

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HIGHER EDUCATION



Caroline Baillie: with contributions from Christopher Beeman, Rita Armstrong, Richard Arnold, Abul Barkat, Liz Beaty, Kumari Beck, Sergio Beltrán, Sean Blenkinsop, Kiado Cruz, Richard JF Day, Kieran Egan, Suki Ekaratne, Gustavo Esteva, John Fazey, Mark Fettes, Maxine Greene, Martin Hodson, Alan Mandell, Laura Piersol, John Reader, Chris Rowland, Chris Rose, Donna Riley, Andrew Rushmere, Stephen Sheely, Yona Sipos, Chris Trevitt, David Woodman, Michael Young

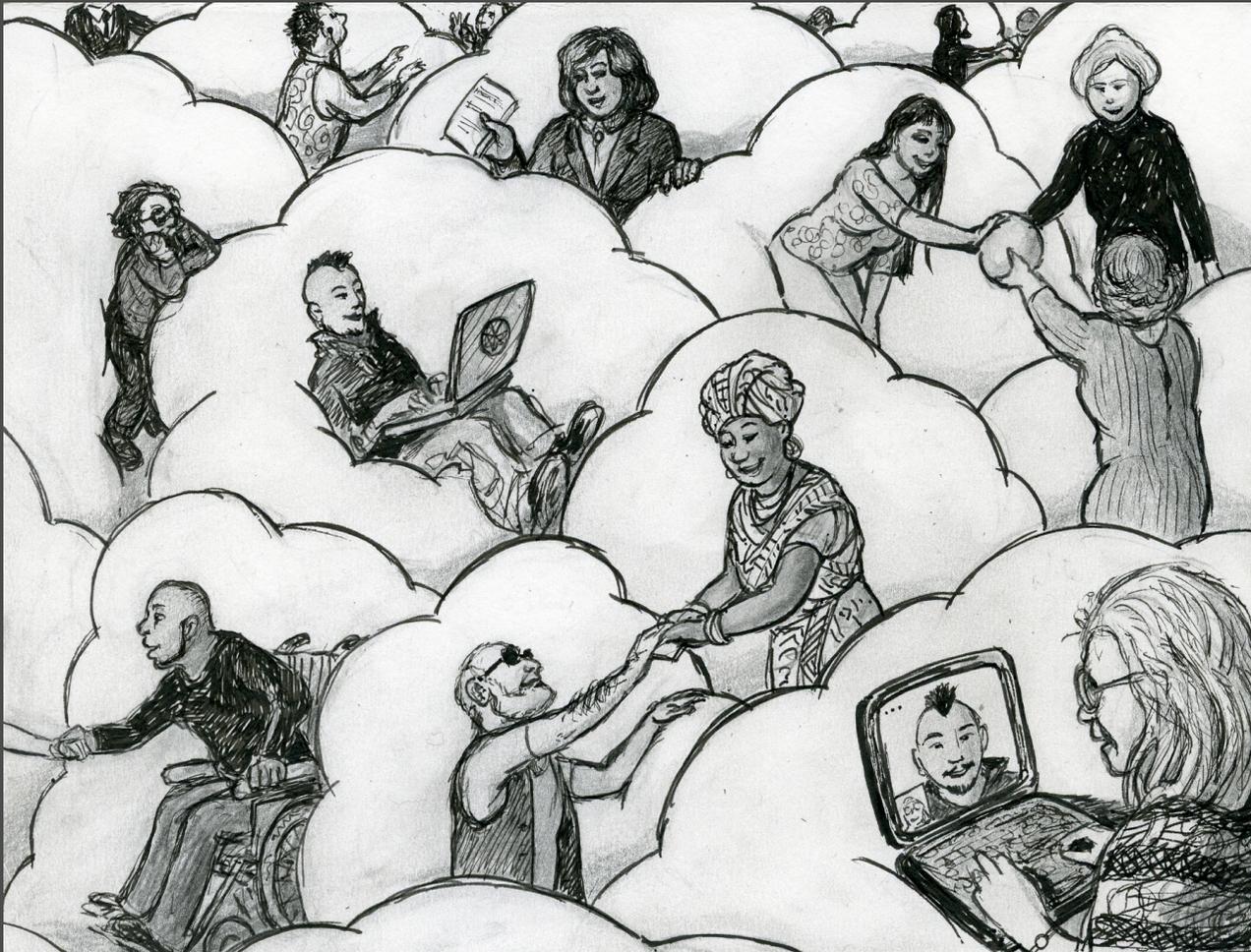
Illustrated by Z*qhygøem

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Note: The words you will read in this short book are verbatim transcriptions of conversations – hence they may contain grammatical errors, such as happens within speech.

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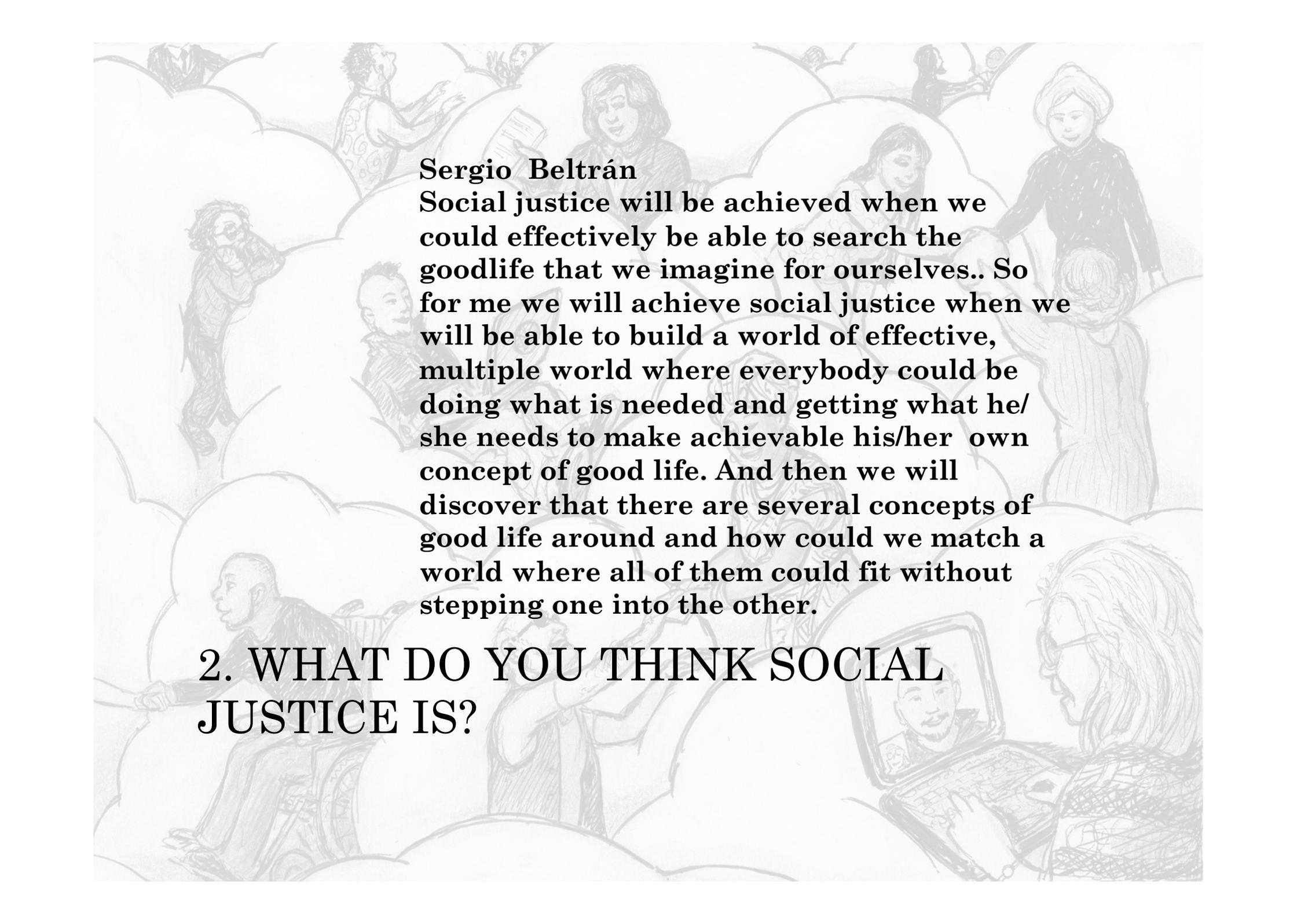
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1. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HIGHER EDUCATION – AN INTRODUCTION

What is the relationship between Higher Education and Social Justice? Is there one? Does HE – of any kind – University, Technical College, Community College etc. promote social justice in society or, rather, does it create social injustice? These troubling questions are the ones we attempt to address in this book. The project began by Chris and I reflecting on our contribution to HE. When we first met, Chris told me he was impressed that I managed to retain my values and be an academic. However, I was not at all sure that was true. If I my life's goal was to enhance social justice in the world, was I in the right place or was I just kidding myself? We decided to explore these questions in more detail by interviewing a range of educators about their views on this topic. As we chose not to define what we meant by social justice the conversations were very rich and diverse. We did not conduct these interviews as a traditional researcher might. The project became more of a long, ongoing conversation. The text is intended to be used to support the advance of social justice in the world. Please use this publication as you wish – just acknowledge the ideas where you can.

1. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HIGHER EDUCATION – AN INTRODUCTION

2. WHAT DO YOU THINK SOCIAL JUSTICE
IS?



Sergio Beltrán
Social justice will be achieved when we could effectively be able to search the goodlife that we imagine for ourselves.. So for me we will achieve social justice when we will be able to build a world of effective, multiple world where everybody could be doing what is needed and getting what he/she needs to make achievable his/her own concept of good life. And then we will discover that there are several concepts of good life around and how could we match a world where all of them could fit without stepping one into the other.

2. WHAT DO YOU THINK SOCIAL JUSTICE IS?

Mark Fettes

Personally, I think of it as being in the business of helping people find ways to make more control over their lives and the futures of their communities. It is for helping people develop a vision of the future that is more hopeful in some way, in which more people have a voice, where more people have freedom to make choices in their lives and where people have the knowledge and skills to make good decisions. Decisions that aren't short sighted and that continue to expand that range of possibility.

Yona Sipos

My first reaction is to couple social justice with environmental justice, or ecological justice..I would definitely create some connection between the way that people are and where people are – the social and environmental.



John Fazey

So when we talk about social injustice.. there is a bandwidth (of tolerance) and provided what is happening is not outwith that tolerance then things will carry on, but if it goes to this side or the other side, it doesn't fall within our boundary, then we might do something about it. I think that whole thing applies to such concepts as social justice because I can see something happening to one person and not feeling that is unjust whilst I can see exactly the same thing happening in another context to a different person and I think - that is not right.

Suki Ekaratn

Am I in control of myself or to what extent am I controlled? So do we need to look at that? We need to have boundaries I think, which you shouldn't sort of overstep so that you in fact do not impinge on other people's rights. But within those boundaries I think there must be chaos so that people can see within this different ways of work rather like in chemistry, physical chemistry, the molecules are all over the place but within boundaries. The moment you go out of that boundary it isn't that form or chemical, or that person. So you need to develop that manageable internal chaos, that is how conversations take place but otherwise we are not allowing conversations and if we do not allow conversations people will remain immobile in their own compartments. We have lots of people, when you speak to them individually, they believe in lots of things they need to do, but they won't do it. They feel chained down, not by his or her beliefs but by other people's. So, there is a scale back of impact, preventing reaching out to that other person, to that other idea you believe is socially just.

Chris Rowland

What I have learned from Liberation theology is that attending to the minute particularities of a particular context is the way into social justice and you could only understand ... and that was the thing that was hammered home to me again and again whenever I saw this grand banner term – liberation theology – what I saw, peasants in the country side, ..or whatever, actually with particular issues which then kind of leads to bigger kind of understandings of how that might kind of relate to bigger national programs. I think that that would be the way in which I would kind of get into social justice. That is what I so like about Marx for example. Marx gets into it through the minute particulars, looking at what is going on in the capitalist economy.

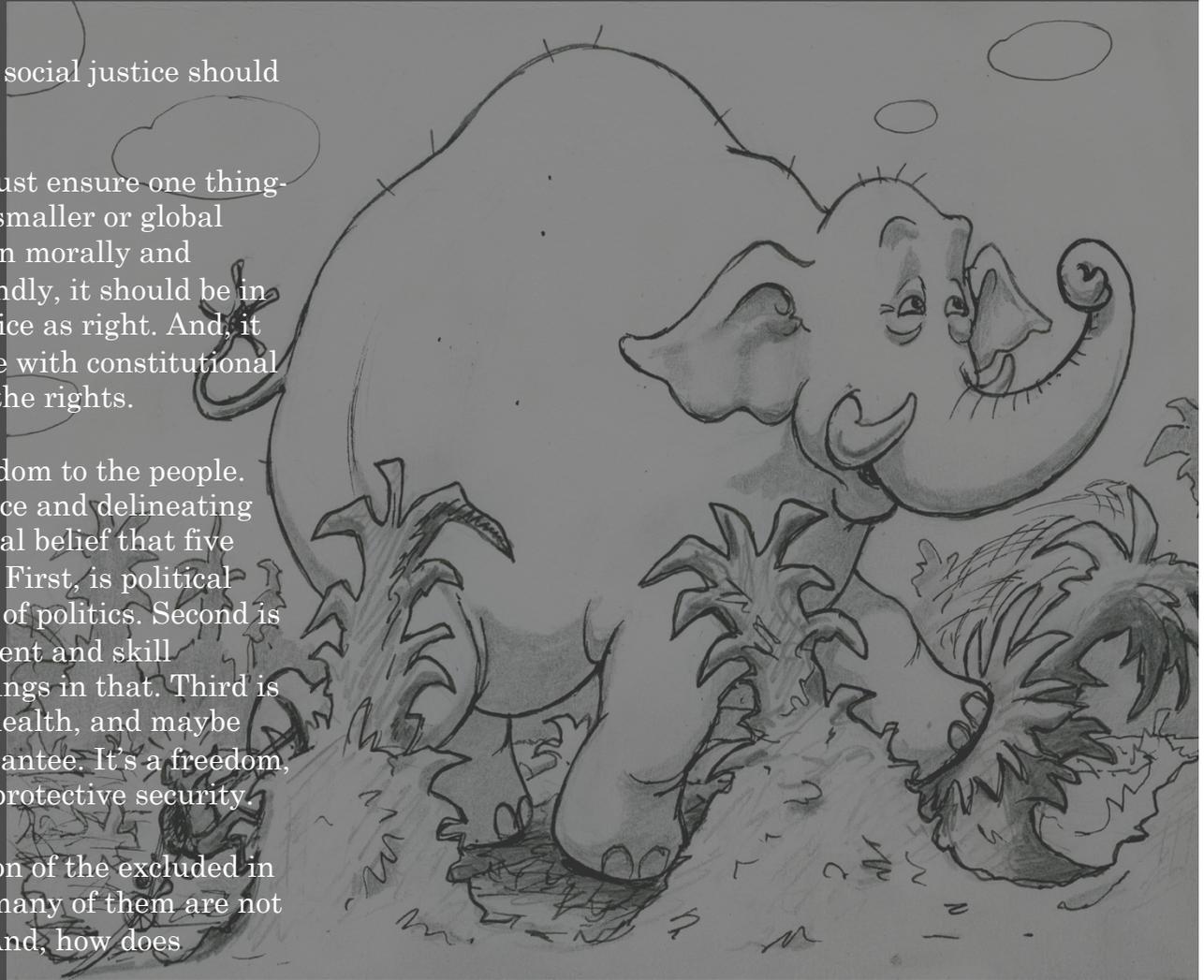
Abul Barkat

I think the definition or understanding of social justice should differ from place to place...

If you want to ensure social justice you must ensure one thing- that people residing in that community - smaller or global community - they view all men and women morally and ethically equal. That is number one. Secondly, it should be in line with constitutional rights. Social justice as right. And it should not only be in line or in congruence with constitutional rights, it should be in line with justice of the rights.

I think social justice means ensuring freedom to the people. Freedom to live life. I think by social justice and delineating freedom with social justice, it's my personal belief that five types of freedom should be ensured to all. First, is political freedom which is participating in making of politics. Second is economic opportunities which is employment and skill development, and then there are other things in that. Third is social opportunities, which is education, health, and maybe other things. Fourth is transparency guarantee. It's a freedom, transparency guarantee. And the fifth is protective security.

Then, I think social justice means inclusion of the excluded in the process of development. I found that many of them are not poor. So, it is basically mindset poverty. And, how does mindset poverty come? I think education.

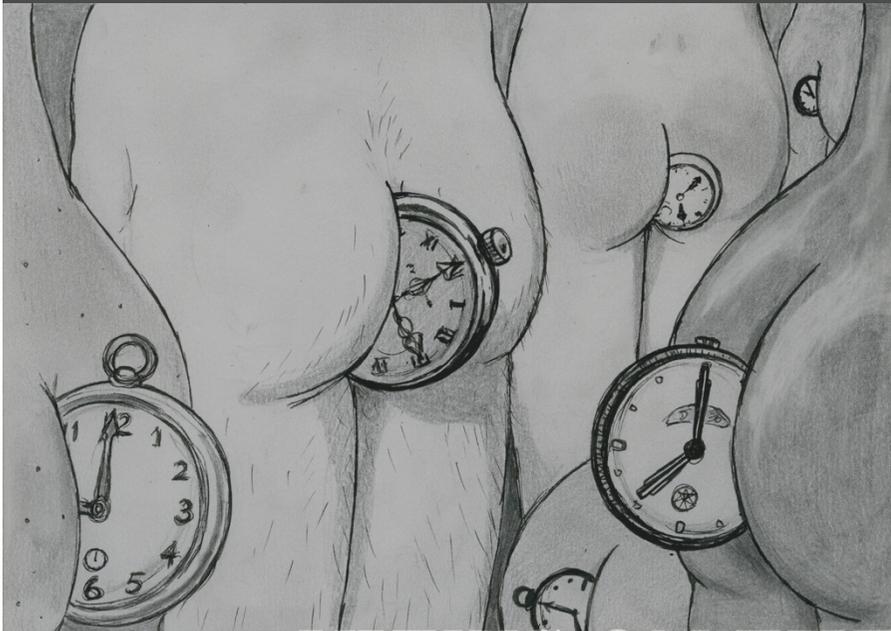


My notes

3. VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP:
IS HIGHER EDUCATION COMPATIBLE
WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Gustavo Esteva

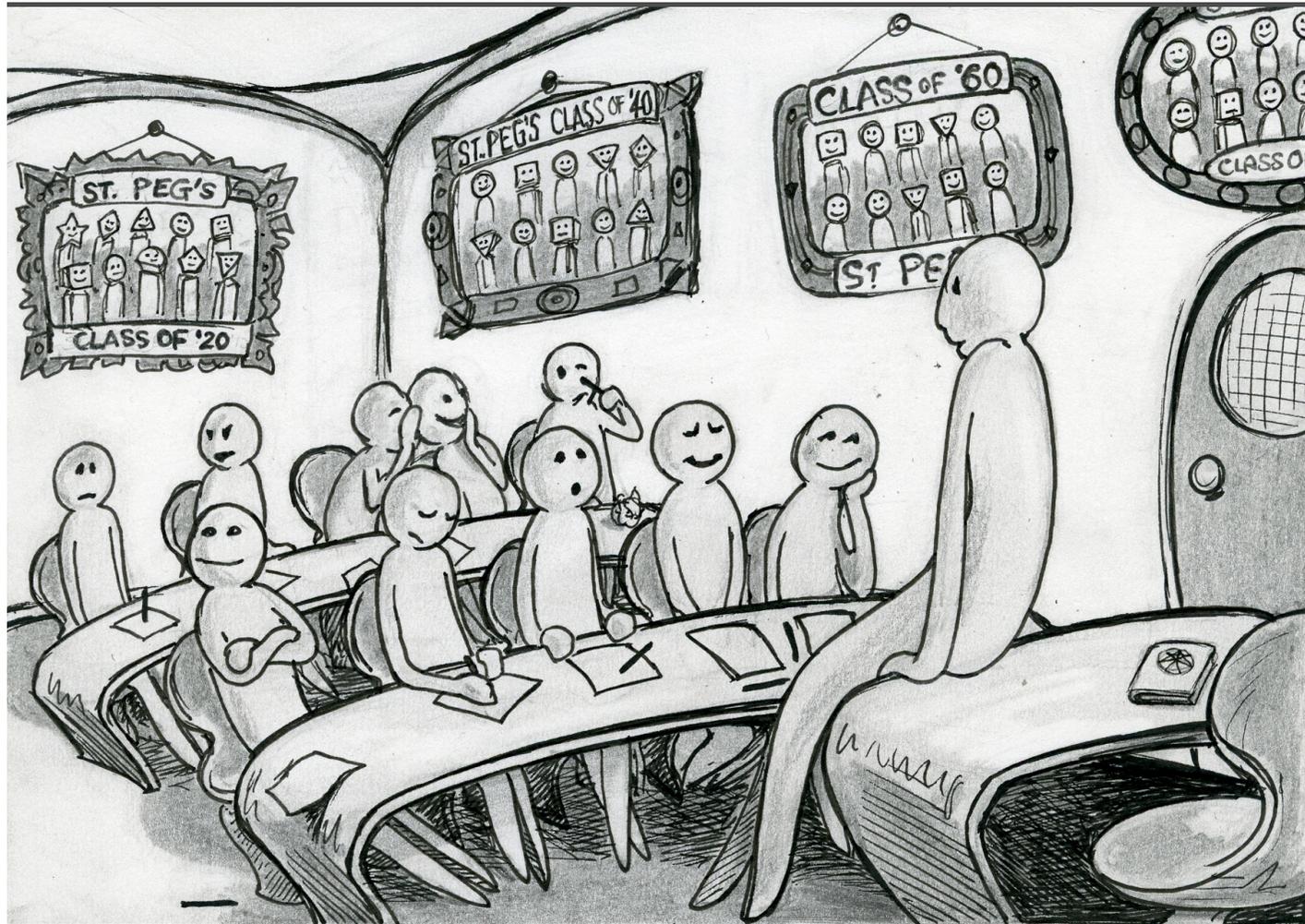
Education is predicated on, is sold to the world in the name of equality. Through education, we all will have the same opportunities and then we will have equality and justice in the world. I think...I am convinced that it produces exactly the opposite. That what it produces is social injustice and aggravates all the inequalities. In fact, what I may dare to say is that what is created through education is the most astonishing and the most general of the all the different inequalities. And all the different class divisions that we have in this society. The main outcome of education is that we have dropouts. That is the main thing. Most people in most societies are uneducated or undereducated because they cannot continue through the whole process of education. Is because of that, they are disqualified, they cannot have access to many things because to have good education with good diplomas is a kind of passport for the modern society. And they are discriminated against all their lives because they do not have these kind of diplomas. Then, my usual position about this is that if we assume the view of those uneducated or undereducated, that is the majority of people on earth the best thing that can happen in the world today for them is to close all the schools on earth. That will create social justice.



Because people know that if you want to learn, a school is not the place. You can learn in many other places, something that you want to learn. But you are in the school to get the diploma. To get the certification. But at the end, this is a very stupid game because at the end, the certification only certifies a certain number of arse hours. The number of hours in which your arse was in a chair. It does not certify any specific competence. You have the diploma of the Harvard law school, that does not mean you are a good lawyer.

3. VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP: IS HIGHER EDUCATION COMPATIBLE WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE?

3.1 HE creates social injustice

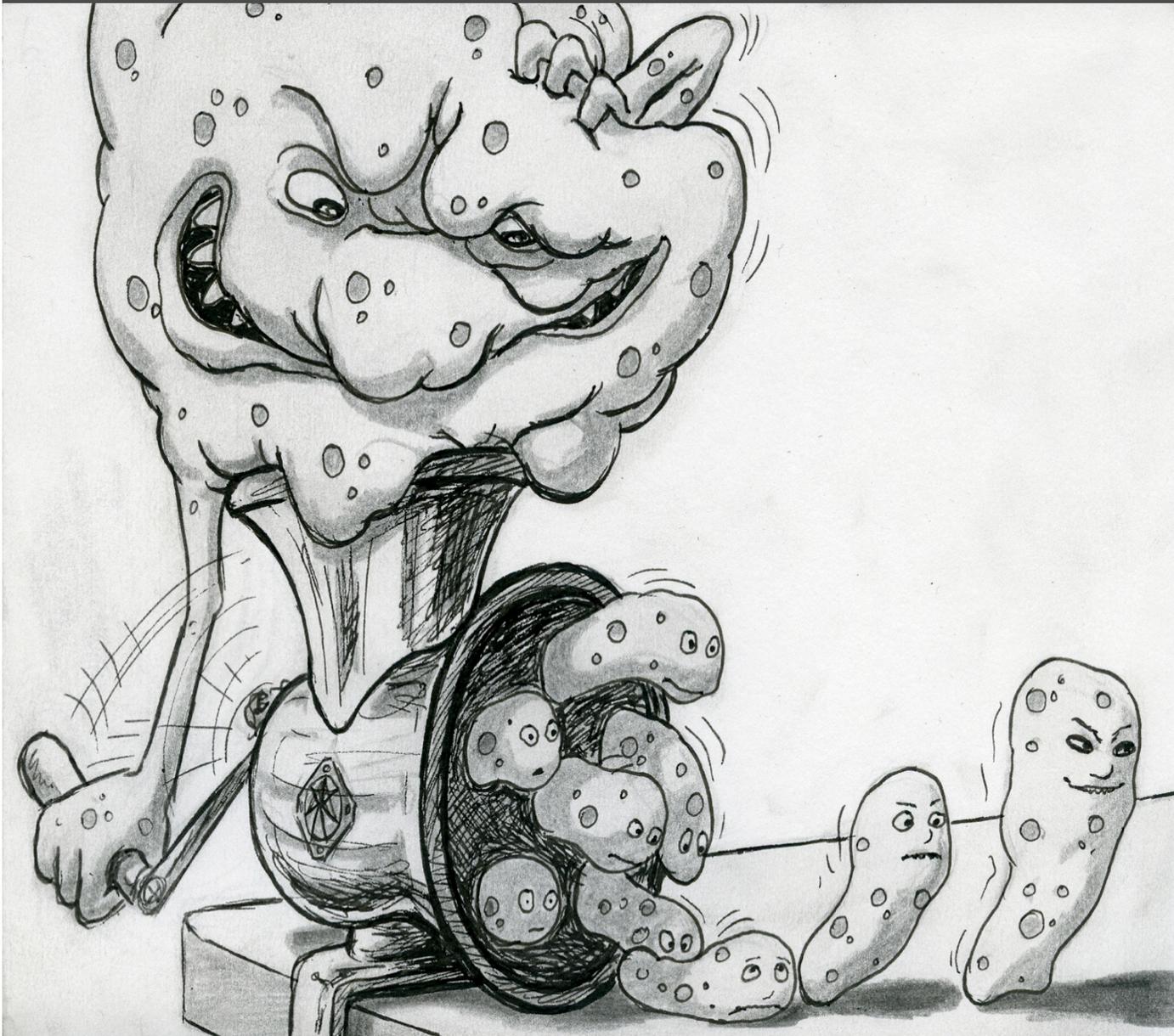


Gustavo Esteva
This is historically correct; in the 19th century, the idea was literally to destroy the indigenous people. And when they were saying, 'we must do what the Americans are doing'...killing them...in Mexico there were too many, and we had very enlightened leaders that say 'no no, we must not kill them, there must not be a genocide, we must educate them'. But to educate them is to educate them into extinction...for them to cease to be Indigenous, to become regular Mexicans. That is the story around the world, of course.

Abul Barkat

I see these places as a very elite place. It is a place of huge privilege only for people who can afford it..I don't think that elitist English education solves the problems of the nation. English elitist medium education, those who do good through that education system, I think they become part of brain drain from their own country to other countries...

3.2. Higher Education replicates or occurs within the dominant discourse



Gustavo Esteva

The idea of education for all and the same education for all is completely absurd. It has no meaning. It is one of the most foolish ideas that humankind could have, ever. If you think that the same curricula is now used for a child in New York and in Pueblos Mancomunados in Sierra Norte - the same curricula, and they are trying to teach the same things to these (guys) - this is absolutely foolish.



Gustavo Esteva

Well first of all, I think, actually I am convinced that education was conceived and designed and implemented with a specific purpose. And that purpose was not the purpose of justice. First of all I am convinced that it was born with capitalism and the purpose is to prepare a labour force to prepare workers. Of course I can conceive, I can imagine, that there are some students in higher education that learn in that place something about becoming critical of the system, etc. But most of the time, it is really against all odds, because the whole system is prepared for the opposite. If we learn, basically, by doing, by practicing, by learning with some people who know how to do what we want to learn, how the people can learn, in the university, with whom they will learn, if the people in the university must be teachers basically there to reproduce the system, not to destroy the system, not to challenge the system. When Marx says, 'Who educates the educators?' Well, it is a rhetorical question because we know the answer. It is the system which educates the educators. And for the purpose of the reproduction of the system. The basic role of educators is to reproduce the system. How the students will learn in any place to challenge the system? Of course, the universities can invite from time to time - Ivan Illich talked in universities all the time, a seminar, a lecture here and there, but it is just to create an illusion that you are very open. Because in a university you have, even a person like Illich, cannot really transform the mentality of the students. Sometime, someone like Illich comes to the university and there is one student there -- that's it! He abandons the university or whatever? because, just seeing Illich, he discovers that. The idea of education for all and the same education for all is completely absurd. It has no meaning. It is one of the most foolish ideas that humankind could have, ever. If you think that the same curricula is now used for a child in New York and in Pueblos Mancomunados in Sierra Norte - the same curricula, and they are trying to teach the same things to these (guys) - this is absolutely foolish.

Z*qhygøem

Who is funding educational institutions? What are their interests and investments? Do they have a commercial, political or religious standpoint? Do they have biases or prejudices of any kind? How non-involved are their opinions? How neutral are their decisions? Are they providing education that is open to all or are they preventing some things from happening? And what exactly is being taught? If it only follows the populist point of view it limits how much it can expand on itself. It is that which lies beyond or outside the populist that pushes our learning, intelligence and understanding. It must be addressed and included.

Z*qhygøem

It (HE) might need to be completely dismantled and restructured. Whilst doing my 'A' levels, I decided not to sit the exams because I realized I was doing them for the wrong reasons: that I was in education for the sake of collecting qualifications. I felt I could easily get caught up in doing so, with the collection becoming the goal in itself. This wasn't what I'd intended. I wanted to create, not just win pieces of paper to justify and authenticate my creativity by someone else's standards. I needed to find my own way, not be churned out as a product of an institution with its own stamp and possibly its own agenda.

I've since spoken to people who went to art school and they told me they *did* feel there was a market for which they were being moulded and channelled and that when their original ideas didn't fit into this model they were often crushed and discarded. The creative process shouldn't be limited by fashion or convention.



Lewis Elton

The business model is completely inappropriate to universities because however you think university runs, their time scales are quite different. It is the norm that the outcome of the services do not appear for 10 or 20 years. Students have to mature and become important people in society, that takes 20 years. So we are talking about a business that doesn't work. I think that one of the things that is happening, that has actually had a strong effect on social justice is that universities are being treated as if they are just like businesses, and they can't be.

Abul Barkat

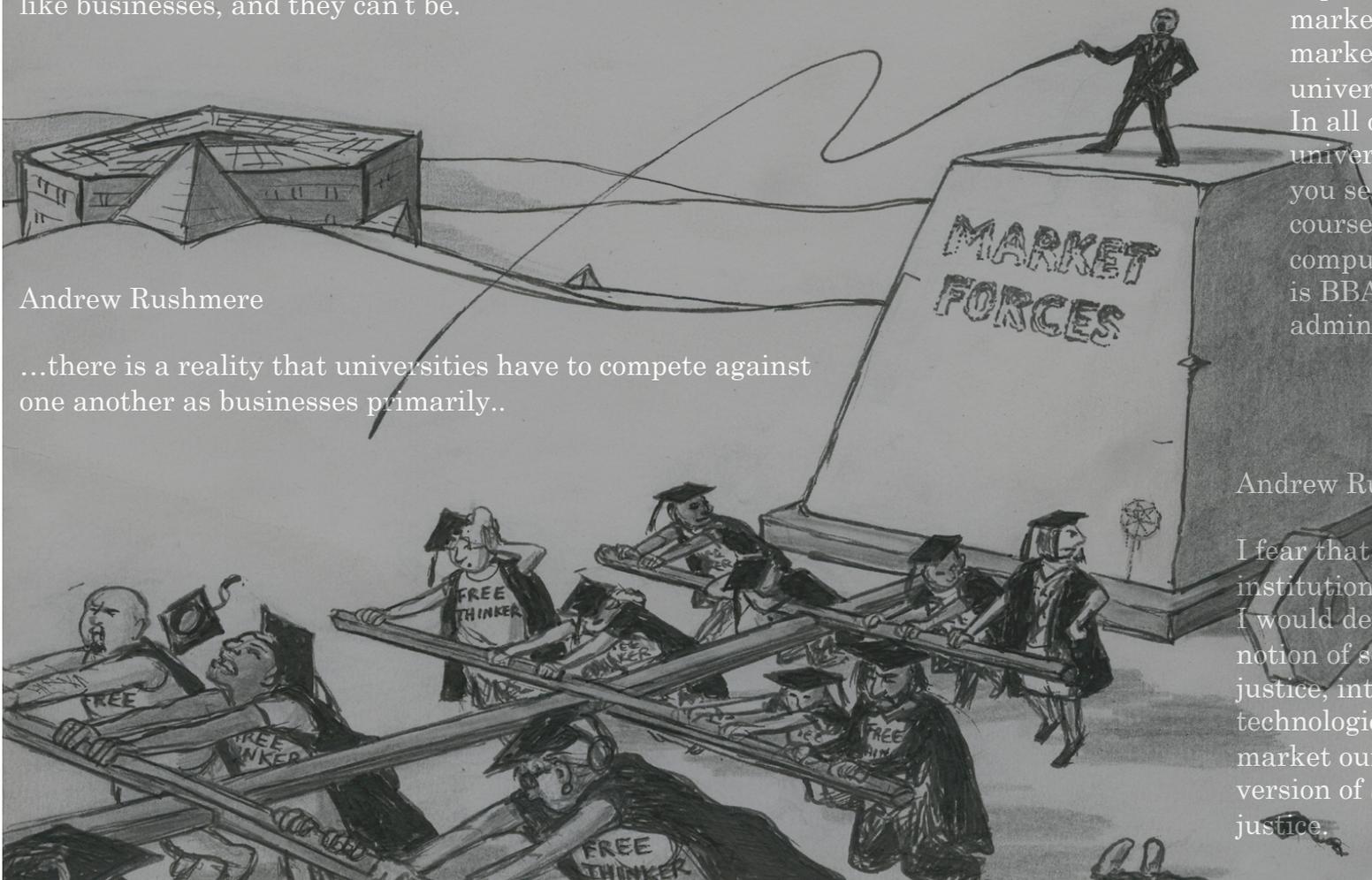
What is the purpose of higher education in Bangladesh? Or in Canada? Or in USA? The whole purpose of higher education is just market. Therefore, whoever is going through which department of faculty depends on what is the market. What is the future market? We have 52 private universities in Bangladesh. In all of the private universities in those cities, you see there are two courses, departments – one is computer science, the other is BBA (business administration).

Andrew Rushmere

...there is a reality that universities have to compete against one another as businesses primarily..

Andrew Rushmere

I fear that often higher education institutions twist that more, what I would describe as grass roots notion of social and ecological justice, into a well funded, highly technologic, glossy, shiny, 'we can market ourselves to the world' version of social and ecological justice.



Helen Cameron

I think the commodification and bureaucratization of higher education make it extremely difficult because I think there is now a precept position that higher education is a commodity. It needs to be run at a higher price and academics are constantly having to juggle the amounts of effort they are having to put in to the work they are doing so really most people have a work load which if done conscientiously would be more than they could manage so the pressure is always for academics to be judging their level of engagement....

Class size as one issue, work load, but also it is the way in which the institution is driven to see the student as a consumer and the student is made to be and not really wanting to talk about what the ideology might be behind the product... parents and so on are now having to pay or students having to get into debt. There is a much greater interest both in the part of students and parents, on the peripherals, like: Is the accommodation nice? Is the food nice? Will my child be safe, will they meet nicer people, and will they come out with a degree that is recognizable, what are the employment rates in the program? So those things are becoming of much greater interest than the educational process which I think is still seen by most people and parents as a sort of black box. You sort of plug into it at one end and come out of it another but there are a lot of mysteries about what are going on in the black box.

Chris Rose

What is happening in universities now is that people are believing in systems of a kind, very dominant, so people who believe in the systemization of a process are becoming very influential, that way of thinking is spreading outwards...so there is this strong belief that everything the teacher does can be somehow codified and abstracted and the teacher only becomes something to do with the point of delivery and the system is owned corporately, that kind of idea... I can foresee a time when the individual experience of the world is 100% mediated by commercial concerns. I think that is something to be afraid of. ... The conventional thing about trying to do important things in one's life, and trying to be spiritually right on, is that we mustn't be materialistic. Unfortunately there is an impossible paradox in that because our senses work with the material world....everything that we are is constructed with interacting with the material world...



John Fazey

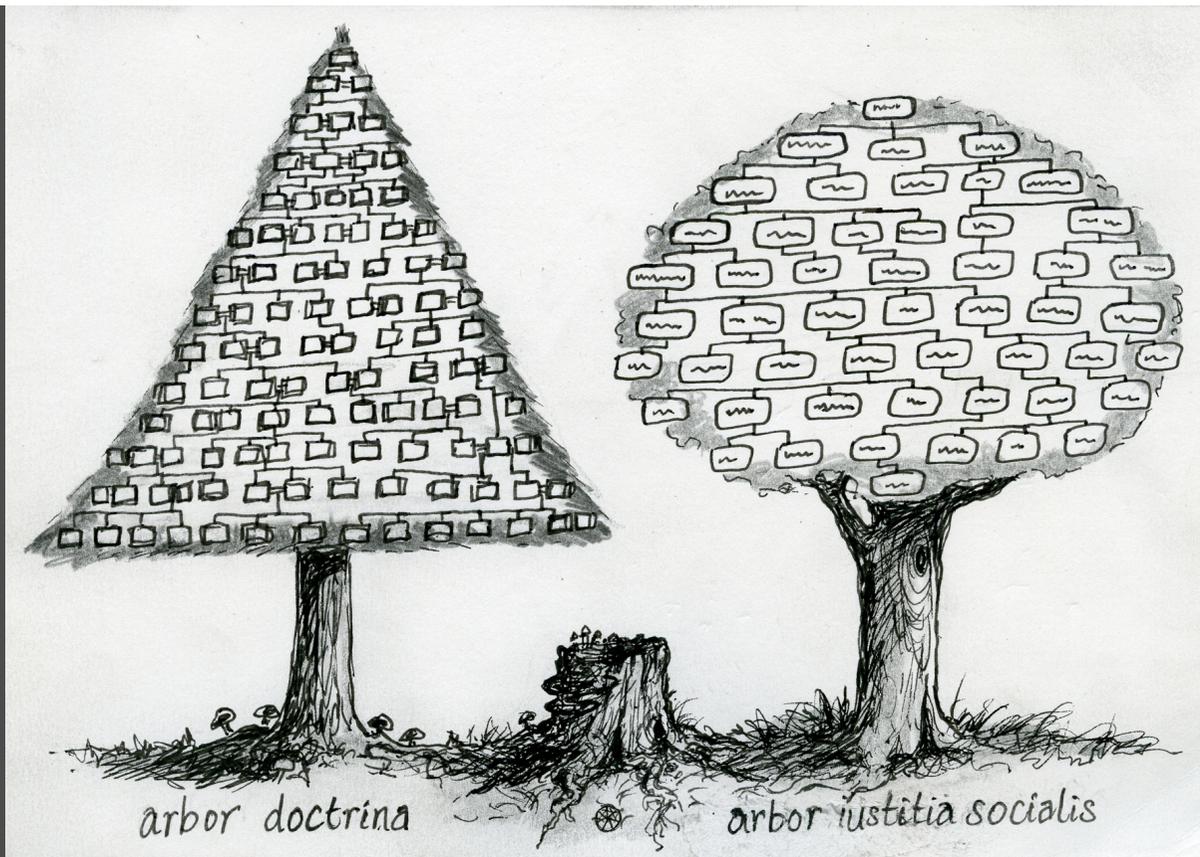
..In the '80s and '90s universities had to become businesses. So the business habit of making profit is what drives British universities and their funding now. So you have to go out, everybody has to go out, and find their own salary and that's, I think, a direct consequence of not thinking in the 1970's. People can't take a teaching job in university as an academic and expect to stay there forever unless they also bring in some research money. And if you go back in the history of the universities that was only the case when paradoxically there was a move towards 'massification' to open up universities to more and more people. Governments said this is a social agenda – you have got to open up the universities so more people can benefit. And then they go on that they are going to need money, so how can we get universities to turn what they do into a revenue source. The only way we can turn what universities are doing into a revenue source is if you don't allow it to be pushed out for free access. So everything has to be commoditized, everything has to be made into something we produce that someone will pay us for and that includes the initial start of undergraduates coming in. In the UK we now have fees, don't have the same fees in Wales or Scotland, but that won't last for long because the universities are screaming that they don't have enough money to pay for staff. Governments will turn around and say that it doesn't come out of the public purse, it has got to come out of your own income.

Michael Young

There is, I guess, my own axe to grind, is using the university degree to get something. How many people have come up to me when I was at the college – what will this credential get me? I don't know! A headache, some debt...but that kind of utilitarian mentality is completely detached from what the attention might have been. It is not about what it gets people it is more about how it gets all of us further ahead.

Kumari Beck

I don't think there is a conscious attempt to do and think through important questions (like what our education is meant to serve) because I think higher education is now much more scarily attuned to a so-called economic reality. And so even the little germs or sparks of inquiry that higher education is kind of meant to spark are I think being dissipated, going nowhere, because there is no conscious effort to stop and look at the situation and think through these things. Are we, for example, aligning our inquiry towards creating the kind of society and communities that support human well being? We are being heavily shaped by whatever else is going on outside, and this is how we get diverted from things that we are concerned about (like social justice).



Kieran Egan

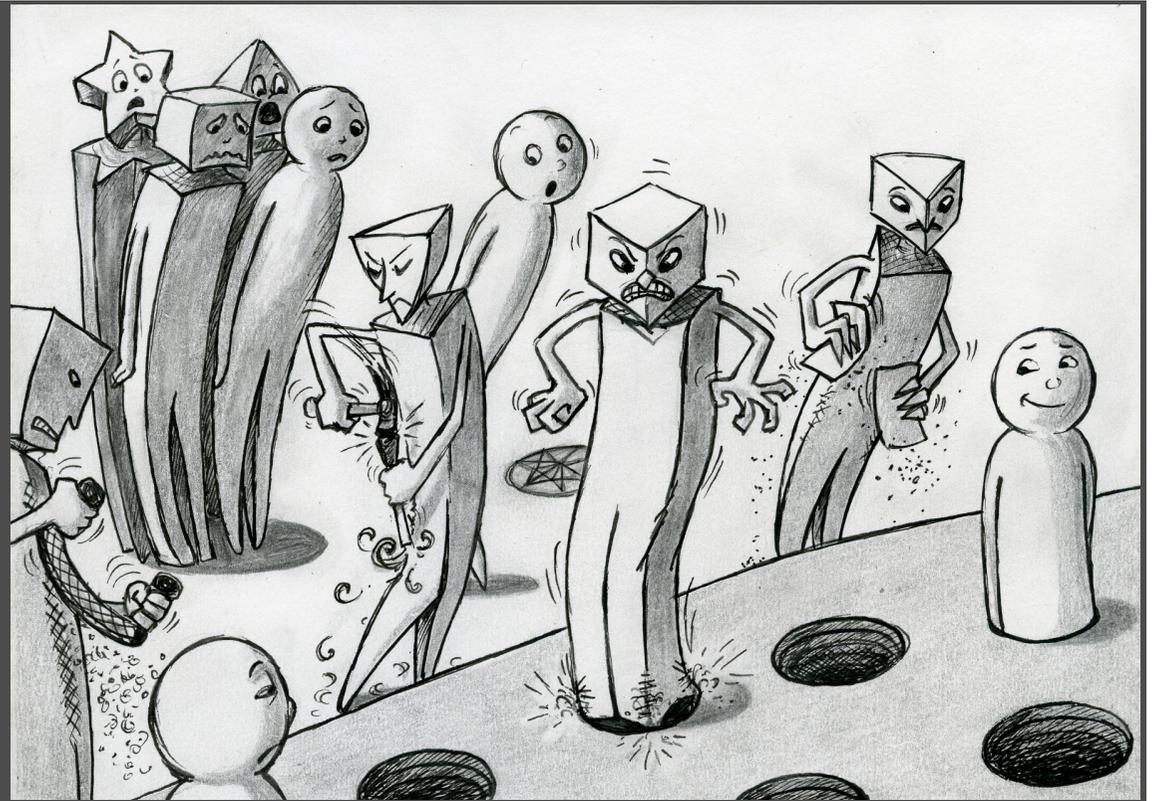
When bright people come into a higher education institution they discover that their rights mean nothing much. What matters is how clever or clear they are and that is only in terms of other people's view of what counts as clever and clear. It is not a very easy institution to think about, it seems to me, in terms of social justice. Social justice is not one of the rules that it runs by except incidentally. But there is something fundamentally unjust in some way about higher education institutions because they have allegiance to ideals of truth, knowledge, whatever, despite Housman's observation that the pursuit of truth is the faintest of all human passions.

Abul Barkat

So, my point is, there is no logical relationship between education and social justice. For example, in Saudi Arabia, one country, the literacy rate is almost 100%. How much social justice is there? This is one side of the coin, no relationship. The other side, there is high positive relationship, positive, linear - depends on what is the purpose of education in that country

My notes

4. VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP:
ARE THERE WAYS THAT HIGHER
EDUCATION COULD BE REFORMED TO
INCREASE COMPATIBILITY WITH SOCIAL
JUSTICE?

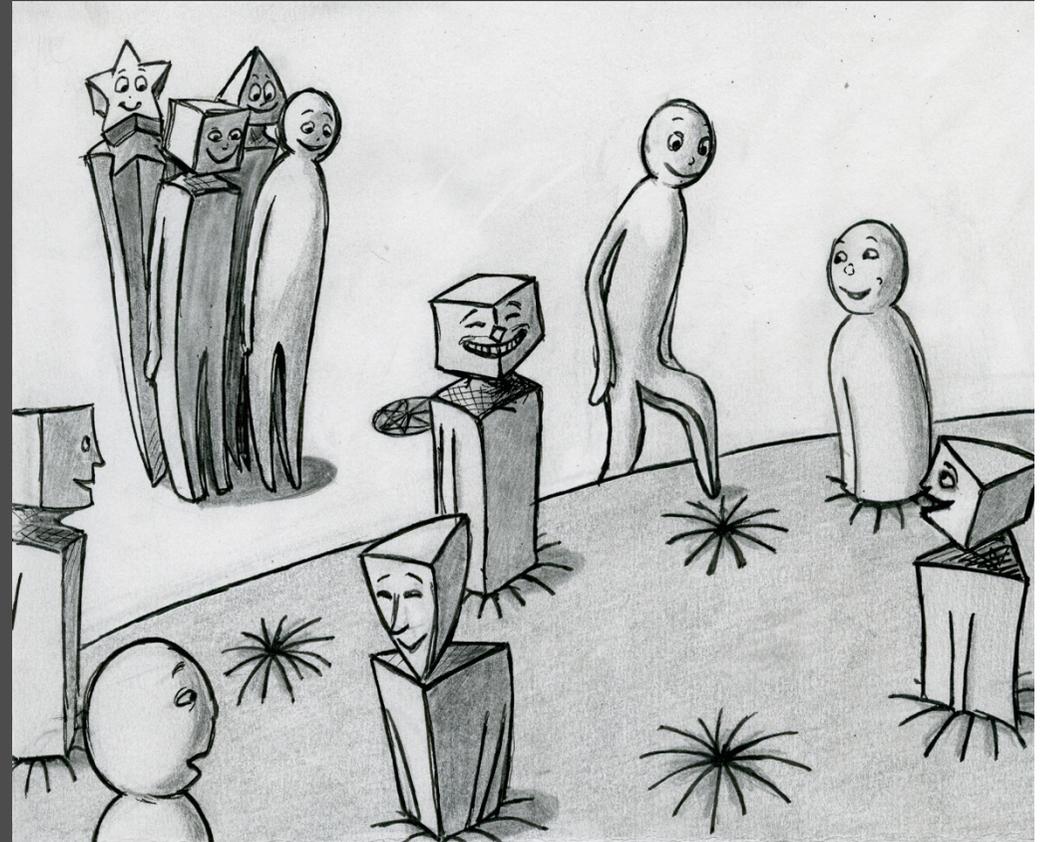


4. VIEWS ON THE
RELATIONSHIP:
ARE THERE WAYS THAT
HIGHER EDUCATION
COULD BE REFORMED TO
INCREASE COMPATIBILITY
WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Stephen Sheely

There is an awful lot that could be done, all that we could talk about in terms of smoothing the transition of students who are not traditionally in cohorts that go to universities, there is actually a lot of things we could do to smooth the transition of students who are in cohorts that traditionally go to universities that we aren't doing anyway. You increase accessibility through the online environment in two ways. You enable students who could not normally get to campus to participate, it is the same thing, but it may be students who can't get to campus because of distance but it may also be students who can't get to campus because of life commitments – so people who are raising children, people who have a full time job. So it might just be that the student is 600 miles away, that they just couldn't get to campus but it could be that they are working 8 hours a day, or 10 hours a day, or they are a single Mum who can't afford a baby sitter or this sort of thing. So done properly e-learning can facilitate all of these people some degree of access to the tertiary learning experience.

4.1 Accessibility



Maxine Greene

We are all very proud of the idea of meritocracy – you don't grow up in the world because you had a rich father – people forget that if you grew up in a house with no toys and no radio – that's no equality – education has a hard time begin fair, being just.

Martin Hodson

For many years the 'better' universities in the UK have been desperately trying to increase numbers from state schools but it is not easy. I was an admissions tutor at our university, and we were trying very hard to do it. The problem was that the admissions system was so set up that it was weighted strongly towards the private schools who were much more efficient and had more money and so they would be the schools that would get their kids to do their application forms early, get them in to the universities early, and so they get processed early. Some of the state schools were just not efficient enough and ended up having their kids put in forms much later at which point some of the subjects were full or nearly so. We did keep some places in reserve for good later applicants to try to get around this, but it was only partially successful. The large increase in fees that is coming in from 2011 will almost certainly favour applicants from better off families and from private schools unless very substantial bursary schemes are brought as a counter measure.

Helen Cameron

Working in an Anglican theological college, there is a huge concern about what qualifications students are going to get so pushing them through some kind of award bearing program and then that means you are then at the hand of the validation of the program, where the emphasizes are and what needs to be covered and it also means that students, their learning, tends to be assessment driven...And while they work very well together [for some things], the actual task of learning is not seen as a collaborative task. I think that is not a very good preparation for what it is like to be in parish ministry where learning that goes on is collaborative learning.

Michael Young

The team work element is a big part of that that they have to demonstrate; it is the ability to work in a team even when things don't work that well for them and that is probably one of the biggest bones of contention that we get in that context of grades because they want to go to grad school, law school, or whatever. That competitive element is always in the background lurking. It impinges what they do probably on a regular basis. But we work around this anyway. Sometimes it is a matter of, becoming counselors, for example, convincing people that the path they are on is the right one, pointing out the reasons why they have succeeded, showing them how teamwork benefits them and what they have done so far. They see why they have succeeded and how they might take those skills into the workforce - it is nothing but a bonus for them.

Helen Cameron

It is about interdisciplinary, about an integrative way of teaching, team teaching, staff and students together forming a learning community and therefore each having things to learn from each other and working in a non-directive way. ... peoples own way of working, not imposing a particular way of working. Those are some of the things about how students and the way in which hopefully, well actually I think it does come with a set of expectations which means that we very quickly form them into a learning community and get working in that way quite quickly.

4.2 Reconceptualising Education

4.2.1 Working together

Laura Piersol

I think it is important that students feel that they are participating in creating these ways of learning, and have a sense that the teacher is learning along with them. I think that for students to feel like they are contributing to this sense of greater meaning is really valuable

Michael Young

I think one of the areas of interests for me over the past, and one that has been put back into my repertoire of teaching and learning now, is the notion of communitarian priority. I see a very nice fit between social justice and communitarian thought. If we can add the term praxis to it, if we can actually make something of it, and I believe that is what we have attempted with a therapeutic community, that that is what a therapeutic community is all about – building a community within a community. This is an effective way to enfold the people who are basically on the outside, although they live amongst us on a daily basis.

Alan Mandell

Part of what social justice education--or, bottom line, any meaningful learning--has to do is Freire-inspired: one has to research, create, and continue to experiment with resources and strategies that are based on and relevant to the experiences of those with whom one is working. Obsession with the manufacture and use of pre-set materials (as elegant as they might be; as full of the knowledge-of-the-day as they might be) will often not even touch the ideas, feelings and questions (often burning ones) of the learners themselves. How can we stay alert to the richness and complexity of these experiences and create learning opportunities built upon them? This is certainly one of our ongoing and difficult challenges.

Laura Pearson

What I envision as bringing social justice into higher education, I see it as a way students have access to not only participating but creating experiential ways of learning that are embodied and that are part of a larger web of interconnection that people call community. So that, in these learning experiences you are always aware of and appreciating in a total physical sense that you are part of a larger whole.

Yona Sipos

There is this core curriculum that goes through first to fourth year called *Land, Food, and Community* where the students come together, required courses, they work in teams. We try to create these teams that are a mix of the students from all the programs and they work on community based research and participating in community service learning. . Working on complex and really messy problems with people ...I started to study plants, and I switched to people, and I thought they won't stay in one place, they talk back, there are all these things about people that are way more complex than studying plants I think. Way more difficult but I think that if we are not providing opportunities for students – undergrads and grads, and the entire community of learners at universities – to actually engage in these real world problems we are doing a great disservice to both people coming out of universities and to the communities that support them.

Mark Fettes

Cultural activities that are intended to be inclusive, intended to put kids in touch with their aboriginal ancestry or put the oldest students in the school a taste of aboriginal culture are reduced to one day, it might be a field trip, it might be a drum making activity, it could be any number of things but the underlying message of all of those is that aboriginal culture is a kind of marginal thing that is interesting and worthwhile if you like that kind of thing but it really has much of the same kind of status as collecting stamps used to be or whatever. ..Absolutely, I think there are still large places for student development, but I also think it needs to be balanced with practical action. I don't think you can go into a community and study them to death and then leave them and leave it at that. I think there needs to be this, because that involves the community, a huge giving on their part as well. There needs to be a balance between working with the community to achieve what the academic side is looking to do and then also balancing that with practical action and actually working with communities to give the their accounts. So that is a good example of Indigenous communities - where they are at the point now where if people are not willing to... they are looking at it from: 'what we can them..give to a community?' before we go in, rather than just studying them to death.

David Woodman

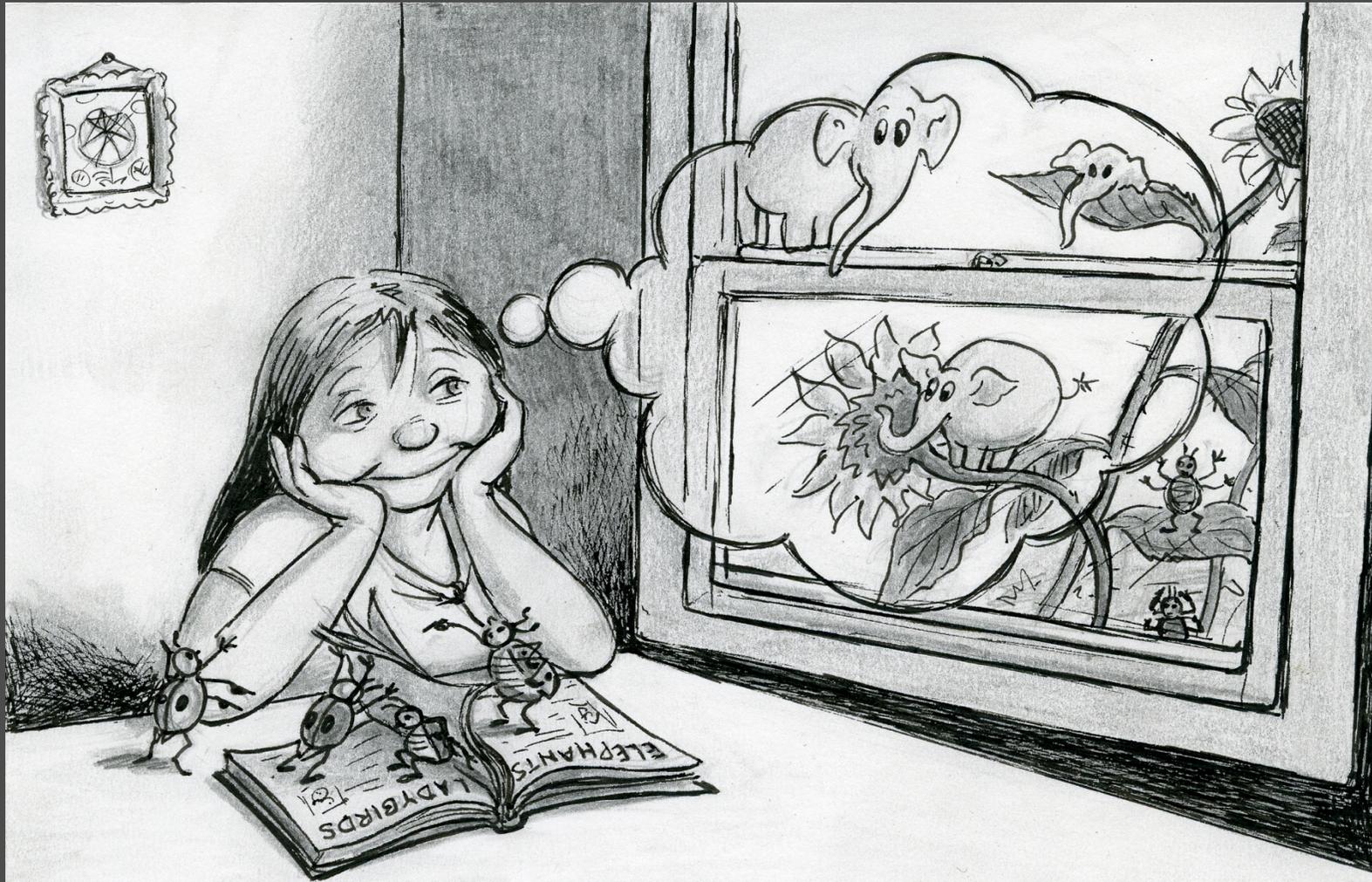
Social justice for me, from the perspective of the university, is involving community engagement and engagement through research, engagement through teaching, and engagement through arrangement of activities that seek to bring benefit to the local community, staff, and the students.

Chris Rowland

The last time I was in Brazil, what was very striking was that a couple of institutions that I went to had as part of their mission statement demonstration that research actually had value, relevance, connection to the lives of ordinary people in the locality where that university was situated. So people in the English department would be engaged in thinking about and relating their research to literacy training... But that and the consciousness raising is part of that.

Chris Rose

Answering your questions often seems to come back to the idea of working collaboratively and questioning the notion of the expert that flies in to do the right thing then flies out again. It must involve the notion of commitment to a place. There were some words that I got out of this report on India that I'm working on, these are questions that we came up with- what is place-based education? There is this intriguing notion...the whole idea that Britain is filled with children who are age 9 and experts on the African elephant but don't know anything about the ladybird in their back garden...so trying to locate things that one claims to be important, trying to locate it in your own reality and not in some abstracted reality that has been through a media filter because so much of what comes out of children has been through a filter of the media. Much more so than it was in the 50's or 60's...



Caroline Baillie

In engineering, we talk about 'micro ethics' - dealing with issues of whistleblowers etc. small scale 'my boss told me to do this bad thing' etc. In addition, however, we want students to think about 'macro' issues – what impact will our designs have on people, societies, local and global. This requires completely different ways of thinking and questioning. It's the same for Higher Education in general. We are constantly dealing with micro issues of funding, timetabling, examiners, form filling, ratings etc. and forget that what we are meant to be doing is equipping our students to think creatively about themselves and their place in the world, today and in the future.



4.2.2 Questioning realities and assumptions

Chris Rose

I think if you establish this notion of multiple truths or multiple realities...it's a liberating thing, if you get away from the idea that there is only one truth about something. We know living systems are essentially non-linear, maybe we have to accept that forms of knowledge are non-linear too. But what you've said in the past is that there is no such thing as a fact. We can use a phrase like that, and then we can say there is a fact in a temporary situation, or in a defined situation you can have a fact. But if you are looking in a research sense at something, or in an inquiring, adventurous sense, you have to dispense with facts temporarily and look at different narratives that are made around something. Out of this will emerge unexpected insights, and this creates an embodied sense of the social construction of knowledge, rather than an ideological concept that it is desirable. The story telling idea is something I spend more time exploring, mainly because it connects directly to multiple intelligences; and I think the context around all this, if we are enquiring 'what does it mean to have a socially constructed process', I think ideas about social justice have got to come out of some experience of how an idea or a process is socially constructed and not processed from the outside. So if you get students to personally experience in real time what it means to have something socially constructed then I think you have got something to work with, to be able to answer that question.

Liz Beaty

There are some really interesting issues in there. One thing is taking education to people, where they are, making it relevant to what they want. The other social justice element is taking people out of their comfort, higher education deliberately takes people out of their comfort zone, away from where they are, to make them into something else. I think there is a real issue there because what we wouldn't want to do is just to stymie the development of so many people by virtue of thinking that the best higher education they could get is to leave them where they were born to take higher education to that community. There is a lot of disquiet about that because people would think that wider participation, as we talk about it here, is actually about getting those people, those young people from the west coast of Cumbria, for example, to go to Manchester University, or London, to the "best university"...and so there is kind of an issue there. And then another element is providing a higher education experience, which means being next to other young people, a mix, a healthy ethnically diverse population. So if you take education to people and then give them what they asked for in the first place, that is a potentially narrowing experience rather than empowering.

Chris Rowland

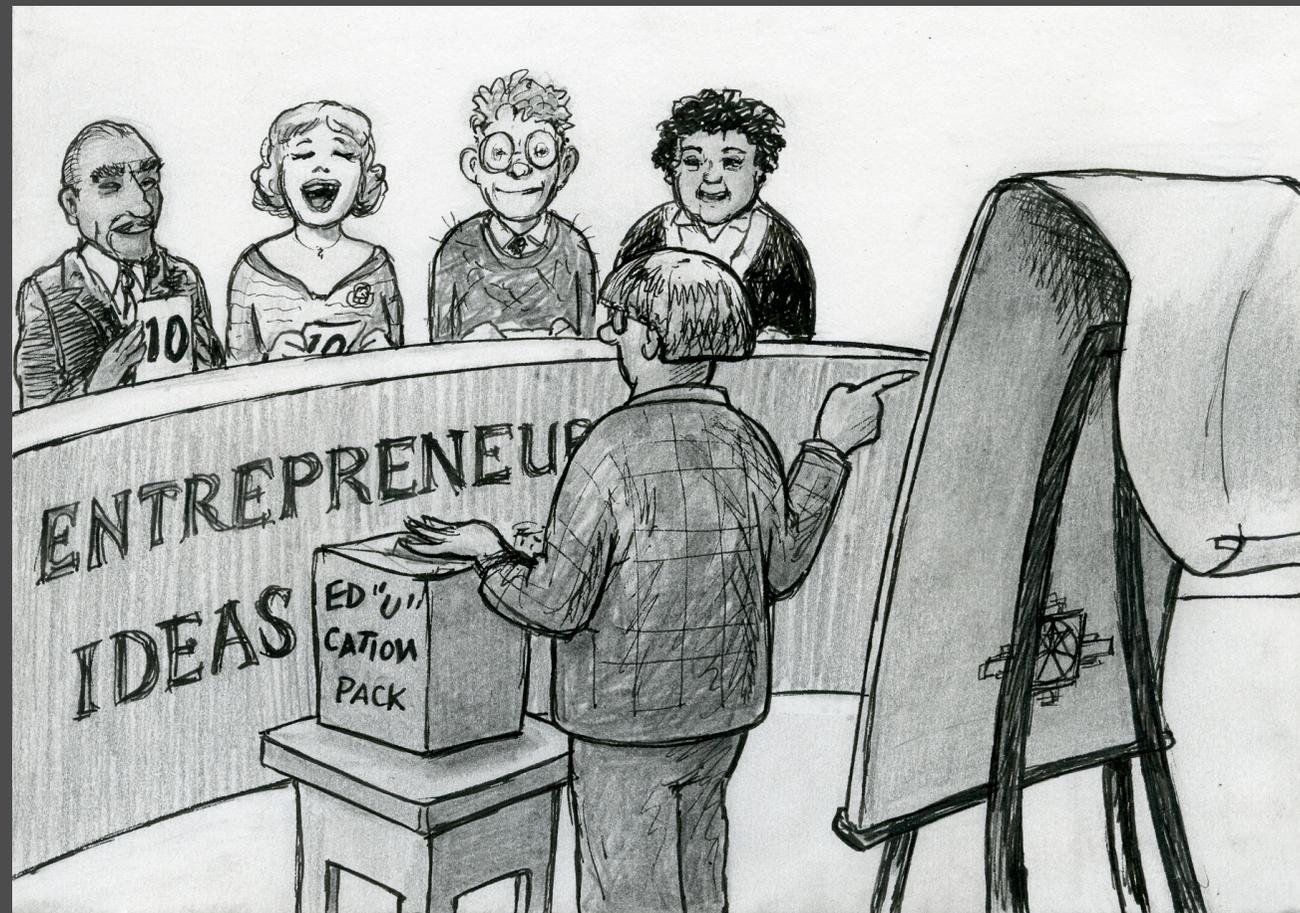
I can imagine, for example, taking a group of students to a local church and a local housing estate, a city center church and a church on a housing estate... and get them to watch what is going on, seeing how the bible is interpreted and to get them to compare the two and then to compare it with the sort of work that they have been asked to do in the university of Oxford and get them to think about the differences and get them to come up with some sort of analysis and out of that one could actually do all sorts of things in terms of social justice, both in terms of the resource of the Christian tradition and in terms of the resources that one might need from sociology or other literature in order to be able to understand things better.

Chris Rose

In a way there is a connection in terms of one's responsibilities in an educational setting. And this is one of the things I found we were exploring in among the individuals in a class I did in the spring. I think it is important to spend time with the stages that happen in a process before you actually try and do something. So it's what happens *before* you try to do these things. I'll try to explain what I mean by that. Students of design often can't wait to get on with designing this thing they have in mind, bypassing the possibilities of expanding the awareness because of the excitement of having an idea. And you often then end up with some pointless exercise. However if you slow down that bit, and take a few steps back, what happens is it's almost like you travel in the opposite direction, and think about what happens in peoples' minds before they start that process, what assumptions do they make about what things mean to them. Revealing the existence of assumptions is one the most effective creative acts. And do they notice what is important to them as individuals? Have they experienced that, or articulated that, or struggled in that. And if you spend time unpacking that kind of thing for students who are not generally used to it, it can have quite a transformative effect on what they then subsequently do. This has the effect of generating remarkable applied energies in a manner that is much more effective than excitement alone.

Alan Mandell

How do any ideas get legitimized? How does one idea, one theory, one way of looking at the world gain credibility? And how does one gain more confidence in oneself as a learner who has the facility and the authority to question these ways of knowing? That is, how does someone learn how to critically reflect on his/her own ideas and on the taken-for-granted assumptions of the times? And here's what's also important: We can't be too quick to throw out a seemingly simple phrase like "critical reflection" without, ourselves, asking what we mean by these words and how we expect anyone to display their supposed power."



Richard J.F. Day

I guess one of the more important things is what is going on in me as the person who is given the role of so called educator. What am I trying to do and how am I trying to do it? Am I trying to impart skill sets to these entities and do I feel that I have succeeded when they show their ability to reproduce that skill? To a certain extent always, I've just realized as I'm speaking, that when I try to teach people critical analysis I can turn them into the kind of brain nihilist who can attack me back and defend themselves. Step one is usually that they defend themselves in as much as they identify with the dominant order. So they get that skill to push me. It usually stops there. When they get the ability to push themselves, then that is what I call being infected.

Kumari Beck

Unless I am very conscious and aware of the particular lenses that I look through and I encounter or engage with the world I am going to be reproducing some of those very things I am fighting against. I think we need to create the time to both personally interrogate those things that we become part of and at the same time I think we need to create pods of intellectuals so that we don't get kind of caught up or just sort of sucked in to the vortex of the institution. We have a responsibility to shake our students out of their comfort zones, and make them think! Ask questions, face fears, question privilege, question the status quo, turn things upside down – and engage with issues. This is the kind of activism that universities ought to be about.

Donna Riley

I'd like to think that the purpose of higher education is to actually give people a meta-level of thinking that they understand that they are using a particular approach to come to a problem. So they know they are using feminist theory, they know they're using a Marxist theory, they know they are using an engineering approach or what ever, and I'm not sure that we achieve that in higher education but I think that if we did that, that would be a huge help in helping people come up with different ways of approaching problems.

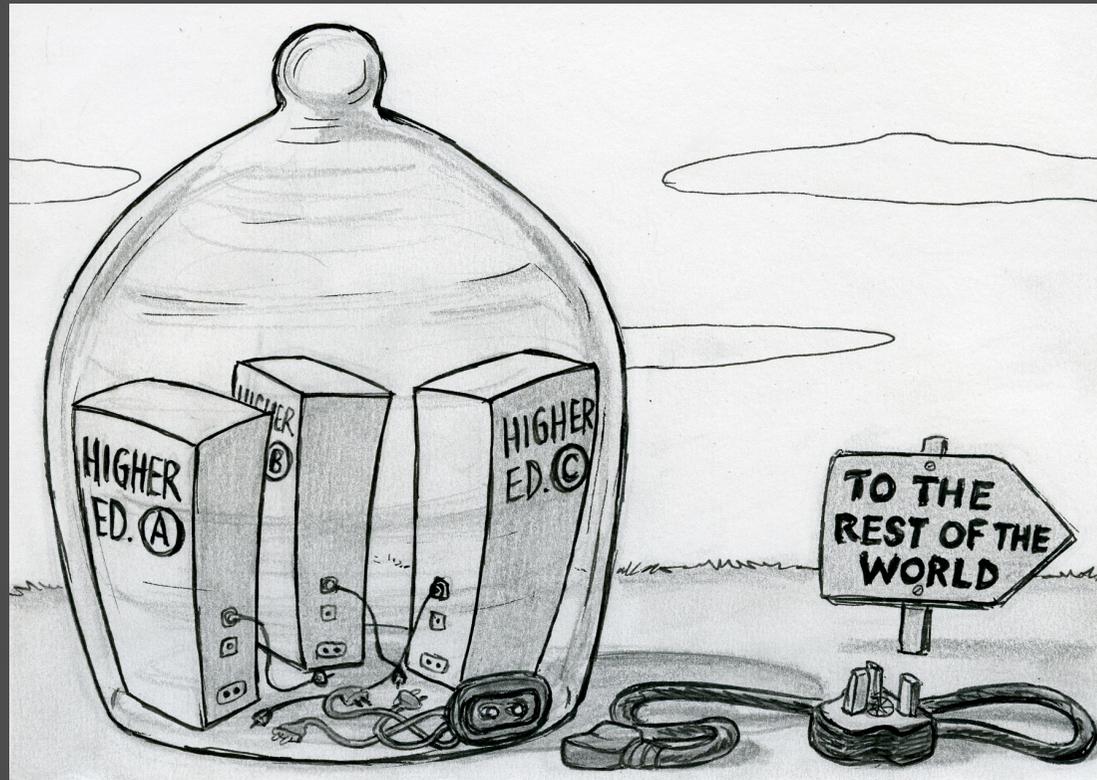
Chris Rowland

I think that all those people who are doing that (professional doctorate) degree, by virtue of the fact that they are being made to think about their practice and so questions inevitably relating to what one might call social justice are going to come up, whatever the solution is they come up with, means that that critical reflective practice is actually going to have built in to it some form of social justice. It is a small thing but I think it is the sort of thing which I think would need to be built into, for me, into any kind of theology degree so that one is going to be thinking about all the time that theology, as it has been practiced down the centuries, not people sitting in a room like this but actually being out there doing things and actually changing the world and doing so for a variety of complex and different reasons and actually understanding what those reasons are. Seems to me what theology is about. It is not what most of our students learn.

4.3 Reconceptualising administration

Richard Arnold

Universities talk amongst themselves and they don't communicate. And that is difficult because if you are talking in an academic language then nobody outside of the university remotely connects with that.

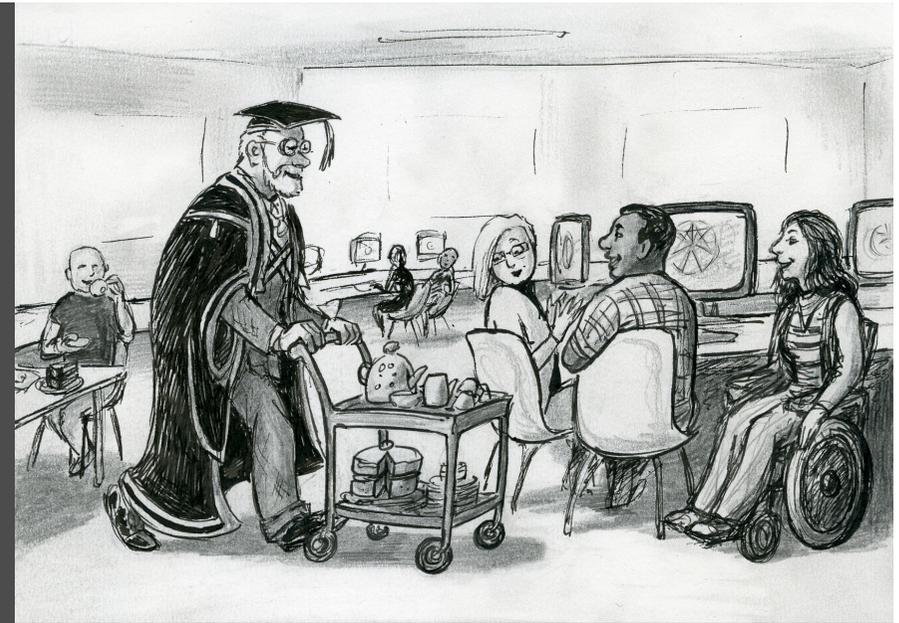


Chris Rose

Well, I think Universities, this is a terrible generalization, but I think there is a danger in certain areas of the universities making themselves irrelevant because of these kinds of phenomenon. Institutions tend to become obsessed with their own internal processes, disconnected from reality. It doesn't have to be like that.

Lewis Elton

Very briefly, he (Humboldt) discovered something, he must have discovered something, the evidence is slightly circumstantial, that has only become understood in the last ten years, which is called complexity theory. Complexity theory is basically a theory that explains the phenomenon of herding of cats. That in fact, in spite of that we are going all directions. Never the less, a herd of cats will, in some strange reason, move in one direction. There is a good mathematical theorem behind that. It means that academics should make decisions in their immediate surroundings... but somehow through the process of complexity theory, it affects the institution as a whole. No one has said the institution should go in this direction, it does. Complexity accounts for that, and therefore it managed to combine the academic freedom of the individual and its service to the state as an institution.



That is totally paradoxical. Administrators and governments want the university to explicitly serve the state. Serve the government or serve society, we say serve the economy, it is still a deliberate way of changing. Academics are being asked now to change their loyalty which has always been to their discipline, towards their institution. Uniquely, the academic tradition is not to be loyal to your institution but loyal to your discipline. But if you are in any other occupation you are loyal to your institution. This is causing considerable tensions now because from on top here we have got to be loyal to your institution, from below we believe we should be loyal to our discipline. My hero in that area is Eric Ashby who was the vice-chancellor first in Sydney, then in Northern Ireland, last in Cambridge. In the '50s, '60s, '70s. Basically, what Ashby said is that the vice-chancellor is the first servant of the university, not the master of the university, and he acted on that. Not only by being a good boy and doing it, but also by realizing limitations of being a vice-chancellor. If you try to enforce it wouldn't work. That is not true anymore. Now vice-chancellors are able to enforce things because it lowers the standard of universities when that happens.

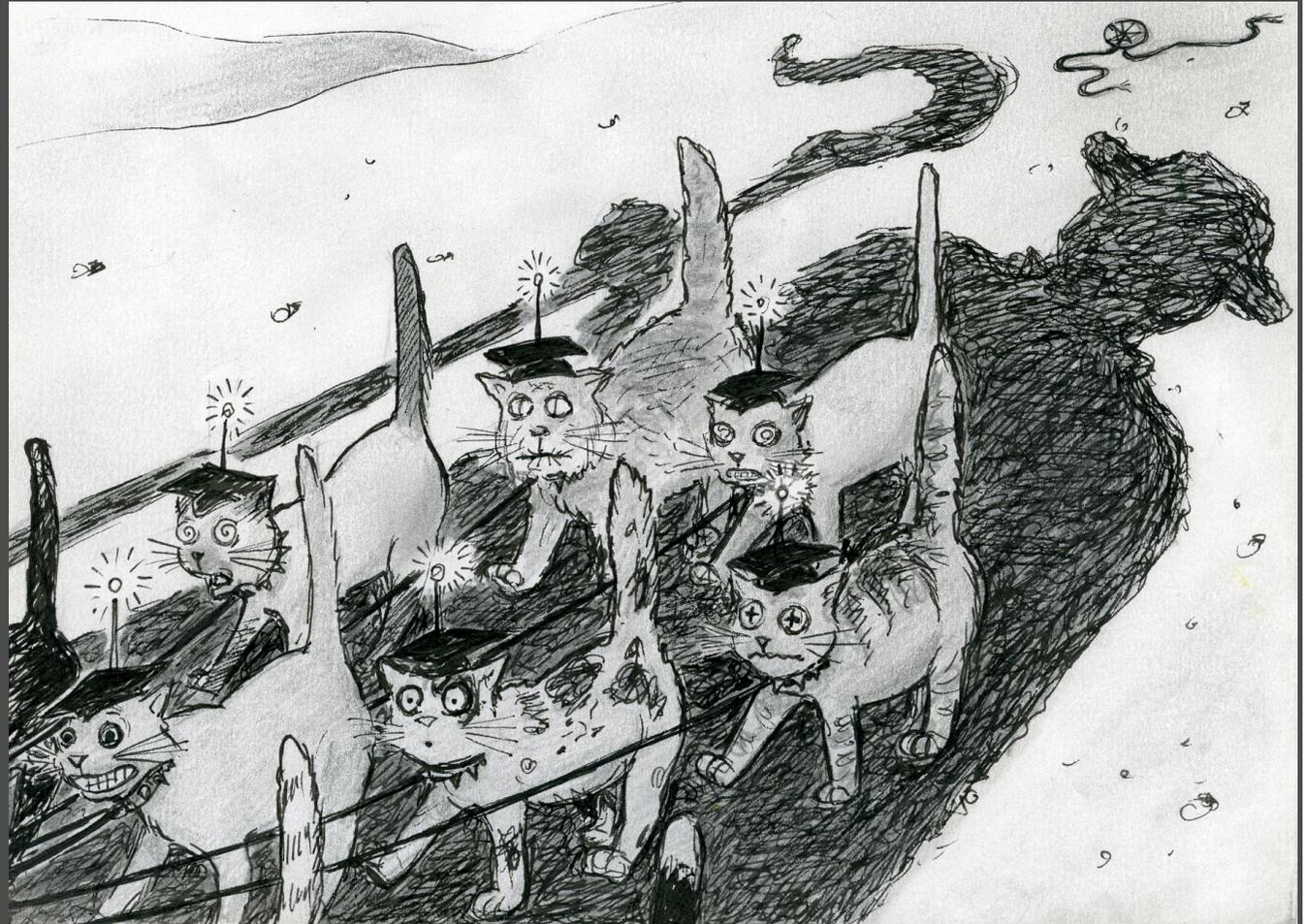


David Woodman

I think that there is that tension between the celebration of the academics as being like herding cats that somehow they are lovely as collections of cats, they're stroke-able and so on but then they bite your hand and things like that. But, somehow their value lays in the fact that they can't be controlled or regulated. I think Lewis celebrates that idea. It is all hidden in the concept of autonomy whereas I am afraid I don't. I think they can be like cats but they can also be trained to behave like dogs. I am just saying that we can find institutional forms that enable people to live comfortably within their own creativity while at the same time not having their creativity get so, sort of, in the way of their relationship with students or in the way of their relationship with the community and so forth.

Mark Fettes

People, including academics, do things for a variety of reasons which include deep values, ethical commitments, those types of things. They include personal relationships and satisfaction you get out of just working with someone and purely instrumental, the calculation. What's in this for me in terms of money, status, time off of teaching, or whatever it might be? I think the only way for universities and other institutions for higher education to become more effective on social justice issues is for them to look at that whole range of motivations and ask themselves how can we work with those motivations to make social justice work attractive for people.



4.4 Governance issues within university and between university and community

Andrew Rushmere

The first things that came to mind were that as far as higher education institutions supporting social or ecological justice or notions thereof, part of the problem it seems we're running into, and all this has to do with governments and the way the university is governed. ... the board of governors sees themselves as being the body that needs to make tough decisions often in the face of intense public pressures. They need to make the tough decisions that are in the best *financial* interests of the University.. So it is this really weird model where the university is kind of allowed to make its own decisions. .You can make your own decisions because you know what is best for the university. .. so we have got this kind of runaway fiefdom in a certain sense where a lot of those notions of social and ecological justice, university could listen to them if they want, but if it is not in line with basically the financial needs of the university at this point then it doesn't even register on the radar.

Yona Sipos

I don't think that having over arching aims of the university creates a monolithic entity. I think that all, to the best of my knowledge, all universities do come up with mission statements, priorities that are articulated. UBC for example has identified sustainability and global citizenship in its mission statement. Sustainability and global citizenship are not by any means defined singularly nor do they really limit the kind of work that is done here. I think the intention is rather that they may shape some of the work that is done here and help to frame some of the work that is done here.

My notes

5. VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP:
CAN HIGHER EDUCATION ENHANCE
SOCIAL
JUSTICE

5. VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP: CAN HIGHER EDUCATION ENHANCE SOCIAL JUSTICE

Richard Arnold

I think it will be fair to say that Universities are the guardians of certain social values and that people within the universities should be expected to be at least aware of that. Now, whether you can force people to sign up to that, whether you actually repel people by doing that... in terms of gender issues and what we do to encourage those things. One response is that you can't tell people to do things because that is mind control and that is the wrong way to go.

5.1 Shifting Values



Suki Ekaratne

People tend even unwittingly to look at themselves professionally as one thing and personally as another. Everyone I think has a value base but may not be able to see their different activities through that lens. They feel that others will laugh at them, others will think they are crazy, others will say you are not aligning with the expected values of a profession. So I think it is necessary to analyse how do your personal values have to end up there, interpersonal values... the outside values, the economic values and things like that, so we become chained in a way we can't change it. .. So I think we have to assure people, like you said earlier, that your personal values will in fact take you along in your life and you need to make that influence the others instead of the other way around.

Yes. Well to me I have not met anyone who has had a bad value. It is the interpretation of that value when applied, when actioned that they don't see the result of that action. So you see lots of people don't look at the second step.

Chris Trevitt

I think there is another interesting thing that has been coming up which is the extent that you can impose values in the education/teaching process as opposed to the extent that you can create an environment that is conducive to people discovering how important values are, what form they might take, and how to feel they are able to progress on a professional path that increasingly takes in the things that they value. I mean these are simple things to say and incredibly difficult things to achieve even in small group learning...

Donna Riley

There is this sort of culture of expertise that exists in higher education, there is a value in being able to...I think there is a huge power in higher education being able to leverage it's power in higher education ..I am involved in a project right now in Springfield and...this is the thermodynamics project we are involved in.. the Farmer's Market, and the Farmer's Market needs something very simple, and they need to electrify their site to allow things to be sold, like cheese and eggs can be sold if they have refrigeration. If they have electricity they have refrigeration. There is an electricity pole right there, all they need is to get this thing wired and sent. But it is one thing for the group, the food bank, to go and say this is what we need from the city, but if Smith College and its engineers come in with a report, suddenly, I hope that is going to mean that that is going to happen. So there is this sort of power of higher education whether we like it or not, this prestige factor that allows for making things to happen that otherwise might not happen. A way that helps social justice groups in facilitating.



5.2 Power and life chances

Liz Beaty

The other end, equally important, but completely different, a real concern about why participation in higher education acts as a generator of life chances. And this is really about a social equity kind of argument, that you don't invest in those who have already got it, you look at bringing in other people to actually be able to access this... A lot of tension and a lot of special money and special programs try to raise aspirations aligning to give extra funding to universities that are successful in participation and bringing new learners in. There are a lot of funding streams focused very specifically on that for of social justice...

John Reader

I am thinking about the guys doing the professional doctorate, if it actually works for him... The other thing that we would say to him is ok, if at the end of this you come out with a doctorate, it gives you more class as we know within the academic world. You are then legitimized to actually say things and publish them and articulate them to other people so it gives you a public platform if you will to actually, as some say, influence say, something like policy or local government policy which will just strengthen your position, your capacity to actually do something about these issues – maybe. Maybe, I am not sure about that.

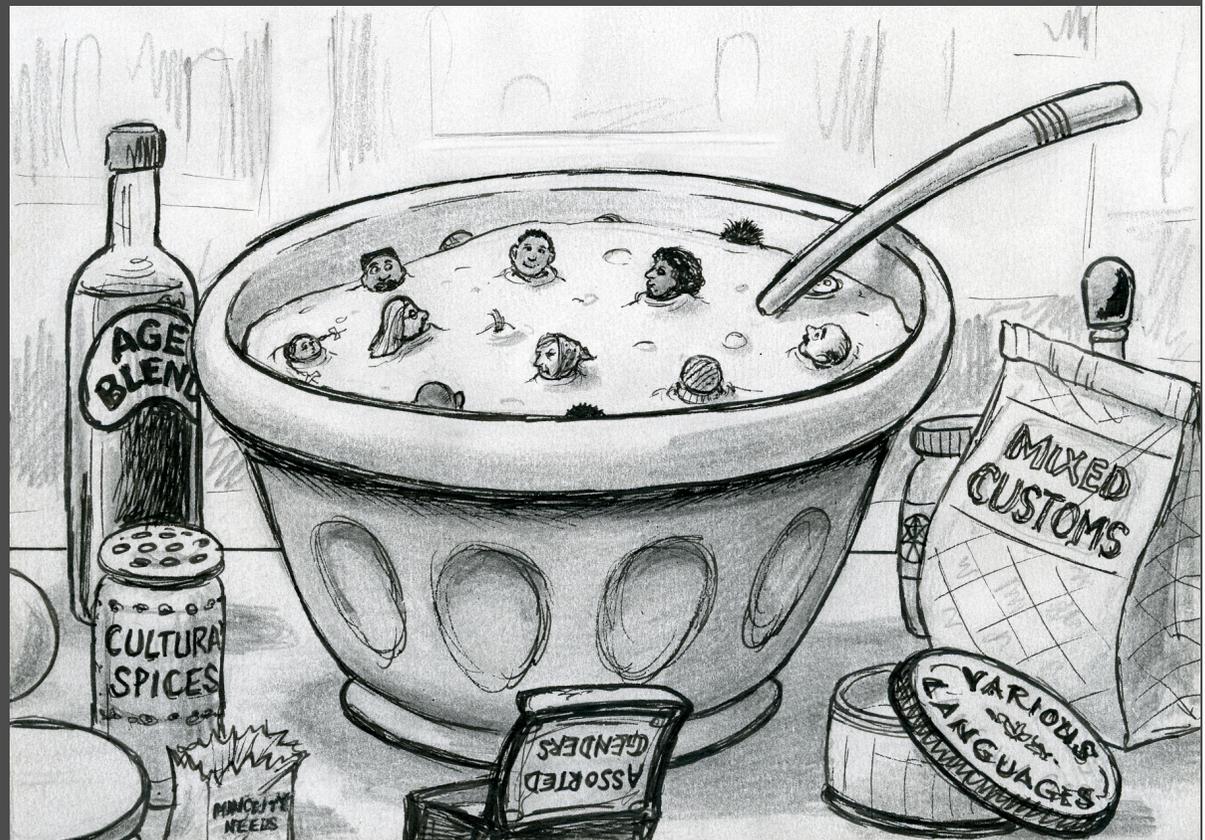
Suki Ekaratne

I think anywhere in the world if you have a higher degree you are in a better salary position. Everywhere it is the same, in the US or anywhere. So of course they will therefore strive to get in to university. And once they get in, that is only the entry position. Then they have that entry, but once they get in what other options do they have. Can they make use of that entry opportunity? In fact... so that they get out of their social order as it were, particularly the first generation student, they have no advice and role models, so they may flounder basically.

Liz Beaty

Yeah, I think the reason the government was using higher education as an arm of policy so strongly is that there is real evidence that people who have experience of higher education are healthier, they have more inclusive views, In all sort of ways it improves social justice to have more higher education. And that evidence is really strong. So yes, I think, if you look at this society, if you look at this part of the world, it is really different if you go down to Liverpool or Manchester, it is very white. You have got very little mixing of people here. One of the things about understanding modern life and being part of a global society is perhaps to rub shoulders with more different people and the university can help to do that by enriching the people who we are around, what it is they are talking about and how they are understanding each other. I mean if you go down to universities like Bradford they have got a really strong mission to try to create a campus and a university that really connects people and helps them to understand multiculturalism. They are a long way off of having that as their main mission here because people will say they don't have that sort of issue. But we need to have it! Everyone has got the issue. Perhaps we don't have the natural population to think globally, it is not naturally hitting you in the face but I think the university can actually do a lot to enrich who the people are that you are rubbing shoulders with.

5.3 Social mixing



My notes

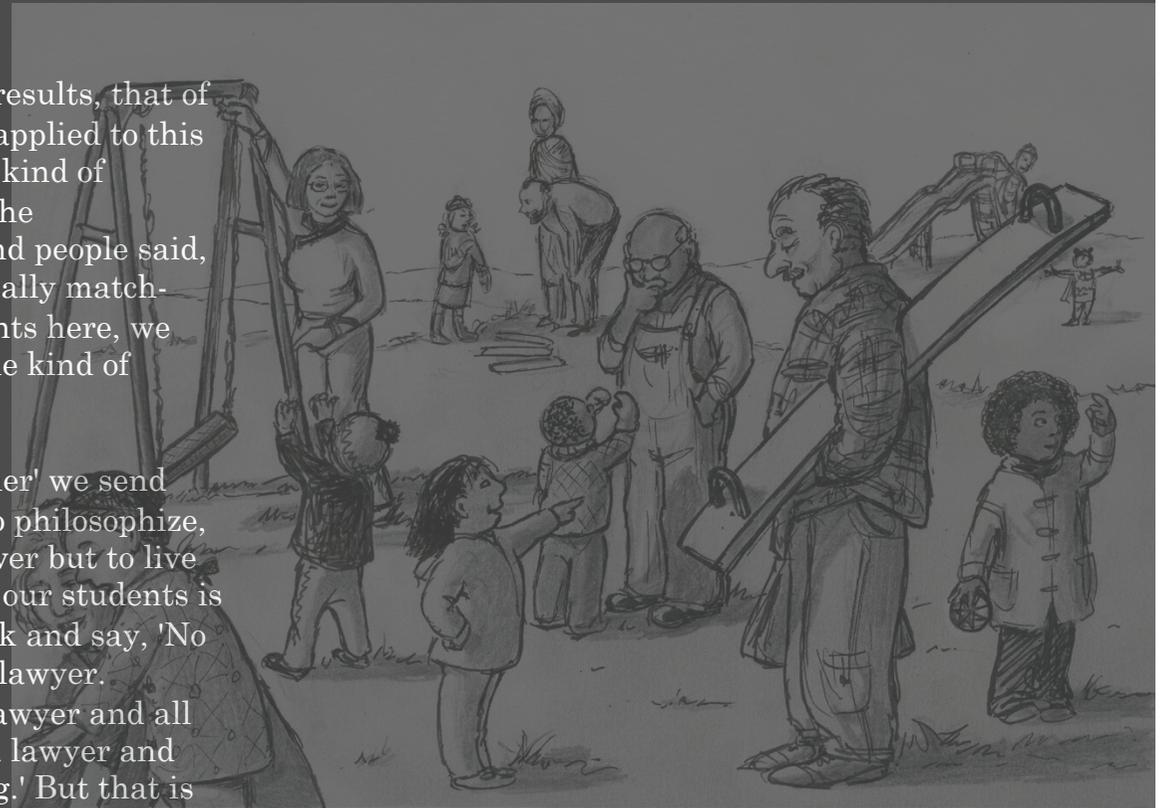
6. ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES TO HIGHER
EDUCATION?

Then if a young guy comes and says, 'I want to be an agrarian lawyer.' What we do is to send him to an agrarian lawyer. And better if he can live with him. And the next day he will go to the courts, to the tribunals to do the job of an agrarian lawyer as an apprentice. Of course this can be combined with reading circles or some workshops, some seminars, when the students ask for them. We also tell them that we will never be trying to supervise their learning, that they are in control of their own process. That they can ask something from us, but we will never ask anything from them.

Gustavo Esteva

Is the Universidad de la Tierra, is that one of the results, that of an alternative to education? Yes, yes, because we applied to this organization the experiences that we had in other kind of activities. And when this emergency came, when the communities say, 'oh, we have this problem' ...??and people said, of course this is not a university, that we are basically match-makers, in the sense that we don't have the students here, we basically connect to them with the person doing the kind of things they want to learn.

If someone come and say, 'I want to be a philosopher' we send him with a philosopher to learn with him what is to philosophize, not to put him to learn greek philosophy or whatever but to live with a philosopher. One things that happens with our students is that after a few days in some cases, they come back and say, 'No no, that is not my thing. That I don't want to be a lawyer. Perhaps they had a fantasy, when they see TV a lawyer and all these kind of things, when they see what is to be a lawyer and going to fight...they say 'No no that is not my thing.' But that is after a few days or after a few weeks, not after a few years of their studies when they discover that that is not their way. And yes, then that is how we created UniTierra.



6. ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES TO HIGHER EDUCATION?

6.1 Alternative models of student-led learning

Sergio Beltran

Actually, I like to present the concept of UniTierra as an alternative to education. In the sense that what we want to focus on learning is the learning process. My conception of pedagogy is that it is a science that has been concentrated on in the last 120 years is how the process of teaching is going, and then there are a lot of theories and methodologies and different ways of approaching the teaching process. But nobody really pays attention to or cares about the learning process. So what we want to focus on here is the learning process. So that is why the whole process is under the control of the learner, as we call them. Instead of students, we call them learners. So in a school what happens is that somebody else decides what it is that you need to learn. How you are going to learn it, what is the structure that you have to follow to get the curriculum to get the knowledge that you are looking for...and how much do you learn it, how well do you learn it. So just imagine a place where you come to learn where there's no teachers, there's no classrooms, there's no schedule and there is no curricula and all the processes are under your own control. So what we do use, or facilitate, is contact with learning, with the people on a specific project, where they are researching for a specific knowledge, how could they get closer to that knowledge. How could they get the information they needed or develop the skills they want to develop. And that is why we want to always encourage people to spend at least half of the time that they decided to spend learning what they want to learn; accompanying, walking with someone who is already doing what you want to learn. So for example (its a pity there is no-one around today) but the guys that wanted to learn how to make a documentary spend most of their time working with somebody that is already making a documentary. And there are a lot of networks. So what we are doing is putting our network contacts of people we know in the service of people that want to learn what those people know how to do.

So yes, we have a set of values...we are interested in helping you to learn whatever is going to be socialmente justo, económicamente viable y ecológicamente sensato (socially just, economically viable and ecologically sensible). So for example, you come from a community that owns the most beautiful forests and is communally owned. And you say 'I want to know how to make forestry' because at the assembly of the community it was decided that we should have a forestry company and we are going to cut all the trees and sell them as wood.' And it will be socially balanced because it is community property and the profit will be spread through the whole community. I'm sure it will have economic viability because the government will be happy to put forth the credit, but you will destroy the environment of the mountains you are living in.

Richard J.F. Day

The one thing I've been most involved in and I've thought was the most successful was "Critical U" in Vancouver, British Columbia. This was something not limited by age. It was not something limited by qualification. It involved people signing up, not only as students but also to become involved in generating the curriculum that we would use. Then all of the co-organizers went out and got people to come, from the university and from various activist groups, to facilitate discussions on the topics that had been chosen by the participants. We were looking for people who could say: we agree with this project you've got in mind, we understand what you are saying you are trying to do, we would like to do it too. Part of our participation will be further defining it.

Kiado Cruz

When you have the liberty to decide how you are going to learn, you have the liberty to decide how you are going to live. And more importantly, rather than talking about rights, I want to talk about liberties. Because rights are something that is given to you. You are given a right by an institution and provided a right or allowed a right. But liberty is what you have yourself. And the liberty to decide what you are going to learn gives you the liberty to choose your life to decide your life.

Stephen Sheely

As an ideological position I believe everyone should have a chance to be as educated as they want to be. I am a huge idealist about education. I believe it is the thing that might save us all if done properly and one of the greatest problems that have faced humanity is that people have just not learned enough about one another. Whether or not a university education is the sort of thing everyone should have is another matter.

Sean Blenkinsop

When I talk to students I talk about one way you could think about knowledge is as a noun. It is a thing. If it is a thing it exists somewhere, can be moved to different places, things like that. If it is not a thing, if it is not a noun, if you don't think about it in a kind of noun way, if you think about it as a verb, so maybe it is in process, something that is being created, then all of the sudden it is less locatable. I don't know what happens if you start to think about it as an adjective or a predicate or whatever, but if you start to mess with that idea the way in which at least the western academy thinks about things, and aboriginal academics have been saying this for years, that it is like hold on a second we have a particular notion of knowledge that we are valuing and the value is something that is presentable, something that is researchable and we researchable in a particular length of time in a particular size in a particular shape that is then publishable in a peer refereed journal or whatever. So you have got these underlying notions of what knowledge is and as a result what human beings are, and as a result how human beings work and the academy is a manifestation of a particular world view.

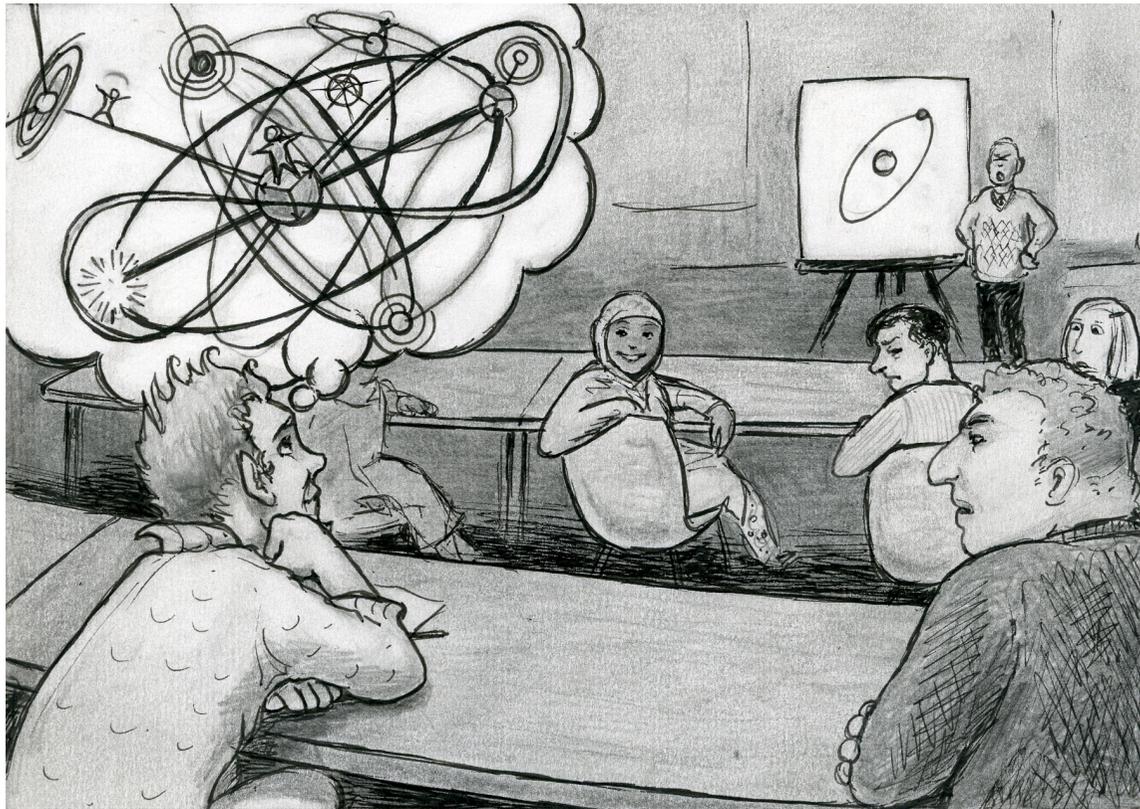
Alan Mandell

The question of 'access' should never be far from our concerns. Too many people in too many contexts remain separate from the learning opportunities that they deserve and need. But this is not only a way-way street. Any community, any institution, has to respect that the learner knows something worth knowing and has something to contribute. Access is not only the institution saying: 'welcome, come in, we'll show you the ropes and tell you what to do.' It's the institution saying: 'welcome, come in, we're interested in learning what you know, what you have done, what you can offer, what you want to learn and, in a million ways, we'll have to change because you're now a part of our community.' For example, a growing number of adult education programs now offer opportunities for students to display their "prior experiential learning"-to receive credit for what they have previously learned outside of the academy. And, without a doubt, this is an important dimension of access. But many fewer of these programs are open to acknowledging and truly embracing new forms and contents of knowledge not already part of the academy. This is where we need to continue to push the boundaries of knowing and invite in different ways of knowing that had been previously excluded.

Maxine Greene

What I think is that we don't regard or respect children's experience and I think it should start there – it should start in the community of children and find out what they have experienced – and now I keep worrying about the enormous increase in immigration – all these little children who come from the Congo – the teacher can't impose her idea of what's what – but then how do you create the human fabric of mutuality – it has to be with the children's experience.

My problem is I also want to bring children alive – to be self critical – angry at these issues – I also want them to appreciate Mozart and Rembrandt – how can I separate my own heritage – that I value from my belief that I have to - for example a lot of children are writing poetry – what they call poetry slams – and the children write poetry – I don't know if you'd call it poetry but it expresses what they feel – so I write to one – its importance psychologically – could we teach them something about metaphors – very hard to balance values – you can't give up what you value.



6.2 Daydreaming and dealing with uncertainty

Z*qhygøem

I'm a daydreamer. I didn't consciously choose to daydream, it's just the way I process information and form ideas. This way of thinking is not celebrated - is actively discouraged - because by doing so you appear not to comply with the machine of instruction. It may seem like you're simply not paying attention, yet daydreaming is a rich source of inspiration, creativity and invention through an alternative, liminal, focus of lateral thinking and imagination. When you are made to feel that there is something wrong in the way you naturally work it can be destructive to you and to all you can offer. Fortunately, I have a strong sense of self and have been happy to go my own way but I can see how others may suffer from lack of support and being forced to "snap out" of their daydreaming function.

Sukie Karatne

I think it has most to do with the ability to sort of handle uncertainty. We need a lot of belief in our selves that things are certain. For them that immediate thing is a certainty, a certainty about it, they are confident about it. They go home and they don't think out of it, they don't want to think out of it. I think one of the biggest skills we can give people is the ability to handle uncertainty. This is the only certain thing – uncertainty in life. And people have to be very uncomfortable with it until you tell people, well uncertainty is the only certain thing.



6.3 Living together/ Socialising knowledge

Kiado Cruz

In the indigenous community there exists no idea or word for knowing the future, you could have hope, there's hope for something to exist but there's never the idea that this will lead to this. What I am doing now will lead to a future such as this. And that's the idea that they promote in the higher education - that if you follow this lifestyle you will gain this certain thing. This idea doesn't exist. It's possible, that there's hope, but it's not a future, it's a hope... The higher education, whether it be in an urban setting or a rural setting or what they call a developed setting or underdeveloped setting, should aim not to create futures but to create hope. Because futures can lead not only to disaster, to not what we expect, and hope can always exist. It doesn't require anything, really. You can always hope but you can't always reach the goals of your future if you have specific things that you plan to accomplish.

If the institutions of higher education could communicate with communities on their own terms and create a different or distinct relationship, that there could then be access to justice and access to higher education. There exists in my culture, in the form of seeing the world, the idea that the horizontal and the vertical can coexist, and that they do within certain structures within society; there are vertical structures, not everything is completely horizontal within the community. We have the metaphor that you have to climb the mountain in order to see the horizon. Sometimes you have to be on top in order to see the horizontal nature of the world as it is. And so the idea that the two can be harmonized. But it has to happen through a discussion that allows indigenous communities to talk about what they want on their own terms.

As it is, as it exists in Mexican society, competition is the form of education, is the ideology around education, so that the more information that someone has, the higher their position in their society and the more information they are able to privatize or make only theirs. And as it becomes at a higher and higher level, as people gain more and more information, it becomes more and more interesting this way of competing, this form of competition. The professors cater more and more to the students who want more information without trying to integrate the students that don't understand or that haven't reached that point. So it doesn't take into account how indigenous people think or feel or act so the way that it could function would be if there were ways to integrate these forms of thinking and acting and feeling into forms of higher education. So that would be with a different ideology; not with an ideology of competition but the ideology of living together. And something that would be more practical, with practical applications as well as theoretical, with discussions about how to learn and live together. And recognizing the environment and everything that surrounds the people. Not separating it. When higher education enters indigenous communities it enters as something apart from the community itself that separates the community, that doesn't allow them to be integrated within the community

Caroline Baillie

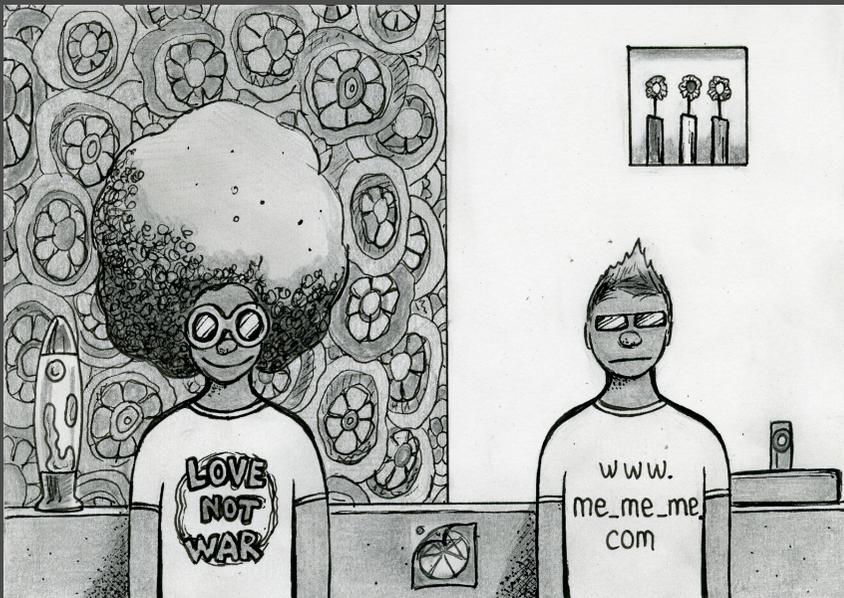
When I was in Buenos Aires, working with my organisation 'Waste for Life', I learnt what social justice was. We were there to see if the local waste pickers or 'cartoneros' were interested in moving from scavenging to manufacturing products from the waste—thereby making more money from the waste they found. I was very nervous of my own self post development critique and worrying that I was continuing the age old line of colonialism in my National heritage. The main reason I decided to continue was the attitude of the cooperatives to the technical knowledge I had to share with them. They told me that they had this notion, between the cooperatives, of 'socialising knowledge', that if I shared with them the ability to transform waste into products, they would share this with others to help them do so also. I was stunned. Who had ever heard that before? In the places I'd worked in the Global North, I'd been used to 'don't tell anyone else so we can be the only ones to benefit, we don't want to lose our competitive advantage, it's our 'Intellectual Property'".



Kiado Cruz

Where he was able to feel and act and think in a different way, in a communal way. When I got into the higher institutions in the city, I tried to explain that I am the community, but not the community - that I am not the representative of the community. But he is the community. And this relates to the whole idea that we are the 'us' not the 'I'. There doesn't exist an 'I'. And that the idea of higher education means that I have a single path that leads me to a single place, to a single goal in which I can have a comfortable life but that's the only path that I can take, the path of 'you', the path of 'I', of me, alone. The idea of a communal lifestyle is that everyone is deciding the different paths that could be. That they are creating many different paths. And there doesn't just exist one path. So when you live in a world where only you exist, where you are not part of anything else, that that limits your path in life. The path in the community is that everyone is deciding and there are many paths.

No, there doesn't exist a word for 'I.'" There are three forms of 'we' in Zapotec. 'Nos otros', 'nos otros nos otros', and 'nos otros ustedes'. Nos otros means the community and the family. Nos otros nos otros means the community and the region, and nos otros ustedes means the people in this region, the people in this part of the world and the rest of us???



When I arrived and started studying at the public schools, and higher studies, it was a study of competition, not of sharing. The form of learning (there) is I know this, I'm going to keep it to myself. This is mine and it makes me better than you because I know it and you don't. And the idea of learning in a community is you know this, I know that, we are going to share what we know and that's a form of learning. That I share what I know and you share what you know.

6.4 Transformation and movements

Chris Rowland

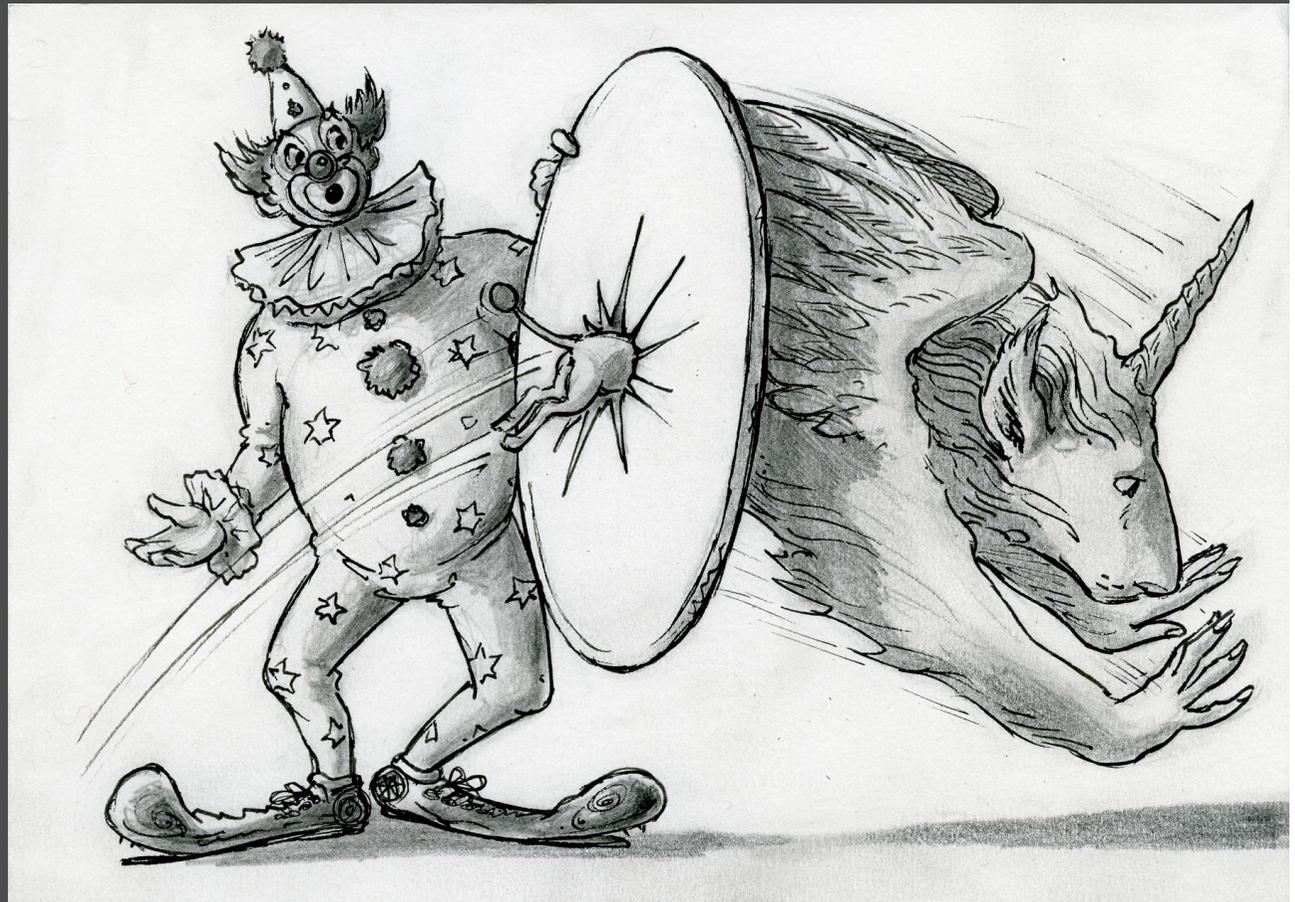
I have for many years been interested in Latin American Liberation theology and have had experience of the sort of pedagogy that they have engaged in around the 1970's and '80s and as far as I know probably still do....I think that vision that we caught a glimpse of in Brazil of higher education institutions thinking very seriously about how it is that creative research might actually relate to specific issues within the kind of social and political contexts in which they are working. In 1983 I went to Brazil saw some of it happening and in so far as we can talk about a conversion experience I think that was it. I mean my life has never been the same since... I came back and thought I was kind of captivated by what I saw and experienced and assumed, and that it would be easily translatable into UK higher education ... and I think I have to admit that it was impossible... I tried.

Sergio Beltrán

Once awareness is created, it doesn't matter how inactively you take it you just can't ignore it, you just cannot come back and live the way you were living before you notice what it implies to live in the modern capitalist consumerism way, in the individual way. And even if its a simple thing to change, its an advance on that. But I don't think that necessarily that higher education its an important step or a basic step to achieve that consciousness, there are other ways of doing it.

Chris Rose

And one of the things you often talked about was observing euphoria...when people actually discover something, become aware of a creative lurch that happens in their own experience. And whether that lurch is forward, or backwards, or sideways, or takes them out of something they were in or a different angle, but that sort of transition occurs, and I think in terms of rewarding, students are rewarded in themselves by experiencing that kind of thing...so I think its important not to think of reward as something given by the person giving the class to the person in the class...rewarded by something that comes from themselves.



My notes

7. REFLECTIONS ON THE PROCESS OF WRITING THIS BOOK

This project was fascinating and difficult. We started out with the intention of connecting those who are concerned about Higher Education and its relation to social justice. We did not define social justice beforehand although we have our own beliefs and bias about what this is. We are interested in structural change which brings about equity and justice and removes all kinds of oppressions in the world. Being part of HE we wished to see what role that institution could play, if any, or if indeed it was part of the system creating the injustice. We wanted to create a book whereby all interviewees were the authors, whose words gave them recognition, and not just the researchers. We recognize that the book is limited by our selection of people who we chose to interview. This has included a lot of people who have been involved in Higher Education, even if they are not now, and hence even if they rebel – are in fact part of the system being critiqued. We have tried to include a variety of countries and cultures but again this was limited due to our resources, time and language constraints. As we noted in the introduction, the style of interview was also different to the usual qualitative research in academia. As Chris noted during one interview:

Chris Beeman

You have a conversation, people are used to conversations, not used to being asked a question... so it is almost like there is this potential for the ideas being generated between us ... we bring to this conversation several other conversations that influence the kinds of things that we would ask questions about which then causes the further generation of your ideas and our mutual ideas to be changed.

It is because the purpose is different. If we are trying to understand a conception of a variety of people about a certain subject, then you don't want to be imposing a conception into their mind so that you think that they think that whereas it actually came from you. In this case of this study, I see this as a journey of development in terms of actually trying to put out there a conversation between a bunch of very different thinkers. That conversation, putting it out there, might further the cause of social justice. In a sense we are problem solving and we are not trying to find out some research thing so that we can benefit our academic careers alone. So that is a different kind of experiment. It is still what I might call research because we are experimenting with the technique.

We are enormously grateful to all those who shared their time with us, none the least those whose words we could not include, due to space restrictions. We hope that it brings inspiration and hope to those who have felt demoralized by what they thought Higher Education could offer and to those who knew it never could.

7. REFLECTIONS ON THE PROCESS OF WRITING THIS BOOK

Sergio Beltrán

What if we start a place for people who do not find that school is the proper place for learning, to go and learn. And that's how UniTierra started.... Imagine for a moment that the revolution that you were fighting for, its already won. That you are living in a kind of society that you imagine that you want to live in. Try to live your life like that from now on, since this very moment (Goodman dixit). And of course you will find immediately obstacles to live the life you want because we are not yet in that ideal society that you were dreaming of fighting for. But then find a way to get over those obstacles. Go over them, dig down them and pass it by, turn around and circle them. If you start to practice your truth, your alternative and not trying to convince the rest of the world that this is the way they should live and you start improving your way of living. You start living in a happier way, in a healthier way, then that is the whole promotion that you need. Just by practicing by good example that could inspire others to appropriate your own yes, your own solution. And maybe the way they reproduce it will not be exactly the same thing because they will probably...if you are not teaching the good life, if you are not imposing parameters of how to build it, then probably each people will readapt it, appropriate it and shape it, mould it the way it will be useful for their own needs. So that is for me the good way of resolving this.



8. WHO ARE WE?

Richard Arnold is Administrator at the Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economies and Societies (LLAKES) Institute of Education University of London, R.Arnold@ioe.ac.uk and previously Administrator, Centre for Excellence in Preparing for Academic Practice Oxford Learning Institute University of Oxford

Abul Barkat is currently a Professor and Chairperson of Department of Economics, University of Dhaka. He joined the Economics Department, University of Dhaka in 1982.

Kumari Beck teaches through themes of social justice in pre-service teacher education, undergraduate and graduate courses in intercultural and international education, anti-racist education, social studies, contemporary issues in curriculum, and global education at Simon Fraser University's Faculty of Education.
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8. WHO ARE WE?

Chris Beeman has farmed for two seasonal decades at a croft near Kingston. He occasionally teaches. His intellectual work is linked to land and learning. It deals with Indigenous ontologies, social and ecological justice and change, and the ways less-human mediated landscapes influence peoples' learning and being. Time is spent with wild places.

Sean Blenkinsop is an Associate Professor of Education at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.

Rita Armstrong is a scholar and member of the Royal Anthropological Institute UK. She has worked as an anthropologist with an interest in justice and equity, and has been managing the group of Baillie on 'Engineering and Social Justice' since March 2010. Rita assisted with data analysis of transcripts for this book.

Caroline Baillie is Chair of Engineering Education at the University of Western Australia. She founded the Engineering, Social Justice and Peace movement in 2004 (esjp.org), and co-launched the International Journal Social Justice and Peace in 2011. In 2006 she founded the not for profit Waste for Life (wasteforlife.org), in order to put her theoretical ideas into practice. Caroline works to support social justice in any of her chosen endeavours: engineering, writing, education, theatre Caroline.baillie@uwa.edu.au

Liz Beaty is Professor and Pro- Vice Chancellor (Academic Enterprise and External Relations) at the University of Cumbria

Sergio Beltrán is co-founder of Universidad de la Tierra (Unitierra) in Oaxaca, Mexico. Years ago, he walked out of his life as an up-and coming, young mexican intellectual to live and work in alignment with the Zapatista supporters network. He developed a deep respect for the capacity people have to make a good life for themselves when they are free to take responsibility for their own communities. Sergio Beltrán is a fierce spiritual warrior who stands for the rights and capacities of people everywhere.

Kiado Cruz, from Oaxaca City, Oaxaca, Mexico, is a community organizer for RASA (La Red Autónoma por la Soberanía Alimentaria: The Autonomous Network for Food Sovereignty), a spin-off of UniTierra, a school that concentrates on indigenous forms of education such as mentoring, horizontal networking and apprenticeship, community service and environmental sustainability. RASA is an ever-increasing citywide network of people who are learning, and then teaching, inner-city gardening, while rediscovering their cultural food roots. The people of RASA are reclaiming their complex agricultural and culinary heritage, “roof by roof, yard by yard.”

Suki Ekaratne (suki.sdc@gmail.com) is educational developer at Bath University UK, having changed over from a marine ecology professorial position in Sri Lanka, where academics also became targeted by a violent undergraduate uprising, triggered by youth perceptions of social injustice of Higher Education. Suki, with his family, also became targeted for assassination, but survived when warned by students. This survival re-lensed his personal perceptions, made him turn ‘educational developer’ and founded the country's first Staff Development Centre in 1997, where he established mandatory staff training courses to change university teaching methods across the country to bring about needed skill development in undergraduates through subject-teaching. He also founded the HE organisation in Sri Lanka, www.slaihee.org. The International Consortium for Educational Development awarded Suki “The Spirit of ICED Award” in 2011 for his leadership in HE.

Mark Fettes is Assistant Professor in Educational Theory at Simon Fraser University.

Richard JF Day is an autonomy-oriented practitioner and theorist, who is very interested in creating and linking radical alternatives to the currently dominant order. To get a further sense of where he's coming from, you can read his book Gramsci Is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements. He can be reached at richard.day@queensu.ca

Kieran Egan is Canada Research Chair and Faculty Member at Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

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Lewis Elton is an expert and Professor in Higher Education, having worked for several Universities including many years at UCL after a previous career in physics in which he was head of Physics at the University of Surrey. Lewis is friend, mentor and all round fabulous person.

Gustavo Esteva is a Mexican activist and founder of the Universidad de la Tierra in the Mexican city of Oaxaca. He is an independent writer and a grassroots activist. He works both independently and in conjunction with a variety of Mexican NGOs and grassroots organizations and communities. He has been a key figure in founding several Mexican, Latin American and International NGOs and networks.

Maxine Greene, author, Professor and inspired thinker, explores living in awareness and "wide-awakeness" in order to advance social justice. Her thinking about existence and the power of imagination have been brought to life through her study, academic appointments, essays and books. In her teaching, she desires to educate those who speak, write, and resist in their own voices, rather than mimic her ideas and language.

Alan Mandell is College Professor of Adult Learning and Mentoring at SUNY Empire State College and, for many years, has worked with adults and written about adult learning and mentoring.

John Reader is Honorary Senior Research Fellow with the William Temple Foundation (University of Chester)

Chris Rose is a designer teaching at Rhode Island School of Design, where he also contributes to a major NSF funded programme for Arts/Design/Science pedagogy and research partnered with other New England universities. Chris is also a member of The Breathing City research group in the UK.
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John Fazey has now retired after forty two years in education in roles ranging from secondary school teaching of physical education and mathematics, youth and community service, coaching Olympic athletes, teacher training and many years at what is now Bangor University. Immediately after retiring he spent three years working at the Oxford Learning Institute and is now more contentedly keeping sheep on a welsh mountainside. He is still passionately interested in how we can help people become more expert at what they do.

Martin Hodson is Visiting Researcher in Environmental Biology at Oxford Brookes University

Laura Piersol is currently pursuing PhD studies at Simon Fraser University with focus in Eco Philosophy and can be found frequently covered in mud as a research assistant with the Maple Ridge Environmental School Project'

Chris Rowland is Dean Ireland's Professor of Exegesis of Holy Scripture at Queens College, Oxford

Donna Riley is Associate Professor and a founding faculty member in the Picker Engineering Program at Smith College, where she teaches engineering using critical pedagogies. She is active in the Engineering, Social Justice, and Peace Network

Andrew Rushmere received a B.A (Hons.) in International Development and Human Geography from Queen's University. He apprenticed in organic agriculture on a small-scale market garden in Camrose, Alberta for two years, and worked on several other organic farms before completing an M.A. in Ecological and Place-Based Education at SFU. He is currently a caretaker and the Academic Coordinator at the UBC Farm/Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, where he facilitates faculty and student teaching, learning, and research. ubcfarm.learning@gmail.com

Stephen Sheely is an expert in education development and especially IT systems to support learning.

Chris Trevitt has a PhD and early-career research and academic experience in environmental science and land management. He works in educational development at The Australian National University (ANU) and, for 2006-11, was Director of the Developing Academic Practice programme at University of Oxford. He has enduring interests in practice-based continuing professional learning, both in the professions and in academia, and action learning as a means for fostering reflective professional practice.

Michael Young is an Associate Professor in the BA Justice Studies Program at Royal Roads University in Victoria, BC. The applied nature of the program lends itself well to the integration of theory and practice in the curriculum. His research and outside professional interests focus on social justice and human rights, particularly as they relate to the inter-relationships between homelessness, addiction, mental disorder and crime. Dr. Young is involved in the development and evaluation of a therapeutic community for homeless persons in Victoria, BC.

David Woodman is Director of Crucible at Roehampton University, London, UK. Crucible is the University's centre of human rights and social justice education.

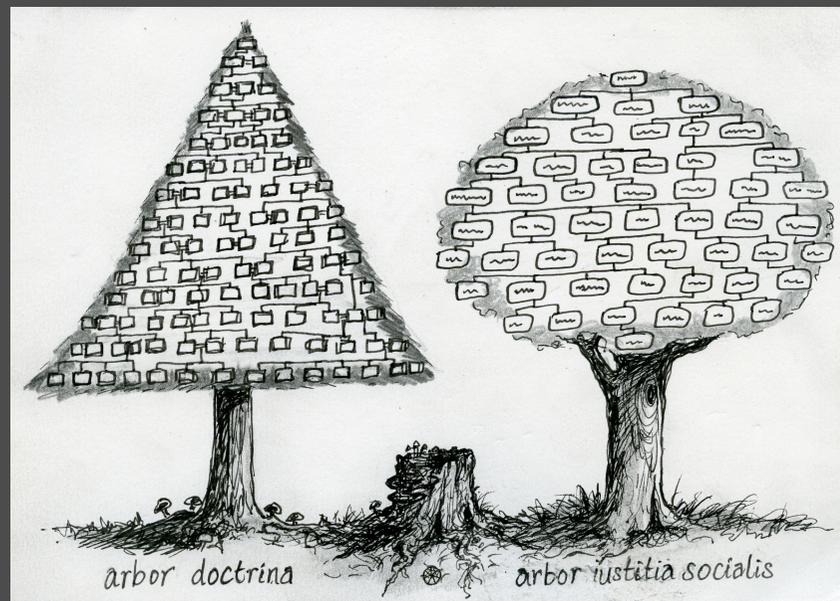
Yona Sipos is a sustainability educator with experience in multi-stakeholder engagement, food system education, and place-based learning. She is completing her Ph.D. in Integrated Studies in Land & Food Systems at UBC.

Z*qhygøem - What do I do? (And, therefore, who am I?!)

I find the division blurry between what is my work and what isn't; it seems inadequate to say that receiving payment is the defining factor since making money isn't necessarily the most significant activity nor is it always the most arduous. Admittedly it's abstract, but I consider my occupation is, or should be, to expand my awareness of my inner-self, the diversity of the world, the nature of reality and so forth; to live mindfully, to help in caring for the world and to support the protection of its habitats and inhabitants; and to explore new ideas and perspectives, and channel my process into authentic creative expression. Humour plays an essential rôle, too! However, on a more mundane level, my profession is in "the arts". I'm not dedicated to any specific medium, regarding them as all part of a continuum, but if I neglect one field I feel its absence from my life. At present, I'm employed mainly in illustration (various publications - many for Caroline Baillie), painting (giclée prints and greetings cards of my paintings, set-painting, etc.) and music (live performance). In the past, this has included writing, acting, photography, film-work and animation. In the future, no doubt, it'll manifest in further areas. E-mail: z-qhygoem@talktalk.net

My notes

An innovative insight into the relationship (or lack of) between Higher Education and Social Justice, this illustrated book represents the culmination of a two year project by activist academics Caroline Baillie and Chris Beeman, through the voices of many educators, within and outside the dominant domain of educational institutions. The intention of the book is to enhance the role that Higher Education can play in supporting social justice in the world, as well as to offer thoughts about alternative models.



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