativist – he also maintained that 'our' morality, by which he meant Western liberal morality, was 'much better than any competing view' (Rorty, 1999, p. 15) – social theory within which social practice was conceived of as a form of 'conversation' (Strydom, 2011, p. 80). Although Rorty was celebrated for reviving interest in pragmatism, creating the 'neo-pragmatist' movement in US philosophy, he was also taken to task for emphasising Dewey's 'anti-foundationalism' over his 'descriptive' metaphysics (Boisvert, 1988; Sleeper, 1986) and theory of inquiry (Hickman, 1992; Campbell, 1995). Like Habermas, Rorty separates the 'good' and the 'bad' Dewey and takes what he needs for his own project, rather than engaging with the latter's substantial critical social theory (Ramberg, 2007).

The debate between Rorty – who appropriated pragmatism from the point of view of the Anglo-American philosophical tradition – and the 'classical pragmatists' is of interest primarily due to the latter's focus on Dewey's metaphysics, dismissed by the former as a 'mistake' (see Rorty, 1982, p. 85). Kadlec (2006, p. 520) notes that a 'deep engagement' with this metaphysics would be required for a 'comprehensive treatment of the critical dimensions of Dewey's pragmatism', and that critical pragmatists are yet to undertake such a task. Chapter 2 takes up this task, explaining how Dewey's (1929, p. 400-23) description of the 'common traits of existence' – which can be summarised as in terms of the 'rhythmic alternation' of change and relative permanence, experienced qualitatively by

human beings – forms the basis for a theory of rationality out of which reflection arises 'naturally'. Ralph Sleeper (1986) in particular tried to show, contra Rorty, that Dewey's emphasis on the relentless flux and change of existence – his 'anti-foundationalism' (Kadlec, 2007) – was complemented by a recognition of the role that human intelligence had played throughout history in bringing stability to this flux, creating through inquiry the institutions and technologies that form the basis of complex, modern societies. Critical theorists like Adorno and Horkheimer, by only seeing the negative consequences of technology, ignore the evidence of human creativity and intelligence all around us. Furthermore, reflection, for Dewey, is not a special faculty or kind of rationality, but rather a very ordinary part of everyday life. While human beings create and recreate relative permanence whenever they act, the purposes and projects of human beings are constantly frustrated by unexpected problems thrown up by both the rhythmic alternation of existence and the consequences of social actions. Although for the most part, people proceed according to well-worn habits, these habits have a tendency to break down in the face of what Dewey calls 'problematic situations'. By dealing intelligently with these problematic situations, people can learn from experience and adapt habits to be more intelligent and to anticipate problems in the future.

Although he did not write about 'alienation' or 'reification', Dewey (2016) explained that the indirect consequences of social actions were experienced *qualitatively* by individuals, in way that was neither 'conscious' nor unintelligent. As Alex Honneth (2006, p. 110) neatly summarises, 'Dewey's reflections boil down to the assertion that every rational understanding of the world is always already bound up with a holistic form of experience, in which all elements of a given situation are qualitatively disclosed from a perspective of engaged involvement'. By breaking with the flow of engaged involvement and reflecting on the 'conditions and consequences' of a problematic situations, people can reconstruct out of this qualitative experience fallible and incomplete, yet useful, knowledge of what the 'Western Marxist' tradition would call the 'totality' (Jay, 1984). As pointed out above, the problem with Frankfurt School critical theory was not its analysis of reification and alienation, but its failure to identify a way to convert this alienation and reification within ordinary experience – or 'false consciousness' – into knowledge of the social relations and mechanism of exploitation that cause this experience and that can

be changed through collective action. Because Frankfurt School theorists deny ordinary people – especially collectives – the agency and intelligence to apprehend the causes and consequences of alienation, these theorists could only resort to a form of pessimism that confirmed the critical theorist's own alienation from political practice. Dewey, on the other hand, links the reification of theory to the reification of experience, concluding that only by dissolving the bifurcation of reason in practice, can ordinary people develop the intellectual tools necessary for the diagnosis of alienation, and by remembering the roots of inquiry in ordinary life, approach the problem of alienation and reification politically with others sharing this qualitative experience.

Based on this democratic philosophy of experience, Dewey – in terms Habermas (2002, p. 228), with 'hindsight', has admitted are strikingly 'convergent' to that of his own theory of the public sphere – formulates a theory of 'collective intelligence' that explains the role of organised, public reflection in the historical development of democracy and the possibility of this practice being recovered for the regeneration and realisation of a form of democracy that would approximate its 'radical' potential (Dewey, 1937). Social inquiry, as one 'mode' of inquiry among others (Dewey, 1938b), is especially suited to the reconstruction of indirect consequences and social structures out of qualitative experience, and therefore plays a key role in the formation of intelligent, democratic 'publics' (Holmwood, 2011). As Larry Hickman (1992) explains, in Dewey's 'functional' account, the public emerges historically when society becomes so complex that individuals cannot deal directly with the consequences of increasingly indirect social actions. At this point, practices of inquiry are invented, as well as institutions of the public, to manage the conditions of social action to secure desirable and positive consequences, and to mitigate negative ones. Like Habermas, therefore, Dewey sees the development of the public sphere as a direct response to the need to control the expanding material base of an emerging capitalist society, and out of meaningful processes of dialogue and democratic participation. However, where Habermas, because remaining within the bourgeois theory of the public sphere, and inheriting the pessimism of his mentors, can only see debased forms developing, for Dewey there is no reason why social inquiry cannot be once again taken over by the public for the control of social conditions. At the end of Chapter 2, then, a 'hypothesis' of 'intelligent populism' is proposed: that Dewey's method of

democracy can be used by the public to turn the qualitative experience of unintended consequences into a form of organised, intelligent social action aimed at democratisation.

Turning to the political situation in the UK today, where almost a decade of post-crisis austerity and stagnation has caused unprecedented levels of inequality and insecurity, Dewey's theory of collective intelligence provides us with hope and a practical methodology for social change. In Chapter 3, Dewey's method of social inquiry is applied to the 'problematic situation' of post-crisis Britain, beginning with the felt, qualitative consequences of austerity and reconstructing the 'totality' out of the history and theory of 'neoliberalism'. From the academic literature on neoliberalism (Burgin, 2012; Mirowski and Plehwe, 2009; Stedman Jones, 2012), the problematic situation producing these negative consequences is reconstructed. While these histories of neoliberalism– which take inspiration from Michel Foucault's (2008) pathbreaking *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* – provide the foundation for this reconstruction, the chapter critically examines two fundamental texts of neoliberalism, Friedrich Hayek's 'The Use of Knowledge in Society' and Milton Friedman's 'The Methodology of Positive Economics' respectively, in order to reach a deeper understanding of neoliberalism as an ideology that frames and guides the 'actually existing neoliberalism' that now dominates economic and social policy in the US and UK. This then provides a strong foundation for the last section of the chapter, which begins with a class-based critique of the more paranoiac tendencies of histories of neoliberalism as transnational 'thought collective' centred on the Mont Pelerin Sociey (Mirowski, 2013), to consolidate the interpretation of neoliberalism as a 'double truth' doctrine, designed to hide the anti-competitive tendencies of what John Bellamy Foster and Fred Magdoff, (2009) call 'monopoly finance capitalism'. Finally, this analysis is applied to the post-crisis emergence of 'populism', to argue that, on the one hand, right-wing populism – which Foster (2017) argues can more accurately be characterised as 'neo-fascism' – is in fact an expression of the neoliberal double-truth doctrine, and on the other, that genuinely democratic critiques of representative democracy can and have emerged, in line with the hypothesis of 'intelligent populism' in Chapter 2.

In the following chapters, UK higher education is explored as a case-study of both the consequences of neoliberalism in the public sector, and of how this sector – particularly the sociological and academic

professions and universities – can be democratised and reconstructed based on Dewey's theory of collective intelligence. Higher education has become a target for neoliberal policy intervention, with the 2010 Coalition Conservative-Liberal Democrat UK Government accelerating the process of privatisation begun in the 1970s through rapid market reform, cutting almost all public funding for university teaching, expanding the student fees and loans system (increasing fees to £9,250) to cover the shortfall, and deregulating the market entry of for-profit colleges and universities. As Andrew McGettigan (2013) has revealed, in a display of both the class interest of neoliberalism and its propensity for ideological obfuscation, this raft of radical changes to what Howard Hotson (2011) has argued to be a world-class and efficient public higher education system was mostly done through secondary legislation, to minimise political controversy, significantly undermining the democratic parliamentary process.

Many excellent critiques of marketisation have emerged since 2010 (see for example: Brown, 2013; Collini, 2010; 2011; 2016; Cruickshank, 2016; Holmwood, 2011b; 2013b; Marginson, 2011; McGettigan, 2013; 2015), with a dedicated academic discipline, 'Critical University Studies' (CUS), created recently in the UK modelled on its US equivalent (Petrina and Ross, 2014). However, because much of this work is either focused on policy critique, which is useful but is limited by a lack of wider economic context and theoretical foundation, or in the case of CUS, informed by post-structuralist theory which struggles to locate collective agency, the overall impression produced by this work is of a relentless and chaotic 'permanent revolution' in higher education that is difficult to fight. However, by placing both the policy interventions – specifically the Research and Teaching Excellence and Knowledge Exchange Frameworks (REF, TEF and KEF) – as well as the ideology of marketisation, expressed most clearly by former UK coalition Government Minister of Science and Universities David Willetts (2017) in his recent book *A University Education*, in context, marketisation can be explained within the framework of third-wave neoliberalism, as suggested above. Specifically, such a theoretical orientation can resolve the confusion between the ideology of marketisation, which argues that competition and choice will improve the quality of higher education, and the consequences of marketisation: monopolisation. Thus, the analysis of marketisation as intervention for the stagnating

capitalist economy evidences the analysis of neoliberalism in the previous chapter. It must be noted that Dewey neither engaged in a critique of political economy – being content to point to the negative consequences of corporate capitalism for democracy (see, for example, Dewey, 1937) – nor did he write much about higher education, primarily focusing on pre-adult education as a crucial period for the development of intelligence. The reconstruction of the problematic situation of neoliberalism and marketisation in Chapters 3 and 4, therefore, rely on traditional critical theory, which in its descriptive analysis of monopoly capitalism provides an accurate picture of the conditions of social inquiry today. For the reconstruction of these conditions so that the vision for democratic social inquiry – or 'method of democracy' (Dewey, 1937, p. 79) – developed in Chapter 2 can be realised, however, it is Dewey's work that provides a 'map' for practical action (Garrison, 2005).

The academic discipline of sociology, being the institutional home of both social theory and social inquiry, provides an ideal starting point for this project of reconstruction. Recent debates regarding a return to and strengthening of sociology's 'public' function support Dewey's arguments that social inquiry not only provides a unique access to the totality of social relations through indirect consequences, but also a key mechanism for the regeneration of democratic publics. Chapter 5 analyses Michael Burawoy's (2005) theory of public sociology as a particularly suitable starting point for the implementation of Dewey's theory of collective intelligence. Burawoy, arguably the global voice of 'public sociology' today, suggests that sociology is linked to the public, which is today 'beleaguered' by neoliberalism, as if by an 'umbilical cord'. By reconnecting sociology to the public within a wider struggle against marketisation and neoliberalism, both the discipline and the public can be regenerated. However, Burawoy, assumes a defensive position: where economics and political science concentrate on markets and states respectively, and are part of the problem as instrumental rationalisations of neoliberalism within academia, sociology should concentrate on criticising these spheres from the 'standpoint' of society. Furthermore, public sociology, also dominated by professional and policy sociology in universities, should aim for and be happy with an 'organic solidarity' within the discipline and its 'division of sociological labour'. While Burawoy's 'vision' for sociology is a useful starting point, and his identification of sociology as a distinctively 'public' discipline correct, his vision is

nowhere near radical enough for the task at hand. Dewey's theory of collective intelligence provides a way for public sociology to overcome its defensiveness, suggesting that by facing outwards beyond disciplinary divisions and beyond the academy, leading the way with practices of 'co-inquiry' with the public, sociology can become the foundation for a democratic social science aimed at realising radical democracy.

This democratisation of sociology then also provides a map for the democratisation of the university in Chapter 6. Many critics of higher education posit a somewhat idealised vision of 'public higher education' and the 'public university' as that which is being destroyed, and which must be defended in the social interest (see, for example, HE Convention, 2016). However, this 'public' is left assumed, and occupies a passive position in this argument as beneficiary of higher education. Furthermore, in recent justifications for the latest performance management metric, the KEF, second generation market reformers such as Jo Johnson are attempting to redefine the public and social value of universities in neoliberal economic terms (see for example HM Government, 2017). Both the failure of defences of the public university to motivate those who are tasked with fighting marketisation – academics, students and the public – and the subsumption of the public vs private good argument (Marginson, 2011) into a neoliberal concept of social use, suggest that the concept of the 'public' needs radical reconstruction. As a founding member of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), Dewey defended with his colleagues a form of positive academic freedom in which academics had a duty to serve the public interest, with the public as direct employers within a system of taxpayer supported higher education (AAUP, 1917). In *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey went even further, suggesting that the public should be recognised, on the basis of his theory of collective intelligence, as intelligent co-inquirers working alongside academics towards a decentralised yet technologically advanced global democracy. A Deweyian critique and reconstruction of academia as 'democratic collegiality' suggests an entirely different vision of higher education to that of neoliberal marketisation. In this vision, universities could be reconstructed as 'social co-operatives' (Hall and Winn, 2017) rather than for-profit monopolists – municipally owned and co-operatively governed by a democratic community of inquiry, including staff, students and the public – and become hubs for radical democracy, connecting academic

inquiry with grassroots, community and labour movement traditions of inquiry. Through this connection, academic social inquiry could play its part in nurturing a strong public that would in turn realise the 'idea' of radical democracy by re-capturing the state and its institutions, including the economy, for the public interest.

The method of democracy

As explained above, this thesis explores Dewey's work as situated within, but also distinct from and making a unique contribution to, the tradition of critical social theory. This section briefly attempts to clarify this relationship in terms of the *methodology* of the thesis. Firstly, what is critical theory, methodologically speaking? An influential definition has been proposed by Stephen White (2004, p. 317), which states that to be critical, a social theory must be able to reveal and question the structures of inequality and power behind social phenomena. According to this definition, White suggests that Marxist and feminist – particularly black feminist – social theories qualify as 'critical'. Deweyian pragmatism, on the other hand, does not. While Dewey's work is 'fruitful for emphasizing the deliberative dimension of democracy', this normative commitment is 'insufficient', as it advocates merely an increase in the *quantity* of deliberation, with no way of distinguishing its quality (White, 2004, p. 323). Deweyian pragmatism is 'relatively uninterested' and 'decidedly unsuspicious' of structures of power, White (2004, p. 315) claims, being interested only 'getting down to the real business of public problem-solving: crafting practical, institutional designs and incrementalist solutions'. In terms of a methodology of critical theory, pragmatism can only offer a deliberative 'ethos', to be grafted on to the more substantive 'research programme' of Frankfurt School critical theory, whose concept of 'real interests' supplies pragmatism with the needed hermeneutics of suspicion (White, 2004, p. 315).

Like earlier Frankfurt School theorists, White either wilfully misreads or ignores entirely Dewey's actual social theory. That Dewey clearly has a critical social theory is the argument of Chapter 2 of this thesis, and, as pointed out already, is also the subject of 'critical pragmatist' defences of his work (Kadlec, 2006, Mitgarden, 2002). What is interesting about White's misreading is that his attempt to

create a pragmatist critical-theoretical 'research programme' without the help of Dewey points directly to the original contribution made by the latter to this tradition, how his social theory is in fact in one sense a radical break from Frankfurt School inspired critical social theory and in another a return to its Lukácsian origins as a 'philosophy of praxis'. White essentially sides with Habermas' attempt to reconstruct critical theory according to his 'theory of communicative action'. As explained in the first chapter of this thesis, Habermas, retaining Horkheimer's distinction between instrumental and substantive rationality, seeks to ground the latter in a hermeneutics of communicative interaction, with all communication aiming at an 'ideal speech situation' of rational, non-coercive consensus building. Based on this 'quasi-transcendental principle, critical theorists can identify attempts to undermine this end by individual or collective 'real interests', for example, manipulation by corporate agents. In White's (2004, p. 319) non-Deweyian (but distinctly Deweyian) pragmatist reading, communication arises out of a need to address social problems: 'In other words, communicative rationality has to be understood finally as a practice of coping with the emergence of problems within a context of intersubjectivity.'

Methodologically, the key difference between White's pragmatist critical theory and the Deweyian theory of collective intelligence presented in this thesis is where the *solutions* to these discursively reconstructed social problems come from. Firstly, communication is only recognised as substantively rational (as opposed to instrumentally rational) if it aims at an ideal speech situation, which in some sense pre-exists concrete examples of communication. The ideal speech situation is something discovered by critical theorists, not by interlocutors, and functions as an external criterion of these concrete examples, rather than as a quality (in the Deweyian sense) of actual communication. In other words, communication in critical theory functions merely to 'prove' or justify the normative commitment of critical theorists. Furthermore, it is up to critical theorists to identify 'real interests', as real people having real conversations tend to be hoodwinked by these interests and, without realising it, achieve only a 'false consensus' (White, 2004, p. 321). Dewey's normative commitment to *democratisation*, by contrast, while indeed positing more deliberation as the aim of deliberation, fundamentally trusts the participants of such deliberation to discover for themselves the solutions to the

social problems that prompted such deliberation. As explained in Chapter 2, in Dewey's pragmatism, truth is judged in application. The criterion of deliberation is whether the solution hypothesised solves the problem. If the problem is a 'significant' one, i.e. related to problems of social inequality, insecurity and justice, then individualistic or self-interested solutions will not work, they will in fact exacerbate the problem (see Chapter 3).

Thus, Dewey's critical social theory is also a theory of social learning, or public self-education. While discreet examples of deliberation may 'fail', both in terms of the solutions they come up with and their emancipatory quality, the progress of democratic societies in becoming more democratic, more deliberative and ultimately more intelligent is cumulative. Unlike Frankfurt School critical theory, Leninist 'orthodox Marxism' and neoliberalism, Dewey's social theory is committed at all levels to democracy: democratic problems require democratic solutions. There is no guarantee that society will learn this fact and organise itself accordingly, but any other kind of solution will ultimately provide only short-term relief and ultimately fail to address these underlying problems. Based on this criterion of efficacy, Dewey's social theory is also able to judge the quality of individual examples of deliberation with regards to the practices employed, namely their use of the best and most appropriate methods of inquiry. Where critical theory must 'discover' the rules of substantive rationality within communicative action, Dewey's pattern of inquiry (see Figure 1, p. 60) is based on 'best practices' of human problem-solving and intelligence, from the quotidian to the rigorously scientific. Based on 'what works', Dewey's theory of inquiry offers a guide and ideal for those embarking on concrete inquiries aimed at democratisation. In this sense, the pattern of inquiry is normative. However, because this normativity is based in practice, not just arising out of but also necessarily tested in practice, this is a pragmatic rather than quasi-transcendental normativity.

Dewey's critical social theory is at root, then, a method – a 'method of democracy'. The first part of this thesis is concerned with this reconstruction of Dewey's theory of inquiry as a critical-theoretical methodology. For Dewey, theoretical reconstruction is crucial to 'clear the ground' before concrete inquiries are undertaken. As Hickman (1992, p. 24) explains, before inquiries can begin, there must be a 'taking into account' of 'the generic traits of the existential world in which we live, a world that

includes not only the situations in which we 'find' ourselves, but also the means and instruments that we utilise to alter these situations and accommodate ourselves to them'. While he describes this activity, much to the chagrin of postmodernist interpreters like Rorty, as 'metaphysics' – a term meant to denote that this is a 'special type of production', a kind of 'meta' inquiry – this is, like all pragmatist activities, a practical one: 'metaphysics is for Dewey unproductive unless it is instrumental; that is, unless it produces something testable, as a map is testable' (Hickman, 1992, p. 24). Dewey's map metaphor, as Fesmire (2015, p. 50) notes, is key to understanding his instrumentalist methodology and concept of truth. A map is provisional and idiosyncratic, but also objective and useful. The purpose of a map is not to accurately represent the world, but rather to help the user navigate unfamiliar territory, or perhaps see the familiar in a new way (e.g. ordinance survey maps for those not used to using such maps for exploring). A map is a 'proposition', and in pragmatist terms, is judged not by whether the proposition 'mirrors' an external world (as with the 'spectator theory of knowledge'), but whether it is 'helpful or unhelpful in furthering the journey of inquiry' (Fesmire, 2015, p. 55).

The first two chapters of the thesis, then, create a theoretical map for the remainder of the thesis through the 'ground-clearing' exercise of extricating Dewey's original contribution from its occlusion within Frankfurt School dominated social theory, and the reconstruction of Dewey's substantive theory of collective intelligence. After creating this map – proposing specifically the guiding hypothesis of 'intelligent populism' – Chapter 3 then begins with the felt consequences of inequality, insecurity and right-wing populism in the UK (albeit from secondary sources), and from this, reconstructs through a combination of academic history of the 'neoliberal through collective' and Marxist monopoly capitalism theory, the 'problematic situation' of 'neoliberalism' that has produced these consequences. Chapter 4 then analyses the consequences of neoliberalism in higher education, the institutional context of social theory. UK higher education acts as a 'case study' in this thesis. This is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, as identified in Chapter 2, social inquiry represents a hugely important social practice within Dewey's social theory, holding the key to the public's re-emergence as an organised, intelligent collective subject ('intelligent populism'). As universities are the institutional home of social inquiry in not just the UK, but most developed societies, higher education is in an important sense 'part of the

problem'. Looking specifically at HE also allows for a more concrete exploration of Dewey's social theory as a 'forgotten alternative' to neoliberalism. Chapter 4 shows how neoliberal ideology works in practice. Inferring the ultimate *consequences* of marketisation from its development so far, it is argued that marketisation has not and will not produce competition or further consumer welfare, but rather lead to the monopolisation of higher education, with the sector eventually being dominated by neoliberal universities as multi-national education al corporations. While Chapter 5 looks at the consequences of marketisation for professional sociology, this chapter and the following chapter move towards a consideration of how sociology and the academic profession in general could become a force for democratisation, with sociologists and academics co-inquiring alongside the public within practices of 'democratic collegiality'. Thus, the last chapters of the thesis correspond to the latter 'suggestions' and 'hypothesis' moments of Dewey's pattern of inquiry.

Using UK higher education as a case study also allowed these interim suggestions and hypothesis to be tested in a preliminary way. Firstly, through a colleague at Coventry University, Stephen Cowden, I was introduced to co-founders of the Lincoln Social Science Centre (SSC), a 'free university' co-operative set up during the 2010-11 student movement against cuts and fee-raises in UK HE. I showed an early version of Chapter 6 to Joss Winn and Mike Neary, who gave me positive feedback and encouraged me to publish it in the peer-reviewed journal, *Power and Education*. Having published in the journal (Ridley, 2017), Winn then added the article to his influential bibliography relating to the project of creating a co-operative university in UK HE, a project he is now exploring with others at the Co-operative College (see Hall and Winn, 2017). Secondly, my critique of marketisation, explored in Chapters 4 and 5, was in large part worked out through a series of articles on David Willetts' (2017) *A University Education*, published as the 'Willetts the Conqueror' series on my blog, *HE Marketisation*. This series was picked up by the editor of the influential US-based Marxist journal *Monthly Review*, John Bellamy Foster, who, in an editorial dedicated to the series, described it as one of the 'most penetrating critiques of the destruction of higher education' to have come from British theorists, alongside Andrew McGettigan's (2013) *The Great University Gamble*. Finally, attending a conference celebrating the 40th anniversary of the 'Lucas Plan' – an unprecedented and remarkably Deweyian

attempt to wrest control of industrial production from Lucas Aerospace management through co-operative inquiry (see Conclusion) – I met Hilary Wainwright, and subsequently began working with her on the idea of a 'socially-useful' university. We both presented this idea at a conference organised by Hugh Lauder at the University of Bath, which was well received by delegates, and this work informed the final presentation of the idea of a democratic, social-co-operative university in Chapter 6.

Arguably, it is this process of preliminary testing that makes Dewey's methodology unique within the tradition of social theory, while also in some sense realising Horkheimer's original vision of politically-engaged social research, before its drift away from practice. Although Dewey did not use the term, the process of inquiry is more accurately described as 'abductive' – a concept from C. S. Peirce, whose work had a clear and lasting influence on Dewey's theory of inquiry (Menand, 2002; Paavola, 2015). For Peirce, abduction is a 'third main mode of reasoning, besides deduction and induction, which is about the process of forming hypotheses or suggestions' (Paavola, 2015, p. 230). Abduction is less cognitive than received ideas of induction and deduction, concerned with 'instinct', 'intuition' and 'insight', or what Peirce called the 'guessing instinct', all of which are intelligent aspects of everyday experience or perception (Paavola, 2015, p. 232). While abduction for Peirce described a particular 'moment' in the process of inquiry, for Dewey, it described the overall process of inquiry as it moves between the poles of induction and deduction.

> There is thus a double movement in all reflection: a movement from the given partial and confused data to a suggested comprehensive (or inclusive) entire situation; and back from this suggested whole – which as suggested is a meaning, an idea – to the particular facts, so as to connect these with one another and with additional facts to which the suggestion has directed attention. Roughly speaking, the first of these movements is inductive; the second deductive. A complete act of thought involves both – it involves, that is, a fruitful interaction of observed (or recollected) particular considerations and of inclusive and far-reaching (general) meanings. (Dewey, 1910, p. 79)

However, Dewey (1910, p. 80) points out that this 'double movement' can occur in a 'casual, uncritical way, or in a cautious and regulated manner'. The difference between the two, like most aspects of

Deweyian inquiry, comes down to the ends of the research in question and the quality of the process of inquiry used to achieve those ends. As explained in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Dewey's method of democracy is concerned with guiding intelligent action, rather than producing reified knowledge that will sit forgotten on the shelf of a university library. Data is selected on the basis of how far it advances the aims of the inquiry, with most data uncovering further avenues of inquiry rather than a definite end-point when data gathering can cease. In other words, a pragmatist thesis is necessarily one that is unfinished, and is less concerned about knowing everything about a subject than creating propositions that can be tested in practice, in a never ending 'back and forth' between application and reflection.

Part 1: Theoretical Foundations

Chapter 1: From Practice to Theory in the Frankfurt School

Introduction

Part 1 examines John Dewey's contribution to critical social theory through a critique of Western Marxism, specifically as it develops within the tradition of German critical theory from György Lukács to Jürgen Habermas. This chapter argues that the Frankfurt School, arguably the dominant tradition of critical social theory today, moved away from Lukács' philosophy of praxis and by abandoning the possibility of collective action in monopoly capitalist society, ended up reifying Lukács' theory of reification. The first section of this chapter examines György Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness* as a radical break from orthodox Marxism in opening up a theoretical space for the development of a methodology of de-reification through critical social theory. Although Lukács eventually concludes that it is the role of a revolutionary Communist Party to lead the working class from false to true consciousness, the question of a methodology is an important contribution to the development of critical social theory. The idea of a methodology of de-reification is taken up by Horkheimer, but in an academic direction, initially to avoid politicisation within the turbulent context of 1930s Germany. However, due to a growing pessimism regarding the capacity of the working class to fulfil the role of a revolutionary class, the Frankfurt School gradually moved away from a practice of de-reification to the pure theory of 'immanent critique'. While in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* the possibility of collective subjectivity is abandoned altogether by Horkheimer and Adorno, the theory of the culture industry presented in this book represents a significant advance on Marxist political economy. The idea of a critical methodology of de-reification is later taken up by Jürgen Habermas in a promising way in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, a book which attempts to move beyond the pessimism of his mentors through an immanent critique of bourgeois ideology, while retaining the analysis of the culture industry. However, Habermas in the end also succumbs to the pessimism of his mentors, missing an opportunity to see political consciousness as arising out of the contradiction between real and false needs within everyday life, expressed dialectically in the movement of collective consciousness between 'non-public' and 'critical' opinion within institutions of the public sphere.

Lukács: The philosophy of praxis

The 'Western Marxist' tradition of critical social theory – an 'open' and 'experimental' tradition of humanist Marxism that rejected its official Soviet counterpart – was inaugurated by György Lukács, particularly with his 1923 masterpiece *History and Class Consciousness*. Lukács' work was crucial in carving out an intellectual space within the Marxist tradition, beyond that of an increasingly 'scientistic' and 'deterministic' historical materialism espoused by both the Bolshevik-dominated third Communist International and the increasingly conservative Social Democratic Party in Germany (Jay, 1984, p. 7). In the 'orthodox' Marxism of the Third International, Marxist critical social theory was reduced to a form of positivism, in which ideas and cultural phenomena were dismissed as 'mere epiphenomena of physical events' and historical materialism was uncritically grafted onto a simplistic idea of natural evolution, within which the contradictions of capitalism would 'inevitably' lead to socialist revolution (Held, 1990, p. 173). Soviet communism, therefore – despite Marx's insistence that a socialist revolution could only occur within economically developed, capitalist societies – was rationalised as the 'natural' outcome of history and the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party justified on the basis of a 'correct' understanding of this natural process, which the party was only fulfilling on behalf of the proletariat (Held, 1990). Lukács, assuming an ambiguous position in relation to this orthodoxy – being a leading member of the Hungarian communist party – questioned this economic determinism while defending the role the party in leading the revolution.

Lukács (1968) tried to explain through the concept of 'reification' how capitalism managed its contradictions – above all economic crises and the experience of alienation that were, for Marxists, the foundations of 'class consciousness' – to avoid socialist revolution. Beginning with Marx's (1990) analysis of commodity fetishism in *Capital*, Lukács explains how the objectification of social relations resulting from the capitalist system of commodity production – which extracts 'surplus value' from wage labour by 'alienating' workers from the commodities they produce – becomes the dominant structuring principle in monopoly capitalist society, 'permeating every expression of life' (Lukács, 1968, p. 84). As Marx (1990) explains, commodity exchange requires use-value, i.e. the social use of products created to meet human needs, to be converted into exchange-value, so that products can be

traded with other products – which would otherwise be heterogenous in terms of value – on the market. In epistemological terms, this, therefore, entails a transformation of *quality* into *quantity*. Lukács (1968) identifies a generalisation of this epistemology within capitalist society as commodification spreads to more and more markets, and to spheres of society outside the classical-liberal identification of the economy with an idealised and socially-circumscribed marketplace. Anticipating later, Marxist critiques of Taylorist 'scientific management' (Braverman, 1974 – see also Chapter 4), Lukács traces socially and historically the spread of rationalisation from factory to society, with quantifying rationality becoming institutionalised as capitalism establishes itself as the primary means of reproducing social life in advanced economies and secures its hegemony through parliamentary democracy.

While this analysis betrays the influence of Max Weber's theory of rationalisation, Lukács retained Marx's emphasis on the social development of reification through capitalist expansion and the spread of rational management, thus also retaining the dialectical emphasis on social practice which both reproduces capitalist social relations and holds out the possibility of an alternative. Lukács argues, with classical and orthodox Marxism, that it is precisely the qualitative experience of reification that allows the working class to apprehend the 'totality' of the capitalist system (Jay, 1984). In fact, Lukács goes further than orthodox Marxists, arguing that this unique epistemological 'standpoint' makes the proletariat the 'subject-object' of history, and distinguishes it as a class from the bourgeoisie, whose position in reproduction renders its perspective necessarily limited (Lukács, 1968). While this argument is highly abstract and has often led to *History and Class Consciousness* being read as a defence of Bolshevism, this standpoint theory is what marks his work as a radical break from the 'orthodox' Marxist tradition, and marks the beginning an alternative tradition of 'Western Marxism' (Jay, 1984). By reformulating alienation as an epistemological relation – reification – Lukács reveals not just that the apprehension of alienation is obscured by the reifying practices and relations of the capitalist system, but also how knowledge of these practices and relations are accessed in a qualitatively immediate manner by the subjects of exploitation.

Lukács' theory of reification, therefore, also provides a substantive social theory that moves beyond the dualistic epistemology of 'class consciousness'. Andrew Feenberg (2014) argues that Lukács,

influenced by the transcendental ontological of Emil Lask, assumed a phenomenological concept of culture, in which things have a pre-theoretical, practical significance thanks to a background understanding sustained by an inter-subjective ‘horizon of intelligibility’. By historicising this phenomenology, Lukács provides a theory of how reification comes to structure not just social relations but, through the spread of these social relations and the relations between people and their practical activities, everyday consciousness within monopoly capitalism. Thus, ideology is not a crude process of replacing the intelligence of passive subjects with false consciousness but of the gradual transformation of culture through reification, which eventually produces a new horizon of intelligibility. Within this new horizon of intelligibility, human activity becomes focused on the reproduction of capitalism and reality is experienced in an alienated way. As a result, culture is placed the centre of Lukács’ social theory of reification, and, contra simplistic versions of Marx’s base/superstructure theory of culture, at the very heart of capitalist reproduction. However, by historicising Lask’s phenomenology, Lukács provides a new foundation for the Marxist concept of totality, while escaping the existentialist irrationalism of subsequent phenomenological philosophy, for example that of Martin Heidegger (1962), who struggles to understand how one horizon of intelligibility replaces another. In Lukács’ historicised phenomenology, social change is simply an historical fact, the transition from feudalism to capitalism can be empirically reconstructed, and the spread of reification in capitalism can be traced to the expansion of the monopoly capitalist system.

Lukács’ critical social theory also avoids the heroic individualism of existentialist phenomenology, in which the only escape from reification – and therefore also source of knowledge of reification, or the totality – is, on the one hand, a socially impotent, bourgeois concept of radical freedom (Sartre, 1992) or, on the other, a mystical concept of ‘anxiety’ in which the world appears to the ‘authentic’ subject as a whole that it is *ontologically*, not socially, alienated from (Heidegger, 1962, p. 190). For Lukács, by contrast, the contradictions of capitalism, while not inevitably resulting in its self-destruction or revolutionary consciousness in the proletariat, do prevent reification from replacing genuine consciousness altogether. Marx (1990, pp. 786-94) vividly describes how workers are ‘thrown’ in and out of employment thanks to the cycles of expansion and contraction of the capitalist system, causing

the 'misery', 'suffering', and 'possible death' of displaced workers during transition periods. For Lukács, then, because the working class suffers the consequences of these contradictions *qualitatively* and far more severely than any other class, it has an epistemologically unique yet socially and historically grounded access to the totality. While it is true that this does not necessarily entail genuine consciousness, Lukács' critical social theory grounds knowledge of the totality and the possibility of dis-alienated and de-reified experience in the movement of everyday life.

However, Lukács' conclusion that it is the role of revolutionary intellectuals within the Communist Party to lead the working class in the absence of class consciousness has led critics like Leszek Kołakowski (1978, p. 283) to interpret this social theory as supplying a 'logical basis' for the Leninist conception of the 'party' as the 'embodiment of the historical consciousnesses' of the proletariat. It is true that Lukács' subsequent embrace of Leninism and rejection of *History and Class Consciousness* suggests such an interpretation. However, as Feenberg (2014) points out, to associate Lukács' social theory directly with the terror of Soviet Communism would be a mistake. While Lukács failed to develop a *method* of class consciousness to match his ground-breaking social theory of reification, this neither entails the vanguardism of Lenin nor the impossibility of 'spontaneous', bottom-up class consciousness. What Lukács' critical social theory does point to is the need to develop a practice of critical inquiry that would enable the proletariat to move from the qualitative experience of the contradictions of capitalism to knowledge of capitalism as a social totality, without the need for a vanguardist political party. It is this change that is taken up by the Frankfurt School, albeit away from practice towards theory.

Horkheimer and Adorno: From totality to totalitarianism

In his inaugural lecture as director of the German Institute for Social Research, Horkheimer argued that, as a result of the failure of science to provide for the needs of all members of society while ameliorating the negative consequences arising from the application of science in technology, 'social philosophy' was needed more than ever (Wiggershaus, 1997, p. 38). However, the positivist social science that had

been developed so far in universities was inadequate to the task. In its place, Horkheimer (1993) proposed 'critical theory' as an interdisciplinary social research programme that would bring together empirical research from various social science disciplines to bear on social problems with the aim of transforming society and emancipating once and for all human beings from domination. Horkheimer's distinctly academic vision for critical theory was, therefore, an attempt to operationalise Lukács' critical theory, using concrete research to reconstruct the social totality from reified experience through an academic methodology. However, where Lukács insisted that only a revolutionary Communist Party could move people from false to genuine consciousness, Horkheimer's 'academicisation' of critical theory was an explicit move to distance the Frankfurt School's work from politics. Through the development of an institutional basis for critical theory within the academy, Horkheimer sought to shield critical theory from the conservativism of the German Social Democratic Party and Soviet communism on the one hand, and the growing parliamentary strength of fascism on the other. As Jay (1984, p. 202) explains, Horkheimer considered that the development of both communism and fascism since the First World War had disproved hasty predictions regarding the historic role of the proletariat, meaning that critical theory 'would have to take into account the stubborn facts that ran counter to the revolutionary expectations of the earlier period'.

This institutionalisation of critical theory and scepticism towards class struggle, however, eventually resulted in the first-generation Frankfurt School succumbing to the deep, cultural pessimism that characterised German intellectuals during the period, expressed most clearly in Weber's theory of rationalisation. Horkheimer drew on Max Weber's theory of rationalisation to formulate his vision for critical social research. Weber distinguished between four 'ideal types' of rationality – practical, formal, theoretical and substantive – each of which structure social action and therefore provide the patterns and regularities of social life (Kalberg, 1980). Substantive rationality, however, was for Weber the only type of rationality that could supply these patterns and regularities with meaning and ground society ethically in a set of shared values. In modern, Western societies, practical, formal and theoretical rationalisation processes had come to dominate substantive rationality, Weber argued, resulting in the progressive 'disenchantment of the world' and the eventual enslavement of people within an

impersonal, bureaucratic 'iron cage' (Kalberg, 1980, p. 1173). While Lukács' theory of reification was also influenced by Weber's rationalisation thesis, he historicised Weber's analysis, turning it on its head, so to speak. Lukács changed the priority of reification and history, so that capitalism was not the result of a tendency towards formal rationality replacing substantive rationality and removing the ethical basis of human action, but of the historical expansion of the capitalist system and its reified social relations, which structure social action through exploitation and commodification. By contrast, Horkheimer in his formulation of critical theory returned to Weber's 'ideal-typical' distinctions between formal and substantive rationality, reversing Lukács' advances towards a practical-historical theory of reification. Horkheimer (2002) admonished 'traditional theory' for becoming a tool for the capitalist exploitation of nature and human beings due to its lack of *reflexivity*. By erasing its social and political context, traditional theory – which for Horkheimer was synonymous with 'positivism' – not only reproduced the capitalist division of labour, but by erecting a theory of knowledge on this methodology, 'absolutised' reification and turned science into an 'ideology' (Horkheimer, 2002, p. 194). 'Critical theory', on the other hand, by making reification the subject of research, could reconstruct the social relations of capitalism within a social-theoretical totality, and help to 'abolish the opposition between the individual's purposefulness, spontaneity, and rationality, and those work-process relationships on which society is built' (Horkheimer, 2002, pp. 209-10).

However, Horkheimer's distance from political struggle rendered this methodology practically impotent. On the one hand traumatised by the horrors of Nazism and its concentration camps, as well as the 'mutually assured destruction' signalled by Hiroshima, and on the other, disappointed by the failure of the working-class to do anything to resist these developments, Horkheimer eventually lost hope in emancipation and social change (Jay, 1984). Finally, in what would become a defining feature of Frankfurt School critical theory, Horkheimer abandoned the working class as the collective subject of emancipation, eventually concluding that the proletariat had been 'fully integrated into the administered society' (Alway, 1995, p. 28 – see also below). This growing pessimism pushed critical theory even further towards Weber and away from Lukács, with Horkheimer (1947, p. v) finally retreating to an undialectical distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective reason' and diagnosing a

‘universal feeling of fear and disillusionment’ that had come to dominate Western society. ‘Subjective’ reason – characterised as means-focused, reducing all ends to that of self-preservation – had almost entirely replaced ‘objective’ reason, he argued, which was aimed at ‘evolving a comprehensive system’ and concerned itself with the ‘idea of the greatest good, on the problem of human destiny, and on the way of realization of ultimate goals’ (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 5). In such times, Horkheimer concluded, it was the duty of critical theory to protect the legacy of objective reason from total domination, thus preserving at least the *idea* of emancipation for future generations.

In his later work, Horkheimer became increasingly influenced by the method of ‘immanent critique’ championed by Frankfurt School colleagues Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno (Wiggershaus, 1997). As Held (1990, p. 185) explains, immanent critique involves ‘confronting the existent with the claims of its own conceptual principles’, and through the ‘negation’ of reality, ‘pointing to the limits, and therefore, the closed-off possibilities, immanent in the existing order’. In its early formulation, Horkheimer considered this method idealistic, holding the view that the practice of reflection and critique was necessary, but not enough to provide a foundation for emancipatory practice. The ‘gap between theory and practice’ created by this method, he insisted, would need to be ‘filled by conscious, revolutionary politics’ (Held, 1990, p. 185). However, as already noted, historical developments had led Horkheimer to abandon the hope in a revolutionary subject and move critical theory further and further way from the ‘philosophy of praxis’ envisioned by Lukács (Feenberg, 2014). The move away from praxis and towards pure theory can be seen most clearly in Adorno and Horkheimer’s (1997) *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. In this book, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997, p. xii-iii) concluded that Western society had sunk into a ‘new kind of barbarism’ as it entered the monopoly phase of late capitalism, with reason now being forced to ‘prostitute itself’ in the interests of the self -preservation of the system. Combining Horkheimer’s reversal of priority between reification and history and Adorno’s method of immanent critique, the book locates the ‘prime cause’ of the retreat from enlightenment into mythology in monopoly capitalism and fascism ‘in Enlightenment itself’, in other words within a tendency towards instrumentalisation in reason (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997, pp. xiii-xiv).

Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) discover, like Weber, the origins of reification not in capitalism, but in the history of Western culture. They trace the disenchantment of the world in Enlightenment to Ancient Greek mythology, using the story of Odysseus' encounter with the sirens – in which Odysseus blocks the ears of his men to prevent them being manipulated by the song of the sirens while he is tied to the mast – to explain how the success of the Enlightenment project has not resulted in liberation for mankind, but rather in an alienated relationship with reality and other people. This alienation has now become so pervasive that human beings now fear liberation, as they fear anything that is beyond reification. Furthermore, while Lukács insists that reification can never be complete, precisely because it is alienating, for Adorno and Horkheimer (1997, p. 25) the end-point of Enlightenment is a 'wholly conceived and mathematised world'. In other words, totality is no longer a moment in a dialectic of social change, never complete and always open to de-reification through political struggle, it is a description of the *impossibility* of change: 'Enlightenment is totalitarian,' Adorno and Horkheimer (1997, p. 6) conclude. This represents what could be called the 'reification of reification', an ironic development demonstrated, for example, in the following passage from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: 'Thinking objectifies itself to become an automatic, self-activating process; an impersonation of the machine that it produces itself, so that ultimately the machine can replace it' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997, p. 25). Here the importance of class struggle is obscured, particularly the role of what Frederick Winslow Taylor called 'scientific management'. For Harry Braverman (1974), like Lukács, reification is a social-historical process, in which the knowledge of the craft worker is transferred into the machine – by force if necessary – to undermine the autonomy of labour and therefore the power of collective struggle, advancing its 'proletarianization' instead. By de-historicising reification and removing class struggle – from above as well as from below – from the dynamic of historical development, Adorno and Horkheimer deny the possibility of social change, confirming in theory their disappointment with the working class.

While *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is resolutely *undialectical* in its negative critique of Enlightenment, Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis of the 'culture industry' does represent an important update to the Marxist critique of political economy. Although the historical role that culture plays in the development

of monopoly capitalism is sometimes obscured by the kind of technological determinism demonstrated above, Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997, p. 137) suggestion that monopoly capitalism turns to the 'mass production of culture' as a response to its internal contradiction between industrial capacity and consumer demand is a useful one. They describe how advertising agencies after the Second World War turned from creating war propaganda to the creation of 'manufactured need' through mass media, applying Freudian psychology to help corporations tap into unconscious desires, particularly with regards to sex (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997). However, rather than satisfying these manufactured needs, the culture industry 'perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997, p. 139). Drawing on the 'dark writers of the bourgeoise' like the Marquis de Sade and Friedrich Nietzsche, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997, p. 92) suggest reification is a form of 'domination', turning consumers into sadomasochists who enjoy their domination. Again, where Lukács insisted that the experience of alienation always held out the possibility of class consciousness, for Adorno and Horkheimer, alienation is used by the culture industry to lock consumers into a state of dependency on the system. In this sense, consumers are like heroin addicts, irredeemably locked into the monopoly capitalist system of reproduction, propping up the system with each failure of will that the enjoyment of mass culture encourages.

Reflecting on *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in 1969, Adorno and Horkheimer (1997, p. ix-x) wrote that they still maintained, 'without qualification', the thesis that Western societies were moving towards 'total integration'. The original edition had promised a 'positive notion of enlightenment' in the Institute's work following the publication of the book, which the devastating analysis in the book was intended to 'prepare the way for' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997, p. xvi). However, this positive counterpart to the purely negative critique in the book was never to appear. In his late work, especially in *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno tried to recover the positive program for critical theory purely within philosophy. Like in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, there is in this work no hope of emancipation through collective action. The philosophy of praxis is given up in favour of a fundamental alienation between 'subject' and 'object', where the irreconcilable difference between the two holds out the possibility of an alternative reality, if only in principle. In a sense, abandoning the social function ascribed to it by

Lukács, reification becomes a method within a philosophy of alienation, replacing critical social theory as an emancipatory practice with a purely negative philosophy that insists its anachronism is an act of political defiance. In his final work, *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno (1997) passes the baton of radical negation from philosophy to works of 'autonomous' art, whose 'very mode of expression opens established reality and negates reified consciousness' (Held, 1990, p. 81). For Adorno, in the end, critical social theory could only produce 'messages in bottles on the flood of barbarism' (Adorno, in Jay, 1984, p. 274).

Habermas: An opportunity missed

For Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), modern democracy, dominated as it is by the mass media and consumption, is a sham, and culture entirely subsumed within monopoly capitalism for the purposes of reproduction. The only freedom that remains is the freedom to 'choose an ideology', with every political choice always reflecting economic coercion, and consumerism representing only the 'freedom to be the same' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997, p. 136). Second generation Frankfurt School theorist Jürgen Habermas, however, tried to show in his early book, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, that liberal democracy in its early development, and perhaps still even within monopoly capitalism, contains the potential to realise the positive freedom and human happiness promised by the Enlightenment. By uncovering the historical 'tensions and factors leading to the transformation and practical degeneration of the bourgeois public sphere', Habermas hoped to show the 'element of truth and emancipatory potential' that democratic institutions still contained, despite their 'ideological misrepresentations and contradictions' (Calhoun, 1992, p. 2). By so doing, Habermas aimed to reconstruct the 'institutional location for practical reason in public affairs' and 'recover something of continuing normative importance' in liberal democracy (Calhoun, 1992, p. 1).

Habermas (1992, p. 7) begins by going back to origins of the bourgeois public sphere in the 'representative publicity' of the Middle Ages, when autocratic feudal monarchs, princes and lords 'displayed' themselves as the 'embodiment of some sort of higher power', not for the people but 'before

the people'. In this era, 'publicity' was a 'status attribute' which was designed, or 'staged', to endow figures of feudal authority with an 'aura' (Habermas, 1992, pp. 7-8). However, through the influence of humanism – for Habermas an early form of bourgeois culture – the newly centralised authorities of late feudalism, on the one hand, expanded this representative publicity in terms of extravagance, while at the same time retreating to the medieval court, where the nobility explored new ideas to the delight of the monarch. As the nobility expanded in wealth, power and influence, this 'proto' public sphere moved into towns, where trade fairs and stock exchanges were already beginning to create the conditions for 'civil society' – which Habermas (1992, p. 3) defines as 'a realm of commodity exchange and social labour governed by its own laws'. In the coffee shops, salons and table societies of Britain, France and Germany respectively, institutions of the bourgeois public sphere began to emerge, where the new bourgeoisie – an emerging class of manufacturers, entrepreneurs and traders on the one hand, and professionals like doctors, jurors and scholars on the other – 'learned the art of critical-rational debate' through its contact with the 'elegant world' (Habermas, 1992, p. 29).

At the same time, the 'expansion of trade' and resulting 'horizontal economic dependencies' overflowed the limits of this vertical feudal power structure, as well as the highly circumscribed institutions of the early public sphere (Habermas, 1992, p. 15). 'Merchants' market-oriented calculations required more frequent and more exact information about distant events', and consequently, news – initially in the form of literary journals and political pamphlets – itself became a commodity (Habermas, 1992, p. 16). Thus, the expansion of the new, literary public sphere and of the emerging capitalist system of production went hand in hand. However, it was the use of new media by feudal monarchs – who saw in this mass technology an opportunity to disseminate their now anachronistic form of representative publicity – that proved to be lasting significance. By taking over the emerging institutions of the public sphere, the feudal state advanced the development of critical publicity while systematically making these institutions, especially the press, serve the interests of the state administration. By calling a public – or what Habermas called a 'publicum' – into being, as the 'abstract counterpart of public authority', the state unwittingly institutionalised this abstract public as the counterpart to the emerging democratic system of governance (Habermas, 1992, p. 23). It also unwittingly concretised the interests of the

bourgeoise, which, due to the material and social independence it was developing by this point, took exception to this reappearance of representative publicity within their newly liberated social space.

Turning to the collapse of the bourgeois public sphere within social-welfare capitalism, the second half of the book, however, assumes a more negative tone. Once the bourgeoisie had achieved hegemony across Europe, it began to turn the institutions created for the democratisation of the feudal state towards the maintenance of equilibrium. The press, for example, once a key institution of critical bourgeois publicity, became absorbed into a system of 'manipulative publicity' (Habermas, 1992, p. 178). Expanding on Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) culture industry thesis, Habermas explained how during the Second World Wa, Western governments learned how to use the mass media for public relations (PR) management by applying the new science of social psychology to its citizens. After the war, these techniques not only continued to be used by the state but were also passed on to capitalist firms as war-time civil servants moved into the private sector. Advertising, which applied these lessons to the sphere of commodity production, became a way not just to inform people about new products, but also a way to create false needs and a new type of citizen: the consumer. In the process, the bourgeois public sphere was hollowed out and replaced by a 'fetishised' and reified 'pseudo-public sphere' (Habermas, 1992, p. 162). Repeating the pessimism of his Frankfurt School mentors, Habermas (1992, p. 215) describes the public sphere within social-welfare capitalism as 'decayed', 'regressive', and 'destroyed'. At the same time as the cultural basis of the public sphere was being hollowed out by consumerism, the political public sphere was also replaced by the 'staged publicity' of periodic elections (Habermas, 1992, p. 201). As a result, the public sphere within monopoly capitalism began to take on 'feudal features' – a process which Habermas (1992, p. 195) describes as *refeudalisation*.

However, while Habermas seems to rehearse the fatalistic position of Horkheimer and Adorno, he also leaves the space open for critical publicity to re-emerge. Although Habermas is criticised for ignoring 'counter' (Fraser, 1992) and 'subaltern' (Negt and Kluge, 1993) public spheres – for example, those created as part of working class, civil rights and feminist social movements in the 19th and 20th centuries – he does acknowledge in places the importance of what he calls the 'plebeian' public sphere in achieving a 'progressive societalisation of the state' (Habermas, 1992, p. 142). While capitalist

markets became increasingly consolidated through ‘oligopolistic mergers’ – with ‘price and production agreements’ rather than ‘competition’ becoming the norm – the working class pushed for the greater democratisation of the parliamentary system (Habermas, 1992, p. 143). For the most part, the increasing commodification of the public sphere extended the *de facto* exclusion of the working class that had characterised the bourgeois public sphere from the beginning. Habermas describes how, despite the principle of ‘equality’ being the foundation of bourgeois ideology, participation was limited by property and lack of education. In response, plebeian publics created their own independent, democratic institutions and cultural traditions (see, for example, Thompson, 1963). In response to the rise of the radical press, however, deregulation and marketisation were used to ‘price out’ subaltern publics from what then became eventually came the mass media (Curran and Seaton, 1997). In other words, de facto material exclusions were once again used to limit the participation of subaltern publics, undermining the ‘idea’ of the public sphere and democracy in monopoly capitalism.

Nevertheless, in the process, plebeian and subaltern publics ‘succeeded in translating economic antagonisms into political conflict’, re-politicising the public sphere in the first part of the 20th century, achieving universal suffrage and universal free education in the process (Habermas, 1992, p. 146). The rise of the working class, alongside the devastation caused by ‘laissez faire’ economics in the 1930s (the Great Depression), forced the bourgeoisie to abandon its political-economic utopia of a ‘natural’ and ‘self-regulating’ society of commodity producers on the market. The bourgeoisie, which initially pitched the public use of reason against the authoritarian irrationalism of the feudal state, came to realise that the state was not something to be feared and destroyed, but something that, through social policy, could be used to both shape the ideal conditions of capitalism and manage the population (see also Chapter 3). ‘Interventionism’ became necessary for the managing of ‘such conflicts of interest as could no longer be settled within the private sphere alone’ and the ‘maintenance of equilibrium’ (Habermas, 1992, p. 143). Furthermore, during the Second World War, the state had become not only a producer and distributor of commodities in its own right, but also a large-scale consumer, purchasing advanced and ever-more expensive weapons of mass destruction financed by the tax revenue of millions of citizens (Habermas, 1992). As a result, as Braverman (1974, p. 285) points out, it was ‘finally accepted’

by the policy-makers of capitalist societies that 'government spending, to the extent that it is enlarged, should fill the gap'. State social-welfare capitalism, therefore, acted not just as the 'lender of last resort' – with huge, international publicly-limited corporations threatening to bring down the whole system if they failed – but also as an active player within the reproduction of monopoly capitalism through its role as a super-consumer and producer of capitalist subjects through institutions of socialisation.

Both the success of working-class agitation to extend the limited democratisation of the state by the bourgeoisie, and the need for democratic governance to retain at least the resemblance of a public sphere to preserve legitimacy, created a contradiction in political democracies. 'The political public sphere of the social-welfare state is marked by two competing tendencies,' Habermas (1992, p. 232) writes. While the collapse of the bourgeois public sphere meant that publicity was reduced to a form of propaganda, the ideological need for representative democracies to resemble the liberal ideal of earlier, revolutionary forms of democracy meant that there was always the possibility of a 'critical process of public communication' re-appearing 'through the very organisations that mediate it' (Habermas, 1992, p. 232). In other words, the more that capitalist states seek only to satisfy artificially created needs, the more they become detached from objective interests. As the public is always at least *functionally* the political subject of democracy, the needs of real public must 'sometimes be satisfied' (Habermas, 1992, p. 218-9). If real needs continue to be left unaddressed, publics will start to organise and look to democratise the state for it to once again look after the interests of their members. However, as long as it is expressed through the 'pseudo-public sphere' of the manipulative mass media, Habermas (1992, pp. 249-50) argues that this dissent could only be called 'non-public' opinion, as fails to achieve explicit and intelligent articulation through an independent and critical public sphere. While Habermas (1992, pp. 249-50) holds out in the final chapter, which reads like an appendix to the book, the possibility of such non-public opinion being turned into critical publicity, the totalising account of welfare state capitalism that precedes points suggests this hope is utopian rather than concrete.

As Joas (2009, p. 211) points out, despite trying to move away from the pessimism of his mentors in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, by presenting an 'overly idealistic picture of the past', Habermas only makes his account of cultural decline 'all the darker in tone as a result'. Like the

earlier generation Frankfurt School theorists, without a positive and concrete conception of political praxis, the 'dialectical' method of immanent critique again results only in pessimism. Oscar Negt and Alexander Kluge (1993) also criticise Habermas for the fixating on literary ideas of public opinion, causing Habermas to dismiss 'post-literary' forms of criticality – such as film – and the critical potential of industrially produced, electronically mediated public spheres, for example what would later become the internet. Being too quick to dismiss the radical possibilities inherent in ordinary experience – which as Lukács suggested always outstripped the totalising movement of reification – Negt and Kluge argue that Habermas missed the seeds of democratisation within everyday life. These criticisms point to a missed opportunity in Habermas' early critical social theory. While Habermas, following the Adorno and Horkheimer, rejects in the book the Lukácsian idea of the working class as 'subject-object' of history, the dialectic of the public described above suggest a less eschatological collective subject formed through intelligent debate and purposive social interaction. While the bourgeois public became the new ruling class of monopoly capitalism, turning the institutions of the bourgeois public sphere against the working class, the counter-publics which formed their own public spheres and subaltern intellectual cultures still hold out the possibility of a social movement that could realise the bourgeois ideal of participatory, deliberative, intelligent democracy. As Habermas acknowledges, this is exactly the argument made by Marx. Like Marx, Habermas tried to derive radical possibility from the dialectic of the bourgeois public sphere. However, without a collective subject, Habermas, like Adorno and Horkheimer, remained within the purely negative pole of this dialectic, and could only reproduce the pessimism of his mentors.

In his subsequent 'linguistic turn', Habermas retreats further from practice, pursuing further immanent critiques of bourgeois social theory – hermeneutics, linguistic philosophy and functionalist sociology – that culminate in his 'theory of communicative action' (Habermas, 1984/1987). Although multi-layered and complex, this mature work can be seen as a return to core Frankfurt School themes, with social action once again mapped onto the Weberian distinction between instrumental and non-instrumental rationality. On the one hand, 'purposive-rational' and 'strategic' action are aimed at the control and manipulation of nature and other people respectively, whereas 'communicative action' is not aimed at

achieving a goal at all, but rather at 'genuine understanding' (Joas, 2009, p. 234). It is this latter aspect of human interaction that provides Habermas a 'quasi-transcendental', foundation for critical theory, outlining both a methodology for rational discourse and an emancipatory, democratic end: the 'ideal speech situation' (Habermas, 1987). While Habermas seems to have found a home for what Weber called 'substantive rationality', as soon as this distinction is translated to the macro-sociological level (Bohman, 2014) of cultural critique, the home of substantive rationality – which he refers to as the 'lifeworld' – is found to be dominated by the 'system' (Habermas, 1987). Thus, Frankfurt School cultural pessimism returns. Again, the method of immanent criticism confirms only what was already known: the inadequacy of mass democracy and the shortcomings of everyday intelligence. For Agger (1995, p. 97), Habermas has wasted decades finding a foundation for the emancipatory commitments of critical theory, only to produce 'yet another elaborate, densely argued but politically irrelevant edifice' that has earned him much academic praise while 'robbing his work of political validity'. Arguably, with Habermas' epic theory of communicative action, the Frankfurt School finally abandoned the philosophy of praxis in favour of assuming what Calhoun (1995, p. 11) calls the 'umpire's chair' in relation to the social and political problems of the contemporary world.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the contribution of Western Marxism in Germany from Lukács to the Frankfurt School to the tradition of critical social theory. The first section demonstrated that Lukács had a profound influence on this tradition – and set a crucial precedent for the Deweyian critical theory outlined in the next chapter – by formulating the problem of social theory in terms of a methodology of de-reification. Although this line of research wasn't developed explicitly by Lukács, his heterodox reading of Marx and developments of Marxist concepts of alienation, reification and totality in new and interesting ways had a lasting influence on the Frankfurt School. For Lukács, reification – the objectification of nature and social relations – was spreading through society thanks to the expansion of the monopoly capitalist system. While Lukács was influenced by both Weber's theory of rationalisation and by phenomenology, he historicised these approaches within a Marxist theory of

totality that explained reification as the cultural 'horizon of intelligibility' within capitalism. This totality referred both to a necessarily shared and dominant understanding within a particular epoch and to the conceptualisation of that epoch through critical theory. However, what distinguishes Lukács' critical social theory from both orthodox Marxism and subsequent Frankfurt School variants is its implication that this shared understanding is necessarily (phenomenologically) accessible to people through everyday experience, and therefore critical reflection is a modality of ordinary experience. Furthermore, while Weber saw rationalisation as resulting in an 'iron cage' of bureaucracy, Lukács insisted that social reality always escapes total rationalisation, and the alienation felt by people as a result of reification could prompt reflection and de-reifying political action. However, Lukács also then raises the problem of class consciousness: why isn't the working class then in some sense automatically a revolutionary class, moving by itself to true consciousness through de-reifying practices, including social-intellectual reflection?

Lukács answered this question in terms of a revolutionary party of professional intellectuals, who, armed with a correct understanding of the social totality would lead people to class consciousness and revolution. The first-generation Frankfurt School, particularly Horkheimer and Adorno, in contrast, developed Lukács' theory of reification and explained that (class) consciousness is prevented and in fact monetised through the culture industry of monopoly capitalism. This insight presents a significant development of the Marxist critique of political economy and indicates a historical answer to Lukács' question. However, the Frankfurt School at the same, by moving away from political action and from empirically-verifiable examples of de-reifying practices and class consciousness in their contemporary context, turned this insight into an apocalyptic, Weberian vision of hegemonic capitalism with no hope of social change to counter-balance this analysis of the social totality. While Horkheimer tried to formulate a practice of social inquiry as interdisciplinary social research, this practice was detached from the wider political situation, and as a form of traditional academic knowledge production, became as alienated and reified as the 'positivistic' social sciences he critiqued in his early work. Habermas then attempted to move on from Adorno and Horkheimer's pessimism by recovering the radical potential of the bourgeois public sphere, which he argued provided both the institutional basis of modern

democracy and an ideological cover for its historical shortcomings. However, in the second part of the book, Habermas also succumbed to the pessimism of his mentors, inheriting the same scepticism towards collective action and the potentials of 'the masses' to move from a manipulated, fragmented false consciousness to a true, political consciousness of the social-economic totality. In his later work, Habermas moved the Frankfurt School even further away from political practice, creating an elaborate and sophisticated theoretical system based on sociological functionalism, linguistic philosophy and hermeneutics, placing his hopes in for social change in the 'quasi-transcendental' structure of communication.

What are the key insights of the German Western Marxist tradition of critical social theory that this thesis will take forward in the remaining chapters? Firstly, the idea of critical theory as inquiry into the social totality of a particular historical situation, specifically the point that capitalism – the ultimate 'totality' of the present epoch – is itself totalising, in that it seeks through its relentless drive to maintain profitability to absorb all spheres of society and social experience into the capitalist system of reproduction. The Frankfurt School's analysis of the culture industry is, therefore, crucial to understanding the contemporary situation, above all else, for the insight that consciousness itself becomes an aspect of this system of reproduction. In Chapter 4 this insight will be developed further in the analysis of 'marketisation', and it will be argued that in 'third-wave neoliberalism', higher education as a system of knowledge production and reproduction through education is absorbed into this culture industry in order to rescue monopoly capitalism from its current crisis of productivity and legitimacy. Secondly, the development of a methodology of de-reification to address this move to monetise and manage consciousness. In the next chapter Dewey's theory of collective intelligence will be presented as a recovery of Lukács' suggestion that this methodology can be a modality of everyday consciousness, and that social inquiry can be a 'philosophy of praxis' rather than another alienated and reified academic practice. Thirdly, the point indicated but not pursued by Habermas, that the contradictions of democratic life within monopoly capitalism will constantly recreate the conditions for such a philosophy of praxis, and that at any moment – with or without the help of critical social theorists or the 'correct' social theory – the 'masses' might turn what Dewey in the next chapter calls 'political democracy' into real

democracy, and re-appropriate the ‘quasi-public’ institutions of the culture industry for the purposes of democratisation.

Chapter 2: John Dewey's Critical Social Theory

Introduction

The previous chapter traced a retreat from practice to theory in the Frankfurt School, and an increasing scepticism towards collective subjectivity and action. This chapter argues that Dewey's work not only offers a substantive and unique alternative to Frankfurt School critical social theory, but one that moves in the opposite direction, suggesting a theory of 'collective intelligence'. The first section of this chapter defends Dewey's 'instrumentalism' against Horkheimer's characterisation of it as a form of 'positivism'. In the process, Horkheimer's vision of critical theory is revealed to represent a 'reification of reification', ironically exemplifying the unreflexive instrumentalism associated by Horkheimer with Dewey. Subsequently, Dewey's social theory is argued to be closer to that of Lukács, in that reification is also explained with reference to a pre-theoretical understanding of social totality that is obscured by capitalist social relations and the alienating habits of life within this system of social reproduction. However, while Lukács relies on the revolutionary Communist Party to move people from false to genuine consciousness of this social totality, Dewey offers a practical and democratic methodology of de-reification in which publics can reconstruct 'the social' from within qualitative experience through social inquiry. This 'method of democracy', therefore, also explains how publics arise out of the need to deal with the consequences of social action. In the final section Dewey's theory of 'collective intelligence' is compared with Habermas' analysis of the bourgeois public sphere. While Habermas succumbs to the pessimism of the first-generation Frankfurt School, Dewey's theory of collective intelligence suggests non-public opinion can be converted into critical public opinion out of everyday practice and that this becomes more likely as real needs are not met within contemporary capitalism. While this is not asserted as a necessary or inevitable result, the chapter concludes that an 'intelligent populism' may emerge from the contradictions of contemporary society.

An underestimated alternative

Before outlining Dewey's critical social theory, it is necessary to extricate his work from misunderstandings arising from its reception by the Frankfurt School (Kadlec, 2006). Due to its hegemonic position in critical social theory, this negative reception has until recently prevented Dewey's work from being interpreted as presenting a critical social theory in its own right (Joas, 1992). Joas (1992, p. 264) traces this negative reception to the influence of Max Scheler, who dismissed pragmatism in its entirety to a 'philosophy that reduces human life to labour and is therefore not adequate for a portrayal of what is authentically spiritual or personal'. As Larry Hickman (2007) explains, the root of the dismissal was a difference in Scheler and Dewey's conception of human beings as '*homo faber*'. While both agreed that sign and tool use were distinguishing features of human kind in relation to primates and lower species of animals, Scheler insisted that this was not enough. He claimed that there existed a *qualitative* difference between humans and animals, and that this difference was traceable to the existence of 'spirit' in the former. On this basis, Scheler falsely characterised Dewey's evolutionary naturalism – which assumes a continuity between species and rejects all supra-natural 'essences' – as a celebration of an instrumental 'will to power' which reduced all human activity to domination over nature and other human beings (Hickman, 2007). For Joas (1993, p. 264), this misreading and over-simplification of the pragmatist tradition informed 'decades of traditional German arrogant and superficial snubs of the most ingenious stream of American thought'. Meanwhile, Alison Kadlec (2006) finds a similar equation of pragmatism and positivism in the work of Antonio Gramsci, who initiated a separate Western Marxism tradition in Italy that went on to influence the British New Left in the 1960s. 'By erroneously equating Dewey's celebration of lived experience and a scientific worldview with a vulgar glorification of all things given,' Kadlec (2006, p. 521) writes, 'the early critical theorists shut off access to an innovative and deeply critical component of Deweyian pragmatism'.

Later Frankfurt School theorists were more sympathetic to pragmatism. Herbert Marcuse was the first to be a 'bit more open toward pragmatism', Joas (1993, p. 265) notes, adding that in his reviews of John Dewey's books, Marcuse 'conceded that Dewey rejected logical positivism himself, and that he did not

plead for a value-free thinking in his theory of valuation'. Dewey's radical suggestion that valuation could itself be subject to scientific and social inquiry, however, remained obscured by the prejudices of subsequent generations of the Frankfurt School against pragmatism (Joas, 1992, p. 265). Even Jürgen Habermas (2002), while admitting that Dewey's work on public formation (see below) could have been a useful reference point for his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, rejected the idea that value-judgements could be justified with reference to the consequences of instrumental action. Habermas, like Adorno and Horkheimer, feared the implications of Dewey's anti-foundationalism – which denied both the need for and existence of any transcendent foundations, including the Kantian 'a priori' – insisting that without such foundations, human societies could easily revert to the irrationalism and barbarism of the Holocaust (Aboulafia, 2002). Habermas' arms-length relationship to pragmatism, in which elements of this tradition are cherry-picked to reconstruct critical theory, also became symptomatic of post-Habermasian Frankfurt School theorists seeking to resurrect Horkheimer's vision of critical theory as an interdisciplinary social research programme (see, for example, Dryzek, 2006; Morrow and Brown, 1994; Strydom, 2011; White, 2006). There are, however, some theorists working within the Frankfurt School tradition who approach Dewey's work as presenting a critical theory in its own right. Alex Honneth (2012) – current director of the Institute for Social Research – James Bohman (2010) and Hans Joas (1992; 1993) have all offered interpretations seeking to show how Dewey's work provides a powerful alternative to both traditional critical theory and neo-positivist theories of social science. This body of work, which is too heterogenous to be referred to as a 'third generation' of the Frankfurt School, will be drawn upon in what follows.

Before moving on to explicate Dewey's substantive and unique critical social theory, it is necessary to address the accusation that pragmatism is a form of positivism, to avoid any further misunderstandings and to reconstruct a more fruitful dialogue between Deweyian instrumentalism and Western Marxism. In his book *Eclipse of Reason*, Horkheimer splits rationality into subjective and objective forms. 'Subjective' reason is 'essentially concerned with means and ends', with the ends 'more or less taken for granted and supposedly self-explanatory' (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 4). For Horkheimer, subjective reason reduces all human ends to the unreflective, biological need for survival, and expressing a rather

reductive view of evolution, to individual self-preservation within monopoly capitalism. However, from a Deweyian point of view, Horkheimer 'hypostatises' a *practical* process of inquiry that involves a complex interplay between means and ends. Essentially, for Dewey (1906, p. 307) what Horkheimer is doing is 'reading back into the order of things' a functional distinction between means and ends, which results in a tendency to mythologise reality and deprive everyday human life of its basic intelligence. For Dewey, there is no such thing as an 'end-in-itself', just as much as there cannot be a 'means-in-itself'; means and ends are always related within an 'ends-means continuum' (Fesmire, 2015, p. 107). An end is always an 'end-in-view' to guide social or individual action, to determine the means of achieving ends, with these ends becoming a means to further ends once achieved (Bernstein, 2010). The ultimate ends of society that Horkheimer associates with 'objective reason' – the personal or social values that underpin the general organisation and direction of individual cultures or societies – are for Dewey also just ends-in-view, albeit at a higher level of abstraction. For Dewey, the problem with positivistic, instrumental science is simply that scientists do not control the ends to which their discoveries are applied. This is a social fact that can be linked, as Horkheimer does in his early work, to the division of labour, a fact which can be investigated empirically. Values, like the ends of scientific and social inquiry, also can and should be subject to inquiry, and science should be made responsible though democratisation.

Reinforced by the long-standing prejudice of German philosophy against pragmatism, Horkheimer's hypostatised view of science and inquiry prevents him from seeing Dewey's work as presenting a critical social theory. Dewey is the target of Horkheimer's most vehement criticisms of pragmatism. He characterises Dewey's philosophy as having the 'ambition to be itself nothing else but practical activity, as distinct from theoretical insight, which, according to pragmatistic teachings, is either only a name for physical events or just meaningless' (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 48). Dewey's attempts to base his instrumentalist social theory on the 'best practice' examples of scientific inquiry indicates for Horkheimer that his philosophy is the 'counterpart of modern industrialism, for which the factory is the prototype of human existence, and which models all branches of culture after production on the conveyor belt, or after the rationalised front office' (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 50). Deweyian pragmatism,

he concludes, by ‘denying the difference between thinking in the laboratory and in philosophy’, denies the difference ‘between the destination of mankind and its present course’ (Horkheimer, 1947, p. 53). In a letter to Frankfurt School colleague Friedrich Pollock, Horkheimer goes so far as to blame Dewey’s instrumentalism for Western society’s failure to resist fascism (Jeffries, 2017). Dewey, who himself never responded to such allegations, would have blamed this crisis of European civilisation – including the Nazi death camps – not on the application of science to social problems, but on bad science co-opted by anti-social political agendas.

It was up to Sidney Hook to defend Deweyian pragmatism against the Frankfurt School. Hook (1982, p. 122-3) recounts how in two seminars he directly challenged Horkheimer to ‘give a specific illustration of some truth discovered by [objective] reason or the dialectic which was beyond the reach of scientific method or a conclusion reached by scientific method in any field that required correction by [objective] reason or the dialectic’. Horkheimer was ‘unable to do so’, returning to his well-rehearsed critique of positivism instead: ‘[He] invoked [objective] reason as a special faculty, distinguished from intelligence or understanding, that in some mysterious way grasped ‘the inherent meaning of things’’ (Hook, 1982, p. 123). For Hook, Horkheimer’s epistemology and critique of Dewey stem from a failure to recognise that thinking is a practical activity that changes the world through inquiry. Turning Horkheimer’s critique of positivism on its head, Hook points out that Horkheimer’s distinction between subjective and objective reason is founded on what Dewey called the ‘spectator theory of knowledge’. For Dewey (1930), all epistemology is founded on a hypostatised problem of how human beings can ‘know’ the world, which assumes a radical split between mind and body. Epistemologists in both idealist and empiricist traditions smuggle in two premises in their answers to this question, according to Dewey. Firstly, they assume that for something to be known, there must be some ‘real’ object that corresponds to whatever item of knowledge is in question. Secondly, for this knowledge to be certain, this object that knowledge relates to must exist antecedently, or have some ‘essential’ being that transcends the act of knowing. Furthermore, behind both premises lies the basic assumption – which Hook identifies with the Frankfurt School – that there must be no distortion of what is to be known by the practical process of knowing, otherwise there can be no certainty in knowledge whatsoever.

Therefore, Horkheimer's distinction between subjective and objective reason is itself, from a Deweyian point of view, a form of positivism, as it is based on a correspondence theory of knowledge that denies the basis of knowing in a practical and social process of inquiry.

More damning, however, is Hook's (1982, p. 129) characterisation of Frankfurt School critical theory as a form of 'disguised paternalism', which continued a tradition of 'enlightened despotism' from Plato to 20th century fascism, according to which the 'rulers are better judges of the true interests of those over whom they rule than the people themselves'. This may sound harsh, but this point is directly related to Dewey's critique of the spectator theory of knowledge. Spectator theories, according to Dewey, can be traced back to a 'bifurcation of reason' within ancient Greek philosophy, particularly in Plato and Aristotle (Kadlec, 2006, p. 523). On the one hand, Dewey sympathises with ancient Greek philosophers, who, faced with a natural world they could not control and could only partly understand, retreated through idealist philosophy to an abstract world that they *could* control. For Dewey (1917), all philosophies seeking a secure footing for knowledge are forms of 'consolation', compensating for the frustration felt at the messiness of life with a *feeling* of certainty. However, this bifurcation of reason also hid a more sinister purpose, as it was 'derived in part from a distortion that served to mask entrenched interests' (Kadlec, 2007, p. 531). As Alan Ryan (1995, p. 98) points out, Dewey was acutely aware of the mutually reinforcing divisions created by the Athenian system of patriarchy and slave ownership, noting that by accepting these divisions, ancient Greek philosophy 'was always in danger of associating thinking with high status [and] doing with low status and thus of projecting its own snobberies and receiving them back as metaphysics'. This had the effect, whether intended or not, of taking the power to criticise existing society away from ordinary people and reinforcing the power of elites (Kadlec, 2007).

While this may not have been their intention, a lack of reflexivity with regards to the social conditions of critical theory means that the Frankfurt School's work can be easily co-opted by anti-democratic interests. Furthermore, the Frankfurt School's gradual retreat from political practice to theory, eventually abandoning Lukács' original vision of critical social theory as a philosophy of praxis, can be easily explained in terms of a growing disappointment with reality, specifically with a series of failures

associated with the working class as revolutionary subject. Firstly, the *German* working class failed to fulfil their promise in radicalising the Weimar Republic in the 1920s, turning away from socialism towards fascism, failing to prevent the Holocaust and implicating itself in this unprecedented act of barbarism. Secondly, rather than embracing socialism or critical social theory as a response to the expanding reification of monopoly capitalism, the *American* working class embraced the culture industry, and by enjoying mass culture, became complicit in its own exploitation. On this interpretation, the retreat from practice that was defended as a 'pragmatic' decision to further the activities of the Institute for Social Research in unfavourable conditions (Wiggershaus, 1997) was an example of the means-focused, practical calculation falsely identified with Dewey's instrumentalism and dismissed as subjective reason. It betrays an ironic *lack* of criticality, as this drift from practice was merely a rationalisation of an inherited and assumed cultural pessimism and speculative philosophy. By contrast, Dewey moved closer to political practice as his career developed. He was a founding member of two trade unions – the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) – and helped establish the New School for Social Research in New York (Calhoun, 2009). While Dewey rejected orthodox Marxism on account of its 'analytical rigidity' (Kadlec, 2007, p. 5), his later work became more insistent with regards to the need to socialise the means of production.

Dewey's critical social theory

As explained in Chapter 1, Lukács grounded his critical social theory in a historised phenomenology within which the Marxist-Hegelian concept of totality was explained with reference to a horizon of intelligibility that gives social action meaning in a particular society or historical epoch. While Dewey rejected all forms of transcendental thinking, his 'descriptive' or 'naturalistic' metaphysics (Boisvert, 1982; Sleeper, 1986; Westbrook, 1991) shares some aspects of this approach, making his critical social theory comparable and complementary to that of Lukács. As Honneth (2006, p. 110) notes, 'Dewey's reflections boil down to the assertion that every rational understanding of the world is always already bound up with a holistic form of experience, in which all elements of a given situation are qualitatively disclosed from a perspective of engaged involvement'. However, in contrast to phenomenology – which

seeks to overcome mind/body dualism through epistemological arguments, thereby inevitably retaining elements of idealism – Dewey's theory is 'considerably more direct and simple' (Honneth, 2006, p. 110). For Dewey (1930, p. 195), 'the world in which we immediately live, that in which we strive, success, and are defeated is pre-eminently a qualitative world'. Like Lukács, Dewey insisted that human beings experience the world primarily as meaningful, and therefore in some sense as part of a meaningful totality. However, through 'detachment', we also have the ability – 'for the purpose of attaining objective knowledge' – to 'extract ourselves from the experience of qualitative interaction in which all of our knowledge is always already anchored' (Honneth, 2006, pp. 125-6). Reification, therefore – although he never used this concept, preferring instead to point out where experience had been 'hypostatised' – is for Dewey (1922) merely a 'collective habit' within which the qualitative origins of experience are forgotten, leading to a feeling of alienation and powerlessness in the face of complex social process and technologically dominated nature (Honneth, 2006).

Dewey's critical social theory is not designed to show how these habits are wrong, or to formulate a correct understanding of reality that would correct such habits. Rather, Dewey's theory of democratic knowledge production is meant to provide a methodology for the development of new collective habits that are intelligent and that would make both inquiry and democracy responsible and responsive to the needs of society. For Dewey, inquiry is not the exclusive property of intellectuals, but something that ordinary people do all the time, and can be developed by anyone into a powerful tool to uncover the conditions and consequences of social action (Dewey, 1929). While human beings deal with the world for the most part pre-reflectively through 'habit' (Dewey, 1922), this habit is not inherently mindless or unintelligent, but to a large extent directed by what Dewey (2005) called 'half knowledge'. Both habit and reflection involve 'inference', which for Dewey is the very basis of human intelligence (Dewey, 1917). According to Tiles (2010), inference is a basic human activity, like breathing or walking, and something we do all the time: 'Every act of human life, not springing from instinct or natural mechanical habit, contains it; most habits are dependent on some amount of it for their formation, as they are dependent on it for their re-adaptation to novel circumstances' (Dewey, in Tiles, 2010, p. 110). Inference is therefore also a skill that enables people to go beyond the 'given' to grasp

what it 'invisible in the visible' (Dewey, 1930). It is in pre-reflective experience, therefore, that individuals apprehend the social totality, or what Dewey (1929) referred to as a 'situation'. A situation, Stephen Fesmire (2015, p. 51) explains, 'refers to any experience at hand, from its brilliant focus – conspicuous and apparent – to its horizontal field or background, the obscured, concealed, enveloping, and felt context'. A situation is delineated and organised according to a unique quality, which is pre-cognitively felt, rather than perceived, and is not just made up of the consciously experienced but also that which was present but at the same time beyond experience (Hickman, 1992). Furthermore, for Dewey, the social totality is not only present to ordinary experience but can be reconstructed by ordinary people through reflection and inquiry (Dewey, 1928).

While for Dewey (1927, p. 159) habits are the 'mainspring of human action', 'binding' us to 'orderly and established ways of action, habits are continuously disrupted by the flux of existence. As Kadlec (2007) points out, it is this aspect of Dewey's 'anti-foundationalism' that provides his instrumentalism with its critical force. When our pre-reflective activity is disturbed, we can either pre-reflectively adjust our habits to negotiate this change without breaking the flow of experience, or stop acting altogether and engage in reflection, depending on the scale of the problem. When this occurs, the situation that gives unites qualitative experience becomes felt as 'problematic' and begins to emerge as the subject of thought (Dewey, 1930, p. 198). While the aim of reflection is to return us to our practical engagements within the flow of unproblematic experience, it is through reflection that our habits can become more intelligent, and the skill of inference improved. In other words, reflection is also a process of learning, leading to an expanded capacity to anticipate problems in the future which Dewey (1938a) calls 'foresight'. The continuous development of reflective practice results in the 'growth' of the individual, which in turn contributes to a rise in the general level of social intelligence of a society and an overall increase in the flexibility of collective habits (Dewey, 1938a). As Kadlec (2007, p. 13) explains, Dewey's critical social theory 'operates on an intersubjective view of everyday experience as a common fund for the development of individual and social intelligence'. The goal of critical reflection is not to 'discover, recover or secure antecedently justified principles', but to 'improve our individual and shared capacity to tap into the critical potential of lived experience in a world that is unalterably characterised

by flux and change' (Kadlec, 2007, p. 12). Like Lukács, then, Dewey provides both a social theory of totality and a critical theory of de-reification. However, where Lukács can only see this process originating in the application of a correct Marxist theory to reified practice, Dewey offers not only a de-transcendentalised social theory but a democratic methodology for the overcoming of reification from *within* social practice, without the need for a party.

However, the world is not defined solely by relentless flux. Dewey does not present a relativistic, postmodern theory of relentless uncertainty and difference, as Rorty (1979) suggests. Although change is the very condition of reflection and intelligence – as it is the disruption of stability that forces us into reflective action – there are also moments of rest, as well as objects that seem to endure through extended periods of time: 'Although it is true that all existence is precarious, it is also true that it is stable' (Dewey, in Sleeper, 1986, p. 128). Rather than establishing his metaphysics on one side of this dualism of change and durability, Dewey establishes a dialectical concept of 'rhythmic alternation' at the heart of his description of existence, with life as an active element in this dialectic that has the capacity to create and maintain durability in the face of constant change:

> There is in nature, even below the level of life, something more than mere flux and change. Form is arrived at whenever a stable, even though moving, equilibrium is reached. Changes interlock and sustain one another. Wherever there is coherence there is endurance. Order is not imposed from without but is made out of the relations of harmonious interactions that energies bear to one another. Because it is active (not anything static because foreign to what goes on) order itself develops. It comes to include within its balanced movement a greater variety of changes. (Dewey, 2005, p. 13)

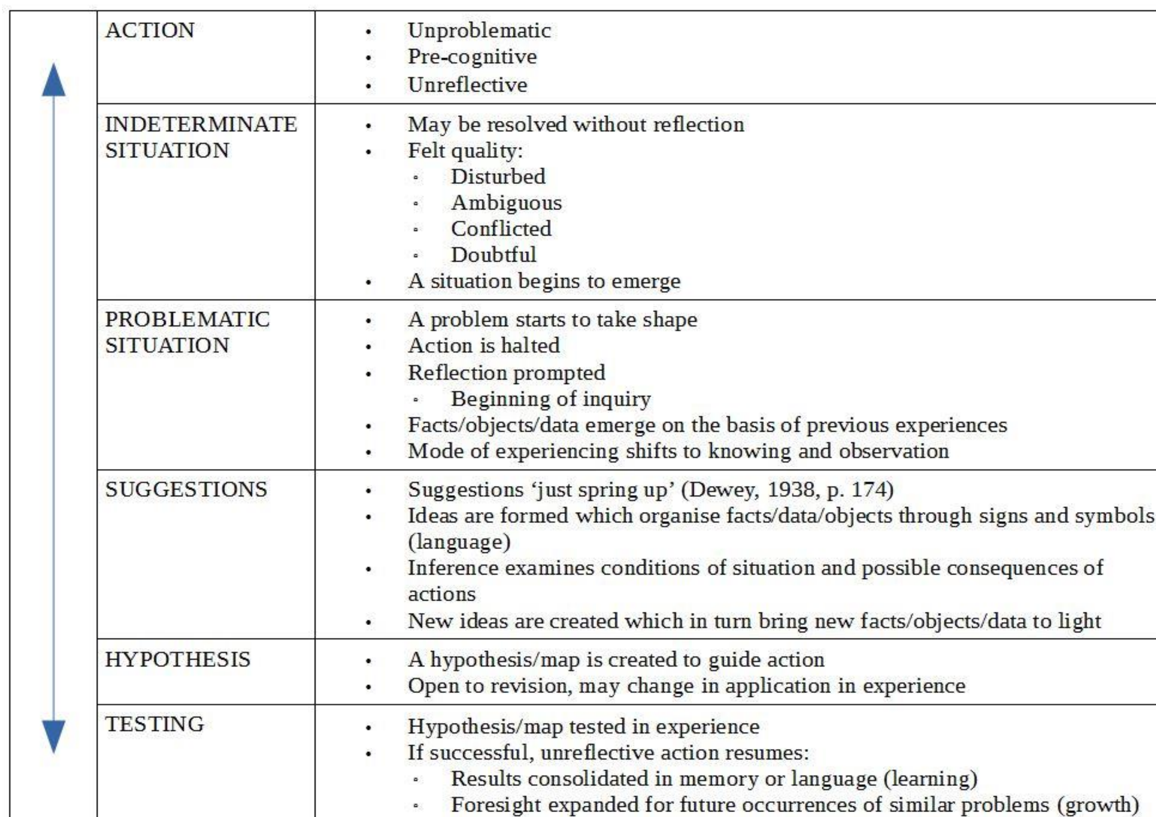
Similar to Marx's (2009, no page) insistence that the 'productive life is the life of the [human] species', Dewey links human intelligence to a capacity to give form to the world. Like Lukács, Dewey draws attention back to the 'performativity of practice' at the heart of social life – the fact that social relations, institutions and the social totality rely on their reproduction through daily activity (Feenberg, 2014, p. 77). What Dewey shares with both Marx and Lukács, therefore, is the point that through the complex division of labour within advanced, technological societies, people often forget that the institutions and

commodities we are surrounded by are the products of human activity. One of the most important jobs of social theory, then, is to help people *remember* this fact, and through this remembering, feel empowered to address the inequalities that structure this division of labour, and undermine the democratic intelligence of the public.

However, where Marx and Lukács can only see social change coming from intellectuals who have broken themselves free from these chains through correct theory, Dewey proposed a critical methodology that would help people to raise *themselves* out of false consciousness. As explained above, habits are continuously interrupted by problematic situations. When our pre-reflective activity is disturbed we can either pre-reflectively adjust our habits to negotiate this change without breaking the flow of experience, or we may need to stop acting altogether and engage in an extended period of reflection. Reflection can range from a matter of momentary pre-reflective 'adjustment' (Dewey, 1917), to conscious but mainly practical consideration – a process of weighing alternatives and consciously deciding on a course of action – to a full-blown inquiry involving formal research methods and sophisticated conceptual or technical apparatuses. For Dewey, all follow a basic 'pattern of inquiry' that originates in everyday problem solving (Dewey, 1938b). Figure 1 reconstructs this pattern of inquiry from three key works on logic: *How We Think* (Dewey, 1910); *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (Dewey, 1938b); and 'Importance, Significance and Meaning' (Dewey, 1949). The diagram shows how inquiry begins, with inquiry starting from pre-reflective experience and ending in the testing of hypotheses. Not all inquiries follow all these steps. Some problems, as already suggested, require only minor adjustment. The double-headed arrow on the left indicates that some inquiries require us to return to previous steps, for example as new data emerges, throwing light on the original problematic situation.

Dewey agreed with the Frankfurt School that supposedly 'neutral' applications of technology hide political and social interests. For Dewey, 'tools and artefacts are no more neutral than are plants, nonhuman animals or human beings themselves; they are interactive within situations that teem with values' (Hickman, 1992, p. 202). What makes technology – including inquiry-based processes of knowledge production and education – *responsible* rather than instrumental or reified is the 'choice, implementation and testing' of ends that arise from the original, problematic situations (Hickman, 1992,

p. 202). Where Horkheimer and colleagues hypostatise the relation between ends and means in practical activity, Dewey proposes that 'values arise out of inquiry' and insists that 'once they are refined by inquiry they are brought back to the situations from which they originated in order to ascertain whether they are appropriate' (Hickman, 1992, p. 202). Dewey grants creativity and imagination to means-end rationality, which for him is the basis of all forms of rationality. As explained above, inference and foresight are practical skills that both require imagination to go beyond what is 'given' to the invisible in the visible and the possible in the actual. In Dewey's critical social theory, 'inventive construction', 'dramatic rehearsal', 'empathetic projection' are all ways of describing the ability to go beyond experience to develop hypotheses, which are necessarily fallible and incomplete as they are subject to the ultimate test of all hypotheses and theories: their ability to deal with the rhythmic alternation of existence (Fesmire, 2015).



ACTION	• Unproblematic • Pre-cognitive • Unreflective

INDETERMINATE SITUATION	• May be resolved without reflection
	• Felt quality:
	  ◦ Disturbed
	  ◦ Ambiguous
	  ◦ Conflicted
	  ◦ Doubtful
	• A situation begins to emerge

PROBLEMATIC SITUATION	• A problem starts to take shape • Action is halted • Reflection prompted ◦ Beginning of inquiry • Facts/objects/data emerge on the basis of previous experiences • Mode of experiencing shifts to knowing and observation
SUGGESTIONS	• Suggestions 'just spring up' (Dewey, 1938, p. 174) • Ideas are formed which organise facts/data/objects through signs and symbols (language) • Inference examines conditions of situation and possible consequences of actions • New ideas are created which in turn bring new facts/objects/data to light
HYPOTHESIS	• A hypothesis/map is created to guide action • Open to revision, may change in application in experience

TESTING	• Hypothesis/map tested in experience
	• If successful, unreflective action resumes:
	  ◦ Results consolidated in memory or language (learning)
	  ◦ Foresight expanded for future occurrences of similar problems (growth)

Figure 1: The pattern of inquiry (Dewey, 1910; 1938b; 1949)

For Dewey, inquiry is also a fundamentally social process. In Dewey's instrumentalism, all tools are social, and contain the accumulated knowledge of human societies formed through practical activity. Like phenomenologists, particularly Martin Heidegger (1962), Dewey traces the totality of cultural understanding through everyday practices like tool use, with the simple activity of hammering a nail into the wall expressing both the horizon of intelligibility that links the individual to the collective through meaning, and the intuitive intelligence of qualitative experience – or half knowledge. Knowledge is socialised through language and reproduced not just through organised culture and its artefacts, but also through individual and collective habit. Language is for Dewey the 'tool of tools', created through 'a process of extraction, refinement and manufacturing'; at the level of culture and 'collective habit', this knowledge is codified, stored and most importantly, *socialised* (Hickman, 1992, p. 61). For Dewey, language should also be thought of as a technology; it makes human conduct possible – both through habit and linguistically-mediated reflection and inquiry – giving the world the significance required for our interaction within it. Language is a 'storeroom' of knowledge and meaning that enables efficiency in getting everyday things done (Hickman, 1992). Dewey agrees with the Frankfurt School that inquiry and technology can become reified and often do, but with Lukács, Dewey sees reification also as a social, historical process, one that transforms meaningful, mostly intelligent activity into something meaningless and alienated. It is not a tendency in reason itself. This kind of argument only obscures the practical, social difference between responsible and irresponsible social action, inquiry and technology.

Collective intelligence

Like Horkheimer, then, Dewey considered inquiry to be key to de-reification and emancipation. Like Horkheimer, Dewey also argued that critical social inquiry had a special role to play in the reconstruction of reification through the analysis of the social conditions that contributed to problematic situations. Dewey (1938b) distinguished different modes of inquiry depending on three main factors: subject matter, end/purpose and distance from qualitative experience. Science, for example, is furthest away from qualitative experience, having bracketed quality to construct natural objects that can be

analysed in terms of physical processes and quantities. Nevertheless, science has practical aims, for example the advance or proof/disproof of a hypothesis or the creation of a new technology. At the other end of the scale, common sense problem solving – even when cognitive and involving imaginative reconstruction – for the most part remains in close proximity to qualitative experience. For example, my car may break down, and even though I try a few 'go to' fixes that sometimes work, I fail to solve the problem. In this case I must consciously consider how to return to whatever I was doing before, perhaps by contacting a breakdown service and finding an alternative method of arriving at my destination. While science provides a methodological ideal for Dewey's pattern of inquiry, it is social inquiry that Dewey considers the widest ranging and potentially transformative mode of inquiry. It has the potential, on the one hand, to refine and make intelligent our everyday habits and purely practical methods of dealing with problems, and on the other, direct and make *responsible* the 'value-free' and highly-abstract modes of inquiry, such as science (Hickman, 1992).

As suggested above, social inquiry also has a unique capacity to reconstruct the social totality out of qualitative experience. For Dewey (1928, p. 315), 'the social' covers the 'widest and richest manifestation of the whole accessible to our observation', and therefore is the 'proper point of departure for any more imaginative construing of the whole one may wish to take'. Qualitative experience covers much more than what we are cognitively aware of, with many aspects of the 'invisible in the visible' operating across vast stretches of space and time. Social inquiry reconstructs the 'indirect consequences' of social actions which exceed the immediate situation within which actions operate (Dewey, 2016). For example, 'inequality' has consequences for many people, which are existentially and materially real and are qualitatively felt by individuals in experience. If problematic situations arising out of inequality – for example negative health effects – are reconstructed through inquiry, the consequences of private actions (for example excessive drinking) will not reveal the cause of such inequality. Only by going beyond the visible to the invisible in qualitative experience, with the help of tools ranging from inference and imagination to theory and experimental apparatuses, can consequences be traced back to relatively remote and diffuse social actions. In Dewey's social theory, therefore, while all social facts must be accounted for through individual experience, social structures are 'real', in that that they have

a real impact on individuals within everyday experience. A negative consequence can be 'deferred', in the sense that institutions and collective habits – which 'pattern' experience and reproduce forms of 'unintentional' prejudice, such as class privilege, institutional racism, ignorance of disability and non-heteronormative forms of sexuality – are created and recreated by groups of individuals, but whose actions are mediated through social institutions.

Crucially, this account of the origins of social knowledge in the qualitatively felt consequences of social action is the basis for Dewey's theory of democracy. In his 'functional' (Hickman, 1992, p. 170) theory of the state in *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey (2016) explains how publics are formed to control the negative consequences of social actions that outstrip the capabilities of individuals or small groups of individuals to control them directly. 'Special agencies and measures' are created to take care of these consequences, and a new social class of 'officials' appear whose sole job is to administer this process of taking care of the conditions and consequences of social reproduction for the benefit of the public (Dewey 2016, p. 78). Governments are not to be equated with the state – which is merely a 'technological artefact' of the public created by the public and managed by officials (Hickman, 1992, p. 173) – because the government includes both members of the public and the officials employed by the public to represent it. While this may appear to be merely a liberal vision of democracy, where the state is supposed to be held to account by the public as a quasi-independent social body, two things are unique in Dewey's formulation, both of which are important for understanding the power of his distinctive critical social theory. Firstly, there is a strong sense of *responsibility* on the part of the state, the government, its officials and apparatuses to the public, in the sense that these apparatuses and therefore the state they sustain *have no existence outside this function*. This explains an aspect of reification that is oversimplified in Frankfurt School critical theory: it is the objectification of public institutions – from markets to universities – as having an independent existence that alienates those who rely on these institutions for their material reproduction. For Dewey (2016, p. 109), this happens when a government becomes 'corrupt and arbitrary', its officials turning away from the public interest and towards their 'private account'.

For Dewey, by contrast, democracy is a process, or perhaps more accurately, a *method*. When people come together within social groups to control the indirect consequences of social action, a 'public' is formed. For Dewey 'association', not individuality, is the basic condition of all things, from natural objects to human beings. Individuality is an *achievement*, dependent on association and the development of character through reflection. For associated individuals to constitute a community, however, individuals must become conscious of this association through the apprehension of shared interests through inquiry: 'The planets in a constellation would form a community if they were aware of the connections of the activities of each with those of the others and could use this knowledge to direct behaviour' (Dewey, 2016, p. 76). However, rather than assume the existence of 'natural' groupings like class, Dewey argues that communities of inquiry arise in response to social problems that individuals on their own cannot deal with. As suggested above, publics arise because conditions and consequences become increasingly complex in modern societies, and therefore individuals form groups, within which experiences can be shared and resources combined through social inquiry. When consequences are observed *as consequences*, they 'take on a new value' – they are revealed to be the result of social action and are therefore subject to control through collective action (Dewey, 2016, p. 75). While this provides Dewey with a functional theory of the state and political democracy, it explains that the shortcomings of both democracy and class consciousness are not due to either a lack of intelligence in citizens or a totalising ideology that nullifies such intelligence, but only a failure to engage in processes of social inquiry that would, in the words of C Wright Mills (1959), 'convert private troubles into public issues'. The solution is not to reduce the involvement of citizens in democracy or to impose class consciousness from above, but to address this failure to inquire through providing people with the resources and education needed for social inquiry to become an intelligent habit. As Dewey (2016, p. 172) noted, the saying that the 'cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy' does not point to the need to 'introduce more machinery of the same kind as that which already exist' but to the need to return to the 'idea' of democracy, to 'clarify' and 'deepen' our understanding and appreciation of it, and to employ 'our sense of its meaning to criticise and remake its political manifestations'.

In other words, social inquiry as the 'method of democracy' is the means through which publics develop a form of 'collective intelligence'. As Narayan (2016, no page) notes, Dewey 'confusingly, across different texts and sometimes within the same text interchangeably', uses a variety of terms – including 'democracy as a social idea', 'method of social intelligence', 'intelligence', 'experimentalist method', 'collective intelligence', 'co-operative intelligence', 'liberalism' and 'democracy as a way of life' – to denote this dynamic, malleable and cumulative aspect of public social action informed by inquiry. While Narayan (2016) opts for Dewey's concept of 'creative democracy' to summarise a proliferation of related ideas, this thesis chooses 'collective intelligence' – used by Dewey in his late essay 'Democracy is Radical' (Dewey, 1937) – to reflect the primacy of an inquiry-based process bridging qualitative experience and democratising social action. As explained above, institutions are collective habits that must be made more intelligent through inquiry and democratising practice, and democracy is a political system made up of such institutions, more or less democratic depending on how far the public participates intelligently in its reproduction. As Philip Brown and Hugh Lauder (2001) argue, the concept of collective intelligence is also important in articulating the social basis of intelligence, and therefore refuting classical liberal and neoliberal elitist conceptions of intelligence. In Friedrich Hayek's theory of the market as information processor, for example, social intelligence is limited to personal 'knowledge of time and circumstance', and the possibility of intelligent social inquiry in overcoming individual limitations denied (Wainwright, 1994, p. 50; see also Chapter 3). However, Dewey's theory of collective intelligence is also *historical*, in that it recognises that the 'capacities and potentials of what we consider intelligence and intelligent action change in relation to new demands and practices of any given age' (Brown and Lauder, 2001, p. 214). While political democracy artificially limits social intelligence in the interests of the few, creative or radical democracy aims to unlock the potential for social intelligence through democratic participation and the democratisation of educational and knowledge-producing institutions such as universities (see Chapter 6).

The *idea* of radical democracy, then, provides both an end-in-view for collective action, and a position with which to critique the shortcomings of political democracy. However, as Kadlec (2007, p. 13) argues, this is not, like Habermas proposed, a quasi-transcendental ideal or fixed principle imposed

from without, but rather a 'calibrating principle' that acknowledges that the 'specific conditions' for the freedom of intelligence are to be 'crafted on an ongoing basis through the medium of experience as a social force'. As argued in relation to the idea of responsible technology, the principle of freedom of intelligence is one that arises out of historical experience and is continuously tested in the struggles of ordinary people against repression. Where Adorno and Horkheimer's immanent critique of Enlightenment could only conclude that reason was irredeemably corrupted by instrumentalism, Dewey is able to point to the existence of both intelligent action and the defence of intelligence through social-historical collective struggle. On this basis, Dewey can recover the emancipatory potential of the idea of democracy through real examples of democratic intelligence in the present. Democracy as an end-in-view is a 'responsible hypothesis' which is tested and confirmed in every example of emancipatory social action and that critiques the structures and practices that hold back the emancipation of intelligence. Values, in Dewey's critical social theory, are 'crafted in practice' and 'cannot be said to exist independently of the relations by which they become coherent' (Kadlec, 2007, p. 13). Democracy is a desirable value, or end-in-view, because it is the only form of social organisation that is able to tap into the collective intelligence of the public. It is also the only 'responsible' way of governing society, as the values guiding social action and social change are generated and tested by the public within everyday social practice.

Towards a critical theory of populism

As pointed out above, Habermas retrospectively admitted that Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* could have been a useful reference point for his book, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. While falsely accusing Dewey of being an 'anthropologically minded epistemologist', Habermas (2002, p. 228) also acknowledged the 'convergence' in their views 'on the discursively structured public sphere as a requirement for democracy'. It is true, their respective accounts are very similar, and both highlight the importance of inquiry in process of public formation. While Dewey recognises the impact of economic interests on the health of the public, particularly the expansion of corporate capitalism and the co-optation of democratic governments within this process of expansion

(Holmwood, 2013), Habermas provides much more detail on the political economy of modern democracy. However, as argued in the last chapter, Habermas' reliance on the method of immanent critique and scepticism towards collective subjectivity prevented him from seeing a way out of the impasse of Frankfurt School pessimism. In the final chapter of *Structural Transformation*, Habermas lays out two 'conditions' that any new public sphere would have to meet 'to be effective in the political realm': 'the objectively possible minimising of bureaucratic decisions and a revitalising of structural conflicts of interest according to the standard of universal interest everyone can acknowledge' (Habermas, 1992, p. 235). In a somewhat circular argument, Habermas concludes that the non-public opinion arising from the failure of representative democracies to meet the real needs of its subjects is prevented from becoming critical publicity due to the manipulative pseudo-publicity of the culture industry. In a sense, Habermas reproduces the kind of 'democratic elitism' represented by Walter Lippmann (1991;1993), which Dewey is railing against in *The Public and Its Problems*.

Dewey accepts Lippmann's diagnosis of the ill health of American democracy and the 'eclipse' of the public by corporate capitalism – which through the 'formal separation of economic and political institutions' attempts to replace the vision of state and market regulated by an active, intelligent public with a technocratic vision of society ruled by the logic of the market, rendering the public 'nugatory' (Holmwood, 2013, p. 185-7). Furthermore, Dewey agrees with Lippmann that the conception of an 'omnicompetent citizenry' is a fiction, and with the Frankfurt School against Lukács that there is no class with a *structurally* unique understanding of the totality. However, for Dewey this does not entail that 'non-public opinion' is unintelligent, or that radical democracy must be replaced with rule by experts. Dewey's critical social theory is essentially designed to show that non-public opinion *is already intelligent*. The feelings of discontent that make up non-public opinion provide both stimulus and content for more explicit and theoretical inquiries into the conditions and consequences of social action. It is exactly the social process of investigating problematic situations that gives rise to the public. Furthermore, the intended outcome of social inquiry is not 'knowledge' of the totality in the strong, and ultimately *reified* sense implied by Lippmann, Lukács and Habermas, but a fallible hypothesis to guide political action. The test of such practical knowledge is not whether it accurately represents the totality

of capitalism, but whether it successfully guides the practice of democratisation. As Kadlec (2007, pp. 93-4) explains, 'Dewey's objection is that citizens are not motivated by a general theory of democracy, but by particular interests that have nothing whatsoever to do with a democratic principle of omnicompetence'.

Dewey's analysis of democratic knowledge was prophetic because it recognised that the already alienated and reified relationship between experts and citizens symptomatic of 'political democracy' becomes an acute political problem in the era of globalisation (Holmwood, 2013). As Dewey noted, the public has an intimate and immediate knowledge of the consequences of public policy, and therefore experts rely on the public to verify the success of such policy. If public policy fails to meet the needs of the public, in Habermasian terms, non-public opinion regarding the shortcomings of political democracy will begin to appear. As the gap between public policy and social need widens, the conditions for non-public opinion to be converted to critical publicity through social inquiry will become more fertile. As Holmwood (2013, p. 187) notes, 'where expertise is in the service of political or administrative elites it is likely to be vulnerable to populist mobilizations by the very interests that expert opinion is being called upon to moderate'. What both Dewey and Habermas are describing, therefore, is the emergence of 'populism' as a response to the breakdown of the dialectic between the public and democracy. This dialectic is 'managed' by monopoly capitalism through the absorption of experts into the welfare state and culture industry. Despite this manipulation, however, the distance this creates between public and expert knowledge 'eclipses' the public, which must then revert to populist forms of political action to articulate its demands. By circumventing the limited and limiting institutions of political democracy, the public can then make its concerns heard and exert some measure of political leverage on parliamentary systems.

While non-public opinion can and often is taken up by reactionary forces seeking to gain political advantage for minority interests, capturing the frustration felt towards elites in simplistic slogans and solutions, Dewey's theory of collective intelligence suggests an alternative path. If individuals can form with others inquiring publics to turn 'private troubles into public issues', non-public opinion can be turned into social knowledge and become the focus of democratising social action within progressive

political movements. In contrast to the top-down, manipulative approach of right-wing populist mobilisation, 'intelligent populism' is an emergent, bottom-up and essentially democratic process of public self-education and mobilisation. Intelligent populism is not a necessary or pre-determined outcome of the dialectic of the public and democracy – or more accurately the breakdown of this dialectic in late capitalist democracies – but only a *possibility*. This path must be actively taken by the public and requires the development of intelligent habits of inquiry. Dewey's social theory is a contribution to this project, offering a methodology to be taken up by individuals frustrated by the shortcomings of political democracy but also willing to co-operate with others to solve these problems democratically. In the sense that this 'method of democracy' gives publics a tool to both critique and overcome the limitations of democracy, it is a critical and normative social theory aiming at the self-emancipation of society from the distorting influence of corporate capitalism.

Dewey was sceptical towards social class as the *only* way of conceiving structural conflicts within society. However, he also clearly recognised the existence of class, and the way that class power distorts democracy within capitalist societies. In his reply to Leon Trotsky's essay 'Their Morals and Ours', Dewey again drew attention to the need for intelligent examination of the relationship between means and ends in intelligent political practice. Instead of acknowledging the interdependence of means and ends, Dewey (1938c) insisted that Trotsky had subordinated the end-in-view of emancipation to class struggle as the only means to achieve this end. In other words, Trotsky's Marxism was not an intelligent, inquiry-based strategy for social change, but rather a dogmatic one that tended to ignore the consequences of political action due to an almost religious belief in the truth of historical materialism. However, Dewey did not, like the Frankfurt School, rule out class struggle as a means of attaining emancipation. For Dewey (1938c, p. 233), 'there are presumably several, perhaps many, different ways by means of which the class struggle may be carried on'. What is essential is that the social problems that bring individuals together within inquiring publics, whether they be related to class, gender, ethnicity and so on, are dealt with intelligently and democratically. Nevertheless, in his later work, Dewey realised that, at some point, such inquiring publics will reach the inevitable conclusion that in an 'age of potential plenty', when social need can be easily met by the application of responsible

technology, 'industry and finance' must be 'socially directed on behalf of institutions that provide the material basis for the cultural liberation and growth of individuals' (Dewey, 1935, p. 54).

Conclusion

This chapter concluded with a hypothesis: that the non-public opinion described by Habermas in his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* could be turned into what he called 'critical opinion' and what is here called 'intelligent populism' through Dewey's 'method of democracy'. This hypothesis is based on the theory of 'collective intelligence' described in this chapter, which was argued to be an advance on Frankfurt School critical theory in a number of important ways. Where Horkheimer reifies the relationship between means and ends, creating an epistemological split between subjective-instrumental and objective-substantive forms of reason, and thus undermining his vision of critical theory as interdisciplinary academic social research, Dewey bases his theory of social inquiry on a fundamental continuity and practicality of means-ends rationality within everyday problem solving. This in turn reveals the basic intelligence of all human action and provides the foundations for Dewey's critical social theory as a methodology of de-reification similar to that of Lukács, but without the need for a vanguardist party. For Dewey, reification denotes a collective habit of 'forgetting' the qualitative basis of human experience and the origins of all knowledge, institutions and social structures in everyday practice. In a sense, this knowledge and our institutions and social structures are themselves forms of relatively permanent habits and can also be judged on their intelligence in terms of how far they enable or frustrate the intelligent control of social conditions for the development of an intelligent society, or what Dewey (1939a) calls 'democracy as a way of life'.

Like Lukács, therefore, Dewey located the origins of reification in everyday life, and of de-reification in reflection on the habits developed and inherited to go about our daily business. Also, like Lukács, Dewey located the possibility of true consciousness in the disruption of this daily business by the contradictions operating behind the scenes of this everyday life, so to speak. Although Dewey theorised these contradictions in his metaphysics as the 'rhythmic alternation' of existence as the 'relative

permanence' of human-created culture and society is disrupted by the flux of history, this maps on straightforwardly to the Marxist concept of contradiction. While the aim of Marxist social theory is to reveal the totality behind the fragmentation and reification of everyday experience, the aim of Dewey's metaphysics is to clear the intellectual ground of 'medieval deposits' so that the public can use inquiry as a democratic social tool to reconstruct the totality from within experience themselves. In a sense, Marxism and Deweyian instrumentalism start and end in the same place: how does true consciousness emerge out of false consciousness? Marxist critical social theory from Lukács to the Frankfurt School, however, jump ahead and answer prematurely, based in both cases on an assumption that it the job of intellectuals – either professional revolutionaries or social science academics – to lead the public from one to the other. As suggested in the Introduction to this thesis, at the most fundamental level, this comes from a pessimistic and anti-democratic view of ordinary intelligence. Dewey, on the other hand, presents a more modest hypothesis – the possibility of 'intelligent populism' – based on both an analysis of the contradiction between political democracy and the idea of democracy and on the empirically verifiable existence of intelligent collective action. While Dewey doesn't describe the history of political struggles for democratisation, the continuous struggle by ordinary people to realise the idea of democracy provides a supporting backdrop to Dewey's theory of collective intelligence.

Dewey's theory of collective intelligence has immediate implications for today's social and political situation, indicating a way forward for intellectuals in the struggle against neoliberalism and marketisation, described in the next two chapters. Marketisation – the application of neoliberal public policy to higher education – is currently attempting to absorb universities into the culture industry of monopoly capitalism. As indicated above, the issue of expertise and the relationship between experts and the public becomes of crucial importance as monopoly capitalism moves in this direction. Dewey suggests a direct and dialectical relationship between the failure of intellectuals to mediate an intelligent public with the democratic state and the prevalence of populism as a response to both the perception that intellectuals have deserted the public and the failure of the democratic state to meet real needs. While Dewey is not suggesting intellectuals should carry the blame for this – although they must, in an epistemological and social sense, be held *responsible* for the failure to address the alienation of inquiry

from everyday life – he does demand that intellectuals take sides, as the 'neutrality' of the academic profession is no longer viable. Just as the culture industry renders the public 'nugatory', so does it remove the material basis for value neutrality. However, before the reconstruction of higher education based on Dewey's theory can be undertaken, the 'problematic situation' of neoliberalism must be reconstructed. It is to this task that the next chapter turns.

Part 2: A Problematic Situation

Chapter 3: Neoliberalism and its Consequences

Introduction

Following the pattern of inquiry outlined in the last chapter, Part 2 reconstructs the 'problematic situation' of neoliberalism from its consequences in everyday experience. Beginning with the qualitative experience of inequality and insecurity – channelled by right-wing forces into reactionary populist movements – the first section of this chapter traces 'austerity' to a crisis of neoliberalism, in turn caused by the 2008 Financial Crisis and the subsequent return of stagnation. The second section turns to recent academic histories of neoliberalism as originating in a highly-organised, elite political project aimed at the restoration of monopoly capitalist interests. Based in the Mont Pèlerin Society, the 'neoliberal thought collective' created an elaborate system of ideology to mask these interests, disseminating arguments for 'laissez faire' to the public through the public sphere, while advancing monopolisation through its influence on political elites. From of a critical analysis of two key neoliberal texts – Friedrich Hayek's 'The Use of Knowledge in Society' and Milton Friedman's 'The Methodology of Positive Economics' – as well as a class-based critique of the more paranoiac tendencies of recent academic histories of the Mont Pèlerin Society, the last section outlines neoliberalism as an ideological 'double truth doctrine'. In the final section, this analysis is applied to contemporary right-wing populism, which attempts to co-opt the anger caused by the consequences of neoliberalism within right-wing conservative and populist politics aimed at by-passing democracy in favour of authoritarian. However, this chapter concludes that this anger can also be directed through Dewey's 'method of democracy' to create a progressive movement for social change, hypothesised at the end of the last chapter as 'intelligent populism'.

Reconstructing neoliberalism

Human beings worldwide are experiencing unprecedentedly high levels of financial and workplace insecurity (Standing, 2011; Hews, 2014), inequality (Piketty, 2014; Stiglitz, 2016) and as a result,

comparably high levels of physical and mental stress (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010; Fisher, 2011; Dorling, 2014). Recent UK government headline figures – which claim that unemployment has fallen to the lowest level for over 40 years (see Figure 2) – hide a reality of under-employment and insecurity (see Figure 3). According the Trades Union Congress (TUC, 2016), 3.2 million UK workers (1 in 10) were in what it calls 'precarious work' in 2016, and the number of workers at risk of missing out on key employment protections had nearly doubled in a decade to 1.5 million. Self-employment within what is now referred to as the UK's 'gig economy' increased from 3.8 million in 2008 to 4.6 million in 2015 (ONS, 2016). Within this figure, part-time self-employment grew by 88% between 2001 and 2015. Such increases in precarious employment are often justified with reference to increases in flexibility and control that such contracts provide not just for employers but also to employees. However, the TUC (2016, p. 29) argues that such contracts not only tend to mean 'lower pay and a lack of control over working life' but there is also evidence that those in temporary and precarious employment experience negative impacts on their health and well-being. An analysis of the British Household Panel Survey in the UK, for example, has shown that 'healthy men and women suffer adverse health effects in insecure, low paid work and those facing low earnings and insecurity were two and a half times more likely than those in better jobs to develop an illness limiting their capacity to work' (TUC, 2016, pp. 29-30). Furthermore, a report by the World Health Organization also highlighted the negative effects of precarious work on health and well-being, including 'higher mortality among temporary workers, and an association between poor mental health and precarious employment' (TUC, 2016, pp. 29-30). Finally, research by academics at Cambridge University showed that precarious contracts used in the UK and US retail industries had caused widespread anxiety, stress and depression in workers due to financial insecurity (TUC, 2016). The TUC (2016, p. 4) concludes, therefore, that the 'key risks associated with work have been increasingly transferred to working people, while any financial rewards from flexibility have accrued to employers'.

The society-wide physical and mental health effects of insecurity at work are compounded by the effects of economic inequality, which has also increased significantly in recent years. According to Mike Savage (2015), the top 10% earned 17 times more than the lowest 10% in 2014 in the UK, and the top

1% earn 124 times more than the lowest 1%. Relative poverty has risen, with a 20% rise in the share of households living below the minimum income standard defined by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Dorling, 2014). Income inequality is both further compounded by, and distinct from, wealth inequality. Savage (2015) describes a 'wealth mountain' that has emerged in the UK, with an increase in absolute wealth closely followed by an increasing divide between how this absolute wealth is shared: for the bottom 50% of society, average marketable wealth increased from £5000 to £15,000 during 1976-2005, while for the top 1% the figure rose from £700,000 to £2.2 million. Despite absolute wealth tripling, the gap between rich and poor has also effectively tripled, rising from £695,000 to £2.2 million. As with work insecurity, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (2010) argue that income and wealth inequality can be directly correlated with a range of health problems, such as mental health problems, obesity, lower life expectancy and higher rates of infant mortality, as well as social problems, including an increase in the number of homicides, higher imprisonment rates and more teenage births. Inequality also has a negative impact on the general level of trust in society, as well as educational attainment and therefore social mobility. Almost all problems common to people at the bottom end of the economic scale are more prevalent in unequal societies. In other words, 'trickle down' economics doesn't work, and thus an absolute increase wealth and economic growth will not address the physical and mental health problems related to social inequality. Wilkinson and Pickett (2010, p. 18) conclude, therefore, that modern societies are 'despite their affluence, social failures'.

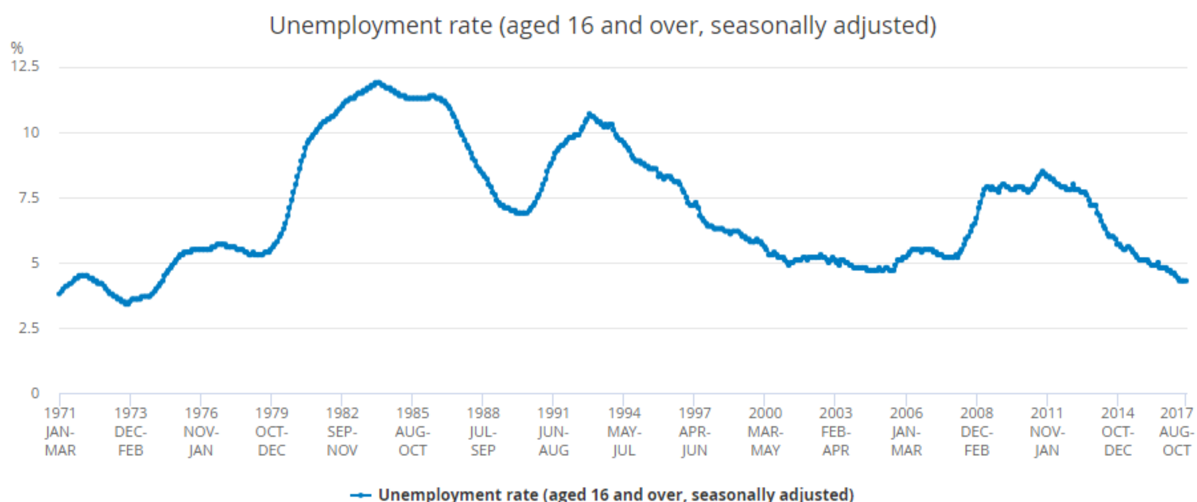


Figure 1: UK unemployment rate (%) from 1970s to today (ONS, 2016)

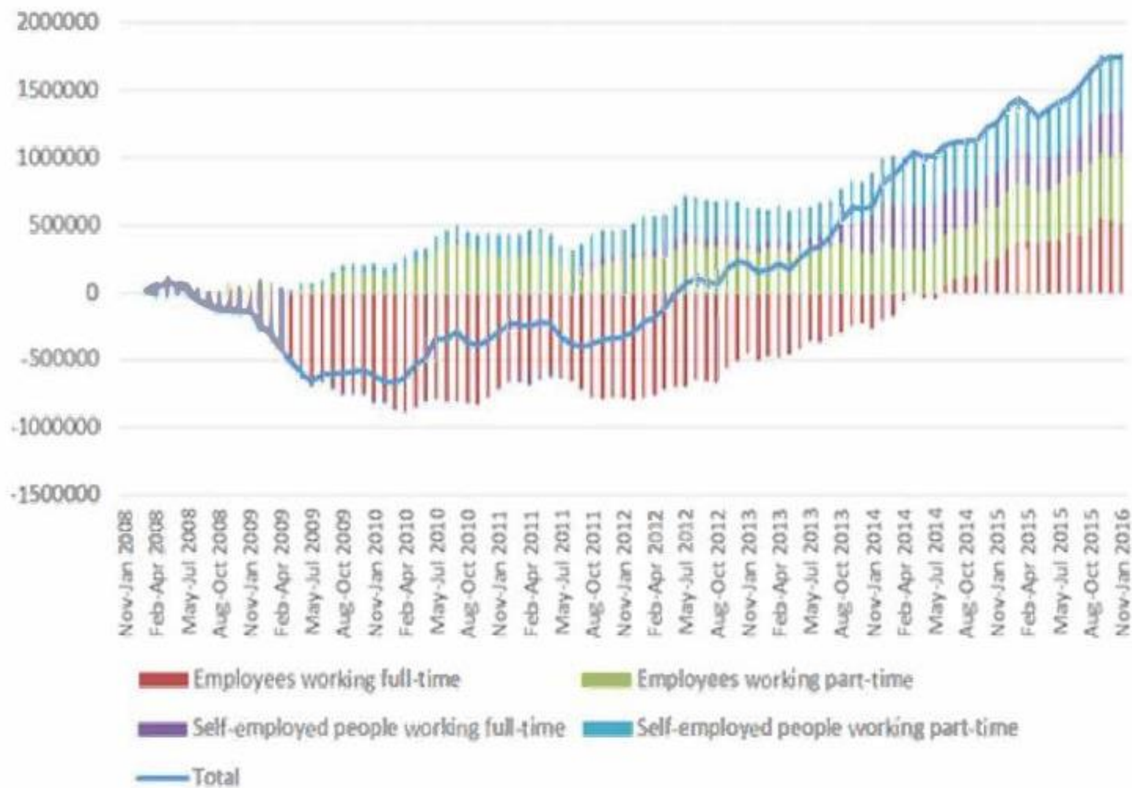


Figure 2: Net employment growth 2008-2016 in the UK (Klair, 2016)

As argued in Chapter 2, these negatively felt consequences of social actions allow for the reconstruction of the social totality through inquiry. Although the experiences described above come from academic and trade union sources, they are real, and their truth can be verified in conversations with those affected by the insecurity and inequality that structures contemporary social life. As Steger and Roy (2010, p. x) note, many people now point to 'neoliberalism' as the cause of this inequality and insecurity, a label that has 'stuck in the public mind' despite criticisms of this concept by mainstream economists and social science academics. Although in use for almost a century, coined in post-WW1 Germany 'by a small circle of economists and legal scholars affiliated with the 'Freiburg School' to refer to their moderate programme of reviving classical liberalism', the term neoliberalism entered public consciousness thanks to the spectacular collapse in 2008 of what it refers to: 30 years of economic policy aimed at 'deregulating national economies, liberalising international trade and creating a single global market' (Steger and Roy, 2010, p. viii-x). Ten years ago the deregulated, global, financialised

neoliberal economy imploded as a housing bubble in the US burst, causing a chain of economic events that resulted in trillions of dollars of assets being wiped out worldwide and a period of stagnation that has lasted to this day, comparable in scale only to the Great Depression of the 1930s (Steger and Roy, 2010). Many people will also point to 'austerity' as the cause of inequality and insecurity. However, contrary to the arguments of the UK Conservative Party that try to pin the fiscal deficit requiring austerity budgets on New Labour's excessive public spending in the years preceding 2008, these deficits were, in fact, created by the unprecedent 'bail-outs' demanded by failing banks, costing the UK Government an estimated £141bn (Oxfam, 2013, p. 1). Austerity – which in the UK has primarily taken the form of deep spending cuts with comparatively small increases in tax (Oxfam, 2013) – is a neoliberal response to the crisis, which has in fact held back economic recovery and prolonged stagnation. In reality, the UK Conservatives are 'using the argument for balancing the budget as an excuse to severely prune back the welfare state, which they have always wanted to reduce' (Chang, 2014, p. 104).

Despite the widespread acceptance of neoliberalism as the cause of both the crisis and its consequences, there has been what Dewey (2016) would identify as a 'cultural lag' with regards to both expert and public responses to the emergence of this problematic situation. Will Davies (2017, p. xiii) recollects how in the immediate aftermath of the crisis, there appeared a sense that neoliberalism had 'suddenly gone off the rails and a new paradigm would have to be grasped'. As noted in the introduction to the thesis, many turned to Marxist critical theory to explain where the crisis had come from (Harvey, 2010). However, no new paradigm emerged, and despite the relentless attack on the public through austerity, apart from a few large protests in 2010 to the first welfare cuts introduced by the UK 'Coalition' Government, a mass movement against neoliberalism failed to appear. For Davies (2017, pp. xvii), this can be explained in terms of a society-wide depression fostered by the competitive meritocracy of neoliberal ideology, in which people are encouraged to blame the effects of austerity on themselves. Dewey (1940, p. 162) would link this to the collective habits of 'excessive individualism' nurtured by neoliberalism, which prevent people turning their 'private trouble to public issues' (Mills, 1959). Nevertheless, the political consequences of this crisis have finally begun to appear. The 'eruptions' of Donald Trump's election to the US presidency and the UK's decision to leave the European Union by

referendum in 2016 represented the ‘long-awaited politicisation and publicisation of a crisis that, until then, had been largely dealt with by the same cadre of experts whose errors had caused it in the first place’ (Davies, 2017, p. xv).

This last point is crucial. As noted in the last chapter, the de-politicisation of the economy may be hidden from the public, but the complicity of experts in preventing social change that would ameliorate the effects of such a crisis – or worse, the involvement of experts in policy that not only cruelly blames ordinary people for their objective social problems, but forces them to pay for a crisis they are not responsible for – creates the conditions for politicisation. The result, for Davies (2017, p. xiv), has been the ‘revenge of politics on economics’. Davies (2017, p. xvii), however, shares with the Frankfurt School a rather limited and dim view of populism, explaining the popular upheavals in the last two years purely in terms of a popular sadomasochism resulting from mass alienation and political apathy. Davies also shares with mainstream political science the assumption that populist mobilisations are ‘aberrant’ phenomena, in the sense that they either fail to meet the classificatory criteria of substantive political ideologies like socialism or fascism or are merely the unintelligent expressions of reactionary, right-wing dissent (Laclau, 2007). The work of Cas Mudde, for example, while analytically sophisticated, fits into the former grouping, as he concludes that populism is a ‘thin-centred ideology’ which can be ‘grafted on’ to substantive ideologies (see Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012). Furthermore, both Frankfurt School and political science views of populism betray the influence of ‘mass psychology’ research, which considers any agency on the part of ‘masses’ to be an expression of herd mentality (Laclau, 2007).

By contrast, Ernest Laclau (2007) argues that ‘populism’ is a form of political reason that has become prevalent in globalised capitalism, which in analytical terms precedes the ascription of ideologies. As a result of the breakdown of ‘natural’ political categories such as class, mass movements have constructed political signifiers and built hegemonic organisations across interest-based groupings as part of a democratic process of political mobilisation. The common interests upon which such inter-grouping solidarity is based may contain elements of traditional political categories – such as class or race – but primarily the ‘meaning’ of such populist movements is made up of an organic combination and

articulation of immediately relevant issues. Clearly, this shares many features of the Deweyian theory of collective intelligence and the hypothesis of intelligent populism suggested in Chapter 2. For Dewey, democratic reason is grounded in the articulation of issues identified through social inquiry, and it is through this process of articulation that collective subjectivity is formed. What both theories of populism point to is the existence of a 'proto-rational' form of collective subjectivity which is both analytically prior to and continuous with the political movements organised around 'classical' social and political issues such as class, race and gender. While Habermas' concept of 'non-public opinion' clearly also hinted at such a theory of populism, the influence of Frankfurt School pessimism led him to conclude that the conversion of such proto-rational dissent into 'critical publicity' was impossible within monopoly capitalism.

While this section began with qualitative experience – following the 'pattern of inquiry' outlined in Chapter 2, the remainder of this chapter turns to the academic literature on 'neoliberalism' to reconstruct the problematic situation that produced the negative consequences described above. While recent histories of neoliberalism (Burgin, 2012; Mirowski and Plehwe, 2009; Stedman Jones, 2012) – which take inspiration from Michel Foucault's (2008) pathbreaking *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* – provide the foundation for this reconstruction, the next two sections critically examine two fundamental texts of neoliberalism, Friedrich Hayek's 'The Use of Knowledge in Society' and Milton Friedman's 'The Methodology of Positive Economics' respectively, in order to reach a deeper understanding of neoliberalism as an ideology that frames and guides the 'actually existing neoliberalism' that now dominates economic and social policy in the US and UK. This then provides a strong foundation for the last section of this chapter, which argues, following Mirowski (2013), but also attenuating the more paranoiac tendencies in his interpretation, for an interpretation of neoliberalism as a 'double truth' doctrine, designed to hide the anti-competitive tendencies of what John Bellamy Foster and Fred Magdoff, (2009) call 'monopoly finance capitalism'.

First-wave neoliberalism: Friedrich Hayek

Many histories and theories of neoliberalism start their accounts with the 'actually existing neoliberalism' of the 1970s, when neo-conservative governments in the UK and US led by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan respectively won popular support and parliamentary power on the basis of unashamedly aggressive free market ideologies. For Steger and Roy (2010, p. 21), for example, the Reagan and Thatcher 'revolutions' were distinguishable by their 'forceful articulation of very particular sets of neoliberal ideas and claims and their successful translation into concrete policies and programmes'. In other words, while 'neoliberal' ideas pre-existed Thatcher and Reagan, it was their ideological purity and application in practice in the 1970s that established this period as the true beginning of neoliberalism, or what they describe as 'first-wave neoliberalism'. According to Duménil and Lévy (2005, p. 9), neoliberalism must fundamentally – historically – be understood as a 'new social order' established during this period in which the 'power and income of the upper fractions of the ruling classes – the wealthiest persons – was re-established in the wake of a setback'. Similarly, David Harvey (2007) explains the rise of neoliberalism as the outcome of a successful class struggle waged by the ruling class against the industrial proletariat of developed Western economies, in which the 'class compromise' of post-WW2 welfare state capitalism – when strong unions ensured the redistribution of profits to workers, leading to high levels of productivity for heavy industries in the UK and US – first collapsed in the wake of 'stagflation' in the 1960s, and then was intentionally destroyed in the 1970s and 80s through deregulation and deindustrialisation. Within the 'monopoly capitalism' tradition of critical theory, Baran and Sweezy (1966) argue that war economy of the Second World War had greatly expanded the productive capacity of industry in the US and UK at the same time as consumer spending was curtailed. This created a build-up of demand that in turn led to a boom in the decades after the war. However, these boom conditions eventually ran dry, and stagnation returned. As a result, the profitability of monopoly firms 'plunged' during the 1960s, and corporate players turned to right-wing political organisations to defend their interests and re-establish profitability through policy intervention.

The above analyses linking top-down political struggle with changes in the structure of the Western economies are important for understanding the 'why' of neoliberalism, i.e. what changed in the 1960s

and 70s that enabled neoliberal hegemony to replace what has been called by many economic historians a 'golden age' of Western capitalism (Chang, 2014; Hobsbawm, 1995; Steger and Roy, 2010). However, recent histories drawing on Foucault's (2008) early 'genealogy' of neoliberalism, by reconstructing the origins of neoliberal ideology in the 'socialist calculation debates' of the 1920s and 30s, enable a much clearer picture to emerge of what distinguishes neo-liberalism from the 19th century 'laissez faire' liberalism that it is often confused with – a confusion which the final section of this chapter argues is itself a key innovation of neoliberalism's 'double truth doctrine'. In this chapter, therefore, Steger and Roy's periodisation is shifted so that this 'pre-history' is established as neoliberalism's true 'first-wave'; followed by the 'second-wave' described above but which was precipitated by a shift in neoliberal ideology under Milton Friedman's leadership, explored in the next section; as well as a 'third-wave' outlined at the end of this chapter, in which neoliberalism assumes a defensive position after the Great Financial Crisis in 2008, turning to marketisation within the public sector – for example, in higher education – to rescue 'actually existing neoliberalism' from a protracted crisis of reproduction.

At the heart of the neoliberal project, as indicated by its 'neo' prefix, was an attempt to reconstruct classical liberalism to meet the challenges of socialism on the one hand, and monopoly capitalism on the other. For Foucault (2008, p. 121), the key distinction between 'laissez faire' or 'classical' liberalism – which Foucault associates with the French 'Physiocrats', specifically François Quesnay, in the 18th century and with the Scottish Enlightenment in the 19th century, specifically Adam Smith – and early 20th century 'neoliberalism' is a change of emphasis away from defending an idealised marketplace model of capitalism from state interference towards using the state to govern '*for* the market, not because of it' (emphasis in original). Wilhelm Röpke's 'sociological liberalism' is singled out by Foucault (2008, p. 120) as having a particularly strong influence on the development of neoliberalism. Röpke's key insight was that competition – for Marxists the foundation not only of capitalist exchange but also of social relations (see Chapter 1) – was an 'essential economic logic' that would 'only appear and produce its effects under certain conditions which have to be carefully and artificially constructed' (Foucault, 2008, p. 120). Röpke was a founding member, alongside Friedrich Hayek, of the Mont

Pèlerin Society (MPS), a secretive club of neoliberal intellectuals that Dieter Plehwe (2009) insists provided the institutional basis for what he calls a 'neoliberal thought collective' (NTC). Still operating today, the NTC is a transnational political-ideological project consisting of 'more than one thousand scholars, journalists, (think tank) professionals, and corporate and political leaders around the globe' that 'for more than fifty years' has elaborated and promoted neoliberal ideology (Plehwe, 2009, p. 8). The conspiratorial tendency of the NTC idea will be dealt with in more detail in the final section of this chapter, however at this stage it is enough to note the importance of this vehicle for transmitting a reconstruction of liberal-economic theory in the 1920s to later manifestations of the NTC, specifically under Friedman's leadership, such as the Chicago School of Economics and the Reagan and Thatcher governments (second-wave neoliberalism).

As Dewey (2008) argues, classical liberalism – which equated the marketplace as an example of the bourgeois public sphere with democracy (see also Habermas, 1991) – was in its early stages a radical philosophy that aimed at the liberation of society from medieval authoritarianism. The word 'liberalism', Dewey (2008, p. 365) explains, came into use during the Enlightenment to 'denote a new spirit that grew and spread with the rise of democracy', which 'implied a new interest in the common man and a new sense that the common man, the representative of the great masses of human beings, had possibilities that had been kept under, that had not been allowed to develop, because of institutional and political conditions'. In other words, early bourgeois ideology was genuinely revolutionary (at least in principle) in that it sought to bring the whole of society, previously dominated by feudal relations of production and a suffocating religious dogma of the 'divine right' of the ruling class to continue to benefit from these relations, along with it to liberation. However, because the industrial revolution driving this political revolution was hampered by the 'mass of regulations and customs formed to a large degree in feudal times', Dewey (2008, p. 365) maintains that the revolutionary force of bourgeois ideology 'took on a limited and technical significance', becoming primarily and exclusively focused on the liberation *from* economic regulation, rather than liberation for social and political power – a power that Dewey strongly associates with the 'idea' of democracy. Although Dewey was consistently critical of Marxism's tendency to reduce complex phenomena to a simplistic 'class struggle' formula, he did

agree that liberalism in the end became a 'bourgeois' ideology, serving to hide a 'transfer of power from agrarian interests to industrial and commercial interests', with power resting 'finally in the hands of finance capitalism' (Dewey, 1937, p. 337).

Foucault (2008) also finds in classical liberalism a positive, political content, tracing in the Physiocrats for example a critique of 'raison d'Etat' – the authoritarian political philosophy of medieval Europe expressed most forcefully by the pre-Enlightenment French state under Louis XIV. In his lectures at the Collège de France in the late 1970s, especially in the 'Birth of Biopolitics' series, Foucault (2008) tries to show that neoliberalism isn't just a reactionary ideology aimed at the reestablishment of monopoly capitalist power and profitability, but rather a somewhat grotesque and therefore fascinating development of a critical-philosophical and essentially 'modern' reflection on what he calls the 'art of government'. While Dewey shares the attempt to historicise liberalism, he does not share Foucault's propensity for morbid fascination. For Dewey the distortion of liberalism as an Enlightenment philosophy – which, in its radical form, for him shared more in common with socialism than with laissez faire economics – was a great tragedy of history. Dewey's work in the 1930s – the decade when John McDermott (in Dewey, 2008, p. xi) notes he 'published most of his social and political writings' – was concerned to rescue the radical content of classical liberalism, especially in its American forms, for example in the work of Thomas Jefferson and Ralph Waldo Emerson, to create a type of 'renascent liberalism' that could provide a roadmap for the democratisation of society (Dewey, 1935). This renascent liberalism was to be distinguished not only from 19th century 'laissez faire' liberalism but also from, on the one hand, the Fabian 'social liberalism' of John Maynard Keynes and Sidney and Beatrice Webb that was emerging at the time, influenced by the technocratic and paternalistic utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham, and on the other, the authoritarian Communism of the Bolshevik Party in Russia, under Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin.

What *is* fascinating about neoliberalism is that during roughly the same period, Hayek, who would go on to play a fundamental role in creating the NTC, was also trying to reconstruct liberalism. Like Dewey, Hayek tried to find a way out of the economic and political chaos of the period. Crucial to this reconstruction, as already mentioned, was finding a way to reconcile the seemingly contradictory

commitments to free markets, on the one hand, and state intervention, on the other. The key to this project was to give new meaning to the concept of freedom at the root of the philosophy of liberalism, while retaining its purely formal basis. Hayek found an ingenious solution to this problem, which was at the same time a return to one of the most enduring concepts of classical liberalism: Adam Smith's metaphor of an 'invisible hand' directing the operations of the market. In his essay, 'The Use of Knowledge in Society', Hayek (1945, p. 519) argues that the 'data' from which the economic calculus starts 'are never for the whole society 'given' to a single mind which could work out the implications and can never be so given':

> The peculiar character of the problem of a rational economic order is determined precisely by the fact that the knowledge of the circumstances of which we must make use never exists in concentrated or integrated form, but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess. The economic problem of society is thus not merely a problem of how to allocate 'given' resources – if 'given' is taken to mean given to a single mind which deliberately solves the problem set by these 'data'. It is rather a problem of how to secure the best use of resources known to any of the members of society, for ends whose relative importance only these individuals know. Or, to put it briefly, it is a problem of the utilisation of knowledge not given to anyone in its totality. (Hayek, 1945, p. 520)

In other words, state planning is impossible because no single individual or group of individuals can calculate how to allocate scarce resources to social needs; only the market with its decentralised system of supply and demand expressed in the price mechanism, can do so efficiently. In a single paragraph, Hayek delivers a devastating critique not only of classical liberalism, particularly its assumption of a perfectly rational 'homo economicus', but also of all 'socialist' programs based in some way on rational economic planning.

Key to Hayek's argument is a version of Walter Lippmann's critique of the 'omnicompetent citizen' (see Chapter 2). For Hayek and Lippmann, French classical liberalism shared with socialist economics an assumption that both individuals and states could overcome the limitations of empirical knowledge,

established by David Hume in the 18th century, through the force of the rational mind alone (Gane, 2014). It was this shared assumption that made classical liberalism vulnerable to the Marxist critique of laissez faire and allowed its alternative of a planned socialist utopia to gain traction with the disillusioned public. Hayek cleverly undermined this shared assumption while positing his own utopian alternative: the market as 'transcendental superior information processor' (Mirowski, 2009, p. 437). The 'fact' that individuals cannot apprehend the social totality is not a problem for Hayek, because the price mechanism both tells individuals everything they need to know and aggregates the partial knowledge of individuals – which Hayek, drawing on the work of Michael Polanyi, called 'knowledge of time and place' – to perform the function of ensuring demand is met with supply without the need for any single mind to know how this happens. Giving laissez faire a Kantian twist, Hayek insists that the market supplies the 'a priori' transcendental foundation for not only human knowledge, but also for liberal philosophy against socialism. While socialism falls on the shortcomings of any individual or political party to fulfil the complex, decentralised epistemological function that the market plays in the reproduction of society, liberalism now has a substantive basis to make arguments for autonomous markets operating through the computer-like price mechanism and for legal structures that protect the smooth-functioning of this operation against intervention by state planning. But in contrast to his mentor Mises, who made similar arguments for the 'catallactic' functioning of free markets but retained a libertarian hostility toward state intervention of any form, Hayek argued 'more subtly' that 'government and the state are of crucial importance because they can be deployed to work in service of the market' (Gane, 2014, p. 1096). In other words, by providing a sophisticated and philosophically 'deep' defence of market autonomy, he provided a strong foundation for the subsequent MPS position that governments, state institutions and legal frameworks could be used to enhance the efficiency of capitalist markets and to introduce the price mechanism wherever it didn't already exist, all to the benefit of corporations.

Before moving on to neoliberalism's 'second-wave' and to Friedman's development of the neoliberal social theory outlined by Hayek, it is useful to note the divergent path which Dewey took in his own reconstruction of liberalism. From a Deweyian point of view, Hayek reproduced the same 'spectator

theory of knowledge' that lies at the root of the entire epistemological project of Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy, which 'hypostatises' both knowledge and the reality of markets as products of human social activity. For Hayek (1945, p. 527), the price system is a 'marvel': 'I am convinced that if it were the result of deliberate human design, and if the people guided by the price changes understood that their decisions have significance far beyond their immediate aim, this mechanism would have been acclaimed as one of the greatest triumphs of the human mind.' Restricted by the spectator theory of knowledge, Hayek can only see intention in individual action if it is possible to hold a 'picture' of the whole as a guide to such action. As Wainwright (1994, p. 5) explains, Hayek's theory of knowledge and the ultimate grounds for his justification of the free market are flawed by a 'dogmatically individualist interpretation of the limits of human knowledge, a denial of knowledge as a social product'. For Dewey, by contrast, individualism and individual knowledge are only possible on the basis of a prior social understanding, that is both present in experience and subject to reconstruction through co-operative inquiry (see Chapter 2). 'If knowledge is a social product then it can easily be transformed through people taking action – co-operating, sharing, combining knowledge – to overcome the limits on the knowledge that they individually possess' (Wainwright, 1994, p. 58).

In terms of Lukácsian-Marxist critical theory, the mistake Hayek makes is to 'reify', as bourgeois social theory is prone to do, the social-historical development of the market as a product of class struggle. As explained in Chapter 1, Lukács' social theory describes reification as a social process, in which the capitalist division of labour, first created in the British 'manufactories' of the 19th century, more and more separates the labour power of the individual worker from the knowledge codified in the structures and patterns of mass production. This 'alienation' of the worker from his or her own labour power is what enables the individual to be controlled by the 'capitalist' – or the representatives of an increasingly socialised capital, managers – a right protected by bourgeois property law. The psychological and political consequences of this alienation are then managed within late capitalist societies by the 'culture industry' (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1997). What is interesting about Lukács' 'standpoint theory' of knowledge is that this alienation affects not only the proletariat as a social class defined by its position in the labour process, but also the capitalist class that defends its dominant position through bourgeois

ideology. From a Lukácsian-Marxist point of view, Hayek's 'marvel' at the mystical functioning of the price system is a result of the alienation of the capitalist class (and its ideological representatives) from the productive process. While this alienation clearly benefits capitalists to the detriment of wage-labourers, it also prevents individual capitalists and ideologues from being able to apprehend the social basis of knowledge or how to reconstruct the totality through socialised knowledge production and inquiry.

While is true that workers are also restricted by distortions of knowledge deriving from alienated social relations, it is also in their interests to overcome this alienation and the property relations that sustain it, whereas it is in the interest of capitalists to rationalise these social relations through ideology. As workers co-operate within social movements aimed at the democratisation of society, they can through social inquiry piece together the fragments of social knowledge and gain a moving, fallible picture of the social totality. While Dewey was sceptical of the more dogmatic ascriptions of ideology to positions within an inevitable class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, he would also argue that Hayek's social theory was based on a 'denial of context' inherent in a faulty and ultimately ideological liberal philosophy (Dewey, 1931). For Dewey, despite his attempts to reconstruct liberalism through a critique of its rationalist assumptions, Hayek's celebration of a mystical force guiding individuals towards social beneficial ends, aside from ignoring the proliferating negative social consequences of market 'transactions', actually smuggles in key rationalist assumptions. Despite, as explained above, aiming at the radical critique of medieval authoritarianism, Enlightenment liberal philosophy 'left in place debilitating elements of the old medieval synthesis', a fusion of the 'Greek idea of the non-physical intellect and the Christian idea of the immortal soul' (Dewey, 2012, p. 170). Despite the Protestant Reformation replacing the epistemological authority of the Roman Catholic Church with that of individual faith, the basis of this new knowledge involved a radical separation of the individual from society. Liberal philosophy took over this 'alienation' of individual from society and spent the next two centuries trying to find a basis for social knowledge in epistemological arguments, with Kant providing the most sophisticated version in his transcendental idealism (Dewey, 2012). Hayek rehearses this

movement, as well Kant's ultimate failure to provide a philosophical explanation for how social knowledge possible.

Second-wave neoliberalism: Milton Friedman

In the 1960s, a split emerged within the MPS. As the MPS became increasingly dominated by American economists, Hayek began to lose interest. Hayek felt that the MPS was no longer the multidisciplinary, internationalist community of inquiry he created alongside Röpke, and the swelling membership undermined its function as a secretive 'closed society' (Burgin, 2012). Milton Friedman, who had been a part of the MPS since the first meeting in 1947, saw his opportunity and staged a successful coup. This resulted in many of MPS' European members resigning in protest, and its power centre shifting to the 'Chicago School' of economics. This incident is not just of anecdotal interest; it signals an entirely new phase of the NTC that would see the 'triumphant return' of laissez faire (Burgin, 2012). In many ways, Friedman was an opportunist, moving from an initial constructive engagement with socialism and a cautious acceptance of some government regulation – for example in his 1951 pamphlet 'Neoliberalism and Its Prospects' – to an aggressive and uncompromising advocacy of free markets in *Capitalism and Freedom*. Historians of neoliberalism point to the influence of the William Volker Fund (WVF) – 'the venture capitalist of the intellectual world' (Burgin, 2012, p. 175) – which after the death of founder William Volker in 1947 and under the leadership of his nephew Harold Luhnow, took an active interest in promoting the ideas of free market liberalism. Luhnow had a long view of winning hegemony, understanding that 'a broad dispersion of small investments with an extended time horizon' could lead to 'one spectacular success' that would 'compensate for the toll of many tiny failures' (Burgin, 2012, p. 175). According to Horn and Mirowski (2009, p. 168), Friedman was not ashamed of being 'an intellectual for hire' because for Friedman, 'all intellectual discourse was essentially just a sequence of disguised market transactions'.

Before explaining the influence of Luhnow and the WVF on second-wave neoliberalism, it is useful to examine closely another of Friedman's early contributions to the neoliberal canon, 'The Methodology of Positive Economics'. This essay shows Friedman moving away from Hayek's emphasis on

philosophy and epistemology in 'The Use of Knowledge in Society', which sought to distinguish the situated economic knowledge of the entrepreneur from the disembodied rationalist knowledge of positivist science. Friedman, by contrast, considered it a 'deadly error' to set economics against science 'in the era of the Atomic Bomb' (Horn and Mirowski, 2009, p. 163). Influenced by the work of Karl Popper – who, according to Plehwe (2009) was an early member of MPS, despite expressing concerns about its stated ambition to operate as a 'closed society' (Burgin, 2012, p. 95) – Friedman attempted in his 'Methodology' essay to establish economics as a rigorous science that could make predictions about the world that could be tested in experience. Key to this project was distinguishing economics as a 'positive' science from 'normative' forms of inquiry, such as political science:

> Positive economics is in principle independent of any particular ethical position or normative judgments. As Keynes says, it deals with 'what is', not with 'what ought to be'. Its task is to provide a system of generalisations that can be used to make correct predictions about the consequences of any change in circumstances. Its performance is to be judged by the precision, scope, and conformity with experience of the predictions it yields. In short, positive economics is, or can be, an 'objective' science, in precisely the same sense as any of the physical sciences. (Friedman, 2009, p. 4)

As Uskali Mäki (2009, p. 62) explains in a retrospective assessment of Friedman's essay, one of the most controversial claims made in it is that the assumptions of an economic theory can be false, 'as long as the theory predicts well'. This argument was specifically directed at critics of neoclassical economics, who had pointed to evidence that 'real' economic actors did not behave like the utility maximisers assumed by this theory.

Friedman defends this argument with reference to numerous examples. Firstly, he points to the physical sciences, where it is an accepted hypothesis that the 'the acceleration of a body dropped in a vacuum is a constant', despite there being in application rarely a vacuum (Friedman, 2009, p. 16). What happens in reality, Friedman (2009, p. 16) explains, is that air pressure is 'assumed' to be zero, or 'close enough to zero' not to impact the results, and therefore falsify the hypothesis. Even in cases where the air pressure does have a significant influence on the results – for example if a light object is dropped, like

a feather – the hypothesis is still regarded as verified in experience, despite one of the key assumptions made by the hypothesis being in some sense 'false'. 'It can therefore be stated,' Friedman (2009, p. 18) concludes, 'under a wide range of circumstances, bodies that fall in the actual atmosphere behave *as if* they were falling in a vacuum.' He then immediately makes the analogy with economics, where such a statement would be 'rapidly translated' into 'the formula assumes a vacuum' – even through it 'clearly does no such thing' (Friedman, 2009, p. 18). This argument – which has become infamous in economics as 'Friedman's as-if methodology' (Mäki, 2009, p. 47) – is then quickly translated to two other examples, each one moving closer to human experience. In his final example, Friedman turns to a well-worn cliché of philosophy: billiards. He argues that the assumption that expert billiard players act *as if* they know the 'complicated mathematical formulas' that would give the 'optimum directions of travel' of billiard balls, despite being false, still provides useful prediction of what happens in real billiard matches (Friedman, 2009, p. 21).

Ultimately, these examples and the 'as if' methodology are meant to support Friedman's conclusion that the falsity of assumptions is irrelevant as long as the theory works in practice. Core to the project of making economics seem like a rigorous science is Friedman's (2009, p. 8) argument that the 'only relevant test of the *validity* of a hypothesis is comparison of its predictions with experience' (emphasis in original). This may sound very Deweyian, but when Friedman (2009, p. 9) explains what he means by 'testing', the difference becomes very clear: 'Factual evidence can never 'prove' a hypothesis; it can only fail to disprove it, which is what we generally mean when we say, somewhat inexactly, that the hypothesis has been 'confirmed' by experience'. In other words, scientific theories are, for Friedman, *unfalsifiable*. Here Friedman is wilfully distorting Karl Popper's (1963) 'criterion of falsifiability', ironically using Popper's attempt to distinguish science from pseudo-science to create a pseudo-science out of neoclassical economics. Popper (1963, p. 36) indeed argues that the existence of factual evidence supporting a theory was not, in itself, a reliable proof of a theory. However, while is 'easy to obtain confirmations, or verifications, for nearly every theory, if we look for confirmations', he notes, a 'genuine test' of a theory is a serious attempt to falsify it, or to refute it. A good scientific theory, for Popper, is one that rules things out and makes 'risky predictions' – predictions that can be refuted by

experience. What Friedman proposes is that as long as observations fail to disprove a theory – in other words, experience continues to support the theory while avoiding refutations – a theory should be taken as not only scientific, but scientifically valid. However, for Popper, this criterion is not strong enough. 'A theory which is not refutable by any conceivable event is non-scientific,' Popper (1963, p. 36) writes. 'Irrefutability is not a virtue of a theory (as people often think) but a vice.' Furthermore, hypotheses must be tested by a democratic public. Popper (1963, p. 352), like Dewey, considers the quality of discussion dependent on the 'variety of the competing views' facilitated by its democratic structure. For Dewey in particular, the level of democracy in public testing contributes directly to the 'truth' or 'trustworthiness' of the hypothesis or theory being tested (see Chapter 2). Due to its structural limitations as a theory of free markets, neoclassical economics necessarily excludes the consideration of the negative consequences of economic actions. In Deweyian terms, therefore, it excludes those publics most impacted by the capitalist system of production – an exclusion it was argued above would potentially lead to the formation of activist publics aimed at democratisation.

By creating a pseudo-scientific foundation for an essentially ideological doctrine, Friedman provided neoliberalism with a methodology that would make it impossible for rational arguments to have any critical effect. Interestingly, Friedman (2009b, p. 355) made a point of not responding to any criticisms to the essay: 'I decided that I had a choice: I could spend my time discussing how economics should be done … or I could spend my time doing economics'. Friedman (2009b, p. 355) admits that this decision had the effect of multiplying and intensifying the discussion around the essay, as it 'left the field open for all comers, and they have all come and produced a broad stream of commentary'. As Burgin (2012) notes, Friedman was not afraid of putting forward controversial opinions. While Hayek was more cautious in his reconstruction of liberalism to be a credible, philosophically sound defence of free markets, bringing this caution to bear on his leadership of the MPS during the immediate post-war period, Friedman – who came to prominence within the MPS in the 50s and 60s and whose defence of capitalism was 'infused with Cold War dualisms' – 'built his professional and public career on the advocacy of positions that ran contrary to received opinion' (Burgin, 2012, p. 154). This aggressive stance towards anyone or any position that questioned the intrinsic good of free market capitalism

eventually paid off. By the 1970s, Friedman became 'regaled with private wealth, academic honours and lasting political recognition' (Burgin, 2012, p. 155), and in 1976 was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences.

Friedman's rise to prominence during the 1970s was made possible by an alignment of interests during the period. Under the influence of Luhnow and the Volker Fund, Friedman had gradually shed all ambiguities concerning the role of the state in capitalism, becoming neoliberalism's 'most forceful exponent of an uncompromising adherence to the market mechanism' (Burgin, 2012, p. 185). At the same time, right-wing elements in conservative parties in the US and UK were looking for a new ideology to break the hegemony of the post-WW2 class compromise, which as explained above had restricted corporate profitability in favour of greater social equality. In 1962, Friedman published what would become his most influential work, *Capitalism and Freedom*, which Burgin (2012, p. 174) describes as 'breath-taking in its audacity'. In the book, Friedman (1982) argues for, aside from a radical limitation of state power: a move away from anti-trust regulation, on the basis that monopolisation is relatively harmless, and if it does occur, it is due to government intervention (this point will be returned to in the next section); the removal of social responsibility and income tax for corporations; and the privatisation of higher education, specifically state universities (an argument that will become important in Chapter 4 of this thesis). Essentially, Friedman outlined an economic philosophy with corresponding policy program for any political party willing to take neoliberalism as its new ideology. This challenge was taken up in the late 1970s by the Republican and Conservative Parties in the US and UK respectively, and Friedman's work became a bible for Reagan and Thatcher administrations. 'If Milton Friedman went on to become more of a public intellectual than a political insider, and if neoliberalism itself later lost the clearly identifiable profile it once enjoyed in the 1970s,' writes Melinda Cooper (2017, p. 19), 'it was because it had become so widely accepted among policymakers of all political stripes and so thoroughly disseminated throughout mainstream economics.' For Burgin (2012, p. 185), Friedman's success represented nothing less than the 'triumphant return of laissez faire'.

Third-wave neoliberalism: From ‘double-truth’ to ‘post-truth’

For Philip Mirowski (2013), Friedman’s re-invention of neoclassical economics as a pseudo-science became the basis for what he calls neoliberalism’s ‘double-truth doctrine’. The MPS under Friedman was more than just the institutional centre for a transnational ‘thought collective’ aimed at winning hegemony for free market ideas; it also developed into an elaborate ‘Russian doll’ structure propagating a Janus-faced ideology (Mirowski, 2013, p. 75). The MPS defended and disseminated extreme free market ideas to the public through mass market publications, sympathetic press outlets and journalists and neoclassical economics departments in influential universities, while accepting the limitations of free markets and adapting these ideas to the needs of corporate capitalist interests in its dealings with powerful elites. Friedman, for example, worked directly with Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan in the 1960s and 70s (Burgin, 2012; Cooper, 2017). This double-truth doctrine developed ‘organically’ out of the MPS, according to Mirowski (2013, p. 68), out of an understanding on the part of MPS members that ‘it would be necessary to maintain an exoteric version of its doctrine for the masses – because that would be safer for the world and more beneficial for ordinary society – but simultaneously hold fast to an esoteric doctrine for a small closed elite, envisioned as the keeper of the flame of the collective’s wisdom’. Even Friedman, for Mirowski (2013, p. 77), was merely a puppet for a more extreme and shadowy figure – George Stigler – who he claims considered the MPS as the ‘executive committee of the capitalist insurgency’.

While the concept of a ‘double truth doctrine’ is useful for the purposes of analysing and understanding neoliberalism’s uniquely contradictory ideology, particularly its emphasis on ‘planning against planning’ (see below), Mirowski’s paranoiac vision of the MPS as a global conspiracy simply overstates the influence of this group of free market intellectuals. As Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy (1966) explain, building on the Marxist theory of monopoly capitalism, it was only a matter of time before the economic conditions supporting the ‘class compromise’ of the post-WW2 period collapsed, and the underlying chronic stagnation of the monopoly capitalist system returned. As explained previously, for Baran and Sweezy (1966, p. 234), the Second World War came just ‘in the nick of time’, saving Western economies from the chronic stagnation of the Great Depression in the 1930s. The war economy pushed

productive capacity to its limit and forced investment in new technologies, while at the same time curtailing consumer spending. This created a 'backlog of demand' that was exploited in the post-war period, creating a long-term economic boom that could sustain an extensive redistribution of wealth within welfare state economies and significant investment in public services without impinging too much on capitalist profits. At the same time, the technological innovations produced during the war, in communications especially, allowed corporations to swell and spread across national borders. So, when stagnation returned in the 1960s, these multi-national corporations began to 'break loose from the industrial relations moorings they had established' during the post-WW2 golden age, emphasising 'leaner and meaner forms of competition in line with market pressures' and exerting their influence on intellectuals (for example through the WVF), politicians and governments to restructure capitalist states in their interests (Foster et al, 2011, no page).

By the end of the 1960s, 'signs of a serious crisis of capital accumulation were everywhere apparent' (Harvey, 2007, p. 12). Unemployment and inflation rose at the same time as tax revenues dropped – a phenomenon which came to be known as 'stagflation'. As a result, the Keynesian policies that had sustained the post-war golden age of class compromise were discredited. For right-wing political factions in the UK and the US, who had, like neoliberals, been arguing against the grain of collectivism and welfarism for 30 years, this presented an opportunity to win back power. Through a counter-intuitive marriage of social conservatism and laissez faire economics, helped along by the intellectual leadership of the NTC, a new political ideology was born (Burgin, 2012). Margaret Thatcher, for example, successfully translated the alienation British people felt with regards to the bureaucratisation of welfare state capitalism, as well as a generational change in attitudes towards work and culture, into a new kind of nationalistic free-market liberalism that Stuart Hall (1979) usefully described as 'authoritarian populism'. Once in power, 'actually existing neoliberalism' began using the state to expand possibilities for profit-making on the part of corporations. Mobilising the threat of 'capital flight', as corporations could with the help of new logistics and communications technologies easily move their operations to other countries with lower levels of corporate tax and less regulation, corporate

interests pushed for the deregulation of finance and for privatisation in the public sector to unlock further opportunities for profiteering.

As well as winning power through neoliberal ideology, neoliberal governments also needed to deliver economic growth when in power. In the UK, Thatcher turned to financial deregulation and privatisation to deliver for corporations, while making it easier for financial interests to sell debt to the working and middle classes to ameliorate the consequences of this upward wealth redistribution. Finance has always been an important part of capitalism, with the creation of joint-stock companies in the early stages of colonialism allowing the risk of ownership to be spread among shareholders and access to much larger amounts of capital for investment (Chang, 2014). Within neoliberal economic approaches to the problem of stagnation, this aspect of the capitalist system took on a life of its own, reaching a whole new level of sophistication and becoming in many ways independent of the 'real' economy of industrial production. Rather than being a 'modest helper to the capital accumulation process', Foster and Magdoff (2009, p. 19) explain, finance 'gradually turned into a driving force'. Speculation took over the function of providing economic growth in the absence of expansion and investment in industrial sectors, resulting in a long-term increase in debt across all levels of society. In the end, speculation changed from something that 'historically came at the peak of the business cycle' to a 'permanent, institutionalised feature of the economy' (Foster and Magdoff, 2009, p. 19). Contrary to the ideology of free markets and meritocratic competition espoused by neoliberal governments, this process of financialisation actually resulted in the further consolidation and globalisation of markets. Mergers and acquisitions, for example, not only involve borrowing large amounts of capital but are also a way to grow without investing in new production. Monopolistic firms rely on the expanded financial part of the economy to undertake 'leveraged buyouts', where rival companies transfer the debt of acquisitions onto the accounts of the firms they buy. The growth of this form of hostile takeover in turn forces firms 'to load themselves down with debt in order to be less attractive to financial wolves looking for assets to leverage.' (Foster and Magdoff, 2009, p. 67).

As well as being another example of neoliberal double truth in action, privatisation was another means of redistribution wealth upwards, from the public to corporations. At the purely ideological level, the

privatisation of public services during the 1970s was rationalised in terms of 'rolling back the state' and the efficiency of competitive market mechanisms. However, at a deeper level, privatisation was not only designed to open the accumulated social wealth contained in these services and institutions but had the effect of spreading monopolisation to the public sector as well. Alongside the commitment to welfare and redistribution – a recognition that the abstract rights of bourgeois liberalism needed to be supported by social rights economic security (Holmwood, 2014) – the socialisation of public goods was recognised even by early neoliberal economists like Hayek as inevitable, due to the 'natural monopolies' that tended to occur in industries such as energy and transport. In order to obscure its negative distribution of wealth and inevitable process of monopolisation, privatisation was couched in the language of competition and consumer welfare, giving rise to a unique form of privatisation: *marketisation* (see also Chapter 4). Margaret Thatcher in the 1970s, for example, introduced 'compulsory competitive tendering' first into local government and then into the National Health Service (NHS). Although this did not necessarily mean that such public services had to be outsourced to private contractors, the pressure on costs that the threat of outsourcing created rationalised the operations and structures of state-run services so that they eventually resembled private sector firms. However, the 'majority' of such contracts went to 'large, often multinational companies', while these companies 'actively' lobbied and marketed their services to neoliberal governments throughout this period, advising sympathetic governments on 'how to modernise their services, recommending on with one hand the sorts of outsourcing strategies from which they, and other companies, benefit with the other' (Huws, 2014, p. 134).

Before turning to the shift from 'second-wave' to 'third-wave' neoliberalism after the 2008 Financial Crisis, when neoliberalism's ability to deliver growth even for corporations finally faltered, it is useful to show how the neoliberal double truth doctrine works in practice. Ideologically, neoliberalism represents, on the one hand, a 'triumphant return to laissez faire' (Burgin, 2012) and, on the other, the 'mightiest champion, despite its worldview' of monopoly capitalism (Foster et al, 2011, no page). While this does seem to place contradictory demands on neoliberal ideology, the explanation of how this contradiction is resolved requires no conspiracy. As Will Davies (2017) explains, the key to the shift

from liberal to neoliberal economic theory lies in the latter's acceptance of monopoly as the successful *outcome* of competition, not as an example of 'market failure', as the former believed. The monopolist is the entrepreneur (individual or firm) that has played the game of capitalism well, the ability to control prices the reward. But monopoly is only ever temporary; it is always possible for another entrepreneur or firm to play the game better and gain temporary advantage, or in some rare cases, rewrite the rules completely. While this rationalisation of monopoly therefore becomes a core aspect of neoliberalism's 'intellectual Teflon' (Mirowski, 2013, p. 28), creating a pragmatic notion of what Foster et al (2011, no page) call 'workable' or 'potential' competition, in which any shortcomings of the actual market can be blamed on state planning, intervention and regulation, this revision is made possible at root by what Dewey calls the 'denial of context' and what Marxist critical theorists refer to as reification. There is no need to posit a shadowy 'illuminatus' disseminating two levels of ideology within an elaborate 'Russian doll' structure, as the contradiction within this ideology stems from a structurally limited perception of reality in which the social consequences of monopoly finance capitalism are obscured from view and the interests of the many are assumed to be aligned with that of the few.

Neoliberal ideology, therefore, must be understood as representing the *class interests* of corporate capitalism, while at the same time being sociologically separate from this class and subject to the same socio-economic changes that determine the needs of the latter at any given historical period. In the aftermath of the Great Financial Crisis of 2008-9, for example, neoliberal ideology performed yet another intellectual leap of faith in order to remain aligned with the interests of corporate capitalism, which Foster and Magdoff (2009) argue became so aligned with financial interests during the boom years of neoliberal deregulation that it should be thought of as 'monopoly finance capitalism'. During the 1980s and 90s, investment banks responded to the rising demand for financial products with the creation of new financial instruments called 'collateralised debt obligations' (CDOs), which were used to hedge the risk of these largely unsecured and low-rated debts, especially in the form of 'sub-prime' consumer mortgages (Foster and Magdoff, 2009). The hedging of these risky loans against less risky investments, such as pension funds, in turn encouraged more of these instruments to be created, resulting in an impossibly complex and intertwining system of trading in debt 'tranches' (Chang, 2014).

As people in the US began to default on their sub-prime mortgages in 2007, the intertwined nature of commercial and investment banking allowed the crisis to spread to the entire banking sector, resulting in the worst financial crisis since the Wall Street Crash in 1929. While the consequences of the 2008 Financial Crisis have fallen disproportionately on ordinary people, neoliberal governments have used this Crisis to socialise the costs of the crisis through austerity and turn it into an opportunity for the further consolidation. Far from resulting in its collapse, NTC-inspired technocratic neoliberalism has emerged 'resurgent' from the Crisis (Pemberton, 2015), stubbornly re-applying neoliberal ideology to post-crisis public policy. Alongside the brutality of austerity, privatisation in the public sector has been accelerated in the form of marketisation (see next chapter).

At the same time, an alternative form of neoliberalism has emerged: right-wing populism. Academic commentators have shown some confusion as to what right-wing populism is and how it relates to neoliberalism. For Davies (2017, p. xiii), for example, unexpected political events such as the decision by the UK to leave the EU ('Brexit') and the election of Donald Trump in the US are explained as 'fervently anti-neoliberal' popular movements 'diametrically opposed to the economic commons sense that has held sway in the UK and US since the 1970s'. For Foster (2017), however, right-wing populism is a 'neo-fascist' reaction to the collapse of neoliberal hegemony, in which neoliberalism is in fact applied in a more authoritarian manner. The interpretation of neoliberalism as a 'double truth doctrine' both agrees with and helps to explain this latter view. While right-wing populists vehemently criticise technocracy – in the form of neoliberal's tendency to de-politicise economic policy, as well as its emphasis on government by experts – they also unambiguously celebrate the market as the basis of political freedom. While right-wing populists question 'globalisation' in terms of its consequences for local producers, their economic policies are focused on either courting multi-national corporations to bring their productive, administrative or logistical centres 'back' to the country in question or building new local multi-national corporations to compete with these international behemoths. In other words, right-wing populists do not challenge the monopoly finance capitalist system that is the economic basis of neoliberalism. More importantly, right-wing populists use the Friedmanite logic of neoliberalism's

slippery ideology to appear to offer something new and challenge the status quo, while actually promising in reality to usher in a more authoritarian version of this status quo.

For the public, resurgent neoliberalism and right-wing populism offer a false choice. Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, however, suggests a genuine alternative. Critiques of representative democracy should not be wholesale associated entirely with right-wing populism. While the latter co-opts the qualitative experience of the negative consequences of monopoly capitalism within reactionary and conservative agendas which aim to preserve corporate power, Dewey's hypothesis of 'intelligent populism' insists that the same qualitative experience can lead to the formation of democratising political movements if channelled through social inquiry. Although dismissed by many social theorists as merely left-wing versions of 'populism', there are in fact examples of such intelligent populist rejections of neoliberalism in the US and UK today. In the UK, Jeremy Corbyn's unexpected rise to the leadership of the Labour Party has shifted the political consensus to the left and presents a genuinely democratic socialist alternative to the neoliberal Conservative Party (Nunns, 2018, Seymour, 2017; Wainwright, 2018). For Hilary Wainwright (2018), Corbynism represents something completely different from both right-wing populism and the traditional, top-down paternalistic politics of Fabianism that have characterised the history of the UK Labour Party through most of 20th century. What is 'striking' about Jeremy Corbyn's offering, Wainwright (2018, p. 34) insists, is that his appeal is based on 'an invitation to join an urgent crusade for a new politics based on popular participation', a promise to 'invite people to participate in developing the policies that the government he seeks to lead would implement' and an encouragement for people 'to have confidence in themselves'. Where populists try to by-pass the system of parliamentary democracy in favour of 'direct democracy', positioning the charismatic leader as having a direct, and emotional contact with 'the people', merely replacing one system of authority with another (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017), Corbyn's promise is to democratise the parliamentary system to make it responsive to the needs of the public, rather than to the needs of multi-international corporations. By contrast to left and right populists, Corbynism represents a 'new politics from the left', Wainwright (2018) insists, grounded in popular participation

and tacit intelligence. In other words, based on this interpretation and the theory of collective intelligence presented in this thesis, Corbynism is an example of 'intelligent populism'.

Conclusion

Beginning with the qualitative experience of the public, this chapter has reconstructed the current 'problematic situation' of neoliberalism in crisis. While neoliberalism isn't yet 'dead', as many commentators expected, and has returned 'resurgent' after the collapse of monopoly finance capitalism in 2008, it has experienced a prolonged period of stagnation. The social cost of this return to stagnation, as well as the economic cost of the post-2008 Financial Crisis bank 'bail outs', is being shifted on to ordinary people through austerity. After the conditions and consequences of the crisis were identified, the problematic situation of neoliberalism facing the public today was reconstructed through the academic literature on the topic, and through an analysis of two key neoliberal texts: Friedrich Hayek's 'The Use of Knowledge in Society' and Milton Friedman's 'The Methodology of Positive Economics'. This analysis revealed neoliberalism to have its origins in a highly-organised, elite, class-based political project centred on the Mont Pèlerin Society, which developed a janus-faced ideology that simultaneously espoused extreme free market ideas to the public while accepting the limitations of free markets and adapting these ideas to the needs of corporate capitalist interests.

However, by grounding this analysis in a class-based history of monopoly capitalism, the last section not only traced the emergence of a 'third-wave neoliberalism' after the 2008 Financial Crisis, which sought to re-establish profitability in the wake of returning stagnation, but also linked contemporary right-wing populism to the same concerns. Essentially, it was argued, right-wing populism, which John Bellamy Foster has insisted could more accurately be described as neo-fascism, is a variant of this third-wave neoliberalism. However, not all popular critiques of representative democracy and second-wave neoliberalism should be associated with this reactionary form of populism, the last section argued, as academic political theorists have tended to do. Based on Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, it was insisted that public anger and frustration at rising levels of inequality and insecurity could also be channelled into progressive movements for democratisation. Such examples of 'intelligent populism'

have already emerged, notably in the UK with Corbyn's leadership of the UK Labour Party and its use of what Hilary Wainwright has called 'power-as-transformation'. The latter as an example of 'intelligent populism' will be returned to in the Conclusion to the thesis. In the next chapter, 'third-wave neoliberalism' is explored in more detail, through an analysis of marketisation in UK higher education.

Chapter 4: The Marketisation of Higher Education

Introduction

This chapter describes how neoliberalism is applied to public policy to deliver outcomes for monopoly capitalism while obscuring this purpose through ideology. One of the ways that contemporary neoliberalism attempts to overcome the crisis of monopoly finance capitalism is through the marketisation of public services, particularly higher education. The first section of sets out the context for this aspect of what the previous chapter analysed as 'third-wave neoliberalism' by returning to the 1963 Robbins Report. It is argued that the Report's ambivalence towards free HE, combined with a sympathy for neoliberal 'human capital theory', left an ambiguous legacy that allowed later market reformers like David Willetts to claim they were completing the project of creating a mass HE system in the UK. After recounting the history of marketisation in UK HE in the next section – which is argued to have begun not in 2010 but in the 1980s with a series of reforms to the system by Thatcher's Conservative government – the chapter examines how marketisation as third-wave neoliberalism works in practice. The third section outlines how 'neoliberal interventionism' (Cruickshank, 2016) seeks to redirect the functions of English universities through a series of national-level performance management systems – the Teaching and Research Excellence and Knowledge Exchange Frameworks (TEF, REF and KEF) – to meet the needs of the needs of neoliberalism in crisis. In the last section, based on the insights of the last chapter, the ideology of marketisation is shown to be a form of neoliberal 'double truth'. While market reform is couched in the language of competition and student welfare, the consequence of this reform will be the monopolisation of higher education and the subsumption of all outcomes to that of monopoly profits. Rather than a free market of 'unbundled' alternative providers, the chapter concludes that English HE in the future will be dominated by huge multinational educational corporations seeking competitive advantage within a saturated, global higher education market.

Mass higher education: An ambiguous experiment in social democracy

As explained in previous chapters, the post-war period in the UK and US was marked by a 'class compromise' between labour and capital, mediated by the state, supported by an economic boom as the pent-up capacities for production and consumption were released. As will be explained in more detail in Chapter 5, in relation to the 'welfarist' sociology of T. H. Marshall, this period was pervaded by a sense of optimism towards the possibilities afforded by these conditions for the creation of a truly socialist form of democracy, underpinned by social rights, the redistribution of wealth and economic planning. An important contribution to this social-democratic project was the introduction of free secondary education for all through the 1944 Education Act, also known as the 'Butler Act' after the conservative politician R. A. Butler who wrote the legislation. Education had become a major issue during the Second World War, due to the sorry state of many British schools and an unfinished movement for education reform before the war, but above all to a feeling that 'a country worth dying for must also be worth living in – not merely for the fortunate few but for all citizens' (Simon, 1991, p. 35). This sentiment was reflected in a speech in 1940 by then Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who insisted that when the war was over, it 'must be one of our aims to work to establish a state of society where the advantage and privileges which hitherto have been enjoyed only by the few should be more widely shared by the many and the youth of the nation as a whole' (Churchill, in Simon, 1991, p. 81). After the appearance of numerous papers and reports – including the first 'Green Paper' on education – and accelerated by the publication in 1942 of the 'Beveridge Report' proposing a comprehensive system of social insurance 'from cradle to grave', the wide-ranging 'Educational Reconstruction' White Paper was finally into passed into law by British Parliament in 1944.

While perhaps remembered with nostalgia as the epitome of post-war social democracy, the Education Act was considered by many at the time as having serious shortcomings. For example, the Labour Party, which supported the Act in Parliament mainly due to a lack of its own educational policy, was disappointed at its failure to abolish the selective, fee-charging private schools known misleadingly as 'public' schools. Alongside the continued existence of these private schools, the 'tripartite system' of state-funded secondary education arranged into selective grammar schools on the one hand and

secondary and secondary modern schools on the other for those that did not do well enough on the 'Eleven-Plus' end-of-primary exam, signalled the continuation of the British class system, despite the introduction of a welfare state. As Raymond Williams (1961, pp. 149-150) noted, 'one has only to compare the simple class thinking of the Taunton Commission's recommended grades with the Hadow, Spens, and Norwood reports, and the practical effects of the 1944 Education Act, to see the essential continuity, despite changes in the economy, of a pattern of thinking drawn from a rigid class society, with its grading by birth leading to occupation, and then assimilated to a changing society, with a new system of grading'. In other words, the democratising power of welfarist reforms like the Education Act was attenuated by both the existing class system of British society and their piecemeal nature. Indeed, as Habermas (1992, p. 232) argued, welfare state capitalism is 'marked by two competing tendencies': on the one hand a genuine democratisation driven by working class agitation 'from below', and on the other, a need to control such agitation 'from above' – as well as managing what was fast becoming an extremely complex system of mass democracy and monopoly capitalism (see Chapter 1).

It is this context that defines the creation of a mass higher education system in Britain, inaugurated by the 1963 'Robbins Report'. Commissioned by Harold Macmillan's Conservative government 'to consider the pattern of full-time higher education in Great Britain', the final report of the Committee for Higher Education led by Lord Robbins noted this fact at the outset, explaining that the 'extension of educational opportunity in the schools and the widening of the desire for higher education on the part of young people have greatly increased the demand for [HE] places' (Committee on Higher Education, 1963, p. 4-5). At the core of the report is the now famous 'axiom' that 'courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so' (Committee on Higher Education, 1963, p. 8). For John Holmwood (2014, p. 66) this was a 'clear endorsement of a social democratic view of education' shared with the earlier 1944 Act. Holmwood (2014, p. 66) also argues that the 'four aims' of higher education as described by the report – (1) 'instruction in skills'; (2) the promotion of 'general powers of the mind', operating on a 'plane of universality'; (3) 'the advancement of learning' and that teaching should 'partake in the nature of discovery'; and (4) the transmission of a 'common culture and common standards of citizenship' –

taken together with a general commitment to equality of opportunity, entail the recognition that liberal economic, civil and political rights require an underpinning of social rights to ensure their realisation for all citizens'.

However, there is a less altruistic side to the report that arguably conflicts with this idea of social-democratic HE. While the 'Robbins principle' of free HE for anyone 'qualified by ability and attainment' was no doubt informed by the sociology of 'citizenship' and 'social rights' propounded by T. H. Marshall and others at the London School of Economics (where Robbins studied and taught), the report was also by its own admission influenced by the then very new Human Capital Theory (HCT) in economics (Barr and Glennerster, 2014). Originating at the Chicago School of Economics in the 1950s and 60s, HCT is most often associated with Gary Becker, although Friedman also worked extensively on the idea during the period, as did Theodor Schultz. Dismissing earlier liberals like J. S. Mill who criticised the dehumanising connotations of the 'human capital' concept as 'sentimentalists', Schultz applied the idea to the puzzle of why productivity had risen so markedly in Western societies despite relatively lower increases in 'land, man-hours and physically reproducible capital'. Investment in human capital (a euphemism for education) was the missing piece of this puzzle, he insisted, and from this insight flowed an entire research programme headed up by Becker explaining a variety of social phenomena hitherto considered beyond the scope of economics. For critics of neoliberalism like Wendy Brown (2015), drawing on Foucault's analysis, the crucial implication of HCT is that it signals the expansion of 'neoliberal reason' to all spheres of society. While this is certainly true and important, in the context of the argument made in the last chapter with regards to 'third-wave neoliberalism', it is the turn towards education as a way to sustain the productivity of monopoly capitalist democracies and, in a sense, 'verify' neoclassical economics as a pseudo-science that is of interest. Essentially, the argument here is that the Robbins Report's use of HCT – in contradiction with commitment to 'social rights' – prepares the ground ideologically for later market reform.

In response to the question of whether Britain could afford free HE, the Committee on Higher Education (1963, p. 204) urged the Government to consider this expenditure as a 'form of investment':

> To devote resources to the training of young people may be, *au fond*, as much entitled to be considered a process of investment as devoting resources to directly productive capital goods. Judged solely by the test of future productivity, a community that neglects education is as imprudent as a community that neglects material accumulation. The classical economists, great supporters of education, had precisely this consideration in mind when they invented the phrase 'human capital'. And, provided we always remember that the goal is not productivity as such but the good life that productivity makes possible, this mode of approach is very helpful.

In this quote the Committee clearly advocates for the HCT view of HE. However, the Committee (1963, p. 205) also warn against trying to calculate human capital in terms of private investment: ‘The return on education, even if it be considered solely in terms of productivity, is not something that can be estimated completely in terms of the return to individuals and of differential earnings.’ The main objections rest on difficulties in calculating this return, not so much on moral concerns. Fine-grained data on graduate earnings linked to individual courses simply did not exist at the time. As will be seen in the next section, the situation has changed. As McGettigan (2015) explains, by linking Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) course and institution data with HM Revenue & Customs student loan repayment data, the Government can now begin to calculate the individual benefits of human capital investment. Nevertheless, the Committee (1963, p. 206) maintained that, even if such data were available, the solution to the problem of how HE should be funded ‘should not be sought on the basis of narrow notions of the nature of the economic return and of measurements’. This is because such calculations ‘omit elements of fundamental value’ – i.e. the ‘social right’ of HE and its contribution to democratic citizenship.

The above discussion is not meant to subtract from the huge, democratising impact and significance of the Robbins Report, but only to show that its context, intellectual foundations and contributions are more complex than might first appear. On the one hand, the Committee was concerned to democratise HE in line with other institutions of the welfare state established after the Second World War. As Walter Rüegg (2011) explains, the Robbins Report was part of a wider movement across Europe concerned with expanding HE and creating ‘democratic’ universities to prevent the horrors of the War, especially

Fascism, from ever occurring again. While Germany had created the first 'modern' universities, with Wilhelm von Humboldt's University of Berlin (established in 1810) providing a model for research universities across the world in the 20th century, before the war these universities were often unconnected with other universities or with national social or economic needs. This was one of the key aims of the Robbins Report, to create a 'system' of HE to meet *national* needs. However, this aim also betrays a political concern running through the Report, which, just as it did in 19th century Germany, emphasises two economically productive functions of modern universities: human capital and 'useful knowledge', i.e. R&D. This economic emphasis was driven at the time by a paranoia with regards to Britain falling behind the USSR and the US, both of which were investing massively in HE as part of a global, educational arms race framed by the Cold War. 'If, as we believe, a highly educated population is essential to meet competitive pressures in the modern world, a much greater effort is necessary if we are to hold our own,' the Committee (1963, p. 268) explained.

Thus, the Robbins Report bequeathed a contradictory legacy, and in many ways left open the door for later marketisation. For example, the Report explored the idea of 'income-contingent' loans, in which graduates only pay off their fee-covering loan when their post-graduation income reaches a certain level. In the Report, the Committee explores the now familiar arguments for ICLs: (1) that ICL are more progressive than free HE, which in the case of the latter, means that those who don't go to university subsidise those that do, who then get a graduate earnings premium; (2) free things are not as appreciated as things that must be paid for, leading students to take their HE studies less seriously. On balance, however, the Committee (1963, p. 211) decided not to recommend financing expansion through fees and loans, because it would create anxiety for students (and parents), who would start their adult lives with a 'load of debt' and would create an 'incentive to caution at a time when willingness to take risks is desirable'. Robbins (1980, p. 35) later said it was a 'matter of regret' that the Committee didn't recommend the ICL scheme as suggested by A. R. Prest. However, Robbins (1980, p. 33) also presciently noted that as the realisation spread among taxpayers of the 'increasing burden' of free HE on public finances and of the inequity of non-graduates paying for graduates, public opinion on fees and loans would shift, and ICLs would become an attractive alternative. Combined with an overly-

conservative estimate of how fast demand for free HE would increase (see below), the central contradiction in the Robbins Report between HE as a 'social right' and HE as human capital investment allowed later market reformers like David Willetts to see themselves as completing, not destroying, its vision of a modern, British mass public university system. 'The system of English higher education today is clearly recognisable as the one Robbins and his immediate predecessors devised,' Willetts (2017, p. 60) later reflected.

A brief history of marketisation

At the end of its Report, the Committee recommended that the government make plans for an increase in student demand from 216,000 places in 1962/3 to about 390,000 in 1973/4, and then 560,000 in 1980/1. In fact, student numbers had already doubled by 1970/71 to 457,000 (Willetts, 2017). Another factor not considered by the Report was an increase in part-time and postgraduate students resulting from the creation of new technical colleges, which the Committee had also recommended and which later became established as 'polytechnics'. Taken together, these under-estimates precipitated a funding crisis in the British HE system that created the conditions for the later introduction of fees and loans. Already in the 1980s, funding was being disproportionately awarded to universities over polytechnics. When the latter were 'incorporated' in 1992 (given university status and degree awarding powers), the same 'unit' of funding was spread across the combined system, effectively halving public HE funding (Watson, 2014). Universities then had to compete for a diminishing resource, creating a 'zero sum game' and competitive behaviours that encouraged later acceptance by university leaders of market reform. At the same time, the political will for social democracy was already fading in the 1960s. As Tom Bottomore (1992, p. 58) explains, there was a 'loss of vigour' for welfarist policies as the post-war economic 'boom' conditions began to disappear, with the return of war in Korea and Vietnam pushing up the price of raw materials. As the reality of Stalinist communism became apparent, enthusiasm for socialism also waned in the Labour Party, shifting attitudes towards less ambitious policies aimed at 'managing' capitalism in the interests of maintaining growth. In the first half of the

1990s, the ‘dual system’ of British HE had lost about a third of its funding, translating to about a 50% in funding per student compared to that in the years following the Robbins Report (see Figure 4).

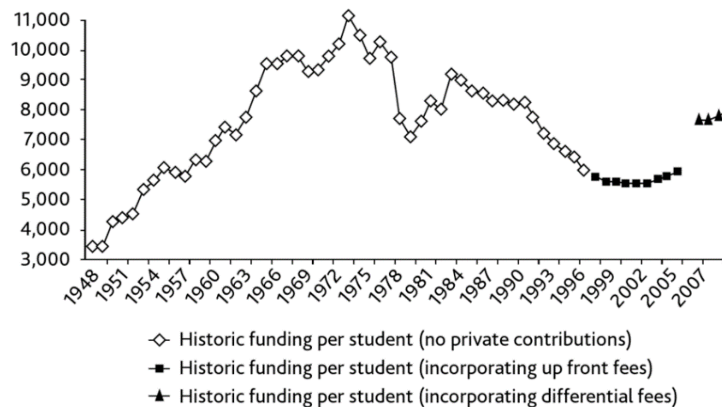


Figure 4: Historic higher education funding per student 1948 – 2007 (McGettigan 2013)

This was the context leading up to the ‘Dearing Report’ in 1996, which proposed a shift from fully public-funded HE to a ‘mixed system’, in which university income was supplemented by ‘top up’ tuition fees, supported by low interest government loans. ‘When the [Dearing] Committee was set up there was a real sense of crisis in UK higher education,’ explains David Watson (2014, p. 60) ‘There was also a sense of paralysis within the major political parties in terms of what to do about it.’ The Report showed total expenditure on UK HE rising in real terms between 1979 and 1995 from about £5.4 billion to just over £7.1 billion. However, the fastest element of expenditure growth during this period, according to the Dearing Committee, was on student maintenance. Capital spending on universities had stagnated, and recurrent expenditure and publicly resourced fees rose only slightly, from £4 billion to about £4.5 billion. ‘The Committee’s conclusion was that, in a context of increased spending on higher education in real terms between 1979 and 1995, the funding of institutions to provide education and research had effectively flat-lined’ (Watson, 2014, p. 60). In a move that would become characteristic of market reform, members of opposing political parties ‘colluded’ to take the issue of HE funding out of the 1997 General Election. After winning a landslide victory and returning to power after 18 years in opposition,

Tony Blair's New Labour majority government then accepted the Dearing Report's recommendations and legislated that domestic students should make a 'modest contribution' (about 25 per cent of the costs) to their education, a target that Robbins had already suggested (Watson, 2014, p. 61).

Although conservative estimates of university expansion and a loss of political will in the decade after the Robbins Report can be blamed for the later 'funding crisis' that led to the introduction of tuition fees and loans, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government in the 1980s accelerated this crisis by savagely cutting public funding for HE. Thatcher came to power on a neoliberal platform that promised to substantially reduce public spending (see Chapter 3). Meanwhile Thatcher – who was suspicious of academia, which she thought was dominated by left-wing intellectuals (Tribe, 2009) – also introduced a number of polices aimed at undermining the professional autonomy of academics. In 1985, the Steering Committee for Efficiency Studies in Universities' Report (also known as the 'Jarratt Report'), proposed the introduction of private-sector style management into universities, with academic governance replaced by corporate-style boards and vice-chancellors becoming chief executive officers of 'higher education corporations' (Deem et al, 2007). The 1988 Education Reform Act, taking on board the recommendations of the Jarratt Report, legislated that academic boards or 'senates' – the once all-powerful decision making body of traditional universities – should deal only with 'academic items of business' and have only 'an advisory role to the director on all other matters' who should 'not be constrained by the academic board' (Shattock, 2012, p. 58). The 1988 Act also abolished 'tenure' – the academic right to secure employment which was meant to provide a material basis for academic freedom (see also Chapter 6) – and gave new 'university commissioners' powers to support universities in sacking individual academics for a menacingly vague 'good cause' (Education Reform Act 1988, p. 194).

Thatcher also introduced in the late 1980s the first government-designed, national-level performance management system into English HE: the Research Selectivity Exercise (RSE). According to Lord Nicholas Stern (2016, p. 39), the purpose of the RSE was to 'standardise and assess the information received from existing 37 subject-based committees' and allow the government to be 'more selective in its support for research'. Translated into neoliberal ideology, this signalled the introduction of

competition into research funding systems, which was intended to drive up the quality of research produced while saving the government money. Each subsequent research assessment exercise refined and scaled up this method of allocating funding through competition. By 1992, the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was distributing 90% of all research funding in the UK, and in 2014, the first Research Excellence Framework (REF) allocated about £1.5 billion of ‘quality-related’ (QR) research (Stern, 2016). Significantly, the REF2014 introduced ‘impact’ as a category into what was becoming an increasingly metrics-based, target-driven exercise. As Laura King and Gary Rivett (2015, p. 221) explain, REF2014 panels assessed three areas: (1) *research output*, ‘based on peer-reviewed publications, which made up 65% percent of the research quality rating’ (from 1* to 4*); (2) *research environment*, which focused on ‘grant income and research students’ success, accounting for a further 15%’; and (3) *research impact*, ‘which measured economic and social benefits of research beyond the academy that were a direct result of excellent research’. That the introduction of impact signals a fundamental move towards ‘third-wave neoliberalism’ will be argued in more detail in the next section, but this direction of travel is hinted at by Lord Stern (2016, p. 8), who noted that research assessment exercises aimed to ‘support a dynamic and internationally competitive UK research sector that makes a major contribution to economic prosperity, national wellbeing and the expansion and dissemination of knowledge’. Here the drift towards economism, begun by Robbins, is clearly demonstrated, with the order of priorities reflected in the grammar of the sentence. While the autonomy of individual universities must be in principle respected – and by extension the academic freedom of individual academics and research projects – the primary function of the REF is as ‘an essential tool’ for the formulation of national, strategic investment decisions and as a ‘strong performance incentive for universities and for individual academics’ (Stern, 2016, p. 8). After 2008, the REF, along with other performance management systems, offered the UK government a way to manage higher education and its output – knowledge production (research) and social reproduction (teaching) – for the purposes of rescuing the neoliberal from stagnation.

While marketisation – which can be defined as the state-led introduction and management of markets into public services – only began in earnest in 2010 with the election of the UK Conservative-Liberal

Democrat 'Coalition' Government, Thatcher's reforms to university governance provided a crucial foundation for this later phase. Vice-chancellors, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, strongly lobbied for the introduction of fees, and once these existed, for them to be increased (Willetts, 2017). When the 1997 Dearing Report recommended the introduction of student fees and loans, thirteen years later in 2010, this policy was massively expanded, with the added rationalisation of the 2008 Financial Crisis 'forcing' the newly-elected Coalition Government to introduce austerity measures, including almost complete cuts to the publicly-funded teaching grant to universities. Upon the introduction of variable fees up to £9000 in 2011, to the 'shock' of the Coalition government, vice-chancellors began charging the maximum fee level, thus immediately crushing any hopes of price competition emerging between universities within the English system (Willetts, 2017). Meanwhile, the National Student Survey (NSS) – which had been introduced in 2005 'to allow a comparison between universities' and 'ensure that public money was spent efficiently with students being satisfied with the services bought from their university' (Cruickshank, 2016, p. 8) – became compulsory for universities. Along with the introduction of student fees, therefore, the NSS signalled the creation of the student-as-consumer, and complemented the performance management of research through the REF.

After many years of piecemeal reform, mainly through secondary legislation, the UK Government finally tabled proposals for a new Higher Education and Research Bill, presented in the 2015 Green Paper, 'Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice' (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2015). The Green Paper was concerned with two changes that were key to the introduction of a market in higher education: (1) the deregulation of market entry and access to the title of 'university' so that 'alternative providers' – for-profit institutions – could come into the sector and 'challenge' existing institutions; (2) a new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to mirror the existing REF system of funding allocation, this time for increases in tuition fees in line with inflation above the £9000 threshold for universities achieving a Bronze rating or above. For McGettigan (2015) these two technologies of marketisation are linked: the TEF, by measuring the most economically productive institutions and academic subjects (as it is linked to graduate outcomes), disciplines both institutions and students into meeting the wider needs of the neoliberal economy. Institutions that do

not play the game are undercut and outmanoeuvred by new, flexible for-profit universities. Within the 2017 Higher Education and Research Act (HERA) – which accepted most of the Green Paper's proposals, ignoring criticisms from academics and trade unions – individual institutions are allowed to go bankrupt, thus also opening up the possibility of takeover by financial institutions or global educational corporations. HERA, therefore, attempts to introduce a 'rigged market' into the English higher education sector, breaking down existing barriers to competition, while making it as easy as possible for new for-profit providers to enter the system (Collini, 2011). This aspect of marketisation as monopolisation is analysed in more detail in the last section of this chapter. However, first it is useful to drill down into exactly how HE is mobilised to deliver neoliberal objectives through marketisation.

The social construction of the market: metricisation

As mentioned in the previous section, the 2014 REF introduced 'impact' as a new metric within national-level performance management of English higher education, with the aim of bringing this system in line with the needs of a stagnating UK economy. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (which has now been abolished, its functions now split between the Office for Students and UK Research and Innovation) defines impact as 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life beyond academia' (HEFCE, 2016b, no page). Impact in REF2014 was measured by impact case studies (ICSs), which are meant to demonstrate the link between funded research and these observable impacts outside academia. This link is demonstrated through impact narratives, supported by evidence, that attempts to quantify this impact within measurable outcomes that can in turn be converted to impact ratings by REF panels. As Michael Power (2018, p. 4) points out, this 'billiard ball' model contradicts the nature and plurality of social impacts and actual social research projects that ICSs are supposed to take into account, and creates an 'epistemological problem' within research assessment that it is then the responsibility of researchers and institutions to try and solve (Power, 2018, p. 4). In other words, 'impact' ignores the difficulties of demonstrating causality that were well-established by philosophers such as David Hume in the 18th

century, and ignores the distortions involved in quantifying essentially qualitative narratives so that they can ultimately reduced to a rating between 1* and 4* (Power, 2018).

However, researchers and institutions have dealt with this problem in a ‘creative’ way. Essentially, Power (2018, p. 4) argues, academics overcame the problem ‘indeterminacy of evidence of impact’ by creating ‘their own evidence’. Using a concept from the field of evaluation studies, Power (2018, p. 4) notes that the epistemological contradiction arising from impact within the REF forces academics to resort to ‘solicited testimony’: ‘In essence, the researcher seeks testimony from identified users of her research who kindly confirm that they have been ‘impacted’ by it’. Solicited testimony is attractive not only for researchers, but also institutions, which, within a marketised environment, are under huge pressure to source as much funding as they possibly can to compete with other institutions (and alternative providers, albeit not usually in terms of research). Firstly, sourcing evidence outside universities would be very costly. As solicited testimony is collected during the process of research, by researchers, it imposes no extra financial burden on institutions. Secondly, solicited testimony solves the problem of causal attribution as it artificially constructs the causal links between research and its proposed impact, with the evidence coming from a legitimate and trustworthy source: the research subject. In a sense, this is the return of what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999) problematised as the ‘native informant’, a figure in colonial, ethnographic research, used by Western researchers to confirm ethnocentric theories, which are then used to justify the exclusion of these subaltern populations from the benefits of colonial exploitation. In the case of the ICS, the native informant is constructed by the researcher to meet the demands of marketisation and then excluded from the benefits of ‘impactful’ research, which are appropriated by the institution for the purposes of surplus generation. Thirdly, solicited testimony makes research impact ‘auditable’ by institutions, thus fitting with the general, corporate organisational model introduced into universities by managers to meet the demands of marketisation. This is a crucial point, as in general, institutional processes and the social activities that operate within these processes are not in themselves quantifiable.

Solicited testimony provides not only a case study of neoliberal marketisation, but also an interesting case study of Dewey’s theory of reification described in Chapter 2. For Dewey, experience is at its most

basic qualitative, with people having an intuitive and practical understanding of the world that is tacitly intelligent. Echoing both Marx and Lukács, Dewey argues knowledge and technology are hypostatised and made irresponsible when the qualitative origins of technology or knowledge are either forgotten or erased. This process of forgetting or erasure is, in line with Dewey's critical social theory and going against the Frankfurt School's reification of reification, itself a social and historical process, linked to collective habits and the power relations that structure these habits. Quantification is a crucial element in the historical development of monopoly capitalism. Harry Braverman (1974) describes how, within the capitalist system, 'scientific management' – inspired by Frederick Winslow Taylor – becomes necessary when firms or organisations reach a certain size and level of complexity. For production to be managed efficiently, labour must be controlled. As far as possible, workers must be removed from the decision-making process not just regarding the operations of the firm or organisation, but over the details of how their work is done. Typically, this is not a smooth process, as this involves the removal and alienation of the worker from the qualitative aspect of his or her work, which as Dewey points out, is also where the emotional content of experience is found. Taylor himself formulated his 'scientific' theory of management out of his own experience of being a foreman at the Bethlehem Steel Company in the latter 19th century, where the establishment of his revolutionary techniques took, in his own words, 'three years of hard fighting' (Taylor, in Braverman, 1974, p. 97). The key to scientific management, as Braverman (1974) explains, is to transfer the knowledge of the labour process, by force if necessary, to a new class of managers. This new class of managers then assigns an individualised and simplified part of the overall production process to each worker, who then simply follows instructions.

It may be argued that such late 19th and early 20th century ideas of 'rationalisation' no longer apply, being superseded by 'human relations' (HR) management, but Braverman (1974) explicitly refutes this argument. Rather than disappearing from management theory, Taylorist rationalisation practices have become so accepted they establish themselves within collective habit. In other words, Taylor's ideas of scientific management – not scientific at all, as it is merely the rationalisation of the capitalist division of labour – are *assumed* within contemporary management approaches, with the function of 'human relations' departments to smooth over what is essentially a process of class struggle. When applied to

the contemporary marketisation of higher education, Taylorist techniques can be easily identified. Firstly, at an institutional level, scientific management has been operating for many years as universities restructure themselves into multinational corporations in anticipation of the monopolisation of the sector (see below). This is usually described in terms of the introduction of New Public Management (NPM) – i.e. private sector (scientific) management processes – into universities (Deem et al, 2007). With the REF, this 'bottom-up' restructuring, reinforced by top-down policy changes to how (modern) universities should be governed, is reinforced and accelerated by sector-level attempts to quantify the national output of the higher education sector. This output is measured in: (1) the 'value' of the product for students-as-consumers, expressed primarily by league tables in the absence of a functioning price mechanism; (2) the 'employability' of graduates, i.e. whether graduates meet the employment needs of corporate capitalism; and (3) the quality of research and development (R&D) which can be bought cheaply or appropriated for free by risk-averse multi-national corporations.

Secondly, at a micro level, the process of Taylorist rationalisation operates in the implementation of the REF, described above. Braverman (1974, p. 112), writes that the 'first principle' of Taylorism is that 'no task is either too simple or so complex that it may not be studied with the object of collecting in the hands of management at least as much information as is known by the worker who performs it regularly, and very likely more'. Performance management systems like the REF begin as elaborate intelligence gathering mechanisms, going through long processes of 'consultation' before proposals are put forward, with information continually gathered as to how to tweak such systems for their aims to be met more efficiently. Further comment is especially forthcoming from university managers, who look to manage the burden placed on their institutions while extracting any 'entrepreneurial' benefits that may result from willing participation. ICSs are a prime example of Taylorism. An epistemological problem concerning the process of rationalising the research process is set by government – whether on purpose or by accident is entirely irrelevant – which is then solved by institutions themselves. Specifically, university middle management is tasked with extracting knowledge of the research process from academics, which is then systematised and given back to the academics in the form of policy procedures and performance management objectives (Power, 2018). The ICS, therefore, is like the 'task idea' of

Taylor's third principle of scientific management, that the simplest description of the process must be created so that it can be standardised for all workers (Braverman, 1974). However, as Taylor's third principle also states, the overall process of research management should also become so opaque and frustratingly over-complicated that its reifying and disciplining functions should be felt and followed, but intellectually obscured. The latter is certainly true of the REF. In 2014, for example, Imperial College London biologist Stefan Grimm committed suicide after 'struggling to fulfil the metrics' imposed by his institution (Parr, 2014, no page). While this tragic example shows that metrics are terrifyingly destructive, and that reification is all too real, Grimm's extreme response also evidences that reification, as Dewey explains, is primarily qualitatively felt and understood.

Despite the costs, structural contradictions and destructive consequences of these research assessment exercises, the model of the REF has in recent years been applied to other aspects of higher education output. In all cases – and pointing to the central insight of neoliberal ideology (see Chapter 3) – systems of performance management are designed to incentivise via both 'carrot and stick' competitive behaviour which, within a fundamentally unnatural market, must be actively and socially constructed. The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), for example, modelled explicitly on the REF, was introduced to address the lack of price competition arising from the 'income-contingent' loan system. As Willetts (2017) explains, ICLs – which only ask for student loans to be repaid once graduates earn over a set amount, currently £21,000 – were designed to emulate a graduate tax while addressing the shortcomings of such a system. ICLs offer two main advantages to market advocates: repayments can be collected even if students emigrate and 'tranches' of the student loan book can be later sold to private-sector loan companies (thus also indicating the financialisation of both HE funding and students themselves). They were also designed to carefully designed as a middle way between a fully public and a fully private scheme: 'Spending on universities is not public spending – competing with popular public services and controlled by the Treasury – nor is it a conventional commercial lending, as then financial regulation kicks in and you risk losing its universality' (Willetts, 2017, p. 74). By creating a tax-payer backed loan scheme, Willetts claimed to have university funding out of public spending, thus avoiding further cuts (even though the most severe cuts had already happened by this point), while

increasing the funding per student that universities receive. However, the cost – as with the cost of neoliberal deregulation generally and its consequences in the 2008 crisis – is eventually shifted on to the public. At some point the debt accumulated by the government through the loans system – which, like the bank bail outs, is added to the Public Sector Net Debt – must be paid off by the tax payer, probably through further austerity.

Student choice, on this model, is based on what students want from HE and how much they are prepared to pay. Consumer demand is supposed to drive this competitive system, with sub-standard providers failing to attract students and those over-charging being forced to cut prices. In other words, marketisation is a textbook example of neoliberal policy making, in which assumptions regarding the 'rational' behaviour of consumers as utility maximising individuals forms the basis for state intervention *for the market*, which is currently deemed as inefficient because dominated by producer interests (i.e. self-governing academics – this point will become important and is returned to in Chapter 6). In retrospect, Willetts (2017, p. 83) admits this 'was a mistake – a wrong forecast based on a false analysis'. This free market vision of marketisation failed because not only did existing institutions in almost all cases immediately charge the full amount – due to the panic caused by swingeing cuts to the teaching grant and because no modern university wanted to be seen as offering 'cheap' higher education compared to high-cost elite 'brands' – but students also did not behave as price conscious, savvy consumers. As Willetts explains: 'as soon as one recognised that what really mattered for students was the repayment formula not the fee level then it was clear that there would not and should not be much price competition' (Willetts, 2017, p. 83). This realisation also prompted a very neoliberal solution: the introduction of an interventionist policy designed to artificially and socially construct the rationality lacking in real students. As Andrew McGettigan (2015) points out, the TEF is an elaborate exercise modelled on 'human capital theory' (HCT) – itself a variation on rational choice theory. In this theory, higher education is a 'human capital investment that benefits the private individual insofar as it enables that individual to boost future earnings' (McGettigan, 2015, p. 4). Through the TEF, then, students are moulded into consumers and universities are rewarded and disciplined according to how well they respond to the needs of a stagnating neoliberal economy.

Like the REF, the TEF – which relies on a mixture of metrics and institutional submissions reviewed by an expert panel – is also designed, alongside the pressure from utility maximising students, to discipline institutions to behave competitively. As teaching-related funding had been almost entirely cut in 2010, the 'carrot' of the TEF was initially an ability for institutions to raise their fees with inflation, with higher levels to be introduced with later TEFs. However, due to political controversy over the raising of fees even higher, with more public scrutiny on marketisation thanks to media-fuelled scandals over excessive vice-chancellor pay, this link between the TEF and higher than inflation fees was scrapped in 2017. However, while there is no financial incentive for individual universities, a Gold rating is still good for a university's reputation, especially for modern universities, which struggle to compete with elite universities which have established, 'positional' brands. Aside from aligning university teaching to wider economic skills needs, the TEF (now the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework) is also meant as a 'disruptive' intervention to break up the monopoly of elite Oxbridge and Russell Group universities, which have sat at the top of league tables since their introduction a decade ago (Willetts, 2017). For Willetts, such rankings 'are a barrier to social mobility' and reward 'incumbency' due to a disproportionate weighting of prior attainment and research power (Willetts, 2017, p. 192). By focusing on student satisfaction (via the NSS) and employment outcomes, and therefore on what students-as-consumers 'want' (or at least what can be measured through metrics), the 'producer power' distorting market-efficient outcomes can be broken up.

However, neither of the two TEFs undertaken so far have done anything to disrupt the existing reputational hierarchy of English universities. Analysing the results of the TEF exercises so far, higher education analyst Mark Leach (2017, no page) commented that the aim of 'turning the sector hierarchy on its head' had not been achieved, as 'only three of the Russell Group universities to enter the exercise were awarded Bronze: Liverpool, LSE and Southampton' and these 'proved to be the exception, not the rule'. While some modern universities like Coventry University achieved Gold ratings thanks to investing millions in raising NSS scores over the years, the existing hierarchy of elite and mass universities remained. Comparing TEF results with UCAS applicant data, Mark Kernohan (2017, no page) found 'no correlation at all', with Gold award holders 'nearly as likely to have seen a decrease in

interest levels as an increase'. For Leach (2017, no page), a Gold award – which can be awarded based on a panel's 'subjective considerations' to counter-balance low scores on metrics – can 'hide a multitude of deep structural and cultural problems at an institution'. Furthermore, as Leach (2017, no page) points out, the TEF is not real measure of teaching quality: the TEF 'does a lot of things, but it's also highly limited'. The 2015 Green Paper, which first proposed in detail the TEF, admitted as much: 'There is no one broadly accepted definition of 'teaching excellence' … in practice it has many interpretations and there are likely to be different ways of measuring it' (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2015, p. 21). Ultimately, the problem with the TEF is the same as the general problem of price competition in higher education: students choose universities primarily based on their ability to get them into the highest possible point in the British class system – what Willetts (2017) calls the 'selection effect' of English higher education. Ultimately, while Oxbridge and Russell Group 'brands' continue to signify this to employers, and therefore students, 'selection' will continue to drive choice in English higher education and a truly competitive market will never exist.

Although McGettigan (2015, p. 2) argues that the TEF could become 'one metric to dominate all others' due to its operationalising of the neoliberal theory of education, HCT, the latest addition to the UK's suite of performance management exercises arguably links English higher education even more fundamentally to the needs of a stagnating neoliberal economy. The Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) – which at the time of writing is still under development – is explicitly designed to address directly the stagnation of neoliberal capitalism. The UK Government's 2017 Industrial Strategy, which also announces an increase of impact weighting in the REF2010 from 10% to 25%, admits that the fundamental challenges facing the British economy can in large part be attributed to the internal contradictions of monopoly capitalism. 'Neither the government nor the private sector is investing enough in research and development (R&D),' the document notes (HM Government, 2017, p. 61). Part of the problem, it explains, is that the UK economy is 'dominated by services', which by definition do not produce anything, and what little R&D exists is 'concentrated in a small number of big businesses and in a small number of sectors such as pharmaceuticals, motor vehicles and technology' (HM Government, 2017, p. 61). In other words, the reluctance on the part of transnational corporations and

conglomerates to invest their way out of stagnation, preferring instead to maintain profitability through efficiency measures, financial speculation, and further monopolisation, is preventing the economy from recovering. The Government, therefore, must step in to stimulate investment and demand. However, rather than investing directly in either nationalised industries or in public services – a Keynesian state planning approach, favoured by Jeremy Corbyn's UK Labour Government – the neoliberal UK Conservative Party is effectively proposing to *outsource* this investment to the English HE sector, with universities incentivised and managed towards neoliberal outcomes through the KEF. A somewhat ingenious solution, this would mean that not only do tax-payers once again literally pay for the crisis of monopoly finance capitalism, as universities are subsidised by tax-payers not only through research funding but through the student loan write-off, but, through the privatisation, marketisation and the eventual monopolisation of this system, this investment is recouped by transnational capital as HE is absorbed into the ever-expanding global culture industry.

The double truth doctrine: monopolisation

The previous sections explained 'third-wave neoliberalism' in terms of a process of turning public services to the needs of a stagnating monopoly capitalist system, both through the opening up of short-term profitability through privatisation and through the restructure of these services via performance management systems. It has also been already shown that such marketisation is ideologically justified with reference to typical neoliberal themes of competitiveness and consumer welfare. This section continues this analysis, demonstrating in particular how the neoliberal double truth doctrine operates within such ideology to conceal real processes of monopolisation. Reflecting in his recently published memoir *A University Education*, former UK Government Minister of State for Universities and Science (2010-4) David Willetts (2017, p. 39) describes the process of marketisation as an attempt to 'bring out the best' in universities, rather than 'giving them orders'. Marketisation – a term Willetts acknowledges, but dismisses as a 'crude conspiracy theory' – involves 'understanding the rewards, incentives and peer pressures which influence [universities'] behaviour' (Willetts, 2017, p. 39). But the 'incumbents', by which Willetts means traditional universities, both elite and modern, were in 'very strong positions in

British higher education' so it was necessary for 'challenge, competition and choice' to be introduced artificially by the Coalition government (Willetts, 2017, p. 277). Furthermore, the success of market reforms is to be judged on a single criterion: 'When I was Opposition spokesman before 2010, I said that the test of any changes we brought in would be if they were in the interests of students and that is the test I tried to apply throughout my time as minister' (Willetts, 2017, p. 61). Based on this criteria, Willetts considers in retrospect that his reforms were a 'conspicuous success', not only because he liberated higher education from 'absurd' controls on student numbers – thus overseeing a 'great social reform' while in Government – but also because he 'saved' higher education from the worst economic effects of the 2008 Financial Crisis: 'We were able to deliver one of the single biggest cuts in public spending of the Coalition whilst at the same time increasing the total cash going to universities for teaching and access by £1.5 billion … that's not bad' (Willetts, 2017, p. 67).

Sir Michael Barber, former chief education advisor at English multi-national education corporation Pearson and partner at private sector consultant McKinsey, has also been an influential ideologue for marketisation. In 2013, he published a report with Katelyn Donnelly and Saad Rizvi, 'An Avalanche is Coming: Higher Education and the Revolution Ahead', which argued that the forces of 'globalisation and technology' were 'disrupting' higher education, and that in response, the 'unbundling' of the functions of existing institutions becomes 'possible, likely or even necessary' (Barber et al, 2013, p. 32). Barber and colleagues list 10 functions of the university that can be 'unbundled': research, degrees, city prosperity, faculty, students, governance and administration, curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, and experience (Barber et al, 2013). In response to the challenge of marketisation – which as has been argued was not an 'natural' result of technological change but a state-led and artificial process – modern universities, without the positional status accumulated over centuries that their traditional, elite Oxbridge and Russell Group rivals enjoy, and which shields them to some extent from acute competitive pressures, must pick and choose from these functions to find their 'unique selling point'. As a result of marketisation, the modern university – which Clark Kerr (1963) characterised as a 'multiversity' due to its multi-functional and complex nature – must be rationalised into five models:

- the *elite* university, mentioned above, which survives due to its monopoly over access to its corresponding elite social networks and post-university careers;
- the *mass* university, which through aggressive entrepreneurialism, technological diversification and rapid geographical expansion will survive through sheer size;
- the *niche* university, which is represented primarily by lean and small for-profit 'challenger institutions' fighting for market-share with the expanding mass universities;
- the *local* university, which provides an economic 'anchor' role in local and regional economies, especially in north of England areas where universities will fill the gap left by the collapse or internationalisation of heavy industries;
- and finally, the *lifelong learning* system, which represents a hope that someone will pick up the social need for non-academic apprenticeships, re-training in cases of structural redundancy and adult education in the absence of government support and funding. (Barber et al, 2013)

However, as evidenced by the need for the REF, TEF, and KEF performance management systems, competition neither appears naturally nor leads to this kind of ideal allocation and rationalisation of resources. In reality, marketisation and technological 'disruption' lead, just like in the wider economy, to market consolidation and monopolisation. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), for example, are argued by both Willetts and Barber to be the primary disruptive force in higher education. As Willetts (2017, p. 320) points out, MOOCs offer a particularly attractive way to eke profit out of an otherwise labour-intensive industry, as the marginal costs of an extra student on a MOOC are 'close to zero'. Once a MOOC has been set up, it is not only significantly cheaper than traditional higher education to run, but scaling this model up in terms of student numbers makes little difference to this cost. MOOCs, therefore, offer a way for existing universities to drive down the costs of higher education while rapidly expanding: 'Radically egalitarian peer learning begins to look like a suspiciously neat way to save money on educators,' Willetts (2017, p. 326) notes. Some modern universities seeking to gain first-mover advantage, such as University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and to a larger extent Coventry University, have experimented with corporate form in response to the opportunities presented by marketisation, creating 'wholly-owned (for-profit) subsidiary' colleges within an over-arching group

structure. The creation of elaborate 'centre-periphery' systems of internal outsourcing (Kimber, 2010) have shown that Willetts' dream of 'no frills' higher education has in fact been realised by entrepreneurial vice-chancellors within existing institutions.

Barber and colleagues (2013, p. 57) inadvertently reveal the truth of marketisation: 'Due to the nature of the industry, there will be rapid consolidation of the online providers, with only the strongest players left standing … At the same time, many middle- to low-tier universities will have to disband or adapt as they become irrelevant'. The future of English higher education will resemble the past, with modern universities forging a path to monopolisation that all providers will be eventually forced to follow. Modern universities, by using technology to rationalise production into a shrinking core of quasi-tenured star academics producing content and research-funding income, and an army of insecure, deprofessionalised service workers delivering standardised 'products' in the periphery, will rapidly expand and dominate the pseudo-competitive, non-elite student market. While elite universities will continue to resist market pressures, the lure of institutional power and prestige and the financial perks of leading an internationally recognised brand will lead the Oxbridge and Russell Group vice-chancellors to follow suit, mobilising the vast resources of such universities to play catch up. While this process hardly resembles the ideology of competition and choice – as students will in future only be able to choose what they can afford, and if on a budget, only have the 'freedom to choose what is always the same' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997, p. 167) – it does reflect the shift in neoliberal theory from competition to competitiveness (see Chapter 3). Monopoly is the prize for those entrepreneurs – in this case vice-chancellors – who play the game well. The losers, those institutions that fail to play the game or play it badly, will be absorbed by the winners, thus advancing monopolisation further.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that far from being discredited because of the 2008 Financial Crisis, neoliberal approaches to public policy are today more aggressive than ever. Marketisation as a key strategy of 'third-wave neoliberalism' is being applied to the English HE sector, to open universities to private

capital and financial speculation, and to redirect their functions to the needs of a stagnating monopoly capitalist system. In the first section, the ambiguous legacy left by the 1963 Robbins Report was described, in order to explain how later market reformers like David Willetts could claim they were completing the project of creating a mass HE system in the UK. The next section then traced the progress of marketisation in the sector since Robbins, focusing in particular on a series of reforms in the 1980s under Thatcher, which created the conditions for the later acceleration of marketisation by successive Coalition and Conservative UK Governments since 2010. Turning increasingly to national performance management systems – the REF, TEF and KEF – to push universities and academics towards neoliberal economic objectives, contemporary marketisation presents a case study of how neoliberal governments socially-construct markets while hiding the truth of such marketisation as a process of monopolisation. Far from creating a competitive, efficient and consumer-focused market in HE, therefore, the last section of this chapter argued that these reforms would eventually see a consolidation of first the English higher education 'market', and then the global market as universities as multinational education corporations compete with each other internationally. Rather than freeing students as consumers from the 'producer power' of self-governing and autonomous academics, marketisation merely replaces one form of monopoly with another, one far more powerful and less accountable. In line with the 'double truth doctrine' of neoliberalism outlined in the previous chapter, then, market reformers – whether consciously or not – are 'selling out' students, academics and the public for the benefit of monopoly finance capitalism.

In the next two chapters, the consequences of marketisation for sociologists and academics are analysed, so that alternatives based on Dewey's theory of collective intelligence can be articulated. But what are the consequences of marketisation for education, and for students who are pointed to as the beneficiaries of market reform? While a full answer to this question is outside the scope of this thesis, which concentrates on universities as knowledge producing institutions and their potential for democratic inquiry, some brief remarks can be made. While Dewey did not write much about higher education, he was clear regarding the role of all levels and types of education in preparing individuals for democratic citizenship. Students-as-consumers no longer have the time to enjoy learning as a social process within

which accepted beliefs are challenged, and to become responsible citizens through the acquisition of methods of free, social inquiry in a safe, experimental context. For Dewey, the theory of social inquiry presented in this thesis is also the basis of a theory and methodology of democratic (higher) education. In a sense, social inquiry provides the ideal, as end-in-view, for both education and politics. Ultimately, however, the question of how students should be educated comes down to the function of universities within society. Unless universities are democratised, attempts to introduce democratic forms of teaching and learning within marketised universities will eventually come to grief under the pressure of the TEF and the government's obsession with employment outcomes. Chapters 5 and 6, therefore, begin the necessary process of reconstructing academic social science, the academic profession and the university, at least in theory, in preparation for a time when a truly democratic university can become the foundation for a democratised HE system.

Part 3: Reconstruction

Chapter 5: Reconstructing Sociology

Introduction

While Part 2 presents a somewhat bleak picture of the social, political and material conditions of social theory today, neoliberalism and marketisation are not monolithic or inevitable processes, and academics can play an important role in resisting these processes. This chapter argues that sociology has a crucial role to play in fighting not just the marketisation of higher education, but neoliberal austerity as well. Michael Burawoy in his theory of 'public sociology' argues that sociology's disciplinary identity is existentially connected to the fate of the public in democratic society. Burawoy insists that in order to fight marketisation and neoliberalism, sociology must reconnect with the public through its repressed, 'organic' sub-discipline: public sociology. By recognising the fundamental contribution that reflexive forms of sociology – critical and public – make to the discipline, Burawoy's 'fourfold typology' aims to nurture an 'organic solidarity' within academic sociology that will resolve its internal conflicts and help it to resist marketisation. However, the first section reconstructs the history of sociology as riven by a 'founding tension' between professional and radical sociology that cannot be resolved in theory. While sociologists like Dewey in the US and G. H. Marshall in the UK tried to establish public sociology as a core part of the emerging sociological profession, critics of professionalisation such as Alvin Gouldner correctly pointed out that, by defending a reified professional ethic of 'value neutrality', professional sociology allows itself to be co-opted by corporate-capitalist interests. The only way that marketisation can be resisted – following the analysis in Chapter 4 – is for sociologists to unite with other academics within universities, and with the public outside the university against neoliberal austerity. In the last section, Dewey's theory of collective intelligence is proposed as a way to ground Burawoy's public sociology as a democratic sociology based on a practice of 'co-inquiry'. By co-inquiring with the public, sociologists can work with the latter to turn qualitative experience into democratic knowledge and democratic demands, and through this process, build structures of political and material solidarity within a wider social movement against neoliberalism.

Sociology's founding tension

For Burawoy, former president of both the American Sociological Association (ASA) and the International Sociological Association (ISA), 'public sociology' – which he defines as 'sociology that seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy, promoting dialogue about issues that affect the fate of society, placing the values to which we adhere under a microscope' (Burawoy, in Nyden et al, 2012, p. 2) – is an important part of the academic discipline of sociology, if not the founding mode of sociological inquiry. However, public sociology has become marginalised and forgotten within the discipline, dominated by its professionalised counterpart. Burawoy argues that although public sociology is flourishing, 'operating in the interstices of society, in neighbourhoods, in schools, in classrooms, in factories', in order to 'invigorate the discipline as a whole', this invisible activity on the part of sociologists must be made 'a visible and legitimate enterprise' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 4). Burawoy claims that at the beginning of sociology, sociology *was* public sociology, and that an 'umbilical cord' connects sociology 'to the world of the public' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 4). For Burawoy, this vision for public sociology is thus a call for a return to sociology's original and foundational role as 'defender of civil society', a civil society which is today 'beleaguered by the encroachment of markets and states' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 4). Public sociology, as a sociological practice and subdiscipline of sociology, is divided further by Burawoy (2005, p. 7) into two types: 'traditional' public sociology – where public sociologists act like 'public intellectuals', addressing an 'invisible', 'thin' and 'passive' public through accessibly written books, journalism and the media – and 'organic' public sociology, through which public sociologists 'work in close connection with a visible, thick, active, local and often counter-public'. Burawoy (2005, p. 8) claims that most of public sociology is organic, and that traditional and organic public sociology are complementary; the former 'frames' the latter, and the latter 'disciplines, grounds and directs' the former.

Furthermore, public sociology is only one 'type' of sociology, and is complemented by three other types within a broader 'division of sociological labour' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 10). Constructed from two questions posed by previous sociologists who also reflected on the nature of sociology – Alfred McLung Lee, another president of the ASA, whose 1976 address 'Sociology for Whom?' supplies the x axis with

two kinds of audience, academic and non-academic – and Robert Lynd, whose 1939 book *Sociology for What: The Place of Social Science in American Culture* furnishes the y axis with a distinction between instrumental and reflexive knowledge – Burawoy (2005) organises this division of sociological labour into what he calls the 'fourfold typology' (see Figure 5). On the instrumental side of the typology there is *policy* sociology, a goal-oriented form of public sociology that services private or public-sector clients who provide policy sociologists with problems to be turned into recommendations for policy. On the instrumental axis is also *professional* sociology, which sees itself as grounding sociology as a science, supplying the discipline with 'true and tested methods, accumulated bodies of knowledge, orienting questions, and conceptual frameworks' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 10). Here, Burawoy draws on the philosophy of science, specifically Thomas Kuhn (1970) and Imre Lakatos (1978), in characterising professional sociology as consisting of 'multiple intersecting research programs, each with their assumptions, exemplars, defining questions, conceptual apparatuses and evolving theories', inwardly absorbed in the 'puzzle solving' activity of what Kuhn calls 'normal science' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 10). Alongside *public* sociology on the reflexive side of the typology there is *critical* sociology, which both examines the deep foundations of the discipline and supplies it with values; it was critical sociology that supplied the two questions that formed the basis of the typology, for example. Critical sociology, for Burawoy (2005, p. 10), 'is the conscience of professional sociology just as public sociology is the conscience of policy sociology'.

	Academic Audience	**Non-Academic Audience**
Instrumental Knowledge	Professional Sociology	Policy Sociology
Reflexive Knowledge	Critical Sociology	Public Sociology

Figure 5: Burawoy's (2005) typology of public sociology

The point of the typology is to show that there is, or should be, an 'organic solidarity' between the four types based on a functional division of labour within the discipline. This is Burawoy's 'normative vision' for public sociology. In the past, Burawoy (2005, p. 15) explains, there has been 'contempt' between professional and public sociologists, with a series of critiques by intellectuals and sociologists in recent decades pointing to the 'retreat of the public intellectual into a cocoon of professionalisation' (see for example: Berger 2002; Jacoby, 2000; Patterson, 2002). By contrast, Burawoy (2005, p. 15) takes the 'opposite view', insisting that there exists a dialectical relationship between professional and public sociology grounded in 'respect and synergy'. Burawoy's (2005, p. 15) 'normative vision' is premised on this 'reciprocal interdependence' among the four types, and the idea of organic solidarity on the necessity of each deriving 'energy, meaning, and imagination' from its 'connection to the others'. However, Burawoy describes how each type of sociology tends to become 'pathological' by 'being over-responsive to their different audiences' (Burawoy, 2005, p. 15). Being fair to each type of sociology, Burawoy (2005, p. 16) addresses the potential pathologies of each: *professional* sociology's tendency to get lost in puzzle solving means it can 'easily regress towards insularity … incomprehensive grandiosity or narrow methodicism'; *critical* sociology, with its value commitments, is vulnerable to 'ingrown sectarianism' and attachment to 'communities of dogma that no longer offer any serious engagement with professional sociology or the infusion of values into public sociology'; *policy* sociology, because of its reliance on external funding, is 'all too easily captured by clients who impose strict contractual obligations', creating 'distortions that can reverberate back into professional sociology'; and finally, *public* sociology, 'no less than policy sociology', can be 'held hostage to outside forces', being tempted to pander to and flatter its publics in the interest of 'gaining credibility with the public, and thereby compromising professional and critical commitments'.

Alongside the pathologies, Burawoy also points to the domination of instrumental sociology over reflexive sociology, of professional and policy sociology over critical and public sociology. Analysing sociology as a 'field of power', Burawoy (2005, p. 18) seems to abandon his vision of organic solidarity in favour of a vague hope that 'subaltern knowledges (critical and public) should be allowed breathing space to develop their own capacities and to inject dynamism back into the dominant knowledges'. To

explain this strange contradiction between an idealistic hope for solidarity and a more realistic acknowledgement of the power structure of disciplinary sociology within the context of marketisation, critics on the one hand point to Burawoy's role as president of the ASA (Calhoun, 2005), and consequent need to appease representatives of all the four types, and on the other, competing and non-complementary theories grounding his vision for public sociology. Raymond Morrow (2009), for example, identifies two major social-theoretical traditions fighting for prominence in Burawoy's theory: firstly, there is structural functionalism, which, drawing on the work of Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, aims for a 'consensus' that would bring the necessary differentiation of disciplinary activity and knowledge together in organic solidarity; and secondly, the 'conflict' tradition of critical theory in the work of Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno and Jürgen Habermas (see also Chapter 1), which, drawing on Max Weber's distinction between instrumental and substantive knowledge, sees an epistemological split in knowledge that cannot be smoothed over by this functionalist conservativism.

Aside from the fundamental tension between the two traditions, explored in more detail below, Morrow points to three problems. Firstly, professional sociology would not be characterised by Weber as straightforwardly 'instrumental'. For Weber, social-scientific activity would be 'more insightfully referred to as conceptual or formal (or perhaps theoretical) rationality', rather than instrumental rationality in the sense used by the Frankfurt School (Morrow, 2009, p. 55). Moreover, given that Weber identifies scientific inquiry as itself a value in Western societies, Morrow points out that professional sociology would have to be acknowledged as having some substantive-rational basis. To be fair to Burawoy, this is the function assigned to critical sociology, but Morrow's point is that professional sociology is grounded in the general value of science, and therefore does not necessarily need critical sociology to provide any external values. Secondly, Morrow argues that Weber's 'anti-positivist' interpretative sociology would entail a rejection of Burawoy's hypostatised dichotomy of value-free (professional/policy) and value-rational (critical/public) sociology. Furthermore, as Weber's idea of social science was based on a hermeneutic distinction between facts and values, with sociology concerned with investigating the latter through interpretative methods, substantive reason and value rationality were not amenable to instrumental forms of reason. On this basis, for Weber, critical

sociology and professional sociology would be fundamentally opposed in what Morrow (2009, p. 56) describes as a 'metaphysical war of the gods'. John Holmwood (2007) also questions Burawoy's use of Talcott Parsons, whose own fourfold 'AGIL' scheme based on the four systems of social action – adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency (pattern maintenance) – Burawoy (2005a, p. 11 footnote) admits his own typology 'bears an uncanny resemblance to'. As Holmwood explains, Burawoy assigns each of the four quadrants to the Parson's AGIL scheme, with professional sociology linked to 'adaptation', policy sociology to 'goal attainment', public sociology to 'integration', and critical sociology to 'latency'. However, Holmwood notes that Burawoy ignores the standard criticisms of the AGIL scheme, for example that they are 'a priori' and are not derived from an empirical analysis of society. Burawoy also inverts the scheme as applied to higher education, giving critical sociology the role that professional knowledge production had in Parsons and Platt's (1973) analysis of universities within the 'cognitive complex' of post-industrial society.

While these criticisms of Burawoy's normative vision are certainly valid, they point beyond the typology – which, as Morrow (2009, p. 48) points out, functions more as a 'heuristic device' than a substantive theoretical foundation – to a 'founding tension' within sociology that structures the divisions of the academic discipline to this day (Nisbet, 1970). For Alvin Gouldner (1971, p. 113), the 'binary fission' between academic sociology and Marxist critical theory within the Western sociological tradition can be traced back to the proto-sociology of the 18th century Enlightenment, specifically Henri de Saint-Simon's utopian socialism. Saint Simon's social philosophy was based in a technocratic vision of society, which Randall Collins and Michael Makowsky (2005, p. 18) colourfully describe as the idea that 'if scientists would form an international council and take over the direction of society', then 'instead of war and strife', people could 'turn their attention to building canals and generally improving conditions'. Saint-Simon famously asked what would happen if a society lost, on the one hand, all of its scientists, industrialists and artisans and on the other, its civil servants, judiciary and aristocracy (Gouldner, 1971). Saint Simon answered that only with the loss of the first section of society would society be thrown into chaos. On this basis, he distinguished between members and institutions of society that are useful and those that are useless. While the poor were dismissed as incapable of

distinguishing between short-term and long-lasting utility – i.e. their poverty was a result of their own incompetence – private property was also criticised by Saint Simon as leading to incompetence, in this case because people could assume ruling positions not because of talent or wisdom but because of inherited wealth. The conservative aspect of Saint Simon's 'social utilitarianism' was subsequently taken over by August Comte, who created a 'grand theory' of 'order and progress' that he called 'positivism' (Giddens, 1979, p. 239). While this was not exactly the positivism criticised by the Frankfurt School (see Chapter 1), Comte's focus on overcoming not only metaphysical but also transcendental philosophy in favour of a science of society grounded in a given reality and the functional utility of institutions does connect Comte's vision with both Talcott Parsons' structural functionalism and variants of Vienna Circle 'logical positivism' (Giddens, 1979).

Reflecting on the state of US social science in the 1950s, C. Wright Mills (1959) lamented the domination of these two traditions within academic sociology, arguing, like Burawoy, that they both represented movement away from sociology's public function. Gouldner (1971) traces the origins of this withdrawal to developments in post-revolutionary France, to a time when the country's bourgeoisie were looking for a model of progress that didn't entail the revolutionary violence of the Jacobin revolution or the conservativism of the Restoration, both of which had reached a stalemate. The French middle class was looking for a new secular religion that would ground industrial-capitalist society in a set of progressive values, thus providing an alternative to the utopian socialism that had begun to influence the working class which this system produced as its by-product. Comte's positive sociology was explicitly designed to meet this need, and its 'social map' of an order based in depoliticised science and the leadership of industrialists 'congenially resonated' with and garnered the public support of this class (Gouldner, 1971, p. 95-9). Sociology's reward was a place in the newly state-established institutions of the bourgeois public sphere (see Chapter 1 for discussion of the development of the public sphere during the Enlightenment). Comte and later Durkheim worked hard to professionalise the new science of sociology within an expanded and secularised 'academy' system in France, differentiating it from other emerging social science and existing humanities disciplines like philosophy (Heilbron, 1995). As Bhambra (2007) points out, right from the start, sociology took on a normative function.

Becoming a crucial part of state-led systems of accelerated modernisation pursued by relatively backward countries such as France and Germany, the modern university became a key institution of state-capitalist expansion, and Comtean sociology provided both a theoretical description of an ideal social order and a normative vision of how this order could be achieved through functional integration. In other words, functionalist sociology grounded the idea of the modern university as a unity of scientific knowledge production (*Wissenschaft*) and teaching for democratic citizenship (*Bildung*) by providing both a science of values and the end of a technocratically governed society (see Chapter 6 for a discussion of the idea of the modern university).

While conservative sociology became institutionalised in modern universities, Saint Simon's utopian socialism and critique of property influenced the nascent French socialist movement of the 19th century, which after disappearing underground to avoid the repression of the Restoration, re-appeared in a systematised form within Marx's radical social theory (Gouldner, 1971). 'Scientific socialism' spread rapidly across Europe thanks to Marx's influence, nurtured within the plebeian public sphere in UK (Thompson, 1963), and forming a key part of anti-capitalist social theory in communist parties in Germany and Russia. Marxist radical sociology, therefore, through the working class, played a crucial role in the democratisation of Western societies in the early 20th century, forcing parliamentary reform and eventually universal suffrage. By the early 20th century, socialist political groups had become mass socialist parties, with the Social Democratic Party in Germany reaching a membership of over a million at its peak in 1912. This momentum for reform – and revolution, with Russia becoming the first socialist state in 1917 – in turn created an 'ameliorative' consciousness in the middle class, with social conservatives increasingly sympathetic to working class interests (Dewey, 1935). After the experience of the Second World War – which taught governments how large sections of industry could be socialised and planned, and industry how the working class could be controlled through the commodification of culture (see Chapter 1) – welfare states were created in the UK and the US. It was during this period that conservative sociology came of age in Talcott Parsons' structural functionalism, providing once again a sociological response to the 'need for social order and moral consensus', this time for welfare state capitalism (Gouldner, 1971, p. 113). Radical sociology, despite its impact on

global politics, only entered the sociological discipline in the 1970s. A counter-movement emerged in academic sociology, partly inspired by Mills' (1959) critique in the 1950s of Parsonian grand theory on the one hand and the 'abstracted empiricism' of Paul Lazarsfeld on the other, and partly driven by the entry of intellectuals from 'new social movements' following the generational upheavals of the late 1960s. For both Gouldner and Burawoy, the entry of Marxist social theory – as well as other radical social theories such as feminism, post-colonialism, cultural studies and queer theory – into the discipline of sociology made it 'polycentric', with no single theory dominating all others and the 'founding tension' becoming a pathology within the discipline itself (Gouldner, 1971, p. 157). While Burawoy (2005) celebrates this polycentrism, for professional sociologists this inaugurated a long period of 'soul searching' about the nature of the discipline, with sociologists describing the discipline as 'impossible', 'disintegrated', 'decomposed' and as having an 'identity crisis' (Holmwood, 2007, p. 47).

Towards a social-democratic sociology

Before returning to Burawoy's theory of public sociology, however, it is worth dwelling on two attempts to establish a public, or democratic, sociology in the 20th century. Firstly, there existed for a short time at the University of Chicago in the US a form of professional sociology with a strong emphasis on public engagement and a sympathy to radical sociologies like Marxism. Pragmatism, through the so-called 'Chicago School of Sociology' (not to be confused with the later 'Chicago School of Economics'), played a key role in the institutionalisation of sociology in America, so much so that for Coser (1978, pp. 311-2), 'it seems no exaggeration to say that for roughly twenty years, from the First World War to the mid-1930s, the history of sociology in [North] America can largely be written as the history of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago'. Although working in the philosophy department, Dewey's instrumentalism influenced not only the pragmatic social psychology of George Herbert Mead but also the urban sociology of Robert Park, both having a lasting influence on academic sociology around the world (Coser, 1978). In both cases, Dewey's influence pushed the work of Mead and Park towards what Burawoy calls 'public sociology'. With Dewey, Mead joined Jane Addams' Hull House settlement, where they alongside other volunteers held classes in philosophy,

literature, history and art, and many other subjects. Dewey and colleagues at Chicago felt that it 'behoved' pragmatist philosophers and sociologists 'to study the manifold social problems of the city first-hand' – 'they all wished to learn by doing good' (Coser, 1978, p. 309). Thus, while the Chicago School was also influenced by Marxism – as Gouldner (1971) notes, Marxism was part of the 'underculture' of academic sociology during its early years – Dewey's pragmatism founded a tradition of critical social theory that was subsequently overshadowed by Parsons' grand theory and by the radical sociology of the 1970s.

Secondly, as A. H. Halsey (2004, p. 51) explains, the London School of Economics (LSE) in the UK was as a whole an attempt to find an institutional home for what Mills (1959) later called the 'sociological imagination', becoming a centre for the training of 'social professionals' and for 'research into the burgeoning problems of industrial society'. According to Halsey (2004, p. 47), like the Chicago School in the US, the history of British academic sociology was for a long time linked to the history of the LSE – which he describes, no doubt being biased as a former employee, as a 'great institution', with the School exercising a 'virtual monopoly over the subject between the two World Wars'. Founded by Fabians Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Graham Wallas and George Bernard Shaw in 1895, the LSE, which became incorporated into the federal University of London in 1900, was from the beginning oriented towards and informed by the development of a parliamentary Labour Party. While Ralf Dahrendorf (1995) urges caution in attributing the later creation of the British welfare state to the influence of LSE 'proto-sociologists', it is nevertheless incontrovertible that the former had some significant influence over the latter. After all, William Beveridge, architect of the welfare state, was director of the School from 1919 to 1937 (see also below). Perhaps the best way to consider the relationship between the LSE, the public sociology beginning to be developed there and the move away from laissez faire towards welfarism is, as Stefan Collini (1983) has argued, in terms of a New Liberalism emerging at the beginning of the 20th century in Britain. The victory of Keynes over Hayek described in Chapter 3 is also part of this shift in political attitudes.

It is important to consider the nature of this shift in a little more detail, as it helps to clarify Dewey's own distinct contribution to the reconstruction of liberalism occurring during this period. In his own

account of the move away from laissez faire in the 19th century, Dewey (1935, p. 21) described how a split occurred in liberalism, with a 'positive' liberalism emerging at the beginning of the 20th century, inspired by Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism and J. S. Mill's later move towards socialism, which came to be associated with 'the use of governmental action for aid to those at an economic disadvantage and for alleviation of their conditions'. According to Peter Lamb (2010), when Fabianism emerged during the 1880s, collectivism was widely accepted as necessary for human flourishing. Although some traditional liberals remained committed to laissez faire economics, Lamb (2010, no page) explains that 'new liberals' like T. H. Green 'believed that substantial state intervention would be necessary if ordinary individuals were to prosper'. 'In the early years of the 20th century, the dominant liberal position involved the acceptance and advancement of the extension of public control in industry,' Lamb (2010, no page) continues, a position which also involved 'collective responsibility for children's education and nutrition, housing, employment, along with support for care of the sick and aged'. Out of this sympathy for collectivism emerged also the Fabians, who were liberal socialists that rejected the idea that violent revolution was necessary for positive social change, insisting instead on the necessity for 'cautious and gradual change' (Shaw, 1962, p. 218). As Asa Briggs (1962) points out, Shaw's 'gradualism' was not so much a British variant on European 'revisionism' – as argued by Lenin, for example – but based on British sympathy for socialist policies and a lack of appetite for revolution. The Fabians' tactics, therefore, involved first 'permeation' within the Liberal Party, and then active participation in the formation of the Independent Labour Party in 1893 (Briggs, 1962). As the Labour Party became a viable parliamentary force, winning its first election in 1924, so Fabianism became a mainstream force in British politics.

However, some Fabians, like some members of the Frankfurt School of critical theory (see Chapter 1), had a rather low opinion of the intellectual capacity of ordinary people. Beatrice Webb, for example, admitted that the Fabians had 'little faith' in what she called the 'average sensual man', who she said could only 'describe his [sic] grievances' not 'prescribe his remedies' (Webb, in Wainwright, 2018, p. 14). Like many socialists at the time, Webb believed, therefore, that solutions had to come from the 'professional expert' (Webb, in Wainwright, 2018, p. 14). Nevertheless, Fabians were slightly less anti-

democratic than the professional experts that oversaw implementing the welfare state. Webb criticised Beveridge, for example, who she said believed that there had to be a 'revolution in the economic structure of society', but that it had to be guided by persons with knowledge and training – i.e. by himself and those he chooses as colleagues' (Webb, in Wainwright, 2018, p. 14). Keynes was also deeply sceptical about allowing workers – 'who do not know at all what they are talking about' – to influence economic and social policy decisions through the Labour Party (Keynes, in Wainwright, 2018, p. 16). For Wainwright (2018, p. 14), Fabianism, Leninist and Stalinist models of socialism and the Labour Party throughout large parts of the 20th century all tended to mobilise a 'paternalistic political methodology' – a 'benevolent version' of what she calls 'power-as domination' – which was premised on a low estimation of people's capabilities by the experts responsible for policy making'. By contrast, Dewey's democratic socialism, as argued in Chapter 2, is based on a concept of 'collective intelligence' where the fallible knowledge of individuals is capable of being socialised through public inquiry. This is an example of political action that Wainwright (2018, p. 21) would call 'power-as-transformation'.

Returning to sociology, the above provides the context for the second notable attempt to establish a form of public sociology in the 20th century: T. H. Marshall's (1992) theory of 'citizenship' grounded in 'social rights'. An LSE sociologist, Marshall in his influential essay 'Citizenship and Social Class' takes on what he sees as influential economist Alfred Marshall's implicit 'sociological hypothesis' in *The Future of the Working Classes* that social equality – or 'citizenship' – is achievable within a system of economic inequality. Alfred Marshall's concept of citizenship was very much that of the formal, literary-bourgeois public sphere described by Habermas (see Chapter 1), and also an early version of the neoliberal rationalisation of monopoly – competition as 'competitiveness'; equality at the outset, inequality of outcome – analysed in Chapter 3. By contrast, T. H. Marshall (1992, p. 8) argued that real, or substantive citizenship required not only bourgeois civil and political rights, but also 'social rights', which he defined as the 'right to defend and assert all one's rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law'. To support this argument, Marshall traced a quasi-teleological development of citizenship within democratic societies, with civil, political and social rights established in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries respectively. For Marshall (1992, p. 8), welfarism was the end-point of this process

of democratisation, with the post-war British welfare state ensuring that every citizen (with citizenship necessarily linked to the national state) had the ‘right to a modicum of social welfare and security’ and a right to ‘share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society’ without the need for violent revolution. While substantive citizenship clashed with economic inequality, contra Alfred Marshall, social-democratic societies had found a way to reduce the latter to further the former *within* the capitalist system of production.

With hindsight, T. H. Marshall clearly underestimated the role of class conflict in both the theory and historical development of citizenship. As Bottomore (1992) points out, Marshall – like Habermas in his account of the bourgeois public sphere – downplayed the contribution of working-class struggle in establishing civil, political and social rights in the last three centuries. As a result, Marshall failed to anticipate the return of class struggle in the second part of the 20th century, as the economic conditions for the post-war ‘class compromise’ collapsed, and neoliberalism sought to re-establish the right to profitability of corporations over the social rights of the working class. In Bottomore’s view, the romanticising of the welfare state by social democrats like Marshall also helped to obscure the way the Labour Party’s early, Bevanite vision of democratic socialism, expressed in its infamous ‘Clause IV’, was in practice replaced by the quite limited aim of ‘managed’ capitalism or ‘corporatism’ in the 1950s. Marshall later recognised the shortcomings of British welfarism, reflecting that ‘the golden calf of democratic socialism had been translated into a troika of sacred cows’ (in Bottomore, 1992, p. 60). Critiquing the contribution of Labour Party moderate Evan Durbin – who also worked at LSE and was influential on the formation of the breakaway anti-socialist Social Democratic Party in 1981 – Marshall conceded that, to achieve democratic socialism rather than a limited social democracy, ‘relatively low priority’ needed to be given to welfare compared with the ‘more genuinely socialist categories of political action’ like socialising the economy (Bottomore, 1992, p. 60).

Marshall’s rosy-tinted view of the welfare state was characteristic of post-war LSE-centric sociology, which became conservative in the face of the return of Marxism and the discipline’s ‘founding tension’ in the 1960s. While sociologists were sometimes critical of the huge extension of state power and bureaucracy represented by 1950s welfarism, this welfarism – along with the expansion of HE during

the period – provided sociology with many opportunities for the academic study of social policy and therefore spurred on the professionalisation of the discipline. As with classical sociology in Europe, this professionalisation entailed a rejection of radical sociology: 'LSE post-war sociologists were committed to a socialism that had no need for Marxism and no time for communism precisely because it was so deeply rooted in working-class provincialism' (Halsey, 2004, p. 84). So, when radical sociology eventually disrupted this 'golden age' of British sociology, these establishment 'dons' weren't impressed: 'Students, largely at the expense of the taxpayer, suddenly appeared, armed with sociological jargon, not as aspirants but as subverters of suburban respectability' (Halsey, 2004, p. 106). However, as Kristin Ross (2002) has argued, despite its dismissal by post-war sociologists and philosophers as 'youth revolt', 'generational conflict' or 'individual consumerism', the critique of the paternalistic welfare state as presented by '68ers' was in many ways valid. Like Dewey's reconstruction of liberalism in the 1930s, their attempt to rescue a form of democratic socialism or power-as-transformation against authoritarian communism, social democracy and neoliberalism was obscured by subsequent history.

Beyond organic solidarity

As noted above, Burawoy celebrates the 'polycentrism' of the sociological discipline and proposes that this sentiment should be shared by members of the discipline in all the 'types' he identifies in his theory of public sociology. But why *should* professional sociology make room for radical sociology, especially if it hasn't (out of choice, at least) in the last 100 years or so? As Burawoy himself notes in his analysis of the discipline as a field of power, and as demonstrated by the history of sociology above, instrumental sociology has *actively* sought to marginalise radical sociology. Both Burawoy (2005) and Holmwood (2007) point to the 'soul searching' that followed the entry of radical sociology into the academic profession, indicating that professional sociologists aren't at all happy with the current situation of 'polycentrism', wishing instead for the relative coherence of pre-60s sociology when it looked like sociology might become a social 'science', like economics. As already suggested, the fundamental tension within the discipline cannot be resolved through theory, especially one that pitches

functionalism against Marxism in the hope that each side will recognise through this opposition the relative value of the other and get along happily despite over a century of conflict (Feagin et al, 2009). In what follows, it is proposed that both typology and vision of organic solidarity should be abandoned in favour of a pragmatist democratic sociology grounded in Dewey's theory of collective intelligence united by a political-material solidarity with the public against neoliberal marketisation. This then resolves the fundamental contradictions of Burawoy's theory of public sociology, which arise directly from his attempt to 'paper over the cracks' of sociology's founding tension.

Today, the real enemy facing not just public sociology, but professional sociology as well, is *neoliberalism*. As Burawoy (2005, p. 7) insists, 'we are governed by a regime that is deeply antisocial in its method, hostile to the very idea of 'society''. What is needed, therefore, is solidarity against marketisation and neoliberalism within the academic profession, with sociologists leading the way, alongside the public. Furthermore, thus is the only way that public sociology can avoid co-optation within the impact agenda described in Chapter 4. The impact agenda, contrary to its stated intentions, threatens to alienate sociology even further from the public, which as the above explained originated in a process of structural differentiation within the discipline as it became professionalised in the modern, research university. Ironically, sociology's existential identification with the public may put the discipline in far greater danger than any other academic discipline of being unwittingly co-opted by this impact agenda. Within the instrumentalism of the REF, particularly the use of 'solicited testimony' to quantify essentially qualitative research processes, public sociology offers a particularly attractive means of achieving impact. In the interests of career progression – or as the result of institutional or managerial pressure – sociologists may turn to public sociology as a way to meet impact requirements, thus completely undermining the critical or emancipatory intentions of any public-sociological research. As Holmwood and Burawoy (2012) point out, the pressure of marketisation on sociologists is so great, that entrenchment in conservativism is more likely than ever before. To survive, it is likely that sociologists will increasingly turn to 'safe' modes of research, sociological theories and projects, as well as 'playing the game' of audit culture (Watermeyer and Olssen, 2016). This will, in turn, lead to a strengthening, not weakening, of the hegemony of professional sociology identified by Burawoy.

In times like these, a crude understanding of 'value-freedom' only leads to an acceleration of marketisation. Gouldner (1973) made a similar point in the 1970s, arguing that the idea of 'value-neutrality' was irresponsible in a time when nuclear war threatened to destroy humanity. Value neutrality forms the basis for both the sociological and the wider academic profession and was a key part of the structural differentiation of the former from Marxism. This value neutrality made sense in the early stages of sociology's institutionalisation, and was progressive in Weber's original formulation as it aimed to shield the profession – and sociology students – from the increasingly polarised and extreme politics of the Weimer Republic in the 1920s. However, once the discipline is institutionalised, this value neutrality only serves to obscure the uses to which sociological research is put by the university, and more importantly, by those who control the university through funding. Gouldner's point is that within the welfare state university, while sociology undoubtedly produced positive outcomes for the wider public through its influence on ameliorative social policy, was also implicated in what Henry Giroux (2015b) calls the 'military–industrial–academic complex' emerging at the time. By divorcing social research from discussions about the ultimate, societal ends of research within the state-sponsored university system, sociology was culpable in machinations of the US state within its 'Cold War' against the USSR. While this may sound extreme, the validity of this point can be seen even more today. As the previous chapter argued, third-wave neoliberalism is characterised by its turn to higher education as a solution to the current crisis of monopoly finance capitalism. While sociologists may not be directly contributing to the objectives of monopoly capitalist firms as they attempt to re-establish profitability with the help of the neoliberal Conservative government in the UK, by engaging with the impact agenda and the other TEF and KEF performance management systems, they are contributing to this wider project within the marketised system. Only by taking an anti-neoliberal stance and actively fighting against marketisation can sociologists aim to have some democratic control over the ends of research.

Gouldner's (1973) critique of value neutrality also resolves what turns out to be a false problem of objectivity in relation to radical sociology. As Gouldner points out, Max Weber's argument for value neutrality was actually for a kind of professional ethic that would counter self-interest on the part of individual academics for career advancement and charismatic power over students. In Deweyian terms,

as part of sociology's institutionalisation, this ethic becomes *hypostatised* as an ideology, and the qualitative origins of this ethic forgotten. As a result, value neutrality obscures the function of objectivity as a *practice* within a *process* of reflection and inquiry. Furthermore, for Dewey, objectivity is only achieved once knowledge is made public. By uncritically defending the sociological profession in terms of value freedom, then, sociologists not only deny the qualitative context of research but also reify knowledge by not including the public in the *testing* of the results of research. Professional sociology becomes *irresponsible*, and complicit in the general reification of knowledge within third-wave neoliberalism. Sociology, therefore, by defending the profession and the university against marketisation, is not rejecting objectivity, or endorsing an 'empty headed partisanship' that is 'unable to transcend the immediacies of narrowly conceived political commitment' (Gouldner, 1973, p. 63). On the contrary, Deweyian radical or democratic sociology is in fact *more* objective than professional sociology, as it is committed to testing knowledge within the context of its discovery and therefore application. It is therefore also far less vulnerable to becoming distorted, reified and co-opted by the neoliberal impact agenda.

This reconstruction of public sociology as Deweyian democratic sociology also avoids a neoliberal 'red herring' that Burawoy falls victim to in his theory. On the basis of sociology's existential identification with the public, Burawoy concludes – drawing on Lukács' theory of class consciousness (see Chapter 1) – that sociology takes a fundamentally different 'standpoint' from other social science disciplines like economics and politics, and therefore avoids the co-optation of social science within neoliberal agendas noted above. He criticises the 'positivist fantasy' put forward by Immanuel Wallerstein and colleagues in their 1996 'Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences', which proposed a 'unified social science' against the 'arbitrary' and 'anachronistic' disciplines that were formed in the 19th century as a result of the professionalisation and specialisation of knowledge production. In response to this new form of positivism, Burawoy (2005, p. 288) re-asserts sociology's interest 'in the expansion of the social' and the defence of civil society. Furthermore, sociology, as result of its commitments, Burawoy (2005) argues, exists in fundamental tension with the other, dominant, social science disciplines, economics and political science. Economics, Burawoy

(2005, pp. 287-8) writes, 'depends on the existence of markets with an interest in their expansion' while political science 'depends on the state with an interest in political stability'. In other words, both economics and political science exist to maintain the status quo. However, as Horkheimer (2002) insisted, interdisciplinary research is needed to reconstruct the social totality out of reification, which is obscured exactly by this arbitrary division of labour within the university, reflecting the wider capitalist division of labour. Burawoy falsely identifies positivism with interdisciplinary research, and cuts sociology off from other social science disciplines that are crucial in building a true picture of social reality out of the fragments of experience. Furthermore, in Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, there is no reason to begin with disciplinary structures whatsoever, as inquiry begins with the felt consequences of social action in experience. Originating outside the academy, such inquiry is free to roam wherever knowledge is most useful, with both the unity and responsibility of inquiry guaranteed by the context of the original problematic situation.

By essentialising the social science disciplines, Holmwood (2007, p. 50) argues that Burawoy misses the danger posed by a different kind of positivism coming from 'transdisciplinary research programs' grounded in a 'unified science of action'. Holmwood (2007) points to arguments that there has been a shift in the way knowledge is produced in advanced societies, away from disciplinary, academic research housed in universities towards a model – 'Mode 2' – that is interdisciplinary, problem-focused and context-driven: part of a 'larger process in which discovery, application and use are closely integrated' (Gibbons et al, 1994, p. 46). Mode 2 theorists claim that the university is no longer a privileged site for knowledge production, and that new knowledge is being created outside the university in multidisciplinary 'laboratories' (Holmwood, 2007). For Holmwood (2007), this move from Mode 1 to Mode 2 knowledge production is linked to the shift in Western economies towards 'post-Fordism', in which heavy industry is outsourced to developing countries and advanced societies are restructured towards technological production and services. Within this restructuring, knowledge is increasingly subsumed into generalised capitalist production processes, as evidenced by the marketisation of higher education. Universities are increasingly just one 'player' in a commercialised neoliberal knowledge regime, competing for contracts (an importance source of income) and providing

experts for commercial research in the form of consultant-academics. This point is even more crucial, considering that such projects are now being explored as a positive response to the challenges posed by the impact agenda (see, for example, Bastow et al, 2014). Again, the solution is not retrenchment, but solidarity within a larger project of democratisation against neoliberal de-politicisation. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with unified social science projects; as Burawoy (2005) points out, somewhat contradictorily, overcoming disciplinary divisions within universities and between academics and the public is an important part of the 'participatory action research' (PAR) traditional of emancipatory social science. The difference between the neoliberal and PAR approaches is not their shared problem-oriented philosophy or collaborative focus but the (lack of) democratic control by researchers and participants over the ends to which such research is directed (Hickman, 1992).

Finally, Burawoy (2005) falls victim to the same scepticism with regards to collective agency that prevented the Frankfurt School from outlining a politically effective model of activist sociology. At the end of 'For Public Sociology', Burawoy (2005) asks rhetorically how the institutionalisation of public sociology can be accomplished considering the overwhelming resistance that a genuinely democratic, anti-neoliberal social science would face from within the discipline, the university and the neoliberal HE system as a whole. Beyond some expansion of the activities of the American Sociological Association (ASA) – including a new, open access magazine *Contexts*, lobbying activities, a column in the *Footnotes* newsletter, an excellence award for the reporting of sociology in the media and a new task force for institutionalising public sociology – the suggestion seems to be that change will come from individual sociologists (Burawoy, 2005, p. 25). Of course, all change must ultimately come from individuals, but the kind of 'social movement' Burawoy describes in his conclusion is exactly the kind of neoliberal entrepreneurialism encouraged by audit culture, incentivised and celebrated in part by inward-facing professional organisations like the ASA, the British Sociological Association (BSA) and the International Sociological Association (ISA). Burawoy (2007) later points to another flaw in his plan: most public sociologists come from public universities – those universities under most pressure from neoliberal marketisation. Furthermore, many public sociologists are in vulnerable positions as 'early career academics', starting their academic careers as precariously employed graduate teaching

assistants (Burawoy, 2005). Burawoy (2005, p. 13) tells the story of a 'typical' public sociology graduate student, who enters the university system perhaps 'inspired by an undergraduate teacher or burnt out from a draining social movement', only to find that public sociology must be 'done on the side' while they 'underlabour' for professional sociologists who have security and time 'for other activities'. It seems highly unlikely, therefore, that such vulnerable academics – which make up an increasing proportion of all academic staff – would be able to take forward such a project.

Towards a radical-democratic sociology

The previous section argued that Burawoy's typology and vision of organic solidarity should be abandoned in favour of a democratic sociology in political and material solidarity with the public against neoliberalism. As noted above, this also entails solidarity with other social science and academic disciplines against marketisation. As Burawoy bluntly puts it, 'no higher education, no sociology' (Holmwood and Burawoy, 2012, no page). Although this statement may seem tautological, as sociology is, after all, an academic discipline, Burawoy is pointing here to a deeper connection between sociology, the university and the public. He adds that as HE becomes 'increasingly oriented to markets and states, then sociology's place … becomes less tenable' and sociology therefore 'has to fight these changes, for its own survival and … for the survival of the human race' (Holmwood and Burawoy, 2012, no page). Inevitably, the question of how the discipline of sociology should be reconstructed in order to effectively fight marketisation and neoliberalism must be deferred to a higher-level question of how the academic profession and the university must be reconstructed to fulfil their democratic functions within a truly democratic society. This is the subject of the next chapter. However, a preliminary answer can be suggested by posing the question: why should humanity care what happens to sociology?

As Burawoy (2005) himself argues, sociology has become detached from its public function, and therefore the public. Holmwood echoes Burawoy's point, commenting that 'sociology is particularly associated with the public function of the university', so much so that 'without sociology, no public university' (Holmwood and Burawoy, 2012, no page). This may be the view of sociologists defending

their profession in the face of attacks on the public university by neoliberal marketisation, but what stake does the public have in sociology, and why should the public rise to its defence? This is a question often left unanswered in critiques of marketisation, but one that is crucial if the fate of academic professions and institutions is to be connected to the wider fate of democracy within neoliberalism. Although Burawoy (2005) makes many claims for the dialogic function of public sociology, and the benefits of such dialogic research practice for the sociological discipline, he does not explain why it is in the public interest to engage with public sociology. Returning to Morrow's (2009) question of what theoretical framework should underpin not just public sociology, but a more critical and emancipatory social science, it seems that only by grounding public sociology in Dewey's theory of social inquiry – which proposes to put public knowledge, public need and public self-organisation at the very heart of social science – can such a relationship be established and build through *practice*.

As explained in Chapter 1, Deweyian social inquiry is distinguished from other modes of inquiry by: its *subject matter*, the unintended consequences of social action (including technology); its *aim*, the democratic control over both the consequence and the conditions of such social action; and its *level of abstraction*, being relatively 'close' to (qualitative) experience. While science may provide a methodological ideal for Dewey's pattern of inquiry, it is social inquiry that Dewey considers the widest ranging and potentially transformative mode of inquiry. Because, for Dewey (1928, p. 311), 'the social' covers the 'widest and richest range of association empirically accessible', social inquiry has the greatest potential to, on the one hand, refine and make intelligent our everyday habits and purely practical methods of dealing with problems (common sense), and on the other, direct and make responsible historically value-free and highly-abstract modes of inquiry, such as science (Hickman, 1992). Furthermore, as social inquiry has the potential to 'turn private troubles into public issues' (Mills, 1959), and thereby form publics through co-inquiry, it is the very condition of what Dewey called 'collective intelligence'. For Dewey (1935), social inquiry is nothing less than the 'method of democracy'.

Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, then, provides a foundation for Burawoy's vision for public sociology, and also for the claim that sociology is somehow connected to the fate of democracy. Rather

than just asserting that sociology is – or should be – important to the public, Dewey's theory shows that sociology is in fact a fundamental practice of democratic self-governance that precedes and overflows the academic, professionalised version of this basic activity. Essentially, what Dewey's theory of inquiry does is 'dissolve' the distinction between sociology and the public into a generalised practice of social reflection, with sociology being only a professionalised subset of that practice. However, this is not to say that sociology itself should be dissolved into practical life, but rather that sociology should play its part in the development of collective intelligence. The fact that sociologists are professional inquirers is something to be used to *further* this project, if the connection of sociology to the public and a wider practice of democratic social inquiry are both constantly maintained. Importantly, therefore, and as will be further explored in the next chapter, Deweyian democratic sociology would not only *strengthen* sociology's relationship with the public, but also *reinforce* the professional basis of sociology as a legitimate and rigorous application of inquiry for the good of society. In other words, and as Holmwood and Burawoy (2012) insist, by strengthening the capacity of publics to engage in social inquiry, working with publics, sociologists strengthen both the academic-sociological profession and the university as an institution for the public good. As Joas (1993, p. 1993) argues, 'from the pragmatist perspective, the social sciences are to aid human communities precisely in the improvement of their possibilities of collective action, and, in a world destitute of metaphysical certainty, they make a crucially important contribution to the solidarity of a community of human beings who collectively recognise and discuss their earthly problems and creatively solve them'.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that, if reconstructed on the basis of Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, Michael Burawoy's vision of public sociology can become a practice of 'democratic sociology' that could lead way for academics to reconnect with the public as part of a wider social movement against neoliberalism. Specifically, it was argued that Burawoy's commitments to an 'organic solidarity' between professional and public sociology should be abandoned in favour of a political *solidarity* within the discipline and with other academic disciplines against neoliberal marketisation. Only then can the

‘promise’ of Burawoy’s theory be realised. The first section revealed a ‘founding tension’ within the discipline that threatened to de-stabilise Burawoy’s ‘fourfold typology’, leading to the conclusion that this tension cannot be resolved by a contradictory functionalist theory of differentiation and consensus. Looking at attempts to establish public sociology as a core part of the sociological profession, for example in the work of T. H. Marshall, it was concluded in the second section that by defending a reified professional ethic of ‘value neutrality’, professional sociology allows itself to be co-opted by corporate capitalist interests. The third section then argued that Dewey’s theory of collective intelligence offered a way for this tension within the profession to be resolved through a practice of ‘co-inquiry’, within which social scientists, alongside other academics, inquire with the public to formulate demands for democratisation. The last section explained how this model of democratic social science, in contrast to claims made by critics of public or radical traditions in sociology, by including the public in the process of inquiry from beginning to end, created ‘strong’ objective forms of knowledge that were more reliable than those created through ‘value neutral’ inquiry. In this new vision of democratic sociology, sociologists as public intellectuals become facilitators of public inquiry, nurturing and assisting such inquiries, offering the tools of the profession according to public need and ultimately trying to give back social inquiry as much as possible to the public. Shorn of its contradictory commitments, Burawoy’s idea that sociologists should be co-inquirers within an active, intelligent public, not experts at inquiring from a social and political distance, can be realised.

Before moving to the next chapter, which moves the discussion of sociologists co-inquiring with the public to the level of the academic profession as a whole, it is useful to briefly examine Burawoy’s reflections on the role of public sociologists as public intellectuals. Again, he draws on multiple theories that do not necessarily fit together or compliment his strong idea of organic public sociology. The ‘organic’ qualifier comes from Gramsci for example, and out of Gramsci’s (1999) theory of hegemony, Burawoy (2007) attempts to ground the dialogic nature of public-sociological research in the concept of the organic intellectual. However, as John Schwartzmantel (2015, p. 76) explains, for Gramsci, organic intellectuals are those intellectual leaders of rising class or subaltern group that give this class or group ‘the consciousness needed to be hegemonic’. Academics, on the other hand, would come under

the category of ‘traditional’ intellectuals. Traditional intellectuals put themselves forward as ‘independent of the dominant social group’ and think of themselves as ‘autonomous, endowed with a character of their own’ (Gramsci, 1999, pp. 138-9). While Gramsci conceded that traditional intellectuals could be won over to the cause of subaltern social movements, the ‘organic’ nature of the intellectual leaders of these social movements was absolutely crucial in establishing the independence of such movements and in preventing co-optation by the dominant class. As explained in this chapter, academics may think they are being politically useful by undertaking public sociology ‘with’ organic intellectuals, but in fact the very epistemological structure of the impact agenda causes the subjects of research to be turned into reified objects, exploited within the research relationship and alienated from the knowledge created. Gramsci’s own position is, in fact, much closer to Dewey’s. Gramsci (1999, p. 140) insists that ‘all men [sic] are intellectuals’ and ‘although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist’. Like Dewey, then, Gramsci considers the origins of intelligence to be found in social practice, and professional inquiry to be derivative of everyday reflection.

Never really abandoning the Gramscian position, Burawoy (2004) elsewhere explores Zygmunt Bauman’s (1987) postmodern theory of intellectuals to clarify the structurally problematic relationship between sociologists and publics within the research process. Bauman distinguishes between intellectuals as ‘legislators’ and as ‘interpreters’, with the former concerned with autonomy and objectivity and the latter with facilitating communication across highly specialised disciplines. While Bauman’s theory suffers from a postmodernist scepticism towards practice and collectivism, reconstructed on a Deweyian basis, this distinction offers a useful way of conceiving the activity of sociologists within what Dewey calls ‘democracy as a way of life’. Assuming that subaltern groups have as much claim to knowledge of the consequences of social action as sociologists – if not more, considering the point that both Lukács and Dewey make about subaltern groups knowing best where the negative consequences of neoliberal social policy ‘pinch’ – sociologists should facilitate public inquiry by teaching community groups sound methods of inquiry relevant to their specific needs, while also opening up the resources of universities to these communities. Sociologists would also be well-

placed to ‘translate’ the socially useful knowledge produced by such grounded communities into public policy, combining their insights with those of other local and regional inquiries and relaying the resulting knowledge to a genuinely democratic government. This idea is explored further in the Conclusion to the thesis, in relation to Corbynism and the Lucas Plan.

Chapter 6: Reconstructing the University

Introduction

The last chapter suggested that Deweyian 'co-inquiry' could become the basis for a practice of democratic sociology, and that sociologists could lead the way in building political solidarity with other academics against marketisation and with the public against neoliberal austerity. This chapter explores this idea at the level of the academic profession, criticising in the first section defences of the public university as based on limited notions of negative academic freedom which make it easy for neoliberal ideologues like David Willetts to position academics as reactionary protectors of 'producer power'. In the second section, through the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP's) '1915 Declaration of Principles' and Dewey's critique of academia in *The Public and Its Problems*, the academic profession is reconstructed as a form of 'democratic collegiality'. Based on Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, it is argued that academics should recognise the public as co-inquirers within democratic research practices, and thus dissolve the alienation of both academia from the public and the public from inquiry. Democratic collegiality, therefore, also offers a way to dissolve the contradictions of ownership and control that arise within p universities as a result of marketisation, described in Chapter 4. In the final section, the idea of an 'asset-lock' is suggested as way to protect in the present the public interest in civic universities against marketisation, and as a transitional measure towards full-blown co-operative governance. As an end-in-view for democratisation, the social co-operative is proposed at the end of the chapter as the ideal model for a democratic university.

Beyond defensiveness

Like the public, academics have experienced the consequences of neoliberalism primarily in a qualitative manner, above all through the anxiety, stress and bullying that accompany the erosion of academic freedom and de-professionalisation of academic labour within market reform. According to Terence Karran and Lucy Mallinson (2017, p. 79), in terms of legal and institutional protections of

academic freedom, 'the UK is clearly the sick man [sic] of Europe'. In a comparative analysis with other European Union (EU) countries of *de jure* protections of academic freedom, utilising the 'most comprehensive assessment', Karran and Mallinson (2017, p. 1) award the UK a score of 35%, which is less than the EU average of 53%, and 'the second lowest among the 28 EU states'. Karran and Mallinson (2017, p. 1) find that the low level of legal protection for academic freedom in the UK is mirrored by an 'equally poor, if not worse' level of institutional, or *de facto*, protection. Using comparable data from over 2000 UCU members and 4000 staff in European universities, they discover that: 23.1% of UCU respondents (compared with 14.1% of EU respondents) reported being bullied on account of their academic views; 26.6% of UCU respondents reported being subjected to psychological pressure (EU = 15.7%); 35.5% of the UCU cohort admitted to self-censorship, for fear of negative repercussions, such as loss of privileges, demotion or physical harm (EU = 19.1%). Bullying, psychological pressure and self-censorship are 'all too commonplace within higher education institutions', they conclude, institutions which are 'supposed to encourage their staff to pursue teaching and learning within an academic environment typified by the tolerance of others' opinions and beliefs and freedom of expression' (Karran and Mallinson, 2017, p. 80). Furthermore, the effectiveness of what minimal *de jure* protection exists in the UK is dependent on whether or not academics exercise, or even know about, their rights to academic freedom. According to Karran and Mallinson (2017, p. 1), only 41.7% of UCU respondents 'claimed to have an adequate working knowledge of academic freedom' (EU = 49.2%), while less than half that proportion (20.6%) 'knew about the 1988 Education Reform Act, which supposedly protects academic freedom in the UK'.

Despite the sorry state of the academic profession in England in particular, where a 'perfect storm' has been created by a combination of 30 years of neoliberal government reform and sector-level and institutional performance management systems (see Chapter 4), academics have so far done little to fight marketisation. In response to the decision by the UK 'Coalition' Government in 2010 to raise tuition fees to £9000 and cut almost all public funding to universities, academics joined students in a series of mass protests culminating in student occupations around the country – including the campaign headquarters of the UK Conservative Party. Academics were also involved alongside students in

increasingly violent clashes with the police, who had resorted to ‘kettling’ tactics (Myers, 2017). However, these protests were largely led by student groups, not academics, and once the UK Parliament had voted through the increase in fees, the student movement lost its momentum. It was not until 2018 that academics mounted significant protest against marketisation, and then only indirectly, in response to proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) – a final salary private pension scheme for academics and non-academic staff in pre-92 universities. In response to proposals by Universities UK (UUK) – which represents the interests of vice-chancellors in UK universities – to change the 'defined benefit' scheme to a ‘defined contributions’ scheme, a move the union said would see a typical USS member lose around £10,000 a year in retirement, UCU members at 65 UK universities took an unprecedented 14 days of strike action. This action, which also saw the return of the student-staff solidarity and student occupations of the 2010 movement, forced employers to retain a ‘clear commitment to defined benefits’ and agree to discuss a ‘wide range of issues raised by UCU, including inter-generational fairness, comparisons with the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the role of government in providing support for USS’ (UCU, 2018, no page). However, despite linking the USS strikes to the marketisation of higher education, as well as to the inter-generational injustice of neoliberalism, as soon as the immediate goal of securing defined benefits had been achieved, the movement against marketisation once again fizzled out.

Part of the problem stems from a lack of vision on the part of academics regarding what they are fighting *for*. Academics have been very good at critique – although often focusing on the minutiae of market reform policy – but not so good at formulating what Dewey calls ‘ends-in-view’ for action aimed at democratisation. The formation of realistic, practical and above all, inspiring ends-in-view is crucial not only for directing collective action to defend the academic profession, but also in uniting the struggle of academics with non-academic staff, students and the wider public against neoliberalism. Although there have been many articulate defences of the public university, mostly published in response to the first round of reform in 2010 (see for example: Calhoun, 2011; Holmwood, 2011b; Newfield, 2011), what follows will concentrate on the Convention for Higher Education’s (HE Convention, 2016) ‘Alternative White Paper’ as an example of this tendency, and also as a recent intervention by an

alliance of academics and UCU activists, thus explicitly oriented towards collective action. Responding directly to the UK Government's 2016 White Paper 'Success as a Knowledge Economy' (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016), the HE Convention's review is largely concerned to debunk the claims made in this set of proposals for market reform that would eventually become the 2017 Higher Education and Research Act (HERA). The *Alternative White Paper* – a collective effort by leading members of UCU, the Campaign for the Public University and the Council for the Defence of British Universities, and supported by the British Sociological Association – is excellent on how the introduction of for-profit providers leads to the 'unbundling' and financialisation of universities; how the expansion of the student loans system results in the financialisation of students and an intergenerational injustice with future graduates lumped not only with huge debt but the growing social burden of unrepaid loans within the Public Sector Net Debt; the failure of government to deal with the growing inequality in society that is exacerbated by marketisation; the growing contradiction within university governance between the self-interest of increasingly powerful vice-chancellors who are benefiting from marketisation and the collective interest of academic and non-academic staff, students and the wider public; and the threat to academic freedom from the metrics-heavy trilogy of performance management systems, the TEF, REF, and KEF (HE Convention, 2016).

However, when it comes to articulating an alternative to marketisation, the HE Convention (2016, p. 34) ends the review with the principles of the university contained in the Magna Charta Universitatum, a document signed by heads of European universities on the 900th anniversary of the founding of the University of Bologna:

- 'The university is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organised because of geography and historical heritage; it produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching.
- To meet the needs of the world around it, its research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power.

- Teaching and research in universities must be inseparable if their tuition is not to lag behind changing needs, the demands of society, and advances in scientific knowledge.'

These principles essentially describe the main functions of the *modern university*, as envisaged by Prussian reformer Wilhelm von Humboldt, who founded the University of Berlin on the ideals of German romantic-idealist philosophy. As Bill Readings (1996, p. 64) explains, the 'University of Culture' instituted by Humboldt aimed at uniting the various branches of knowledge (*Wissenschaft*) within an idea of national culture, which was also to provide the basis for the formation of individuals as national citizens (*Bildung*). These two functions were considered to be inseparable, and it is this unity of research and teaching that give the modern university its unique meaning and identity in relation to other institutions of knowledge production and education. However, Readings' point is also that the meaning of the modern university is inextricably linked to the needs of emerging capitalist states in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Countries such as Germany needed a way to quickly establish the scientific base for the development of an advanced, national-capitalist economy, having lagged behind the 'organic' development of capitalism within the British Commonwealth. Alongside the need for state-subsidised scientific innovation, these states also needed to rapidly train a new class of highly educated civil servants to manage this new system.

The modern university, therefore, was also a 'public' university, in that there was a 'sometimes explicit and more often tacit expectation that they would serve public purposes' (Calhoun, 2011, p. 28). However, these public purposes were circumscribed in the last instance by the needs of corporate capitalism, with the autonomy of universities as public institutions based on a relationship of convenience with Western governments for the creation of national-capitalist states. Academic freedom, within this arrangement, 'comes to be the freedom of each intellectual to hold [their] own special intellectual standards within (and tacitly limited by) a larger loyalty to the essential institutions of the social order of the nation' (Gouldner, 1971, p. 136). In the modern university, therefore, a complex relationship emerged between the academic profession and the wider democratic public, with the latter also increasingly in tension with this quickly consolidating corporate capitalist system (see Chapter 1). This complex historical relationship problematises both simple appeals to the 'public'

within defences of the public university, and the defence of the 'ideal-typical' modern form of the university as its institutional basis. This complex relationship can be analysed in terms of the modern university as a 'bourgeois public sphere', for example, an analysis which reveals similar contradictions between formal freedoms and their basis in *de facto*, material relations of exclusion. As Boden and Epstein (2011, p. 478) argue, academic freedom, despite being based on a formal right to inclusivity, was a privilege in practice 'accorded primarily to a very restricted range of individuals, chiefly white, middle-class men' (Boden and Epstein, 2011, p. 478). However, academics were themselves limited by material restrictions, originating in the links between university, state and corporate capitalism described above. As shown in the last chapter, for example, the disciplinary identity of academic sociology developed in large part through a critique of Marxism and socialism. While academics were in principle free to research what they liked, value-neutrality as a professional ethic was meant in part to protect academics from wider political developments, whether they be the absorption of universities into the 'military–industrial–academic complex' (Giroux, 2007) or the McCarthyist repression of academics who critique these developments.

Elsewhere, John Holmwood – a contributing editor to the *Alternative White Paper* – has developed a more nuanced defence of the public university that recognises the need to address the gap between formal and social rights within the idea of the public university. Holmwood (2014) returns to Robbins' 1963 vision of mass higher education within UK welfare state capitalism as a way to explore this contradiction, like Habermas (see Chapter 1), attempting to salvage what is radical in the idea of the university as a bourgeois public sphere. As explained in Chapter 4, Robbins was commissioned to review the UK higher education system 'in the light of national needs and resources', concluding that this system should have four key aims: (1) 'instruction in skills'; (2) the promotion of 'general powers of the mind', operating on a 'plane of universality'; (3) 'the advancement of learning' – teaching should 'partake in the nature of discovery'; and (4) the transmission of a 'common culture and common standards of citizenship'. More importantly, the so-called 'Robbins Principle' stated that 'courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so'. Taken together, Holmwood (2014, p. 66) argues, these two aspects of

Robbins' vision of the welfare state university 'entail the recognition that liberal economic, civil and political rights require an underpinning of social rights to ensure their realization for all citizens'. Although this idea of HE as a social right was never realised in practice – partly because of the collapse of the post-WW2 boom that made the ameliorative welfare state possible and the subsequent privatisation and marketisation of public services under neoliberal governments (see Chapter 3) – this idea of the welfare state university as a mechanism for the amelioration of inequality provides a far more substantial ideal for the public university. This period was also one in which academics enjoyed high levels of *de jure* and *de facto* academic freedom. As Boden and Epstein (2011, p. 484) explain, because the welfare state at the time was marked by a 'gift' economy attitude to public services, which shielded public institutions from the wider exchange economy, 'infrastructural freedom came with relatively generous funding with few strings attached'. In other words, within the welfare state university, formal academic freedom was matched by high levels of material freedom. Consequently, academics were able to realise to a large extent the ideal of universities as 'self-governing communities' and could, within the wider political and social restrictions of Cold War politics, research and teach 'what they liked' (Boden and Epstein, 2011, p. 484).

However, at a deeper level, the fact that the welfare state university was also in some sense also a Cold War university points to a shift in the relationship of convenience between universities and the state that characterised the modern university, that echoes the wider developments of the public sphere within monopoly capitalism. As Daniel Sarewitz (2011, p. 415) explains, behind the mythical 'golden age' of Cold War US science was a 'broader reality' in which the Department of Defence 'created a huge, integrated knowledge-production enterprise aimed at achieving a particular desired outcome: victory over the Soviet Union'. In other words, for Western governments fighting communism, the *idea* of academic freedom provided an idealised example of capitalist freedom and provided a strong ideological weapon against caricatures of totalitarianism. At the same time, anti-communism within the US – 'McCarthyism' representing the most extreme example – placed unprecedented restrictions on academics. The Frankfurt School in exile, for example, engaged in increasing levels of self-censorship for fear of being ostracised from the emerging US discipline of sociology (Wiggershaus, 1997). More

importantly, what Sarewitz points to is a continuity between state-capitalist and welfare state models of the modern university. While the welfare state university provided a strong material basis for academic freedom, this was conditional on the university system as a whole meeting the needs of post-WW2 monopoly capitalism. As noted above, the Robbins Report was commissioned to help the post-WW2 UK Government create a *system* of higher education *in the light of national needs and resources*. In the UK, these needs concerned the rebuilding and modernisation of the post-war British economy, including the training of a new class of civil servants to administer the welfare state. Furthermore, the welfare state university also contained the seeds of later transformations of this modern university model, also concerned with the needs of capitalism as it develops through the 20th century. As Habermas (1971, p. 2) explains, within welfare state capitalism, the modern university is not only expected to further knowledge and form citizens in the national interest but is also expected to transmit technically exploitable knowledge 'into the channels of industrial utilisation, armament, and social welfare', and also provide 'advisory knowledge' to administration, government and other decision-making powers, such as private enterprises'. The latter function already anticipates the later absorption of the university within third-wave neoliberalism and into the culture industry of monopoly finance capitalism, which restructures its functions in terms of 'knowledge exchange' (see Chapter 4).

However, this continuity also points to the fact that the function of the university in democratic societies remains the same: the production of socially-useful knowledge and the education of citizens for democratic governance. This purpose would also remain within the kind of radical, inquiry-based 'democracy as a way of life' suggested in Chapter 2. From a Deweyian point of view, the university is a *technology* of the public, created to uncover the conditions of negative social consequences and produce knowledge that would guide the organisation of society to manage these conditions, to create *positive* consequences. A democratised university would also retain its educative function, inculcating inquiry as an intelligent habit to be applied not just in specific fields, but in democratic life generally. In Dewey's vision of education – which applies to all levels – the goal is to create an 'industrial culture' and develop an 'industrial intelligence' in individual members of an active public (Dewey, 1915).

Citizens in a radical democracy ‘must have power of self-direction and power of directing others, power of administration, ability to assume positions of responsibility’ (Dewey, in Benson et al, 2007, p. 23).

Dewey was critical of the ‘hypostatisation’ of universities within ‘political democracies’, and understood that, like the economy, universities must also be socialised within a continuous system of lifelong education to provide the public with the kind of ‘method of democracy’ described in Chapter 2. While Dewey did not write much about HE, one piece of early writing, ‘The School as Social Centre’, is particularly suggestive as to what a Deweyian model of the democratised university would look like. In this essay, Dewey (1902, p. 73) suggests that the school should be a ‘social centre’, providing a community with a ‘full and adequate social service’ by bringing it ‘completely into the current of social life’. Dewey did not develop this further with relation to the university, however Lee Benson and colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania have tried to apply this model to educational reform in West Philadelphia to create a ‘local ecological community’. A university in such a model would need to recognise its responsibility to the local community and become a centre for ‘both youth and adults’ to come together in ‘analysing problems suggested by the needs of the community and in formulating and exploring solutions to those problems’ (Benson et al, 2007, p. 71). A university as social centre would be concerned with ‘improving all aspects of living in the community in all the broad meaning of that concept, in the local, state, regional, national, or international community’ and would be an institution for ‘planning to meet the discovered needs of the community with changes in emphasis as circumstances indicate’ (Benson, et al, 2007, p. 71). This idea is also reminiscent of the Lincoln Social Science Centre, a co-operative university founded on the method of critical pedagogy (see conclusion to this chapter).

This idea of the university as a social co-operative will be explored further in the last section of this chapter. However, what the above discussion shows is that the problem of the public university is not the *function* of the university within democracy, but the relationship between the university and the public. In Dewey’s theory of collective intelligence, the university should assist the public with its inquiries into social conditions and be a core part of a system that would intelligently control these conditions to secure desired social outcomes according to the needs identified through such inquiries.

In both liberal and welfarist phases of the university, however, academics are alienated from the public and given material security and formal academic freedom in exchange for the furtherance of monopoly capitalist interests. During these phases, while academics were more or less shielded from the capitalist system, both in terms of direct interference and material security, the wider public sphere was becoming increasingly hollowed out and replaced by a manipulative publicity. As argued in the previous chapter, during the neoliberal era, the arms-length relationship between the university as a 'pseudo-public sphere' and the monopoly capitalist state is discarded in favour of an indirectly manipulative system of performance management – the TEF, REF and KEF – designed to bring the reproductive functions of universities into line with neoliberal needs. In other words, academics are through marketisation being finally absorbed into what Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) called the 'culture industry'. In the neoliberal university, then, there is no such thing as 'value-free' knowledge; all knowledge produced in the 'ruined' university is subject to co-optation and socialisation (Readings, 1996, p. 129).

While this kind of totalising critique can, as argued in relation to the Frankfurt School (see Chapter 1), lead to pessimism and scepticism towards social change, when balanced by the concrete and above all practical end-in-view of democratisation, such an analysis merely presents a realistic picture of the challenges faced by such a project. It also shows that critique is not enough; as Dewey (1902, p. 73) points out, democratising education 'is a matter of practice, not of theory'. In Chapter 2, Dewey's critical social theory was argued to suggest a 'hypothesis' that the qualitative experience of the consequences of neoliberal austerity could be converted into intelligent forms of democratic, collective action through social inquiry. In Chapter 5, Dewey's critical social theory provided a way to reconstruct Michael Burawoy's vision of public sociology as a form of 'democratic sociology' in which sociologists joined with academics in other disciplines in a political solidarity against marketisation, and with the public against neoliberal austerity. What both of these conclusions point to is a role for academics in the struggle against third-wave neoliberalism, in which the historical alienation of the academic profession from the public is overcome through political practice, and anxieties about value-neutrality abandoned in favour of a grounded practice of co-inquiry where the social-use of knowledge is determined by the public's involvement in all phases of the research process. In the following two

sections, these suggestions are developed concretely with relation to two related concepts: 'democratic collegiality' and the democratic university as social co-operative.

Democratic collegiality

As explained at the end of Chapter 4, academics are currently caught within an ideological 'pincer movement', in which the defence of the public university is dismissed as the protection of 'producer power' and marketisation proposed as a democratising project in the interests of students as consumers. David Willetts (2017, p. 25), for example, frames his memoir of marketisation in terms of a tension between challenging this producer power and 'respecting the independence' of a 'small self-perpetuating group' – i.e. academics – that had 'captured' higher education and 'were not fulfilling any higher purpose'. Crucially, part of this pincer movement also involves the subsumption of the private/public distinction – which many critiques of marketisation, such as the *Alternative White Paper*, rely on for their force – within a wider socialisation of higher education described in Chapter 4 as third-wave neoliberalism. Again, Willetts' memoirs are instructive. The income contingent loan (ICL) system, he explains, was 'carefully designed as a middle way between a fully public and a fully private scheme' (Willetts, 2017, p. 74). Not only does he claim to have 'saved' universities from neoliberal austerity through the ICL system, but he also insists that the 'RAB charge' – signalling the proportion of these ICLs that will never be paid back, and therefore the total transferred onto the Public Sector Net Debt balance – acts as a democratic estimation of the spread of private-public benefits of higher education. What Willetts is trying to claim is that by designing the ICL system as a graduate tax rather than a mortgage-style loan, the government is not only able to manage its financial commitment and demand repayments even if students emigrate – while also presenting the measure as progressive – but also claim that this process of retrospective tweaking is itself democratic. 'The structure can be calibrated in many different ways to give a different balance of payment between taxpayers and graduates,' Willetts (2017, p. 81) explains, adding that 'governments can respond to changes in political opinion about, for example, the mix of public and graduate payments within this overall structure'. In other words, the RAB charge is a complementary tool in Willetts' technocratic vision of a managed

market in English HE, to be manipulated alongside the TEF, REF and KEF to 'nudge' the system towards the wider UK Conservative neoliberal agenda.

Of course, as Andrew McGettigan (2013) reveals in his influential critique of marketisation, *The Great University Gamble*, there was nothing democratic about the way market reform was introduced into English HE (see Chapter 4). But the point is that with third-wave neoliberalism, the very notion of 'public good' is being re-written in neoliberal terms. What this suggests is a need to rethink this concept and base the defence of the public university on a far more radical and sophisticated concept of the 'public'. For example, the difference between Deweyian and neoliberal theories of the public, is that for Dewey the public is defined in terms of agency and its need to intelligently control social conditions through inquiry, whereas for Willetts, the public is assumed to be a consumer and the university a producer of knowledge as commodity. In the latter case, the public is passive and has a claim on the university purely in monetary terms, and academics are to be held to account insofar as they 'satisfy' the consumers of knowledge and education. The American Association of University Professors' (AAUP's) '1915 Declaration of Principles' – which betrays the influence of Dewey as its president at the time of its formulation – provides a good starting point for articulating a strongly democratic defence of the academic profession, that both escapes and subverts the neoliberal pincer movement described above. For the AAUP (1917), the professional function of academics to produce knowledge is supported by the public on the condition that academics then answer *directly* to the public, not to the university as employer or government as provider of funding. This direct link between the academic profession and the public is for the AAUP so strong that universities, if they seek to undermine this relationship and direct knowledge towards private interests, should not be called universities and should not be able to access public funding (AAUP, 1917). The confusion of private and public in the function and governance of universities, manifested in attacks on academic freedom, represents a 'radical failure' on the part of trustees and governments 'to apprehend the nature of the social function discharged by the professional scholar' and falsely presents this function to the public, which is invested in it (AAUP, 1917, no page). In principle, all claims to proprietary rights are 'waived by the appeal to the general

public for contributions and for moral support in the maintenance, not of a propaganda, but of a nonpartisan institution of learning' (AAUP, 1917, no page).

This strong notion of public interest can be explained more clearly with reference to Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, outlined in Chapter 2. For Dewey, publics arise originally to exert collective control over the increasingly complex and interlocking consequences of social actions, or in developed democratic societies when the state – the instrument created by the public to control these conditions in its interest – ceases to act in the public interest and ameliorate the conditions leading to these consequences. Thus, experts, including academics, are employed by the public to perform this function. However, as part of the general drift away from real democracy towards the technocratic administration of society on behalf of monopoly capitalism – what Dewey calls 'political democracy' – this relationship has been obscured and academics have become alienated from their original function and from the public. Dewey (2016, p. 197) argues that academics have 'shirked' their responsibility by retreating to the academy, with the defence of a purely negative academic freedom a 'rationalisation of an escape', marking a 'construction of an asylum of refuge'. Furthermore, for Dewey, the alienation of academia from the public is a major factor in the disappearance – or 'eclipse' – of the public that is so crucial for the functioning of democracy. In *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey (2016) attributes this alienation in part to the specialisation of both knowledge production as the sole activity of a highly-educated class of intellectuals with access to technical apparatuses and scientific methods, and of the various disciplines that have become disconnected from each other, pursuing increasingly narrow areas of inquiry. This specialisation breaks the connection between academic inquiry and the social problems faced by the public, thus rendering the former increasingly irrelevant to the latter while also undermining the need for the public to itself engage in or with inquiry, either through familiarity with the results of these inquiries and their subsequent use in overcoming problems, or by being directly involved in inquiry, perhaps through civil society associations (trade unions, amateur science, etc).

However, Dewey also argued that despite being alienated from inquiry and excluded from the academy, the public has in many cases a better social understanding of the knowledge produced by experts, as they suffer the consequences of this knowledge as it is applied in social policy or technology. In

Deweyian terms, the division of labour within society, where academics produce knowledge that is then applied within public policy to further the interests of limited publics (e.g. corporations), with no consultation regarding the effects of the application of such knowledge, makes universities *irresponsible*. The university as a 'responsible technology' (Hickman, 1992) *of the public* – the vision of public interest suggested by the AAUP's 1915 Principles – would not only include the public in the process of knowledge production, but also in the process of evaluating the consequences of this knowledge as it is applied, or tested, in practice. Responsible knowledge is also, through this process of co-inquiry, of better quality, or *truer* (Fesmire, 2015). For Dewey, knowledge is not true insofar as it correctly represents the world. This too is a view symptomatic of the alienation of academics, whose self-image is that of professional inquirers producing value-free knowledge of a society materially and politically external to the university, which is then applied by other experts to the public. In this scenario, the feedback loop of co-inquiry is not needed, for the public is always either 'subject' or 'object' of knowledge, rather than a co-producer or verifier of its truth. This is also the case for neoliberal models of public higher education, in which universities serve the public – first and foremost students, but also businesses, charities and taxpayers – as passive consumers of knowledge and judges academics as commodity producers like in any other sphere of capitalist production. Dewey's instrumentalism, by contrast, conceives of knowledge in terms of its contribution to democratic self-rule by the public. While this entails a pragmatic theory of truth as 'usefulness' (Fesmire, 2015), this is not the restricted sense of utility assumed by neoliberal social theory, because the criteria of what determines usefulness in any given context is determined by the public through inquiry. Whereas neoliberalism either ignores real needs or manufactures false needs to shift the masses of commodities produced by the monopoly capitalist system, democratic knowledge begins with real needs identified within qualitative experience, which are then articulated through inquiry along with the means to address these needs. The usefulness of knowledge, then, is judged on how far it contributes to not only the satisfaction of real needs but to a general process of growth in which negative consequences are avoided and positive consequences are secured in the future through intelligent social planning.

It is the separation of means and ends within inquiry through the division of intellectual labour in society that renders both academic knowledge production and modern universities irresponsible, and enables their co-optation by neoliberalism. Essentially, academics are reduced to means, or in Frankfurt School terms, *instrumentalised*. Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, on the other hand, suggests a co-operative model of inquiry in which academics would collaborate with the public to co-produce and test knowledge, dissolving the distinction between academic knowledge and public opinion altogether in favour of a more inclusive idea of democratic knowledge. Such a model of democratic knowledge would not only overcome the structural contradiction within the public university and subvert its role in producing and transmitting technologically exploitable knowledge for neoliberal interests, mobilising the institutional apparatus for the public interest instead, but also provide a stronger notion of objectivity than that of value-freedom. For feminist standpoint theorists, the traditional idea of 'objectivity' – which Sandra Harding (2015) refers to as 'weak objectivity' – has tended to reproduce the interests of dominant groups, i.e. white, middle class men (see also: Harstock, 1983; Smith, 1987). 'Strong objectivity', in contrast, requires that research, where possible, begins outside dominant conceptual frameworks and social institutions, and recognises values and interests that may contradict or even undermine the dominant values and beliefs of a given society (Harding, 2015). Complementing such standpoint theories of knowledge, Dewey's theory of democratic knowledge insists that it is only though 'open and cooperative inquiry that different (although always provisional) maps can be constructed, terrain surveyed, inevitable biases revealed, mistakes debated, novel trails blazed, and new values and purposes incorporated' (Fesmire, 2015, p. 59).

As argued in Chapter 5, a Deweyian democratic sociology provides a model practice of co-inquiry. Co-inquiry, by beginning with democratic inquiry *within* the public, offers a way to both incorporate into academic inquiry the tacit knowledge of social consequences experienced by the public, and also 'test' and correct academic knowledge through its integration within public inquiry. A democratic university grounded in practices of co-inquiry, then, would ensure that the knowledge it produces is 'true', in the sense of 'trustworthy', and *helpful* rather than destructive (Fesmire, 2015, p. 102). This concept of co-inquiry gives substance to the Peircean consensus theory of truth as ensured by a 'community of

inquiry', which is implicitly assumed by scientific practice and by collegial ideas of university governance. By expanding this notion of a community of inquiry to include the public, co-inquiry offers a way of overcoming the contradictions of university governance created by the introduction of monopoly norms into the modern university (see Chapter 4). Democratic collegiality evades the false opposition between public and private in neoliberal ideology by leaping beyond the apparent contradiction between academic autonomy and responsibility that structurally haunts the modern university and is exploited by ideologues such as Willetts in his critique of producer power.

However, critiques of marketisation should not begin with the academic profession when articulating alternatives. As the HE Convention (2016, p. 18) points out, 'universities are now fully integrated into the life of communities across the UK, with nearly every major town and city boasting at least one university that contributes in numerous ways both to the local economy and to the region's cultural life'. Such civic universities have in many cases 'provided an alternative to the decline of other employment and industries, taking over derelict buildings and re-energising localities' (HE Convention, 2016, p. 18). But as Willetts (2017) points out, there is now no government guarantee behind universities; they will not be 'bailed out' like the banks if they fail, whether or not this is due to excessive risk-taking or to market reforms. The HE Convention (2016) predicts that in such cases, the government would court private corporations to take over such universities, thus also furthering the privatisation of higher education through the entry of 'alternative providers'. Such corporate interests would not be interested in the public role that modern universities play as civic or 'anchor' institutions in local communities, nor would they be interested in student welfare. As private fully private corporations, 'their primary responsibility will be to their owners, investors and shareholders' (HE Convention, 2016, p. 18). Taking into account the extent to which civic universities have grown and taken over much of the local communities they operate in, such a move would not only undermine the public interest, but undermine local democratic processes, considering the extensive local political influence these institutions now hold.

Rather than being an afterthought within critiques of marketisation, the analysis of the potential impact of market reform on local communities should be the guiding focus of critique aimed at democratisation.

As explained in Chapter 4, Thatcher's reforms in the 1980s resulted in the replacement of collegial forms of governance with managerialist methods, with the direction of universities decided by increasingly powerful and unaccountable vice-chancellors. As Rebecca Boden and colleagues (2012) explain, reforms to university governance in the 1980s and 90s meant that collegial forms of governance were replaced with 'closed, clientelistic relationships' between university leadership teams and business elites in the wider community. As a result of the power given to vice-chancellors as chief executive officers, university governance structures were increasingly used to by these vice-chancellors to appropriate wealth via rising remuneration packages and to push for marketising reforms in order to accrue the associated status benefits that come from successful entrepreneurial leadership (Boden et al, 2012). Such 'managerial predation', aside from the negative impact on academic freedom already outlined, also encourages the appropriation of public and community resources, which are increasing seen as assets to be absorbed by the civic university as a key player in local economic life. While these transformations are driven by the greed of vice-chancellors – encouraged by neoliberalised structures which reward entrepreneurial behaviour, such as the Times Higher Education Awards – the ability of vice-chancellors to co-opt institutions to feed this greed arises directly out of an ambiguity between ownership and control of universities as 'quasi-public' institutions. The formal ownership of universities by governing boards enables this ambiguity to be exploited by vice-chancellors, who *de facto* control governance structures by their control over selection of board members and the lack of any counter-veiling force from neutered academic boards. While universities, as charities, are not allowed to make a profit, the way that surplus is put in the service of expansion, with for-profit and overseas subsidiaries providing additional resources and opportunities for rationalisation, echoes the wider norms of monopoly capitalism and the behaviour of oligopolistic firms.

Consequently, vice-chancellors in such civic institutions increasingly see the surrounding community as an asset to be exploited, alongside academic labour and students-as-consumers. Although there is little research into the negative impact of universities on surrounding areas, there has been some research into what has become known as 'studentification'. As Nakazawa (2017, p. 1) explains, studentification is a 'neologism that refers to the social, cultural, economic, and physical

transformations of urban spaces resulting from increases in and concentrations of student populations' and is a phenomenon that 'emerged prominently in the 1990s in the UK under the country's expansive higher education policies'. As a result of the rapid expansion of individual universities, the demand for student housing in local communities has vastly outstripped the ability for either university or privately-owned student accommodation companies to meet this demand. Over time, this has led to an accelerating rise in house prices and rental costs, resulting in housing crises in many university cities and towns (Smith et al, 2014). Higher population densities caused by studentification have also led to 'secondary effects', such as build-up of rubbish, fly-tipping and shortages of parking in residential areas. While these impacts may seem trivial, they represent the qualitatively felt consequences of the underlying social inequality caused by irresponsible university expansion and ultimately, irresponsible university governance. More diffuse impacts such as an increasingly transient population, public services (such as buses) only available during term-times and a general change in the quality of residential areas are all felt by local residents as 'a sense of dispossession and a loss of attachment and belonging to their local community and studentified neighbourhood' (Smith et al, 2014, p. 118).

The point is that critiques of marketisation should, following Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, begin with this qualitative experience of the consequences of market reform, and local publics – such as UCU branches or local trades union councils – aimed at the democratisation of specific institutions should work with publics that are directly related to these institutions. In this way, activist-academics do not have to struggle to link their abstract critiques of neoliberalism to a public that doesn't seem to be interested but will find an already motivated population which understands all too well the consequences of marketisation and has an immediate interest in democratisation. It is true that in many cases the anger felt by local communities can be expressed in a reactionary manner towards students (Smith et al, 2014). However, through inquiry, this anger can be converted to democratic knowledge and the antagonistic relations between residents, students and university workers transformed into relations of solidarity as interests are linked and action is undertaken oriented to positive social change. Although this might sound utopian, there are models of such inquiry-led community organising. For example, in response to the Tottenham Riots in 2011, local community leaders led a 'citizens' inquiry'

to formulate a 'community-led response to identify a clear plan of action for a brighter future in Tottenham' (North London Citizens, 2012, p. 3). The resulting 'citizens work plan' outlines a series of interventions over a year period aimed at overcoming the breakdown of community-police relationships, youth unemployment, and feelings of powerlessness that the inquiry had identified as the conditions leading to the riots. A more ambitious project was undertaken in 2015 by JustSpace – a coalition of voluntary and action groups in London – which proposed a 'community-led plan for London' addressing issues as wide-ranging as housing, climate change and transport. Anticipating the need for a new plan for the city by recently elected Labour mayor Sadiq Kahn, the plan aimed at 'claiming rights to the city by and for those who don't have them under present conditions, those whose rights have been taken away or are under attack' (Just Space, 2016, p. 6).

These examples show that Dewey's theory of collective intelligence provides a model of how university governance can be democratised, and universities made to be responsive to social needs rather than institutions that create negative consequences through their ignorance of these needs. These examples also show, as argued in the previous chapter, that a democratised sociology has a crucial role to play in helping communities translate the qualitatively felt consequences of, on the one hand, bad university governance into demands for democratisation and also on the other, of neoliberal austerity into demands for the wider democratisation of society. By joining with the public in such practices of co-inquiry, sociology can help academics link their demands with the demands of the public to begin a process of public formation that can contribute to a substantive social movement against neoliberalism. In this sense, the creation of co-operative communities of inquiry grounded in Deweyian practices of co-inquiry is the first step to the realisation of 'intelligent populism'.

Co-operative universities

While the specific demands of publics aimed at the democratisation of universities must be discovered through specific and local practices of democratic inquiry, it is possible to formulate an end-in-view for democratised university governance: universities as 'social co-operatives'. Rebecca Boden and

colleagues (2012) suggest the idea of a ‘trust university’ as both a transitional model towards a full co-operative university and a way to address the governance problems arising from the introduction of managerialism into universities, exacerbated by murky relationships of ownership and control that arise from their ‘quasi-public’ status. Based on the John Lewis Partnership (JLP) model, in a trust university, the combined assets of the institution would be put into a ‘non-revocable trust’, which would mean that they could not be sold off for the self-interest of any member of the institution (Boden et al, 2012). As with the JLP, employees can then be made beneficiaries, effectively becoming 'partners', with rights to influence decision making and any profits either put back into the company (which would be most appropriate for a 'quasi-public' institution) or redistributed as an annual bonus. But more importantly, the public interest and democratic structure of the trust university can be enshrined in a charter. ‘The trust university’s deed would define all employees and students as its beneficiaries,’ Boden and colleagues (2012, p. 20) insist, ‘entitling them to access to the organisation’s resources, and would create an obligation for all of them to use these resources for the purpose of facilitating socially, culturally and economically beneficial work’. Rather than being organised around the need to achieve competitive success within a HE market, the co-operative governance and ownership structure of the trust university would work to ensure that the needs of staff, students and the local community are all met as fairly and as transparently as possible.

For critics of this model, however, the trust university does not in fact overcome the deep problems of governance caused by the separation of ownership and control. In a trust university, corporate governance would not necessarily change, and workers would not necessarily be directly involved in decision making. For Somerville (2014, p. 4-5), the trust university is ‘way short of being a member-controlled body [as] there is no challenge to either the capitalist wage or to the internal management hierarchy’. Cook (2013) agrees, pointing out that the trust university is a ‘sub-optimal’ model of co-operation, as the division of labour is retained, and market pressures still encourage efficiency over democracy. But Boden and colleagues (2012) recognise these limitations and suggest that, in the short term, the kinds of co-operative community-led inquiries described in the previous section would go part of the way to facilitate strong forms of democratic dialogue between universities and surrounding

communities that would ground co-operative forms of ownership and control in the future. In the short term, the trust university is a transitory model towards a full co-operation, introducing structural changes that point towards the latter in practice. In fact, this is the model's strength, as it offers an end-in-view for democratisation that is less daunting than a fully-blown co-operative university.

Beyond the trust university, advocates of the co-operative form for public, democratic universities seem to have settled on the 'social co-operative' as the most appropriate model (Hall and Winn, 2017). In the past four decades, social co-operatives – which are distinguished from worker and consumer co-operatives by their 'multi-stakeholder' membership structure – have grown in popularity within the global co-operative movement (Saunders, 2017). Their multiple forms of membership enable them to reflect multiple interests, making them accountable to not only the producers within the organisation, but to surrounding communities that also have a stake, or that are impacted by its activities. This makes them ideal for the delivery of public and social goods, such as healthcare and education. Mondragón University is the largest and perhaps only real example of both a social co-operative and a co-operative university, and therefore provides a case study of what such a model might look like in practice. As Joss Winn (2015) explains, there are three types of membership at Mondragón: workers (academics and professional staff), users (other co-operatives, businesses, and the local community) and students. Workers must invest around €15,000 to join the co-operative – which can be taken out of their wages over a two year period – in exchange for which they receive a return on investment as a proportion of the university's surplus, if there is one. As Mondragón is a private university, students must pay fees, but which are lower than at other private universities thanks to cross-subsidies from its other activities, such as consultancy. Governance structures are similar to that of traditional universities, indicating, as argued above, the continuity between 'modern' and 'democratic' university models, but in place of a neutered and symbolic academic board or senate is a 'general assembly' composed of one-third each of workers, users and students. Final decisions are taken on the basis of one-member, one-vote (Winn, 2015, p. 43).

How exactly does the social co-operative model improve on the idea of the public university? Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, co-operative universities offer a concrete way to realise the collegial

ideal which is outward-facing and democratic. In a social co-operative, the public, which is impinged on by the university in terms of its operations, is integrated into the university's structures of ownership and control. By establishing strong, horizontal mechanisms of governance, vice-chancellors – who would, in this model, need to be elected and would thus be directly accountable to staff, students and the public – would not be able to create an environment where excessive risk-taking and grossly unequal incomes were acceptable. Furthermore, where academic senates and boards are subject to neutering by managerialism in neoliberal universities, the general assemblies of such institutions would represent a genuine balance of power, as well as a model of democracy for other, civic institutions in communities within the local public sphere. The question immediately arises: why would staff and students want to play such a central role in the governance of universities, when they are already busy with their daily responsibilities and in the latter case are only there for three or four years? While sounding like a practical question, this also betrays some conservative assumptions about students and young adults. Students are, in fact, increasingly turning towards co-operative solutions to problems caused by marketisation, for example high student rents and poor treatment by private landlords[1]. Of course, the practicality of short-term versus long-term interests in the make-up of multi-stakeholder co-operatives must be acknowledged. But as Peter Sommerville and Gary Saunders (2013, p. 6) point out, the degree of control for each member group 'is a matter for debate in each case when drawing up the constitution'.

When it comes to the attitudes of academics towards co-operation, recent research has shown that such models are very attractive. Dan Cook (2013), for example, in a survey of 122 research students, found that 73.8% of respondents considered the idea of collegiality either 'attractive' or 'very attractive'. Breaking these results down further, Cook discovered that women were especially drawn to more democratic forms of ownership and control. From this sample, Cook (2013, p. 30) suggested that approval ratings for workplace democracy in universities were 'strongly positively correlated' with the desire to become an academic and that in 'professionally argumentative' organisations like universities, 'purposeful internal debate is more efficient than attempting to manage dissent'. An argument for co-operation, therefore, which could be used by local UCU branches to leverage democratisation

[1] See, for example, the work of Students for Cooperation: http://www.students.coop/

campaigns, could be that co-operative universities are less wasteful, an argument that could be quantified through an analysis of the financial costs of management in neoliberal universities. Cook's findings are supported by Edwin Bacon (2014), who in a qualitative survey of 48 academics from across the UK HE sector, found that there was widespread desire for more collegial decision-making. One respondent from a post-92 university, for example, said that 'many people are well-nigh desperate for collegial governance, lament the lack of it and often explicitly express frustration that it is not collegial'. 'Flatter structures enable greater autonomy and flexibility', Bacon (2014, p. 1) concludes, allowing academics to better deliver the key functions of the university. What these two studies suggest, therefore, is that the *idea* of democracy, retained in only its most hollow and instrumental form in the political democracies of neoliberal universities, survives in the consciousness of academics. As with the wider public, Dewey's theory of collective intelligence offers a way to turn this consciousness into real movements for democratisation, alongside the public in the fight against neoliberal austerity, with the social co-operative as a substantive end-in-view.

Conclusion

This chapter has suggested, based on the idea of 'co-inquiry' formulated in the last chapter, that a Deweyian concept of 'democratic collegiality' could provide new basis for not only academic self-governance, but for the resolution of contradictions of ownership and control in contemporary universities resulting from marketisation (see Chapter 4). The first section examined the idea of the 'public university' through a critique of the HE Convention's (2016) *Alternative White Paper*, discovering that the relationship between the university and the public – assumed to be unproblematic in many defences of the public university – has an uneven history in democratic societies. It was concluded that the function of universities in democratic societies, whether in welfarist, neoliberal or socialised forms, is the production of socially-useful knowledge and democratic citizens. The problem with both existing universities and the idea of the public university is the alienation of academics from the public it is meant to serve, and the alienation of the public from inquiry that it needs to control the state apparatus, including universities. To overcome this alienation, the second section argued that the

relationship between academics and the public must be reconstructed on the basis of Dewey's theory of collective intelligence. Through co-inquiry, the idea of the public university as a public sphere can be realised in truly democratic form, and the university reclaimed by the public as a technology for the control of social conditions for the public good. In the last section of this chapter, the social co-operative was proposed as a model for the democratic university, that realises the idea of the public university in a radical way, with practices of co-inquiry ensuring the efficacy of co-operation and the reconstruction of a responsible, positive version of academic freedom within such democratic universities. As a short-term end-in-view, the idea of a 'trust university' was argued to provide a transitional measure that would on the one hand resolve ambiguities in university governance in favour of public ownership and control and put a halt on the local advance of market reform, and on the other, act as a pragmatic bridging reform for further democratisation, towards a fully co-operative and democratic university.

However, a serious question remains: how realistic is this end-in-view? Joss Winn (2015, p. 40) suggests that there are three different routes to co-operation in higher education, all fraught with difficulty: 'conversion, dissolution, or creation'. Winn has himself been involved in two major attempts to create a co-operative university. Firstly, Winn is a founding member and key participant in the Lincoln Social Science Centre (SSC), a co-operative 'free university' which has no physical location but operates as a voluntary institution in the centre of Lincoln. The SSC is one of the only 'free' universities set up during the 2010 student movement to survive until the present day, in a large part thanks to the resilience of the co-operative model. Secondly, Winn has been influential in formulating a plan for the Co-operative College to set up a co-operative university. The Co-operative College has become interested in the creation of a publicly-funded (through student fees) co-operative university following the passing of the 2017 Higher Education and Research Act (HERA), which makes this a concrete possibility. However, such a co-operative university would only in principle be challenging the logic of marketisation, as it would be one type of 'alternative provider' among other for-profit 'challenger' institutions and would thus be playing into the narrative of disrupting public HE described in the previous chapter. The other two routes to co-operation raise similar questions. For example, if a university were to fail because of aggressive risk-taking encouraged by marketisation, while the UK

Conservative Government would not 'bail out' such institutions, it would no doubt see this as an opportunity to advance the privatisation of higher education through the entry of education corporations. As Willetts (2017) admits, during his time as Minister for Universities and Science, he worked hard to enable to sale of the College of Law to Montagu Private Equity. He also laments his failure to secure more such buy-outs by corporate interests and envisions a future in which more education corporations like Pearson compete on a global stage with the giants of monopoly educational capitalism within a fast-consolidating international higher education market.

Dissolution, then, presents another way of realising the democratic university, but one that would require stakeholders to raise the necessary capital in a short amount of time in order to compete with monopoly interests. Again, co-operative universities set up through the dissolution route would, like newly established ones, remain within the logic of marketisation. Conversion through local trade union-led, inquiry-based campaigns for democratisation – with the conversion of assets into a non-revocable trust its end-in-view – may present the most realistic option, especially if resistance to marketisation grows and academics continue to undertake collective, consciousness-raising action. Conversion also has the advantage of building strong foundations of solidarity and co-inquiry through democratising practice, thus grounding the resulting democratic university in an existing co-operative community of inquiry. However, campaigns like this would be incredibly difficult and exhausting, and within a marketised context and with a hostile government in charge of funding and regulation, such an institution in transition would be extremely vulnerable. For these reasons, the discussion concerning democratisation must be raised to a higher level. Truly democratised universities of the kind suggested in this chapter would need support from a sympathetic government. This point is considered further in the Conclusion to the thesis.

Conclusion: Towards an Intelligent Populism

Before returning to the hypothesis of 'intelligent populism' proposed at the end of the first section of this thesis, and reflecting on the contributions and limitations of the thesis, it may be useful to briefly summarise the findings of each chapter. Chapter 1 argued that the Frankfurt School, the dominant tradition of critical social theory today, moved away from Lukács' philosophy of praxis and abandoned the possibility of collective action in monopoly capitalist society. While Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of the culture industry was, in revealing the way that consciousness itself becomes an aspect of this system of reproduction, acknowledged as a major contribution to the Western Marxist tradition of critical theory, this chapter concluded that Habermas missed an opportunity in his work on the public sphere to develop a theory of how critical consciousness can emerge out of the contradiction between real and false needs in democratic societies. Chapter 2 proposed Dewey's theory of collective intelligence as a substantive and unique alternative to Frankfurt School critical social theory, and one that moves in the opposite direction towards political practice. Contra Horkheimer, Adorno and Habermas, the chapter argued that, with the application of Dewey's 'method of democracy', non-public opinion could be turned into what Habermas called 'critical opinion', and a form of 'intelligent populism' could emerge as a form of collective subjectivity within social movements for democratisation.

Part II of the thesis then moved towards an analysis of the 'problematic situation' facing both social theorists and the public today. Chapter 3 explained that a highly-organised, elite political project aimed at the restoration of monopoly capitalist interests had, by influencing and dominating public policy for the last 30 years, contributed to the inequality and insecurity experienced by ordinary people in the UK today. Examining contributions by F. A. Hayek and Milton Friedman in particular, the chapter showed how the 'neoliberal thought collective' created an elaborate ideology of 'double truth' designed to hide monopoly interests and the consequences of neoliberal public policy. Chapter 4 then looked specifically at how contemporary 'third-wave neoliberalism' in the UK has turned to higher education to rescue monopoly capitalism from returning stagnation after the 2008 Financial Crisis. Behind the ideology of competition and free markets, following the analysis of neoliberalism as a double-truth doctrine in the

previous chapter, marketisation was revealed to be a process of monopolisation in which the UK HE sector, and eventually the global HE 'market', would become dominated by multi-national educational corporations.

Part 3 then moved towards a discussion of how HE could be reconstructed, beginning with the sociological profession. Chapter 5 argued that sociology had a crucial role to play in fighting not just HE marketisation, but neoliberal austerity as well. If reconstructed on the basis of Dewey's theory of collective intelligence, it was argued that Michael Burawoy's theory of public sociology could become the 'method of democracy' outlined in Chapter 2, and could lead way for academics to reconnect with the public as part of a wider social movement against neoliberalism. Building on the conclusions of Chapter 5, Chapter 6 suggested that a Deweyian practice of 'democratic collegiality', based on the model of democratic sociology outlined in the previous chapter and led by radical sociologists, could push for the democratisation of UK universities. At the end of the last chapter, the idea of an 'asset lock' was suggested as a way to protect the public interest in public universities and as a transition to the social co-operative as a model of the democratic university.

The last two chapters explain how sociologists and academics can contribute to the realisation of the hypothesis of 'intelligent populism' presented at the end of Part 1, and returned to at numerous points in the thesis. While the reconstruction of sociology, the academic profession and the university is not a necessary condition of such intelligent populism emerging, these reconstructed institutions of the public sphere would certainly provide important resources for the development of collective intelligence. As insisted in Chapter 2, the seeds of collective intelligence are already within the public, even in its beleaguered and 'eclipsed' state within contemporary systems of 'political democracy'. In a sense, the hypothesis of intelligent populism has been verified by various left-wing movements that have arisen in response to third-wave neoliberalism, first in Spain (Podemos) and Greece (Syriza), and most recently by the rise to the leadership of mainstream left-wing parties in the US and UK of Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn respectively. As noted in Chapter 3, Corbynism is not simply a left-wing version of right-wing populism, but rather something that Hilary Wainwright describes as 'power-as-transformation'. Rather than seeking to replace grassroots social movements, Corbynism helps to

channel this popular energy into intelligent, often technologically-mediated forms of inquiry, for example on social media (Nunns, 2018; Seymour, 2017), and into new democratic institutions grounded in public ownership and control (Labour, 2017).

However, the manipulation of real needs by the culture industry and their co-optation by right-wing populist forces exert an overwhelmingly negative influence on this nascent intelligent populism. Reconstructed public institutions for the development of collective intelligence – democratic sociology, collegiality and universities – would provide strong scaffolding for these movements and act to counter-balance the negative influence from the right. Sociologists and academics have an essential role to play, not as leaders of the revolution but as facilitators and co-inquirers. In a sense, the thesis is meant to remind sociologists and academics that they are themselves a part of the public, and not only have a responsibility in making sure that the public has access to and expertise in public inquiry – especially social inquiry – but have an interest in defending the public against manipulation and co-optation. Again, the conclusion of the thesis is not that academics must 'save' the public from monopoly capitalism and right-wing populism. The conclusion could be more accurately summed up as insisting that sociologists and academics need to 'get their house in order'. One point made forcefully in this thesis is that the university is no longer a refuge from the culture industry; it has, in fact, become one of its most powerful institutions. With the REF, TEF and KEF, all academic work, no matter how well intentioned or 'radical', can be captured within the value-creating mechanisms of marketisation and directed either towards the surplus-driven expansion of universities as transnational corporations or to the economic needs of a stagnating national economy. Academics must *take responsibility* for their knowledge-producing activities, and also their educational activities, and fight against marketisation in higher education.

However, as argued in Chapter 6, this struggle should not be waged separately from the public, but as part of practices of co-inquiry. Struggles within HE can be united with struggles against neoliberalism in society within broad-based campaigns for democratisation. In the 1970s, a group of workers based at various Lucas Aerospace factories formed a 'combine' and developed an 'Alternative Plan for Socially-Useful Production'. When the managers of Lucas Aerospace decided to close some of the

firm's factories and cut jobs in others, an inter-union, multi-factory 'combine committee' made up of shop stewards and white-collar staff representatives challenged the company's restructure plan with an alternative plan of their own, which proposed the redirection of production towards socially-useful ends and products (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982). As Wainwright (2018, pp. 41-2) notes, the Lucas Plan remains 'one of the most radical and forward-thinking attempts ever made by workers to gain power over the purpose of production and demonstrate, in practice, a democratic direction for industrial change'. Although not directly inspired by Dewey's work, the Lucas Plan is an uncanny exemplar of the theory of collective intelligence explored in this thesis, showing both the intelligence of ordinary people and the way that this intelligence and knowledge can be socialised to create a system of decentralised and democratic planning.

The Lucas Plan also points the way forward for sociologists and academics looking to put this theory into practice in democratising HE, and thereby contribute to the development of an intelligent populism in the UK. As already suggested in the concept of 'co-inquiry' in Chapter 6, in order for specific democratisation initiatives to gain traction with the public, and thus become part of wider anti-neoliberal social movements, alliances must be developed beyond narrow, professional interests. The Lucas Aerospace Combine, for example, was a 'multi-union, staff and manual, industrial structure' that cut across the occupational and craft basis of British trade unions (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 13). Within heavy industries at the time, close working relationships between highly skilled designers and shop-floor workers were normal: 'shop-floor workers were trying out and suggesting modifications to designs which they would then discuss with the technical workers; the designers' skill involved the ability to specify measurements in mathematical terms, whereas the fitters' or welders' skills involved the ability to make very precise judgements on the basis of more tacit understanding built up from experience' (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 32). Through this working relationship, the artificial divisions of intellectual vs manual labour characteristic of corporate rationalisation were eroded, and new relations of solidarity were created in their place.

The innovation of the Lucas Aerospace Combine was to formalise this development within a new type of collective organisation, which in turn created the conditions for shared issues to be turned into

collective demands for democratic control and ownership. This process was also problem-based, in that the Combine was created out of the realisation that the issues workers faced resulted from monopoly tendencies in not just the firm, but the system as a whole, and therefore needed forms of organisation appropriate to this development. Furthermore, by beginning with the problems faced by workers and by including these workers within processes of inquiry, the Combine created a 'responsible' organisation that overcame the alienation of the monopoly-capitalist division of labour. By challenging these artificial divisions of labour, the workers' inquiry leapt beyond the 'bread and butter' issues usually covered by trade union bargaining, linking workplace issues with the needs and problems of the wider public. 'Workers plans make explicit workers' needs and priorities; and increasingly this has come to mean workers not just as producers but also as members of a local community, as fathers and mothers, as future pensioners, as patients and users,' Wainwright and Elliott (1982, p. 223) explain. The Lucas Plan, they continue, attempted 'as far as possible to show the connections between these needs, and how they could be met with the productive and financial resources now under the control of management, the financiers or civil service' (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 223).

The Combine was, thus, a living example of the 'democratic collegiality' proposed in Chapter 6. Crucially, this process was founded on an ethos of self-education and intellectual self-sufficiency that went against the grain of both the orthodox Marxist insistence on centralised leadership and academic and trade union elitism that denied the capacity of ordinary workers to understand the conditions of social and political problems. For example, rather than rely on the employer to provide information, with management operating in secrecy exactly to prevent workers demanding improvements to pay and conditions, the Combine 'produced its own experts and made use of outside help to educate and prepare itself' (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 47). The Combine created a *democratic system* of knowledge production, with workers building up an overall picture of the economic and social totality that in turn suggested the need for an alternative plan. As the Combine began to outline its alternative corporate plan, it was able to use this system of democratic knowledge production to formulate a set of proposals for socially-useful products that not only expressed the qualitative experience of its members but also linked with and influenced an emerging nuclear disarmament and climate change movement.

This process of inquiry was also explicitly aimed at raising the consciousness of those taking part. As Wainwright and Elliott (1982, p. 10) explain, the 'Combine executive drew up a questionnaire for all the factories, with two purposes: first to help the Combine to compile an inventory of the skills and equipment available in Lucas Aerospace; and second, to encourage workers to suggest how they could use these productive resources to meet social needs in their own communities and elsewhere'. Rather than being treated as a 'value-neutral' process of fact gathering, the questionnaire was designed to *challenge* workers to think beyond the reified structures of collective habit. A quote from a Lucas Plan shop steward, Tommy Quirk, reveals how the workers' inquiry was experienced as both educative and liberating: 'At first, I did not feel that I could write up reports and things like that … during the first two days I felt like going home … but by the time of the last two days I felt I could go on forever … without the mix of technical and manual workers I don't think we'd have done anything like as good' (in Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 189).

The Lucas Combine also worked with a group of academics at the North-East London Polytechnic (now the University of East London), together creating an alternative educational institution grounded in the need for democratic knowledge. The 'Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems' (CAITS) had an 'ambitious' brief:

- 'To assist the Combine Committee in the development of various Lucas Plan products, and to help to develop the economic and social arguments to support the shop-floor-led demand for industrial conversion and diversification
- To act as a clearing house for the Lucas Corporate Plan and promote the development and application of socially useful products.
- To establish expertise in the field of socially useful products and make this available to other groups.
- To engage in the promotion of design, development, prototype manufacture, production and marketing of 'alternative' products. Also, to assist in the development of more socially desirable non-hierarchical organisational forms of industry.

- To assist in establishing small-scale co-operative ventures and community industries in the East London area.' (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 171)

Although the centre was eventually shut down, for the short time it existed, CAITS represented a complete reversal of the traditional relationship between academics and the public, universities and their surrounding communities. Echoing the strong definition of public responsibility of the AAUP (see Chapter 6), the Combine considered that 'as tax-payers and members of the surrounding community they had a right of access to these resources, to sufficient space, to libraries with periodicals which public libraries cannot afford, to workshops without management supervision and to contacts with people from many different disciplines' (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 168). Rather than waiting for academics to come to them, the Lucas Combine turned up at the university gates and demanded support, luckily finding a few academics willing to think beyond traditional boundaries and join with their non-academic colleagues in the struggle against monopoly capitalism.

As mentioned in Chapter 6, academics have finally begun to mobilise against marketisation, going on strike for an unprecedented 14 days in 2017 in response to proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). Interestingly, the UCU strike bears an uncanny resemblance to the early work of the Lucas Aerospace Combine, which took an interest in pensions after the defeat of the 1969 Crossman Pensions Bill (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982). In an act of strategic foresight that became typical of the Combine, interested members began to work out proposals in advance of a future Conservative Bill that might outsource pensions to the private-sector, and began campaigning for proposals including: the election of trade-union representatives to pension boards and negotiating committees and the elimination of inequalities between staff and shop-floor workers. Like the UCU campaign, self-education proved crucial in securing victory, with the Combine organising a series of 'teach-ins' where Combine pensions experts 'explained how pension funds were controlled, what actuaries did, and what were the interests and ploys of the company in running their own pensions scheme' (Wainwright and Elliott, 1982, p. 77). Similarly, the 'USS Briefs' published a series of papers on the USS dispute as it developed, significantly strengthening lay members' understanding and therefore participation in the dispute (USS Briefs, 2018). Like the Lucas campaign, the USS Briefs

linked the attack on pensions with wider issues such as university governance (#USSBriefs15), the marketisation of English higher education (#USSBriefs3) and neoliberal financialisation (#USSBriefs16), pointing to the need to move beyond the pensions dispute to build a long-term, broad-based campaign aimed at democratisation (#USSBriefs9 and #USSBriefs29).

However, academics still need to be better at linking their struggle with struggles the university. As the Lucas Combine realised, the issue of pensions affects not just all union members, but all members of society. The issue of pensions, therefore, would be an ideal one for building broad-based campaigns around. While it is true that trade unions are confined by local and national bargaining agreements, and by informal traditions of respecting each other's staff-group boundaries, these restrictions do not rule out the formation of combines to campaign on a wider basis. Furthermore, by uncritically accepting these restrictions, workers are in fact reproducing the division of labour imposed by the corporate university. Local UCU branches should take the initiative following the success of the USS strike and form combines, electing not only representatives from the main staff unions in universities, but also student activists, delegates from local trades union councils and community groups. In this way, broad-based support for specific campaigns can be built and the energy from UCU passed on to manufacturing and public-sector unions which have suffered far worse from historical de-industrialisation and earlier phases of privatisation. As suggested in the last chapter, community inquiries like those undertaken by North London Citizens and JustSpace – as well as the Lucas Plan, of course – can provide models for how the qualitative experience of the consequences of marketisation and neoliberalism can be refined and articulated within demands for democratisation.

Finally, the demands and knowledge produced through such local inquiries, as well as the general knowledge of marketisation and its alternatives developed through the USS strike and in this thesis, should feed in to Labour's HE policy under Corbyn. As part of its 'For the Many, Not the Few' manifesto, Labour promised to create a National Education Service (NES) to ensure that people in the UK have access to 'cradle-to-grave learning that is free at the point of use' (The Labour Party, 2017, p. 34). At this stage, however, the proposals for HE do not extend further than a promise to abolish tuition fees. Looking at the recently published NES Charter, two principles in particular could be significantly

strengthened by proposals suggested in this thesis. Firstly, the NES promises that 'educators and all other staff will be valued as highly-skilled professionals, and appropriate accountability will be balanced against giving genuine freedom of judgement and innovation' (National Policy Forum, 2018, p. 7). As it stands, this suggests traditional ideas of academic freedom. However, building on the conclusions of the last chapter, academics in UCU working alongside other stakeholders in university combines could suggest a 'Council of Scholars' that would link strong notions of professional self-regulation with a recognition that, on the one hand, all staff within universities contribute to their scholarly output and therefore should be recognised as knowledge-producing professionals, and on the other, that such scholarly activity is reliant on an inquiring public that employs universities directly to produce knowledge on their behalf and which also has the right to engage with university staff to further inquiries taking place outside university walls. Practically, this could mean a national or international body comprised of elected representatives from all interested parties – academics, administrators, students and community inquiry groups – which maintains a set of democratically formulated professional standards of inquiry and manages any disputes occurring within this community of inquiry.

The idea of the university as a social co-operative would also provide Labour with a concrete alternative to the market model of the corporate university (see Chapter 4), as well as a viable case study for its recent 'Alternative Model of Ownership' proposals (The Labour Party, 2017b). In the short-term, the idea of an 'asset-lock' would provide a meaningful, institutional complement to the promise of free HE, removing the institutional basis for market behaviours and norms. In the long-term, a Council of Scholars could be affiliated to Co-operatives UK and its principles aligned with the Rochdale Principles of co-operation (Woodin, 2015), which were argued in Chapter 6 to be closely aligned with the principles of collegiality of the academic profession.

Contribution of the thesis

If the two questions posed at the beginning of this thesis are accepted as fundamental to critical social theory, then Dewey's theory of collective intelligence is clearly a major contribution to both sociology and to the social sciences as a whole. However, beyond the sociological profession, Dewey's hypothesis

of intelligent populism also points beyond third-wave neoliberalism. In this sense, the thesis is timely. As Hilary Wainwright (2018) points out, what is needed today is a 'new politics of the left'. Dewey's theory of collective intelligence gives this new politics a strong theoretical and methodological foundation. By offering a substantive alternative to Frankfurt School critical theory and orthodox Marxism, Dewey's 'method of democracy' offers hope and support for democratic socialists across the world rising up against monopoly finance capitalism.

Clearly there is a tension in this thesis between Marxism and pragmatism. Readers may point out that by bringing these two traditions together, both are distorted beyond recognition. However, as this thesis has shown, there are similarities between the Marxist 'philosophy of praxis' tradition, represented by Lukács in particular, and Dewey's unique brand of pragmatism. Rather than situating Dewey's social theory in the context of this tradition, the thesis could also have explored Dewey's critical social theory as a contribution to the tradition of 'critical pedagogy'. Critical pedagogy – which builds on the work of radical Brazilian educator Paulo Freire – also deals with the two questions that frame this thesis. This thesis certainly has the potential to contribute to this tradition by providing a more democratic, and therefore suitable, alternative to the Frankfurt School, which has had a large influence on critical pedagogy since Freire. Much of contemporary critical pedagogy is also concerned with the critique of neoliberalism in education, particularly HE. However, like other academic critiques of marketisation, critical pedagogy also tends to focus either on the ideology of marketisation – the stated aim of bringing competition and a free market to HE – or the defence of the public university, which is threatened by marketisation. The theory of marketisation presented in this thesis – that market reform results in monopolisation and is aimed at the resuscitation of a stagnating neoliberal economy – would therefore provide a useful foundation for critical pedagogy in HE. The example of the Lucas Combine also shows how critical pedagogy works in practice, and how Dewey's theory of collective intelligence in many ways makes critical pedagogy's implicit 'method of democracy' explicit.

In conclusion, the aim of this thesis was to create a 'map' for emancipatory action in the present. Ultimately, in Deweyian terms, the contribution of the thesis can only be 'tested' in practice. For academics seeking to fight HE marketisation and neoliberalism in society, this thesis has presented

some concrete ends-in-view: setting up a ‘combine’ made up of representatives from publics affected by the social actions of irresponsible universities; proposing within Labour Party policy a ‘Council of Scholars’ to represent such combines at a national level and to replace the TEF, REF and KEF mechanisms; and campaigning for the assets of universities to be put in ‘non-revocable trusts’ as a transitional measure on the way to universities as social co-operatives. These ends-in-view can be pursued straight away. While Corbynism represents hope for a democratic socialist future in the UK, after decades of despair and disappointment on the left, academics, intellectuals and activists cannot afford to sit around and wait for this hope to be realised ‘from above’, so to speak. As the example of the Lucas Plan shows, the mistake made by labour movement activists in the 1970s was to expect the Labour Party to deliver on the promise of democratic socialism represented by its radical manifesto just by getting elected into Parliament. By the time that these activists realised that they had been betrayed, it was too late. The disappointment of this defeat and the effect this had on the labour movement led directly to the victory of Margaret Thatcher a few years later, and the hegemony of neoliberalism for the next 30 years after that. Dewey’s idea of ‘democracy as a way of life’ can be realised today, within active, inquiring publics and by intelligent populist movements for democratisation. We as academics can help, we can be a part of this change.

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