Beyond the consolations of professionalism: resisting alienation at the neoliberal university

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> There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even passively take part. And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop.[1]

Apologia

This article is influenced by our experiences of academic life at De Montfort University (DMU), Leicester. One of us (Jonathan Davies) has been a professor at DMU since 2011 and Director of the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA) since 2015. The other (Adam Standring) is a Marie Curie Post-doctoral Fellow undertaking his Fellowship at the institution (2022-4), originally attracted by the academic-activist culture of CURA. DMU is not the subject of our analysis, but our interests, practices and positionalities require disclosure and discussion with respect to what follows.

Soundings

From 2015 to 2019, CURA was on an upward curve, enthusiastically supported by the university's central executive, including the then Vice-Chancellor, who had big ambitions for a middle-ranking institution, and was aiming for the 'Top 30' in academic league tables. CURA was instrumental to those ambitions. It was launched by a small group of colleagues on the back of an ESRC research grant *Collaborative Governance Under Austerity: An Eight-case Comparative Study* (ES/L012898/1), a significant win for DMU social sciences at the time. The grant provided a launch pad for CURA. We were not unique, but were one of a small number of centres and institutes seen as flagships at DMU. CURA won support because we played the game of the day successfully: creating a vibrant research environment capable of attracting ambitious academics and post-graduate students, winning research income and (tacitly) supporting the 'Top 30' push.

Hence, CURA was able to thrive as an intellectual caucus, heavily influenced by various traditions of anti-capitalist thinking; at first focusing on the governance of and resistance to austere neoliberalism in cities, but then growing far beyond that. We gained prestige within the institution, were in receipt of numerous benefits, including relatively generous research hours for our staff (at least on paper), relatively generous core funding, and ready access to the Vice-Chancellor and other senior officials. Under the leadership of the charismatic VC, power was highly concentrated, much as it is now. However, because we were ticking the right boxes, CURA was largely unburdened by managers. If anything, they went out of their way to facilitate us.

We were therefore able to pursue the critical research we valued by observing the rules of the game, as we encountered them at the time. As researchers showing austere neoliberalism to be an eminently resistible ideological dogma, we were nevertheless good neoliberal citizens. There is no doubt that our 'success' must have come at a cost to less fortunate colleagues, and many were unable to flourish under the old regime. When we were establishing parameters for our comparative research programme on austerity governance, an international colleague warned that we were all interior to, and inevitably complicit with, the system we deplored. There could be no illusions of exteriority. If we did not take that advice sufficiently to heart in building CURA, we can certainly do so now, at the point of its unravelling.

The neoliberal boom that sustained us is well and truly over. The warning signs were there before Covid-19, as executives began stating that research was too

expensive. From memory, the exhortation to focus on grant capture became more urgent around 2018. Colleagues - many of whom were doing work that did not require or lend itself to soliciting income - started directing their efforts accordingly. The departure of the charismatic VC in early 2019, and then the pandemic, exposed multiple weaknesses in the DMU 'Top 30' strategy. An unfavourable tweak to league-table metrics did not help. Far from reaching the 'Top 30', the institution plummeted down the rankings. From the ashes there arose a new managerial narrative of an institution in financial crisis, challenged to no avail by the DMU branch of the University and College Union (UCU). From spring 2020, research resources were severely curtailed, initially as an emergency measure in response to Covid-19. Since then, CURA has been decimated by 'austerity', following the very logics that we spent a decade repudiating.[2] Centres in our faculty were stripped of core budgets, resources for research were slashed, and an escalating squeeze on research time for non-professorial staff began. Unsurprisingly, scholars attracted to DMU under the previous regime, people with 'market choices', left in droves. While few, if any, areas of DMU were unaffected, CURA's relative privilege meant that it was disproportionately de-privileged by levelling-down. We have fallen a very long way.

Despite these choppy waters, CURA managed to win three Marie Curie post-doctoral fellowships in 2021, a scheme we had targeted as a way of building and enriching our scholar-activist community. On the research income criterion, we were the most successful centre in our faculty that year. One of us, Jonathan Davies, as CURA Director, believed that 'success' might provide some protection for our work and stabilise the situation. He was naive. In May 2022, staff at the level of Associate Professor and above in Politics and International Relations, where many CURA members were based, were placed 'at risk' or as 'provisionally selected' for redundancy, including the director and deputy director. The stated reason was underperformance against a unit-level 'staff student ratio'. Davies, who was seriously ill at the time, survived the process purely by luck. But the process led to a further exodus by colleagues with market mobility, including one of the three hard-won Marie Curie fellows. As a result, while CURA exists on paper, it is as a hollowed and depleted entity.

The lessons to be drawn from this fall from grace are two-fold. First, when we surf the wave of a neoliberal boom, it should be no surprise if we are then consumed by a neoliberal bust. Second, 'success' provides no defence against retrenchment.

Performing to expectations on one variable is futile, when the powers-that-be can always trump it with another. We learned that petitioning executives with appeals to 'excellence' was futile. The course was set.

What follows is inflected by anger, as we survey the ruins of our endeavour. Yet, we must ask ourselves why we did not write this article when we were surfing the wave of the neoliberal boom. It needed writing then no less than it does now. However, we had a lot to lose at that time. In disclosing our positionalities, we do not seek to re-consecrate the role of the professor, the autonomous academic, or the privileged research institute. Exploring the relationships between neoliberal managerialism and the anti-intellectualist crusade of the UK government, we endeavour to think of better ways to do academic labour than we were able to achieve with CURA.

Introduction

In many ways, our local experience is a microcosm of that afflicting UK and international academia, as well as students and non-academic university staff. The wider context for this article is the decline of the academic profession as an 'autonomous' self-governing entity, and its subordination to rampaging neoliberal managerialism.[3] We explore what we see as a malign constructive juxtaposition: between, on the one hand, the crude economism and pseudo-progressivism that underpin neoliberal managerialism, and, on the other, the anti-intellectualism of a decrepit, viciously reactionary British state. Despite the apparent value contradictions between neoliberal progressivism and reactionary anti-intellectualism, we suggest that the former abets the latter. The second section of the article is a discussion of the de-colonisation debate, which illustrates this collusion.

The final part of our article considers grounds upon which this reactionary confluence might be resisted. Here, we return to the defeat of the academic profession by neoliberal managerialism. We do not call for a renaissance but suggest that academics might do better to embrace the logics of downward social, economic and cultural mobility in pursuit of universalising intellectual labour, a goal that is just as incompatible with old-style professionalism as it is with neoliberal managerialism. If such an agenda seems fantastical, we follow the late Mike Davis in insisting that only explicitly utopian thinking, and action, can conceivably be equal to the monumental crises we face.[4]

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Neoliberal managerialism as anti-intellectualism

Much ink has been spilled on the confection of 'markets', league tables and performance management in global higher education, in parallel with the remaking of students as 'customers'. With doubtless noble exceptions, and variations in style, an authoritarian managerial elite enforces these processes across the sector, centred around the courts of increasingly dominant vice-chancellors.[5] Authoritarian neoliberal management has accelerated what Pierre Bourdieu called professional 'downclassing', whereby academic status, power and authority have, with some exceptions, been severely degraded.[6] The full-time permanent academic remains part of an economically privileged middle-class stratum, especially the professoriate, but it has nevertheless been socially and culturally deprivileged. And even this stratum is increasingly vulnerable to the erosion of pay and conditions, the ineluctable rise of precarity and the intensification of work under ever-tighter managerial control.[7] The experience of downward mobility remains variegated by the status of institutions and other professional, class, racial, gender and ableist distinctions. However, the ubiquity of these trends is glaringly obvious. Safety in tenure or seniority is increasingly an illusion. The notion of a university governed according to professional norms is correspondingly obsolete. Although many lament this course of events, and there are myriad astute diagnoses of the malaise, academic resistance has generally been tepid and ineffective.[8]

Neoliberalisation has long been enmeshed with anti-intellectualism in driving the decline of the profession. Peters identified three strands of anti-intellectualism: religious, populist/anti-elitist, and unreflective instrumentalism.[9] Anti-intellectualism long precedes neoliberalism and will doubtless outlast it. However, there are strong affinities and common drivers in the current period. In Britain, New Labour played an important role in fuelling the present anti-intellectual zeitgeist. In 2003, after the government had introduced tuition fees and student loans, Education Secretary Charles Clarke infamously asserted:

> My central argument is that universities exist to enable the British economy and society to deal with the challenges posed by the increasingly rapid process of global change. I argue that what I described as the medieval concept of a community of scholars seeking truth is not in itself a justification for the state to put money into that.[10]

This instance of unreflective instrumentality provoked controversy amongst VCs at the time, but it is now so baked into managerial bad sense that it is never questioned.

Michael Gove gave renewed impetus to the anti-intellectualist turn when he lambasted 'experts' in the Brexit referendum campaign. As someone who likes to quote Gramsci, Gove knew very well what he was doing. The anti-intellectual assault has gathered pace, with regular media attacks on academia amplifying dog-whistles from radicalising 'culture warriors' on the hard right. Last year, the Daily Mail reported that: 'The woke brigade have hijacked academia', and mourned the death of 'free speech' and 'academic rigour'.[11] This reactionary strand seeks to articulate a populist anti-intellectualism with elite resistance to the (partial) democratisation of knowledge and mass access to higher education, and the loss of control and deference it is considered to have engendered. In an age of crises, elites - rightly or wrongly - see a knowledgeable, intellectually astute and critical population as threatening. The intellectual vibrancy of the arts and humanities is seen to pose a particular threat, which is why they have been attacked and jettisoned in favour of sciences, engineering and all-pervasively vacuous (mainstream) management studies. The offensive is prosecuted by managers in the name of a disinterested 'market', but just happens to serve the agenda of the hard right, which determines how this 'market' is rigged and no longer hides its glee at the prospect of destroying universal arts and humanities education. How to reframe the problematic, and what might be done to reverse these attacks, is discussed in the final part of this article. The next section discusses the decolonisation debate to enlarge upon the affinities between pseudo-progressive neoliberal managerialism and reactionary anti-intellectualism.

VCs: De-colonise yourselves!

Propaganda from today's vice-chancellors seems like a throw-back to the New Labour years. The incantation of economic 'necessity' (deficit-fetishism, competition, enterprise, franchising, collusion with dictatorships) is sugar-coated with progressivist fervour, pursuant to 'inclusion, diversity and sustainability'. In universities, these pervasive vocabularies are directed perhaps less at cynical academics than at the young people from across the globe who grace our institutions as students. For the hard right, these vocabularies are part of the 'woke' malaise. But in reality they are little more than market-speak: they are so divorced

from the lived experience of retrenchment across the sector that they have an Orwellian quality. The harsher the authoritarianism, the more loudly such 'values' seem to be proclaimed.

Waves of attacks on arts and humanities in the name of 'the market' show how progressive rhetoric attaching to neoliberal managerialism is always subordinate to the much-manipulated economic imperative. Beyond this, however, progressivism is itself suffused with neoliberal characteristics. The values in question are flattened out, aligned with supposed economic imperatives and stripped of depth and critical content. The radicalising right, fearful of 'woke capitalism', ought to be reassured by the knowledge that progressivism is merely the sugar-coating of the reactionary anti-intellectualist pill. The co-optation of the de-colonisation movement exemplifies.

The call for de-colonisation first came to public attention in the UK as the demand of South American and South African students, announcing itself with the 2015 'Rhodes Must Fall' movement.[12] A crucial part of the de-colonisation agenda is the call for the adaptation of curricula and research practices to encompass the thought of scholars from the global south, whilst subjecting the ideas of European scholars to critical scrutiny from these wider perspectives. De-colonised scholarship is more poly-vocal than its predecessors, and more attentive to colonial geographies and racialisations. Extending the range of voices included in debate brings perspectives that would otherwise be missed. As a former colleague put it in correspondence with us, such initiatives can 'provide material change that ostensibly radical scholars did not necessarily struggle for in practice because of their positionality'.

Perhaps surprisingly for some, the idea of de-colonisation has been energetically co-opted to neoliberal managerialism. As Dalia Gebrial has argued, however, managers treat it 'almost exclusively "in terms of culture and identity rather than politics and history"'; this allows them to de-politicise racism and render anti-racism amenable to the output quantification needed by managers.[13] Through this de-politicising of the de-colonising and anti-racist agenda, managerialism has allowed racism to continue to 'flourish' … 'in spite, or because of, the need to account for equality, diversity and inclusion in global markets for higher education'.[14] As Nadena Doharty, Manuel Madriaga and Remi Joseph-Salisbury have commented, the practice of university executives advances coloniality 'by adopting the work of a few racially minoritised groups, but exploitatively draining the useful parts of their scholarship

to meet institutional metrics and marketise fashionable buzz-words …'.[15]

This emptying out of radical content does not mean that the idea of a decolonised university should not be taken with the utmost seriousness by all academics. Moreover, we recognise that these values, once officially endorsed, can sometimes overflow the control of executives. Nevertheless, it is clear that the 'progressive' vocabularies of neoliberal managerialism will inevitably clash with, and are epistemologically hostile to, approaches that question the ways in which histories and structures of oppression manifest themselves in the Anglophone university of the twenty-first century. This is partly because the critique required to render visible the every-day forms and practices of domination cannot easily be quantified for output metrics. But, more fundamentally, it is because, much like defenestrating Rhodes, applying a de-colonisation lens to the history, governance, hierarchies and day-to-day management of universities would directly threaten the power and ideology of vice-chancellors and their courtiers, whilst forcing them to confront that which their discourses suppress. We can find no evidence of executives turning the lens upon the apparatuses and rationalities that empower them. In this sense, neoliberal managerialism can be seen to rely upon a variety of anti-intellectualism, in the form of selective or strategic ignorance. The message to any VC reading this is: 'physician, heal thyself'.

We extrapolate from this apparent inability the suggestion that neoliberal managerialism is fundamentally incompatible with anti-coloniality. Although we recognise that anti-neoliberalism and anti-coloniality should not be conflated, it is difficult to envision the de-colonisation of universities without their de-neoliberalisation. This is because the strategic ignorance of neoliberal managerialism, and much of the power it invests in executives, is rooted within the tradition of Western economic rationality. This is a tradition that has always entertained delusions of its own impartiality, and has been determinedly oblivious to the disastrous consequences for others of its neo-colonial or neo-imperialist practices, both materially and ideologically. The global spread of neoliberalism has depended precisely on such strategic ignorance. Neoliberal managerialism, whether in academia or in multinational companies and the global infrastructure that supports them, conceals its own colonial logics and denudes progressivist values of emancipatory content.[16] Despite the gulf in values articulated by 'anti-woke' Tory nativists and ostensibly liberal university management regimes, the latter are

thoroughly complicit in anti-intellectualism. By extension, we question whether neoliberal managerialism is compatible with *any* of the values it appropriates under the veneer of progressivism.

From 'Homo Academicus' to public intellectuality?

So far, neither academics nor students nor anyone else has been able to slow, let alone halt, the ideological, political and managerial offensive against universities. What, then, is to be done and by whom?

In the first instance, we should abandon any nostalgia for 'the profession'. Professional disempowerment makes it tempting to look back on the days of yore as more progressive and politically engaged, but the university has always been, among other things, an arm of cultural and economic state power: from credentialising and acculturating the ruling classes to providing technologies and resources for the spread of colonial capitalism, racism and apartheid. Moreover, (senior) academics are complicit in ushering in and sustaining the current system: not only through gaming it as we did in CURA, or failing to resist it, as we also tried to do in CURA, but also through direct collusion. In 2000, the university teachers' union (at that time the Association of University Teachers) carried out an informal survey of its members' experiences of managerialism within their institutions, and the responses told a similar story of staff representative bodies ceding power to officers. For example: 'About 12 years ago the … senate voted away its decision-making authority by carrying a motion put by the university officers that decisions made by them did not have to be ratified by the senate'.[17] Those turkeys voted for Christmas, and they were not the only ones.

The history and cultures of academia give us no confidence that, if it did miraculously occur, a restoration of professional power would result in neoliberal managerialism being supplanted by an authentic progressivism. Neoliberal managerialism still flourishes at institutions that have putatively sovereign staff bodies - which can often be subverted through pacification and selective incentives; not to mention through the framing of self-interest by individualised academics. Academia is a house divided across disciplines and hierarchies; and these divisions are reflected in decisions about joining a union or taking industrial action.

Even as the cultural capital deriving from the profession evaporates, internal

hierarchies widen. The gap between the precarity of the early-career gig-economy lecturer and the privilege of an elite, if culturally deprivileged, professor has never been greater. The individualisation of academic labour also makes it difficult to conceive of 'the profession' as a singular or unified entity, let alone one capable of driving a new vision for intellectual labour. Nadena Doharty and her colleagues put it bluntly: academics are 'among the most conservative, ineffectual and disorganised of workforces'.[18] Moreover, as Kehinde Andrews has noted, the concept of the university as the 'incubator of progressive and critical thought' is 'a dangerous myth'.[19] Notwithstanding neoliberal managerialism: 'What fool does not understand that state-funded institutions are unwilling to support and fund the work of revolutionary movements or to promote ideas that propose their own demise'?[20] Academic conservatism, together with the crude metrics and sophistry of neoliberal managerialism, can appear to be an overwhelming force, but it is ultimately underpinned by the state and the raw coercive powers invested in state and managerial elites. As Hobbes famously said, 'clubs are trumps'. Nostalgia for the halcyon days of 'the university' provides no basis for renewal. Something altogether more radical must be considered, if that which is of value in intellectuality is to be salvaged.

We suggest that the task ultimately requires the negation, not only of neoliberal managerialism but also of professionalism. In a sense it requires academics, especially those who believe they are secure, to embrace the consequences of downward economic, social and cultural mobility and commit to a worker identity and the principles of solidarity it can conjure. The Association of University Teachers was formed in 1909, with two missions in tension with one another: that of a trade union organisation to improve material conditions; and, should this be achieved, a subsequent focus on educational matters. The latter ambition has been on hold for more than a century. The trade union aspect has become ever more prominent, and in the past twenty-five years industrial action has been frequent, sustained and increasingly bitter. The formation of UCU in 2006 heralded a period of intensification in trade union activity, as political and managerial attacks on universities gathered momentum.[21] One challenge to academia, then, is to acknowledge the futility of the professionalist aspirations of AUT founder Douglas Laurie, and to wholeheartedly embrace worker organisation.

The barriers to such a conscious culture shift across a hierarchical, segmented

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and atomised social field are formidable. Current struggles over pay, conditions and pensions in UK Higher Education have highlighted the determination of vice-chancellors, having vanquished the profession, to smash trade unionism altogether. We suggest that de-professionalisation is going to continue whatever happens: either through the inexorable state-management offensive, or as a purposeful strategic orientation by university staff, towards a critique and repudiation of any cultural practices that inhibit full-blooded struggle.

While this might seem like an abstraction from everyday concerns, we suggest that explicitly abandoning the consolations of professionalism could help academics refocus and reinforce common ground with others: our own precariously under-employed colleagues and other unions in equal measure. Erin Bartram, a US-based historian, made a similar point (incidentally reminding us that these are global questions).[22] She noted how, faced with existential threat during the pandemic, many tenured historians were 'able to recognize themselves as workers' for the first time, and sought solidarity from the very adjuncts [untenured staff] to whom they had long refused it. Bartram concluded that if the study of history is to be saved at all, it will have to be saved for everyone. Safety, today, is otherwise a delusion.

A crucial aspect of this new focus is for UCU to forge solidarity with students and other campus unions.[23] Alas, the practical capacity of the National Union of Students (NUS) to mobilise has never seemed weaker than during the thirteen years since the last great student protests of 2010. Its presence in national politics is negligible. On campuses, staff-student dialogue - what academics are allowed to say about employers and educational issues in class - is heavily policed.

Nevertheless, there are affinities between the alienation of academic and student labour, which bely the reactionary framing of students as 'customers'. In its 2020 education policy, the NUS comments: 'Despite the incredible work done by the student movement and our allies, the system is now running itself into the ground: just like any other market, it is heading for a crash. The mental health crisis, the housing crisis and the cost-of-living crisis: these are not just headlines, they're our daily lives'.[24] Though neoliberal managerialism seeks to enforce the customer-provider cleavage, and it is not clear what proportion of UK students NUS speaks for, these common and congruent experiences should provide grounds for practical dialogue and solidarity, as they have, at the time of writing, during the UCU Marking and Assessment Boycott (MAB). More could certainly be done by unions, and

local branches, to recognise, accentuate and build on these shared experiences, particularly considering the ongoing MAB that has directly impacted on the ability of many students to graduate with completed degrees.

Politically, the language employed by UCU General Secretary Jo Grady, a working-class woman from a mining family, resonates with the idea of opening a closed, segmented and class-bound profession to working-class academics and working-class politics. Speaking at the Durham Miners' Gala, Grady said:

> Comrades, right now we're also fighting at the sharp end of the neoliberal assault on education. As arts and humanities courses get slashed up and down England, in another Tory bid to shrink the horizons and crush the aspirations of the working class. Because the ruling class actually do understand the value of education. They understand its power. And let me tell you: they're scared to death of an educated working class.[25]

Like the NUS and UCU, the universities section of UNISON states its vision for higher education in markedly political terms. It expresses concern about the unsustainability of student loans, and anti-working class plans to restrict access. The union believes that education should be free and a right for all. Senior national officer Ruth Levin is quoted on its website, stating that university education 'should not just be the preserve of those who are lucky enough to have parents who can bankroll students through university'.[26]

Critics rightly caution that the espousal of working-class values can sometimes obscure or even legitimise the timidity and conservatism of bureaucratic trade unionists. Like pseudo-progressivism, it can provide radical cover for business-as-usual. Nevertheless, as with de-colonisation, such statements can serve as provocations, overflowing the authors' intentions. At the very least, they suggest that campus unions know that the stakes of today's struggles go far beyond mere pay and conditions, to the heart of what a university is for. Could these parallel diagnoses and tentative affinities herald a more substantial and organic unity than the 'fantasized alliances' that a long time ago produced the social explosions of May 1968, but quickly dissipated in its aftermath?[27] Or will the unions be further weakened by ever-more remote and ruthless vice-chancellors, backed by the UK government and prepared to inflict limitless damage on staff and students in the

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name of 'the market'?

As well as abandoning any nostalgia for the old days, we would go further, to argue that the struggle for intellectual labour within the university is ultimately 'the struggle to abolish the University as an incubator for alienated labour' per se.[28] Put differently, and as intimated earlier, intellectual resources must be democratised and re-situated in the public realm. The purpose of university education is 'social transformation through self-actualization and ontological liberation in knowledge production'.[29] As Richard Hall suggests, the logic of this vision is surely the abolition of 'the university' as a privileged intellectual arena. Again, such a vision may seem far beyond reach. Many difficulties - including overwhelming workloads, the ways in which incentives fall on individuals, and managerial policing - stand in the way of university teachers seeking to connect with public knowledge activity. However, there are many potential actions at a practical level: there is no reason why union branches cannot take up the cause of public education, run public lectures (even professoriates could do this), hold open meetings with other staff unions on common concerns, and support 'people's university' initiatives such as that co-organised by University of Leicester and CURA members in the years before the pandemic. Much of this kind of activity already happens, but it needs massive amplification and radicalisation, perhaps through trade union campaigns.

What is true of education in general, finally, is also true of anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles for the university. The cultural practices of academia have often been no less inegalitarian and pro-colonial than those of neoliberal managerialism. Gurminder K. Bhambra and colleagues have asked how demands to decolonise the university can be related to 'the struggle for a public university'.[30] Collectively addressing these issues requires of us a judicious mix of pessimism of the intellect together with an, admittedly extravagant, optimism of the will. However difficult it might be, finding common cause with fellow campus workers and students, and putting academic labour at the service of workplaces and communities, holds out the promise of a far more authentically de-colonised and liberated university than anything that can ever be achieved by neoliberal managerialism or academic professionalism. It is in everyday practices, as well as through revolutionary insurgencies, that utopias can be made.

Our thanks are due to colleagues who gave us brilliant feedback on an early draft,

Soundings

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Notes

1. From speech by Mario Savio, activist and key member of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement, Berkeley, 2 December 1964.

2. E.g., J.S. Davies, A. Bua, M. Cortina-Oriol and E. Thompson, 'Why is Austerity Governable? A Gramscian Urban Regime Analysis of Leicester', *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Vol 42 No 1, 202, pp56-74.

3. See S. Price, 'UK universities during Covid-19: Catastrophic management, "business continuity" and education workers', in Price and Harbisher (eds), *Power, Media and the Covid-19 Pandemic,* Routledge 2022, pp86-122.

4. M. Davis, 'Who will Build the Ark?', *New Left Review* 61, 2010, pp29-46. p45.

5. E. Lybeck, 'University Management as Court Society: A Processual Analysis of the Rise of University Management', in C. Burke, C. Costa, M. Murphy and R. Raaper (eds), *Social Theory and the Politics of Higher Education: Critical Perspectives on Institutional Research*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020, pp27-44.

6. P. Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, translated by Peter Collier, Stanford University Press 1988, pp163-4.

7. E. Bartram, 'A Profession, if you can Keep it', *Contingent Magazine*, January 2023: https://contingentmagazine.org/2023/01/07/a-profession-if-you-can-keep-it/.

8. L. McCann, E. Granter, P. Hyde and J. Aroles, '"Upon the gears and upon the wheels": Terror convergence and total administration in the neoliberal university', *Management Learning*, Vol 51 No 4, 2020, pp431-451.

9. M.A. Peters, 'Anti-intellectualism is a virus', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol 51 No 4, 2019, pp357-363, p359.

10. Cited in L. Hodges, 'You're Wrong, Mr Clarke', *Independent*, 29 May 2003: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/higher/you-re-wrong-mr-clarke-106663.html.

11. 'The woke brigade have hijacked academia', *Daily Mail Comment*, 10 October 2022.

12. D. Gebrial, 'Rhodes Must Fall: Oxford and Movements for Change', in G. Bhambra, D. Gebrial and K. Nişancıoğlu (eds), *Decolonising the University*, London, Pluto Press 2018, pp19-36.

13. Gebrial, 'Rhodes Must Fall', p30.

14. S. Ali, 'Managing racism? Race equality and decolonial educational futures', *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol 73 No 5, 2022, pp923-941, p923.

15. N. Doharty, M. Madriagab and R.J. Salisbury, 'The university went to "decolonise" and all they brought back was lousy diversity double-speak! Critical race counter-stories from faculty of colour in "decolonial" times', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol 53 No 3, 2021, pp233-244, p241.

16. One striking example of failing to understand equality outside of neoliberal parameters is seen in projects for gender mainstreaming in community environmental programmes in the Global South. In Mexico, Violeta Gutiérrez-Zamora found that one such project directs indigenous and campesina women to 'transform themselves into "productive and entrepreneurial" subjects'. She named this process 'the coloniality of neoliberal bio-politics': V. Gutiérrez-Zamora, 'The coloniality of neoliberal biopolitics: Mainstreaming gender in community forestry in Oaxaca, Mexico', *Geoforum* No 126, 2021, pp139-49.

17. D. Triesman, 'Report of an informal survey of members' views and experiences of managerialism in their institutions': https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/1561/Report-of-an-informal-member-survey-of-managerialism-AUT-May-00/html/ucu_autla6802_managerialism_1.html.

18. Doharty et al, 'The university went to "decolonise"', p22.

19. K. Andrews, 'The Challenge for Black Studies in the Neoliberal University' in Bhambra et al, *Decolonising the University* (see note 12), p138.

20. G. Bhattacharyya, 'How can we live with ourselves? Universities and the attempt to reconcile learning and doing', in K. Murji and G. Bhattacharyya (eds), *Race Critical Public Scholarship*, London, Routledge 2014, pp53-70, p59.

21. UCU was formed through the amalgamation of the AUT and NATFHE (National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education).

22. E. Bartram, 'A Profession, if you can Keep it', *Contingent Magazine*, January 2023: Available online at https://contingentmagazine.org/2023/01/07/a-profession-if-you-can-keep-it/.

23. McCann et al, 'Upon the gears and upon the wheels' (see note 8).

24. https://www.nus.org.uk/education.

25. https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/12409/Speaking-at-the-Durham-Miners-Gala.

26. Statement made on 22.2.22: https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2022/02/unison-slates-government-plans-for-english-university-education/.

27. Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, p164.

28. R. Hall, *The Alienated Academic: The Struggle for Autonomy Inside the University*, London, Palgrave Macmillan 2018, p262.

29. Ali, 'Managing racism?', p937 (see note 14).

30. Bhambra et al, *Decolonising the University*, p6 (see note 19).