HABITUS, ONTOLOGY AND MISRECOGNITION

ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF STRUCTURAL INJUSTICE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

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Abstract

This thesis is grounded in the philosophy of education, and is first and foremost an issue-based body of research intended to explore how those of us within the university context can work towards combatting the structural injustice present within the practices and processes of our institutions. I approach this in two stages. In the first stage (Parts 1 and 2), I use the theories of Pierre Bourdieu to explore how structural injustice manifests within the university and how it manages to reproduce itself over time without significant resistance. Part 2 then uses the insights and approaches of critical pedagogy to critique neoliberalism as the dominant philosophy and ideology that shapes the way in which universities function within the wider educational context and shapes (and limits) their institutional habitus. The second stage of the thesis introduces the concepts of secondary habitus, reterritorialisation, and the decolonisation of the mind, as tools to disrupt structural processes and practices of reproduction. It focuses on what is required to address the issue of structural injustice and explores (Part 3) what is required from a student perspective (a transformed individual habitus) and (Part 4) what needs to be addressed in order to transform the institution's habitus (particularly the combatting of misrecognition). Finally, I propose a model for a transformed institutional habitus that can be used as a starting point for combatting structural injustice within the university context.

My major contribution to my field of study has been to construct the twin paradigms of individual and institutional habitus transformation as theoretical models (and both practical and academic starting points) for directly confronting the disadvantaging encountered by many of our university students.

Keywords: habitus, structural injustice, misrecognition, neoliberalism, reterritorialisation, decolonisation

> "Thought is non-productive labour, and hence does not show up as such on balance sheets except as waste" (Readings, 1999, p. 175).

Figure 1. Thought as non-productive labour, 2015, photo A Nobbs

Habitus, ontology and misrecognition

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Signed: Antony Nobbs

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1 Introduction

1.1 Genesis

This thesis was born out of an experience I had during my first week of employment at my current place of work, a New Zealand university. I had recently been appointed as the 'Learning Communities' manager, and was tasked with establishing and running a peer support programme for 'at risk' students. I chose to visit a lecture for one of our university's papers that had a very high failure rate. The experience itself was very insightful. This particular 'high risk' paper was being taught to a 'high risk' cohort via video and the technology was not working. As a direct consequence, students were not engaged and very quickly began to leave the lecture theatre. That the institution (represented by the faculty and school) had considered it appropriate to teach its 'most difficult paper' to its 'least successful' cohort of students via a pedagogical delivery system that did not function effectively, and one to which the student cohort could not meaningfully relate, was breath-taking in its lack of pedagogical forethought and evidence of a complete lack of awareness about the students it was meant to be educating.

My initial approach was to look to design a support programme targeted at this particular paper and these particular students. However, my early research very quickly identified that this effective disadvantaging of some students/types of student was, in fact, occurring university wide. And while, in some cases, it could be attributed to poor pedagogical practice and a lack of critical thought around student cohorts, in most cases, this disadvantaging of students was part of the practices and processes of the institution. It was, in effect, an injustice entrenched within the structures of the university. Most disturbing of all for me was the realisation that this structural disadvantaging of some students (and the advantaging of others) is seen as 'business as usual'. It has become (although Pierre Bourdieu might argue that it has always been this way) the way we operate. This injustice seems to have been normalised by neoliberal theory and practice (a concept I explore in Part 2) and by the misrecognition that Bourdieu uncovers and that I explore in Part 1.

In terms of introducing this thesis, and to provide the reader with a useful way to engage with my work, it is helpful to address four key areas. The first, already achieved

above, is to provide an account of the genesis of the research and to note my motivation for it. The second is to note my contextual location and to identify the intentions of this research. In the methodology section, I will then provide an account of how I intend to develop the thesis before finishing by addressing the teleology of this body of work.

1.2 Goals and Context

My thesis is issue based and is focused on exploring, uncovering and understanding the issue of structural injustice (injustice that is located in the processes and practices of the university – rather than being located in the actions of individuals) in Western university education and on identifying means and methods of confronting and challenging this injustice. That injustice exists in university education (and in Aotearoa New Zealand, in particular) is well documented (Anae, 2010; Bargh, 2007; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2015; Cram et al., 2014; Crawford, 2016; Crawford & Greaves, 2015; Earle, 2008; Milne, 2009, 2011; Roberts, 2009; Thrupp, 2006, 2010, 2014) and the disparities in academic outcomes are well known. The point of this thesis is to explore how this injustice comes about and the way in which it is able to reproduce itself over time, and then to explore methods that seek to change the situation. This issue-based focus is significant. I do not intend to follow the path of theoretical orthodoxy. I make no claims to be 'Bourdieuian' or 'Deleuzian' or to portray myself as an orthodox 'critical pedagogue'. My intention is to use the theories, perspectives and insights of Bourdieu, Apple, Giroux, Deleuze and others in order to uncover, highlight and understand how structural injustice manifests within the university context. As part of this exploration, I also intend to identify and critique the dominant philosophical and ideological frameworks (the 'meta' level influences) that enable and produce the conditions within which this injustice thrives, and to propose an outline of a process that can serve to confront the issue.

When I refer to the 'university' (and later the 'institution'), what I am referring to is a Western institution of higher learning. As such, it is a complex organisation encompassing research, teaching, student services and community relations, and one that has a significant number of staff and students engaged across a large variety of

'Western' academic disciplines, and the practical support and maintenance of these disciplines.

Structural injustice originates in the ideologies (expressed as practices) of the institution. Many authors have provided potent and challenging critiques of the neoliberal university (Apple, 1995; Apple & Au, 2015; Apple, Kenway, & Singh, 2005; Bargh, 2007; Bauman, 1998; Cole, 2005; Cram et al., 2014; Devine, 2004; Driscoll & Wicks, 1998; Giroux, 1998, 2001, 2004; Hall & O'Shea, 2011; Helleiner, 2014; Lauder & Hughes, 1999; Natale & Doran, 2012; Peters, 2005; Readings, 1999). My original contribution to the field of the philosophy of education is to offer theoretical starting points intended to challenge structural injustice within the Western university context and then to map practical ways forward. To that end, I have incorporated the concepts of thresholds, epistemic othering, institutional interpellation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, secondary habitus and decolonisation of the mind as strategies and methods to account for, and to disrupt, the practice and reproduction of structural injustice.

In this task, I benefit from being located within the student services directorate in my university and, thus, being based outside of a faculty or school. This context and perspective allows an insight that is less dependent on the rules (and personal success) of field competition that Bourdieu highlights and that I explore in Part 1. It affords me a broader and less subjective perspective in relation to identifying privileged perspectives, positions and their implications. Similarly, working as I do with dis-affected and 'struggling' students from across the university, I witness on a daily basis the injustice that results from the disadvantaging of some students based on who they are (and their perceived shortage of appropriate cultural capital) rather than on their work ethic, their intelligence and their potential.

1.3   Methodology

This section is intended to explain my methodological approach to exploring and then challenging the issue of 'Structural Injustice in Tertiary Education'. To that end, I begin by locating myself within the philosophical tradition of critical theory and

describe the key components of this approach and how they are linked to my research task before examining the methods that I use.

The subsection on functionality then focuses on how my methodology functions. I explain my topographical approach to both the literature and the issue, and explain the criteria used to choose authors and sources, the way I located this information, and my thinking behind how the information, theories and perspectives were organised. I then focus on how the different areas inform each other and, particularly, on how I use these groups of information in my developing research.

1.3.1 Critical theory

My choice of methodology has largely been dictated by the subject matter. From the very beginning of the project the goal has been to try and address the issue of structural injustice within university education. This focus on uncovering the issue and then providing a response to it has meant that the methodology chosen must, by definition, be able to provide the tools to uncover the structural injustice (including its embeddedness and its reproduction) as well as act to ensure an outcome rather than simply a description of a problem. Other methodologies were considered, including auto-ethnography, post-structuralist approaches, mixed methods and grounded theory methodologies. However, while all of those approaches might provide some useful insights, none manage to maintain the focus on the issue and also ensure that the research resulted in a paradigm for addressing structural injustice. A qualitative approach (i.e. a phenomenological approach) simply uncovers misrecognition (or alternatively false consciousness). In effect all that is discovered is that the injustice is misrecognised.

As I will show, critical theory was simply the best equipped methodology to achieve both uncover the structural injustice and then to provide the motivation for the creation of strategies and processes to attempt to confront this injustice. However, I do want to make the point that this is not a thesis about critical theory. Critical theory is simply the methodology used in order to most effectively engage with the research and with the required outcome.

Given the particular focus of my research, finding a methodology to provide the conceptual framework for approaching the task was a relatively straightforward process. My research is focused on identifying, locating and then challenging particular systems of structural injustice within tertiary education. Critical theory as a methodology fits like a glove. Gibson (1986) puts it this way:

> Critical theorists of education have three things in common. They begin from a concern to map the inequalities and injustices of education. Next, they claim to trace those inequalities and injustices to their source, showing the educational processes and structures by which they are maintained. Finally, they seek to propose remedies to those injustices. These three shared characteristics can be restated as: What is wrong with education? Why and how have those ills arisen? How may they be remedied? (p. 44)

This is essentially the outline of my methodology. Part 1 of this thesis uses the theories and insights of Bourdieu (habitus, cultural capital, fields and misrecognition) to provide an account of how structural injustice arises and manages to reproduce itself over time before moving on in Part 2 to use the work of Giroux, Apple and Devine (neoliberal critique) to spell out how the wider education context is shaped and how this works to define and limit the ways that universities operate – including the embedding and reproduction of existing systems and practices of structural injustice. Parts 3 and 4 then advocate remedies to transform the situation: transforming individual habitus, transforming corporate habitus and reclaiming a relational ontology.

There are five key approaches or assumptions within critical theory that are essential to my research. The first (Gibson, 1986) is the contention that theory and practice are inseparable. It is, therefore, not enough merely to identify the inequalities and injustices within a specific context, and then to trace how they reproduce and whose interests they serve. Theoretical critique and practice must be linked, and it is the critique that shapes our practice.

Secondly, critical theory is teleological. It requires an extra step and it is this extra step – asking how these injustices may be remedied – that ensures that critical theory, as a conceptual framework, has a teleological focus. It requires an outcome and research must, by definition, be focused on providing one if it is to remain within the critical theory tradition. This second key component has the idea and experience of

emancipation as its central goal. This is a refinement of its teleological focus. Gibson points out: "Critical theory is not simply explanatory, but is committed to enabling change towards better relationships, towards a more just and rational society" (1986, p. 2). Justice requires emancipation from systems and structures of domination, and, at the very least, the opportunity to confront and to challenge inequality and injustice.

The third essential component of critical theory is the rejection of the 'given-ness' of structures, systems and processes:

> Nothing significant in human society is 'given' or 'natural'. Critical theory argues that in human affairs all 'facts' are socially constructed, humanly determined and interpreted, and hence subject to change through human means. In education for example, such notions as 'achievement', 'failure', 'progress', 'ability' (and education itself) are neither objective, nor natural, nor disinterested terms. Rather they are categories constructed by, and serving the interests, or certain groups. (Gibson, 1986, p. 4)

This commitment to examining systems, structures and processes critically is a vitally important part of my research and is also a key approach both for the theorists and in the methods I use. This rejection of 'given-ness' allows us to look behind surface appearances. It allows for the very detailed critique of systems and structures that might otherwise be 'taken for granted'. It allows for the identification of whose interests are being served under current processes and practices, and of whom is being advantaged or disadvantaged, and, in short, provides the key insights that will be required when we move to transform existing injustices.

This uncovering of whose interests are being served is central to the practice of critical theory. Gibson notes:

> Critical theory argues that the identification of conflicting interests is more truly revealing than other approaches. It yields valid representations of reality and probes more powerfully into the nature and causes of our social world. In its search for the interests served by knowledge or social practices, critical theory claims to lay bare the springs of human action as it exposes the roots of injustice and inequality. (1986, p. 5)

This uncovering of the power dynamics within systems and structures of domination is essential for the identification of systems and practices of injustice as well as for locating practices, systems and processes that require transformation. When we are able to identify who is being advantaged and who is being disadvantaged

within particular contexts, we are also then able to identify locations of confrontation and potential transformation. Again, Gibson notes:

> Critical theory claims to provide enlightenment as to the actual conditions of social life. That enlightenment consists in the disclosure of the true interests of individuals and groups... this focus on interests means that critical theory sees conflict and tension rather than harmonic consensus as a central feature of social life.
> (1986, p. 5)

The fourth significant component of critical theory is its critical engagement with meta (overarching) perspectives. In order to provide an account of institutional habitus, we need to examine the external philosophical and policy factors that contribute to the way in which educational institutions understand themselves and define their practices, and the reasons for their failure to address issues of internal structural injustice adequately. Neoliberalism is the current dominant philosophy guiding both public policy and the practice of universities (indeed, of the entire tertiary sector). Critical theory's approach to neoliberalism takes the form of a critique of 'instrumental rationality' (which is a critique of the functioning of neoliberalism, particularly as it relates to claims of efficiency and to the measurement of this). Gibson (1986) has this to say:

> Critical theorists see instrumental rationality as the dominant feature of the modern world... Instrumental rationality represents the preoccupation with means in preference to ends. It is concerned with method and efficiency rather than with purposes. Instrumental rationality limits itself to 'how to do it?' questions rather than 'why do it?' or 'where are we going?' questions. It is the obsession with calculation and measurement: the drive to classify, to label, to assess and number, all that is human. As such it is the desire to control and to dominate, to exercise surveillance and power over others and over nature. (p. 7)

Finally, the fifth key component of critical theory is concern with the ontology of persons and this is also a feature of my research:

> Critical theory's analyses of how individual identity is formed (or malformed) stresses three major aspects of the individual/society relationship. First is the centrality accorded to the individual... the powerfulness of individual endeavour. It challenges orthodox Marxism's reduction of the individual to a mere tool or puppet of wider economic forces... and argues for recognition of human intentions, powers and purposes in shaping society... second, critical theory is vitally concerned with the formation of personality... uniting

as it does both personal and societal considerations... Third, critical
theory investigates the relationships of individual and society
through the concept of ideology... critical theory shows how ideology
interpenetrates, indeed is the very stuff of, everyday life, familiar
assumptions, mundane practices and beliefs. (Gibson, 1986, p. 7)

Gibson's reading of ontology within critical theory (particularly his assumption
of the post-enlightenment construction of the person as, primarily, a rational,
autonomous individual in competition with other individuals) differs from my primary
concern, which is the pre-eminence of models of individualism over communitarian
counterparts (that stress relationship, role or 'place' as the primary constituents of the
ontology of persons – see MacIntyre, 1984; Taylor, 1995). However, of more
significance is that the issue of the ontology of persons is a key part of the conceptual
framework of critical theory. So, while I may part ways at this point in relation to what
it is that constitutes us as persons, I do so within a framework that takes the issue
seriously.

I use three major methods within the conceptual confines of critical theory, the
details of which will become clear when I look at the ways in which I will use my
different groups and sources of information. For now, it is important to note that I take
a critical approach to documentary analysis, to the analysis of theory and to contextual
analysis. These three processes form the core of my research and provide the insights
and perspectives required to identify and locate systems and structures of injustice, to
examine critically how these systems and structures reproduce, to explore whose
interests they serve, whom they advantage or disadvantage and, finally, to provide an
account of how these contexts of injustice can be transformed.

1.3.2 Functionality

I settled very early on the work of Bourdieu as the foundation from which I
would critique and view the wider educational system and process. Bourdieu's
theories provided a detailed and telling account of how and why systems of structural
injustice were able to function and remain largely unchallenged within universities and
other educational institutions. Of particular significance was: his use of habitus and

cultural capital to provide a compelling account of how these injustices come about; his use of the concept of 'misrecognition' to explain how these systems of domination manage to reproduce themselves over time; and, finally, his use of the concepts of 'misrecognition' and 'field competition' to account for why these systems remain largely unchallenged.

Having established Bourdieu as my key theorist, I chose to take a topographical approach in relation to my literature review. I have undertaken a survey of what I consider to be the key 'critical voices' in relation to the issue of 'structural injustice in Western university education'. This critical topographical approach has been focused on three main areas. Firstly, I wanted a 'critical theory' account of the meta-context of Western tertiary education. I wanted to explore and understand the philosophical and political perspectives that help shape the institutional practice. I wanted to gain an overview of the field and, in particular, of the way in which key figures viewed the issue of educational injustice.

Second, I wanted to explore a 'critical theory' approach in relation to the process of structural/systematic injustice within university education and, in particular, a critique of Bourdieu's theories. My reading of Bourdieu had identified some areas of weakness or shortcoming and I was interested in a wider approach to this criticism.

Finally, and in the tradition of critical theory, I wanted to explore the strategies proposed or required in order to transform the structural injustices and inequalities present within Western university education.

The authors/sources of information with which I engaged had to meet certain key criteria. They needed to come out of the wider school of critical theory and I tended to focus on those who can be described as 'critical pedagogists'. This is particularly important in relation to three key areas. They needed to be concerned with the identification of injustice and inequitable educational systems and practices. Their method needed to include the rejection of the 'given-ness' of practices and processes in order to be able to trace the advantaging and disadvantaging of particular groups of people as well as the identification of whose interests were being served by these systems. Finally, they were required to be teleological in focus. While there does seem to be a paucity of actual practical outcomes, I wanted to explore the ideas, perspectives and practices that, even if they don't provide actual transformation of unjust practices, they at least illuminate possible ways forward.

The second key criterion was that they operate within the framework of 'Western educational systems'. Bourdieu's contention (1977, 1990a, 1999) is that his theories can be applied to any Western stratified society. My personal teleological focus is on outcomes for university students in Aotearoa New Zealand so, for insights and perspectives to have relative contextual appropriateness, they need to be targeted at Western tertiary institutions and contexts.

The third criterion was that, where possible, they also provided a critique of Bourdieu's theories in particular or of 'theories of reproduction' in general. Bourdieu seems to have seen his primary role as one of uncovering the reasons for the fact that particular cohorts of student do not succeed in education, and describing why and how systems of domination are able to reproduce themselves over time and that, once this injustice has been uncovered and the misrecognition overcome, changes will naturally take place. His role was clearly that of the sociologist dedicated to uncovering issues and laying them bare. He did not, in that sense, have a teleological focus to his work. So, the engagement with his theories by critical theorists with their emphasis on teleology is an important component of my research. It is part of exploring the implications of Bourdieu's theories and also of identifying some of the key elements required for the transformation of unjust systems and practices.

The theorists I have used have been sourced in three ways. They have been identified by library and database searches, by their appearance in citations and bibliographies of others, and by recommendation from my supervisors and other university colleagues.

The organisation, or structuring, of my sources of information comes largely as a result of my reading of Bourdieu. This reading of Bourdieu identified three significant areas of research. The first was the need to transform individual habitus, the second to challenge and transform what I call 'institutional or corporate habitus' and, finally, to explore the implications, and the critiquing, of the dominant 'individualist' ontology assumed by most critical theorists in relation to 'communitarian' models and possibilities.

The tasks, therefore, are as follows, and writers, theories and perspectives are grouped around these areas. The first task is to overcome the implied fatalism of Bourdieu's concept of (individual) habitus both by exploring the reality of agent actions

and responses to systems of domination, and by exploring options to transform or reconstitute this habitus. One of the most significant critiques of Bourdieu's theories is that he assumes that systems of domination operate without significant opposition from those being dominated and, as a result, he does not pay enough attention to agent actions and responses. Also, he seems to imply that habitus is simply a given, which shapes the aspirational horizons of those to whom it applies, and that these horizons are unlikely to change (and it is this assumed resistance to change that is particularly problematic). Both of these issues need to be addressed and I will draw on Bourdieu, Apple and Giroux for this task.

The second task is to explore which factors, philosophies and policies play key roles in the formation and shaping of corporate or institutional habitus and how these might be challenged and transformed. In the same way that individual habitus provides aspirational horizons for students, institutional habitus provides practice, process and system horizons for educational institutions. Here, the work of Apple, Giroux and Devine is essential for the identification of philosophical and (in Devine's case) policy elements that shape university identity and practice.

The third task is to explore the impact of alternative ontological models on both individual and corporate habitus. Surprisingly, given their critique of 'instrumental rationality' and 'homo economicus', most critical theorists seem to assume the post-enlightenment concept of the rational, autonomous individual as the basis for their various critiques. It is my contention that post-enlightenment individualism is simply another construct amongst many and its given-ness is open to both dispute and critical examination. I address this issue in Chapter 10.

My theoretical sources, therefore, form logical and easily identifiable groups. The first three groups are focused around the meta-picture and the issue of corporate/institutional habitus. The international writers in 'critical pedagogy' provide a critique of Bourdieu, and of 'theories of reproduction' in general, while also providing a 'meta' critique of neoliberalism and its role in shaping corporate/institutional habitus. The New Zealand writers in critical pedagogy provide a contextual approach particularly in relation to the application of neoliberal theory to local educational institutions. And, finally, the policy, law and institutional values sources provide evidence of the implementation of neoliberal theory within the context of tertiary education in New Zealand.

The second grouping also contains three distinct groups of theoretical sources, and these address the area of individual habitus and its transformation. The first is focused around the transformation of individual habitus through shifts in perspective. Sandoval (2000), for example, introduces the concept of the 'decolonisation of the mind and imagination', Deleuze offers the concept of 'deterritorialisation' and reterritorialisation as means of moving out of a strictly defined habitus into something which is 'more', and Freire focuses on a change of perspective that comes about via the conscientisation of individuals and groups. Transformation in this sense comes from the actors perceiving things, events and contexts differently.

The second group is built around the concept of transforming individual habitus through action. Caygill talks about re-conceptualising education as resistance. Freire also fits within this group as conscientisation is always accompanied by action in his action–reflection–action hermeneutical circle. Whilst neither theorist is directly quoted, both provided a point of reflection for the development of Parts 3 and 4. This approach to transforming individual habitus via action conforms to the insistence of critical theory that theory and practice are inseparable.

The third grouping relates to the place and implications of ontology within critical pedagogy. The majority of material written by critical pedagogists does not address the ontology of persons directly. As previously noted, it seems to be the case that it is assumed that the constitution of persons relates to their post-enlightenment autonomy. Indeed Apple, Giroux and Gibson seem to make a point of reclaiming the individual – or perhaps, more accurately, reclaiming the significance of the individual – from various versions of Marxism.

However, it seems to me that a lack of engagement with ontological possibilities has seriously weakened the possibilities of both individual and institutional habitus transformation. It is my contention that a communitarian concept of ontology, based on persons being constituted as persons by relationship rather than by post-enlightenment conceptions of rationality, has the potential to provide a very important part in the transformation of both individual and corporate habitus.

In summary, my research is firmly located within the conceptual framework and practice of critical theory. It begins by using the theories of Bourdieu to uncover structural systems of injustice within university education, focusing on how and why

students are being either advantaged or disadvantaged by systems and practices. Having done that, it looks to trace these systems of domination to their sources and to uncover whose interests are being served by the particular practices. Bourdieu's concepts of misrecognition and 'field competition' then provide an account of why these contexts and processes of injustice remain unchallenged.

My inclusion of a variety of critical pedagogic critiques of neoliberalism allows me to identify the key external philosophies and policies that shape and direct the habitus of Western tertiary institutions. Here, a critical theory approach allows for the identification of whose interests are being served by current university practices and which groups are being advantaged or disadvantaged.

And, finally, the teleological focus of my research comes into play when I look to undertake the three critical tasks of my research. Those are the transformation of individual habitus, the challenging and transformation of corporate/institutional habitus and the application of alternative communitarian understandings of the ontology of persons.

1.4 Structure

The thesis is developed in four parts. In Part 1, I explore the theory and experience of structural injustice and the way in which it functions. I use the theories and insights of Pierre Bourdieu to provide an account of the form the structural injustice takes, the way in which it functions and manages to embed itself within the structure (and associated practices), and how it reproduces itself over time.

Part 2 is an examination of the wider context in which this structural injustice operates and explores the key philosophical and ideological factors (neoliberalism) that shape institutional expectations, practices and processes. It is intended to provide an account of why structural injustice is so pervasive within the university context.

Once the reasons for the existence and functioning of structural injustice have been identified and explored, Part 3 begins the move to a teleological focus and explores what factors and features require transformation from the student/agent perspective in order to address structural injustice.

Finally, in Part 4, I explore which factors, processes and ideologies require transformation from an institutional perspective, and provide an outline of the way in which this proposed transformation may address the issue of structural injustice.

1.5 Teleology

The presence and impact of structural injustice in university education is one of the most significant factors facing anyone working or studying within this context. It is deeply embedded within the structure, practices and processes of Western universities, and addressing the issue in a meaningful way poses some serious challenges. Chief amongst these are: an institutional reluctance and resistance to engaging in critical reflection; the marketisation of education consonant with the ideology of neoliberalism; and the continued misrecognition of the way in which structural injustice operates, embeds itself and reproduces over time. These issues will be explored in depth in Part 2.

There are problems associated with writing and thinking about the university as an entity. The risk of reification is real and sits uncomfortably with some readers. However, the university as an institution is the context within which structural injustice is both practised and reproduced. As such, it is not a morally neutral space and there needs to be an ethical accountability for unjust practices and outcomes. The 'university' is more than an abstract idea. It is an entity composed of staff, students and ideological commitments. Ethical responsibility lies with all of us who work within the university context. We are the ones who help reproduce structural injustice, or misrecognise what is taking place (this will be addressed in Part 1 and expanded on in Part 4) or actively confront the issues. In order to pursue any meaningful process of addressing the issue of structural injustice, we need to be able to discuss the 'ownership' of those structures and to locate responsibility for that. For this reason, the concept of the university as an entity is significant for my research as will become evident in Part 4.

I do not expect the university as an institution to change or transform itself in any meaningful way (as a result of the impact of neoliberal theory and practice as explored in Part 2). The intention, therefore, of this thesis is significantly smaller in

scope, as noted above, and I wish to accomplish two main tasks. The first is to provide an in-depth theoretical account of how this structural injustice operates and how it impacts students. As I will show, I aim to remove the option of misrecognition and of ignorance that is used by the institution to avoid addressing the issue. That structural injustice is present and the fact that it significantly impacts a variety of students in a negative way is uncontentious. When the process (and, in Part 4, I will argue the practice) of misrecognition is removed as an option, I believe (along with Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990) that the institution (if it is an ethical entity) is forced either to acknowledge the situation and act to address it or to own and accept the fact that it unjustly advantages some students over others.

My second task is aimed at supporting both students and staff of the institution who are interested in changing and challenging the structural injustice. To that end, I have devoted two of the four parts of this thesis to providing a theoretical grounding for a way in which this may happen. These models of change are intended to be starting points for addressing the issue. They are intended to be process focused rather than content specific and are presented as starting points for reflection and for actions rather than as prescriptive methodologies. They are intended to provide a possibility of hope in the face of the enormity of the change that is required. They are my contribution to the ongoing challenge to bring justice, equity and compassion to a context that is sorely in need of all three.

PART 1 – BOURDIEU AND PEDAGOGY

Figure 2. Beauty or waste? 2015, photo, A Nobbs

2 Bourdieu and Pedagogy

This chapter draws on some of the translated writings of Pierre Bourdieu and also the work of a number of commentators. The critique of Bourdieu's theories in this chapter arises as a result of my own interpretations of his assumptions and the implications of his theoretical positions when applied to university education in Aotearoa New Zealand between 2013 and 2016. As identified in the Introduction, this thesis is an issue-based examination of structural injustice within the university context. It is not a thesis about Bourdieu or his theories. His theories are (particularly insightful) tools used to uncover and engage with the issue. My interest, therefore, is not in Bourdieuian orthodoxy (and it is exceedingly difficult to define any particular strand of thought that could be defined as orthodoxy, given the decades over which his scholarship emerged and the vagaries of the various translations into English) but, rather, on the efficacy of his theoretical insights and their implications. So, whilst I have engaged deeply with Bourdieu's own writings, I have also sought to engage with a variety of interpretations and applications of Bourdieuian theory – especially in terms of their insights into issues of structural injustice.

I will be using the sociological theory of Bourdieu as a lens to consider the many cultural and structural issues that impact students engaging in tertiary study. Bourdieu's understanding of 'culture' as being, at least in part, a means for the establishment, protection, entrenchment and legitimation of systems of domination is a key factor in my decision to base my initial research around his theories. He provides a very useful methodology for examining the way in which systems and structures of domination persist, and manage to reproduce themselves, and thus how they perpetuate tacit structures of domination and what are, in effect, systems of structural injustice.

Bourdieu's theoretical approach provides a very compelling and detailed system for the analysis of the use of cultural power. I will be focused particularly on his theories of 'cultural capital', 'habitus', 'symbolic power' and 'misrecognition', and his theory of 'field'. These five theories allow for: the identification of cultural capital; the understanding of the genesis of cultural capital; the understanding of the empowerment and disempowerment related to the accumulation and use of cultural

capital; the provision of an account for the ongoing reproduction of systems of domination; and, finally, the identification of the contexts in which this cultural capital struggle takes place.

The application of these theoretical approaches to the area of tertiary study will show that the whole process of tertiary study is less than equitable and far from a level playing field. It will highlight the way in which the cultural capital that students bring to their studies has a direct and ongoing impact on their success or lack thereof. It will highlight the way that current pedagogical practice contains significant tacit cultural capital requirements and that this directly advantages students who already possess (or can access) this capital while directly disadvantaging students who do not have access to this tacit cultural capital.

Essentially, I will use Bourdieu's theories as a lens through which to examine four key areas. I will use his theory of 'cultural capital' to explore the reasons behind the fact that particular cohorts of students succeed while others fail in tertiary education. I will use his theory of 'habitus' to explore the ways in which students' aspirational horizons are defined and shaped by their socialisation. I will explore how misrecognition and symbolic power act to enable systems of domination to entrench themselves and to reproduce across generations. And, finally, I will explore the ways that monopolies in 'fields' (in terms of defining the value and the distribution of the fields' various types of cultural capital) and the rules of competition ensure that transformation is all but impossible.

I will argue that, in the light of a 'Bourdieuian' analysis, it becomes clear that not only is contemporary tertiary education far from egalitarian but it also contains what can be described as significant levels of structural injustice. This will be made evident by looking at the tacit cultural capital requirements of the educational system in general and by noting that current pedagogical practice, rather than seeking to change this outcome, acts to reinforce the existing structures of domination and is complicit in its reproduction.

Part 1 will begin by locating Bourdieu (2.1) within the wider philosophical context and, then, (2.2) identifying his specific philosophical and sociological concerns. I will identify both the major philosophical traditions he draws upon and explore how

his approach to these theories and his engagement across a variety of positions has enabled a unique and insightful perspective to be developed. In order to pre-empt some of the existing criticism of his positions, I will focus on the specific philosophical problems he attempted to address and also highlight the key sociological issues that he sought to investigate. This will be followed by a brief examination of his own specific context and the implications this has when using his theories to examine other contexts.

The section on 'Bourdieu, culture and the role of the educational system' (2.4) then moves on to identify what Bourdieu understood culture to be and, especially, his charge that culture is a means of domination. It explores the role of the education system, in particular in relation to its functional role in cultural reproduction, its legitimation of systems and structures of domination, and its role in the reproduction of class relations and inequalities.

The next section (2.5) explores the concept of 'capital'. It focuses on the three types of capital that Bourdieu identifies, 'economic capital', 'cultural capital' and 'social/symbolic capital', and looks at the way in which they interrelate, the way they are present within fields and agents, and the way they act as forms of power.

My exploration of Bourdieu's conception of 'habitus' (Chapter 3) examines how it is intrinsically linked to context and, also, ontologically linked to the notion of 'field'; I explore how the theory works, what it is intended to provide an account for, and how it still allows for conceptions of (at least partial) agent autonomy. Of particular importance in this section is the identification of the need for the transformation of agent habitus and the way in which the explicit creation of a secondary habitus may provide an effective means of doing this. The proposed transformation will be examined in depth in Part 3.

I then turn to look at the concept of 'symbolic power' (in Chapter 4) and the way in which it acts to help provide the grounds for misrecognition, and to legitimate and entrench systems and structures of domination.

My examination of Bourdieu's construction of 'field' (Chapter 5) seeks to explore five key areas. The first is the idea that field is the context within which the

relations between agents and structures take place. The second is the idea that the concept of field is complex, that it contains varying degrees of autonomy, that it is impacted by external 'fields of power' and that, internally, fields have both autonomous and heteronomous poles. The third area is the largely negative impact that fields can have on 'new entrants' and the fourth is the three key roles of agents within any particular field. The fifth and final area is the issue of whether or not fields are ontologically constituting of agents.

Finally, I will highlight four key areas that need to be addressed in order for any transformation of the current structural injustices to take place. I will explore the areas of pedagogical transformation and habitus transformation, the 'rules' of field competition and the need for strategies to deal with the process of 'misrecognition'.

2.1   Bourdieu's Approach to Philosophy

Bourdieu draws inspiration from a variety of philosophical perspectives and traditions. That he does not locate himself within one particular framework is the result, at least in part, to what Webb, Schirato and Danaher (2002) describe as his eclecticism; it is an eclecticism that has two distinct advantages:

> The first is that as a 'visiting' non-specialist, he is relatively free to move across fields such as art history or linguistics without being directed by the 'ways of seeing' of that field. And, as a corollary, he is also free both to ignore issues or problems which practitioners might consider essential to their thinking or enquiries, and to ask questions, or pursue lines of enquiry, which might be unthinkable to those closely involved with the field and its ways of thinking. The second advantage is that he is able to use insights derived from different theorists to transform bodies of knowledge and give them a 'practical' that is to say, political – edge or dimension. (p. 4)

This eclecticism, confidence or freedom to move across and within fields (and/or disciplines) is significant in at least three ways. First, it is reflective of his approach to philosophy, given that he draws from a wide variety of traditions, including Althusser, Durkheim, Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Wittgenstein, and others.

Second, it allows him a perspective and analysis of fields not given to those whose 'ways of seeing' are directed by what Bourdieu calls (see Chapter 5) field rules and field competition. Bourdieu can, and does, bring insights and perspectives to the analysis of social life within fields and other social hierarchies, which are unlikely to have been developed within the confines of those particular fields. In a similar fashion, he is able to identify themes, approaches and methods that are transferrable and can be applied in other contexts.

The third significant point relates to the kind of criticism levelled at Bourdieu and his theories. Bourdieu's confidence in moving through and between fields can be seen to be alienatory. When actors within a field, who have struggled and competed for cultural capital and for their place in the hierarchy, are faced with what, in effect, is an 'interloper' who raises questions not only in relation to the epistemology of the field but also in relation to the unjust legitimation and reproduction of their very positions of power, a friendly response is unlikely. Criticism of Bourdieu is often framed in a way that assumes his examination of the issues had originated within the field – that is, it had been produced within the implicit and explicit rules of the field. These rules, naturally, do not bind the 'interloper' and, as such, seem to me to have resulted in criticisms that miss the mark (Apple, 1995; Giroux, 2001). Both assume the same constraints, agendas, positions and rules under which they would be working from within that field – and these rules, etc., by and large, do not apply to Bourdieu (or to anyone else from outside that field). As a researcher, observer and practitioner based outside a formal academic faculty, I experience a similar freedom to question and critique that is not constrained by membership of a particular school or academic field.

That Bourdieu draws from a variety of philosophical traditions and perspectives is well documented. Calhoun (2008) notes that Bourdieu reflects three central themes. He leans on Marx's concern with power, domination and inequalities in social life, Weber's concern for status hierarchies and the differentiation that is present in all spheres of social life, and Durkheim's view that human life is deeply social.

Additionally, Webb et al. (2002) argue that, from Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, Bourdieu gains some of his insight into the concept of field:

> Both understand language not as a mirror reflecting a pre-given
> reality, but as a 'practice' that 'makes the world', or at least
> determines how we understand it. Each field… has its own sets of
> discourses and styles of language, and that not only determines what
> is seen… but what things are valued, what questions can be asked,
> and what ideas can be thought. (p. 13)

Bourdieu, therefore, is happy to draw from a variety of sources in order to illuminate and help shape his key theoretical positions. In the next section, we identify how he defines his own position in relation to the more structured philosophical issues.

2.2 Bourdieu's Meta-philosophical Themes

I can identify three particular philosophical themes that appear to be central to Bourdieu's development of his key theoretical concepts. The first is a general commitment to the legitimation of sociology as a genuine science (this was significant for Bourdieu – see Bourdieu (1990a, 1990b) – but does not impact directly on my research) while the other two are central for the understanding of how and why Bourdieu's key concepts developed the way they did. These are: an attempt to overcome the objectivist/subjectivist dichotomy prevalent within sociological theory; and the articulation of a philosophy of the social as the ground upon which his concepts are able to interact and be expressed.

Bourdieu's attempts to address the objectivist/subjectivist dichotomy within sociology, politics and education is an important theme, and one that is central to the development of his theories, and it also highlights the fact that much of the criticism directed at him (Apple, 1995; Giroux, 2001) fails to take into account this very significant intention. Wacquant (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) describes Bourdieu's position this way:

> Based on a non-Cartesian social ontology that refuses to split object
> and subject, intention and cause, materiality and symbolic
> representation, Bourdieu seeks to overcome the debilitating

reduction of sociology to either an objectivist physics of material structures or a constructivist phenomenology of cognitive forms by means of a genetic structuralism capable of subsuming both. (p. 5)

This is a clear statement of Bourdieu's position. He seeks to avoid joining either position on the basis that neither allows an adequate or realistic appraisal of the way in which social life functions. Charges that Bourdieu gives priority to structure and does not allow for agent responses seem, clearly, to miss this explicit commitment. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) put the issue beyond doubt in this fashion:

Against all forms of methodological monism that purport to assert the ontological priority of structure or agent, system or actor, the collective or the individual, Bourdieu affirms the primacy of relations… What is special about Bourdieu is the zeal and relentlessness with which he deploys such a conception, as evidenced by the fact that both of his key concepts of habitus and field designate bundles of relations. (pp. 15-16)

This would seem to be Bourdieu's primary ontological commitment. Priority is not invested in the agent and nor is it invested in the structure. Ontological priority is invested in the relations between things that exist in the social realm– relations between agents, relations within fields, and relations between agents and structures. Webb et al. (2002) describe this interplay between agents and structures this way:

Bourdieu, reading across both subjectivist and objectivist approaches simultaneously, insists that practice is always informed by a sense of agency [subjectivism] (the ability to understand and control our own actions), but that the possibilities of agency must be understood and contextualized in terms of its relation to the objective structures of a culture [objectivism or structuralism] – what he refers to, generally, as cultural fields. For Bourdieu his relationship between field and habitus does not completely determine people's actions and thoughts, but no practice is explicable without reference to them. (p. 36)

Bourdieu, therefore, allows room for both structures and agents to play significant roles within the arena of social life and interaction, and, as we shall see

when we explore his concepts of habitus and field, this allows for a very accurate analysis of how social life functions, is legitimated and is reproduced. This ontological commitment to the priority of relations is evident when we move to look at the third theme: Bourdieu's implicit philosophy of the social world. Bourdieu and Wacquant note (1992) that Bourdieu's philosophy of the social:

> … is monist in the sense that it refuses to establish sharp demarcations between the external and the internal, the conscious and the unconscious, the bodily and the discursive. It seeks to capture the intentionality without intention, the knowledge without cognitive intent, the pre-reflective, infraconscious mastery that agents acquire of their social world by way of durable immersion within it… and which defines properly human social practice. (pp. 19-20)

Bourdieu understands the social world as not being built on hierarchical relations between an object and a subject (where one takes priority in the shaping of the other) but, rather, on "a relation of 'ontological complicity'… between habitus, as the socially constituted principle of perception and appreciation, and the world which determines it" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 20). Calhoun et al. (1993) provide a very succinct summary of this social world, which:

> … can be conceived as a multidimensional space that can be constructed empirically by discovering the main factors of differentiation which account for the differences observed in a given social universe… the structure of this space is given by the distribution of the various forms of capital [these will be explored in 2.5]… firstly economic capital, in its various kinds; secondly cultural capital or better, informational capital, again in its different kinds; and thirdly two forms of capital that are very strongly correlated, social capital, which consists of resources based on connections and group membership, and symbolic capital, which is the form the different types of capital take once they are perceived and recognized as legitimate. (pp. 3-4)

The social world, then, is a series of relations or relational spaces where both agents and structures act to shape and define each other. Bourdieu (1997, p. 180) describes this as losing ourselves in a game (the concept of the 'game' is metaphorical but the actions we take while playing the game are not). In playing this game, while we

may struggle as individual agents, we are, at the same time, always part of something significantly larger. "Play is not simply a diversion from some more basic reality but a central part of the activity by which forms of life are constituted, reproduced, and sometimes transformed" (Calhoun, 2008, p. 362).

However, this larger context is not fixed and unchanging. Calhoun (2008) points out that this larger context is subject to change:

> The social structures that enable and constrain our action may seem unchanging, but they are not. What appear to be fixed structures in social life are (a) the product of historical action that creates them, [in this sense they are not 'natural' occurrences and they reflect the specific interests of those in positions of domination] (b) never completely finalized but always subject to either reinforcement or change, and (c) usually more reproduced than changed, even when people try to change them. Those with greater resources [particularly economic and cultural capital] have greater capacity to make the structure serve their interests, but even those with minimal resources are usually drawn into reproducing the existing culture [hierarchies and systems of domination] and social structure as their only ways of achieving anything and as defenses against various threats. (p. 365)

In summary, it is important to be cognisant of the presence of the three meta-philosophical themes and of the way in which they shape the development of Bourdieu's theory. His location of ontological priority in the relations between things (rather than giving priority to either subject or object) is of particular significance. Bourdieu's 'ontological complicity' allows a more nuanced understanding of how habitus, misrecognition and fields function and act to reproduce systems of domination. We will examine each of these points in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

2.3 Bourdieu's Sociological Concern

Bourdieu's compelling central concern is focused around the reproduction of systems of domination, which Swartz describes as "the question of how stratified social systems of hierarchy and domination persist and reproduce intergenerationally without powerful resistance and without the conscious recognition of their members" (1997, p. 6). So, Bourdieu's goal is: to explore the way that groups and individuals are held in self-reproducing systems of domination; to provide an account of why there is no significant resistance to this situation; and to explore the way in which the

dominated groups and individuals manage not only to 'misrecognise' (see Chapter 4 for an account of misrecognition) what is happening within their contexts but also to contribute to and collude in their own domination. He does this, as noted above, by focusing on: what is at stake in systems of domination (cultural capital); identifying the genesis of that capital and how it provides aspirational horizons (habitus); how misrecognition can be understood and accounted for (symbolic power); and, finally, how this misrecognition – in conjunction with the use of symbolic power – acts as a means of legitimating and reproducing systems and hierarchies of domination.

Bourdieu's theories provide a very elegant and effective means for analysing the genesis of power, the use of power and the reproduction of power within the context of social structures and systems. He provides the tools that enable a very detailed analysis of power at work within these contexts and that highlight the role played by his concept of misrecognition – as the means by which unjust systems of domination are both legitimised and reproduced. However, his own approach also requires some contextualisation in order to ensure that my analysis is not coloured by the assumptions that are part of his historical context and that are embedded in his theories. Therefore, before looking at the content and practice of his theories, it is important to take note of the distinct context and of two assumptions that both shape the way his theories developed and were seen to interact with and account for the social world in which he operated.

In terms of the actual historical context in which Bourdieu developed his theory, Swartz (1997) notes that:

> … since Bourdieu developed his concept within a distinct national
> high culture tradition, it appears tied to a strong assumption of high
> cultural hegemony. Some of its rhetorical power is lost when
> exported to other national contexts where there is more cultural
> pluralism. (p. 81)

This is a pertinent point as very few cultures mimic that of France and its long-established and clearly defined notions of high and low culture. However, I am not attempting to translate the results of his research across cultures (where there may well be issues) but, rather, to apply his methodology in order to locate, identify and critique systems of domination within tertiary education. The point, however, needs to

be borne in mind that Bourdieu's theories do belong to a specific culture within a specific period of history. And, while he does believe that his work is applicable to any stratified society, an awareness of his historical context will be useful to ensure that the application of his theory does not include inappropriate cultural assumptions. I will address some of his more problematic cultural assumptions in the conclusion to this chapter.

Bourdieu also makes two key assumptions that impact on the cross-cultural transfer of his theories. The first assumption is that the fundamental characteristics of social life are competition, misrecognition and the domination of hierarchy over egalitarianism. Swartz (1997) argues that:

> Bourdieu's relational method intersects with core assumptions he makes about the fundamental character of social life. The relations he constructs are invariably competitive rather than co-operative, unconscious rather than conscious, and hierarchical rather than egalitarian. The recurring image of social life one finds in Bourdieu's work is one of competitive distinction, domination, and mis-perception. (p. 63)

While there is no doubt that this assumption about social life within stratified Western societies does reflect (very accurately, at least in part) much social interaction, it does not account for the full range of interactions and social relations. Because Bourdieu's focus is very much on the issue of power, and its location and expression within social hierarchies, it is natural that he views society in this way. However, social life also includes practices such as altruism, social justice and solidarity, amongst others, which provide a case for exceptions to the general rule. It is possible that Bourdieu would argue that these exceptions are simply a case of the dominant providing incentives to the dominated so that they will continue to mis-perceive their situation. This might account for practices like philanthropy but it does not account for practices like social justice.

These exceptions lead to the second assumption that he makes in relation to the ontology of persons. Bourdieu seems to assume the traditional post-enlightenment concept of the autonomous individual in his work. The individual is a person because of their rationality, their autonomy and their ability to think in terms of past, present

and future. The individual is thus, by definition, in competition with other autonomous individuals in the accumulation of scarce resources – be these economic capital, social capital, cultural capital or goods and services. Even within stratified 'Western' cultures, this perspective is challenged by communitarian theorists (MacIntyre, 1984; Taylor, 1995), who argue for an understanding of the constitution of persons as entities based on role, place or relationship. Again, Bourdieu's assumption can be problematic when we attempt to shift his methodology across cultures, especially to more pluralistic cultures. In these contexts, some groups of 'individuals' do not see themselves as completely distinct from their wider extended families and communities (for example, Māori concepts of whānau, hapū and iwi). Cultural roles play a key part in their understanding of their social life and cultural/communal obligations are key components of their habitus.

I do not believe that either of these assumptions means that Bourdieu's theories and methodologies cannot be applied in different cultural settings. I think that the commonalities between various 'Western' stratified societies are similar enough to allow for the very successful application of his theories and to overcome most of the objections that can be raised. Habitus, in particular, allows for the close examination of the key cultural elements a person (and, to an extent, a group) brings to their context. I believe that this will allow for both the inclusion of non-self-serving interests and the conception of the self as something that is more than simply a post-enlightenment autonomous individual.

2.4 Bourdieu, Culture and the Role of the Educational System

Culture is understood as providing the grounds and the context for human interaction and communication. But, more significantly, Bourdieu (1999) identifies a second definition: that it is also a means of domination as it establishes, protects, entrenches and maintains the hierarchies that contain and embody the sources of power that shape the ways that people interact and the ways in which resources are distributed within a particular context. Swartz (1997) summarises this as follows:

> Culture includes beliefs, traditions, values and language; it also
> mediates practices by connecting individuals and groups to

institutionalized hierarchies. Whether in the form of dispositions, objects, systems, or institutions, cultures embody power relations. Further, many cultural practices in the advanced societies constitute relatively autonomous arenas of struggle for distinction. Intellectuals – the specialized producers and transmitters of culture – play key roles in shaping those arenas and their institutionalized hierarchies. (p. 1)

However, discussing culture can be problematic. For example, from within my professional context, I can clearly identify at least four layers of what might be described as hierarchical culture. We start with the dominant 'Western' culture that is mediated to us largely via the World Wide Web and through the arts (music, films, fashion). This layer is dominated by multinational companies and the materialistic and consumer-based lifestyles they promote, and can be seen as a very insidious form of cultural colonisation (and as a direct consequence of neoliberal ideology as will be discussed in Part 2). Then, lower down in the hierarchy, we encounter our own national culture. This is more pluralistic in make-up but is still largely Western in origin and influence. Following that, we then meet with the culture of university or tertiary education, which carries with it its own set of rules, expectations and cultural capital requirements, before we finally encounter the culture that students bring with them to their education (this is influenced to an extent by 'Western' and 'national' culture and is what Bourdieu would describe as habitus – this will be described in detail later in Chapter 3).

Bourdieu seems to confine himself largely to addressing the national understanding of culture (as distinct from transnational understandings that are present in neoliberalism and that I will address in Chapter 9) as this is the context within which his methodology operates. He then accounts for the university culture by his use of the 'field' theory (Chapter 5), describing it as one context amongst many where the competition for symbolic power takes place.

However, he does pay significant attention to analysing and describing the role that education plays. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) note that the education system performs three key functions. Firstly, it performs a cultural reproduction function. Swartz describes it in this way: "Analogous to the Catholic Church, the school is an institution specifically contrived to conserve, transmit and inculcate the cultural

cannons of society" (1997, p. 190). Education, then, is not simply about the transmission of skills and of technological knowledge but also about the normalisation and entrenchment of existing social relationships and structures. Secondly, a consequence of this cultural reproduction is that the education system legitimates existing systems and structures of domination. It does this by normalising the entrenched inequalities and this normalisation acts to deflect agent attention and contributes directly to agent misrecognition. Finally, when cultural reproduction combines with traditional pedagogy, the education system acts to reproduce existing class relations and inequalities.

These three functions are very significant. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) note that the prevailing (and traditional) pedagogy in France rewards a refined mastery of linguistic skill and that this clearly advantages students who are rich in the required cultural capital. He also notes that deficiencies in this mastery are not corrected by the institutions and thus three things happen. Firstly, the 'rich in cultural capital' students are rewarded for what is essentially no more than membership of a dominant social group/class. Secondly, the students deficient in this tacit cultural capital are disadvantaged and, in effect, discriminated against in ways that are based not on talent or effort but simply on cultural or class membership. And, finally, Swartz notes: "style as much as content becomes the mechanism whereby cultural privilege is reinforced and cultural disadvantage is left unattended" (1997, p. 200). This process ensures that the existing social hierarchies are reinforced and rewarded by the very process of engaging in education.

But it is not just linguistic style that serves to entrench and reward existing social class systems of domination. Swartz (1997) contends that:

> Bourdieu focuses on how the higher-educational system reproduces, rather than redistributes, the unequal distribution of cultural capital. This leads him to examine the structural features or curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation for an explanation of how this occurs. He argues that formal schooling contributes to the maintenance of an unequal social system by privileging certain cultural heritages and penalizing others. French schools, he finds, emphasize the forms of knowledge and cultural ideals and styles dominant social groups in particular cherish. (p. 199)

The implications of these particular findings are both disturbing and far reaching. They highlight that, not only is the educational system far from equitable, it is also fundamentally designed to reproduce, entrench and maintain this inequality across generations. Any transformation directed at the redistribution of cultural capital or the introduction of a more egalitarian context is, thus, required to offer a completely new system. It will simply not be enough to change curriculum, assessment or pedagogy without addressing the underlying systems and processes of the accumulation and use of symbolic power and symbolic violence (two concepts that are explored in Chapter 4).

As noted earlier, another function provided by the education system is the legitimation of the existing systems of domination. Any use of symbolic power requires that it is first legitimised and Bourdieu believes that this happens by the actor's misrecognition of causal factors within a context.

> Educational institutions, Bourdieu therefore argues, operate as an 'immense cognitive machine' that under the appearance of technical neutrality impose primitive intellectual classifications that ratify existing social classifications. This process goes misrecognized (by both those using the power and by those it is being used upon) at a tacit level. Indeed, it can only operate tacitly, since widespread awareness of this 'latent function' would make the system inoperative... schools consecrate social distinctions by constituting them as academic distinctions. (Swartz, 1997, pp. 203-204)

This transformation of social distinctions into academic distinctions is very significant. Because agents misrecognise this transformation, they tend to assume that the 'academic distinctions' are legitimate and this response further entrenches social inequalities.

2.5 Capital

The theory of 'cultural capital' is possibly Bourdieu's greatest contribution to contemporary thought. It is certainly a significant key to understanding his theory as the other major concepts all either play supporting roles or explore the implications of the ways in which this capital functions, is distributed or is competed for. Habitus

(Chapter 3) acts to allow us to identify the genesis of cultural capital and also to understand how this capital shapes the possibilities and the horizons of its bearer. Similarly, field (discussed in Chapter 5) provides us with a description of the context in which the struggle for power is carried out and also a description of how this struggle is mediated. Finally, symbolic power (see Chapter 4) and symbolic violence act as tools to explain the consequences of cultural capital struggle and the implications for the dominators (in terms of reproduction) and those who are dominated (in terms of disadvantage and continued misrecognition). All three are involved in addressing Bourdieu's key concerns: How do systems of domination come about? How do they manage to reproduce across time? Why are systems of domination allowed to continue?

Cultural capital, for Bourdieu, is first and foremost something that, while it reflects socialisation to a degree, is also something quite tangible (Bourdieu, 1999). By re-conceptualising culture as both a form of power and also as a receptacle for traits, perspectives and horizons, Bourdieu is able to extend the logic of economic analysis to goods, services, perspectives and preferences that, traditionally, were not perceived as capital. He is thus able to explore their roles in a variety of situations. How does cultural capital affect access to institutions? How does it impact on the success of agents within social contexts? How does it enable the reproduction of systems of domination? How does it go unrecognised or misrecognised by agents? Calhoun et al. (1993) describe Bourdieu's concept of capital this way:

> Bourdieu's notion of capital, which is neither Marxian nor formal economic, (although it draws from both) entails the capacity to exercise control over one's own future and that of others. As such it is a form of power. This notion of capital also serves to theoretically mediate individual and society. On one level, society is structured by the differential distribution of capital… on another level, individuals strive to maximize their capital… The capital they are able to accumulate defines their social trajectory (that is, their life chances); moreover, it also serves to reproduce class distinctions. (pp. 4-5)

While the 'capacity to exercise control over one's own future' may be less certain than the quote assumes, the key point is that capital, in this sense, is first and

foremost a means of power. Possessors of capital (in any of its forms) have the means to practise some level of control over their own futures and, should they possess enough capital, over the futures of other agents.

Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) identifies three distinct kinds of capital (and notes that an expression of one or more of these is sometimes present as a fourth form), which can all be present in an actual or in a symbolic form:

> I have shown that capital presents itself under three fundamental species (each with its own subtypes), namely, economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. To these we must add symbolic capital, which is the form that one or another of these species takes when it is grasped through categories of perception that recognize its specific logic or, if you prefer, misrecognize the arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation… I have analyzed the peculiarity of cultural capital, which we should in fact call 'informational capital' to give the notion its full generality, and which exists in three forms, embodied, objectified, or institutionalized. Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. (pp. 118-119)
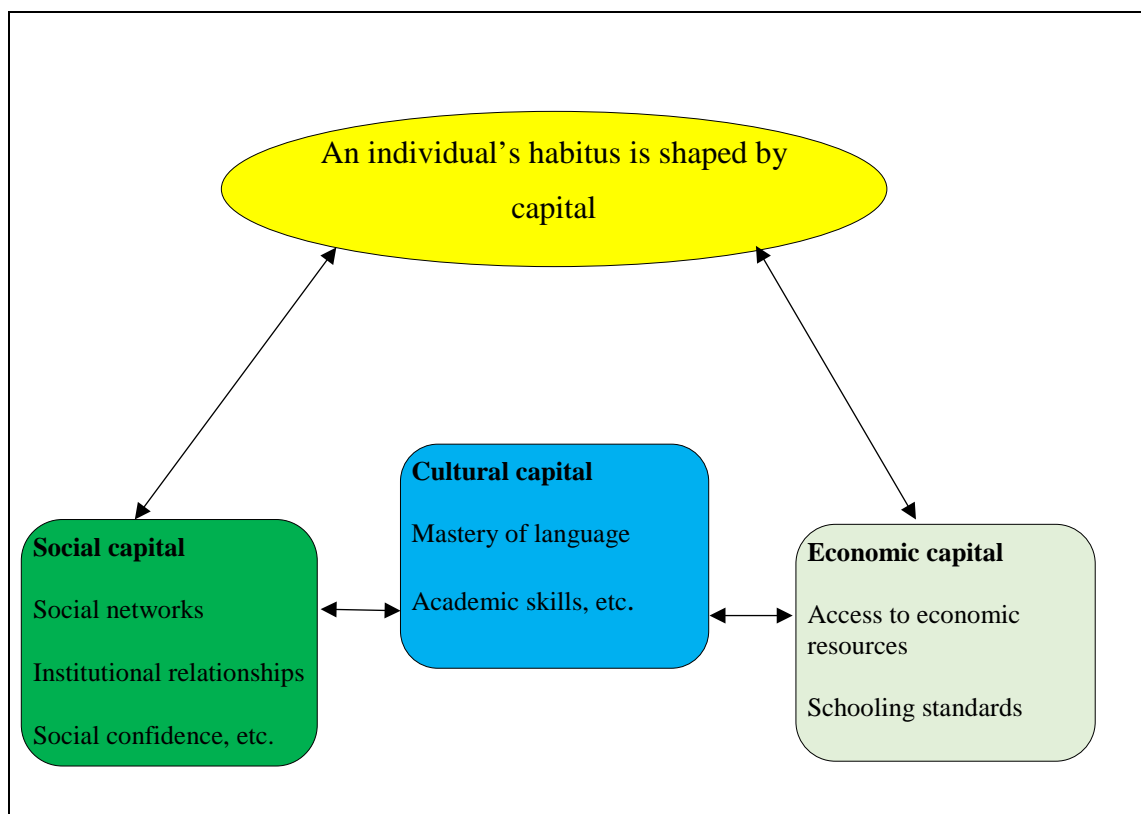
Figure 3. Links between habitus and capital, 2014, diagram, A Nobbs

Figure 3, above, illustrates the links between the various types of capital and an agent's habitus: economic capital can be thought of as material property and, in effect, cold hard cash; cultural capital can be described as the accumulated cultural skills that are in demand within a particular field (academic context); and social capital can be considered to be the network of connections within and across fields, the detailed insights and knowledge of the rules of any particular field, and perhaps, also, the ability to position oneself within a field in order to attract the greatest-possible cultural capital distribution.

This description, while conveying some of the complexity involved in the presence and application of capital types, does not fully identify the roles these capitals may play. Calhoun et al. (1993) delve further into this point:

> Much of Bourdieu's work focuses on the interplay among what he distinguishes as social, cultural, and economic capital. Economic capital is the most efficient form of capital; a characterizing trait of capitalism, it alone can be conveyed in the guise of general, anonymous, all-purpose, convertible money from one generation to the next. Economic capital can be more easily and efficiently converted into symbolic (that is, social and cultural) capital than vice versa, although symbolic capital can ultimately be transformed into economic capital… Symbolic capital functions to mask the economic domination of the dominant class and socially legitimate hierarchy by essentializing and naturalizing social position. That is, noneconomic fields articulate with, reproduce, and legitimate class relations through misrecognition. (p. 5)

Capital is not neutral. The masking role played by symbolic capital in the entrenchment and reproduction of systems and hierarchical positions of domination is very significant. It is not just the uneven and unequal distribution of capital that reproduces privilege and oppression, it is also the very nature of capital itself that allows this to continue largely unnoticed and unchallenged.

Capital has practical consequences. It is not merely the product of a particular field as it also has the ability to change an agent's position within that field. All three types of capital from Figure 3 have implications for both the possessor of that capital and for other agents with whom they interact in any particular field.

Capital is also not intrinsically static. It is able to be converted from one kind to another. Calhoun (2008) highlights this ability:

> There are two senses in which capital is converted from one form to another. One is part of the intergenerational reproduction of capital. Rich people try to make sure that their children go to good colleges… this is a way of converting money into cultural capital (educational credentials). In this form, it can be passed on and potentially reconverted into economic form. The second sense of conversion of capital is more immediate. The athlete with great successes and capital specific to his or her sporting field – prestige, fame – may convert this into money by signing agreements to endorse products, etc. (p. 381)

It is difficult to pin down a definitive account of Bourdieu's conception of cultural capital. However, it does include things like verbal and written facility, aesthetic preferences (what counts as art, the significance of literature), food preferences (in terms of what is consumed and how it is consumed), a general cultural awareness, information about and expectations of the school system, employment horizons and expectations, and educational and trade credentials. Effectively, it is the actual goods, perspectives and horizons from the socialisation and enculturation that take place over one's life but particularly in the formative years. It is, thus, clearly linked to an agent's habitus. Yang (2014) notes that:

> Capital, habitus and field are 'interlocking'. Endowed with the system of predispositions, the practices of social agents, mediated by habitus, are adapted to the structure and thereby contribute to its reproduction. (p. 1528)

Cultural capital operates mostly at an implicit or tacit level and it is the job of the sociologist, firstly, to identify this capital and then to explore its impact on the agent as he or she operates in social contexts.

What is also significant is that Bourdieu (1999) seems to believe that the accumulation of new types of cultural capital is difficult if not impossible (he allows for the acquisition of cultural capital via 'field competition' but the accumulation of new types of cultural capital seems determined by the agent's habitus – especially in relation to the aspirational horizons that habitus provides). This point seems deeply

problematic because it introduces an element of what can be described as fatalism into his analysis. If cultural capital (and indeed habitus) is simply a given that cannot be challenged and transformed, then any agents with what is seen as deficient cultural capital will simply not be able to succeed in that context. Bourdieu expands on this theme, as we shall see when we look at his concept of habitus, but he does this simply to reinforce his point and the problem remains unresolved. While Bourdieu is committed to social and structural transformation (especially in terms of egalitarianism), I suspect that he believes the problem must be tackled by focusing the need for transformation not on the agent but on the structures of domination that exist. There is no doubt that the educational systems of domination are in need of transformation but I am not convinced that this alone will transform the outcome for agents with 'deficient' cultural capital. I suspect that there is also a need to identify the tacit elements of cultural capital requirements embedded in educational assessment, pedagogy and administrative processes, and to look at ways in which agents can access this cultural capital in order to succeed. This will require the addition of 'new' cultural capital and, in some cases, the transformation of both agent and institutional habitus.

2.6   The Accumulation of Cultural Capital

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital emerged from his attempts to explain unequal academic achievement within the French educational system. He found that traditional explanations relating success or failure to natural abilities, such as perceived intelligence or notions of giftedness, were inadequate. This success, or lack thereof, could be much better explained by the quantity and quality of cultural capital the students inherited from their families.

Cultural capital is understood by Bourdieu as existing in different states. Swartz highlights this by noting: "firstly, it refers to the ensemble of cultivated dispositions that are internalized by the individual through socialization and that constitute schemes of appreciation and understanding" (1997, p. 76). The second part of this quote is particularly important. Cultural capital can be used, appropriated or consumed only when it is first understood. It can be possessed tacitly but can be used (exchanged, expressed or traded) only when it is recognised and

acknowledged/understood. This is a significant difference from the use of material goods whose consumption is related simply to possession. For Bourdieu, cultural capital is embodied and is, in a sense, a form of knowledge. As such, for it to be meaningful, it needs to be understood (or at least internalised) in a similar way to that by which we engage with theory or music. This becomes even more significant when thinking around how to address cultural capital imbalances within student cohorts. It is simply not possible to merely allocate extra economic resources to 'at risk' student groups and hope that this imbalance will be addressed. Rather, it implies that explicitly teaching this cultural capital (or finding another method for students to acquire and consume it) will be necessary.

For Bourdieu, agents begin the accumulation of cultural capital in early childhood. However, this is not by accident or osmosis. It requires a significant investment of time and pedagogical action by an agent's parents and extended family, and, often also, by hired professionals. This intentional accumulation of cultural capital is significantly affected by the agent's social context. The more removed from mere economic survival this context is, the higher and richer the level of cultural capital accumulation becomes. This, of course, acts to reinforce and reproduce class-based inequalities and, in fact, turns these class-based inequalities into cultural capital differences. Bourdieu (1999) then notes that this cultural capital investment is rewarded in education, in marriage practices and in company hiring practices. Those agents with high levels of significant cultural capital succeed while those who lack these are penalised.

Secondly, Bourdieu (1999) notes that cultural capital exists in an institutionalised form. In this sense, structural entities as well as agents can embody cultural capital. An example of this is the educational credential system. Swartz (1997) contends that:

> Bourdieu places great importance upon the growth of the higher educational system and the role it has come to play in the allocation of status in the advanced societies. Expanded higher education has created massive credential markets that are today decisive in reproducing the social class structure. (p. 76)

Because educational credentials play a very significant role in employment and, in particular, in gaining access to socially desirable positions, parents are increasingly required to invest in their children's cultural capital in order for them to reap the

benefits both during and after their tertiary education. Parents invest their economic capital in sending their children to prestigious educational institutions where this economic capital is translated into the kind of cultural capital that will provide them access to prestigious employment. It is then translated back into economic capital when they gain employment but it is important to note that economic capital on its own is not enough. Without the translation into cultural capital, the children are not generally able to access those positions that are considered socially prestigious. Obviously, this is a process and a strategy that require a certain level of economic affluence in order to be effective.

Swartz (1997) notes that:

> Bourdieu argues that it is the tremendous growth of the objectified and institutionalized forms of cultural capital into relatively autonomous markets that has been perhaps the single most important development to shape the stratification structure and the role of cultural producers in advanced societies. (p. 76)

For Bourdieu, cultural capital has, increasingly, become the basis of social stratification and it is the unequal distribution of this capital across social classes that leads to the social inequality present in contemporary society.

It does seem important to return to the point that there are significant distinctions between cultural capital and economic capital. Economic capital is represented by actual things (money, property, access to credit). It is easy to exchange and it is accepted as a form of power within most social contexts. Cultural capital, on the other hand, seems more related to possibility and potential. It has the potential to be converted into academic success. It has the potential to provide access to prestigious employment. However, there is no guarantee of social improvement or of access to aspirational social positions. These are simply possibilities that become more or less likely dependent on the level and type of cultural capital the agent carries with them (and also dependent on the agent's accumulation of social/symbolic capital).

All types of capital, cultural, social and economic, are the objects of struggle as valued resources. Swartz (1997) observes that:

> Individuals and groups draw upon a variety of cultural, social, and
> symbolic resources in order to maintain and enhance their positions
> in the social order. Bourdieu conceptualizes such resources as capital
> when they function as a social relation of power. (p. 69)

For Bourdieu, then, cultural capital – as a means of accessing academic success, educational credentials and, thereby, aspirational social positions – is both a source of power and, at the same time, an object of struggle.

By re-conceptualising the concept of culture and by extending Marx's concept of capital from the purely economic to what are ostensibly non-economic goods, services and socialised perspectives, Bourdieu created a key conceptual and analytical pathway. The creation of a new species of capital allows for a very rich and in-depth analysis of how power is created, maintained and expressed within social and structural contexts. In effect, it allows us to move beyond simple generalisations about an agent's success within society. It allows us to examine who succeeds within specific contexts and to highlight the reasons for this success. When the notion of success is applied to the Western university educational context, we can identify that it is most closely related to two things: the cultural capital endowments that individual students bring with them; and, also, the tacit cultural capital requirements of individual papers, schools and faculties (see Parts 3 and 4). A cultural capital analysis highlights the structural injustices present within the educational system. It enables us to see that students are not being assessed on a level playing field and that any attempts at introducing a more egalitarian situation must encompass structural and pedagogical transformations.

3 Habitus in Context

While Bourdieu's concept of habitus can be seen as a stand-alone concept, it is perhaps more useful to understand it as something that is intrinsically linked to its context. Habitus has its associated meanings and functions but it is not presented as something that should be interpreted or understood in isolation from his other key theoretical insights. Yang (2014) notes that Bourdieu describes 'practice' as resulting from the interaction of field, habitus and capital:

> Bourdieu stresses that practice is not merely deduced from either habitus or field, but from the interaction of capital, habitus and field. In *Distinction* (1984, p. 101), Bourdieu formulates practice as follows
>
> [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice
>
> This concise formulation emphasizes the interlocking relationship between Bourdieu's three main 'thinking tools': habitus, capital and field. Unlike some arguments in Bourdieu's earlier writing in which his theory of practice focuses heavily on habitus, it makes clear that Bourdieu refuses to reduce practice to the independent effects of any of these three. (p. 1523)

So 'practice' is dependent on the relations between the three areas. Grenfell and James (1998) take this argument further by noting that:

> Bourdieu has referred to the relationship between field and habitus as one of 'ontological complicity' (1982a, p. 47, *Lecon sur la Lecon*). Ontology can be defined as the nature of being or the essence of things. For Bourdieu, such things are the product of habitus and field and between habitus and field: (now quoting Bourdieu) "the relation between habitus and field operates in two ways. On the one side, it is a relation of conditioning: the field structures the habitus, which is the product of the embodiment of immanent necessity of a field (or of a hierarchically interesting set of fields). On the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction: habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and with value, in which it is worth investing one's practice". [1989, p. 44, *Towards a reflexive sociology*]. (p. 16)

By making the link an ontological one, Bourdieu, in effect, argues that field and habitus act to constitute each other. This is an interesting point. Can the notion of habitus even exist without the relational existence of the notion of field? Does habitus

have any meaning at all without also being part of an ontologically constituting context?

Social practice (or the behaviour of agents) would seem to need to be understood as being conditioned and shaped by the interrelating of: their capital, which defines their chances of success within a particular field; their habitus, which shapes their aspirational horizons; and the field itself, which determines their position in the hierarchy and their access to the cultural capital produced. Calhoun et al. (1993) put it this way:

> Bourdieu interrelates the three central concepts we have outlined. He conceives of social practice in terms of the relationship between class habitus and current capital as realized within the specific logic of a given field. An agent's capital is itself the product of the habitus, just as the specificity of a field is an objectified history that embodies the habitus of agents who have operated in that field. (p. 6)

3.1   Description

The birth of Bourdieu's concept of habitus relates to the need to describe the reason that agents act in certain specific ways within fields that are not attributable to observable and rational processes and rules. Calhoun (2008) describes the issue thus:

> The logic of practice calls attention to two paradoxes: (1) doing anything depends on processes of which we are not usually conscious and do not usually rationally control… (2) individual actions appear as though they were consciously strategic even when they are not because they are given the effect of direction by the larger social field. (p. 365)

The concept of habitus is, therefore, required to address or provide an account of the reasons that agents act in the ways they do within fields, especially when these actions seem to be in opposition to their own best interests. Having used the concept of cultural capital to account for the success or lack of success for student groups and cohorts, Bourdieu is left needing to account for how these inegalitarian social systems can make sense to both those who are in the dominating group and those who are in the group being dominated. He does this by providing the very elegant concept of 'habitus' as a means for accomplishing three central goals. First, he uses the concept to

address the issue of individual agency and, in particular, to explain why individual actions contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of socially inequitable systems rather than challenge and transform them. Secondly, he uses it to provide an account of the genesis of cultural capital. And, finally, he uses the idea of habitus to explain how an agent's aspirational horizons are shaped and defined by the cultural capital he or she inherits.

Bourdieu sets out to explain how an agent's action can be accounted for without recourse to systems of rules, norms or conscious intention. This last part, conscious intention, is particularly important. For any system of power to function, there needs to be a form of legitimation. So, for inequitable systems of domination to be able to function and reproduce over time, they must be legitimised by both the dominating and the dominated. For Bourdieu, the only way this can happen is when an agent misrecognises what is happening in their context. For, if they were to recognise fully the systems of domination to which they were subject, there would be rejection if not revolution. The theory of 'habitus' is an attempt to account for the occurrence of this misrecognition. It is an elegant response to this issue of "how can one take into account both the observed regularities of social action... and the experiential reality of free, purposeful, reasoning human actors who carry out their everyday actions practically, without full awareness of, or conscious reflection on, structures?" (Swartz, 1997, p. 95).

For misrecognition to occur, Bourdieu needs to provide an account of the reasons for an autonomous, rational agent making choices that, in effect, contribute to and/or collude in that agent's domination. Clearly, any agent making rational choices is unlikely to disadvantage himself/herself by choosing to participate in a system that continually reproduces a structure and an outcome in which the agent is dominated.

There are, of course, other reasons that may motivate an agent to choose to remain in, or participate in, a system in which they are being dominated:

(1) The alternative could be worse. Gaining educational credentials via an inegalitarian structure may be preferable to not gaining credentials at all.

(2) Apathy. Often it is simply easier to go along with the existing structures rather than having to commit significant time and energy in an effort to create change and transformation.

(3) Enervation. The loss of nerve. Some contexts are simply too big in scope, and the issues themselves can be simply too large. This can result in a loss of the motivation required in order both to challenge the prevailing conditions and to institute change.

Bourdieu believes that there is another level of agent motivation and notes that an agent's action is not simply a mechanical response to contextually external structures, whether they be cultural, economic, social or political. Swartz summarises the point this way: "habits, traditions, customs, beliefs – the cultural and social legacy of the past – filter and shape individual and collective responses to the present and future. They mediate the effects of external structures to produce action" (1997, p. 69). In effect, what he is arguing is that agent choices are not defined by mechanical responses to contextual structures but, rather, they are informed and shaped by an agent's habitus. This habitus, the collected socialisation (culture, beliefs, traditions and customs), not only mediates the way in which the agent perceives social structures but also acts to provide aspirational horizons for the agent.

It is difficult to find a definitive description of habitus. Bourdieu's language around habitus is dense, not particularly clear and certainly not concise. Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Peristiany, 1966) describes habitus as:

> … a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks.
> (as cited in Swartz, 1997, p. 100)

Bourdieu's 1984 version (Bourdieu, 1984) describes habitus as:

> … a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express

> mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.
> (as cited in Swartz, 1997, p. 101)

When Bourdieu writes about structured structures, he is writing about the origins of habitus: in effect, its underlying framework. That habitus is the socialisation that comes about via peer groups, via cultural groups and, in particular, via family. It is, in essence, the learned and lived experience of a class-specific culture and context. When, on the other hand, he writes about habitus as a structuring structure, it is useful to understand that this is referring to its role in providing aspirational horizons and in mediating the agent's actions, choices and possibilities. Habitus is a set of deeply internalised dispositions that result from familial, cultural and class socialisations that tacitly shape an agent's actions, choices and possibilities. The fact that they tacitly mediate the agent's actions is key here as this is what provides the explanation for agents misrecognising situations in which they are being dominated.

Added to this is the contention that part of this socialisation is the internalisation of external structures. Habitus, therefore, tends to reflect both the social context in which it comes into being and the social implications of being part of that context. By this, I mean that habitus can be described as a product of the particular class involved. It reflects the values, perspectives and likely opportunities of the social class to which the agent belongs.

In effect, habitus generates, for the agent, a self-fulfilling aspirational horizon related directly to the kinds of opportunities that people within that particular social class can expect. Swartz notes that "it shows how structural disadvantages can be internalized into relatively durable dispositions that can be transmitted intergenerationally through socialization and produce forms of self-defeating behavior" (1997, p. 104).

Habitus shapes and limits an agent's actions, which result in existing aspirational opportunities being perpetuated and reproduced. The internalisation of the likely success or failure, common to the agent's social class, is transformed into the agent's own expectations. Calhoun et al. (1993) explain how this relates to practice:

> The notion of Habitus is central to Bourdieu's theory of practice,
> which seeks to transcend the opposition between theories that grasp

practice solely as constituting, as expressed in methodological and ontological individualism (phenomenology), and those that view practice solely as constituted, as exemplified by Levi-Strauss's structuralism and the structural functionalism of the descendants of Durkheim. To this end, Bourdieu treats social life as a mutually constituting interaction of structures, dispositions, and actions whereby social structures and embodied (therefore situated) knowledge of those structures produce enduring orientations to action which, in turn, are constitutive of social structures [they entrench and legitimate]. Hence, these orientations are at once 'structuring structures' and 'structured structures'; they shape and are shaped by social practice. Practice, however, does not follow directly from orientations… but rather results from a process of improvisation that, in turn, is structured by cultural orientations, personal trajectories, and the ability to play the game of social interaction. (p. 4)

Webb et al. (2002) acknowledge that habitus contains four central features: disposition, knowledge, practice and the notion that habitus operates at an unconscious level. We are conditioned or disposed to behaving in certain ways that are defined by our cultural and social trajectories. This disposition is, effectively, an aspirational horizon and we act in a fashion that entrenches our cultural and social trajectory and expectations. Habitus is also our operational knowledge of the world and the contexts within which we operate. Whilst habitus is formed largely within our found communities (family, etc.), this knowledge is not solely genetic (in that sense nor formed solely by socialisation within that context) but also results from our interactions with our wider context. Third, the habitus is always constituted in moments of practice. It is always 'of the moment', brought out when a set of dispositions meets a particular problem, choice or context. And, finally:

Habitus operates at a level that is at least partly unconscious. Why? Because, habitus is, in a sense, entirely arbitrary; there is nothing natural or essential about the values we hold, the desires we pursue, or the practices in which we engage... in order for a particular habitus to function smoothly and effectively, individuals must normally think that the possibilities from which they choose are in fact necessities, common sense, natural or inevitable. Other possibilities are ruled out precisely because they are unthinkable.
(Webb et al., 2002, pp. 38-39)

So, what does the concept of habitus accomplish? It accomplishes five key things: (1) it allows for the active presence of past experiences; (2) it provides an account of the capacity for structured improvisation; (3) it aligns with the idea of the internalisation of 'life chances'; (4) it accounts for individual and collective trajectories; and (5) it accounts for the 'metaphorical sense of timing' in relation to Bourdieu's concept of social life as 'game playing'. In relation to the first point, Grenfell and James (1998) note:

> Habitus ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the correctness of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms… Habitus, most succinctly, is therefore an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted. (p. 14)

This accrual of past experiences happens on two levels. These are experiences that the agent accrues through their individual social interaction but, perhaps more importantly, these experiences are ones that are enculturated into them by their membership in a specific class, culture or social location. This second part is what allows them to ensure 'constancy' over time and acts to shape the agent's aspirational horizons. The second accomplishment is the provision of an account for the capacity for structured improvisation. This is important because it allows Bourdieu to:

> … analyse the behaviour of agents as objectively coordinated and regular without being the product of rules, on the one hand, or conscious rationality on the other. It is meant to capture the practical mastery that people have of their social situation, while grounding that mastery itself socially. (Calhoun et al., 1993, p. 4)

Being able to explain agent behaviour (especially when it is not obviously self-interested) without recourse to systems of rules is a key piece of Bourdieu's conceptual analysis. Improvisation (within the confines of the specific cultural trajectory provided by habitus) allows him to portray an agent with a certain level of individual freedom in their social relations rather than being held hostage to a concept of social interaction that would rob them of any sense of agency.

And yet, Bourdieu theorises that habitus acts as an aspirational horizon. Is this idea of agency simply an illusion that cannot compete against the inevitability of habitus horizons? Calhoun et al. (1993) point out that:

> The idea that Bourdieu draws on here is that the distribution of statistical probabilities of life chances for a given class is internalised via that habitus. The working class internalises that its life chances are limited. (p. 24)

This internalisation of life chances is the major way in which habitus acts as an aspirational horizon. It is also a major factor in the misrecognition of structural injustice and of systems of domination. When an agent's cultural and social trajectory is constrained by this internalisation of aspirations, we come up against one of the key challenges in looking to combat structural injustice. The identification of issues and processes of structural injustice assumes, at a very basic level, that equality of access and of chances of success, and a level playing field, should be present for all agents. The internalisation of life chances runs the risk of undermining this equality and predisposes some agents to accept unequal and unjust treatment. Addressing this issue will be key to exploring how agent habitus may be transformed.

Habitus is also a compilation of collective and individual trajectories. Reay (2004) argues that Bourdieu conceives of habitus as a 'multi-layered' concept:

> With more general notions of habitus at the level of society and more complex, differentiated notions at the level of the individual... at times, Bourdieu seems to be suggesting a degree of uniformity. At other times, he recognizes differences and diversity between members of the same cultural grouping and writes in terms of the singularity of individual habitus. (p. 434)

This differentiation is important. Without it, any appeal to agency is unlikely to be successful. If all individuals from a specific class, culture or context had identical social trajectories, any concept of agency would be subsumed by the inevitability of habitus. The recognition of difference and diversity leaves room for both agency and the transformation of an agent's habitus.

Finally, habitus accounts for the 'metaphorical sense of timing' that is so central to Bourdieu's metaphor of social life as an example of 'playing games'. Calhoun (2008) identifies this point:

> Habitus is for Bourdieu what accounts for the metaphorical sense of timing in sport (when to pass, or break free, or to shoot). All of these metaphorical skills are learnt in the home, in the school and in employment (or unemployment). They are skills that are practiced within these contexts and they can advance or limit the 'players' ability to compete or to be successful. (p. 363)

3.2   The Functioning of Habitus

The predictability and the 'predestination' of habitus can be seen as significant weaknesses in the concept (Apple, 1995; Giroux, 2001). However, Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) are very clear that this is not the case:

> It is important finally to emphasize that the lines of action engendered by habitus do not, indeed cannot, have the neat regularity of conduct deduced from a normative or juridical principle. This is because 'habitus is in cahoots with the fuzzy and the vague'. As a generative spontaneity which asserts itself in the improvised confrontation with endlessly renewed situations, it follows a practical logic, that of the 'fuzzy', of the more-or-less, which defines the ordinary relation to the world. Consequently, we should refrain from searching the productions of habitus for more logic than they actually contain. (p. 22)

This highlighting of the 'vagueness' or unpredictability of habitus is another argument for the relative autonomy of Bourdieu's agents. It highlights the complexity of social relations and allows for the concept of habitus to be seen as a major force in the shaping of an agent's actions and aspirational horizons (whilst not being the only factor). There is room for autonomy and there is room for actions or choices that would take the agent outside of the trajectory we may expect their habitus to provide. However, this vagueness always happens within the context of habitus as a 'structuring structure'. The internalisation of rules, actions and probabilities that accompany habitus, and the fact that much of the work done by habitus is at an unconscious level, mean that agent deviations are not easy. Yang (2014) points out that:

> What have been internalized are not only the rules of the field (social structure) with which an individual is engaged, but also his or her position in that field, together with the chance of succeeding, which are determined by the defining capital in that field and the volume and composition of an individual's own capital… people who are inherently disadvantaged in a particular field would naturally adjust their aspirations (one embodiment of habitus) and very often turn to self-elimination without consciously assessing the real chances of success. (p. 1527)

The internalisation of rules, trajectories and chances of success would be significantly easier to alter or transform if they were operating at a conscious level where their origins (many resulting from misrecognition) could be explored and rebutted. However, as Yang (2014) notes:

> For Bourdieu, habitus functions 'below the level of consciousness' (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 73,). Habitus, while being a product of the system, has an endless capacity to generate thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions. It is not we ourselves, the social agents, who are doing what we want to do, rather we are acting according to the order provided by habitus, which is a perpetuated and repeated structure inherited from the past and internalized from the objective conditions. (p. 1525)

3.3 Habitus and Transformation

Fortunately, however, the situation is not quite as bleak as it first appears. Yang (2014) argues that habitus can be acquired in at least two ways. The first, and traditional, mode is the acquiring of habitus through implicit and largely unconscious means. This is the approach to which Bourdieu subscribes. However, habitus can also be acquired through what Yang calls 'methodical inculcation':

> Explicit pedagogy is equally important and frequently used in real-life contexts while acquiring a new set of skills, knowledge and even a new form of habitus… first, explicit pedagogy entails not simply scholastic inculcation, but also strategic planning of what needs to be inculcated, plus the sequence and the pace, in the process of acquiring a certain habitus... Secondly, explicit pedagogy also embraces the idea that an individual needs to be able to utilize different modes of inculcation, 'mixing' the scholastic inculcation

with the less intensive and more everyday familiarization… Thirdly, Bourdieu is right with regard to the relationship between the primary and the secondary (or any subsequent) habitus on three counts: (1) the primary habitus is the basis for the subsequent formation of any other habitus; (2) the subsequent habitus has to struggle with the previous one(s); and (3) the chance of success for any subsequent habitus depends on the distance between the habitus it intends to inculcate and the habitus inculcated by the previous phases of inculcation. (2014, p. 1533)

The concept of a secondary and subsequent habitus is significant for at least four reasons. The first is that it allows for the possibility that the agent can become more than their primary habitus would seem to allow. In that sense, the secondary habitus can be seen as a way of supplementing the aspirational horizons provided by the initial habitus. Second, it returns the concept of agency to agent aspirations. As Yang notes above, 'methodical inculcation' requires strategic planning of which the agent can be part, rather than simply inheriting their primary habitus. Third, this kind of 'habitus transformation' causes significantly less ontological and cultural violence to an agent. One of the risks of exploring habitus transformation is that the transformation of the agent's habitus can result in a disconnection or rejection of some of the cultural and ontological features that provide a sense of identity to the individual. For example, success within a Western university context can require cultural capital that is often not only absent from an agent's primary habitus but may even be at odds with it. An example of this can be found within many Pacific cultures where there is a resistance to ask questions of lecturers due to cultural values that require the 'respect of elders'. Finally, the concept of a secondary habitus introduces the possibility that agents may create and adopt a habitus for a fixed period of time, or for use only within a specific field. This particular point would seem to allow for a very high level of agent autonomy and, as such, overcome some of the criticism directed at the concept. In contrast to Yang (2014), Reay (2004) does not discuss secondary habitus but she does allow for the possibility of habitus transformation:

The range of possibilities inscribed in a habitus can be envisaged as a continuum. At one end, habitus can be replicated through encountering a field that reproduces its dispositions. At the other end of the continuum, habitus can also be transformed through a process that either raises or lowers an individual's expectations. Implicit in

the concept is the possibility of a social trajectory that enables
conditions of living that are very different from initial ones. (p. 435)

She assumes that, where habitus meets with field, either the conditions and expectations of the primary habitus are replicated or there is something else that either 'raises or lowers' the agent's expectation. There seem to be two distinct possibilities for what this 'something else' may be. Reay posits that: "when habitus encounters a field with which it is not familiar, the resulting disjunctures can generate change and transformation" (2004, p. 436). However, it is not at all clear that this is the case or, if it is, that the outcome has anything positive in it for the agent concerned. If we take the case of new students entering university education, we find that, while some thrive and prosper according to their cultural capital dispositions, others struggle in cases where their habitus has not prepared them to meet the implicit cultural capital requirements of their education. In many cases, there is no change or transformation involved. Their habitus does not allow them to compete successfully so either they withdraw or they accept their marginalisation within the field and try to compete (despite this disadvantage) on what is an uneven playing field. There is no transformation here, just the implications of a lack of the necessary cultural capital.

Yang (2014) argues that the pairing of reflexivity and explicit pedagogy does create the conditions in which habitus transformation (or the creation of a secondary habitus) can take place:

The use and success of explicit pedagogy in realizing transformation
is hugely dependent on reflexivity… reflexivity has to be understood
as, at least, a separate form of habitus compared to the habitus he
more frequently cites for an individual. More importantly, such
reflexivity works against habitus: habitus has the tendency to
perpetuate the social structure from which it is produced and it is
below the level of consciousness, while the purpose of reflexivity is to
raise the consciousness, trying to understand the complexity of
practice. (pp. 1533-1534)

In this sense, it is reflexivity that enables the agent to think, act and strategise in a way that acts to limit the role of habitus in defining agent expectations and social outcomes. In this sense, reflexivity is 'anti habitus'. But self-reflection is not always

enough. What reflexivity does is that it provides the conditions in which explicit pedagogy can take root. It provides the opportunity and the motivation for a recognition and re-evaluation of existing habitus. Explicit pedagogy then becomes the means by which either the transformation of existing habitus or the creation of a secondary habitus can begin. The issue of secondary habitus will be expanded in Parts 3 and 4.

Finally, perhaps what is in need of transformation is not the habitus itself but, rather, the agent's experience of that habitus. Calhoun (2008) points out that:

> Bourdieu shows action to be always shaped by learning (habitus), social contexts (including fields), and structural conditions (including distributions of capital as well as choice and creativity). Bourdieu emphasizes that it is an illusion to think of individual action as pure freedom and social structure as pure constraint. Social structure is internalized in what we learn from experience. (pp. 364-365)

When we think again about students in a university context, whose perceived cultural capital shortcomings and habitus predispositions almost inevitably set them up to fail, we need to ask what experiences are taking place here. Bourdieu would argue that the prime experience here is one of misrecognition. Students tend to locate the problem for their lack of success within themselves rather than relating it to systems and structures of domination. If they experience their habitus at all, it is likely to be in terms of it being inadequate. Their habitus, therefore, becomes a negative. However, their habitus is a negative only in relation to the implicit cultural capital requirements of university study. This is where explicit pedagogy and reflexivity may come in useful. If these students can use reflexivity to overcome their tendency to misrecognise their involvement in an unequal and unjust system of domination, then they are well placed to begin to benefit from a new and explicit pedagogy (see Parts 3 and 4) that encourages the creation of a secondary habitus: a habitus that will enable them to compete on a more equal footing.

Before turning to look at some of the criticisms raised against Bourdieu's concept of habitus, there are two last points to touch upon. The first is that, while habitat acts to shape habitus, the reverse is also true. And the second point is to note

that, while habitus is primarily associated with individual agents, it is also a useful concept when applied to communities, cultures and institutions. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) highlight the first point:

> If the habitat shapes the habitus, the habitus also shapes the habitat, through the more or less adequate social usages that it tends to make of it. This certainly throws doubt on the belief that bringing together in the same physical space agents who are far apart in social space might, in itself, bring them closer socially: in fact, socially distanced people find nothing more intolerable than physical proximity (experienced as promiscuity). (p. 128)

The interviews in *The weight of the world* (Bourdieu & Accardo, 1999) bring to mind the idea that habitus can also be perceived as a space or a physical context. While habitus does provide aspirational horizons, it also seems as though it can provide physical horizons. Many of the people interviewed in the book have almost no ability to leave the context within which they live. The 'projects' or 'problem suburbs' seem to be the totality of their existence. Those who can leave have done so already. Those who remain are effectively imprisoned within their world by a lack of education, employment and actual transport. Thus, perhaps, the housing projects become their 'field' and the accumulation of cultural capital shifts to become the accumulation of economic/material capital.

In addressing the second point of the concept of habitus being applicable also to groups and institutions, Webb et al. (2002) note:

> Habitus… does not apply only to the individual subject. Whole communities can be identified as having a collective habitus, characterized by shared perspective on the world, relatively common sets of values and shared dispositions to believe and behave in particular ways. (p. 93)

We will return to this point in Part 4 but it is enough for now to note that the concept of habitus is applicable to institutions as well as to individuals.

One of the objections that can be brought against Bourdieu is the charge that habitus is simply another word for class and that a more traditional Marxist analysis would do just as well. While it is true that there is a direct link between the concept of

habitus and the concept of class, I do not consider that the two concepts are interchangeable. Habitus is directly related to, and is a product of, class situations. However, the concept of habitus allows for a much more detailed and nuanced analysis of cultural capital. It provides for three key roles that are central to understanding Bourdieu's key concern: how systems of domination are able to reproduce themselves over time. Firstly, habitus provides an account of how cultural capital is generated and of how social, cultural and class characteristics, practices, perceptions and expectations are reproduced. Secondly, habitus provides an account of how these factors shape an agent's aspirational choices and thus reflect and reproduce the expectations and aspirational horizons common to the agent's context. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, habitus provides an account of: how agents misrecognise the domination to which they are subject; how they, in effect, collude in their own domination; and, thus, how these systems and structures of domination are able to reproduce themselves over time.

4   Misrecognition and Symbolic Power

The following diagram illustrates the causes and the consequences of misrecognition within the theory of Bourdieu and within the context of education.
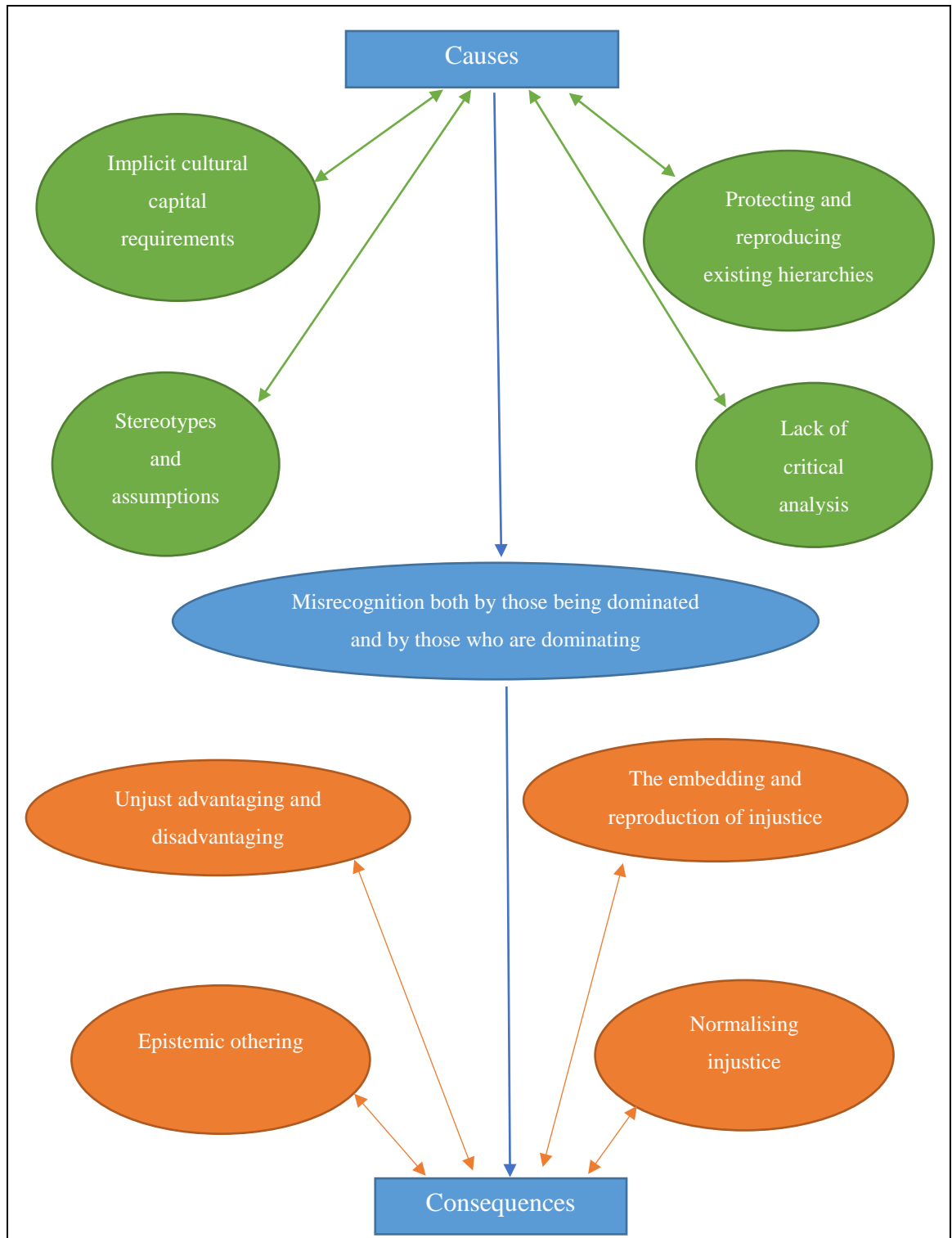
Figure 4. Misrecognition, 2017, diagram, A Nobbs

Central to the idea of misrecognition is that it functions as a concept only when both parties (the dominated and the dominating) misrecognise what is taking place (and thereby give legitimation to the practice or action in question).

Symbolic power is closely related to the idea of misrecognition and it is also an expansion of part of Bourdieu's theory of 'habitus' in that it is an account of the details of the way in which legitimation and misrecognition occur for agents who are dominated.

In approaching this issue, Bourdieu makes three key assumptions (1990b, 1999). Firstly, he quite rightly notes that, in contemporary stratified societies, the key method of domination is symbolic manipulation rather than the threat of physical violence or overt coercion. The maintenance of power through violence and repression is much less effective than is the maintenance of power that comes when the dominated unknowingly collude in their own domination.

Secondly, he makes the assumption that the exercise of power (that is non-coercive) requires some form of legitimation and that the most successful form of legitimation comes when those being dominated misrecognise their situation and unwittingly legitimate the practices and processes of those who are dominating.

And, finally, and most problematically, Bourdieu holds that self-interest underlies all agent practices. Because he holds this position, he is required to provide an account of how and why a self-interested agent would act in a way that contributes directly to their own domination and he uses his theory of symbolic power to accomplish this. The logic of self-interest when misrecognised leads to what can be called a logic of dis-interest. This dis-interest is the denial of, or the refusal to acknowledge, the political, social and economic interests that are present within a structure, system or set of practices. For this misrecognition or dis-interest to function, Bourdieu needs an account of the way in which attention is deflected from the interested character of any set of practices and how these are transformed into dis-interested pursuits. Swartz (1997) states the argument this way:

> Activities and resources gain in symbolic power, or legitimacy, to the
> extent that they become separated from underlying material
> interests and hence go misrecognized as representing dis-interested

forms of activities and resources. Individuals and groups who are able
to benefit from the transformation of self-interest into dis-interest
obtain what Bourdieu calls symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is
'denied capital'; it disguises the underlying 'interested' relations to
which it is related giving them legitimation. (p. 43)

This is a very clever and quite beautiful description of how symbolic power functions. Symbolic capital is a tool for domination. It is seen as a legitimate demand or obligation imposed upon those being dominated when, in reality, it is a form of power that acts to both legitimate and to reproduce, unconsciously, the systems and positions of domination present within any particular social context.

Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) identifies three key functions of symbolic systems. Firstly, they operate as systems of cognition. They provide the means to understand and order society. They are structures that provide the means for understanding and integrating society. This is evident in things such as art, religion, myth and science. They impose an order on social relationships and provide a lens through which these relationships make sense. Secondly, they are conceptual systems that contain deep and shared cultural meaning. As such, they are systems that provide both knowledge and ways of communicating. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they function as instruments of domination. This domination happens in two parts. Initially, symbolic systems provide the social distinctions, hierarchies and ranking systems of our social contexts. They provide the structure and define the relationships, positions of power and obligations of our social contexts. However, having done that, their second role is a political one. They also provide the grounds and the basis for the legitimation of these hierarchies, distinctions and ranking systems. Swartz (1997) notes:

Symbolic systems, from this perspective, are classification systems
built upon the fundamental logic of inclusion and exclusion. All
symbolic systems follow this fundamental classification logic of
dividing and grouping items into opposing classes and hence
generating meanings through the binary logic of inclusion and
exclusion. (p. 84)

But power is not located in words or symbols. Rather, it is located in the relationship between the ways in which symbols, in particular, relate to social

structures. Symbolic systems have no power in and of themselves. They gain their power from the dominated misrecognising their domination and, through this misrecognition or dis-interest, providing the legitimation required for the exercising of symbolic power. In effect, symbolic power owes its effectiveness to the dis-interest of those being dominated. Thus it is that the taken-for-granted assumptions of the dominated (that the particular system of practices is 'as it should be') create and establish symbolic capital and, thus, symbolic power. Swartz (1997) points out that:

> Bourdieu understands ideology, or 'symbolic violence', as the capacity to impose the means for comprehending and adapting to the social world by representing economic and political power in disguised, taken-for-granted forms. Symbolic systems exercise symbolic power only through the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it. (p. 89)

This point of complicity is a very significant one. Symbolic power, in the sense envisaged by Bourdieu, is almost a case of the 'emperor's new clothes'. Its very existence depends on the denial of both its role and its existence by all members of a particular social context. It requires the complicity of both the dominated and those that are doing the dominating. Without this complicity, it simply becomes a system for understanding social concepts and loses its capability as a ranking system and as a system involved in the intergenerational reproduction of unequal social relationships.

I believe that Bourdieu's theory of 'symbolic power' is a very subtle tool for explaining how misrecognition occurs for dominated agents. There are, however, two points of contention and these are his assumption that self-interest underlies all agent actions and, secondly, his commitment to the concept of symbolic systems being understood as following a binary logic of fundamental classification.

The assumption that self-interest underlies all agent actions is problematic at best. Certainly, it is uncontentious to claim that most individual actions may be self-interested and that the kinds of stratified society in which we live promote self-interest (more aptly, perhaps, the maximisation of self-interest) as a primary lifestyle goal. However, human interaction is much more complicated than that. Altruism, social justice, virtue ethics and a variety of concepts of spiritual growth are all examples of

systems where self-interest is often at odds with goals, outcomes or personal growth that are considered to be significantly more important. Similarly, communitarian cultures also offer contexts in which self-interest is not only a secondary concept but where communal interest is seen as a priority. Self-interest as a concept that underlies agent actions really makes sense only in an individualised Western context. In any pluralistic context, this individualised notion of self-interest is going to be far less compelling and certainly not universal.

However, a rejection of Bourdieu's universal 'self-interest' claim does not void his argument or his theory of 'symbolic power'. Having a tool to explain why self-interested agents misrecognise what is happening in their contexts is still very significant even if it does not encompass all members of our pluralistic culture in Aotearoa New Zealand. What is required, then, is a recognition that self-interest is not the only interest guiding agent actions and that a careful contextual analysis needs to be made before making this claim in my cultural context.

My second point of contention relates to Bourdieu's use of binary oppositions. Given the diversity of the spectrum of cultural capital, and given that the levels of cultural capital may differ significantly across a cultural, social or class grouping, it seems very strange that he describes symbolic systems as binary classification systems. Again, human experience and human relationships seem much more complex than that. Is it really true that, in a given context, you are either the dominator or the dominated? What if you have recognised your complicity but are unable to change or challenge the system?

As an explanatory tool, the description of symbolic systems as structures that provide distinctions, hierarchies and ranking systems is a very useful way in which to understand how these come about. However, the implications of the binary operation of these systems seem inadequate to explain the lived experience of agents within any particular social context. As such, making room for the variety of human responses and interactions seems important and this fits with Bourdieu's understanding of ontological primacy being located in the interactions between subjects and objects (2.2), rather than in the subjects and objects per se.

5 Field – the Context and Arena of Struggle

Having provided an account of the currency of social struggle through his theory of 'cultural capital', Bourdieu then describes the genesis of this currency and the way in which it provides agents with aspirational horizons through his concept of 'habitus'. Once these arguments are established, he uses his theory of 'symbolic power' to account for how agent misrecognition occurs and how this contributes to the intergenerational reproduction of systems and structures of domination. Finally, Bourdieu turns his attention to describing the context of social struggle and to providing an account of the rules by which this struggle is carried out. He does this through his theory of 'field'.

Swartz (1997) describes the concept of 'field' this way:

> Field defines the structure of the social setting in which 'Habitus' operates... field denotes arenas of production, circulation, and appropriation of goods, services, knowledge or status, and the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate and monopolize these different kinds of capital. (p. 117)

So, 'field' has at least two different roles. It is first and foremost a context of conflict and struggle. It is a competitive arena in which agents struggle against each other in order to advance their social positions and gain access to, or a monopoly over, the distribution of the capital at issue. What is of particular interest here is that, while 'field' is the context in which habitus is practised, it is more than simply a context. The agent actions that take place in a particular 'field' are shaped and formed by three things. Agent actions are the product of 'habitus' combining with 'capital' and the intersecting of these things with the structure and the dynamic of the particular 'field'. Agent actions, then, cannot simply be traced back to primary class socialisation because they come alive and find expression within the context of their interrelating with the boundaries and with the capital of the particular 'field'.

Secondly, 'field' is also the context in which capital of varying types is produced. Bourdieu (1999) refers to areas like 'the intellectual field', where capital producers such as academics operate. It is of interest that Bourdieu chooses to use the concept of 'field' rather than concepts such as institutions, organisations or social classes. He

does this in order to make the distinction that agent actions are always mediated through the context and the structure of 'fields'. 'Organisation' and 'institution' tend to imply a level of consensus and they are unsuitable for Bourdieu for two reasons. Firstly, he wants to emphasise the struggle and the conflictual character of social life within fields. And, secondly, he believes that there are areas and arenas of struggle that are only weakly institutionalised or where the boundaries of action are either fluid or not well established. The concept of 'field' allows him to keep the focus on conflict and the struggle between agents.

While 'fields' are contexts and structures of conflict, it is important to note that they are not level playing fields. The interaction between agents is governed by their relative location to each other in the prevailing hierarchy of social positions.

Swartz's linking of habitus and the struggle for cultural capital to fields is enlightening but fails to appreciate the depth of Bourdieu's concept. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) describe field in these terms:

> A socially structured space in which agents struggle, depending on the position they occupy in that space, either to change or to preserve its boundaries and form. Two properties are central to this succinct definition. First, a field is a patterned system of objective forces (much in the manner of a magnetic field), a relational configuration endowed with a specific gravity which it imposes on all the objects and agents which enter in it. In the manner of a prism, it refracts external forces according to its internal structure… a field is simultaneously a space of conflict and competition. (p. 17)

The key here is the focusing on the issue of struggle (see Bourdieu, 1998a). It is neither just a struggle for the available cultural capital produced within the field nor just a struggle for the ability to distribute this capital. The struggle is also for the existence and identity of the field itself, and for whether its rules and boundaries are changed or entrenched.

Fields are also the context in which 'relations' between agents and structures are played out. Grenfell and James (1998) point out that:

Field is therefore a structured system of social relations at a micro and macro level. In other words, individuals, institutions and groupings, both large and small, all exist in structural relation to each other in some way. These relations determine and reproduce social activity in its multifarious forms. Moreover, because they are structural, positions (of individuals, between individuals, between individuals and institutions, and between institutions and institutions) can be mapped or located, and the generating principles behind their relations ascertained. (p. 16)

The concept of field expressed here confirms two important points. The first is that social life is significantly more complex than either a subjectivist or an objectivist position can account for. To begin to understand the subtleties of social 'relations', we are required to support Bourdieu's attempt to find a philosophical position somewhere between objectivity and subjectivity. Second, this quote highlights that the key to understanding the social experience of agents is to be found in the 'relational' space between all participants and all of the structures that shape that participation.

It is also important to understand how fields function and relate to each other. There are two significant points here. The first is the semi-autonomy of the field and the second is the heteronomous and autonomous poles that each field contains. Calhoun et al. (1993) describe the limited autonomy of fields in this fashion:

Each field is semi-autonomous, characterized by its own determinate agents (for example students, novelists, and scientists), its own accumulation of history, its own logic of action, and its own form of capital. The fields are not fully autonomous, however. Capital rewards gained in one field may be transferred to another. Moreover, each field is immersed in an institutional form of power and, even more broadly, in the field of class relations. Each field is the site of struggles. That is, there are struggles within given fields, and there are struggles over the power to define a field. (p. 5)

Fields are also only semi-autonomous because as Calhoun et al. (1993) note:

Fields are located within a 'field of power' defined with respect to the internal dynamics of a class. The differential distribution of power within a class, based on differential access of different fields to economic and/or symbolic power, maps unequal class fractions. Producers from the cultural field – having access to symbolic, as against economic, power – are the 'dominated fraction of the dominant class'. Last, the classes are located within the general field

of class relations and struggles. Analysis of any specific field must, in Bourdieu's view, take account of its social structural hierarchy. This view of social structure tries to link class and status, relate to both action and practice through habitus, and provide an account of the reproduction of hierarchy. (pp. 15-16)

As an example, the field of education is not autonomous. In fact, in its current form it is barely semi-autonomous. While the field of education does identify, value and distribute its own cultural capital, its autonomy is increasingly limited by its location in relation to the field of power (that we call politics) and the growing interference from this larger field. The political field of power is becoming more and more involved in setting educational agendas, working conditions, curriculum and methods of assessment. Education is required to serve the economy and the neoliberal business agenda. Within this vortex of power, real and meaningful field autonomy is increasingly less viable. I will discuss neoliberalism in Part 2 (7.3) but, for now, it is important to distinguish between neoliberalism (as a philosophy and an ideology) and the politics/state field (which conveys this philosophy/ideology). Neoliberalism is not a field of any sort. It is the dominant ideological component of a field of power and, as such, acts as an underlying meta-field. Politics/State is a field of power that (in this case) puts the dominant ideology into practice (neoliberalism) and thus impacts directly on other proximate fields.

Even within fields themselves, we find what Webb et al. (2002) describe as heteronomous and autonomous poles:

…the autonomous pole of a field (that tends to be isolated and removed from the rest of society) and the heteronomous pole of the same field (that which is bound up very closely in relations with the rest of society). Within the field of education, for instance, the autonomous pole would be, that the school is a space for nurturing the spiritual and intellectual growth of a child within a supportive environment… at the heteronomous pole, by contrast, we might find questions about student fees and loans, the cost of particular subjects, disciplines or even schools, and so on. (p. 107)

Thus fields, in relation to 'fields of power', are seen as having less engaged and perhaps more engaged regions. Another way of describing this may be to say that fields have philosophical and pragmatic regions. The philosophical region is the one

where a field's philosophies and reasons for being are shaped and competed over. The pragmatic region is where a field cooperates or contests (and often at the same time) with political forces and dominant ideologies.

Thus, fields are never entirely free of external influence and it is this struggle for limited degrees of autonomy (and the acknowledgement of internal field expertise) that helps shape the kind of capital competition that takes place between agents within the field.

Before turning to examine what kind of agents are present within any particular field and what their field roles may be, it is also worth noting that people enter fields with differing degrees of expectation and chances of success; while some (those who are clear about the 'game and the rules' they are playing) will be confident and prepared to compete, others will experience exclusion and alienation. I can identify four ways in which fields can negatively impact new entrants. These are: (1) the relegation to an inferior position within a privileged context – where the agent has the required cultural capital but not the required symbolic or social capital (access to networks etc.); (2) the lack of adequate cultural capital, which results in a feeling of being 'out of place'; (3) the designation of the field itself, which can result in the degradation of its participants; and (4) the field's ability to impose its own malaise on participating agents.

Bourdieu (1999) highlights the first point when he writes about how position within a field can be painfully alienationary:

> How painfully the social world may be experienced by people who,
> like the bass player in the orchestra, occupy an inferior, obscure
> position in a prestigious and privileged universe. (p. 4)

Entry to the field is, in itself, not enough if the position an individual is to occupy is inferior and likely to remain so. This may well be the experience of some students in the university context. They are present but are painfully aware of their location in the hierarchy; many may also be without the cultural capital they need in order to compete and rise up the hierarchy.

The second way that fields can negatively impact on participants relates to the lack of the implicitly required cultural capital and the resulting 'feeling out of place' that is very obvious in the university context. This 'feeling out of place' is often experienced by 'new entrants' to any particular field because, as Bourdieu (1999) points out:

> At risk of feeling themselves out of place, individuals who move into a new space must fulfil the conditions that that space tacitly requires of its occupants. This may be the possession of a certain cultural capital, the lack of which can prevent the real appropriation of supposedly public goods or even the intention of appropriating them. (p. 128)

It is one thing to decide to join and compete within any particular field (and 'success' within a particular field requires this competition) but it is an entirely different experience if the agent discovers too late that they lack the appropriate capital either to participate or to compete meaningfully. Because the requirements of fields are tacit rather than explicit, an agent can easily find themselves in a position that will see them either relegated to the most disempowered position in the field or where the odds are so stacked against them that they cannot compete at all.

The third way in which a field can negatively impact the participants relates to when the field itself is 'degrading' as an entity. In *The weight of the world*, Bourdieu & Accardo (1999) highlight this when reflecting on 'housing projects':

> Likewise, the stigmatized area symbolically degrades its inhabitants, who, in return, symbolically degrade it [or physically degrade as evidenced in the interviews]. Since they don't have all the cards necessary to participate in the various social games, the only thing they share is their common excommunication. Bringing together on a single site a population homogenous in its dispossession, notably with respect to culture and cultural practices: the pressure exerted at the level of class or school or in public life by the most disadvantaged or those furthest from a 'normal' existence pull everything down in a general levelling. They leave no escape other than flight toward other sites (which lack of resources usually renders impossible). (p. 129)

This point is significant. Fields are not, by definition, sites of liberation or advancement. While most discussion around fields tends to assume they are generally

sites of competition, advancement and ambition, they can also be sites of dispossession, a lack of possibilities and abandonment. Bourdieu's housing projects are an exemplary case in point. This particular field acts to severely limit any aspirational horizons of the participants. In fact, the conditions for belonging are such that 'escape' from this particular field is very difficult indeed. Even the possibility of physically removing oneself from the context is made difficult by the absence of public transport and the lack of the resources required to purchase private transport. This is a field that has a strong claim on its members.

The fourth way that a field can impact negatively on its participants is related to the one above but it portrays the ways that 'fields of power' can negatively shape the other fields with which they interact. Lenoir (1999) examines 'disorder among the agents of order' and notes:

> If, at least as far as representations go, the crisis of the courts is identified with that of magistrates, it is because, like all bodies that dominate a sector of social activity, they can impose the definition of their malaise on everyone. By virtue of their dominant position in the social order, they are in a position to convert their problems, linked in part to their class membership – their 'independence' or their 'power' – into general problems. (p. 223)

This point has implications for the educational sectors of society. When I think of the university context, a couple of questions arise: (1) Who dominates the landscape? Government, neoliberal theory or senior executives (note executives not educators)? and (2) What is their malaise? Not effectively serving the economy, or not meeting targets in terms of income or student numbers? These questions relate directly to 'the field of power' and these issues are addressed in Part 2.

Bourdieu (1990b) identifies three main hierarchical positions in 'fields', all of which have their related strategies for struggle and conflict. At the top of the heap are the established agents. These are the agents who inhabit positions of power and domination within their 'fields' and who exercise monopoly control both over what is defined as important cultural capital and also over how that capital is distributed. Their strategies tend to be grouped around the issue of conservation – in relation to their position – and reproduction of both their social position of domination and the

creation of capital so that they retain a monopoly over its distribution. Grenfell and James (1998) note the following about the field of education:

> Education… is a game where social inequalities are reproduced in ways that are systematically misrecognized, it also operates through individuals' strategic positioning. Some strategies operate to maintain or improve positioning in the symbolic field by increasing capital. Other strategies convert one form of capital to another; again, in order to improve on personal worth through social valuing. It is Bourdieu's contention that these processes are the unrecognized, or misrecognized, generating structures of social, in this case, educational practice… thus misrecognition is at the heart of the efficiency and power of education. (p. 22)

Those in positions of domination within any particular field are in the position to make the field function in a way that supports their own specific cultural capital possessions and production and that actively entrenches their positions of authority and power.

The second group can be defined as 'newcomers'. This group is made up of the new entrants into the field and, as a general rule, they aspire to attain the dominant social positions for themselves. Their strategies tend to be focused around succession and their attempts to usurp the rights and benefits that come with the dominant positions. They are agents who understand clearly the rules of the field, have a habitus and an array of cultural capital that allows them to be competitive, and will act in conformity with the tacit requirements of the field. In effect, they seek to maintain the field as it is and, at the same time, to advance their position within it.

There is, however, a third group also present. This group, I will call the disenchanted. Because its members have little expectation of gain (either in terms of capital or in terms of social position) from the established group, their strategies are much more focused on change and on challenging the legitimacy of both the dominant, established group and the group of new entrants. This challenge tends to be focused particularly on disputing the legitimacy of the dominant group in order to define the standards in the field and also its legitimacy over the distribution of the capital that is produced.

That Bourdieu identifies this third group is significant because he has clearly and consistently made the case that all agent actions are related to self-interest. How, then, can he account for the disenchanted? This group is, by definition, not expecting any significant gains or benefits from the established agents, and their strategy of challenging the legitimacy of the dominant group is unlikely to benefit the career prospects of its members. Swartz (1997) points out that, while Bourdieu does acknowledge that "fields are sites of resistance as well as domination, one being relationally linked to the other. Yet fields capture struggle within the logic of reproduction; they seldom become sites of social transformation" (p. 121). And the reason that they seldom become contexts or sites of transformation is that social positions in any particular field are directly related to the unequal distribution of relevant capital and not to the merit and personal skills and attributes of individual agents. Thus, for any transformation to succeed, the legitimacy of this unequal distribution of cultural (or other) capital must be challenged. Similarly, the monopoly over what counts as relevant capital must also be confronted and undermined.

A fourth group exists within fields (the academic field at least) and this is made up of field members who have been marginalised by both the established agents and the 'newcomers', and yet are not committed to any idea of change or transformation within the field. I suspect that they have, by and large, become unwitting victims of the institutional misrecognition that functions within the field but it may also be the case that they have simply chosen to accommodate themselves to the existing practices and hierarchies because it is simply 'easier' to do so. Part 4 addresses this issue in more depth.

At a personal level, as both an employee and a researcher, I tend to locate myself within the third, disenchanted grouping. For me, the issue is one of justice rather than social position. It is possible that Bourdieu may wish to argue that my self-interest is addressed when the inherent structural injustice of a particular field is exposed and challenged. This, however, seems to be stretching the idea of self-interest too far. To this point, I see myself as a beneficiary of this structural injustice rather than as a victim of it. I have the 'cultural capital' and the 'habitus' that allows me to engage in my chosen field with a relative level of equality and success. However, my recognition of this personal benefit comes with the recognition that the structural

injustice present within tertiary education is simply unacceptable. Personal gain or self-interest is not enough to overcome the injustice that I see. And this highlights an ongoing weakness in Bourdieu's theory: that self-interest is always the motivation behind an agent's action.

However, the most significant problem with Bourdieu's concept of 'field' appears when we consider the rules by which struggle and conflict within a field are assumed to take place. Swartz (1997) notes that: "entry into a field requires the tacit acceptance of the rules of the game, meaning that specific forms of struggle are legitimated whereas others are excluded" (pp. 125-126). The obvious questions that arise here are who decides what the rules are and what forms of struggle are included and excluded? Doesn't this simply mean that the dominant established group gains yet another means of maintaining its power and of reproducing the conditions required to entrench its position?

This system may work well for the challengers (new entrants into the field) and the established incumbents, who share a common interest in preserving the field itself. However, what of the disenchanted? The introduction of previously excluded tools is a very effective way by which subversive agents can seek to undermine existing domination. The de-legitimation of entrenched monopolies would seem to require new perspectives and insights. Yet, if these possibilities were excluded from the outset by those in positions of domination, then the chance of any transformation of practice is seriously limited. The implications of Bourdieu's position would seem to be that the dominant group has the opportunity to define the terms of struggle; this can lead only to a further and more thorough entrenchment of their position. Part 4 explores some possible methods of transforming the field.

Finally, 'fields' also play an ongoing role in the agent's misrecognition of the power relationships present within a 'field'. For Swartz (1997):

> Actors misrecognize the arbitrary character of their social worlds
> when they take for granted the definition of rewards and of ways of
> obtaining them as given by fields. An unintentional consequence of
> engaging in field competition is that actors, though they may contest

the legitimacy of rewards given by fields, nonetheless reproduce the structure of fields (p. 126)

Field competitors, by their tacit acceptance of the rules of reward and competition, unconsciously collude in the inequities of social position and cultural capital distribution present in their chosen field. By 'taking for granted' that the cultural capital production and distribution is either 'just' or 'as it should be', agent competitors misrecognise the power dynamics present in their context. By assuming that all is as it should be, they miss the opportunity to explore critically the systems of domination present within their field. But they do more than that. By accepting the rules of competition, agents unconsciously collude in the reproduction and entrenchment of those systems of domination.

It is worth raising another issue in relation to misrecognition. It is possible to argue that, due to the presence of a kind of fatalism in Bourdieu's theories, misrecognition can be understood as a type of 'false consciousness'. From this position, an agent's actions are a result of a false understanding around what is, or what is not, in their interests. Under this approach, inequities in any particular context are allowed to continue, not because they are misrecognised but because the agent believes that they are being treated appropriately. Associated to this is the very real risk that the researcher ends up in a privileged, paternalistic position where only they are able to reveal the false consciousness that is present and to offer an alternative consciousness.

However, I believe that Bourdieu's theory is much too sophisticated to fall into this trap. Bourdieu does not argue that ignorance plays a role in the reproduction of systems of domination. Nor does he argue that these systems are allowed to entrench themselves and to reproduce themselves based on the actions of any one party. Misrecognition is a concept that applies to all parties in any particular field. The dominated and the dominant are both subject to misrecognising the way in which power is captured and is expressed within their particular context. Misrecognition takes place because the agents involved have made tacit assumptions about the legitimacy of their field, and have 'taken for granted' that the creation and distribution of cultural capital within their field is appropriate and is 'as it should be'. The

sociologist's role is to point out that misrecognition is taking place. At that point, Bourdieu seems to assume that agents will then act to redress the injustices present within their context.

A final point of issue remains and that is: 'are fields ontologically constituting?' Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) make the point that: "This or that particular intellectual, this or that artist, exists as such only because there is an intellectual or an artistic field" (p. 107). So, if the artist cannot exist without an artistic field, then it would imply that both the individual (as a participant in the field) and the field itself are mutually ontologically constitutional. If fields are built on relations, and if they are ontologically constituting, then it would seem that Bourdieu is implying a very different understanding of the ontological constitution of agents from that which is normally associated with his theories (a post-enlightenment individualism). If this is the case, then his understanding of agents as primarily self-interested would, at the very least, need further examination. The answer to this question is beyond the scope of this thesis but it may be helpful to return to one of Bourdieu's philosophical themes (2.2): that is, that ontological primacy is to be found in the relation between subjects and objects. Ontological primacy, in this case, applies to neither the field nor the agent but to the relationship between them.

6 Conclusions and Ways Forward

Pierre Bourdieu's theories offer a tremendously insightful and sophisticated lens for the critical examination of tertiary educational institutions, and the success and/or failure of their students. Of particular importance is his examination of how essentially inequitable systems of domination are able to entrench themselves and reproduce themselves over time with the collusion of those they are dominating.

In Part 1 I have used the theories of Bourdieu to explore two key issues and these are: how structural injustice manifests within the university context, and how this injustice manages to reproduce itself over time.

I have explored these issues first by locating Bourdieu within his own context and then by highlighting his own sociological concerns. Of particular significance was his approach to philosophy and particularly his freedom (and confidence in his ability) to move across and within fields and not be bound by the embedded ways of seeing and ways of competing that belong to particular fields. He was thus able to ask questions and bring insights and perspectives not usually found within those fields. This had two important implications. The first is that some criticism of his positions are less about what he contends than they are about his rejection of the ways of seeing that particular fields require of their members. And, secondly, Bourdieu is able to very effectively identify positions and practices of privilege because he is not part of the competition for cultural capital within that particular field.

Bourdieu's approach to the concepts of culture and education is to argue that they are at least in part concerned with the establishment, protection, entrenchment and legitimation of systems of domination. His theories provide much more than simply a description of structural injustice and instead provide a detailed account of how this injustice is embedded, whose interests are served, and how this injustice is able to reproduce itself over time. I used the theories in the following fashion.

Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital was used to highlight how possession of the appropriate cultural capital endowments has a direct impact on student success within the university, and also to highlight that many of the cultural capital requirements

within the educational context are implicit, resulting in students misrecognizing key determinants for academic success.

I explored the concept of habitus in relation to its origins and also in terms of its role in shaping and limiting the aspirational horizons of all students, and the impact this has on the students' expectations of success.

Bourdieu's concepts of misrecognition and symbolic power are key to the understanding of how structural injustice is embedded and particularly for how it manages to reproduce itself over time. I explored the concept of misrecognition in detail and this will play a key role in Part 4 when I examine the transformation of institutional habitus and argue that recognising the existence and the practice of misrecognition is pivotal to any institutional attempt to address structural injustice.

Finally, I explored Bourdieu's conception of fields and of field competition and highlighted how fields act to entrench injustice and to protect existing hierarchies. This point will be expanded upon in Part 3 when I look at how faculties use thresholds and threshold concepts as gatekeepers for entry into academic fields.

I have, however, identified four key areas of Bourdieu's work and approach that need to be addressed in order for his theories to provide the level of insight I hope for when they are transferred into the much more pluralistic context of Aotearoa New Zealand. These areas are 'Context', 'Fatalism', 'Self-interest' and 'Field rules'.

I have discussed the issue of 'context' at the beginning of this part of the thesis and noted that Bourdieu's theories were created in an historical and social context that is different in significant ways from my own. Two issues are of particular importance here. The first issue is that Bourdieu was writing out of a largely homogenous (as distinct from pluralistic) culture. French culture, especially in relation to education, exhibited very clear and distinct areas of high and low culture. Aotearoa New Zealand in present times is a very different environment. On the one hand, we do have a very typically Western, stratified society and this is important because it reflects the conditions required to use Bourdieu's theories successfully. However, this base of Western culture is always moderated by a relatively high level of pluralism in relation to values and beliefs. We simply do not have the very distinct areas of high and low

culture that prevailed in Bourdieu's France. The implication of this is that some of the general assumptions and statements that Bourdieu makes about culture and society, while appropriate within his context, have to bear much closer scrutiny within my context. This will be evident when I move to look at 'fatalism' and 'self-interest' but it is also evident in his assumption that the fundamental social condition is one of competitive distinction. While I am happy to concede that competitive distinction is a central component of stratified societies, this assumption is more difficult within my pluralistic culture. In my context, competitive distinction is only one of a variety of social conditions. It is moderated by positions of communitarianism within Western cultural groups and within many Asian communities. It is moderated by conceptions of family, whānau and hapu within Māori communities, and also by individual and group commitments to values like social justice, personal growth and spirituality across large sections of society. These problems will be highlighted when I look at the issue of self-interest.

Fatalism in the work of Bourdieu is not something that he recognises himself but I do believe it is present in both his theory of 'cultural capital' and his theory of 'habitus'. In relation to 'cultural capital', Bourdieu seems to believe that the transformation of this capital is difficult if not impossible. An agent simply has the cultural capital that they have acquired and they succeed or fail based on that. Swartz (1997) supports this by noting: "Even prolonged exposure to university instruction does not fully compensate lower and middle-class youth for their initial handicap in cultural capital" (p. 199). And yet, when Bourdieu (1990b) writes about field, he acknowledges that cultural capital is both created and distributed within a particular field. In other words, agents are still acquiring cultural capital throughout their lives and it is this competition for cultural capital that drives his notion of 'field competition'. The inability of people, processes and programmes to transform an agent's cultural capital would, in essence, mean that any attempts to change or transform inequitable systems will inevitably fail. I do not believe that this is what Bourdieu intends but it certainly seems to be the implication of his position. This fatalism is also present to a very deep level in his concept of 'habitus', especially in relation to the manner in which it shapes and limits an agent's aspirational horizons. Bourdieu's contention is that an agent's habitus will lead him or her to choose options

or to aspire to careers, social positions and opportunities that are appropriate to his or her class. Thus are social ranking systems entrenched and reproduced across generations. However, for those of us who are interested in transforming unjust social structures, we must, by definition, be able to impact and transform both the agent's cultural capital and their habitus. Without doing this, we are doomed, continually, to reinforce the inequitable status quo. The explicit creation of a secondary habitus may go some way to addressing this issue (as will deterritorialised and decolonising responses) and it is something I will examine in more depth in Part 3.

The problem with Bourdieu's contention that self-interest underlies all agent practices is that it simply does not allow for the reality of everyday human interaction. His commitment to agent self-interest does make sense within a social context where all or most of the members considered themselves to be ontologically constituted as rational, autonomous individuals. His position allows for neat and tidy theory and analysis but quickly comes unstuck in contexts where ontological positions are different and where ethnic culture prescribes communal, rather than individual, notions of identity and commitment. Therefore, any use of Bourdieu's theories in my context would require the acknowledgement that self-interest (while being a significant motivating factor) is often mediated by commitments and obligations that are, first and foremost, communal in nature. It will require the recognition that self-interest will often be subservient to the interests of family or the wider community (this predisposition in relation to communitarian notions of self-interest will be encapsulated within the agent's habitus).

Finally, Bourdieu's account of 'field rules' will prove particularly problematic for anyone approaching the issue from a 'critical methodology' perspective. As a sociologist, Bourdieu's role is to uncover the power dynamics of the systems he examines. His account of 'field' does this particularly well and he very precisely identifies the 'established' participants as those who prescribe the rules and who control the distribution of the cultural capital produced within the field. Critical theorists, on the other hand, are interested not just in critiquing the context but also in the transformation of outcomes and practices. Therefore, the first thing they are likely to do is to challenge not only the legitimacy of cultural capital distribution but, more particularly, the legitimacy of those setting the rules for 'field competition'. By having a

monopoly over the rules for how agents may compete for cultural capital within a field, the established agents not only entrench their own positions but are also able to include or exclude agents based on their perceived compliance or level of threat. Critical theorists will, by definition, attack this monopoly and are most likely to do so by introducing previously excluded practices and tools as these practices will often have been excluded due to their ability to undermine existing systems of domination. Conflict over this monopoly and its legitimation is inevitable.

In terms of ways forward for my research, four areas present themselves. These are pedagogical transformation, cultural capital and habitus transformation, the de-legitimation of field rules and, finally, strategies for addressing the issue of misrecognition by both the dominated and the dominating.

Pedagogical practice that tacitly rewards or punishes students based on their inherited cultural capital is simply unjust and entirely unacceptable. Our current pedagogical practice needs both analysis and transformation: analysis in order to identify the tacit cultural capital requirements implicit within our teaching and transformation to ensure that our pedagogy does not advantage or disadvantage students based on their cultural capital or their social group membership. These issues will be examined in Part 4 when I explore the transformation of institutional habitus.

But transformation of pedagogical practice is only half of the answer. As important is the ability to transform an agent's cultural capital as well as their habitus. In order to break away from Bourdieu's implicit fatalism, critical theorists must explore ways of transforming what agents bring to their studies as well as the aspirational horizons within which they operate. This may include the revaluation of cultural capital that has previously been rejected as being without value but will also include the opening up of aspirational horizons. Part 3 will explore this area.

The entrenched monopolies that Bourdieu identifies in his examination of 'field' are of particular significance for critical theorists looking to transform tertiary education. Equal opportunity or even just the ability to compete on a level footing is simply not available when agents in positions of domination control not only the categories of what constitutes cultural capital but also the ways in which it is distributed. When added to that is the ability to create, define and entrench rules for

who can compete and how they can compete, we are left with a context which begins to look very nepotistic. It would seem essential to any process of transformation that this monopoly is analysed, critiqued and made visible. Part of this process may be the development of tools and practices that contribute directly to this process of de-legitimation. A key part of the 'way forward' will be to develop strategies to deal with misrecognition. As Bourdieu has consistently pointed out, the entrenchment and intergenerational reproduction of unjust systems of domination is only possible when they are legitimated and this requires that both the dominated and those doing the domination misrecognise what is taking place. The reproduction and functioning of these systems of domination are entirely dependent on this misrecognition. Once the dynamics of power are unmasked, the system is immediately under threat – at least that is Bourdieu's expectation. Unmasking misrecognition will be pivotal to any hope of both individual and institutional habitus transformation. This unmasking is explored in Part 3 (in relation to those being dominated) and in Part 4 where I engage with institutional misrecognition.

PART 2 – INSTITUTIONAL HABITUS AND NEOLIBERALISM

Figure 5. Transmission versus obligation, 2015, photo, A Nobbs

7   Institutional Habitus and Neoliberalism

Having explored the immediate context of structural injustice in Part 1, the aim of Part 2 is to explore the wider context and the ways in which this context establishes and supports structural injustice within the university context. Here, I intend to complete the groundwork required to provide an account of how and why systems and structures of injustice are able to operate within universities. In Part 1, I used the lens of Pierre Bourdieu to account for the ways that systems of domination are able to reproduce and entrench themselves over time. Here, I will explore the context within which universities operate and argue that neoliberalism, the dominant ideology both nationally and globally, shapes and limits the way universities function, and also acts to direct their activities and to shape their core functions. This analysis is essential in order to address structural injustice because universities are not free to act and to operate as they wish. Rather, their operations, their educational aspirations, and their ways of understanding and measuring success are determined by the prevailing meta-philosophy (guiding theory) and ideology (guiding methodology) of neoliberalism. I contend that neoliberalism acts as both an overarching philosophy and an ideology. In its role as a philosophy, it provides the theoretical foundations, framework and justifications for its world view. As an ideology, it is the practical expression of these values and theories, and it acts to structure and concretise the theory in its real-world practice.

Chapter 7 will begin by describing neoliberalism and why it is significant for my research. I will then explore the concept of 'institutional habitus' and argue that this has a major impact on student experience and shapes both their success and retention of students at the institution. Finally, I will establish the links between Bourdieu theories and the phenomenon of neoliberalism, and argue that an extension of Bourdieu's concept of field allows us to identify very clearly the role that neoliberalism has on the educational landscape.

Chapter 8 then looks to explore how neoliberalism functions and how it has managed to embed itself within both the field of education and the wider society. I will contend that the colonisation of educational language by economic language has played a key role in this process. This chapter will also examine educational teleology

(as it differs between neoliberal and more traditional university understandings) as well as epistemological concerns with neoliberal education. Finally, this chapter will offer some insight into critical pedagogical critiques of 'reproduction' accounts of education and argue that, while some significant criticisms can be raised, Bourdieu's approach is not significantly weakened by them.

Chapter 9 will dig deeper into the 'normalisation' of neoliberal theory and practice, including extending the critique to the transnational and global role of the ideology and the impact of this on both institutions and individuals. It will also include the identification of neoliberal alliances and a critique of the concept of 'excellence' as it applies to neoliberal constructs of the university.

Chapter 10 has two main parts. The first critiques neoliberal ontology and explores the implications for individuals of this before raising alternative ontological constructions. The second part of the chapter then examines neoliberal attempts to shift responsibility and blame and how this is accomplished by the redefinition of public and private spheres. Finally, this chapter ends with a brief examination of critical pedagogical responses and resistance to neoliberal theory and practice.

7.1   What is 'Neoliberalism'?

Neoliberalism, as a national and indeed global philosophy and ideology, seems to have permeated all levels of Western societies, such as Aotearoa New Zealand, without ever really entering the 'public consciousness' and without any meaningful debate about the legitimacy of both its values and its practice. It continues to surprise me that, while the ideology and practice of neoliberalism drastically shapes our work in the area of tertiary education, very few of my colleagues (either academic or allied staff) would be able to provide a description of the ideology. Apple and Au (2015) do, however, provide a very good general description of neoliberalism. They describe it as "a particular set of economic and social relations that privileges the market as the chief structural and ideological governance mechanism" (p. 117). They expand on this by noting that neoliberalism contains two key components. These are an ideological component that is focused on the ideas of the centrality of individual freedom versus the supposed incompetence of national government, and an association with a supposed inherent superiority of private competition over public processes and

outcomes. Neoliberalism presents this as 'ideological common sense'. Their second component is the 'radical reconfiguration of class relations' where national and international governance is subservient to the interests of corporations (in particular, their ability to exploit labour, move freely across national boundaries and to consolidate their power) and to the support and maximisation of local and transnational markets.

This description highlights some key features, the first of which is the privileging of the market. Giroux (2004) is one of many commentators who note that neoliberalism is "wedded to the belief that the market should be the organising principle for all political, social, and economic decisions" (p. xiii). In this sense, neoliberalism can be described accurately as late capitalism. This belief that the 'market' is best able to organise social, political and economic life is problematic for two key reasons. That the 'market', rather than democracy, is in a position to define justice, equity and opportunity is justified on assumptions that the 'market' is neutral and efficient, and by the inappropriate importation of economic language and tools (Devine, 2004) into non-economic areas of human endeavour.

That neoliberalism (and, therefore, the 'market') is not in any way neutral is highlighted by Giroux (2004). He is clear that:

> Neoliberalism is not a neutral, technical, economic discourse that can be measured with the precision of a mathematical formula or defended through an appeal to the rules of a presumptively unassailable science that conveniently leaves its own history behind. Nor is it a paragon of economic rationality that offers the best 'route to optimum efficiency, rapid economic growth and innovation, and rising prosperity for all who are willing to work hard and take advantage of available opportunities'. On the contrary, neoliberalism is an ideology and politics buoyed by the spirit of market fundamentalism that subordinates the art of democratic politics to the rapacious laws of a market economy that expands its reach to include all aspects of social life within the dictates and values of a market-driven society. (p. xxii)

The privileging of the market (Bourdieu, 1998b) is also the privileging of those who dominate the market and of those in whose interests the market operates. In Bourdieu's terms, the market is simply another system of domination. It privileges

those with access to economic capital and dominates those lacking in that same capital. There is no neutrality.

In a similar fashion, the claims to efficiency are not as clear-cut as advocates would argue they are. The market is efficient in creating and measuring surpluses (even when this surplus creation may not be appropriate – as in the field of education). However, this efficiency is very limited and is a blunt instrument at best. The market cannot and does not measure outcomes that do not qualify as surpluses. Its interest is focused on the production of surpluses and the transformation of these into economic capital. It is, therefore, unable to measure the kinds of outcomes that educationalists might value – like student confidence, critical thinking, citizenship, belonging, perspective changes, and engagement with theory and with diversity. All of these things can be seen as part of a university student's ontological journey but, unless they can be measured and traced to economic production or economic output, they fall outside of the market's ability to measure and thus have no value.

A second key claim to the market's efficiency is that it is self-regulating. Supply and demand will ensure that the market remains balanced and that outcomes are equitable within the market understanding of that term. And yet, as the global financial crisis of 2007/2008 (Helleiner, 2014) has shown us, the moment that the market seems to start self-correcting, it is immediately propped up by governments and transnational institutions whose vested interests are at risk. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the market is unable to cope with the inexhaustible concept of greed. There is no concept of appropriate profit or appropriate returns within the market place. Maximisation of both is the order of the day. Secondly, there is, at the same time, no concept of what constitutes appropriate fields for surplus accrual and acquisition. The market drive is to identify, measure and appropriate surpluses in all areas of life. And surpluses can be squeezed out of the most unlikely of places – such as the education and health sectors – both of which, it could be argued, are intended to focus on the well-being of citizens. There is no self-regulation. There is only the consistent drive towards creating more with less, regardless of the impact on persons and on society in general, and, when this becomes unsustainable, those benefiting most from the system will intervene in order to entrench their positions of domination.

Neoliberalism is also about the maintenance of economic hegemony and existing social hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1998b). Giroux (2004) highlights this point when writing about the idea of success within the neoliberal context:

> Within this emerging neoliberal ethic, success is attributed to thriftiness and entrepreneurial genius while those who do not succeed are viewed either as failures or as utterly expendable. Indeed, neoliberalism ranks human needs as less important than property rights. (p. 60)

Neoliberalism privileges certain kinds of people. As mentioned previously, it privileges those with access to economic capital and it also privileges those technocrats with the skills to measure certain outcomes and supposed efficiencies. The ideology is all about measurement. The test of any process or practice comes down to three key traits: it must be measurable, it must be uniform and it must be able to be duplicated.

Efficiency requires measurement, and the creation and maximisation of surpluses requires uniformity of goods or services, and that these are able to be duplicated across contexts, suburbs, nations and continents. The technocrat provides the tools and the processes of measurement that allow people, products and services to be either adopted or discarded. Technocrats are thus essential for the efficient functioning of neoliberalism and are valued accordingly. It is thus unsurprising that managerial technocrats are increasingly replacing educators in the decision-making positions of many universities (Devine, 2004; Giroux, 2001; Readings, 1999), including my own.

Neoliberalism also has considerable appeal to politicians. Lauder and Hughes (1999) note:

> The appeal to markets was and is extremely attractive to policy makers. The idea that markets could improve educational performance without having to increase government expenditure showed, in theory, how something could be got for nothing... at the same time parents could become more involved with their children's education through greater choice: clearly a good selling point at elections... however, critics see no magic in the market but an

attempt to shift the nature of the educational competition in favour
of the middle class. (p. 20)

Claims to efficiency, neutrality and uniformity sit well with governments struggling to balance budgets and with a policy-making elite that is convinced that public life should serve the national economy. What this puts at risk is the idea that higher education contributes to, and acts as, a means of moderating the impact of a purely market/profit-driven society. The appeal to, and the privileging of, markets acts to undermine the kind of national democratic identity most Western cultures have held dear (and that universities – based on the Humboldtian model – have sought to nurture). The privileging of the national economy over the democratic nature of national identity serves, in Giroux's words (2004), to support a "self-interested individualism that celebrates selfishness, profit-making, and greed" (p. 139).

7.2   Institutional Habitus

When students enter university education, they are not entering a 'neutral space'. The field of tertiary education is a highly ideological space and, as I have shown in Part 1, it is a space that advantages some students based on who they are, and disadvantages others for the same reason.

In Chapter 3, I unpacked Bourdieu's concept of habitus and explained how it shaped the student's or agent's aspirational horizons, focusing on how it acted to shape (and often limit) the potential and educational possibilities of individuals. Here, I want to extend the notion of habitus from Bourdieu's focus on the individual/agent to encompassing the university as an institution. It is my claim that 'institutional habitus' is what creates the space that a student enters when they come to university and it is also what shapes their aspirational horizons, their engagement and their interaction during their student journey (in this sense, it embodies some of the concept of institutional interpellation that I examine in Chapter 12). In the same fashion that individual habitus shapes and limits the individual's aspirational horizons, so too does institutional habitus place limits and boundaries around the possibilities for the student's academic journey. Who they are as students (consumers of skills and

knowledge, potential compliant employees or ontological journeyers) is defined, to a very large extent, by the spaces available to explore, the opportunities to belong, the collegiality or the lack of it provided by the institution, and the ways in which their success is both understood and measured.

It is my contention that a university's habitus (within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand) comprises three key elements: history and tradition, relevant governmental policy, and, most significantly, the prevailing and dominant meta-philosophy (overarching philosophy).

Readings (1999) identifies three clear stages of Western university tradition and development. He identifies the Kantian stage – where the focus of the university was built on the concept of reason. He then argues that the 'Humboldtian' stage followed – where the fundamental purpose of the institution was to identify and support ideas, practices and processes that acted to strengthen national identity and culture. And, finally, Readings argues that we have entered the stage of the transnational neoliberal university that is built on (shallow and inappropriate) notions of excellence. This is the 'background' that is incorporated into the university's institutional habitus and it is important to note that all three components may be present within a particular habitus. In addition, while I concur with Readings that the neoliberal notion seems to be the most visible and dominant presence, there are likely to be struggles over its domination of the other streams, at least in the short term, as both Kantian and Humboldtian conceptions of the university still operate throughout the Western world (albeit in an increasingly weakened state).

The second key component of the university's institutional habitus can be found in national government (and transnational treaty negotiations) policy, practice and commitments. In Aotearoa New Zealand, universities are public institutions and receive a significant level of funding from the government. In our particular context, we experience two themes of governmental policy that are at odds with each other. On the one hand, we have governmental legislation (see Te Pokai Tara Universities New Zealand, 2016) that requires universities to 'accept the role as critic and conscience of society' and, on the other, we have (Editorial, 2014) the education minister, the Honourable Steven Joyce, making it clear that education in general and

universities in particular are intended to be focused primarily on supporting the national economy. The institution's habitus (if it wishes to continue to receive government funding) is, therefore, shaped to a significant degree by the policy and practices required by legislation, and by the approach and policy of the incumbent political party. An example of our government's neoliberal commitment can be found in the issues paper/questionnaire sent to all New Zealand tertiary institutions in 2016, on the government's behalf, by a body called the 'New Zealand Productivity Commission'. The name clearly establishes its ideological base and this is further reinforced by its tag line that announces: "the commission that pursues abundance for New Zealand". Who could argue against that? (See 9.4 on how the concept of excellence is used within neoliberalism in the same fashion.) A brief critique of the paper can prove illuminating.

The paper and the questions reflect a very specific, although implicit, ideological agenda. Despite its claims to be focused on providing "insightful, well-informed, accessible advice" leading to the "best possible improvement in the well-being of New Zealanders", the paper and the questions reflect a very shallow and a very limited approach to the issue of new models in tertiary education. The 'Productivity Commission' is clearly a neoliberal body and, as such, its point and purpose is to promote neoliberal ideology and neoliberal processes and outcomes. This becomes abundantly clear when we break down the types of questions (73 in total) asked in the document:

- Nineteen questions are focused on 'measurement'.
- Eighteen questions are focused on 'business models'.
- Eight questions address the area of 'competition'.
- Eight questions ask for responses in relation to 'outputs'.
- Seven questions look at issues of 'excellence'.
- Six questions ask about 'economies of scale'.
- Four questions address the issue of 'choice'.
- Two questions are related directly to 'administrative practices'.

What is obvious here is that the 'Productivity Commission' assumes that the 'well-being of New Zealanders' is something that can be addressed purely in terms of economics and productivity. The assumption is that only business questions are relevant to both the tertiary sector and the well-being of citizens. What is significant is that the 'human factor' is entirely missing from the list of questions asked. There are no questions on the following:

- Good citizenship

- Being the moral conscience of society (despite this being a legislated role)

- The expectations of future students

- The needs and wants of current students (it is as if our students do not exist)

- Universities' links to external communities (i.e. treated as if such relationships do not exist)

- The role and place of staff.

There is no mention of the treaty as the founding document of our nation. (As such, our context – Aotearoa New Zealand – is entirely absent. This document might as well be addressing a university context in the USA or the UK.)

The document (and the questions it asks) are fundamentally flawed. It has been constructed in such a way that it shapes and limits the kinds of responses that are available, and it completely excludes what some may see as the most significant part of any viable models of tertiary education – the human element and the context to which we as an institution belong.

Institutional habitus is shaped by the dominant meta-philosophy of the day. With neoliberalism has come the 'marketisation of education' and the understanding that universities are less about serving the public good than they are about serving the economy and maximising surpluses that can be converted into economic capital. Universities are seen as businesses and, increasingly, are being run as such. There is much detail to come in the following chapters but, for now, it is enough to note that education conceived as a business is significantly different from education conceived

as a public good. The requirement to operate and function as a business, therefore, plays a significant role in the institutional habitus of universities.

All of these factors shape the universities' institutional habitus and all of them impact on students at the start of, and during, their academic journeys. This impact is evident in at least three main areas: the framing of the student experience; the transition experience; and the inclusion or exclusion of students via thresholds to both the institution in general and specialist academic fields in particular.

The now-dominant practice of the marketisation of education plays a major role in the framing of student experience and of student aspirational horizons. The model of the university as a business comes complete with an attached ontology (a deeper exploration of this will come in Chapter 10). Business models highlight efficiency in both production and outcomes. Students are thus perceived as a series of assessments with an attached teleology of accreditation. The student experience is focused on the successful completion of assessments to be accomplished in the shortest and most efficient time period. The focus of teaching is increasingly tied to assessment outcomes and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is, effectively, something that negatively impacts on the efficiency of the process. 'Listen, perform and graduate' is the mantra. Citizenship, critical thinking, and the testing and exploration of ideas, perspectives and theories are considered valuable only to the extent that they support the accreditation teleology. Despite its advocates' claims to being student focused, neoliberalism is not a student-friendly paradigm. It imposes outcomes and limits the aspirational horizons of students by its strict focus on production-line outcomes and its fetishisation of measurability and uniformity. This fetishisation plays a major role in institutional habitus, and acts severely to limit and frame the student's academic journey.

The institution's habitus also plays a significant role in students transitioning from high school education, the workforce or other situations into tertiary study. A key element is the implicit cultural capital requirements of the institution. Efficiency dictates that the smaller the investment (in teaching time and in upskilling students without the requisite cultural capital), the greater the surplus. The transition experience is thus focused less on ensuring adequate preparation for students and more on sorting students into the 'likely' and the 'less likely' to succeed with

assessments. What is referred to as 'student success and retention', then, can be seen as a process that both reinforces systems of domination and also acts to reinforce social stereotypes of what a successful university student looks like (in terms of race, gender, culture and socio-economic position).

Institutional habitus impacts on the thresholds for entry to the institution and, particularly, on the thresholds for entry to particular academic fields. When success is measured only in assessment outcomes and the attached accreditation, students are permitted entry only when they are likely to be able to complete assessments efficiently. Entry thresholds are thus geared around the cultural capital requirements of the field and not the potential for pursuing knowledge, creativity or critical engagement. Some or all of these virtues may be present in students but they are there to serve the goal of eventual accreditation and are not valued for their own sakes.

A direct consequence of neoliberal ideology on institutional habitus is the increasingly pervasive idea of the student as 'customer' (Devine, 2004; Driscoll & Wicks, 1998; Natale & Doran, 2012). In my own context, my institution has adopted this stance without exposing the idea (or the underlying ideology) to any rigorous academic discussion let alone academic critique. In fact, there has been no public discussion at all. Somehow students have mysteriously been transformed into customers and, as such, are being seen as consumers of educational services and as units of economic value. The ontological implications of this shift will be explored in Chapter 10. In terms of institutional habitus, however, it is important to note that the treating of students as economic units or mere consumers of educational goods and services is another key way in which institutional habitus shapes and limits a student's academic journey. A 'customer' has needs and desires that are shaped by a transactional model of engagement. The customer purchases the product by paying their fees and the institution provides the goods and services for consumption. The institution's responsibility to this 'customers' is limited to business concepts of customer satisfaction. And yet, this would seem to be a totally inappropriate model for university education. From my perspective, what universities offer, among other things, is the 'possibility' of accreditation. A student cannot simply pay a fee and have the accreditation provided. The student must work hard and engage with the material

in order to succeed. As I highlighted in Part 1, this success is often predicated on the level and type of cultural capital a student brings with them to their studies. If this is true (and I believe the argument is compelling), then the institution's deliberate disadvantaging of some students would seem to violate any notion of fair and ethical customer service. In a similar fashion, students as mere consumers of educational goods and services are unlikely to be encouraged to engage in any activity or thought that does not serve the transaction. How then do universities nurture and help create good, critically engaged citizens? If the transaction defines the institution–student relationship, then students can experience only very shallow and narrow educational journeys.

7.3 Neoliberalism and Fields
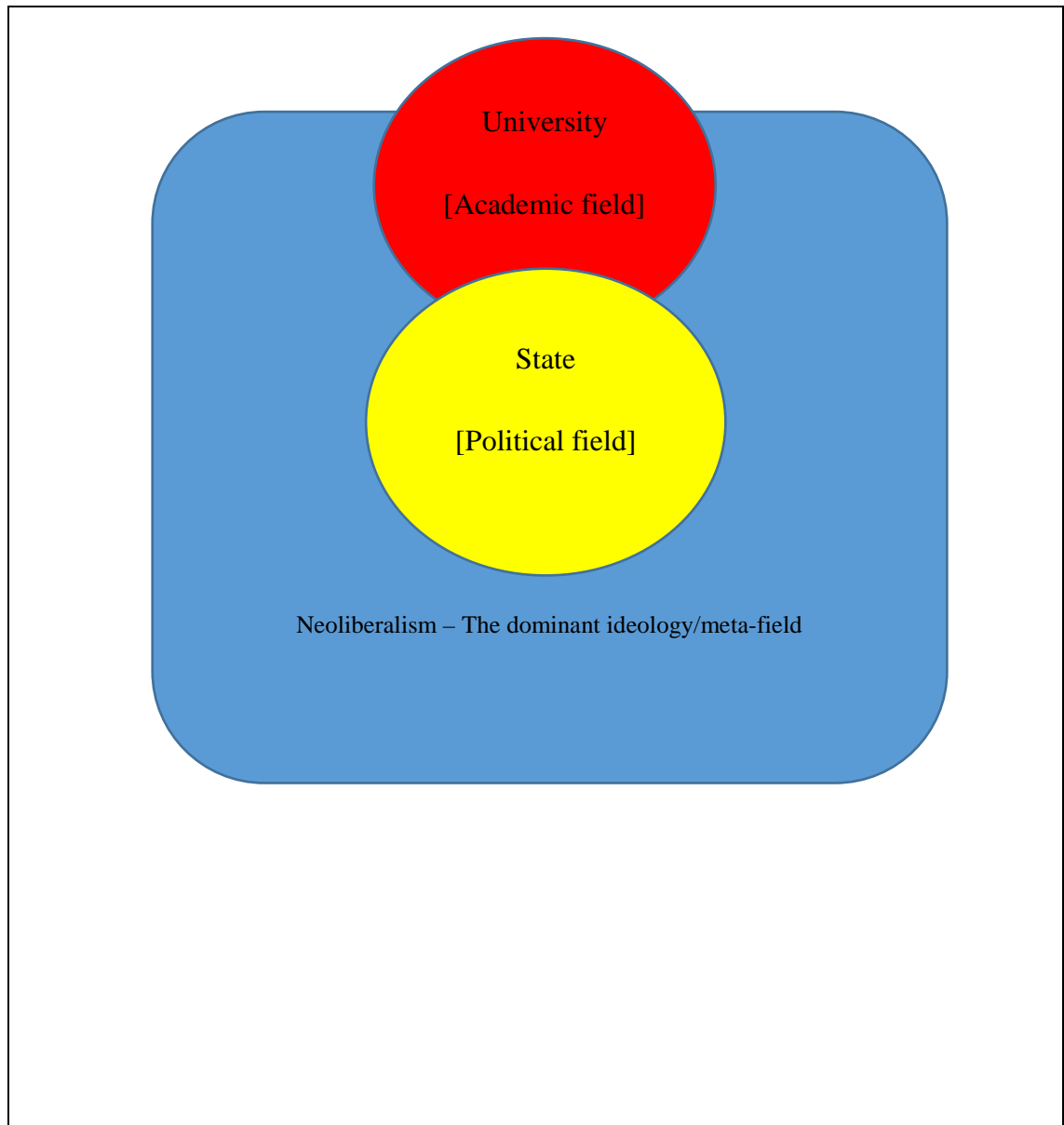
Figure 6. Fields and neoliberalism, 2015, diagram, A Nobbs

Figure 6 provides a visual representation of how Bourdieu's concept of field can be used to illuminate the relationship between the field of university education (the academic field) and the philosophy and ideology of neoliberalism (see Chapter 5). It also highlights the reason that any discussion of structural injustice within a university

context must, by definition, also critique the context within which that injustice is both created and within which it is given life.

In the same way that structural injustice cannot be understood in separation from its context, so, too, the university (as the producer and maintainer of this structural injustice) cannot be understood to be separate from the context within which it operates. Bourdieu's concept of field is essential for understanding that context. As we know from Part 1, all fields have a limited level of autonomy and, for Bourdieu, this level of autonomy is related directly to the proximity of what he describes as fields of power. In the case of the university (as the context within which a variety of academic fields operate), the proximate field of power is that of the political field – especially in terms of educational policy and its ideological underpinnings. The university field is thus limited in its autonomy and is shaped and coerced by its proximate field of power. The step that Bourdieu did not take is to locate the field of power within the confines of the dominant transnational philosophy and ideology. However, to understand fully the context in which the university is shaped, it is essential to recognise that the field of power (in this case, the political field) is also limited in its autonomy. It would appear that, in Aotearoa New Zealand, our current government is almost completely captured by neoliberal ideology.

Fortunately, all is not lost as at least a limited practice of autonomy is possible. Kloot (2015) identifies Bourdieu's concept of refraction as a means of understanding how fields can maintain some form of autonomy:

> Drawing on an analogy from the natural sciences, Bourdieu suggests that a field refracts the forms of power that impinge on it from other fields. The degree of autonomy of a field can be thought of as its 'refractive index' – the higher a field's refractive index, the more effectively it deals with external determinants. This is not achieved by totally resisting external pressure – which would be analogous to 'deflection' – but by finding ways of accommodating external threats so as to preserve the autonomy of the field. (p. 962)

There are two key issues here. If we agree that institutional habitus is shaped (at least in part) by external determinants (government policy as the proximate field of power and neoliberalism as the dominating ideology) then intentional refraction could

be the means by which these external determinants are combatted or undermined (or, conversely, adopted or adapted). At the very least, the process of refraction may end up having a role in the 'transformation of institutional habitus'. The challenge will be in bringing the institution to the position where it is reflective enough to acknowledge the importance of intentional refraction.

Secondly, there would need to be a discussion around 'refraction versus deflection'. And it would also seem important to ask to what degree the external determinants (the political field and the ideological field) have already transformed the university field (and thus the habitus of the institution). These themes will be explored in Part 4.

8 The Practice and Implications of Neoliberalism

8.1 Overview

Chapter 8 explores the functioning and implications of neoliberal theory as it impacts on university education. Section 8.2 addresses the issues of the disconnection of power from notions of social responsibility evident within neoliberal theory and links this to the new kind of mobility afforded to transnational capitalism and to the prioritising of measurement tools and of the administrative process in general that is a feature of neoliberal theory and practice. Then, 8.3 explores how neoliberalism has managed to embed itself within education and argues that this is primarily caused by the colonisation of educational language by economic language and the promotion of an assumed neutrality in the marketisation of education. Section 8.4 moves to focus on educational teleologies and contrasts the marketised ideal of neoliberal practices with the teleologies of critical pedagogists represented by Apple and Giroux. Section 8.5 then examines epistemological concerns, particularly in terms of what counts as knowledge and whose knowledge is of the most worth. Finally, section 8.6 seeks to locate the theories of Bourdieu within this debate and explores some of the critique raised in relation to his account of the reproduction of systems of domination and the perceived neglect of the role of human agency in his theories.

8.2 The Functioning and Implications of Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism, in its numerous variants, is a philosophical approach and ideological methodology (or practice) that presents itself as impartial and as a means of providing the opportunity for all persons to advance their interests as they see fit. This assumption of impartiality and neutrality is one of the key issues that makes the theory so dangerous. It is not a theory that advocates self-criticism and it seems to be unable to explore the implications of its own practice.

Apple (1995) tests this neutrality when highlighting who it is that benefits from neoliberal philosophies:

> The market offers a powerful response to a whole set of technical, managerial, and ideological problems. It appears to give power to all parties, while systematically advantaging and disadvantaging others, and effectively

reproducing the classic lines of the social and technical division of labour. It plays its part in the re formulation of citizenship, as the mode of consumption is generalised... and it serves to generalise the commodity form, a basic building brick of capitalist culture and subjectivity. (p. xxiv)

In Bourdieu's terms, the market is simply another structure and strategy that enforces and reproduces the systems of domination that currently exist. Apple is right to pose the question about who is the 'we' that benefits from the market. Clearly, the answer is... the existing groups and structures of domination. Even worse is the clear implication that "if the poor are still poor after this society is radically transformed around the 'private', then we'll know that they got poor the old fashioned way: they earned it" (Apple, 1995, p. xxv).

The disconnecting of power from associated responsibilities is a feature of neoliberal practice and one that is highlighted by Giroux (2004). Essentially, the argument is that the globalisation of neoliberal ideology supports a new kind of mobility (and disconnection) for capitalism and for those who invest. This mobility (across national borders) allows for an unprecedented level of disconnection from the responsibilities to workers, to their communities, to the environment and to the national economy that have traditionally existed when capital is located in, and focused on, one particular geographical location. It is, in effect, the freedom from the responsibility to contribute to the daily life and the continued existence of the local community. Bauman (1998) notes that this "shedding (of) responsibility for the consequences is the most coveted and cherished gain which the new mobility brings to free-floating, locally unbound capital" (pp. 9-10).

This is the reality of capitalism and it is the reality of neoliberalism as the dominant ideology. When success can be measured only by the technocrats' accounting practices, social obligations simply become a cost without benefit. Even the introduction of a 'kinder' version of capitalism cannot overcome this fetish with measurement and with surplus creation. To transition ethical considerations from the 'cost without benefit' column into the 'adding value' column requires that at least two conditions are met. The ethical responsibilities must have a measurable outcome and the ethical considerations must contribute to the creation, maintenance or conversion of surpluses into economic outcomes.

The freedom to escape obligations of social responsibility is, in part, justified by a very limited understanding of the concept of growth and the linking of this to a generalised notion of human well-being. Bargh (2007) writes that:

> Growth for neoliberal advocates means essentially economic growth… to gauge whether or not a country is achieving 'growth', or showing signs of emerging from poverty and developing, neoliberals use increases in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as their measure. As a measuring tool GDP contains numerous flaws, such as being unable to perceive the distribution of wealth within countries, the long term consequences of transactions, differences between 'good' and 'bad' transactions, and transactions occurring 'outside' the market. (p. 11)

This is a key point. We need to examine very critically any claims made by neoliberals within the education sector because the tools used to justify any claims of success are cumbersome and unable to measure many key factors. As an example, technocratic success in the measurement and uniformity of student support services cannot distinguish between the qualities of interactions; they measure simply the number of interactions and cannot measure the quality or the usefulness of any particular interaction. Numbers, in this case, do not tell the whole story.

Where the focus of change is targeted in relation to student success is also interesting. Cram et al. (2014) identify this in relation to addressing equity issues in universities in Aotearoa New Zealand:

> Much of this policy-led change has come about as successive governments have endeavoured to address the inequalities that Maori and Pasifika face in higher education. While change has been in line with the government's tertiary strategy the focus has been on participation, retention and success of Maori and Pasifika students rather than embedded structural change to the way institutions operate. (p. 7)

There has been no change to the habitus and cultural capital expectations of universities; rather, the focus has been on changing the students to fit the mould. This is a direct result of the significance of measurement for neoliberalism. Student success in the equity context is measured by the gap between success rates of the 'at risk' students and the success rates of 'general' students. No attention is directed to the

process of education (except in terms of its efficiency). Questions are not raised in relation to the appropriateness of implicit cultural capital requirements and nor are questions raised in relation to the appropriate engagement of different cultural groups. These questions require thought, critique and the real desire to provide an equitable and engaging academic context. It would seem that, for neoliberals, this questioning is without efficiency and undermines the commitment to uniformity.

However, this focus on the uniformity and privatisation of the individual (by this, I mean the treatment of students as individual consumers unconnected to their constituting communities) is not without consequence. Hall and O'Shea note (2011) "the structural consequences of neoliberalism – the individualisation of everyone, the privatisation of public troubles and the requirement to make competitive choices at every turn – has been paralleled by an upsurge in feelings of insecurity, anxiety, stress and depression" (p. 6). Anxiety, stress and depression are now key descriptors of Western cultures. This increasing isolation of the individual, their increasing need to compete and the pressure of uniformity clearly have negative impacts on an individual's well-being. When we add to that the removal of traditional support structures located in the concept (and practice) of community, we, potentially, are left with individuals no longer able to access the traditional structures and processes of support. We are left with a society (or perhaps, more accurately, 'an aggregation of individuals') locked into a competitive struggle with itself.

Perhaps the key change that neoliberal ideology inflicts on university education relates to the shift in both the governance and the focus of university practice. Readings (1999), amongst others, notes that we have been witnessing an increasing shift from educators (professors) to professional administrators (technocrats and business figures) as the central figures of university governance. The strategic goals of universities, and their day-to-day operations, are increasingly in the service of the university as a business, in the service of the university as the creator of surpluses, and in the service of the university as the producer of compliant employees. Readings (1999) points out that:

> When Ford Motors enters into a 'partnership' with The Ohio State
> University to develop 'total quality management in all areas of life on

campus' this partnership is based on the assumption that the mission
of the university and the corporation are not that different. (p. 21)

This "total quality management" is a means of transforming the university from an institution that traditionally valued the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake into a business that is dedicated to becoming both more efficient and more productive. The term 'quality management' is significant here because, as Readings notes (1999), "quality can apply to all areas of life on campus indifferently, and can tie them together on a single evaluative scale" (p. 22).

The administrative focus is increasingly evident within the core roles of universities. If we define these core roles as research, teaching and administration, we quickly find that the latter experiences the most attention. The former become subsumed under the practice and ideology of 'administration'. Research then becomes the administration of academics by their peers – highlighted by current academic publishing requirements – and teaching becomes the administration of students by their lecturers and by those marking assessments. The success of these core roles is increasingly defined by administrative measurement, which provides a very narrow means of evaluation. Readings (1999) notes that:

> … administration involves the processing and evaluation of
> information according to criteria of excellence that are internal to the
> system: the value of research depends on what colleagues think of it;
> the value of teaching depends upon the grades professors give and
> the evaluations students make; the value of administration depends
> upon the ranking of a university among its peers. Significantly, the
> synthesizing evaluation takes place at the level of administration.
> (p. 126)

Again, we see evidence of core functions of the university (teaching and research) becoming defined and evaluated by technocratic accounting processes. For technocrats, quality that is not directly measurable is of no value. What we see is a move to the commodification of educational practices. These then become educational services or educational products because it is only in these forms that education becomes measurable and thus valuable. This marketisation of education sees the knowledge of educators packaged and commodified, it sees the automation

of learning through online resources and technologies, and it sees the structural marginalisation of educators in favour of technocrats and 'business experts'.

Given that neoliberalism cannot take account of ethical, equity and social concerns, how does it act to overcome this objection? Apple et al. (2005) argues that this is accomplished, at least in part, by the technocratic management process itself. They points out:

> The seemingly contradictory ideas of state-sponsored competition; regulation by market forces and a life supposedly made good by consumerism, on the one hand, and the equally tension-ridden notions of doing much, much more with much, much less; worker accountability; performance standardisation; state testing; and nationalised curriculum have been used in odd ways to reinforce each other. Corporate managers have helped cement neoliberal and neoconservative positions on education for private gain into the daily lives of many students, teachers and parents. (p. 14)

This 'cementing' of neoliberal ideology is accomplished via a constant and ongoing programme of reviews as re-evaluations targeting the destabilising of established cultures, interests and alliances, the use of executive power to create new and more efficient departments, research streams and centres, and the use of restructuring as:

> … an ideological test of loyalty between the management's agendas and the traditions and communal values of academics. This advantages opportunists who, unbounded by professional ethics or expertise, are ready to align with the agenda of authority, while marking those who are loyal to established cultures as 'part of the problem' supposedly threatening the long-term survival of universities. (Apple, et al. 2005, pp. 177-178)

The quest for efficiency and increased 'production' is not without cost. The price of uniformity and the privileging of measurement is carried by those hard-to-measure values and virtues that many of us see as essential to the university experience and to the role that higher education plays in the creation and maintenance of a viable and valuable civic society. I will examine the implications of this privileging in more detail in Part 3 but now I turn to one of the key strategies in the

establishment of neoliberalism as the dominant ideology – the colonisation of educational language by economic language.

8.3   The Colonisation of Educational Language by Economic Language

That educational institutions have been increasingly understood as business entities and, moreover, that they themselves have been acting as business entities is no longer a contentious statement. Apple (1995) notes:

> Of course, it is the former language – of bureaucracy, of the colonisation of all of our lives by the metaphors of markets, profit, the accountant's bottom line, and so on – that circulates more widely. It leads to what can only be called a loss of memory, an assumption that such approaches were and are neutral technical instrumentalities that if left alone will ultimately solve all of our problems in schools and the larger society (on the terms of dominant groups, of course)… These techniques are not neutral. Efficiency, bureaucratic management, economic models applied to everything – these are ethical constructs. Adopting them requires moral and political choices. Their institutionalisation needs to be understood as an instance of cultural power relations. (p. xxiii)

Here Apple touches on some key points. The first is the assumed neutrality of the marketisation of education. As we will come to see in the development of this section, neutrality is far removed from the way in which marketisation functions. The consequences of neoliberal philosophy are far from neutral. In fact, they serve the interests of certain privileged social groups directly while the cost of these philosophies is borne by those less well located in the social hierarchy. This assumed neutrality is, however, central to the success of the neoliberal project. It is what Bourdieu might call the method of misrecognition (see Part 1) that allows the system and structure of domination to reproduce itself and that also allows for its own legitimation. Highlighting and undermining this misrecognition is a central part of my research.

The second is the assumption that these "technical instrumentalities" will somehow solve our problems in education and in society. Devine (2004) contends that

this is because it "appears to have the legitimacy of science, logic, and economics" (p. xvi) and that this false assumption adds a legitimacy that is wholly inappropriate. (See also Bourdieu, 1998b.)

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Apple notes that this marketisation has ethical implications. This point, in particular, is something that seems to be missing in most of the literature. Where there is power, where there are systems of domination, there we also find ethical and moral consequences. It is an important and timely reminder that, while I am engaging with these theories and perspectives at a theoretical level, these same theories have actual day-to-day impact on real people. When we talk about systems and structures of domination, we are talking about the repression, the oppression and the marginalisation of actual persons.

Neoliberal ideology and its associated conceptual spin-offs like public choice theory have managed to lodge themselves in public consciousness in a remarkably short time and with remarkable efficiency. The consequences of this are serious. Devine (2004) points out that public choice theory has:

> … permeated the way people think so that to offer any other form of explanation or procedure is tantamount to declaring oneself old fashioned or irrational. In other words, by becoming the new mode of "governmentality" (Foucault, 1991a), Public Choice operates as a censorship system to keep out other forms of thought and to reinforce itself. (p. xvi)

She argues that public choice theory, by appropriating and distorting the language of education, has managed to legitimate itself in the meta-narrative of educational debate and theory, and that it has done this despite its own internal contradictions and despite its claims to scientific authority not being able to withstand academic scrutiny. The implications of this are serious. Public choice theory has, in effect, reconstructed educational theory and practice. By displacing traditional educational theory and practice, it has redefined and "reconstructed our notions of government, of the relations of people in government departments with each other and with their 'customers'" (Devine, 2004, p. 1). It has redefined how educators and students both interact and value each other, and it has created a caste system of

providers and consumers. It has allowed for education to shift its focus from one of engagement (with theories, ideas and perspectives) to one of the production line where students are processed, in a factory-line fashion, to be delivered at the end as compliant employees. However, it is worth noting that compulsory mass education can be seen historically as only ever being at the service of 'capital'; for example, when literate workers were needed, then primary education became compulsory. It, therefore, may be legitimate to ask whether or not the fact that tertiary education has also moved into the education of the masses means that its purpose has changed from engaging the cultural elite and professional classes to training the masses for an ever-more-complex world of work.

The use of terms and concepts like 'added value', particularly in educational contexts, is another example of both the colonisation of educational language and the negative implications of neoliberal theory. Devine (2004) notes:

> Throughout the Western world, there has been much interest, particularly by administrators under pressure from funding agencies, in demonstrating that schools 'add value' to their students. Added value can be seen as a case study of Public Choice Theory in educational practice. By using the language of economics (value), it becomes possible to think of learning as something that can be measured, quantified, and used as an indicator of good teaching and good educational management. (p. 123)

Yet this assumption that added value can be measured is problematic. This is because it doesn't identify where this added value is located, or whether or not this success can be attributed to external factors. It presumes that the student didn't simply work harder or that they were not influenced by someone external to the educational context. Therefore, claiming that a certain process, structure or system adds value without identifying and tracking how this happens is, for all intents and purposes, an empty gesture.

Value in economic terms relates directly to the price that can be obtained for the goods or services in the 'market'. The application of this to the educational sector (in any meaningful way) would require students to be treated as commodities whose success or failure is determined by the market. This is a particularly disturbing

implication of the marketisation of education. By seeking to measure outcomes in economic categories, neoliberal theory has successfully disconnected itself from the reality that the subjects are human entities with a huge variety of associated expectations and interests. These interests may prioritise relational obligations, or the pursuit of outcomes that are not self-interested or that cannot be measured within a simplistic economic framework. The 'market' is simply unable to deal with this plurality of interests. It is simplistic in approach and cannot provide an adequate account of human needs, expectations and outcomes.

There are a significant number of inappropriate economic concepts now embedded in educational practice. Devine (2004) highlights another in the idea of 'best practice':

> Best practice is presumably a practice that has emerged from the competition as a current survivor. The usual thing is to try to identify best practice and circulate the idea among practitioners. There is an inherent irony to this, however: the insistence upon the implementation of best practice may preclude the evolution of better practice. It certainly has the effect of suppressing diversity. (p. 159)

This is an important point. It asks: how much do we value diversity – or how do we trade off efficiency versus diversity? Do we evaluate our programmes and practices based solely on efficiency or do we also allow for the hard-to-measure value that a diversity of practices and approaches brings to what we do? Again, neoliberal theory acts as a means of homogenising educational theory and outcomes. It wants uniformity and singular outcomes rather than a plurality of outcomes. In effect, the implications of neoliberal theory are that it seeks to strip education of its uniqueness, and of its diversity of values, outcomes and practices. It seeks to enforce a bland and shapeless uniformity that is finally able to be measured only in purely economic terms.

We see evidence of this when we note that, increasingly, faculties are becoming businesses and students are being understood and treated as revenue streams. Natale and Doran point out (2012) that "colleges and universities are in threat of becoming institutions whose primary service is to prepare the student for lifelong

consumerism rather than a 'better life'" (p. 192). In this sense 'support of the economy/market' seems to be given priority over everything else.

An equally pressing implication of the colonisation of educational language and practice is the embedding of methodological individualism (we will explore this in more depth in Chapter 10). Again Devine (2004) makes a telling point:

> In Public Choice Theory it is not generally permissible to talk of society, or the interests of society, or the will of the people. These terms imply that larger groups have some kind of meaningful existence, which Public Choice theorists would deny. To them, a group is merely an aggregation of the wills of the individuals who comprise it: it has no existence, interest, or responsibility of its own. (p. 26)

Given that we live in a pluralistic society that exhibits a variety of ontological positions, an embedded methodological individualism is not at all reflective of the society in which it finds itself. As a concept and as a practice, it is simply unable to cope with the plural understandings of personhood present in contemporary Aotearoa. It is in direct opposition to the wider society that it seeks to shape and, thus, entirely dependent on being misrecognised. It is my intention to continue the process of uncovering the misrecognition.

The key issue with the language of economic management is that, increasingly, it tends to be the context both within which all discussion around university performance takes place and by which it is measured. This 'economic lens' shapes and limits the kinds of question that can be asked and the kinds of answer that can be accepted. With the increasing 'normalisation' of this lens, we are experiencing the dumbing down of conversations and of the critique of the university's performance and of its role in the wider society.

This lack of critique becomes apparent as we move to the discussion of the point and purpose of university education.

8.4   Educational Ends – Teleology in Opposition

The key questions here are: What are we educating for? What is the purpose of university education? Is it to gain credentials and social and cultural capital that can be transformed into economic capital (Bourdieu)? Is it to create critically engaged citizens (the second of Reading's historical university descriptions)? Is it to maintain, grow and nurture cultural identity (the wananga model in Cram et al. 2014)? Is it about supporting and growing the national economy (current government expectation)? These are issues that highlight the conflict between individual aspirations and institutional commitments on the one hand and the conflict between neoliberal managers and critical pedagogists on the other. Apple (1995) answers the questions in this way:

> The basic ends and means of education are becoming so limited that education (perhaps 'training' is a better word) is increasingly only about getting paid work, and the only knowledge that is considered legitimate is that which meets the needs of an increasingly unequal economy. (Apple, 1995, p. x)

Traditionally, education has, at least in part, been about the creation of good, critically aware citizens (Apple, 1995; Giroux, 2001; Hooks, 1994). Education has been about learning to think critically, to engage with ideas and theories, and to value knowledge for its own sake. Universities have acted as the moral conscience of the nation and, as noted earlier, this is enshrined in the Education Act 1989. The shift, therefore, to an almost exclusive focus on employability and the service of the national economy comes at a very heavy cost to what were once considered the key values of education. Kirylo (2011) contrasts this shift with the goals and focus of critical pedagogy, and notes two key components. The first is that, historically, critical pedagogy has understood education as a method (and practice) of counter-socialisation focused on social justice and the nurturing of democracy. This is seen as a means of balancing the role of mainstream education in the legitimation of the existing social order and its unjust and inequitable distribution of resources, power and in-demand cultural capital. As a result, the education of students is focused on support for the creation of critical thinkers who are able to question, challenge and engage with existing systems and practices of injustice and domination. Smith and McLaren (2010) summarise this well:

> Broadly speaking, critical pedagogy is an approach to understanding and engaging the political and economic realities of everyday life… critical pedagogy challenges the social, environmental, and economic structures and social relations that shape the conditions in which people live, and in which schools operate… Critical pedagogy demands that people repeatedly question their roles in society as either agents of social and economic transformation, or as those who participate in asymmetrical relations of power and privilege and the reproduction of neoliberal ideology. (pp. 333-334)

Common to all these perspectives are the claims that critical pedagogy is political (in that it aims to investigate and challenge existing social hierarchies): that it is focused on the transformation of existing inequalities; that no systems or structures are neutral and that each supports, protects and reproduces existing interests; and that understanding the power dynamics and distributions of contemporary education is key to enabling any changes. Readings summarises this as "the university exists not to teach information but to inculcate the exercise of critical judgment" (1999, p. 6). This is essential and he notes that, unless this inculcation of critical judgement is supported, the outcome is likely to be increasing student apathy (which is another name for consumerism):

> I am not talking here about dropout rates so much as about the widespread sense among undergraduate students in North America that they are 'parked' at the University-taking courses, acquiring credits, waiting to graduate. In a sense, this is their reaction to the fact that nothing in their education encourages them to think of themselves as the heroes of the story of liberal education, embarking on the long voyage of self-discovery. What they are engaged in is 'self-accreditation', preparing for the job market.
> (Readings, 1999, p. 138)

However, we do need to be aware that neoliberal theory did not arrive and upset a perfectly working system. Previous incarnations of the university (see 9.1) were themselves not without fault and neither myself nor the critical pedagogists quoted are advocating a return to some historical utopia. What is advocated is the critical analysis and engagement with existing educational ideologies and systems, and the courage and creativity to propose alternatives that are linked to a social justice teleology.

Educational theory and practice has always had its critics both internally and externally. Giroux (2001), for example, notes that:

> When education is not linked to social change and left to its own devices it becomes a centre for the reproduction of existing social inequalities, where education is about moral, academic and political regulation. Where students are trained to become pliant workers and conforming intellectuals... (p. xx)

He consistently makes the point that higher education cannot be looked at in isolation. He argues that it is vital for the civic and democratic life of the nation: "Schools should provide students with possibilities for linking knowledge and social responsibility to the imperatives of a substantive democracy. Education is not training, and learning at its best is connected to the imperatives of social responsibility and political agency" (2001, p. xxiv). The challenge of his 'radical pedagogy' is that the confrontation and critique he brings to educational contexts is also intended to impact social action and social transformation. There is a political implication for, and requirement of, education. This is to develop in students a critical political consciousness that is emancipatory for the self, for the context (community) and for the wider political environment. Education in this sense is about transformation and the development of the consciousness referred to is in line with the universities' legislative requirement to be the social conscience of the nation.

We need to be clear here that Giroux is at war with the practice and ideology of the political 'right' and particularly its representation in neoliberalism. He conceives of his critical pedagogy, primarily, as a means of resistance to current systems of control and domination. Education, therefore, is linked at a core level to human emancipation:

> Education has fundamental connections with the idea of human emancipation, though it is constantly in danger of being captured for other interests. In a society disfigured by class exploitation, sexual and racial oppression, and in chronic danger of war and environmental destruction, the only education worth the name is one that forms people capable of taking part in their own liberation. The business of school is not propaganda. It is equipping people with the knowledge and skills and concepts relevant to remaking a

> dangerous and disordered world. In the most basic sense, the
> process of education and the process of liberation are the same.
> (p. 114)

This quote highlights some salient points. It highlights the role that education plays in equipping students with the critical skills required to understand themselves and also what it means to be part of a democratic society – in addition to the knowledge and skills required to perform specific roles and jobs. Secondly, it acknowledges that education plays a role in the legitimation and reproduction of systems and structures of domination and inequality. And, finally, it acknowledges that partaking in education – as teacher or student – entails risk. This risk relates to the accommodation required to conform to existing practices or the risk required to attempt to transform current pedagogical practice.

However, these teleological concerns need to be understood within the wider educational context and, in particular, the struggle for supremacy in the definition of, or control of, what counts as knowledge and what is given epistemological primacy.

8.5   What Counts as Knowledge – Epistemological Concerns

One of the key questions in education has traditionally been: 'What knowledge is of the most worth?' This now seems to have been replaced by the question: 'Whose knowledge is of the most worth?' Bourdieu would, of course, answer the second question by identifying the dominant/dominating group as the owner of the knowledge that is most valuable. However, our contemporary situation is not quite that clear-cut. Apple (1995) makes the point that:

> … dangers arise when we assume, as some people have, that there is always a one-to-one correspondence between any knowledge that is seen as 'legitimate' or 'official' and dominant groups understanding of the world. This is too simplistic, since official knowledge is often the result of struggles and compromises and at times can represent crucial victories, not only defeats, by subaltern groups. (p. ii)

This warning against simply accepting the critique of theorists like Bourdieu is evident in the work of both Apple and Giroux. They consistently argue that reproductive theories, while insightful, do not allow for the significant resistance of

subordinate groups and individuals (see 8.6 below). It is, therefore, not a forgone conclusion that those in positions of domination have their way by default.

Still, neoliberals have not been idle when it comes to shaping educational theory and practice, and Apple highlights this in his examination of curriculum. He breaks down the investigation of curriculum into two key areas. The first relates to content, knowledge and epistemology, and asks <u>what</u> is present as knowledge and <u>what</u> is missing. The second area relates to the <u>form</u> this knowledge takes. Apple (1995) is particularly interested in the way that knowledge is organised within the curriculum and gives examples of how education in a variety of subjects is now standardised and each student progresses at their own pace with their interaction limited to being with the teacher only:

> One could ask, what could be wrong with that? This is the wrong question if one is interested in ideological reproduction and how the school responds to crisis. A better question is, what is the ideological coding in the material? How does it organise our experiences in ways similar to the passive individual consumption of pre-specified goods and services that have been subject to the logic of commodification so necessary for continued capital accumulation in our society?
> (pp. 28-29)

Again, we see clear evidence of the individualisation of education and the breaking down of subjects into individually consumable packages. The opportunity for engagement with other students and with a 'classroom community' is traded off in favour of a streamlined and supposedly efficient model. Here, education most obviously begins to look like a product rather than a process.

Giroux, on the other hand, is quite happy to engage with the question of whose knowledge is of most worth. In his critique of traditional educational theory, Giroux (2001) makes this point:

> Schools are viewed within this perspective as merely instructional sites. That schools are also cultural sites is ignored, as is the notion that schools represent arenas of contestation and struggle among differently empowered cultural and economic groups... missing from the traditional view is the notion that culture refers to specific processes that involve lived antagonistic relations among different

> socio-economic groups with unequal access to the means of power
> and a resulting unequal ability to produce, distribute, and legitimise
> their shared principles and live experiences. (p. 74)

The key issues here are twofold: firstly, the traditional approach is unable to explore the cultural capital reasons behind student failure or success because it assumes an unrealistic equality between students; and, secondly, it fails to notice the role that education (and educational systems) plays in the maintenance and reproduction of systems of domination. The traditional approach avoids any examination of whose interests are being served by traditional pedagogical practice.

There is clearly a change of paradigm taking place. It is one that reflects the shift from knowledge being valuable for its own sake to knowledge being valuable because it may lead to an employment opportunity and because it enables the national economy to be competitive in the world market. Natale and Doran (2012) highlight this point:

> Society's relationship with knowledge is also changing: it is shifting to one
> where society is increasingly concerned with the utility of knowledge. A new
> model of higher education appears to be developing in which the pursuit of
> knowledge related to the 'practical' rather than the pursuit of knowledge
> related to what is 'true' or 'good' has become the dominant goal. The
> knowledge society is interested only in certain kinds of knowledge and values
> only certain kinds of learning. Therefore, students are torn between self-
> development and the need to have marketable skills. More so than in the past,
> students are focused on preparation for the workplace and are overly
> concentrated on content related only to the job. (p. 188)

The themes that are emerging, therefore, are the increasing individuation of the educational process, the shift to education as a consumable product and the primacy of the types of knowledge that lead to employment opportunities. There are implications here for how students are both understood and treated.

8.6   The Critique of 'Reproduction' Accounts of Education

While Bourdieu's account of the reproduction of systems of domination is considered to have been ground breaking in moving the debate about justice and equity in education forward, it has nonetheless attracted strong criticism from the school of critical pedagogy. This criticism has tended to gather around three key and

interrelated areas. These are that the theory is too simplistic, that it ignores human agency (particularly in relation to the dominated) and that Bourdieu's concept of culture is mistaken. Apple (1995) argues that the reproduction account of schools is too simplistic. It recognises that schools play two significant roles – supporting the conditions for capital accumulation (via credentials), and the legitimation of existing systems and practices of social structure and hierarchy (including the economy). What reproduction accounts do not seem to pay attention to are that these two functions can often be in conflict with each other as witnessed by the overproduction of qualifications that are not demanded by market 'conditions'.

Bourdieu seems to assume that the reproduction of systems and structures of domination is, in many ways, a fait accompli and this is what leads to the 'fatalism' present in his theories (see Chapter 6). Apple's point is that even systems of domination may often be at odds with themselves. While Bourdieu assumes a smooth, streamlined process, Apple argues that educational systems most often contain internal inconsistencies and expected outcomes that may be in opposition to one another. When these opposing forces come into conflict, the reproduction theorists seem unable to provide an account of the way that these conflicts play out or describe the extent to which they undermine the process of reproducing systems of domination.

I think this criticism is less significant than Apple holds it to be. I believe that Bourdieu's concept of 'field competition' allows plenty of room for internal inconsistencies and conflicts within any particular context. For Bourdieu, 'fields' are sites of struggle for the distribution of newly created cultural capital and conflict, and inconsistencies are to be expected.

Apple's more significant criticism relates to the issue of human agency. When writing about the complexities of reproduction, Apple (1995) points out:

> Workers resist in subtle and important ways. They often contradict and partly transform modes of control into opportunities for resistance and maintaining their own informal norms which guide the labour process. Whatever reproduction goes on is accomplished not only through the acceptance of hegemonic ideologies, but through

> opposition and resistances. We should remember here, though, that these resistances occur on terrain established by capital, not necessarily by the people who work in our offices, stores, and industries. (pp. 22-23)

There are two key points here. The first is that systems of reproduction are not unaffected by the persons/agents upon which they act. This point is made repeatedly by both Apple and Giroux (and possible student responses of resistance are explored in Part 3). They contend that reproduction will always encounter some kind of resistance and that this resistance will impact on how successfully the reproduction of systems of domination is carried out. I think it is important to acknowledge the truth in this statement and that it is something that Bourdieu does not address directly. However, Bourdieu's central contention is that systems of domination are able to reproduce because they are misrecognised. This is significant. Neither Apple nor Giroux addresses the issue of misrecognition and I think that is because the resistance that they note is not related to reproduction. I suspect that their workers or students resist as a direct result of their habitus (which may contain ideas around the importance of unions or the role of worker actions in 'keeping the boss honest', or university students equating academic success with lecturing skill rather than with thresholds and cultural capital) rather than as a result of recognising systems of domination. It would seem possible to resist certain practices in the workplace, school or university while still legitimating and misrecognising the process of domination.

The second part of the quote is particularly compelling. It notes that resistance most often takes place within a context defined by, owned by and, essentially, at the mercy of the prevailing system and interests of domination. In this context, meaningful resistance obviously becomes much more challenging.

Giroux (2001) is also concerned about the perceived absence of human agency in 'reproduction' accounts of education. There are:

> On the one hand, radical educators who collapse human agency and struggle into a celebration of human will, cultural experience, or the construction of 'happy' classroom social relations. On the other hand, there are radical views of pedagogy that cling to notions of structure and domination. Such views not only argue that history is made behind the backs of human beings, but also imply that within such a context of domination human agency virtually disappears. The notion

> that human beings produce history – including its constraints – is subsumed in a discourse that often portrays schools as prisons, factories, and administrative machines functioning smoothly to produce the interests of domination and inequality. (p. 4)

This is a key point. One of the real issues for me with Bourdieu's analysis, as discussed in Chapter 6, is the feeling of fatalism implied in his constructs of cultural capital and 'habitus' in particular: because an agent's excess or lack of cultural capital has a profound impact on their academic success and because 'habitus' is so strongly involved in shaping the agent's aspirational horizons. It becomes very difficult to see how this vicious circle can be broken in order to change the almost pre-determined outcome. I think that Giroux highlights a key potential trap here for those of us using Bourdieu's analysis and that is how easy it is to fall back on the position that the systems and structures of domination are to blame rather than taking the next step that looks to explore individual agent roles in the process. For me, it is important to challenge consistently the fatalism I locate in Bourdieu's theories and to explore options for interventions that return human agency to the processes.

Giroux (2001) describes theories of reproduction as focusing "on how schools utilise their material and ideological resources to reproduce the social relations and attitudes needed to sustain the social divisions of labour necessary for the existing relations of production" (p. 76). The focus of such theories, he argues, is overwhelmingly focused on the systems, structures, mechanics and implications of domination. This focus has been particularly useful for uncovering the 'interested' nature of education and the key role it plays in the reproduction of systems of domination. However, their key weakness, he notes, is "the refusal to posit a form of critique that demonstrates the theoretical and practical importance of counter-hegemonic practices" (p. 77).

It is important to note that Giroux's critique of 'theories of reproduction' is related primarily to their usefulness or lack thereof in the support of radical pedagogical approaches. Bourdieu, on the other hand, focused on uncovering an explanation for why different cohorts of students succeeded or failed in education. His analysis was intended to provide an account of the advantaging/disadvantaging of student groups and of the way in which this context of dominance/being dominated is

able to reproduce itself over time. It may be that Bourdieu seems to expect that, once the inequity was uncovered, change would follow but it never seems to be his intention to plot that change himself.

Giroux (2001) is also concerned about Bourdieu's concept of culture and the implications that this has for human agency. He sees it as Bourdieu assuming that culture is a one-way process of domination where class responses are defined by existing hierarchies and systems of domination. This ignores the conflict that Giroux sees as present via both the cultural capital created by the working class, and the resistance and struggle between classes (the dominated and the dominating). He sees two key problems with Bourdieu's view. The first is that class distinctions are reduced to whether or not they hold and express power or whether they are acted upon, and this ignores not just class complexities but also race and gender differences. And, secondly, resistance as both a concept and a practice is largely ignored under the perceived inevitability of Bourdieu's account of reproduction.

I am not convinced that Bourdieu does, in fact, leave no room for human agency. As an example, his concept of 'field' presents a context in which agents struggle and compete with each other for various forms of capital (most notably, for the cultural capital produced in the field). This 'agent versus agent' struggle relates directly to the success of the individual agents. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that Bourdieu does not explore agent resistance to the dominant structures rather than saying he leaves no room for human agency (although he does note the three central roles within a field and that one of these is what I call the disenchanted, who, by definition, challenge and resist the systems of domination (see Chapter 5).

Giroux (2001) sums up his position when advocating 'resistance' as a key lens and methodology for a radical pedagogy:

> It celebrates a dialectical notion of human agency that rightly portrays domination as neither a static process nor one that is ever complete. Concomitantly, the oppressed are not viewed as being simply passive in the face of domination. The notion of resistance points to the need to understand more thoroughly the complex ways in which people mediate and respond to the interface between their own lived experiences and structures of domination and constraint. (p. 108)

The importance of this notion of resistance becomes even more significant as I move on to look at the normalisation of neoliberal theory and practice in the next chapter.

9   The 'Normalisation' of Neoliberal Theory and Practice

9.1   Neoliberalism and Globalisation

Neoliberalism is a philosophy and ideology (see Chapter 7) that operates across a variety of contexts. In order to understand its impact on university education, we need to appreciate the full extent of its reach and realm of operation. I will do this by looking at three key areas of neoliberalism and its place in globalisation. I will begin with an overview then will look to explore the implications for universities and for the educational sector in general before finishing with a brief examination of the implications that global neoliberalism has for individuals.

9.1.1   Overview

Globalisation, as a concept, has been critiqued from a variety of perspectives. How we approach the issue is of paramount importance. Apple et al. (2005) make the case for the importance of context as a starting point:

> Globalisation is often reified, ascribed a range of universal characteristics. Given this approach, educational scholars have taken up the task of understanding its various forms and of inferring its effects on education. In my view, this is a fundamentally misguided way of theorizing the relationship between globalisation and education. A better way needs to focus on the politics of naming globalisation and on understanding its salience in its specific historical and political contexts. (p. 110)

This highlights the danger of assuming that any particular 'meta' or overarching philosophy (i.e. neoliberalism) can be easily understood separate from its context, and the risks associated with assuming that general characteristics enable an accurate understanding of its functions and the ideology and entrenched interests that drive it. My approach will be to link neoliberalism (in both its global and national contexts) consistently back to the issue of, and implications for, university education in Aotearoa New Zealand. An associated risk of using generalised notions of neoliberal values and practices is that these can then easily become normalised (an issue we will explore later in this section). These risks are real and Apple et al. (2005) notes:

> What this analysis suggests, then, is the need to understand contemporary ideological constructions of globalisation historically, rather than as a set of naturalised economic processes operating in a reified fashion. Unless this is done, many of the neoliberal ideas that have become popular in recent years will continue to appear as a natural and inevitable response to the steering logic of economic globalisation... And it is significant that globalisation will appear dissociated from its roots in the European projects of imperialism and colonialism, which continue to shape the lives of people within not only the developing but also the developed world, with a global geometry of power that is inherently unequal. (p. 113)

This identification of both neoliberalism and globalism as inherently entrenching and maintaining specific capitalist economic processes and interests is very significant. Bargh (2007) goes as far as claiming that neoliberalism (in its global positioning) is a new form of colonialism and this resonates with Giroux's (2004) linking of neoliberalism and 'empire' and Bourdieu's (1998b) identification of global neoliberal power sources and the associated "unprecedented mobility of capital" (p.3).

A key factor in the contention that neoliberalism operates as a new form of colonialism can be witnessed in the way it has managed to absolve itself from many local and state responsibilities, and to erode the distinction between economics and politics. In relation to the first point, Giroux (2004) writes that:

> Under neoliberal globalisation, capital removes itself from any viable form of state regulation, power is uncoupled from matters of ethics and social responsibility, and market freedoms replace long-standing social contracts that once provided a safety net for the poor, the elderly, workers, and the middle class. (p. 59)

The state is no longer the primary regulator of capital production. In its place is rule by the world market. State regulation is now almost entirely subservient to the global economy. And, having disestablished the distinction between economics and politics, neoliberalism, at the same time, creates a distinction between the state and the market. The state is presented as a model of inefficiency and vested interests while the market (thanks to its supposed neutrality) is presented as a paragon of efficiency and equality.

But 'the state' is not simply a casualty of neoliberal globalisation. The state is complicit in its own minimisation by consistently pursuing the 'path of least resistance'. Apple et al. (2005) write:

> In contrast to strong nation states that invest in the education of the public as a collective socioeconomic good, states with a weak, complacent commitment to the sovereignty of their citizens are keen to disinvest in underwriting their citizens' social and economic security. This involves the establishment and deployment of calculative regimes to give effect to the political project of neoliberalism. This repertoire of cultural technologies of compliance embodies forms of expertise for fabricating measures of those short-term 'out comes' that are imagined as enhancing the power for effecting micromanagement… these technologies of audit have achieved high status and considerable market value in the hierarchy of power, especially in states with weak links to their citizens and strong commitments to acting as agents for the market. (p. 14)

This micromanagement and other implications of global neoliberalism are explored next.

9.1.2   Impact on universities

Education for compliance or education for transformation? Cole (2005) argues that education is the key for global capital in two ways. First, it normalises capitalism and, secondly, it acts to create an ideology based on the impossibility of changing capitalist control and practice:

> It is important for capitalism that the education system does not hinder this process. Indeed the current ideological requirements of capitalism are that the education system play an active role both in facilitating the growth of consumerism (a material as well as an ideological benefit for capitalists) and in naturalising capitalism itself. This takes the form of bringing business into schools and in using schools to promote business values. (p. 11)

Global capital benefits from the co-option of university education (and education in general) that is the direct outcome of neoliberal policy. Neoliberal education is a tool to create a compliant workforce for efficient production; it serves to create and entrench a self-perpetuating pool of consumers, and acts as a tool to

normalise and naturalise both capitalism and the requisite trait of consumptive individualism.

In addition, Readings (1999) notes that education is part of the self-knowledge of capitalism:

> Like the stock exchange, the University is a point of capital's self-knowledge, of capital's ability not just to manage risk or diversity but to extract a surplus value from that management. In the case of the University this extraction occurs as a result of speculation on differentials in information. (p. 40)

He also points out (p. 164) that neoliberal practice is concerned less with the type of thought that universities produce and more with the quantity. "Produce what knowledge you like, only produce more of it, so that the system can speculate on knowledge differentials, can profit from the accumulation of intellectual capital"). This is why we see an increasing investment in university education by multinational corporations and key industrial figures.

This investment is practised almost entirely on the terms of and for the benefit of capital. While it allows universities to make up for funding shortfalls, it also plays a significantly negative role:

> The political projects of neoliberal and neoconservative globalism have co-jointly reinvented and repositioned the state within new problematics of governing. This has seen ideological critiques of the 'education of national/global publics' used to breach the values and expertise valorised by educators so that their work is now opened up to reconstruction as constituents of market-driven business enterprise. (Apple et al. 2005, p. 14)

Educators are then seen primarily as the producers of knowledge. This production is useful only when it produces surpluses that can be exchanged for economic capital, and this production is overseen by managerial technocrats who measure and evaluate the effectiveness of this production. This is the university in service of global, neoliberal capital.

9.1.3 Impact on individuals

The consequences of global neoliberalism are no less significant for individuals. They impact, in fact, on the core of what it is to be human: on the ontology of the self. Readings claims that "the capitalist system… offers people not a national identity but a non-ideological belonging: a corporate identity in which they participate only at the price of becoming operatives" (1999, p. 48). And, by operatives, he means that they create and understand themselves as 'homo economicus' (this point will be explored in more depth in Chapter 10), and that they create and understand themselves as consumers of goods in competition over scarce resources with other individuals, whose key goal in life is the advancement of their own self-interest. And this approach ties in nicely with the rise of the 'market as pedagogy'. When education is increasingly at the service of business and the economy, pedagogy begins to undergo a transformation. Apple et al. (2005) elaborate on this point:

> Not surprisingly, the global corporate curriculum does not teach kids anything at all about how it is both produced and consumed. It screens from view the 'night-time of the commodity' – the economic modes and practices associated with production and consumption…
> The sphere of production is thus the night-time of the commodity: the mysterious economic dark side of social exploitation which is so effectively concealed in the dazzling glare of the market-place.
> (p. 40)

The pedagogy of the market teaches only what is required to ensure consumption, uniformity (efficient production and consumption) and the conditions required for the continuation of global, neoliberal domination.

By ensuring that it controls the means of measuring success, neoliberalism has the tools required to ensure that both individuals and institutions are required to comply (under the banner of good and efficient business practices) and, in effect, collude in their own diminishment and ability to act. As Noam Chomsky, with a delightful piece of black humour, has pointed out:

> We do have a welfare state, but it is a welfare state for the rich… the rest of the people have to be convinced that they live in a classless society. Schools have always played a role in keeping this myth alive.
> (2000, p. 36)

9.2   Who or What Constitutes Neoliberalism? – Alliances

It is, I think, useful to explore briefly the idea of who it is that makes up the neoliberal support base. The debate can be framed very easily as an 'us' versus 'them' duality and, as we shall see, it is not quite that clear-cut. So, who exactly are the 'them'?

Giroux (2004), writing about the specifically American context, writes of an ideology of American supremacy and argues that, in the USA, neoliberalism works hand in glove with religious fundamentalism:

> When and where such nakedly ideological appeals strain both reason and imagination, religious faith is invoked to silence dissension. Society is no longer defended as a space in which to nurture the most fundamental values and relations necessary to a democracy but has been recast as an ideological and political sphere 'where religious fundamentalism comes together with market fundamentalism to form the ideology of American supremacy'. (p. xix)

This ideology of supremacy seems to reflect the particularly American presence of fundamentalist Christianity within the national debate: a presence that is significantly less to the fore in other Western democracies. Apple and Au (2015) extend the membership of the neoliberal alliance to include: (1) neoliberals; (2) neo-conservatives; (3) authoritarian populists (the Christian right and, more recently, Donald Trump); and (4) a particular fraction of the upwardly mobile professional and managerial new middle class (technocrats – those with managerial and administrative expertise, and with a vested interest in the growth of this expertise, and who are also motivated to limit the competition experienced by their own children in the pursuit of cultural capital and accreditation). All of these groups have vested interests in the education sector. Apple and Au describe the contemporary educational landscape this way:

> Neo-liberals are the most powerful element within the alliance supporting conservative modernization. They are guided by a vision of the weak state. Thus, what is private is necessarily good and what is public is necessarily bad. Public institutions such as schools are 'black holes' into which money is poured and then seemingly disappears… For neo-liberals, there is one form of rationality that is more powerful than any other – economic rationality. Efficiency and

an 'ethic' of cost-benefit analysis are the dominant norms.
(2015, p. 7)

In Aotearoa New Zealand, we mainly experience the first, second and fourth groups but not the third. The religious right is not visibly present (except perhaps in the area of charter schooling and Destiny church) but the technocrats to whom Apple refers are increasingly more and more visible.

To this point, the 'them' is easy to define in opposition as bigoted fundamentalists concerned primarily with the dominance of their own world views and with their place within the hierarchy of that world view. However, Gillborn (2015) challenges this somewhat when he notes that 'whiteness' plays a key role in neoliberal education practice and policy (and, therefore, directly impacts on the issue of cultural capital requirements):

> Although race inequity may not be a planned and deliberate goal of education policy neither is it accidental. The patterning of racial advantage and inequity is structured in domination and its continuation represents a form of 'tacit intentionality' on the part of white powerholders and policy-makers. (p. 198)

The charge of 'white supremacy' is not related to fringe groups who are obviously racist but to the 'myriad of daily discriminations' that are not noticed (by those who carry them out) or that are taken as normal. Two quotes highlight this. Ansley (1997) notes:

> By 'white supremacy' I do not mean to allude only to the self-conscious racism of white supremacist hate groups. I refer instead to a political, economic, and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white supremacy and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily re-enacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings. (p. 592)

The second quote is from bell hooks (2014):

> When liberal whites fail to understand how they can and/or do embody white-supremacist values and beliefs even though they may not embrace racism as prejudice or domination (especially domination that involves coercive control), they cannot recognise the ways their actions support and affirm the very structure of racist domination and oppression that they profess to wish to see eradicated. (p. 113)

That global neoliberalism embodies 'white values and beliefs' would seem to be an uncontentious statement. Ideologies are not neutral concepts or spaces. The danger of global neoliberalism is that it does not have the tools, the incentive or the ability to engage in self-critique. It's assumed scientific base, its neutrality and, as I will show, its commitment to excellence absolve it of this responsibility. It, therefore, assumes itself to be well positioned to avoid acknowledging any charge of implicit racism.

9.3 The 'Normalisation' of Neoliberal Thinking

One of the most surprising things within my own university context is the lack of any institutional understanding of neoliberal ideology, and the absence of any awareness that neoliberalism as an ideology needs to be defended by its advocates. There are no publicly identifiable advocates of neoliberalism because its practices are seen as basic 'common sense'. The desire to make the university more efficient equals common sense. The moves to make the university more productive equal common sense. The increasingly arduous administrative tools required to measure these outcomes equal common sense. The focus on 'adding value' equates to common sense as does the appeal of producing graduates that the economy requires. There is, therefore, no need to defend those things that, by definition, make the university a better place (where 'better place' means more efficient, more productive, and able to be measured and made uniform). This makes any opposition to neoliberal processes and practices feel a little like 'tilting at windmills'.

This normalisation of neoliberal language and practice is accomplished in three major steps (all of which are supported by the colonisation of educational language by economic language, see Chapter 8). The first is the closing down of conversational

space by making sure that there are no longer any categories in which to speak about critical citizenship or civic life. Giroux (2004) articulates this point well and also highlights the second step (which is the impossibility of critical thinking):

> Within the discourse of neoliberalism that has taken hold of the public imagination, there is no way of talking about what is fundamental to civic life, critical citizenship, and a substantive democracy. Neoliberalism offers no critical vocabulary for speaking about political or social transformation as a democratic project. Nor is there a language for either the ideal of public commitment or the notion of a social agency capable of challenging the basic assumptions of corporate ideology as well as its social consequences. In its dubious appeals to universal laws, neutrality, and selective scientific research, neoliberalism 'eliminates the very possibility of critical thinking, without which democratic debate becomes impossible'. This shift in rhetoric makes it possible for advocates of neoliberalism to implement the most ruthless economic and political policies without having to open up such actions to public debate and dialogue. (p. xix)

That the very possibility of critical thinking is at risk is a particularly disturbing claim. Neoliberalism seeks to normalise this by seeking to portray progressive thought as both archaic and impractical. It appeals to a very limited (read easily measurable) conception of science, of progress and of reason, and positions these as normative and as 'ideal rules'. What this practically entails, according to Giroux (2004), is:

> … a return to a kind of radical capitalism, with no other law than that of maximum profit, an unfettered capitalism without any disguise, but rationalised, pushed to the limit of its economic efficacy by the introduction of modern forms of domination, such as 'business administration', and techniques of manipulation, such as market research and advertising. (p. xxv)

The third key factor in the normalisation of neoliberal thought is what Kirylo calls "the veiling of the obvious" (2011, p. 143). This veiling of the obvious links very closely to Bourdieu's concept of misrecognition. In the same way that Bourdieu argues that systems of domination cannot survive without being misrecognised, the 'practical wisdom' of neoliberalism can be embedded in the processes of the university only if it brooks no critique of its theory and practice. So long as neoliberalism is understood as neutral/impartial, as a model of efficiency and as the key contributing factor to the

excellence of the university, this normalisation can survive unquestioned. Thus, the key role of its opponents is to unmask and to name the interests prioritised by neoliberal theory and practice. Giroux (2004) puts it this way:

> Neoliberalism has to be understood and challenged as both an economic theory and a powerful public pedagogy and cultural politics. That is, it has to be named and critically understood before it can be critiqued. The common-sense assumptions that legitimate neoliberalism's alleged historical inevitability have to be unsettled and then engaged for the social damage they cause at all levels of human existence. (p. xxv)

This 'unmasking' of the interests prioritised, of the unsupported assumptions of neutrality and fairness, and of the claims to efficiency are vital to any meaningful engagement with neoliberal theory. The centrality of this unmasking is addressed in Chapter 19.

9.4 Problems with 'Excellence'

As I noted in Chapter 8, Readings identifies three distinct stages of the modern university. The first he describes as the 'Kantian' stage where the university's purpose and identity are directly related to the promotion of 'reason' as its purpose for being and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake as the key outcome of its work. The second stage he describes as the 'Humboldtian' stage where 'reason' as the key focus of the institution is replaced by the identification, creation and entrenchment of national ideas of culture and identity. The third stage he identifies is the 'university as a model of excellence' or what can be described as the university embodying the techno-bureaucratic notion of excellence. Peters (2005) accepts these three models but argues that the third has entirely dislocated the university from its traditional roles. He writes:

> I differ from Readings because I think the founding discourses of the modern university have been ruptured by the discourse of excellence. The combined pressures of globalisation, managerialism, and marketization have stripped the University of its Historical Reference Points and threatens to permanently change its mission and to jettison both the academic freedoms and institutional autonomy characteristic of the traditional university. (p. 70)

His point is that, while the first two of Readings' stages changed the focus of the university, they did not change it in the fundamental way that is occurring and being contested under neoliberalism. Increasingly, the university as a model of techno-bureaucratic excellence is a business rather than an educational institution, and one that has been cut loose from the values and commitments of its core identity.

Excellence as a term is an almost constant presence within the dialogue of my institution. The 'pursuit of excellence' is commonly used to justify structural changes, cutbacks in levels of staffing, the shortening of study time frames and the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess and measure staff buy-in to the prevailing neoliberal ideology. However, a closer examination of the term reveals some significant problems. Readings (1999) points out, firstly, the arbitrariness of the term. He claims that 'excellence' is invoked:

> … to say precisely nothing at all: it deflects attention from the questions of what quality and pertinence might be, who actually are the judges of a relevant or a good University, and by what authority they become those judges. (p. 32)

This arbitrariness is not acknowledged by its advocates in what is yet another clear case of 'veiling the obvious'. The assumption is that appeals to excellence effectively mute any opposition as who is prepared to say that the pursuit of excellence is not a worthy endeavour? And yet, what exactly is this excellence we are pursuing? And, as Readings has noted, who defines it and on what basis are they qualified to do so?

The appeal to excellence is also intended to overcome the question of value across the range of the university's disciplines and services. Readings (1999) highlights this point:

> The assumption is that the invocation of excellence overcomes the problem of the question of value across disciplines, since excellence is the common denominator of good research in all fields. Even if this were so it would mean that excellence could not be invoked as a 'criterion' because excellence is not a fixed standard of judgement but a qualifier whose meaning is fixed in relation to something else. (p. 23)

He gives the example of a university's parking service being given an award for 'excellence in parking'. What this actually meant is that they had been remarkably efficient in 'restricting' motor vehicle access. He points out that they could also have been deemed excellent if they had provided more rather than less parking or reduced the time staff took to walk to work. Excellence in this sense is meaningless as it is not quantifiable and can be appealed to as a standard that is not necessarily linked to a useful or viable outcome. The argument is that this is often how the term is used by corporations and, increasingly, by universities. (A search of my own university's website reveals the term is used 1,156 times – http://www.aut.ac.nz/.)

The neoliberal notion of excellence is not a benign concept. It is a concept that is used quite brutally within my own institutional context against staff, support teams, and practices and processes that, having been 'measured', are seen as falling short of the institution's expectation of excellence. The only people safe from the concept are those who define excellence as Readings (1999) highlights:

> Excellence draws only one boundary: the boundary that protects the unrestricted power of the bureaucracy. And if a particular department's kind of excellence fails to conform, then that department can be eliminated without apparent risk to the system. (p. 33)

The consequences of this 'pursuit (of a shallow notion) of excellence' is apparent with how inequity is treated. Writing about the British introduction of performance indicators for the governmental funding of universities, Readings (1999) notes:

> The performance indicator is, of course, a measure of excellence, an invented standard that claims to be capable of rating all departments in all British universities on a five-point scale. The rating can then be used to determine the size of the central government grant allocated to the department in question. Since this process is designed to introduce a competitive market into the academic world, investment follows success, so the government intervenes to accentuate differentials in perceived quality rather than to reduce them. Thus more money is given to the high-scoring university departments, while the poor ones, rather than being developed, are starved of cash… (p. 36)

The pursuit of excellence is not about justice or equity or a level playing field. It is about the maximisation of efficiency, production and the creation of surpluses. All of these are to be measured and judged by accounting methodologies. It is best described in Readings' terms as "the moment of technology's self-reflection":

> The appeal to excellence marks the fact that there is no longer any idea of the University, or rather that the idea has now lost all content. As a non-referential unit of value entirely internal to the system, excellence marks nothing more than the moment of technology's self-reflection. All that the system requires is for activity to take place, and the empty notion of excellence refers to nothing other than the optimal input/output ratio in matters of information. (1999, p. 39)

10 Hidden Assumptions and Shifting the Goalposts

10.1 Ontological Oppositions and Commitments

The ontology of persons (MacIntyre, 1984; Taylor, 1995) is a key means of understanding both how theories and ideologies function, and, in particular, the implications these theories and ideologies have for the persons within their contexts. How we understand students is key to my research. Are they understood (in the traditional liberal individualistic model) as being defined by their rationality, and their ability to perceive a past, present and future? Are they in competition with others for scarce resources? Or, are they constituted as persons (in the communitarian sense) by their relationships, their roles or their duties? All ideologies make ontological assumptions about persons (or, in our case, about students as individuals making up a particular grouping of persons). How these persons are ontologically constituted, their notions of identity and belonging, and their expectations and intentions are central to the critique of neoliberalism and its alternatives. Ontological positions often go unacknowledged and, therefore, un-critiqued. In this section, I want to explore the ontological assumptions of neoliberalism: to ask how the philosophy understands the ontological constitution of persons and to explore what it means to be a student within the context of neoliberalism. I, then, want to contrast this with other understandings of who and what students are.

I want to focus the discussion by identifying the key neoliberal assumptions of ontology before exploring some of the implications of this position. Finally, I will highlight some alternative ontological positions and their associated cultural capital.

10.1.1 Neoliberal ontology

A central concern with neoliberalism (and public choice theory, which is a subset of that) is that it is rooted in 'methodological individualism' and, in particular, in the understanding of the human subject as 'homo economicus'. Devine (2004) notes that:

> … the basic elements of Public Choice theory are homo economicus, the self-seeking individual; methodological individualism, a system of analysis that recognises only the individual; rationality, which is both a claim to the superiority of man and to the predictability of his

> actions, and hence to the universality of his motivation and the possibility of s science built on the foundations of this universality; and finally, the market, an institution that, it is claimed, harnesses the interests of homo economicus and converts them by the best possible processes into productive social relations. (p. 15)

Under this description, individuals (students, for the purpose of this thesis) are affected in the following fashion. The concept of homo economicus conceives of the individual as an entity who will consistently pursue economic outcomes relating to the pursuit of self-interest. Success within this notion of ontology takes place when the individual maximises their personal interests. Methodological individualism consistently assumes (and mandates) the individual as being primarily self-interested and success is then measured directly in relation to outcomes that maximise this self-interest. Thus we see the focus on measurement and uniformity highlighted in Chapters 8 and 9. Rationality is embedded within the concept of homo economicus and is the primary justification for individuals choosing to maximise their own interests. Finally, the market is the context within which homo economicus operates and within which the pursuit of individual self-interest takes place. The market is assumed to provide the ideal environment for the prioritising of individual interest over the interests of groups or communities (unless these communities are aggregations of self-interested individuals).

Three points of critique are immediately apparent here. The first relates to exclusion/inclusion. The question is who, by definition, is excluded by a theory that includes the above basic elements. Whose voices and interests are excluded or ignored? The answer would be: anyone who understands themselves as being ontologically constituted by relationship (communitarians, many ethnic groups); those who don't meet the rationality threshold (babies, children, old people, some intellectually disabled, the mentally ill); and critics of our consumerist culture, etc. Similarly, there are plenty who would find themselves alienated on a theoretical basis: those who do not believe that the market regulates anything; and those who believe that the market certainly does not use best possible practice in order to produce productive social relations. Consumerism, individualism, capitalism and the market are, by definition, competitive; therefore, what they tend to ensure is the entrenchment of existing hierarchies of wealth and capital ownership. Finally, an

understanding of the human subject that, at all times, assumes a 'self-seeking' individual whose sole purpose is the maximisation of self-interested outcomes fails to account for any of the altruistic attitudes and behaviours that we would seem to claim are essential for any viable society. The kind of society that emerges from a collection of homo economici is likely to be one that would lack compassion, justice and any notion of equality.

10.1.2 Implications of neoliberal ontology

The first (and most obvious) implication of methodological individualism is that it creates an individual whose primary focus is consumption. Citizenship (membership and belonging) is translated to mean consumption. Giroux (2004) writes: "Central to neoliberalism is the assumption that profit-making be construed as the essence of democracy and consuming as the most cherished act of citizenship" (p. 61). Individuals are first and foremost consumers. Apple and Au (2015) reinforce and add detail to this point when they note:

> The idea of consumer is crucial here. For neo-liberals, the world is in essence a vast supermarket. 'Consumer choice' is the guarantor of democracy. In effect, education is seen as simply one more product like bread, cars, and television… Thus, democracy is turned into consumption practices… the ideal of the citizen is that of the purchaser. The ideological effects of this are momentous. Rather than democracy being a political concept, it is transformed into a wholly economic concept. The message of such policies is what might best be called 'arithmetical particularism', in which the unattached individual – as a consumer – is deraced, declassed, and degendered. (p. 7)

The individual or person ontologically situated as a consumer serves the interests of neoliberalism in at least four key ways. Firstly, it makes individuals uniform. The stripping away (of what we might call significant and politically relevant characteristics) of features like race, gender and class or culture implies that everyone can be treated equally. There is no need to consider concepts like historical injustice, structural inequity, glass ceilings or any other perspective that might highlight practices, assumptions and stereotypes that need to be challenged. The second way that the

ontological construction of individuals as consumers serves neoliberal ideology is that it creates a reliable constituency. Consumers are safe. They simply work to consume. They are reliable; their actions and focuses can be easily identified and easily planned for. Consumers are accommodated by ensuring production is efficient and by ensuring that a variety of choices for consumption is available. By stripping back the complexity of individual lives, neoliberalism creates a class of citizens that are easy to satisfy and easy to manage. This leads to the third point that citizens as consumers are easily measurable. When success and satisfaction are related to a single category (consumption), and measurement of that category is very straightforward, technocrats have an easy path to justify practices, processes and production (or satisfaction through purchases in the 'market', which is assumed to be perfect). In terms of the university, this reflects what Readings (1999) considers to be the change of culture within universities from being cultural institutions to being corporate institutions. He notes that "to analyse the University solely in terms of cultural capital, however, would be to miss the point that this is now merely one field of operations" (p. 11). He uses Syracuse University as an example of an institution that has rejected the idea of belonging in a mutually constituting fashion (a sense of connection, responsibility and obligation to the university) in favour of "bottom-line accounting". As a result, alumni contributions are significantly lower and Readings links this to two points:

> The students at every turn are asked to buy the signs of symbolic belonging (hence University 'book' stores devote a great deal of space to logo-encrusted desk items on the Disneyland model). Thus commodified, belonging to the University carries little ideological baggage and requires no reaffirmation through giving (any more than a consumer, having purchased a car, feels the need to make further periodic donations to General Motors in excess of the car loan repayments). (1999, p. 11)

The treatment of students as consumers or clients almost ensures that their sense of belonging is, at best, limited to their time in the institution, and that their accumulation of cultural and social capital is skewed towards symbolic items (the embossed desk pad) rather than to symbolic and cultural capital accumulation.

Neoliberal ontology also contains a misunderstanding of what freedom is and how it functions:

> Neoliberals essentially take the status quo of social and political economic relations in society as impermeable, and leave individuals to their fate. This assumption arises because neoliberals equate 'free' with 'voluntary'… all behaviour that is not coerced is free, voluntary, and self-chosen… it assumes that each person in an 'economic' relation is an autonomous, self-directing actor and views freedom from the perspective of the person acting, not the person acted upon. The notion of being acted upon – by manipulation, compulsion, subliminal suggestion, or passive receipt of externalities – hardly exists in this thinking. People outside market transactions are not considered. (Bargh, 2007, p. 9)

This is a significant point because neoliberalism's concept of freedom is a structural one focused on systems not on people or individuals. Freedom for neoliberals is freedom of the market to function, freedom of capital movement and freedom from state intervention. It is not freedom from slave wages or freedom from racism, sexism and discrimination. It is a freedom to dominate individuals, markets and, increasingly, nations.

The ontological position that assumes individuals/students as consumers also considers them as human capital, and this has implications both for the individual and for education in general. Apple and Au (2015) write that:

> Underpinning this position is a vision of students as human capital. The world is intensely competitive economically, and students – as future workers – must be given the requisite skills and dispositions to compete efficiently and effectively. Further, any money spent on schools that is not directly related to these economic goals is suspect. (p. 7)

In effect, what this identification as human capital achieves is to transform education (in terms of participants, practitioners and management) into a context focused almost exclusively on efficient production. Apple and Au (2015) highlight this when writing:

> Students are the 'raw materials' to be produced like commodities according to specified standards and objectives. Teachers are the workers who employ the most efficient methods to get students to meet the pre-determined standards and objectives. Administrators are the managers who determine and dictate to teachers the most

efficient methods in the production process. The school is the factory assembly line where this process takes place. (p. 68)

10.1.3 Alternative ontologies

I will be examining ontology in more detail in Part 3 but, for now, I wish to acknowledge that (within my context and within most Western contexts) methodological individualism is simply one model of ontology amidst a variety of viable options. What is missing in the neoliberal notion of methodological individualism is the notion of persons as humans (relational entities) – rather than as economic entities. Kirylo (2011) makes this point:

> Humanisation and dehumanisation are both concrete possibilities for human beings, but only humanisation is an ontological and historical vocation. The vocation of becoming more fully human is what defines us as human beings; it is the essence of being human. Humanisation is an historical, as well as ontological, vocation because it calls us to act [on the basis of critical reflection] in the objective world of lived social relations. Dehumanisation represents a distortion of this vocation. (p. 45)

Persons as consumers and as human capital are stripped of the key features of what it is to be human. Their identity is made so narrow because neoliberal theory cannot account for the diversity of human behaviour, relational engagement, commitment, obligation and other non-measurable features. That neoliberal ontology is dehumanising in this sense seems incontestable. If we value the diversity of what it means to be human, and if we consider life to be about the journey to becoming fully human, then neoliberal ontology is simply not going to be sufficient. Freire (as cited in Kirylo, 2011) illustrates this point beautifully:

> I cannot understand human beings as simply living. I can understand them only as historically, culturally, and socially existing. I can understand them only as beings who are the makers of their 'way', in the making of which they lay themselves open to or commit themselves to the 'way' that they make and that therefore makes them as well. (p. 163)

The focus on consumption and production (which are both economic imperatives) also acts as a method of exclusion from university education. Cram et al. (2014), when addressing governmental strategy in New Zealand, point out:

> The tertiary Education Strategy talks about inclusive tertiary provision and the goal of working towards an inclusive society. Phillips and Tibble argue that the inclusion that is being referred to is underpinned by an economic imperative. This focus on economics and the productive potential of individuals limits the possibility of realising inclusion. (pp. 11-12)

Inclusion, access, success and retention are dependent on an economic ideology that is fundamentally at odds with the cultural and communitarian values of the groups it is targeting. Here we see the impact of institutional habitus. If, as Bourdieu argues, individual habitus shapes the aspirational horizons of individual students, here we see how institutional habitus shapes the aspirational potentialities of students by imposing an ideological-economic meta-philosophy that measures success in terms of economic rather than cultural outcomes. Success within this context is measured in accreditation outcomes. The student is treated as a consumer of educational services. Success is measured in terms of assessments achieved and accreditation gained; this minimises the expectations and outcomes of students who do not consider themselves to be ontologically constituted as methodological individualists. Cram et al. (2014) acknowledge this point:

> Historically the marker of success in higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand has been focused on academic outcomes… While successful outcomes are important for equity and social justice reasons such a narrow view is challenged by Māori and Pasifika students and communities. (p. 17)

The processes and practices of neoliberalism (and universities in general) seem to assume that students will simply modify themselves in order to compete within the existing systems and processes. Penetito (2014) advocates a new space in the university where students are recognised as both individuals and members of a collective in:

> … a new higher educational form that goes beyond ideas of
> accommodation of difference; that goes beyond notions that are
> seen as integrative and does not accept as reasonable the claim that
> both forms can co-exist within a space that remains separate and
> with both institutions maintaining their own integrity. The new form
> is a merged entity. It is a place where individuals are free to choose
> as individuals and as members of recognised and respected
> collectives. (p. 23)

This requirement for alternative spaces and ways of engaging and belonging reflects the reality of students who come out of a communitarian ontology. This ontology is part of the essence of these students. It cannot be removed or side-lined for the duration of their academic journeys. Wilkie (2014) writes on Māori cultural capital and notes:

> The values Māori place on te whenua (the land), being tangata
> whenua (people of the land), identify as Iwi (tribal members), and the
> importance of whānau (extended family) offer a basis for
> understanding the cultural and community capital Māori take into
> higher education. These elements are central to a uniquely Māori
> 'cultural capital' and influence the educational decisions the
> participants made… (p. 63)

Similar expressions of a communitarian ontology are found in the understanding of Pasifika peoples. The pursuit of Western education has taken Pasifika people to educational spaces that are in opposition to their cultural identity. Sauni (2014) describes this experience as follows:

> In migration, Pasifika exchanged well-known secure spaces, enriched
> with the cultural capital of Pasifika values, mores, nuances,
> intrinsically true and time-tested emotional intelligence and ways of
> knowing and being, for an unknown, insecure space, where Pasifika
> cultural capital had little or no status, and where their ways of
> knowing and being had no place in the educational system… (p. 136)

This lack of ability by neoliberalism to acknowledge (in any meaningful fashion) any ontology outside of its own is not limited to Aotearoa New Zealand. Tara Yosso (2005), while addressing the issue of cultural capital, also, by default, makes a strong

case for alternative ontologies from within Black and Latino American culture. Her intention is to challenge the traditional categories of cultural capital and it is my contention that these alternative forms of cultural capital reflect underlying ontological positions that differ radically from neoliberal methodological individualism. Yosso identifies six different categories of what she describes as community cultural wealth. These are: aspirational capital, familial capital, social capital, navigational capital, resistant capital and linguistic capital. Firstly, these are all useful and insightful descriptions of the kind of cultural capital students may bring with them into the university context. She identifies some particularly interesting areas. Aspirational capital, for example, is described as:

> … the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals. (Yosso, 2005, pp. 77-78)

This reflects a relational commitment that is in opposition to the autonomous, competitive, consumer of neoliberal ideology. Similarly, linguistic capital reflects a student experience that is seldom evident within most middle-class Western contexts. It is about valuing community, tradition and roots. Yosso writes that linguistic capital:

> … includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style… Linguistic capital reflects the idea that Students of Colour arrive at school with multiple language and communication skills. In addition, these children most often have been engaged participants in a storytelling tradition that may include listening to and recounting oral histories, parables, stories (cuentos) and proverbs (dichos). This repertoire of storytelling skills may include memorization, attention to detail, dramatic pauses, comedic timing, facial affect, vocal tone, volume, rhythm and rhyme. Linguistic capital also refers to the ability to communicate via visual art, music or poetry. (2005, pp. 78-79)

This ties in with her concepts of both familial capital and social capital, which emphasise the significance of belonging to, and identifying with, community. Yosso's final two types of community cultural wealth are both based in resisting contemporary forms of domination. She writes that navigational capital:

> … refers to skills of manoeuvring through social institutions… for
> example, strategies to navigate through racially-hostile university
> campuses draw on the concept of academic invulnerability, or
> students' ability to sustain high levels of achievement, despite the
> presence of stressful events and conditions that place them at risk of
> doing poorly at school and, ultimately, dropping out of school.
> (2005, p. 80)

In other words, navigational capital is focused on survival within what is an ontologically and ideologically hostile environment (this reflects the kind of cultural capital that will be particularly useful when we look at the concepts of reterritorialisation and decolonisation in Chapters 13 and 14). Added to this is her concept of 'resistant' capital:

> Those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behaviour
> that challenges inequality… furthermore, maintaining and passing on
> the multiple dimensions of community cultural wealth is also part of
> the knowledge base of resistant capital. (Yosso, 2005, p. 80)

This statement clearly reflects a deep dissatisfaction and distrust of the status quo. It is also clearly a concept of cultural capital, firmly entrenched in the value of community that reflects a clear ontological opposition to methodological individualism.

In linking her insights back to Bourdieu, I do believe that Yosso misunderstands Bourdieu. She does acknowledge a difference between Bourdieu's theories and the way they have been used in the USA (to legitimate white middle-class cultural capital) but then also contends that Bourdieu valued only a very narrow range of cultural capital – and he does not make that point at all. What he does is make the point that educational institutions or 'fields' value only certain kinds of knowledge. She confuses the description with a judgement. It may also be the case that the concept of community cultural wealth is not at all in opposition to Bourdieu and would find a home within his concept of habitus. Regardless, her concept of community cultural wealth clearly reflects an ontology of the person that is not only an alternative to methodological individualism but is also one that is in direct opposition to it.

10.2 The Reallocation of Blame and Responsibility

The reallocation of blame, from those responsible to those who are victims, is one of the most insidious features of neoliberalism. The scapegoating of people, processes and unfavourable outcomes is a key part of neoliberal modus operandi. Apple and Au et al. (2015), note:

> The entire project of neo-liberalism is connected to a larger process of exporting the blame from the decisions of dominant groups onto the state and onto poor people. After all, it was not the government that made the decisions to engage in capital flight and to move factories to those nations that have weak or no unions… and it was not the working class and poor communities that chose to lose those jobs and factories, with the loss of hope and schools and communities in crisis that were among the results of those decisions. (p. 8)

This exporting of blame is, in many ways, an attempt to remove any notion of responsibility (and the associated economic costs) from those dominating the neoliberal vision. It is an intentional disassociation from current social problems, many of which are a direct result of neoliberal programmes and practices. Apple (1995) notes that one of the major achievements of the 'right' has been:

> … to shift the blame – for unemployment and underemployment, the loss of economic competitiveness, and the supposed breakdown of 'traditional' values and standards in the family, education, and paid and unpaid workplaces – from the economic, cultural, and social policies and effects of dominant groups to the school and other public agencies. 'Public' is now the centre of all evil; 'private' is the centre of all that is good. (p. xvii)

This is not simply dishonest, it is also cynical in the extreme. This shifting of blame/responsibility has gone even further in the education sector where Devine (2004) points out that the responsibility for failure in schools has been shifted from the institution to the individual:

> The failings of schools are seen in terms of the failures of individuals, who are publicly identified and often replaced. Principals, and members of boards of trustees, are technically 'responsible' for the running of their school, so that, no matter how poor or diverse or

> disaffected the constituent school and community population may
> be, the culprits can never be allowed to be poverty or ignorance, but
> must be interpreted as bad decision making – that is, bad choices
> made by those who have 'power'. (p. 24)

This allocation of blame is clearly problematic because it seems to assume that education (perhaps social life in general) happens in a contextual vacuum that is unaffected by actual social realities. Individuals within educational contexts are being held responsible for the consequences of an educational philosophy (colonised by neoliberalism) to which they do not subscribe and over which they have no power.

The cynical shift of responsibility is accomplished by the monotheistic application of neoliberal technologies of measurement. These technologies are intended to measure what is, effectively, the level of ideological submission by the educational institution/sector. They manufacture truth claims in relation to efficiency and productivity, and these claims are supported by state/governmental regulation. This test of 'truth' thus becomes the orthodoxy of neoliberal measurement. Despite the inability to measure anything outside of the shallowest data, neoliberal technologies of excellence are used with evangelical vigour to assess, value and then judge both systems and people. Because it claims efficiency, neutrality and, therefore, impartiality in its pursuit of excellence, any lack of success within its framework of measurement cannot be attributed to the measurement process itself and thus must belong to those things (economic units or human capital) that are the subject of the measurement.

10.3 Redefining the Public and Private Spheres

Another significant feature in the neoliberal justification of its refusal to accept blame or responsibility comes in the form of the redefinition of 'private' and 'public' spheres. 'Private' issues are the responsibility of individuals while 'public' issues become the responsibilities of the state and the community. Giroux (2004) argues that, for neoliberalism, all problems are private:

> Within the discourse of neoliberalism, democracy becomes
> synonymous with free markets while issues of equality, social justice,

and freedom are stripped of any substantive meaning and used to disparage those who suffer systemic deprivation and chronic punishment… [This supports] the central neoliberal tenet that all problems are private rather than social in nature. (p. xviii)

'Private' issues not only become the responsibility of individuals, and this relieves the burden from institutions, they are also effectively disengaged from public debate. They are hidden from the public realm and this is a deeply political act. Issues like childcare, maternity leave/benefits and domestic violence are framed as 'private' rather than 'public' issues; addressing these becomes a 'private' rather than a 'public' responsibility. Cultural capital is another example where, once it is framed as a 'private' issue, the responsibility for any perceived shortfall becomes the responsibility of the individual (or their immediate family) rather than a responsibility of the educational system.

We are encouraged to think of ourselves as 'private' entities rather than as 'public' participants in a variety of ways. I have previously examined (10.1) how the neoliberal commitment to methodological individualism embeds this in both theory and practice but it is also accomplished by less theoretical means. The highlighting of the individual as a consequence of shifting from 'public' to 'private' is accomplished in a variety of very subtle ways. Apple (1995) locates this in the way in which the idea and use of 'time', or at least a commercial understanding of it, accustoms us to think of ourselves as acting as 'market' and 'consumers' rather than as 'public' and as 'citizens'. (While the technology involved in viewing electronic material has changed in the past decades – particularly in relation to the web and online streaming – the insights into how media is used and how it impacts upon viewers remains insightful). Gitlin (1979) highlights this particularly in relation to:

> … how the formal device of prime-time television entertainment encourages viewers to experience themselves as anti-political, privately accumulating individuals. This reproduction of hegemony is accomplished by the use of the standard curve of narrative action, where standard characters deal with a new version of the standard situation, the thickening of the plot where 'stock characters' show their standard stuff, the resolution of the plot over twenty-two or fifty minutes, all of the regularities of the repeated formula are

'performances that rehearse social fixity'. They express and cement the obduracy of a social world impervious to substantial change. (p. 254)

Apple notes that even the actual viewing process contributes to this 'industrialisation' of time. Persons sit isolated in the viewing experience often engaging in socialisation only during commercial breaks. He observes that:

Commercials determine the times at which things happen in the plot. The very fact that commercials are so dominant speaks to the consequences on the contours of our consciousness overall. They play a large part in getting us 'accustomed to thinking of ourselves and behaving as market rather than as public, as consumers rather than citizens'. (1995, p. 30)

The redefinition of the public and private spheres under neoliberalism is a tool that seems to be designed to accomplish at least three goals. First, it aims to shift the responsibility for unjust/inequitable outcomes from the systems of domination (the market) to the individual. This achieves the reduction of any associated costs that would arise from addressing the issue (and thus the maximisation of surpluses) to the particular market/system and it helps embed the idea that individuals are always responsible for the outcomes they experience. Second, it is not just the responsibility that is shifted – it is also the blame that is reapportioned. The individual is held accountable for their choices or lack of choices, regardless of whether or not those choices would have any impact on the system of domination in place. Third, the redefinition of the public/private spheres acts as a means of weakening the possibility of any debate or resistance by 'breaking up' or not allowing community consensus to form. When issues become private rather than public, there is no obligation for those unaffected by the particular issue to become involved in its resolution.

10.4 Resistance

Neoliberal domination of both the economic and the educational landscape is a serious and somewhat daunting challenge for those of us wishing to be involved in the

creation of a more just and equitable education system and society. In Part 3 (The Transformation of Individual Habitus) and Part 4 (Transforming Institutional Habitus), I will be exploring in detail some strategies designed to support that process. However, in the meantime, I wish to highlight some of the key points of resistance to neoliberal ideology as it shapes the field of university education.

A key theorist in this area is Giroux and this is particularly evident in his approach to radical, critical pedagogy. The goal of Giroux's radical pedagogy (2001) is to reclaim the fundamental political nature of teaching and to focus on the importance of linking pedagogy to social change. He sees the educational space as a site of possibility, resistance and contestation. It should be focused on engaging students through their own experiences and histories, and connecting this to critical learning.

He argues that schools don't need standardised testing and curricula but that what is required is curricular justice – a curriculum or pedagogy that includes teaching forms of inclusiveness, respect and care, and that is economically equitable (although cultural capital equality would seem a better approach), and a pedagogy whose teleology is not the reproduction of inequitable systems of domination.

Giroux notes that one of the most important theoretical perspectives missing from the hidden curriculum discussion is:

> … a view of schools as sites of both domination and contestation. The incorporation of this perspective is crucial because it redefines the nature of domination as well as the notion of power. In other words, domination is never total in this perspective, nor is it simply imposed on people... power must be viewed in part as a form of production inscribed in the discourse and capabilities that people use to make sense out of the world. Otherwise, the notion of power is subsumed under the category of domination, and the issue of human agency gets relegated to either a marginal or insignificant place in educational theorising. (2001, p. 62)

Resistance, for Giroux, is part of the fabric of any educational context. It is always present in any context of domination. However, this quote is significant in another way in that it brings the notion of hope back into the analysis (and, in this sense, it also moderates the concerns I have with Bourdieu's 'fatalism' noted in Chapter 6). It is too easy to assume that domination is inescapable and the one

overpowering concept in the educational process. Human agency, the ability to resist, is always present at some level and must form part of any theorising or the ever-present risk of enervation is the likely outcome.

It is important to note that the presence of resistance in a particular context does not automatically mean that the systems of domination present are at risk. Apple (1995) points out that:

> These informal cultural resistances, this process of contestation, may act in contradictory ways that ultimately tend to be reproductive. By resisting and establishing an informal work culture that both recreates some sense of worker control over the labour process and rejects a good deal of the norms to which workers are supposedly socialised, workers may also be latently reinforcing the social relations of corporate production... Resistances on one level may partially reproduce the lack of control on another. (p. 23)

This is where Bourdieu's concept of misrecognition is so important. For resistance to combat the reproduction of systems of domination, it must be based in a reflective and critical position that has identified the issues at stake in the particular context. Resistance for its own sake runs the very real risk of reinforcing the habitus of the agent in question and of helping reproduce the prevalent system of domination. For example, Apple (1995, in *Education and power*) notes that (what he calls) 'lower class' boys in high schools often unknowingly collude in the streaming of education by refusing to engage in the educational process. This lack of engagement and, therefore, lack of success results in them being streamed into the kind of menial, low-skilled labour jobs that both their habitus and the system of domination within the school presented as the most likely outcome. Resistance in this context, because of misrecognition, simply reinforced existing inequalities and colluded in the reproduction of unjust systems and practices.

So, resistance by itself is not enough. Giroux (2001) alludes to this when he talks of the necessity for pedagogical practice to find ways to use issues related to class, race, gender and sexual orientation (and, presumably, so-called lack of cultural capital) as resources rather than as sources that are systematically punished by failure and exclusion. This is targeted resistance. Here we have an example of a kind of

resistance that seeks both to undermine and to transform educational contexts of repression and domination. He expands on this theme and notes:

> Students bring different histories to school; these histories are embedded in class, gender, and race interests that shape their needs and behaviour, often in ways they don't understand or that work against their own interests. To work with working-class students, for instance, under the purported impetus of a radical pedagogy would mean not only changing their consciousness, but simultaneously developing social relations that sustain and are compatible with the radical needs in which such a consciousness would have to be grounded in order to be meaningful. (Giroux, 2001, p. 149)

This is an interesting point as it supports my contention that, in Bourdieu's terms, we need to reshape/challenge/transform students' habitus in order to have a meaningful impact on the current structures of domination and reproduction.

Giroux (2001, p. 157) contends that a theory of ideological critique contains three key elements: reproduction, production and reconstruction. In this sense, his critical approach is much broader than is Bourdieu's, whose focus is almost solely on the area of reproduction. Giroux's approach allows him to avoid the criticism of fatalism that I direct at Bourdieu as is in evidence below.

In terms of reproduction, Giroux's approach is very similar to Bourdieu's; he refers to reproduction in relation to "texts and social practices whose messages, inscribed within specific historical settings and social contexts, function primarily to legitimate the interests of the dominant social order" (2001, p. 157). However, Giroux's idea of production goes further than does Bourdieu's when he argues that, even within reproductive ideologies, social practices and texts are always mediated. "It is particularly important to acknowledge that texts are always mediated in some fashion by human subjects; meanings are always produced by human agents when they confront and engage cultural forms such as curriculum, texts, films and the like" (2001, p. 159). This relates directly to the way in which ideology is produced. It does not happen in a vacuum and always contains agent actions and reactions.

Giroux (2001) describes reconstruction as a principle that:

> … shifts the theoretical terrain from the issues of reproduction and
> mediation to a concern for critical appropriation and transformation.
> This suggests a mode of ideology critique in which the interests that
> underlie texts, representations, and social practices would not only
> be identified but also disassembled and refashioned with the aim of
> developing social relations and modes of knowledge that serve
> radical needs. (p. 160)

This call for reconstruction will be addressed when I look at my points of departure. Educational justice will, from my perspective, be related to the transformation of both individual habitus and institutional (or corporate) habitus, and these will be examined in depth in Part 3 (The Transformation of Individual Habitus) and Part 4 (Transforming Institutional Habitus).

In summary, Giroux states:

> The task of reconstruction is not simply to analyse knowledge and
> social relations for dominating ideologies or subversive unintentional
> truths, but to appropriate their useful material elements and skills,
> and to restructure them as part of the production of new ideologies
> and collective experiences. (2001, p. 160)

I like Giroux's approach to extending or adding steps to Bourdieu's identification of reproductive systems of domination. He is correct to state that all systems are mediated by agent actions and reactions but I think he is missing a key step. Bourdieu contends that the reason systems of domination are able to reproduce over time is because of agent misrecognition. It is difficult for agents to confront, engage with or mediate systems, structures and texts when they are not aware of what is taking place. It seems to me that there needs to be a prior step of politicisation of those who are being dominated by the system at issue. Giroux (2001, p. 196) does write about reforming educators in order to make them better agents of transformation but he does seem to believe (2001, p. 194) that students are so powerless in relation to their educational experiences that teachers and educators must be the starting points.

There are another three areas that I see as significant in the combatting of neoliberal ideology. These are: critical pedagogy and identity, accounting for

subjectivity (rather than neoliberal uniformity) and Kirylo's views on dialogue for transformation.

Scherr (2005) contends that critical pedagogy needs to be linked to the support of student identity (note this is in direct opposition to neoliberalism which forces the student to accept the dominant model of methodological individualism):

> Critical pedagogy seeks to fulfil the task of supporting individuals in the process of dealing with their life story and helps them to check and clarify their identity. It does not presume, that individuals possess a cultural identity determined by social and ethnic origin and [one that] cannot be changed. Rather, it seeks to enable individuals to critically deal with identifications and memberships. (p. 152)

The focus on the development of identity, rather than the imposition of identity, is a key strategic difference between critical pedagogy and neoliberal ideology. Neoliberalism cannot account for difference nor is it able to measure (or even acknowledge) this diversity in any meaningful fashion. Scherr goes on to point out that critical pedagogy "can be characterised by the fact, that it does not regard subjective experiences, life knowledge, and the fears and hopes of its addressees to be unimportant and ignore them. Instead, it considers them important and takes them up" (2005, p. 152).

Finally, Kirylo (2011) (reflecting Freire) notes that freedom (from neoliberal tyranny) and change requires dialogue:

> The critical way to move toward freedom for both parties is through dialogue. Clearly, requiring the theological virtue of hope, a deep humility, the courage to love, and a profound faith in humanity, dialogue requires a horizontal relationship in order for reality to be recreated for both the oppressor and the oppressed. (p. 139)

The odds of creating a horizontal relationship between (practitioners of or adherents to) neoliberal theory and practice, and the people and institutions impacted by those practices, would seem to be almost non-existent in the current climate. I will look to using a different approach to creating the horizontal relationship. My view is that hope, humility, the courage to love and a deep faith in humanity are unlikely to be

pre-existing conditions to any dialogue between the dominated and those doing the domination. My approach is to look to the transformation of individual habitus on the one hand and institutional habitus on the other, as a way of providing the kinds of condition where a 'horizontal relationship' can take place. This is what I will seek to accomplish in Parts 3 and 4.

In concluding Part 2, I would like to begin by noting that as Olssen (2017) points out any critique of neoliberalism runs the risk of portraying it "as a kind of bogeyman-placeholder for all that is wrong with the predominant political and economic system in the West" (p. 41). In fact, the argument can be made that its introduction of "an assortment of accountability and monitoring techniques [is] aimed to overcome all possible sources of inequity, inefficiency, corruption, and capture" (p. 48). Apologists can therefore point to the fact that most universities have instituted multiple approaches to addressing inequality associated with diversity or disadvantage.

The assertion that the multitude of university support services reflects a theory of social justice contained within neoliberalism is a fairly contentious statement. I do not believe that my university's support services are motivated by any institutional sense of social justice. Neoliberalism's marketisation of education has meant that university success (and thus access to governmental funding) is based almost exclusively on numbers. The institution needs to show how it performs in relation to competing institutions and it needs to show that it offers support where policy (via governmental directives) dictates. I would contend that the existence of support services within my university is largely the result of these external funding requirements. Even if we could show that neoliberalism contained a viable and visible theory of social justice, it is unclear how this would impact on the reality and practice of structural injustice. I am interested in the way neoliberal philosophy constrains how universities operate, how they measure success and its role in the embedding and reproduction of structural injustice. So even if a theory of social justice was identified, it does not account for the neoliberal focus on individuals rather than structures.

It is also significant that individuals who subscribe to different political theories continue to act in accordance with those theoretical/ethical positions (within the university), and that the university both captures and capitalises on their processes

and outputs. Therefore, although such actions soften the edge of neo-liberalism, they do not, in the final analysis, interrupt its inexorable political effects. It would seem likely that a lot of what have been regarded as institutionally-produced instances of social justice are in fact individually produced and reflect the leftovers of previous forms of political and social thought. To some extent the university captures academic forms of resistance and advances them as triumphs of neo-liberalism.

It is my contention that support services operate out of a deficit model of the student and without exception are designed to 'fix' the student rather than to address any structural institutional issues. Within my institution we have the following support options and initiatives: Targeted scholarships, Disability support, LGBTI support, International student support, Governmental equity funding, Maori liaison services, Peer mentoring support, Pacifica advancement.

The most significant point about these institutional initiatives is that not one of them is intended to address the issue of structural injustice. I refer to this point in section 8.2 and note "there has been no change to the habitus or cultural capital expectations of universities; rather, the focus has been on changing the student to fit the mould." Misrecognition is key here. As I will make clear in the conclusions to my thesis, our support services (as they currently stand) continue to allow misrecognition to function and injustice to reproduce. To challenge this system, our support programmes would need to have their focus shifted from a fixing a 'broken' student to targeting a 'broken' system.

Because universities (within my context of publicly funded institutions) operate within a political and economic environment that requires them to behave or operate in certain ways, and to achieve certain financial and social targets, Part 2 has been designed to locate and describe the dominant philosophy (neoliberalism), and then to explore how this philosophy shapes and constrains the way that universities function. This focus on what I have called the 'meta context' is intended to provide an account of why seemingly obvious injustice is either trivialised or its continued misrecognition is entrenched. Neoliberalism provides an intellectual and operational framework within which the entrenchment of privilege is a direct outcome of the fetishisation of measurability, uniformity, and so-called efficiency.

In Part 2 I have developed the argument in the following fashion:

- I have introduced the concept of institutional habitus and explored its role and impact on the shaping of student aspirational horizons, the definitions and experiences of student success, and the impact on student retention by the university.

- I have shown how neoliberalism relates to Bourdieu's understanding of fields and how it is in effect seen as a 'meta-field' and one that vigorously shapes other proximate fields (such as education).

- I explored how neoliberalism functions and particularly how the colonisation of educational language by economic language has acted to embed and normalise neoliberalism within the educational context.

- I have explored teleological and epistemological concerns and argued that the neoliberal marketisation of education has resulted in challenges to both areas with the dispute around 'what counts as knowledge' being replaced with the concern of 'whose knowledge counts' and how this knowledge can be transferred to 'customers' in a way that facilitates the creation of educational surpluses.

- I then extended the critique of neoliberalism to take account of its transnational and global activity and impact – exploring both its alliances and how it has sought to dominate the educational landscape globally by focusing on the marketisation of education and the introduction and entrenchment of technocratic understandings of key values such as excellence.

- I have sought to critique neoliberal ontology and explore the impact that the methodological individualism has on student ontology along with the implications of the redefinition of students as customers or clients rather than as students or as critical thinking citizens. I have also explored alternative ontologies and highlighted how neoliberal inability to acknowledge other ontologies significantly weakens both its arguments and its practices.

- I have explored neoliberal practice in the public realm and its attempts to privatise what are essentially public problems or issues in order to avoid both moral and financial responsibility and accountability.

- Finally, I have explored some of the contemporary approaches of resistance to neoliberal theory as a means of locating the contemporary debate and as a means of setting the scene for Parts 3 and 4 where I look at the transformation of individual and institutional habitus.

PART 3 – THE TRANSFORMATION OF INDIVIDUAL HABITUS

"Excellence marks nothing more than the moment of technology's self-reflection" (Readings, 1999, p.39).

Figure 7. Technology's self-reflection, 2015, photo, A Nobbs

11 The Transformation of Individual Habitus

That the individual habitus of disadvantaged students requires transformation, should, by now, be uncontentious. As Parts 1 and 2 have made clear, addressing the issue of structural injustice in university education requires something to change within both the perspectives and the practices of students on the one hand, and university processes, practices and implicit requirements on the other hand. In this section, I will focus on how the transformation of individual student habitus (within the context of the university) may contribute to combatting the structural injustice experienced by many of our university students.

The transformation of both individual habitus and institutional habitus as I understand it is about the process and tools of transformation rather than what the actual content of that transformation entails. I am very aware of the need to not be prescriptive in relation to the content of transformation for two very significant reasons. First, it is simply inappropriate to define what someone else's transformation will look like and to do so reinforces existing power inequalities and reflects a complete lack of awareness of intersectionality and its implications for identity. Secondly, I cannot possibly know what an intellectual decolonisation will look like for someone whose identity, habitus and cultural capital and different to my own. My focus therefore has been on providing the tools and the opportunities rather than the content of any individual transformation.

I do acknowledge the risks that are associated with a 'white, middle-class, middle-aged and male intellectual' trying his best to address issues of social and structural injustice. Students (such as those experiencing the advantaging or disadvantaging of structural injustice) have a truly diverse range of experience, habitus and cultural capital, all of which are impacted by gender, ethnicity, sexuality, socio-economic positioning, and internal drivers and motivators. So, this section, as with the thesis as a whole, is intended to explore options for the transformation of individual habitus as one means of confronting and combatting structural injustice within the university context. As such, exploring the process for transformation will be more important than what the actual content of that transformation will require. I would

hope that the process I am proposing will be able to be used by groups and individuals, regardless of their own intersectionality.

A brief summary of how Part 3 supports the development of the thesis is probably useful at this point.

Part 1 provides a way of understanding and identifying the issue of structural injustice in university education – this is 'the practice of injustice'. Part 2 explores and critiques the key factors that allow structural injustice to establish and reproduce itself – this is 'the context of injustice'. Part 3 then seeks to examine how structural injustice might be combatted from a student perspective – and provides a possible process for doing this. Finally, Part 4 explores the way in which structural injustice can be combatted from an institutional perspective – and provides a framework for how this might be achieved from within the institution.

In Part 3, I intend to develop the argument as follows. Chapter 12 examines key structural context issues impacting on individual transformation – transitions and thresholds – and explores implicit contextual practices and their implications for individual habitus transformation – epistemic othering and institutional interpellation. Chapter 13 explores the proposed process of individual habitus transformation through three main options (de- and re-territorialisation, ideological decolonisation and the creation of a secondary habitus) and looks at how these might function. Finally, Chapter 14 considers what a transformed or reconstructed student habitus might look like.

Addressing the issue of structural injustice requires significantly more than simply teaching academic skills that are judged to be missing or insufficient. It requires addressing aspirational horizons (habitus), cultural capital expectations (habitus) and ontological assumptions (also habitus) as well as addressing the implications of contexts and practices that disadvantage certain students (transitions, thresholds, epistemic othering and institutional interpellation). As noted above, I intend to develop three possible methods of transforming individual habitus in a way that addresses the issue of structural injustice.

The first option is to explore the ideas of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. I do this by beginning with unpacking what the concepts mean and explaining how I will use the concepts – for a different purpose, that is, as a practical method rather than as an explanatory device. One reason for doing this explicitly is to avoid criticism based on a 'lack of Deleuzian orthodoxy'. In addition, I link these concepts back to Bourdieu (as my key theoretical underpinning). I unpack the concept of territorialisation and highlight the key insight that academic territories/fields are not value-neutral spaces. In addition, I explore how transitions and thresholds act to territorialise academic spaces (and act as gatekeepers). Finally, I explore student options of deterritorialisation – those of flight, accommodation and ambivalence – and student options of reterritorialisation – those of accommodation, survival, resistance and subversion.

The second option is the creation of a secondary habitus. I explore this by widening Bourdieu's concept to include both the impact of technology and the impact of dominant ideology, and note the problem of mistaking 'counter-training' with secondary habitus creation. I highlight the depth of the concept of habitus – skills teaching is not enough; transformation must include engagement with aspirational horizons, the maintenance and enhancement of identity, and ontological implications. Following this, I look to establish the 'agent/student-driven' nature of secondary habitus creation – it is the intentional acquisition of specialised dispositions, skills and perspectives – and link it to the risk of 'institutional responsibility avoidance' that can accompany the creation of a secondary habitus (this is addressed in depth in Part 4).

The third option is decolonisation. I do have some hesitation in being too descriptive about what is required for students to decolonise successfully (I address this issue in more depth in Part 4 when I focus on creating the conditions for decolonisation within the institution) as decolonisation cannot be done 'on behalf' of someone (and what I am suggesting is a process rather than a single event that the student 'does to them self'). I want to leave room for student/agent critique and choice in how they respond. I explore this option in the following manner. First, I clarify that what is being decolonised is the dominant ideology – this is also intended to pre-empt criticism related to the charge of 'colonising decolonisation' or of using it as a metaphor. I use Fanon's work as a starting point to explore what decolonisation

entails and identify the 'breaks' with the current educational context that are required for a decolonisation: stereotypes linked to cultural capital shortfalls, existing habitus-based aspirational horizons, neoliberal (for neoliberal read 'dominant ideology') ontological assumptions, neoliberal notions of success and embedded neoliberal values.

I have no desire to return to some 'pre-neoliberal' university context and I have certainly not advocated that. From my perspective, there are two issues at play here. I mention pre-neoliberal models of the university as examples that illustrate that neoliberalism is not a natural state – simply another model that currently dominates education and its domination happens to be particularly damaging. The second issue is that critiquing neoliberal ideology is unavoidable because it is part of the institutional DNA responsible for structural injustice. Similarly, I have tried to avoid criticism based on a 'lack of Deleuzian orthodoxy'. I consider my approach in adopting and modifying their concepts to be completely legitimate, given that I am explicit and intentional in my approach. Decolonisation is a tricky concept to write about as a white, middle-class, middle-aged male. Again, I consider my approach (focusing the process of decolonisation on ideology) to be legitimate for addressing the issue of structural injustice. I have attempted to outline a process rather than to present a prescriptive paradigm in order to allow room for a variety of decolonised responses and perspectives.

12 Context and Issues

Student engagement does not take place in a vacuum or on a well-manicured, equitable and level playing field. It takes place within the context of well-established and entrenched systems of power and academic hierarchies, of embedded and brutal neoliberalism, within a space that is competitive rather than nurturing, and one that is driven by the marketisation of its services and practices. To begin to understand the issues that students face in their university studies, and the reasons that the transformation of individual habitus is important, I want to start with the context and the key problematic stages of student experience.

12.1 Context and Key Stages

The university context is (as previously detailed in Part 2) a particularised context dominated by neoliberal ideology and practice, and this domination is not without consequence. One consequence is what Bang (2014) describes as 'empire building' within the educational sector. He notes three key stages, which are:

> 1) the learning business or how psychology, testing, and other knowledge forms regarding learning are commercialised and deployed in the education field as new interventions teachers can apply, thereby promoting and testing learning among pupils; 2) the teaching business or how new forms of didactics, classroom management, and other disciplinary/managerial tools are introduced to both faculty and students, which again appear in a commercialised form, as products or practices school leaders can invest in or guide their teaching staff towards; and 3) the empire-building business or how schools are oriented towards producing specific kinds of morality among their charges who will grow up to be citizens engineered for a globalised world's new markets and economic demands. (p. 52)

Education then becomes a field dominated not by the ideas and agendas of educationalists but rather by the ideas and agendas of business and capitalism. Students enter a context that, increasingly, has as its core focus the marketisation of education and the creation (and conversion to economic capital) of 'educational surplus'. It is significant that, while students are increasingly described as 'customers' or 'clients' within this context, the reality is that they are treated as the raw materials

upon which educational agendas, systems and practices will act in order to achieve outcomes of accreditation and the creation of educational surpluses.

So, the traditional university context that, historically, may have been able to be described as 'rich with learning opportunities' can perhaps now best be described as one that is focused on efficiency, uniformity and measurability (see Part 2); each of these is to be undertaken in the most cost-effective manner. In addition, it is now a context that is intended to operate almost entirely in support of a neoliberal conception of the national economy.

12.1.1 Transitions

Every university student arrives at their academic journey in the university from 'somewhere'. The move from the previous 'space' (be it a structure, a system, a paradigm or a social/communal role) to the university context is a shift between two very differently particularised contexts and is described as a transition. There are a variety of transition experiences for university students. Some are transitioning from high school, some from the workforce and some from parenting, and some are looking to change careers. Each of these transitions requires a different approach in terms of both the student's existing cultural capital and the cultural/academic capital requirements of their study. Transition tends to be understood as an experience or process that operates at the front end of the student journey. I would argue that universities need to be more flexible in understanding transition requirements and their associated challenges, and extend the idea of university transition to include more than simply the initial engagement with the university.

What is common to all the transitions is that the student is moving from a space that has required them to act/learn/behave/take responsibility in certain ways, to a space that has its own specific (and often very different) expectations and requirements for successful engagement and navigation. Complicating this transition in the case of universities is that many of these requirements are implicit. Students are expected (perhaps by a process of academic osmosis) to grasp and master these implicit requirements, often without being aware of exactly what these requirements are or of the extent to which their academic success hinges on mastery of these requirements. For example, success within the university context tends to require a

high level of self-directed learning, the ability to organise and plan reading times, exam preparation times and assessment deadlines. It requires a certain level of language mastery and the ability to identify, understand and appropriately address learning outcomes, and the ability to present this information in the required form. Student confidence with the expression of ideas, and the ability to engage with theories and perspectives contributes directly to academic success. As Bourdieu has made clear, success in this context is significantly affected by both the student's habitus (in terms of aspirational horizons and also in terms of their expectations of success) and also their accumulated cultural capital. Clearly, students who transition already confident in their own cultural capital and their ability to identify and meet university requirements will be significantly advantaged over students whose cultural capital does not prepare them with either the ability to identify implicit cultural capital requirements or with the confidence in these skill areas once they have been identified. Note, however, that their awareness or lack of awareness relates to cultural capital, and cultural capital requirements, not to the justice or injustice of the system. Both types of student are still likely to be experiencing misrecognition – that is, they are likely to relate their success or lack of success to something internal to themselves (intelligence, work ethic, natural ability) rather than to the way the academic system operates.

12.1.2 Thresholds

Each area of study, each faculty/school/department and, often, each paper has a threshold requirement in terms of concepts, theories, academic skills and, frequently, other skills (laboratory or workshop skills) that a student is required to master in order to 'enter' their field of study. In many cases, these threshold concepts are implicit. A significant issue in the success of a new undergraduate (and of their feeling as though they belong to their discipline) relates to their ability or inability to identify, become comfortable with and master these threshold concepts.

Threshold concepts are distinct from core concepts (and prerequisites – which address entry requirements). Whereas a core concept is a conceptual building block essential for understanding a particular subject or field, a threshold concept requires a new way of seeing: of viewing the content area through a completely new lens. Meyer et al. (2006) clarify this distinction:

> The notion of a 'threshold concept' was originally introduced into discussions on learning outcomes as a particular basis for differentiating between core learning outcomes that represent 'seeing things in a new way' and those that do not. A threshold concept is thus seen as something distinct within what university teachers would typically describe as 'core concepts'. (p. xv)

For Meyer et al., this 'seeing things in a new way' is pivotal. They acknowledge that, often, this knowledge is troublesome in that it may be counter-intuitive and uncomfortable in relation to existing ways of understanding and can be 'alien' or alienating. Acquiring this threshold knowledge is, however, essential to the progress of the student. They write:

> Within all subject areas there seem to be particular concepts that can be considered as akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. A threshold concept represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. (2006, p. xv)

This transformed way of understanding content is not without consequences. On the positive side, students can move through the 'portal' and make progress with their academic journeys. However, Meyer et al. point out that:

> As a consequence of comprehending a threshold concept there may thus be a transformed internal view of subject matter, subject landscape, or even world view, and the student can move on. However, such transformation, though necessary for progress within the subject, may prove troublesome to certain learners for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that such transformation entails letting go of earlier, comfortable positions and encountering less familiar and sometimes disconcerting new territory. (2006, p. xv)

It is this "variety of reasons" that provides me with particular concerns. Meyer et al. refer to this challenging knowledge as "troublesome" knowledge and that idea provides a useful place to start. The letting go of "earlier, comfortable positions" should not be taken lightly. The kinds of position that are likely to come under considerable pressure and critique tend to be the positions that play a significant role

in the core identity and ontological constitution of persons. Here we are talking about religious positions and political commitments/affiliations both of which are likely to be embedded in student habitus. This is also the case with cultural membership and can become particularly contentious when Western university thought begins to challenge cultural and ethnic values, virtues and practices. Significantly, this challenge tends to be very one-sided. Seldom does the institution allow the students ontologically constituting positions to call out the assumptions, values and practices of the university. I will expand on this below when I look at the implications of thresholds for identity construction and deconstruction.

A further consequence of encountering thresholds is the possibility that the encounter does one of two things. It may highlight 'cultural capital shortfalls' and/or it may highlight issues in relation to individual habitus. The implication of students discovering cultural capital shortfalls is that they immediately measure themselves against other students and can often come to the conclusion that they are 'not as good' as their fellow students, 'not as intelligent' or 'not as hard working'. In other words, they can start to view themselves as being deficient or in deficit – for a requirement of which, because of its often-implicit nature, they were unaware. In this sense (although Meyer et al. do not comment on this), thresholds can also be seen as points and locations of structural injustice and can function as gatekeepers to their associated fields. While a pragmatic argument can be (and is) made for their purpose being beneficial – that is, they exist to ensure students have the appropriate skills and attributes to belong successfully to the academic field – they also clearly act as part of a process of exclusion and of the entrenchment and reproduction of existing hierarchies, power relationships and systems of domination.

The issues that are highlighted in relation to individual habitus tend to relate more to the expectations of the students than to the expectations of the academic field. Because an individual student's habitus shapes their aspirational horizons, a negative encounter with thresholds can reinforce existing stereotypes present within their habitus. This is particularly evident with students who are 'first in family' in relation to university study (that is, no other members of their family have attended university and, as such, the expectations of the wider familial group do not always reflect the reality and requirements of university study). Their habitus may not include

university expectation as a norm nor, perhaps, does it include an expectation of successful participation. A negative experience at the point of thresholds can often lead to disappointment, disengagement and eventual withdrawal from the particular field and, possibly, the university as a whole.

Thresholds have three distinct stages. The first is the encounter with the threshold. The second is the space that Meyer et al.(2006) identify as the 'liminal space' within the threshold and, finally, there is the other side of the threshold which, essentially, is the stage of (perhaps limited) academic belonging and membership of the field (see Chapter 5). The first encounter with the threshold, I have explored above and this is largely focused on the experience of the encounter for students. The liminal space – because it takes place within the threshold – is more concerned with the experience of the implication of the threshold for students. When writing on liminality, Meyer et al. (2006) note that thresholds can be transformationary and that:

> … such transformation can also entail a shift in the learner's identity. The result may be that the student remains stuck in an 'in-between' state in which they oscillate between earlier, less sophisticated understandings, and the fuller appreciation of a concept that their tutors require from them. (p. xvi)

This space in the midst of a threshold is where transformation takes place. Because thresholds are "transformative in function; there may be a change of status" (Meyer & Land, 2006, p. 22). And this status is not without implication: "As a result of the ritual the participating individual acquires new knowledge and subsequently a new status and identity within the community" (p. 23). The 'confirmation of candidature' for doctoral degrees, at my institution, is a very obvious example of this. The student engages in the ritual process of presentation, review and oral testing and, if successful, their status changes from 'provisional' to 'confirmed' candidate. They now possess a limited membership of the academic community and it is not without humour that the student can apply for business cards that put this new status in writing. However, "transformation can be protracted, over periods of time, and involve oscillation between states, often with temporary regression to earlier status" (p. 23). So, in a

sense, the transformation required by thresholds is not based on a single event. It is a process that may go back and forth over time.

Thresholds are more than simply 'gateways' to academic understanding and academic field membership. They are complex events/process and have five key features, all of which have implications: they are transformative, irreversible, integrative, bounded and troublesome. They are transformative in that:

> Once understood, it's (the threshold's) potential effect on student learning and behaviour is to occasion a significant shift in the perception of a subject… In certain powerful instances, such as the comprehension of specific politico-philosophical insights (for example aspects of Marxism, feminist or post-structuralist analysis) the shift in perspective may lead to a transformation of personal identity, a reconstruction of subjectivity. (Meyer et al. 2006, p. 7)

This significant shift of perspective and perception has both positive and negative outcomes and associations. Thresholds that require or raise the likelihood of a 'transformation of personal identity' or a 'reconstruction of subjectivity' are both exciting and, at the same time, potentially very risky. Clearly, not all thresholds require engagement with the kind of knowledge that may threaten a student's personal identity and, even when they do challenge this identity, we may wish to say that this is a good thing. After all, some will say that university study should take the student outside of their comfort zone and it should challenge their existing assumptions, perspectives and world view. I suspect that the difference (and acceptability) comes down to whether or not the threshold challenges a person's identity or threatens that identity. Either way, this point highlights the fact that thresholds can have a very powerful effect on students who encounter them and that being prepared for this encounter (having some prior knowledge of what to expect – a simple warning may be enough) may play a significant role in whether or not the threshold is successfully negotiated.

Secondly, the consequences of thresholds encounters are irreversible or, perhaps more accurately, they require a significant level of effort to unlearn. They are "probably irreversible, in that the change of perspective occasioned by acquisition of a

threshold concept is unlikely to be forgotten or will be unlearned only by considerable effort" (Meyer et al. 2006, p. 7). The impacts relate to both the change of perspective the student gains in relation to the subject matter and also the potential transformation in how the student views themselves. Davis (2012) notes this risk:

> The transformative character of threshold concepts reflects the way in which they can change an individual's perception of themselves as well as their perception of a subject. In gaining access to a new way of seeing, an individual has access to being part of a community. The irreversibility of a threshold concept makes it inconceivable that they would return to viewing not only the world around them, but also a subject community and themselves, in the way they did before.
> (p. 74)

This irreversibility becomes problematic when what becomes irreversible is something that plays a key role in the ontological constitution of students. As an example, take a Māori student who is immersed in the tikanga of their people. Thresholds that threaten rather than challenge this ontological identity can be harrowing for the student concerned. This may be an example where the appropriateness of the irreversibility of thresholds becomes problematic. I will address this issue further in Chapter 13 when I look at how the development of a secondary habitus may be a means of overcoming this problem. For now, it is enough to note that the problem exists.

Thresholds are also integrative in that they expose "the previously hidden interrelatedness (of ideas, concepts, or perspectives)" (Meyer et al. 2006, p. 7). This feature of thresholds is one that is largely beneficial to the student and one that smooths their transition to membership of the academic field in question. The connecting of theories, perspectives and processes enables the student to gain a much deeper grasp of the particular academic space and to gain a better understanding of the depth and dynamic of their chosen field.

Thresholds are also bounded; they are:

> … bounded in that any conceptual space will have terminal frontiers, bordering with thresholds into new conceptual areas. It might be that

such boundedness in certain instances serves to constitute the
demarcation between disciplinary areas, to define academic
territories. (2006, p. 8)

Meyer et al. seem to assume that this boundedness relates to the specific academic field – hence the comments that it relates to the demarcation between disciplinary areas (what Bourdieu would describe as different academic fields). I suspect that the boundedness they identify take place on a much smaller scale or at a much lower level than those considered by Bourdieu. As Figure 8, below, illustrates, each academic field contains multiple thresholds. None of these thresholds guarantees membership of the discipline or field but, rather, each is a step towards that outcome. Thus, the terminal frontiers Meyer et al. mention relate to specific content, skills or perspectives required for that particular transition – rather than to a demarcation allowing access to another discipline.

12.1.3 Thresholds, gatekeeping and troublesome knowledge

From a Bourdieuian perspective, thresholds can function as 'gatekeepers' to academic fields or, more accurately, they act as a series of mini gatekeepers that limit the types and kinds of student that can access the field of study (those with the 'correct' cultural capital and dispositions).
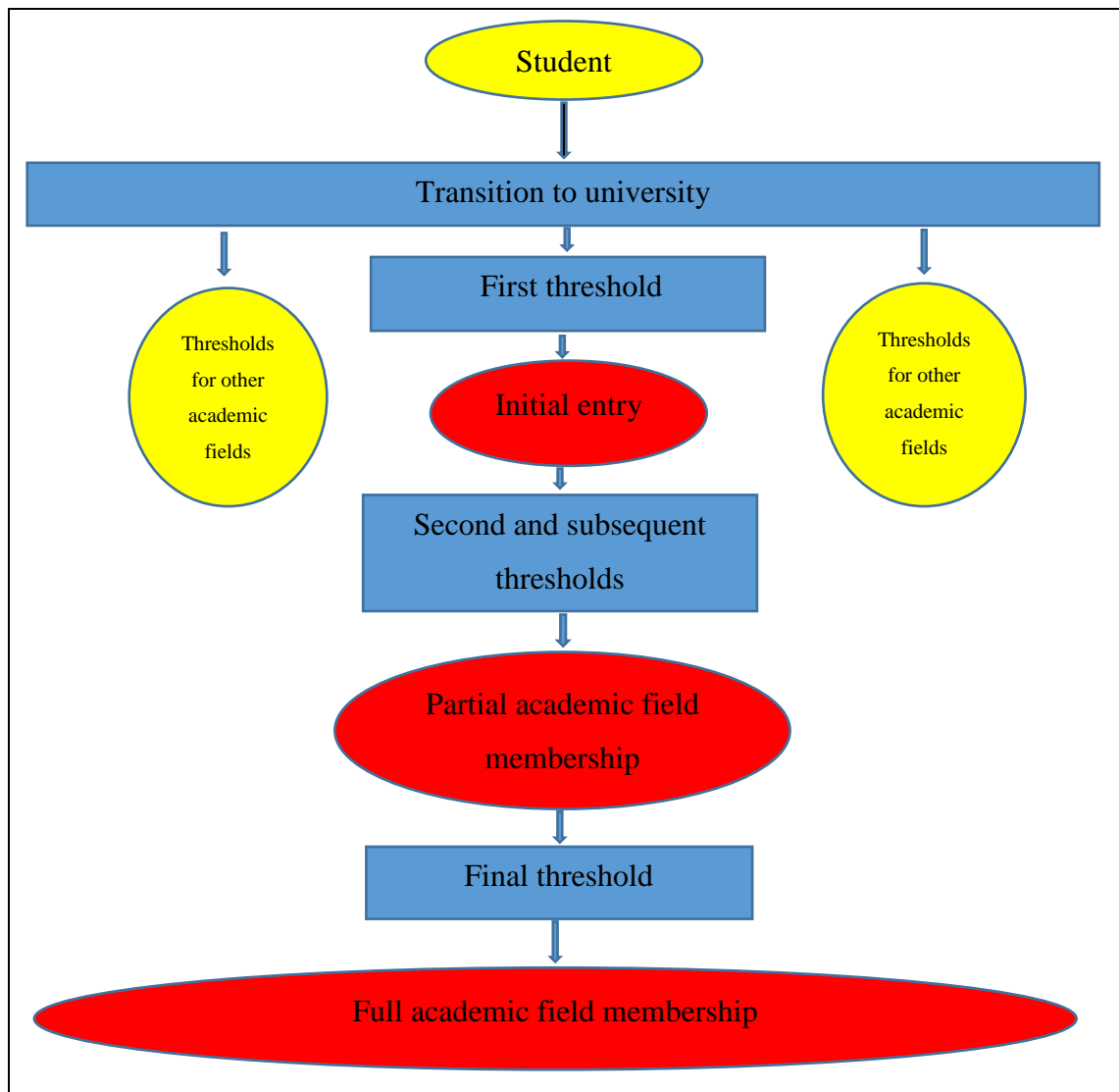
Figure 8. Multiple thresholds, 2016, diagram, A Nobbs

The diagram above is intended to provide a simplified, visual account of the way that this gatekeeping role is encountered by students on their academic journeys. Students encounter these gatekeeping thresholds on many occasions as they transition into and through the university and their own academic journeys. They encounter these gatekeeping thresholds in every faculty, school and discipline within the university and, also, within each and every course and paper they take.

What the diagram highlights is that threshold entry is not a one-off experience and that successful negotiation does not automatically entail full membership of any particular academic field. A student can successfully pass through an early threshold – in the process, gaining the required skills, perspectives and insights required by that threshold – and yet fail to continue to transition successfully through other thresholds

or on to full academic field membership. Examples of this can be found in cases of competitive entry degrees like law or medicine where successful threshold negotiation does not, in itself, guarantee membership (or, in these cases, even advancement) into an academic field. In these cases, thresholds act as initial gatekeepers to the field of study (excluding those without the requisite academic and cultural capital) and that gatekeeping is then further reinforced by a selection process that excludes students based on their assessment results rather than on their grasp of threshold concepts. A slightly different version of this can be found in postgraduate study where students gain entry to the first stage of a doctoral degree but fail to progress past the 'confirmation of candidature (PGR9)' threshold. Thus, they gain a 'partial membership' of the field but cannot gain entry to 'full membership' in the field.

This gatekeeping role is not something highlighted in Meyer's work but it is significant to the student experience and to the existence and reproduction of structural injustice within the institution of the university. Meyer et al. (2010) seem to assume that thresholds, both as concepts and as structural experiences (structures with implications), are morally and structurally neutral (they seem to ignore any possibility of intellectual colonisation or epistemic othering – both of which will be explored later in this section). They seem to understand the value of conceiving of and then identifying thresholds to be located in the identification of key content and skills that can be taught appropriately so that more students can enter into their chosen field of study. This approach is to be applauded and, no doubt, has an impact on student success and satisfaction. However, this assumption of neutrality makes the identification of the gatekeeping role, and its place in the entrenchment and reproduction of systems and structures of inequality, difficult. If, as its proponents argue, the identification of thresholds within papers and disciplines leads to a significant improvement in student success and engagement (Meyer et al. 2006), the question must then be raised as to why universities haven't adopted this approach en masse? There may be a variety of reasons. Is it because members of the lecturing staff are lazy? Are they simply unaware of the notion of thresholds and threshold concepts? Is it because the time demands on lecturers do not allow for yet more work, or the opportunity for each to reflect on their own practice? It is because both the teaching staff and the institution see the gatekeeping role of thresholds as part of a 'natural

selection' process? Or is it that the gatekeeping role of thresholds plays a key role in entrenching and reproducing the systems and structures of power and hierarchy already existent within the particular academic fields? I suspect that all of these reasons come into play. However, most significant is that the implications of this gatekeeping always lead to the last point – the entrenchment and reproduction of existing systems and structures of domination – and this outcome further supports the structural injustice present within all universities.

My critique of the gatekeeping role of thresholds should not be taken as supporting a position that would see access to academic fields being made easier by the 'dumbing down' of threshold expectations or by the removal of thresholds altogether. What I would advocate is that thresholds are made explicit. In a similar fashion, the fact that thresholds (and threshold knowledge) can be troublesome is not intrinsically a bad thing. Here I find myself in agreement with Meyer. As previously noted, thresholds are also 'troublesome' in the sense that they involve knowledge:

> … which appears counter-intuitive, alien (emanating from another culture or discourse), or incoherent (discrete aspects are unproblematic but there is no organising principle).
> (Meyer et al. 2006, p. 9)

Meyer et al. acknowledge the importance of university study being challenging (troublesome in parts) but distinguish between that and knowledge that provokes anxiety:

> When knowledge ceases to be troublesome, when students sail through the years of a degree programme without encountering challenge or experiencing conceptual difficulty, then it is likely that something valuable will have been lost. If knowledge is to have a transformative effect it probably should be troublesome, or at least troubling, but that does not mean it should be stressful or should provoke the kinds of anxiety, self-doubt and frustration that can lead students to give up. (2006, p. xiv)

Threshold knowledge can be troublesome in a variety of ways and it is worth exploring this further. Perkins (2006) highlights four kinds of knowledge and the

reasons that some knowledge may be troublesome. Some threshold knowledge is what he describes as 'ritual knowledge'; this type requires meaningfulness and some understanding of why we use/execute routines to obtain particular outcomes. The ritual needs to be understood within its own context before the knowledge itself can be understood. An example of this can be found in the way that engineering or biomedical laboratory work/teaching is conducted. The process (ritual) practised needs to be understood within the practice of the particular discipline before it can make sense to the student. This can be contrasted with his second kind of troublesome knowledge – that described as 'inert knowledge', which "sits in the mind's attic, unpacked only when specifically called for by a quiz or a direct prompt but otherwise gathering dust" (Perkins, 2006, p. 10). This kind of knowledge can prove troublesome because it is used only sporadically and needs to be available to be called up only when and if required. An example of this is formula-based knowledge in subjects like accounting, finance or engineering. The formulae may be required only for making certain calculations and need to be available only when their specific role is required. He also highlights 'conceptually difficult knowledge' – knowledge that conflicts with "reasonable but mistaken expectations (like the idea that heavier objects will fall faster than lighter objects)" (p. 10). This conceptually difficult knowledge is knowledge that requires an adjustment on the part of the student's perspectives, world views and presuppositions. It is uncomfortable knowledge and often the kind of knowledge that needs to be 'wrestled with'. In that sense, it is similar to the fourth kind of 'troublesome' knowledge he identifies – that of 'alien or foreign knowledge', which originates from a place or perspective that conflicts with our own. This is knowledge that is built on a culture and context that is different from our own. It is knowledge that depends on foundations, perspectives and expectations that may be both unfamiliar to us and nonsensical when examined outside of their specific contexts. A good example of this is found in my own practice (more in Part 3) where I train student mentors to become aware of structural injustice and perceived cultural capital shortfalls. This is challenging knowledge and requires a high level of engagement and understanding from the mentor.

To this list, Meyer et al. add another two kinds of challenging knowledge: tacit knowledge and that of the presentation of knowledge – troublesome language. They

points out that tacit knowledge can be troublesome simply because it is tacit. This is, according to Meyer et al. largely personal and implicit at the level of 'practical consciousness' and it may be shared by a community of practice. I suspect that what they are referring to here is not knowledge that is embodied in the threshold as such but rather a tacit knowledge that is present in the practices (and the practitioners) of a particular field. In this sense, what they are referring to could be described as the habitus and cultural capital of a particular field. In either case, this is knowledge that is, by nature, implicit and is, therefore, very hard both to identify and to master. Additionally, troublesome language can be another area of concern. Disciplinary language is often used to privilege certain academic fields (and their participants) and Meyer et al. note that: "The discursive practices of a given community may render previously 'familiar' concepts strange and subsequently conceptually difficult" (2006, p. 14). The problem here is that threshold knowledge can be made even harder to grasp and master when the language involved also acts as a gatekeeper: one that adds a further layer of complexity to the threshold transition and one that highlights the involvement of power relations within the concept of thresholds.

The closest that Meyer et al. get to the issue of thresholds and power is to note that there is a link between thresholds and the possible colonisation of curriculum. They write: "a further significant issue is that threshold concepts might be interpreted as part of a 'totalising' or colonising view of the curriculum" (2006, p. 16). This is an interesting point. Thresholds are the points of entry to academic disciplines and academic fields. They are, by definition, transformationary but are they also colonising? They are not colonising in the traditional sense because they are portals or conceptual gateways to a field much more than they are descriptors and controllers of content. While they may act to normalise a certain way of being within a field, they act much more as a sorting mechanism than as an imposed ideology. In this sense, the imposed ideology (the colonisation) has already taken place outside of the specific field – in terms of the institution's neoliberal commitment. Thresholds simply act to (implicitly) introduce and apply the rules of academic field inclusion/exclusion, and academic field membership. Students can still succeed (in terms of assessment) without mastering threshold concepts (note that for threshold concepts to be linked to learning outcomes, they would need to be made explicit) but, in Bourdieu's terms,

would struggle to compete within the particular field. However, it may be argued that threshold concepts have colonised their related academic fields as their mastery is a requirement for legitimate membership of the particular field. While this is possible, I think the account of thresholds as gatekeepers to academic fields and disciplines is a more accurate description of their role, their function and their implications. Thresholds may act to shape the kinds of student that populate their related academic fields but they don't seem to shape what the academic fields look like, beyond whom they allow to transition into them.

12.2 Issues Impacting Individual Habitus

Having described the context of academic engagement, we move now to explore the key 'structurally unjust' factors that impact on, and shape, student encounter with, and experience of, the academic journey. The exploration of epistemic othering will explore how implicit (although epistemic privileging can also be explicit) epistemic privileging acts implicitly to alienate and to 'other' some university students. The examination of institutional interpellation will highlight how tacitly university systems and structures bring certain kinds of student into being and will explore the implications this has for student success and belonging.

12.2.1 Epistemic othering

I have borrowed the idea of epistemic othering from Keet (2014) because it illuminates two key features. First, it identifies and describes how some students are alienated and disadvantaged as the result of a structural feature of the university experience and, secondly, it roots this structural injustice within the ontology of the university.

Keet's approach is built around the idea that the epistemic othering that takes place within the South African tertiary context is, in fact, an epistemic injustice and that this epistemic injustice is "inscribed in the disciplinary formations of knowledge" (2014, p. 23). It is part of the institutional ontology and this epistemic othering/epistemic injustice "is part of the genetic codes of the disciplines" (p. 25).

> More so than any other social and intellectual arrangement, the disciplines permeate the life of the university. Academics and students are streamed; professional, academic and student identities are constructed; scientific authorities are established and maintained; social statuses are affirmed; social spaces mapped out; recognitions, rewards and sanctions are distributed; and epistemic injustices are legitimated. (Keet, 2014, p. 28)

Students, when they enter the university, encounter a heavily value-laden space in which what counts as knowledge, and the ways in which this knowledge is to be interpreted and in which the understanding of this knowledge is to be expressed, have already been defined and indeed entrenched within disciplinary practices.

Epistemic othering is distinct from what I have thus far called 'implicit cultural capital requirements'. What the concept of epistemic othering offers is an account of the groundwork in place from which implicit cultural capital requirements arise. Kleet thinks of the process of epistemic othering as "acts and dispositions with the self-reinforcing co-constitution of power/knowledge by which epistemic identities are either affirmed or misrecognised" (2014, p. 24). (Note the implicit referencing of both Foucault and Bourdieu.) He contends that the epistemic injustice comes about as the privileging of interpretative resources that are structurally anchored in the disciplines. This anchoring in the disciplines is thanks to their role in producing "a world where voids in hermeneutical assets are falsely regarded as equally distributed. These formations of knowledge, nowadays, preside over a considerable part of university practices and their conditions of privilege and disadvantage" (p. 24). These 'voids' are the gaps in the interpretative skills that students exhibit. They are essentially cultural capital and, as with all cultural capital, their distribution is neither equal nor equitable. His contention is that students are fundamentally epistemically advantaged or disadvantaged by the valuing of certain epistemic commitments and perspectives. These are rooted within the core of academic disciplines and within the institutional identity of universities, and the advantaging or disadvantaging reflects the extent to which these commitments and perspectives are present within the students' cultural capital dispositions. When students are 'made other' by the processes, practices (and, in this case, claims around what constitutes valuable knowledge) of institutions, they

are disadvantaged at a far more serious level than that of simple assessment outcomes. Keet pulls no punches when he writes:

> Othering concerns the consequences of racism, sexism, class (or a combination hereof) in terms of symbolic degradation as well as the process of identity formation related to this degradation.
> (2014, pp. 25-26)

Students are thus engaging with a context that is pregnant with implicit values, perspectives, epistemologies and hermeneutical practices. These either affirm or deny a student's own cultural capital and their epistemic insights and practices. Each student encounters a system and structure that defines epistemic value and that, as a direct result, either affirms or denies their existing epistemological practice and, indeed, identity. Fricker (2007) makes this point about how this epistemic and hermeneutical injustice functions. It is an injustice because "some significant area of one's social experience (is) obscured from collective understanding owing to a structural identity prejudice in the collective hermeneutical resource" (p. 155).

Epistemic othering is entrenched deeply within university practices and processes. As a consequence, it impacts on all university students and is a tool (intended or otherwise) that acts to advantage – by endorsing existing epistemological tools and processes of some students – or to disadvantage – by rejecting or refusing to acknowledge the existing epistemological resources of other students. As such it is a key component of structural injustice within the university context and needs to be addressed in any notion of habitus transformation.

12.2.2 Institutional interpellation

I have noted previously that students do not enter a value-free context when they encounter the university. This context is heavily shaped by values, expectations, requirements, and new educational paradigms and pedagogies that are often implicit. I have examined some of these concepts (thresholds, epistemic othering and implicit cultural capital requirements) and explored their implications. However, my approach has been to critique these concepts largely in terms of the difficulties and challenges

they put in the way of most of our 'culturally/epistemically different' students. There is, however, another question that should be asked here (and it is one that few institutions seem to ask) and that is: How does our university – as an institution – interpellate its students? Or perhaps, more significantly, what kind of student does it interpellate?

12.2.3 What is institutional interpellation?

The notion of interpellation is found in the work of Louis Althusser and his followers. Althusser's original portrayal of interpellation as the bringing (hailing by the policeman) into being of a certain kind of person has resonated with many thinkers such as Montag (2003), who writes: "Individuals are interpellated, that is, hailed or addressed, as subjects (authors and owners of their own words and deeds) by Ideological state apparatuses" (p. 119). Or, as Patel (2013) puts it, "interpellation is a kind of hailing that endeavours to strengthen a particular aspect of the identity of those addressed and to reconfigure their social practices" (p. 542).

This 'hailing' or calling into being can be performed at an individual level (one individual to another) or at a communal level (an institution to an individual or a group of individuals).

Devine (2003), writing within the educational context, provides a delightful account of her father, as a teacher, interpellating a potentially problematic student into an engaged and enthusiastic one by the simple process of verbally affirming the positive aspects of his educational journey – of calling into being (or verbally recognising) a student of promise rather than a student of 'problems'. The argument Devine makes is that, if teachers can manage their own thinking about students rather than focusing on just managing students, they can call into being a variety of different kinds of student:

> Teacher education students come into class wanting to know how to 'manage' the students they have before them but… the students they have before them are actually not a static entity. They are to a significant degree a reflection of what the teacher sees or, perhaps more accurately, a reflection of the reflection that the teacher shows the student. (2003, pp. 29-30)

This is a significant point. University students are also not static entities. The reflection shown to them both by lecturers and by the institution plays a key role in shaping how they see themselves and their role as new academics. When students are explicitly or implicitly affirmed for their cultural capital and the suitability of their habitus, they will have vastly different (and more positive) experiences from those of students who have their cultural capital shortfalls highlighted and whose habitus does not support the full potential of their academic journeys. As such, these students begin to recognise themselves in a different way and begin to act in line with the expectations associated with the reflections they have seen from the institution and its representatives.

Devine expands on this point by noting:

> The point of this notion of interpellation… is that teachers have more power than they think they have. Beginning teachers tend to see themselves as having a fixed character… and their students as having fixed characteristics… Teachers can alter the situation markedly by recognising the power they have in calling a student to take up certain subject positions – as learner, as manipulable pigeon, as citizen, as 'good' pupil or 'bad' pupil (or even worse not a 'pupil' at all), as a sexed person, as a person of a specific culture, ethnicity, colour… and so on. (p. 30)

This raises some important questions about interpellation and university study. Interpellation can happen both explicitly (which Devine encourages) and unconsciously (through unconsidered responses and processes). How does our university's initial contact with students shape this in a positive or negative way? Does the transformation of the aspirational horizons of habitus require constant or regular support or can it be undone by negative interpellation? Does (particularly institutional) interpellation have levels of effect – i.e. does initial institutional interpellation act as primary habitus does in reinforcing aspirational horizons? These points will be addressed in Part 4 when I examine the transformation of institutional habitus.

Montag (2003) makes the link to a kind of institutional interpellation when he writes of being interpellated by ideology: "we are interpellated, addressed, judged and punished as the authors of our actions, our bodies caught in a very real apparatus of subjection" (p. 78). Institutional interpellation in this sense has two distinct parts.

Firstly, the institutional process, practices and expectations (both explicit and implicit) act to call forth a certain kind of student. Secondly, the dominant ideology (see Part 2 on neoliberalism) also acts to call forth a certain kind of student by way of the role it plays in shaping the practices of the institution. An example of the latter is the shift within Western universities towards treating student encounters as transactional encounters. In my particular university, the catchphrase (within student support services) is 'that all student problems can (and should) be resolved within two contacts'. The ontology that this practice reflects is one of the student as a client and as a series of problems needing to be resolved. The swift resolution of these problems is counted as 'best practice'. The kind of student that is interpellated as a result of these practices is one that is constituted by a set of problems. These students are not ontologically interpellated/constituted as critical thinkers, members of an academic community or future leaders. A transactional approach simply cannot extend itself beyond the short term (most often immediate) transaction. These students are 'hailed' (and treated) as potential problems in need of resolution. How, then, do we expect them to view themselves? And how, then, do we expect them to view the institution? This 'transactional interpellation' adds considerably to the alienation, the disengagement and the disenfranchisement of our students.

12.2.4 Interpellation and freedom/misrecognition

Interpellation is particularly powerful because it operates without most students (and indeed most agents) being aware that they are subject to it. We are interpellated on an almost daily basis either by the institutions to which we belong or by those for which we work (our punctuality, how we dress at work, our work ethic, our rewards in terms of advancement and remuneration). We are subtly called into being certain kinds of student, employee or educator. This interpellation is most often understood (by those doing the interpellation) as a 'free and natural act' by those being interpellated. This notion of freedom is significant because it is this 'free choice' by which the agent acts to accept his/her subjection. Montag (2003) notes that "the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commands of the Subject, i.e., in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection" (p. 117). This is a Bourdieuian type of misrecognition. Neither party is recognising the interpellation that is taking place. In the case of individuals like teachers and lecturers

interpellating their students, they are, by and large, seeking to manage their classrooms and lecture spaces, and would argue they are simply responding to student behaviour (hopefully guided by an explicit pedagogy). But where there is no choice, it is hard to argue that any level of freedom is available. When students are treated as 'transactional encounters' or as 'problems requiring speedy and efficient resolution', they are, within the particular context, being ontologically understood and constituted as shallow agents, whose most notable feature is the 'problem' that needs resolution. There is no freedom in this interpellation. It is something that the institution imposes on the subject and the only recourse the subject has is to disengage with the structure of the institution. Uncovering this misrecognition and highlighting its implications is vital to addressing the issue of structural injustice.

12.2.5 Interpellation and individualism

That students are ontologically constituted as rational, autonomous individuals rather than as relationally or communally constituted persons, seems to be taken for granted in most Western universities. Despite some institutions recognising indigenous people and/or the multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism of their student bodies, their practices are uniformly neoliberal and, thus, decidedly individualistic in application. Araujo and Martuccelli (2014) remind us that individualism is not the only game in town. They point out that, in traditional societies:

> The individual was mainly considered as an anomaly because she or he was seen as a particular deviance from the common features of the social group... Against this interpretation the thesis of institutional individualism meant a real revolution. Individual was no longer perceived as a singular deviance of a general model. It became itself the institutional model to be incarnated. (p. 26)

In this case, the individual came into being only when the community member chose to distance themselves from their community's practices, values, perspectives and assumptions. The individual here comes into being as a direct result of acting against the interpellation of their constituting community. This point raises interesting possibilities. Is the reclaiming of a communitarian ontology a direct act of resistance to the prevailing neoliberal interpellation of our Western university institutions? Is the

university now the ontologically constituting force for students/individuals? Or is it, rather, constituting certain kinds of individual?

Araujo and Martuccelli (2014) make the connection to institutional interpellation when they note:

> … the growing individualization is an outcome of the shift to a society… in which institutions do not transmit harmonious prescriptive norms to actors but impel them to give sense on their own to their social trajectories through reflexivity… this does not imply that individuals are freer. This means that they are subdued by a new historical process that produces them through other institutional commandments. (p. 26)

Another key point is that these 'interpellated individuals' do not create their own ideals, values, commitments and behaviours. These are interpellated by the institution. Araujo and Martuccelli (2014) write that:

> In no society do individual actors invent subject ideals. These ideals are offered and put at their disposal. They are part of the culture and society in which an individual is forged. The specificity of occidental modernity and institutional individualism is that the individual is interpellated to constitute her- or himself as an individual-subject by institutions. Institutions are the ones that offer representations and support. (p. 27)

The creation of "subject ideals" is a key feature of interpellation. Davis (2012), however, goes further when she notes:

> The potential of interpellation as the basis for a performative theory of subjectivity lies in its being a naming that constitutes the subject it so names. There is no subject before the naming; that is, interpellation does not describe a pre-existing or given subject which then internalises or appropriates its subjectifying conditions. Instead, interpellation gives an account of the genesis of the subject; that is, of the subject as an already subjectified, and thus, social being. (p. 882)

I do not dispute that institutional interpellation plays a role in the ontological constitution of students. However, I do think that this constitution is only partial and

relates only to a specific context. For Davis, interpellation acts to constitute the agent in their entirety. I am not sure why interpellation is seen as the key factor in subjectifying the person. Doesn't interpellation bring (the possibility) of a certain kind of person into being? Why would that not be context dependant rather than universal? That is, I can be interpellated into a certain kind of student within my university context but that particular subjectivity does not necessarily reflect or encapsulate me outside of the academic context. Would I not be subject to multiple interpellations in the community of my life: for example, as an average surfer, a creative musician or a compassionate friend?

12.2.6 Interpellation and dominant ideologies

As I have alluded to above, institutional interpellation does not take place within a values vacuum and the prevailing, dominant philosophy/ideologies shape the kind of agent called into being by this interpellation. While this 'transactional interpellation' is clearly evident within Western universities, Araujo and Martuccelli (2014) make the point that other factors are also in play. They question how forceful or compelling this institutional interpellation is by itself:

> The process of individuation in Chile differs from that of the institutional individualism model. Certainly, the work of institutions is active and explicit in many realms of social life. However, individuals are not forged basically in reference to institutional prescriptions. Individuals are forged confronting social life's vicissitudes by means of their capacities and skills, which include the mobilisation of interpersonal relationships, and through a singular set of strategies and competencies. (p. 35)

There is a misunderstanding here about what constitutes an institution and about how a philosophy like neoliberalism shapes social life. In Part 2, I explored the 'meta' context of universities and how this is shaped by the prevailing (and, therefore, dominant) philosophy of neoliberalism. Neoliberal philosophy is the 'invisible voice' of institutional interpellation within the university context. Neoliberalism requires the university to function in certain ways and this institutional practice forces agents/students to respond in certain ways – in effect, interpellating them from a

distance; that is, these particular 'vicissitudes of social life' can be traced directly to neoliberal philosophy and practice/processes.

12.2.7 Interpellation and ontology

So how does interpellation act to create, impact or shape the ontology of university students? Davis (2012), writing in her critique of Judith Butler, argues that Butler has a very ontological notion of interpellation: "the interpellative naming is for Butler, the individual's entry into intelligibility and its guarantee of existence and legibility" (p. 883). This issue is a contentious point for theories of interpellation – whether or not individuals/agents can exist without their being 'hailed/named' by others – but it is not significant for my concerns. I do not seek to establish interpellation as a constitutive key to the ontology of persons. What I seek to establish is that interpellation is: (1) an ongoing process that continues to play a key role in the 'calling forth' of types of person (student) within my context; and (2) that the act of interpellation is performed by institutions (in terms of processes, systems, methods of engagement) as well as by other persons. I also believe that, when we look at 'institutional interpellation', we are looking at a process that interpellates its participants only during the time period within which they engage with the institution. So, specific types of student are 'called forth' during their academic journeys. However, this interpellation lasts only as long as they stay within the university context and, significantly, only as long as the interpellation remains unrecognised. Interpellation has power only to the extent that it remains unrecognised.

Interpellation effectively creates behavioural and reflective norms for the students/agents it impacts. Davis (2012) identifies this and notes that it causes 'constitutive violence':

> Whereas Butler presents an account of norms as productive of, and indeed, essential for, our social existence. She sees normativity as having a 'double meaning', as norms both enable and constrain life. As well as guiding and orientating our aims and aspirations, norms are also, for Butler, imbued with a necessarily negative side: they normalize, govern, and compel us; they do us a constitutive violence. (p. 886)

The implication here is of particular pertinence in relation to 'institutional interpellation'. This calls into being certain kinds of student subject, and these subjects reflect/become the norms within the particular context. They are treated in a certain manner that reflects the institution's understanding of student ontology (in our context, the neoliberal model of the student being constituted as a series of assessments) and, thus, are constituted as a certain kind of being. This constitutive normalisation seems to be a direct result of students encountering university systems and processes. They are required to queue for ID cards; they are shuffled off to see different parties for enrolment inquiries. As such, they are interpellated as 'problems requiring solutions' and this is reflected in our current mantra that all student problems or issues can be resolved in two interactions. This is a purely transactional understanding of student engagement. Students are interpellated as transactional entities; they are constituted as having needs that can be 'resolved' with the minimum of interaction. This normalisation of a very shallow understanding of subjectivity does constitutive violence to our students. It is misrecognised by the institution, which considers itself to be simply engaging in 'best practice', and it is misrecognised by students as simply being the way in which the institution operates. It is a 'practice' particularly evident in the sphere of student support but it is evident also within teaching and learning, where students are interpellated as 'high-needs/at-risk students', 'low-needs/good students' or somewhere in between.

12.2.8 Interpellation and change

I would like to make some final points on the issue of interpellation: interpellation can be limited in scope and in effectiveness by the habitus of the student/agent in question; it can be multi-sourced and many interpellations can be impacting on the student/agent at any one point; and, finally, it can travel both ways – that is, students can also interpellate their lecturers (Jones, 1991). (In the same way, lecturers can be interpellated as 'engaging', 'incompetent', 'easily distracted', etc. by the way in which their students interact with them and treat them.)

So, what are the implications for interpellation from habitus? Can a person answer or respond to an interpellation if that is not part of their 'possible world' or the

world of their aspirational horizons shaped by their habitus? Devine (2003) addresses this point when she writes:

> This is why Althusser positions these interpellations within ideology. 'Ideology' he defines as 'a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence' (Althusser, 1984, p. 162, *Essays on ideology*, London, Verso). If the ideology is completely unknown – the representation is unrecognisable, there is no imaginary or conceptual connection or the discourse amounts to a foreign language – then interpellation will not work. There is no point in calling a child a 'linguist' just because he or she has a fair mastery of language: the term will be meaningless and it will not alter her self-conception. Call her 'good at English', however, and her world begins to change. (p. 31)

So, it is not clear that a student/agent can be 'hailed' into being a certain kind of being, when a conception of that 'type of being' is not at least represented within their own habitus. This raises the interesting point that, for interpellation to be most effective, it needs to be very clear about exactly what the outcome of this interpellation is intended to be and this outcome needs to be represented within the student's habitus – this is particularly problematic when (it seems like) most interpellation within the university context is implicit.

Secondly, students do not experience a single interpellation when they engage with the university. They are, it would seem, subject to a variety of interpellations. If we accept that interpellation can be implicit as well as explicit, then it would seem to be going on at all periods of student teacher/lecturer interaction and presumably in all institution/student interactions. As I have previously discussed, our students are receiving a 'transactional interpellation' from the moment they encounter our student services from orientation onwards. We can then add to this the interpellation that results from interactions with their school or faculty and then the interpellations that come from their lectures in each of their papers. And because this interpellation is largely implicit (and, therefore, unexamined and misrecognised), there is no point at which the individuals concerned reflect upon the integrity or intentionality of the process. Our students are then buffeted by a variety of interpellations, none of which are recognised (explicitly named) and none of which have been examined in order to achieve a positive outcome.

Finally, and perhaps most positively, interpellation is not a one-way street. Devine (2003) writes that interpellation goes both ways:

> Nor is the teacher alone the source of interpellation. The classic research done on New Zealand classroom interactions by Alison Jones in 1984 (Jones, 1991) shows very clearly that students can interpellate the teacher, and call a certain teacherly subjectivity or a way of being a teacher into existence, just as surely as a teacher can summon a way of being a student into being. (p. 33)

Whether or not this transfers quite so effectively from a high school context (smaller classes and much more regular contact with the teacher in question) to a university context is not clear.

12.3 Conclusion

Epistemic othering and institutional interpellation have a major impact on the student experience of university study. As such, they are key issues that any proposed 'transformation of individual habitus' must take into account. My examination of epistemic othering highlights two key points. The first is that epistemic othering provides an account of the alienation and disadvantaging of some students based on who they are rather than on what they have done or have not done. In this sense, it adds a deeper layer to Bourdieu's claim that individual cultural capital shortfalls and implicit institutional cultural capital requirements account for this. In Bourdieu's terms, epistemic othering acts as a sorting mechanism. It allows or disallows access to academic fields and it entrenches existing systems and structures of domination whilst, at the same time, ensuring their reproduction. And, secondly, epistemic othering proves that this injustice is, in fact, structural and is located within the ontology of the university as an institution (it is inscribed in the disciplinary formations of knowledge).

Students experience multiple interpellations when they engage in university study. These range from interpellations (intentional or otherwise) from individual lecturers to institutional interpellations that result from interactions with university processes and practices. These latter interpellations are seldom considered by institutions but can have a major impact on student success and well-being. However, these interpellations

have power only to the extent that they remain unrecognised. Their power lies in the normalising of the interpellation and, once the student/agent is aware of this process, the interpellation loses much of its force. This institutional interpellation of students, as transactions and as problems to be resolved, is a direct contributor to the structural injustice present within the institution. This is, in part, due to the neoliberal desire to reduce everything to numbers (transactions) but the consequences of this are the denial of the humanity of its subjects and their treatment as raw materials on a production line. Whilst interpellation can work both ways (students can interpellate lecturers), the recognition of the process of interpellation seems to be most significant when exploring the ways in which students can respond to structural injustice. Recognition of institutional interpellation undermines both its efficiency and its effectiveness and is a viable strategy in combatting structural injustice.

13 The Process of Transformation

Transformation is not a simple process. Devine (2003) notes that simply teaching students skills is not enough in itself to bring about the kind of transformation required:

> The teaching of skills is not in itself emancipatory, there has to be something more. It may well be that the most emancipatory activity of the teacher has less to do with the content of lessons and more to do with the relations established, that is, the subjectivities and relations between subjectivities which are the ethical business of teaching. (p. 30)

This has important implications for the transformation of habitus. If part of the issue is a perceived shortfall of cultural capital, then simply teaching the skills that are lacking is unlikely to be enough. What that may accomplish is a heightened level of success for assessments but it is not clear that it changes aspirational horizons or whether or not it impacts the unequal playing field that students encounter. It would seem likely that the most positive outcome would involve the student moving from the group of those students implicitly disadvantaged by their perceived cultural capital shortfall to a group which is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged (this is the kind of move we sometimes see within my area of student support services). The structural injustice issue, therefore, still exists. One might also argue that even if the 'skills' teaching was successful, students with newly acquired skills are unlikely to be on a level playing field with advantaged students who have a high level of confidence and familiarity with those skills.

The concept of transformation then needs to move beyond the simple addition of skills and embrace the notion that this transformation will require a reordering of perspectives, practices and aspirational horizons.

This chapter seeks to explore what the process of transformation might look like for the individual student. To this end, I will engage with the concepts of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, with the concept of secondary habitus and the notion of decolonisation in order to explore how these concepts may shape a

process that leads to the transformation of both student experience and student habitus.

13.1 Deterritorialisation and Reterritorialisation

13.1.1 What is territorialisation?

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of territorialisation is not something that is particularly easy to describe; it is dense and multi-layered, and, in addition to that, I have different goals in mind. Their intention is to describe human action in the world while mine is much smaller in focus and is simply intended to provide another account of the context students will experience when they enter university study – in this case, the 'territory' of the university. So, this section is not a Deleuzian critique of the university. Rather, it is my attempt to provide an account of: (1) what students encounter at university (territorialised spaces); (2) how they might respond appropriately to that encounter when it is negative (deterritorialisation); and (3) what kind of support framework they might establish if they choose to remain engaged with the territory (reterritorialisation).

For my purposes, territorialisation has four key features: it is a primary driver of human action and organisation; it is driven by ontological necessity; it is functionally expressive; and, finally, it transforms (often violently) that which it encounters.

As a primary driver of human action, it is, in essence, a reversing of ethological understandings that territorial behaviour is a response to biological imperatives. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) position is that we are not territorial because we are biologically aggressive but, rather, we are 'aggressive' because we are territorial. Young, Genosoko and Watson (2013) note that Deleuze and Guattari organise traits so that "they work relative to, and for the purpose of, the territory" (p. 307). Territorialisation is, in this sense, an ontologically constituting driver of what it is to be human. It is the inevitable outcome of any human interaction with their context.

Territorialisation is also driven by an ontological requirement for context and for boundaries. In terms of the big picture… the universe (cosmos and earth) are made up of 'machinic' phenomena and 'mechanical' phenomena. Mechanical phenomena

represent stable forces or milieus and machinic phenomena are those that express "the rhythmic relation between such stable milieus" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 307). Territorialisation is an act or a series of acts, which are "a seizure and assemblage of these exterior (to the actor) forces. The animal or human being acts (individually or in groups) on these phenomena in order to establish itself in its environment, to create a border between inside and outside" (p. 307). Again, this desire is an ontological necessity.

Territorialisation is also functionally expressive. Young et al. note (2013):

> While territorialisation can function in a transcendental fashion for assemblages of oppression this establishment has no function analogous to the functions that it appropriates; therefore, they (Deleuze & Guattari) conclude, that when taken for itself, its actual function is expressiveness... it is not an impulse triggering action, but the 'style' of motifs, counterpoints, and refrains. (p. 307)

It is always an action or, as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe it: "Territorialisation is an act of rhythm that has become expressive, or of milieu components that have become qualitative" (p. 348). This identification of territorialisation as an action and, more particularly, as an ontological requirement is significant. Territorialisation in this sense is not optional – rather, it is inevitable – and this inevitability normalises the (inevitable) responses of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. The issue here is not that territorialisation is, by definition, unjust. It simply is. It is the make-up (or the content) of the territory that defines it as either just or unjust.

Finally, territorialisation is transformationary in that it changes the context, landscape or space it encounters. And this encounter is not particularly subtle. Young et al. (2013), point out: "A territory borrows from all milieus (environments – specifically ones you are part of) it bites into them, seizes them bodily (although it remains vulnerable to intrusions). It is built from aspects or portions of milieus" (p. 308). The language here is interesting. Territories do not subtly assimilate the spaces they encounter. The process of territorialisation is one of forceful engagement – 'biting' into existing milieus and reconstructing the terrain from portions of what previously existed. This language is important because it lays the groundwork for the

deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation that will follow and provides the freedom for agents engaging in this process to be relatively unrestrained in their response. Deleuze and Guattari (1987), addressing the effects of territories, note:

> A territory has two notable effects; a reorganisation of functions and a regrouping of forces... when functional activities are territorialized they necessarily change pace… these functions are organised or created only because they are territorialized, and not the other way around. (pp. 353-354)

We should expect, then, that students reterritorialising will impact on the organisation of functions and the regrouping of forces and that this process will be vigorous.

13.1.2 Concepts in practice – the way in which I am using them

The concepts of territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation are particularly useful tools for examining the ways in which students may look to transform their habitus and their experiences of structural injustice. And it is as tools (rather than as components of Deleuzian orthodoxy) that I intend to use them. What I wish to accomplish is to use Deleuze and Guattari's concepts as an explanatory device, firstly, to explore the way students may respond to structures of injustice within the university context and then, secondly, to explore a process of how these same students might usefully respond to those experiences. I want to take the concepts out of the abstract philosophical environment they inhabit and apply them to the university context that students inhabit. To do this, some general clarifications need to be made (more detailed unpacking of the terms will take place in 13.1.3 below). Deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation are fluid concepts. As such, they do not happen as one-off events but rather are happening almost constantly and, in particular, are responding to each other. By that I mean that territorialisation will cause, in some cases, responses of deterritorialisation, which will inevitably lead to acts of reterritorialisation. These reterritorialised persons will then encounter 'territories' and the whole process may start all over again. For my purposes, I wish to lock one of these cycles in time and note that the way I will use the concepts is as follows:

(a) Academic fields are the territorialised spaces in question. These are the spaces that are pertinent to my research as these are the spaces where students will encounter structural injustice.

(b) The concept of deterritorialisation will, therefore, be concerned with the student's responses to this encounter with the territorialised academic space.

(c) My approach to the concept of reterritorialisation will then be concerned with the ways in which students have deterritorialised, what the implications of this movement are and how they can usefully reterritorialise this experience and the academic space or context within which it takes place.

13.1.3 What are deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation?

Territorialisation and deterritorialisation are opposing notions and yet they are intrinsically linked as one invariably (and conceptually) follows the other. Paquette and Lacassagne (2013) describe deterritorialisation as a flight response to a territory:

> Deterritorialisation operates as a line of flight. Deterritorialisation involves departing from a territory. That being said, deterritorialisation is not an end in itself. Relative deterritorialisation can lead to reterritorialisation or the creation of a new territory or territories. More importantly, in the idea of deterritorialisation lays the notion that the subject may seek to free itself from the oppression and alienation induced by a specific mode of subjugation at play in a territory… Deterritorialisation involves the creation of a new assemblage and the production of new territorial patterns and motives. (p. 247)

Deterritorialisation is a response by an agent or group of agents to a territory that involves at least three elements. The first is the rejection of that territory (or the values, practices and processes it contains), the second is the 'flight response' to the territory (which may be a physical relocation or may be an intellectual or emotional disengagement) and, finally, is a response in relation to that territory. This response may be in the form of a complete and total rejection of the territory (such as dropping out of university study) or in the form of a reterritorialisation that provides one of two

things: either a supporting framework (reterritorialisation of the self) to enable operation within a 'hostile territory' (as in a support structure that some university staff may operate in order to enable them to remain within a neoliberal context); or a new framework and practice that enables their goals to be obtained via another means (alternative models of education like apprenticeships or on-the-job learning – reterritorialisation of the 'space', either the existing space or a new space entirely).

Paquette and Lacassagne (2013) highlight this relationship between deterritorialisation and change and also imply the distinction between deterritorialising the self (reflected in the first quote below) and deterritorialising the context/space (which is evident in the second quote below):

> Rather than talking of subjects in the classical sense, Deleuze and Guattari prefer a more fluid and open ended understanding of identity as something in flux, always unstable, and as an assemblage of several events from both the past and the as-yet-to-come (never closed). Deterritorialisation, thus, is resisting a mode of subjugation and, as such, involves (in reterritorialisation) the assemblage of new defining events and new modes of individuation not based on the modes of subjects or on the modes of constituting things.
> (pp. 247-248)

For Paquette and Lacassagne (2013), reorganisation is tangible and is a key theme in the process:

> Territorialisation involves a reorganisation of functions and a grouping of forces, the likes of which create differentiation and distance... territorialisation as the process of creating a distance, the process of marking what may be felt as an oppressive delineation; and deterritorialisation/reterritorialization as a process of departure, fleeing a process of subjugation that is felt as alienating. (p. 244)

Deterritorialisation is also an example of territorial expressiveness. It expresses and produces a 'becoming' in the agent/student that is transformationary in nature. The deterritorialised subject becomes (in the process) something else, something new and the implication of what is being rejected.

For my purposes, the issues that need to be addressed are: (1) how do university transitions and university thresholds territorialise? (2) how do the 'subjugated' either deterritorialise or reterritorialise? and, (3) is this response resistance, accommodation or subversion?

(1) University transitions. These territorialise by advantaging/disadvantaging the accumulated cultural capital of new students. Grouping takes place based on the type and amount of cultural capital possession and this same process would seem to produce a creation of distance (oppressive delineation) between those 'at ease' with the cultural capital requirements and those either alienated by them or not even aware of their implicit existence.

University, faculty and paper thresholds are the second stage of territorialisation and also the 'gatekeepers' to 'specialised knowledge'. Here, the advantaging/disadvantaging would seem to be less obvious but perhaps more alienating. Cultural capital requirements are now more specific (although still mostly implicit) and entry into or belonging to the academic community is dependent on passing through the threshold. This requires both the appropriate cultural capital (in terms of academic skills and dispositions) as well as the ability to identify and comprehend the implicit knowledge requirements of the field of study.

(2) Deterritorialisation. Students who have been 'distanced' by the territorialisation of university transition and thresholds have three options. They can deterritorialise and flee the situation and this is evidenced by disengaging from the institution and, most often, 'dropping out' of tertiary education. They can seek to reterritorialise, which concerns trying to 'accommodate themselves' to the requirements of the institution (particularly difficult if this requirement is implicit). I suspect that both of these responses are largely unconscious. Or, they can become ambivalent. Tomlinson (1999), writing on the idea of deterritorialisation as the cultural condition of globalisation, notes that "the experience of 'displacement' in modernity is not one of alienation, but of ambivalence" (p. 107). This is an interesting point. What is the experience of university transitions and thresholds? It may be mistaken to assume that cultural capital deficits inevitably result in alienation – they may also result in ambivalence.

And this ambivalence will, by definition, work against action of any kind – be that deterritorialisation or reterritorialisation.

It would seem that there are a variety of methods/motivations for reterritorialisation:

(a) Resistance. A reterritorialising response of resistance would need to be both explicit and intentional. It is not clear to me that reterritorialisation would require departure. Why can it not imply or create a reordering/reorganisation of forces, groups, individuals or processes that seek to resist the imposition (requirements) of a prevailing territorialisation. Surely any challenge or change will require this reorganisation of forces. How might this work? Resistance from a position of relative powerlessness will prove challenging. The best that can be hoped for from this position is an accommodation with the territory in order to pursue a specific outcome – like accreditation. The creation of a secondary habitus (see 13.2) is an example of this.

(b) Subversion. This, also, is explicit and intentional. This approach may be more subtle than is direct resistance. How would a subversion of the transition process work and what would it look like? Possibly, this approach is more realistic at the point of thresholds… however, the knowledge/skills required for academic community membership still need to be acquired and access to the field is still 'gate kept' by those whose domination is being both entrenched and reproduced.

(c) Simple accommodation. Is this a reterritorialisation or rather a 'giving in' to the original territorialisation? A significant question here is: 'does territorialisation do violence to the individual?' I suspect that the answer relates to the level of accumulated cultural capital that the student brings with them. A territorialisation that requires little in the way of cultural capital adjustment (and one that is also supported by the agent's habitus and, hence, aspirational horizons) may be a relatively seamless transition. There doesn't seem to be any reterritorialisation going on here. Another student with a lesser amount of the 'required cultural capital' may need to 'adjust' in order to accommodate the territorialisation required by both transition and thresholds. This would seem to require an active reterritorialisation in order to transition or to cross the threshold.

(d) Survival. The experience of territorialisation is not optional (but the response to it is a reterritorialisation of the self or a reterritorialisation of the 'space'). To transition to the university or to pass the threshold of a particular academic field requires engagement with the territory. To resist is to remain outside the field or, at best, to be tolerated on the fringes.

The use of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts has allowed the identification of four key points. The first is that they provide an account of the way students may respond to fields/territories that are alienating, discriminatory or 'othering'. Secondly, three clear responses to the situation are established – deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation and ambivalence. The third point is that territorialisation is transformationary (to what it territorialises) and this process often does violence to the existing field/territory it encounters (capitalism's territorialisation of the education field is a good example of this). Finally, a reconstructed or transformed habitus needs to be able to account for student responses to a field/territory that are not based on field competition. Deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation will, therefore, be legitimate parts of a transformed habitus.

13.1.4 Locating within Bourdieu

Here, I want to note briefly the way in which the Deleuzian concepts of territorialisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation fit within the academic world, as it is understood through the theories of Bourdieu, and how they add an extra element to the discussion.

Firstly, there are obvious parallels between territories and fields, and, while these terms are not strictly interchangeable, they do in a macro sense describe the same space. However, the concept of territorialisation acts as a means of describing a social space (which has been 'seized' and acted upon) but it cannot account for an agent's actions within that space (once the space has been established) – as Bourdieu does with his notion of field competition. Yet, it does seem that both deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation are practices and processes that may well take place under the notion of field competition. As such, they can provide an account of the ways students may respond to the territory/field.

So, what is the distinction or relation between a territory and a field? Academic fields clearly qualify as territorialised spaces. These spaces are easily identified as being socially constructed, reflecting prevailing ideologies, and ordered via hierarchies and structures of domination and reproduction. They are territorialised in the sense that they are the result of human action, they are expressive in nature (they are spaces that act both on their members and on those fields surrounding them), and they are clearly spaces that evidence a specific environment with clear and obvious borders. In this sense, Bourdieu's concept of fields would seem to encapsulate the notion of territories while adding to it a practical awareness of what goes on within that space (competition for the creation of, the identification of and the distribution of the cultural capital produced by that field).

However, Deleuze and Guattari's concepts are particularly helpful in that they add to the discussion about the kinds of action agents may carry out either within a field or when encountering the field for the first time. In this sense, both the idea of deterritorialisation and that of reterritorialisation add to our understanding of agents' responses within/to fields by paying attention to agent responses that relate to confrontation or rejection of a field rather than the assumed competitive activity: an area that Bourdieu seems not to have addressed. In this way, the concepts also deal with Bourdieu's implicit fatalism. They highlight possible agent responses to systems of domination and, in a sense, prioritise the idea of agent resistance.

What is the relation between a habitus and a territory? As I have noted, both habitus and territories act (at least at an unconscious level) to provide aspirational horizons for the student/agent. Habitus does this by containing the socialised expectations of success, the level of comfort that attempting to belong to the institution entails and the cultural capital skills surplus or deficit in relation to the academic expectations, both implicit and explicit, of the institution. The territory impacts on the aspirational horizons of the student/agent because it defines what counts as success within the context while also sorting and grading participants within that same context. It shapes aspirations via thresholds and via interpellation, as it looks to entrench its existing systems and to reproduce systems and structures of power.

Both concepts (habitus and territories) are, in a sense, pre-existing at the moment of encounter when students engage the academic field/territory. Students are, in part, ontologically constituted by their habitus and they bring that with them to the encounter. Territories are already in existence so students/agents encounter something that is already in place. Where they differ is in the areas of what is shaped, by the implications of change responses and by their ability to be adjusted or changed by the encounter.

Habitus, by definition, shapes internal expectations and aspirations. While it is created largely externally, functionally it works from the inside out and shapes predispositions within students/agents. Territories, on the other hand, shape aspirations and expectations from an external position. Territories provide the physical, intellectual and aspirational possibilities within the academic context. In that sense, they permit or refuse student success, student belonging and student aspiration. In terms of what may be changed or reshaped by the student–territory encounter, the two concepts are quite different. Any responses in terms of habitus will most likely result in either a modification to the habitus in question – perhaps in relation to expectations, aspirational horizons or the addition of cultural capital – or in a reinforcing of existing expectations and aspirations. Habitus, thus, has the ability to respond to the encounter and, in that sense, habitus has the ability to be adjusted. This adjustment may take the form of a secondary habitus (see 3.4 and 13.2), the adoption or creation of significant cultural capital or the adjustment of aspirational horizons in order to accommodate the territory/academic field. It is not clear that territories have this ability to be adjusted. The agent/student response to a negative encounter with a territory is likely to be either accommodation with the field (this is a change by the student not a change by the territory) or a deterritorialisation by the student/agent, which is a withdrawal or disengagement, and, again, requires no change or adjustment by the territory/academic field. For the territory to reflect significant change, it would need to be reterritorialised by something else and this 'something else' would need to be significantly more powerful than students/agents are usually able to be (Paris 1968, is an example of this and, more recently, the 'We are the University' Auckland on Facebook). Bang (2014) gives an example of what would

be required (although he has a different take on Deleuzian concepts and fields). He writes:

> Every field is one of power… In addition, when considering the economical – also one of power – its nature and impact both fractalise and distort the field of power in lesser fields, which often assume economic or capitalist forms. Thus capitalism, as the superior force of deterritorialisation, has deterritorialised other fields, recoding them into distorted versions of itself. (p. 54)

I take his point, although I would use different terminology. I see it as capitalism (or more accurately neoliberalism – as the expression of capitalism within the university context) simply 'territorialising' the field. If that is the case, this process seems to imply violence; that is, it seems to be 'forcing' the field to reorder itself in the capitalist image – and that would reflect contemporary university experience. If deterritorialisation is primarily 'flight', then Bang's description does not account for what is taking place.

Habitus is then distinguished from territories by being, potentially, a much more mobile and flexible concept. While Deleuze and Guattari may see territories as more fluid than I have presented them to be, in their form as academic fields, they are effectively static structures that require considerable force in order for change (reterritorialisation) to take place.

13.2 Secondary Habitus

A second possible option for the transformation of individual habitus is the construction of a secondary habitus. The aim of this section is to explore the idea of a secondary habitus and the role this might play in addressing the issue of structural injustice.

We will start by focusing on the context and identifying the way in which habitus is shaped and impacted by dominant ideologies both at the point of engagement with university education and throughout the student's/agent's life. We will then move on to look at the transformation of individual habitus and the key issues associated with it

as well as exploring the questions raised by Wacquant, which challenge the idea that habitus needs transformation.

Finally, we will look at what a secondary habitus entails and explore what it may look like for university students.

13.2.1 Habitus, ideology and globalism

McLaren (1996), writing on the plight of students, highlights the impact that national (or transnational) ideology has on shaping an individual's habitus. He notes that there are forces outside of the family, the school and the local community (the traditional sources of habitus) that act to shape an individual's habitus.

> Students are particularly vulnerable in these dangerous times, as they are captured in webs of social and cultural meaning not of their own making, motivated to remember in specific ways, and silently counselled through advertisements, the media, and religious and political 'others' to respond to the logic of commodity fetishism as if it were a natural state of affairs. (pp. 118-119)

In this sense, Bourdieu's notion of habitus (discussed in Chapter 3) needs to be widened (or at least the relationship made explicit) to take account of prevailing ideologies and philosophies that are 'embedded' in the individual, not via normal relational means but via media and internet technologies and practices. These practices, desires, expectations and aspirations form a growing component of student/agent habitus in contemporary society.

Kenway and Bullen (2005) expand on this point and argue that the identity of children is shaped by the globalised and "commercially produced children's culture and youth culture" (p. 32) and that understanding who young people are now requires an understanding of "some of the big cultural and institutional patterns and shifts associated with the global market meta-narrative, as these are now manifested economically, culturally, and politically (p. 32)." This "commercially produced" youth culture is not accidental. It is the result of the continuing desire for the creation of surpluses and economic capital and it has implications both for our understanding of Bourdieu's concept of habitus and for the significance of the transformation of

individual habitus. Bourdieu understood habitus being formed largely from the immediate social and class context of the individual. The individual's aspirations then tended to be located within a physical (versus virtual) community and within a context in which the meeting these aspirations was relatively likely. The argument here is that key factors in the shaping of a child's identity also come from external sources like the media, the web and targeted advertising. Individual habitus is then shaped by a variety of sources external to the student's/agent's family and local community. While traditional sources of habitus may have provided some students/agents with a very limited and limiting set of aspirational horizons – the kinds of aspiration available now via external sources introduce the kinds of aspirations that may be completely impossible to actualise. Apple et al. (2005) note the impact of the market on individual habitus:

> The market motif is now the guiding metaphor of our times. Market modalities have moved into many areas of life once understood as commerce-free. Commerce-saturated information and communication technologies are vital global distributors of market ideologies. They help to spread market gospel about the benefits of consumption as a way of life. They spread images of desire… the market seeks to persuade us that consumption and pleasure are one. (p. 34)

There are significant issues here for the habitus of individuals. Habitus, then, is at least impacted by a construction of desire that is created externally and presented as attainable regardless of the reality of that attainability. Habitus thus may be shaped by unrealistic goals and expectations in an almost opposite way from that by which habitus operated traditionally – realistic but limiting. There are both positive and negative implications to this. On the one hand, this external impact on habitus may act to free and widen aspirational horizons while, on the other hand, the implications of an aspirational horizon that is unattainable would seem to contribute to the 5-D relationship identified below. Kenway and Bullen (2005) point out that young people have a "5 D relationship with education" (p. 31). "They are dissatisfied, disengaged, disaffected, disrespectful, and disruptive" (p. 31). Any transformation of individual habitus needs to take into account the external factors and pressures that are involved. Traditional sources of habitus are now in competition with external, virtual

sources and these sources are increasingly effective. The market is becoming (or has become) the new pedagogy as Kenway and Bullen (2005) highlight (and online sources and online media like Facebook have only reinforced this):

> In children's consumer-media culture, identities are formed and knowledge is produced and legitimated. In many ways, corporate pedagogues have become postmodern society's most successful teachers. Their pedagogies are voluptuous and are consumed hungrily by the young. The corporate curriculum has become the yardstick against which all other curricula are judged and found wanting. (p. 36)

The media, internet and, technology are significant as forces that are outside of what are considered to be traditional contributors to, and creators of habitus. These new contributors to habitus are concerned not with the shaping and 'sorting' of the individual's future (aspirational horizons) but rather with the shaping of the individual's habits as a consumer. Traditionally, the analysis of habitus has tended to focus on the creation, and embedding of behaviours and attitudes that reinforce the individual's social position. Web and technology based habitus creators seek to ensure that consumption habits and preferences are ingrained in the individual and that this habitus and these expectations of consumption are normalised.

What globalisation has added to this mix is that it has allowed habitus creators with no links or commitments to the individual's context to be involved in shaping habitus, and thus aspirations, in ways that are both disconnected from the individual's ontologically constituting values and sources while promising outcomes that cannot and will not be supported in any meaningful way. The aspirations created this way are often unrealistic and can be seen as points of disconnection from local and traditional community.

13.2.2 Why transformation?

There is no doubt that some students, without the cultural capital resources identified as vital for academic success, can and do succeed in university study. However, as Bourdieu has shown, it is uncontentious that university structures, systems and processes advantage some students whilst disadvantaging other students, based on the cultural capital they bring with them. Addressing this structural injustice (the unjustified advantaging and disadvantaging of students) requires two areas to be addressed. The first is a change or transformation of the 'things' that students bring to their university study. The most useful concept for these 'things' is found in Bourdieu's notion of habitus because it includes more than simply the cultural capital (skills and attributes) they bring. It also usefully includes the understanding of all those components that shape their aspirational horizons and their expectations for success and of their own potential. The second area that needs addressing is the structures of the university itself and this we will explore in Part 4.

That some students manage to succeed without the requisite cultural capital and habitus tends to be in spite of the structure and their disadvantaging. They are not competing on a level playing field. Cross and Atinde (2015) highlight this success despite the odds and challenge the assumption that students from disadvantaged or marginalised backgrounds are doomed to failure because of a lack of social or cultural capital. They argue that what this assumed failure presupposes is that these students are unable to impact their own situations:

> What this theoretical framework ignores is that some students from poor backgrounds develop assets that enable them to navigate successfully at university. These assets include active cognitive processes or a 'pedagogy of survival'… through persistence in activities that may be subjectivity threatening, experiences of mastering these, and the consequent enhancement of self-efficacy, people process, weigh, and integrate diverse resources of information concerning their capability, which becomes central to regulating their choice of behaviour and effort expenditure as they confront new situations. (p. 309)

This sounds very much like the adoption or creation of a secondary habitus; note also that the 'subjectivity threat' (the undermining of their ontological identity) may be overcome through positive interpellation.

Commenting on cultural capital and habitus, Cross and Atinde note the following key points:

- The background of such marginalised students equips them with the capacity to respond positively and productively to key challenges within the university.
- At a social level, they have developed their own network skills, resilience, and determination to emancipate themselves from poverty.
- This phenomenon is described as 'compensatory capital' which includes compensatory skills such as coping mechanisms, self-reliance, perseverance, adaptability, and flexibility in the choices they make to their advantage, and the ability to consult or seek advice from older or more experienced people.
- At the level of dispositions and predispositions, while their habitus may conflict with a campus lifestyle, it is essentially their sense of resilience, intrinsic motivation, and self-determination to free themselves from poverty that enable them to adjust to life on campus and cope with new challenges.
- Some students from disadvantaged backgrounds develop alternative forms of capital, dispositions, and predispositions, and a pedagogy that, when used creatively, enable them to navigate their lives successfully within an academic environment. (2015, p. 309)

However, it is not clear that the authors make the correct distinction between cultural capital and habitus:

> We have associated the concept of habitus with a range of attributes that enable students to adapt to the university environment. Thus we have moved from the conception of habitus within Bourdieu's parameters (dispositions and predispositions to conform)…
> (2015, p. 309)

I don't agree with the last part of this. Habitus shapes the kinds of possibility available to the agent rather than forces conformity to particular outcomes, "to include attributes such as intrinsic motivation, resilience, self-determination, self-efficacy, and self-reliance (dispositions and pre-dispositions to change or adapt)" (p.

314). Again, all of these are possible within Bourdieu's concept of habitus. The question is where do they come from if not from habitus? Cross and Atinde (2015) answer this question by writing that "they tend to be cultivated within poor African communities" (pp. 314-315). Is this not habitus? Perhaps they form a secondary habitus and the success of these students relates to their creation or adoption of an academically supportive secondary habitus. If they are not a secondary habitus, then the argument should be made that their primary habitus has equipped them for academic study.

This misinterpretation of habitus is a common theme:

> A key element in achieving these goals successfully is the set of dispositions and predispositions for hard work that students have built up as a result of their survival strategies in the village, which enable them to adjust their habitus. (Cross & Atinde, 2015, p. 320)

This is clearly incorrect. The "set of dispositions and predispositions" they built up in the village IS their habitus. All this is saying is that there are parts of their primary habitus that support their academic success (but it is also true that, traditionally, these dispositions may not have been recognised as being useful in a university context): the predisposition to make sacrifices, the predisposition to make difficult choices, the predisposition to adapt to new situations and the predisposition to do more with little.

That cultural capital shortfalls can be overcome is evidenced by Guanglun and Ning (2016), who provide the example of accents, a direct consequence of a rural habitus, and describe the way that they can be changed by constant and repeated 'counter-training' from teachers. They note that theoretical support for this habitus change can be found in Bourdieu's own accounts (1992 and 2000):

> Nevertheless, habitus can change… As Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 133, *An invitation to reflexive sociology*) argue, 'being the product of history, it is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures'. The body is 'open to the world, and therefore exposed to the world, and so capable of being conditioned by the world, shaped by the material and cultural conditions of existence in which it is

placed from the beginning' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 134, *Pascalian meditations*). (pp. 419-419)

A key question that needs to be asked is whether or not 'transformation' is the appropriate concept when we are talking about agent habitus. Or is Bourdieu's implied fatalism (that habitus and cultural capital endowments do not noticeably change) enough to suggest that the process (of transformation) is a waste of time?

Bourdieu's chief collaborator, Louis Wacquant (2014), addresses this and raises the question of whether or not habitus transformation is necessary. If habitus does not contain the inevitable fatalism that Bourdieu seemed to imply it did and if habitus is 'malleable' in the way Wacquant argues it is, then perhaps I should be writing about the 'nurturing of habitus' or the 'sculpting of habitus' rather than the 'transformation of habitus'. Wacquant lists:

> … five propositions that clear up tenacious misconceptions about habitus and bolster Bourdieu's dispositional theory of action: (1) far from being a 'black box', habitus is fully amenable to empirical inquiry; (2) the distinction between primary (generic) and secondary (specific) habitus enables us to capture the malleability of dispositions; (3) habitus is composed of cognitive, conative [natural tendency, impulse, striving, or directed effort] and affective elements; categories, skills, and desires; (4) habitus allows us to turn carnality from problem to resource for the production of sociological knowledge; and (5) thus to realize that all social agents are, like martial artists, suffering beings collectively engaged in embodied activities staged inside circles of shared commitments. (2014, p. 3)

The two propositions of interest here are that habitus is amenable to empirical inquiry and that habitus may be described as malleable. In terms of habitus being amenable to empirical enquiry, Wacquant's claim that habitus is an invitation to empirical inquiry serves (he believes) to undermine the claim that Bourdieu's concept of habitus is fatalistic. This is significant. He makes the claim that the assumption that habitus cannot be empirically scrutinised has resulted in the concept being seen as complicit in the "endless replication" (2014, p. 3) of social structure. He notes that it was not social reproduction and cultural congruence that Bourdieu sought to examine in his early writings but, rather, he sought to provide an account of social

transformation and cultural disjuncture or disconnection. He also argues that "habitus alone never spawns a definite practice: it takes the conjunction of disposition and position, subjective capacity and objective possibility, habitus and social space (or field) to produce a given conduct or expression" (Wacquant, 2014, p. 3). While he may be correct that habitus may not form a specific practice, the 'dispositions' contained within a person's habitus make specific outcomes likely or even predictable. These same 'dispositions' also act to limit possible practices and outcomes because they shape 'aspirational horizons'; that is, some practices or choices are not even possibilities. Whilst I acknowledge Wacquant's intimate understanding of Bourdieu's work, I am unconvinced by this argument. Being amenable to empirical enquiry does not affect the implications of an individual's habitus and, particularly, the role that habitus plays in the creation of aspirational horizons. Bourdieu (see Chapter 6) certainly implied a strong fatalism in relation to habitus and it would seem uncontentious that any significant change of a student's/agent's cultural capital and aspirational horizons would require a change/transformation of the habitus in question. The malleability of dispositions does not of itself translate into 'the malleability of habitus' and it is not clear exactly what this malleability entails. Rather, this argument makes the case for the importance of a secondary habitus that can moderate the impact of the primary habitus and enable the student/agent to succeed in or accommodate themselves to a context from which they might otherwise be excluded.

Wacquant also highlights the significance of context both in relation to the way in which dispositions are established and in relation to the integrity and coherence of their expression. He notes:

> Because they are acquired over time in diverse circumstances that can entail extended and abrupt travel across social space, and because they encounter a cosmos that may itself undergo swift and sweeping change… the dispositions of agents display varying degrees of internal integration… This is why Bourdieu (2000 [1997], pp. 160-162) insists that "habitus is neither necessarily adapted (to the situation), nor necessarily coherent"; it can be "riven by internal contradiction and division"; and "it can have its failings, critical moments of perplexity and discordance" when it produces unforeseen and nonconforming practices. (2014, pp. 3-4)

It seems as though Wacquant has moved to a model of habitus that assumes that the agent is fully mature, perhaps middle aged and with significant life experience. This may account for why this description of habitus feels quite different from Bourdieu's account that we have examined in Part 1. Complexity in general and complexity in habitus in particular can be expected to be significantly more complex when examining Wacquant's agents versus the recent school leavers we have been considering.

13.2.3 Transformation and associated issues

Before we can explore the need to transform individual habitus in order to try and overcome structural injustice in university education, we need to remind ourselves that education as a concept and practice is far more than neoliberal attempts at marketisation make it out to be. Bracher (2006) highlights this:

> The fundamental aim of education should be to support and develop students' identities, those configurations of self that provide us with vitality, agency, and meaning and give us a sense of ourselves as a force that matters in the world. (p. xi)

This connection between education and identity is a significant one and is firmly linked to the notion of habitus. If habitus is what shapes the student/agent, and identity is the product of this shaping, then the transformation of individual habitus will have a direct impact on the individual's identity. And this identity will be intrinsically linked to education as Bracher (2006) highlights when writing on the significance of education for identity development:

> The first is that a strong identity is a valuable and even essential basis for the development of intelligence and the capacity and motivation to learn. Second, identity development is crucial for personal well-being. And third, the increasing role of education as a means of solving social problems [i.e. building social resilience]… mandates a focus on identity problems. (p. xi)

In looking at the transformation of individual habitus and its link with identity, the following needs to be taken into account. The maintenance and enhancement of identity is a key motivation for any learning. That being the case, successful education will require the support of the student's identity (note that this does not rule out careful challenges to that identity). Habitus transformation, therefore, requires that attention is paid to both the identity contained by the habitus and the growth and nurture of this identity going forward. This intentional support is essential as Bracher (2006) notes:

> Even when students do experience learning as providing some identity support, they often experience it as more threatening than supportive of their identities and thus resist learning, often with great vigour and effectiveness. (p. 5)

The individual identity of every student is expected to undergo something of an ontological journey during their university study. Their exposure to new and challenging ideas, perspectives and practices will inevitably impact on their identity and on how they understand their place in the world. In and of itself, this is not a bad thing. However, a successful transition through this process will depend in a large part on the habitus that the student brings or develops. Some degree of destabilisation of student identity seems inevitable and this will be highlighted by papers and courses that require critical thinking. Thus, transformation is inevitable – the question then is how to act to make it an exciting and expected part of the ontological journey rather than a stabilising or destabilising experience. The issue is one of helping each student to maintain their identity in the face of potentially threatening knowledge while still allowing for the transformation of perspective and critical engagement with new ideas that the ontological journey promises.

Habitus transformation needs to address the following questions. What are the impacts on field competition when an individual's habitus is transformed? Are they better placed in the hierarchy? Are they better equipped to engage in field competition for the available cultural capital? And does this transformation have an impact on the structure of the field, the amount of cultural capital produced or who controls the cultural capital distribution? Does it also aim to transform the idea of, or the practice of, field competition in the academic field in question? Essentially, we

need to ask whether we are aiming for the transformation of habitus to allow the student to be more successful or to be a better fit with the academic context and its (implicit) requirements, or whether we are also aiming for the transformation of individual habitus to act as a means of transforming the academic field/institutional habitus. It is my contention that it is inevitable that a habitus that is transformed in order to benefit the student is also going to challenge the context within which it operates and thus bring pressure to bear on the institutional habitus of the university. We will examine this further in Part 4 but this needs to be the case unless we wish to abandon the student/agent to the tender mercies of the institution. Bracher (2006) identifies the risk this entails when writing on the difficulty of maintaining identity within an environment of 'establishment pedagogy':

> Even when joining an academic club through mastering its discourse… it can nonetheless ultimately be disempowering, even psychologically eviscerating, insofar as membership, like identification with an authority, entails renunciation of certain key components of one's self. 'Good students' in such a pedagogy are often those who are most quickly and fully colonised, getting rid of their 'naïve', 'biased', or 'uncritical' ways of reading, thinking, feeling, and perceiving and assuming responses called for by the new system. (p. 92)

Successful accreditation cannot be the only result of a transformed habitus. This transformation needs to include skills, traits and cultural capital, which enable the student to negotiate the academic context successfully. But this transformation must also provide the ground/framework by which the institutional habitus is uncovered, challenged and transformed.

13.2.4 Secondary habitus requirements

The deliberate acquisition of 'specialised' dispositions is what results in secondary habitus and distinguishes it from primary habitus. The key here is the idea of 'deliberate' acquisition. Primary habitus (see Chapter 3) is attained by what is almost a process of osmosis. It is absorbed from the surrounding context of family, community, work/school and, increasingly, virtual media. Thus, secondary habitus is of particular interest when we consider a student engaged in university study – where success in the form of accreditation requires the acquisition of academic dispositions

not currently within their existing habitus or accumulated cultural capital. In distinguishing between primary and secondary habitus, Wacquant (2014) notes:

> The primary habitus is the set of dispositions one acquires in early childhood, slowly and imperceptibly, through familial osmosis and familiar immersion… secondary habitus is any system of transposable schemata that becomes grafted subsequently, through specialised pedagogical labour that is typically shortened in duration, accelerated in pace, and explicit in organisation. (p. 5)

However, it is not clear that this deliberate acquisition of a secondary habitus follows quite as simply as Wacquant seems to expect it will. For example, if an agent's primary habitus shapes their aspirational horizons, how possible is it to pursue a secondary habitus that requires the acquisition of dispositions that do not sit within the context of the primary habitus or that requires the kind of imagination or aspirational horizons not provided by the original habitus? How realistic is it for a secondary habitus to transcend the primary habitus without an associated interpellation, decolonisation (13.3) or reterritorialisation? Furthermore, if a secondary habitus requires specialised and explicit pedagogical labour, then to what extent is the explicit nature of this pursuit of dispositions required to be organised from outside of the agent's primary habitus? How likely is it that the agent identifies this need of secondary habitus and dispositions, given that their primary habitus would not normally encourage them to do this? Here, 'class habitus' (social and cultural capital) and maturity (life experience) would seem to be determining factors.

The transformation of individual habitus will need to take into account that the habitus of some students/agents will not provide the required grounding to make the acquisition of a secondary habitus either successful or appropriate/normal. Wacquant writes that "Every agent has a primary (generic) habitus, which is both a springboard and matrix for the subsequent acquisition of a multiplicity of (specific) habitus" (2014, pp. 5-6).

Also problematic is that more than just two types of habitus are identified. The distinctions between secondary, tertiary, quaternary and quinary habitus are not made clear. Nor is the obvious question of why they would not simply form one secondary habitus that contains multiple dispositions in the same way that our primary habitus

contains multiple dispositions. Wacquant does, however, acknowledge that the primary habitus can also act as 'limiter' on the acquisition of subsequent and secondary habitus. He writes:

> The casting of a secondary (tertiary, quaternary, quinary, etc.) habitus will thus be inflected [caused to deviate] by the distance separating it from the systems of dispositions that serve as scaffolding for its construction because they precede it. The greater that distance, the more difficult the traineeship, and the greater the gaps and frictions between the successive layers of schemata, the less integrated the resulting dispositional formation is likely to be. (2014, pp. 5-6)

For Wacquant, these difficulties, gaps and frictions impact on the degree to which an agent feels 'at home' in their new habitus… however, his acknowledgement of distance causing deviation is not strong enough because I believe that, in many cases, the aspirational horizons created by a primary habitus do not even allow for the possibility of secondary habitus short of either heroic action on the part of the agent or the accumulation of the kind of life experience that allows the primary habitus to be made explicit and then challenged.

There is also a question about the durability of secondary habitus. Is it the kind of habitus that can be adopted for a period of time or for the completion of specific tasks/roles and then abandoned or modified once those are achieved? That is, the adoption of a specifically academic habitus (group of dispositions) that are no longer required once the academic goal is achieved. If this is the case, do they really form a habitus or are they simply a collection of skills and tools? Wacquant (see 13.2.2) helps to address these questions by the identification of three distinct components of a habitus, all of which are necessary in the development of a secondary habitus. These are: the cognitive, which "consists in the categories of perception through which agents cut up the world, make out its constituents, and give them pattern and meaning" (2014, p. 6). The second is the conative: (p. 6) "it consists of proprioceptive (physical body receptors supplying information about the body) capacities, sensorimotor skills, and kinaesthetic dexterities that are honed in and for purposeful action" (that is, the physical embodiment of the dispositions to be acquired). And the third is the affective which "entails the vesting of one's life energies into the objects,

undertakings, and agents that populate the world [or field] under consideration" (p. 7). These three categories are useful tools to test whether dispositions count as a secondary habitus or whether they are simply accumulated skills acquired in order to achieve specific tasks.

In summary, a secondary habitus that is intended to address the issue of structural injustice needs to take the following five points into account. Firstly, the concept of habitus needs to be widened to account for the influences of media (particularly online media) that are a direct result of the dominant neoliberal ideology (other influences may also be present) and that shape aspirational horizons in service of that ideology. Second, this aspirational impact has both positive and negative implications. On the one hand, the notion of an external influence (online media) impacting on and widening aspirational horizons is a positive thing. It can help break the self-reproducing aspirations that can limit student potential. On the other hand, it can also introduce a level of unreality in relation to student aspirations (not everyone can be a music or film megastar). Third, we need to acknowledge the importance of a secondary habitus as a means of moderating the primary habitus – especially where this primary habitus works against or limits academic success and belonging. The fourth point relates to an awareness of the significance of continuing to support student identity when considering habitus transformation. This is particularly important given the 'problematic' nature of academic thresholds. Finally, the adoption of a secondary habitus does not need to be permanent. For example, it is legitimate for a student to adopt certain academic skills and dispositions in order, simply, to gain accreditation and with no intention of retaining these once the accreditation has been achieved. In this sense, a secondary habitus can be both temporary and task specific.

13.3 Decolonisation of the mind

A third possible option for the transformation of individual habitus is connected to the decolonisation of the mind. Part 2 has made clear that the education system as a whole, and the actors within that context (students, teachers, managers and support staff), have largely been captured by the ideology and practices of neoliberalism. It has also highlighted the way that this 'colonisation' has occurred largely by stealth and the

use and embedding of implicit practices, processes and expectations. A successful transformation of individual habitus is required to address this reality and is most effectively accomplished by identifying exactly what it is that is being decolonised and then exploring what this colonisation entails.

13.3.1 What is being decolonised?

The concept and the practice of decolonisation is a complex and contested area of theory. I wish to be very clear about what it is that I wish to apply the idea of decolonisation to, and also the methodology I use to do this. Mihesuah and Wilson (2004) provide a very useful starting point for the discussion of decolonisation:

> A large part of decolonization entails developing a critical consciousness about the cause(s) of our oppression, the distortion of history, our own collaboration, and the degrees to which we have internalised colonialist ideas and practices. Decolonization requires auto-criticism, self-reflection, and a rejection of victimage. (part (a))

> Decolonization is about empowerment – a belief that situations can be transformed, a belief and trust in our own people's values and abilities, and a willingness to make change… decolonization in its farthest extension moves us beyond mere survival and becomes a means of restoring health and prosperity to our people by returning to traditions and ways of life that have been systematically suppressed. (part (b)) (p. 71)

This quote is usefully separated into two parts in order to highlight the way in which I will use the concept of decolonisation and how my approach (while sharing a similar teleology) is also significantly different. Part (a) provides a tool box of practical methods of decolonisation – the developing of a critical consciousness, reflection, collaboration, etc. Part (b) highlights the way decolonisation is most often viewed historically and based on an experience of invasion, war, mass migration and the loss of ethnic identity, practices, communities, languages, land and access to resources.

My use of the notion of decolonisation is not based around a specific historical event but, rather, around an historical process of what is essentially a philosophical

invasion/conflict. This colonisation has been one of ideas rather than one of armies or of colonisers. Yet, the outcomes have been similar – the loss of identity (national as well as ethnic), community, traditional practices and, increasingly, land and resources. This colonisation via neoliberal ideology has created new classes of citizens (the alienated and the successful), introduced an entirely new class of people (technocrats) and, as such, restructured society as effectively and viciously as has any historical colonisation.

Three questions appear pertinent here. What does decolonisation mean? Who is doing the decolonisation? And what is being decolonised? I plan to use the concept of decolonisation in a specific way. My approach is not to try to reclaim indigenous knowledge or ways of being but, rather, to identify what I consider to be the specifically harmful philosophies and ideologies that are taken for granted within our Western university context (see Part 2) and to argue that decolonisation relates to the uncovering, the critique and the rejection of these. The decolonisation that I am talking about is not the rejection of Western thought and practice in its entirety (to return to some presumably idealised, indigenous way of thinking and being, and nor does it assume that neoliberalism is the first example of philosophical colonisation – it is simply the latest and most dominating one) but the rejection of those ideologies and practices that have colonised contemporary university education, and that enable and continue to entrench structural injustice within the institution. Here I am thinking of neoliberalism (see Part 2) and its emphasis on privatisation, uniformity and measurement, of consumerism and its replacement of notions of developing the self/community with a focus on an almost unmoderated and fetish-like acquisition of material goods, and on neoliberal individualism with its ontology of 'homo economicus' and its promotion of self-interest as the ultimate social good.

Choosing to use a concept like 'decolonisation' is not uncontentious. Keet (2014) reflects a common view that decolonisation should not be used as a metaphor as this takes the focus away from what they see as the primary role of decolonisation. For him, decolonisation should bring about "The repatriation of indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies" (p. 23). I take his point and I suspect he is attempting to resist 'the colonisation of decolonisation'. That makes sense and I am happy for Keet and others like him to

stand in judgement of my intended use of the notion of decolonisation. I would, however, note that I am not using decolonisation as a metaphor and would raise two issues in my defence. The first is that I am not exploring the concept of decolonisation on behalf of a colonised group of people; nor is it appropriate that I do so. My use of the term is not intended to replace any theories and practices focused on the repatriation of land or indigenous knowledge and practices. Rather, it is designed to explore how we can combat the more subtle colonisation that has impacted the habitus, the minds, the imaginations and the aspirational horizons of university students in Aotearoa New Zealand while, at the same time, highlighting the implications of this decolonisation for our universities as institutions and as entities engaging in multiple practices and processes that require a decolonising lens. Essentially, we are pursuing different outcomes and claiming that an epistemic privilege for one position over another requires significant justification. My second point is that the understanding of colonisation and its impact on indigenous cultures as being only about land, indigenous life and 'settler guilt' paints a very incomplete picture of both the process and its implications. I do not dispute the devastation and injustice that has been inflicted on indigenous cultures throughout the world, and throughout history, by colonisation. However, colonisation is not simply an historical event or artefact. It continues every day and, within cultures dominated by Western practices, this colonisation is now largely ideological and philosophical. It acts on our ways of thinking, it creates our aspirational horizons, and it shapes and limits our possibilities of engagement and our ways of thinking. It is this more subtle colonisation that I seek to identify and engage.

13.3.2 What might the process entail?

It is helpful to have a starting point for what the process of decolonisation might entail. Hage (2010) provides this starting point when he lists Frantz Fanon's stages of decolonisation for the intellectual. These are:

- Stage 1. The colonized intellectual assimilates as much as possible to European culture and thought, believing that everything modern and good and right originates in Europe, thus devaluing the colonial past and its present culture. (pp. 113-114)

- Stage 2. In the second stage, some of the colonized intellectuals rebel against the Eurocentrism of thought and the coloniality of power by celebrating, re-affirming and re-locating themselves symbolically in their original culture. As Fanon put it: "In order to escape the supremacy of white culture, the colonized intellectual feels the need to return to his unknown roots and lose himself, come what may, among his barbaric people" (Fanon, 2004, p. 155, *The wretched of the earth*)… the risk is that affirming identity and tradition, whether dedicated to past sufferings or past glories, creates a static position, even in its opposition to modernity's domination.

- Stage 3. The creation of a new humanity which "moves beyond the static opposition between modernity and anti-modernity and emerges as a dynamic, creative process. The passage from anti-modernity to alter-modernity is defined not by opposition but by rupture and transformation."
(Hage, 2010, p. 104)

These stages are a relevant starting point for how we may look to encourage the decolonisation of the minds and imaginations of our students. It requires two key ingredients: the desire for change and the willingness to make a break with the current system of oppression/domination.

Kohn and McBride (2011) engage with the theme of desire, noting that a key feature of decolonisation is "the desire to change the course of history and assert self-determination, accompanied by a need to nonetheless reckon with the historical legacies of colonialism" (p. 2).

 One of the key differences between historical colonialism and the ideological colonialism of today can be identified in its teleology. Kohn and Mcbride write of the teleology of colonialism being the "handing over" (pp. 3-4) of the burden of government to the colonised at some point (that tended to recede infinitely into the future; however, that was not always the case and it should also be noted that, in countries like New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, indigenous peoples were often regarded as subhuman and, as such, incapable of governance). Yet, the similarities are

also significant. It is interesting to ask the question of how neoliberalism compares to historical colonisation:

Colonialism –

- Enlightenment, bringing educated insight and efficient forms of management and productivity to the 'natives'
- A more efficient and effective way to operate society
- An inherent superiority over those to be colonised
- A form of maintenance of existing hierarchies and the entrenchment and reproduction of existing systems of domination
- The banishment (by force or stealth) of existing ways of thinking, knowing and ordering lives.

Neoliberalism –

- Enlightenment, productivity, uniformity and measurement as the overarching principles of success, a re-education of the 'masses' by stealth (see Part 2, Devine, 2004)
- Efficiency as the key to individual success – transactional at its core
- An inherent superiority – particularly as the result of the colonisation of language
- A form of maintenance of existing hierarchies and the entrenchment and reproduction of existing systems of domination
- The banishment (by stealth) of existing ways of thinking, knowing and ordering lives, mostly by highlighting inefficiencies in existing ways of being and assuming that efficiency is the key measurement against which all things should be judged – also the significant ontological assumption of 'homo economicus'.

What this tells us is that (under this comparison at least) neoliberalism is clearly a form of colonisation. It is simply more subtle, more in keeping with the age and considerably more effective than is colonisation in that it has disguised itself as practical wisdom (and best practice). Yet its consequences on the educational (and national) landscape are devastating.

In terms of 'Making the break', Kohn and McBride (2011) note the significance of this for self-actualisation:

> If you are colonised the past and present offer no glimpse of self-actualization. Action is required to provide a break with the past and present, and to change the trajectory of the country's [student's] future. (p. 9)

What are the implications of this for university students encountering transitions and thresholds? How is this "break with the past and present" undertaken? What does the break require? Decolonisation of the mind would seem to require:

- Breaking of existing stereotypes linked with implicit cultural capital shortfalls: That is that some groups of students succeed while others do not because they are more intelligent, etc. This break is accomplished theoretically via Bourdieu's theories on cultural capital, habitus and fields. Making this widely known is the method of providing the 'break' for students.

- Breaking of existing habitus aspirational limitations. Again, Bourdieu provides the theoretical framework for uncovering the role of habitus in shaping aspirational horizons. Teaching this to students is the method for making the break.

- Breaking of neoliberal ontological assumptions. This involves the critique of 'homo economicus' and the exploration of other viable ontologies.

- Breaking of neoliberal notions of success. Again, the groundwork has been accomplished here in Part 2.

- Breaking of the flawed embedded neoliberal notions and values: that is, of equality (in terms of a level playing field), of the superiority of the private over the public and that the pursuit of self-interest is the ideal way of 'being' in society. The next chapter will examine all of these points. (It should be noted that whilst neoliberalism strongly prioritises the private over the public (see Part 2), it still sees a role for the state in ensuring the student's/agent's identity construction is not left to chance and that it adheres to the neoliberal agenda.

So, what the break requires is, first and foremost, a critical recolonisation of student understanding and awareness. It requires alternatives to the dominant neoliberal philosophy to be presented, critiqued and reflected upon. It requires open and ongoing debate and interaction. It is also important to note that this kind of decolonisation cannot be done 'on behalf' of someone; it needs to be agent/student motivated. As such, the best we can do as agents within an institution is to provide the groundwork and the space in which this can take root. I will examine this in more detail in Part 4 when I address the issue of transforming institutional habitus.

14 Individual Habitus Reconstructed

In Part 3, I have explored what I consider to be the key areas of structural injustice within the university context and offered some responses by which affected students may attempt to mitigate the injustice. The discussion can be usefully broken up into three sections: the key contextual issues; the structural injustice features (the addressing of which will require the transformation of institutional habitus and will be explored in Part 4); and appropriate student responses which make up the transformative process.

The key contextual issues are those of transitions and thresholds. These play a major role in the advantaging and disadvantaging of students. They both tend to be thought of (if they are thought of at all) as morally neutral and as processes that are natural components of university study. As such, they are largely ignored or misinterpreted. Epistemic othering and institutional interpellation both play significant roles in the advantaging and disadvantaging of students and are similarly ignored or misinterpreted; both have potential negative implications for student ontology and for student belonging.

A reconstructed or transformed habitus needs to engage with all of these components in order to address the issue and practice of structural injustice:

- Transitions become problematic when their requirements are implicit and students are disadvantaged either by not having the required cultural capital or by not being able to identify what is required.
- Thresholds. As previously noted, thresholds are not morally neutral but assuming their neutrality (misrecognition) plays a significant role in their contribution to structural injustice. Thresholds do, in fact, act as gatekeepers to academic fields. In and of itself, that fact is not necessarily harmful but when the threshold requirements 'do violence' to student ontology, and when these same thresholds act to entrench existing privilege and structures of domination, then their role in structural injustice becomes clear.
- Epistemic othering is an insidious form of injustice. By privileging certain interpretative resources, it results in the clear advantaging of some

students and the 'making other', or alienation, of other students. This, of course, impacts on academic success and on student retention, and can have a significant impact on student identity/ontology.

- Finally, institutional interpellation is a largely unexamined area in which universities call into being certain kinds of student. In one sense, institutional interpellation should be unsurprising but, when it is aligned with the dominant ideology/philosophy of neoliberalism, it has what I consider to be disastrous implications both for the students concerned and for education as a whole.

It is clear then that transformationary processes need to take account of these issues. However, we also need to be clear on what is at stake in the process – what the 'transformation of individual habitus' is intended to accomplish. There are a few possibilities:

- Successful completion of assessments: i.e. the ability to compete or at least manage in an academic environment – the pragmatic approach
- The maintenance or strengthening of an existing habitus/identity, despite implicit institutional cultural capital requirements – the cultural approach
- The provision of a secondary habitus that is temporary and allows for the academic engagement to happen on the institution's terms
- The decolonisation of the mind and the imagination – engagement with the institution from an oppositional perspective
- The ontological journey as the basis for an expected transformation of the self of self-identity: i.e. transformation of identity and habitus as a direct and expected consequence of the academic journey
- Deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation: the rejection of existing practices and processes of university education and a response that seeks either temporary accommodation within the system or alternative practices, ideologies and outcomes.

My approach is that all of these outcomes need to be considered in addressing the issue of structural injustice in university education.

14.1 Transformation in Theory and Practice

I have advocated three possible responses or processes that I believe are essential to addressing structural injustice. These are: the creation of a secondary habitus, the decolonisation of the mind, and deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. (In addition to these, a fourth strategy relates to the simple uncovering, identification and making known that structural injustice exists – uncovering misrecognition – and this will be explored in Part 4 when I look at institutional habitus transformation.) The next three subsections will focus on examining how each of these approaches manages to deal with the issues of transitions, thresholds, epistemic othering and institutional interpellation.

14.1.1 The implications of a secondary habitus

The creation of an intentional secondary habitus would seem, at first glance, to be the most efficient (note the neoliberal concept) and effective means of addressing structural injustice. It places the responsibility clearly on the individual student – which fits very nicely with the prevailing ideology of the university. As such, the success or lack of success of the student is clearly located in their individual effort and is not traced to anything structural. Therefore, the student is the problem and there is no requirement for institutional change or the acceptance of any responsibility. This is the perfect neoliberal outcome. But let's dig a little deeper. How does the creation of a secondary habitus enable the student to address the issue of injustice and which skills or attributes would this habitus contain?

In order to deal with the issue of transitions, a secondary habitus would need to incorporate two distinct functions. It would need to include (and this inclusion might require developing dispositions) the skills required to uncover implicit cultural capital requirements and then it would need to include the ability to assign these requirements to specific skills and attributes and to incorporate them into the student's cultural capital. In order to function in a meaningful fashion, this new habitus would need to include the confidence to use these new skills and dispositions within a

context that requires competition with other individuals. This is no small task and the viability of this option becomes questionable for the majority of students.

To a certain level, every new student does create or adopt a secondary habitus during their academic journey. Most often, this will mean either a growing confidence with existing cultural capital and associated aspirations and/or the addition of cultural capital (in terms of skills and attributes) that contribute directly to academic (assessment) success. However, this process becomes much less likely to succeed with 'structurally disadvantaged' students for three main reasons. The first is that their experience of the transition is not simply one of their being 'extended' or challenged in relation to their cultural capital. Often, the experience of transition is one that impacts on their ontology, on how they understand themselves as 'persons', and their experience is one of alienation and feeling devalued not just in relation to a 'shortfall' of appropriate cultural capital but also in relation to a rejection of themselves as students and as persons (this is further highlighted and reinforced by epistemic othering).

The second problem is that the skills and attributes that are required to make the transition successfully are not particularly well supported by the institution. These skills and attributes are (as we have noted) most often implicit. The university, as an institution, has not acknowledged them explicitly and, therefore, it considers itself to be free of the obligation to provide support for its students. Thus, the student is left largely on their own to accomplish the task.

Finally, the adoption of a secondary habitus is significantly pressured by time and by financial concerns. The creation of new skills and dispositions, and developing the confidence required to use them effectively, are not quick processes. A lack of success during the first semester of an academic year can mean that the student (whilst doing everything possible to adopt the new habitus) is excluded from government funding as a result of their lack of assessment success. This is a very real experience for many of our 'at risk' students and this time/financial pressure will prove to be an issue for all of the suggested transformationary options. As such, it becomes an issue that the university needs to consider and which we will explore in Part 4.

The habitus requirements of successful threshold negotiation are closely related to those required for transitions. The skills, dispositions and attributes that are used to uncover implicit cultural capital requirements are the same skills that are useful in identifying thresholds, assessing the skills and dispositions necessary to negotiate them, and putting these skills into practice. Where a secondary habitus begins to differ is when the student comes up against the gatekeeping role and the realisation that thresholds also act to entrench and reproduce systems, practices and positions of domination. The transition experience can be negotiated relatively successfully without an acknowledgement or awareness of the ethical implications and ethical commitments. This is much less likely to be the case in the encounter with thresholds (unless the student misrecognises the function of the thresholds – as the institution tends to do). In the threshold encounter, students are much more likely to become aware of the gatekeeping and reproduction roles, and, as a result, are more likely to start to ask questions about the ethics of the process/structure. A secondary habitus that will be useful for threshold negotiation is one that needs to incorporate some means of reflection on these issues, and some means of either accommodating this reality or of actively confronting and working against it. The temptation, simply, to misrecognise what is happening is compelling (enervation in the face of the enormity of structural change is a likely outcome) and a secondary habitus that asks for more would need to be particularly robust.

The issue of 'epistemic othering', while benefiting from all the requirements identified so far, requires another addition to our secondary habitus. Because 'epistemic othering' can and does do violence to the ontological identity of some students, our secondary habitus needs to provide the tools and dispositions that will enable affected students to protect their identities/cultures whilst, at the same time, allowing for those identities to be reflected upon and to develop in light of and in line with the academic journey. In section 12.1.2, I noted that being 'uncomfortable' can be an important part of the student experience. However, Meyer's distinction between a threshold experience that is challenging and a threshold experience that is threatening is very important. Threshold encounters that produce in the student anxiety, frustration and self-doubt can easily result in disengagement and, eventually, the abandoning of studies. The secondary habitus, therefore, needs to provide the

foundations for the protection and nurturing of student ontologies whilst, simultaneously, allowing for this identity to be challenged, for reflection and for the development of new perspectives, insights and positions.

Finally, the secondary habitus needs to equip the student with the ability to deal with institutional interpellation. Interpellation, as I have noted, can be both positive and negative in outcome. The secondary habitus is, therefore, required to enable the student to identify, assess and respond to institutional interpellation. The identification of interpellation is a very powerful tool. Institutional interpellation functions effectively only when it is either not recognised or misrecognised. The ability to identify this interpellation allows the student either to accept it or to reject it outright (and, in the case of institutional interpellation, to demand to be treated differently). This is the ability to assess whether or not the interpellation is helpful and then to respond appropriately.

In summary, a secondary habitus requires four key features in order to address structural injustice within the university context. First, it needs to be able to identify implicit cultural capital requirements and to add the missing skills, dispositions and attributes required (in terms of both transitions and thresholds). Secondly, it needs to allow room to, or have the ability to, ask ethical questions of the structures and processes it encounters and the added ability to be aware of the implications of these. The third feature it requires is the ability to identify and distinguish between ontological challenges and ontological threats, and to respond protectively when appropriate. And, finally, it needs the ability to identify, assess and respond to instances of institutional interpellation.

14.1.2 A critical recolonisation

We need to recognise that all decolonisations are, in effect, recolonisations. What I am proposing here is a critical recolonisation: one that I see as beneficial to students who experience the structural injustice of contemporary Western university systems.

Rather than exploring how a recolonisation can deal with each of the four structural injustice issues individually, it is necessary to note that recolonisation is an ideological approach that has implications for each of the issues (rather than having to be adjusted in order to address the issues – as was the case with secondary habitus).

A 'critical recolonisation' starts from the point of identifying what is in need of decolonisation. In one sense, this whole thesis is my attempt at contributing to the decolonisation of the university system of education. I have done this through three main strategies. First, I have used Bourdieu to highlight systems of domination within the university system. Then I have carried out an analysis of the wider philosophical context and exposed the prevailing ideology of neoliberalism and its implications before exploring, in Parts 3 and 4, what needs to be done in order to address this structural injustice. So, decolonisation is targeted at the ideologies and philosophies that allow structural injustice to flourish and to remain (relatively) undetected within university education. This ideological colonisation has impacted both individual and institutional habitus and, as a result, it has permeated university processes, practices and ontological assumptions.

In terms of the specifics of what requires decolonising, we need to look no further than the prevailing ideology of neoliberalism (note neoliberalism is both an ideology and a guiding philosophy and I use the terms interchangeably). While it is the philosophy/ideology that is the target of decolonisation, it is important to remember that it is the people, the processes, and the structures and institutions that are colonised by neoliberalism. This is where decolonisation needs to take place. There are four key features and implications of neoliberalism that require decolonising/recolonising. These are: the myth of education as a level playing field, misrecognition within the academic field, the dominance of the 'homo economicus' ontological model and finally, the normalisation and embedding of economic language and economic outcomes with their associated themes of uniformity and measurability.

Neoliberalism is particularly effective because it embeds itself by stealth (Devine, 2004) and by denying the possibility of alternatives. It has managed to embed itself within education to the extent that much of the university feels no obligation to defend its practices and processes because they are simply best practice – and being

'best practice' is justification enough (see 8.3). That no questions are raised as to whose best practice this is, why uniformity of practice is a good thing or whether or not this 'best practice' does, in fact, lead to best outcomes is proof of how effective neoliberalism has become. A decolonisation, therefore, needs to focus on the uncovering of these neoliberal assumptions and their examination in the light of their impact and implications.

The idea that education is a level playing field – that no one is intentionally advantaged or disadvantaged – is a cornerstone of the New Zealand psyche. And yet, Part 1 has provided clear arguments that students are advantaged or disadvantaged based on their accumulated cultural capital, on the implicit requirements of university education, on the ease or difficulty of transition, on their encounter with thresholds, on their experience of epistemic othering and on the impact of institutional interpellation. Believing in the myth of educational equality obscures the qualities of discrimination present within the processes and practices of the university. That this assumption is allowed to perpetuate itself is thanks to its misrecognition by both institutions and individuals (and perhaps by the stubborn refusal to view the undermining of the concept of equality as a result of structural injustice). I will explore this issue in Part 4.

A critical decolonisation also needs to challenge the assumptions that the neoliberal ontology of 'homo economicus' is an accurate reflection of the students who make up the university community and whether or not this ontology is or should be aspirational. What we know is that 'homo economicus' represents Western 'man' in his least attractive make-up – self-interested, selfish and an isolated individual in fierce competition with other isolated individuals. Homo economicus can be relied on, always, to pursue 'his' own interests and to take account of the interests of others only when that will have a beneficial outcome for 'himself'. It is hard to see how any of that can or should be aspirational. A critical recolonisation needs to take into account the variety of ontological constitutions that make up the student body and allow for the differences in approach, perspective, aspiration and epistemic hierarchies. A critical recolonisation needs to allow the room for more options rather than for a singular, self-interested outcome.

A decolonisation/recolonisation that engages with structural injustice will have at least four features:

1. It will involve the identification and critique of existing neoliberal stereotypes and assumptions (particularly ontological ones).
2. It will require the identification and critique of existing aspirational horizons (formed from existing habitus and from academic territories).
3. It will involve the reimaging of academic/student success – which will be enabled by the previous two features.
4. And it will involve the explicit replacement of neoliberal values with values (and ontological commitments) that allow room for a variety of ontological positions, a variety of epistemological positions and a variety of aspiration outcomes.

14.1.3 Journeys of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation

The use of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts makes the most sense when they are viewed as the process or the method for decolonising action. Neither concept provides any content for change or transformation but, rather, each provides an account of how this transformation can come into being. I have focused their role on describing how 'disadvantaged students' can respond to structural injustice when they are located either on the border of the academic field/territory (transitions and thresholds) or immersed within it (responses to field competition).

Deterritorialisation is a means of responding to the experience of disadvantage, alienation or epistemic othering within the academic context. It is the action that describes the subject (student) seeking to free itself from domination and I have noted that it contains three elements. The first two are: the rejection of the territory/field and the implications of its operation. This takes the form of a physical and/or intellectual/emotional disengagement with the territory that leads to the third element, which is a move towards one of three options – reterritorialisation, ambivalence or complete disengagement (which, within the academic context, means a withdrawal from university study).

The action of deterritorialisation is intrinsically linked to that of reterritorialisation. One invariably follows the other. Reterritorialised responses are generally focused on either the reterritorialising of an existing space – the provision of a supporting framework in order to allow the student to remain within a 'hostile' territory or the creating of a new territory as a result of the rejection of the existing one.

Deterritorialising and reterritorialising responses will be informed and given motive energy from the critique involved in decolonisation. They are not required to provide the critique themselves but, rather, to provide the process by which the implications of a decolonisation are expressed and given form.

14.1.4 Conclusions

I have attempted, in this chapter, to provide an account of what the key constituents of a transformed individual habitus may be, what they might look like and how they might function.

Creating a secondary habitus will be effective if accreditation (assessment success) is the desired outcome – especially if the issues of institutional support and time/financial pressure can be overcome. This is the path of least resistance and the one that requires the least effort and engagement by students. However, the key point remains that this approach supports the prevailing neoliberal ideology and allows the institution to escape responsibility for the entrenchment and reproduction of structural injustice. The intentional creation of a secondary habitus may act to mitigate some of the implications of structural injustice but it does not (by itself) act either to challenge or to change the prevailing system of domination.

Addressing the issue of structural injustice requires a much higher level of commitment from the student/agent. Challenge and change of the system require something more aggressive, significantly more risky and with an associated greater level of individual commitment. It requires a process of decolonisation/recolonisation, and this process needs to be robust enough to identify clearly that which needs to be decolonised and then to commit to following this through to its conclusion. This is not

a light task and it remains unclear how realistic it is to expect 'disadvantaged students' to have the time, energy or motivation to take this option.

Finally, I have used the concepts of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation as descriptors of a process by which decolonisation and recolonisation can be carried out successfully.

However, this transformation of the student's/individual's habitus is only part of the process required to address the issue of structural injustice. The second (and essential) component is the transformation of the institution's habitus and it is to that issue that we now turn.

PART 4 – TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONAL HABITUS

"Those who profit from the status quo entertain a general suspicion of any intellectual independence" (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 232).


Figure 9. Suspicion, 2015, photo, A Nobbs

15 Transforming Institutional Habitus

This section is intended to explore the way in which the university, as an institution, can act in order to address, alleviate or mitigate the injustice contained within its own structures. As such, the key issue will come to be seen as 'misrecognition' and the key questions will be identified as ethical ones. In that sense, this section should be straightforward. Bourdieu has already answered the question of why systems and structures of domination are allowed to exist, to entrench themselves and to reproduce themselves: because both the dominated and the dominating misrecognise what is happening. Misrecognition assumes, at the minimum, a moral neutrality on the part of the institution. However, it becomes increasingly difficult to allow this assumption for neoliberal institutions – and this is particularly the case for an institution like the university where the examination and exploration of ideas, theories and philosophies should be part of daily practice. In our case (universities), continued misrecognition of structural injustice and its causes is a moral decision (either by act or by omission). The questions to be answered, therefore, are ethical ones. How do we deal with the injustice implicit within our systems and structures? And how do we address the implications of this structural injustice/immorality – especially as they impact on our students and staff?

The transformation of institutional habitus is to be understood as an outcome of the responses explored in this section rather than as something that can be critiqued and analysed on its own – separate from the context in which it operates.

This section will address these issues in the following manner. Chapter 16 will focus on institutional responses to the issues of structural injustice raised by the context of academic study. It will explore institutional responses to transitions and argue that there is an institutional responsibility to provide support for students undertaking this transition that is underpinned both by a basic morality and by the institution's own neoliberal ideology. In a similar fashion, it will explore the idea of institutional responses to thresholds and argue that the uncovering of the implicit requirements of thresholds, and assuming responsibility for this, will go a long way towards the reduction of structural injustice in this area.

Chapter 17 will then move to explore the structural features of the academic encounter and will focus on epistemic othering and institutional interpellation. For both these issues, I will argue that the key to addressing the issue of structural injustice successfully lies in dealing with both misrecognition and the embedded and implicit features of the issues.

Having explored the way in which the institution can deal with its own misrecognised actions and omissions, Chapter 18 then turns to look at how institutions can act to support the transformation of individual habitus. I will argue that the support of students who are disadvantaged by structural practices and processes is a moral requirement of universities (given that, as Parts 1 and 2 have shown, they are directly responsible for this disadvantaging). This support begins with the acceptance and uncovering of misrecognitions and with active support of student processes of institutional navigation. I will look at the creation of secondary habitus and the ethical implications in relation to institutional responsibility before looking at institutional responses to decolonisation and the processes of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation.

Finally, in Chapter 19, I will explore the key features of a transformed institutional habitus and explore how the transformation of institutional habitus might proceed in the face of institutional resistance to self-critique and to ethical and structural change. The second part of the chapter will provide an example of how this institutional transformation has begun in my working environment and will also look to offer ways forward for addressing the issue in the future. In that sense, I will provide a template of actions and processes that may be usefully adopted by other educators within their own institutions.

Note: my intention in this section is to engage in a critique of the practice of universities as institutions. This critique is not intended to be based on a caricature of the 'institutional university' but, rather, it is rooted in my experience of the university in which I work and its daily advantaging and disadvantaging of students.

16 Institutional Habitus and Contextual Injustice

In recent times, universities have placed emphasis on the success and retention of students and, thus, universities have put considerable resources and effort into the area of student transitions. One would, therefore, expect that the area of student transitions to university would be one that functions efficiently and effectively for both parties. That this is not the case is, in large part, the result of three key issues. The first is the institutional focus on aesthetics rather than ethics. (What I mean by aesthetics is that the institution is focused on how changes look/appear – do they look uniform, do they appear functionally effective, do they reflect the institution's conception of 'brand'? As such, the institution's approach is dictated by the whims of the market.) The second is a lack of understanding of what is required in the process of transition and, finally, a lack of awareness that transitions may appear at multiple points on a student's academic journey and that, even if they don't, a successful transition cannot always be achieved in the first week of study.

Significantly less attention has been paid to the issue of thresholds and their implications. This is largely the result of two key features. The first is the neoliberal obsession with measurement and uniformity that focuses attention on measurable outcomes rather than on the ethics of processes and structures. The second feature is the ongoing misrecognition in relation to what is actually taking place in the student encounter with thresholds.

16.1 Transitions

That institutions tend to see change as aesthetic rather than ethical poses problems for addressing structural injustice. What this means is that, when considering any change (in this case, adequate support of transitioning students), the institution tends to ask itself 'what will this change look like?'. Proposed changes are then measured largely in terms of their aesthetic value rather than of the functional and ethical implications of their outcomes. Instead of asking 'how do these changes address the issues of injustice?' or 'what implications might there be for disadvantaged

students?', institutions tend to measure the outcomes on a scale that does not pay attention to ethical issues and outcomes.

This seeming lack of awareness of ethical issues is driven largely by the institution's aesthetic approach and neoliberal commitments (although, as we will see, neoliberalism can also be made to support ethical outcomes). On its application to education, neoliberalism has assumed a very aesthetic form. What it wishes to see is measurable outcomes, uniform and transferrable processes, and the creation of educational surpluses that can be converted into economic or cultural capital. Success of a process, a practice or its student body (clients or customers) is measured in this way. However, as we know, numbers alone cannot tell the full story. A major weakness of this desire for measurability is that the tools in question lack the sophistication to measure adequately what happens in many student–institution interactions. In my own area of running peer mentoring programmes and working with student mentors, we can very easily record the number of students we meet and the papers and assessments for which we provide support. What we cannot measure in a meaningful way is how successful each encounter was (see Biesta, 2010). One interaction is one interaction in terms of measurability. And yet we know that one encounter can be life changing or it can be of very little benefit at all. The desire for uniformity also has significant implications for support services. We are required to be able to reproduce our support regardless of the context. This does not allow room for tailoring support to different cultural groups or groups without the required cultural capital. From a neoliberal perspective, the support services may look good because they can measure and show interactions, and they offer the same uniform service regardless of context. This type of approach is underpinned by the transactional ontology applied to students. They are problems; we fix them in the most efficient way and they then move onward towards accreditation. This all looks good in monthly and annual reports, and on the balance sheet, but it undermines our ability to respond to issues of injustice and systemic disadvantaging. It works directly against the kinds of outcome that would result if the institution asked ethical questions. How do we address issues of structural injustice? What do we need to do to ensure our students have the best chance of success?

The aesthetic approach (which focuses on the way systems and processes appear – rather than on their moral implications) also allows the institution (see 1.4 in relation to issues of reification) to shift the responsibility for student readiness and student support to other parties. Student lack of success in transition is seen as being a direct result of the poor or inadequate preparation they have received prior to attending university or of the students themselves making uninformed decisions.

Those of us working within the institution are well aware of the cultural capital requirements of university study (Anae, 2010; Apple & Au, 2015; Bargh, 2007; Cram et al., 2014). We are also well aware of perceived shortfalls in our secondary education system. We cannot, therefore, be surprised when students arrive unprepared and without the requisite skills for university studies. If we allow students to enrol, if we take their money, then we are morally obligated to provide them with the support that will enable a successful outcome. It is interesting to reflect on the calls to treat and understand students as customers – while, at the same time, not offering them the kinds of customer support that would be the norm elsewhere in the 'market place'. The university has a moral obligation to treat its students (customers) with respect and to treat them justly. Clearly, we are not doing that with all students. This lack of justice and equitable treatment is all the more surprising given that 'best business practice' (a much-loved phrase of neoliberals) would advocate that treating customers fairly is a key building block of successful business practice. As an institution, we market ourselves and we sell ourselves but we don't help significantly with the transition (in neoliberal terms, we don't prepare our customers to become better customers). It would seem that the concept of 'support' runs counter to the concepts of 'excellence' and 'competition'.

A commitment to aesthetics also allows a surface approach to any issue. There is no requirement to 'dig deeply' when what is important is how a process looks and that measurement tools can ensure its effectiveness and efficiency. This potential 'dumbing down' of educational support and educational practice has meant that, increasingly, very few parties in the university are prepared to do anything but pay lip service to the requirements of successful student transitions. By lacking the moral obligation (or by choosing not to recognise it), universities have little incentive to become cognisant of what is required for transition (this is seen as the student's responsibility).

Successful transition requires the acquisition of new skills and learning to negotiate new environments. Students are required to understand and practise new learning paradigms. They are required to submit to new assessment models and to acquire a new and often challenging technical vocabulary. While this is being undertaken, they are required to learn/practise self-directed learning and high-level time management while also navigating a new physical, relational and, often, cultural environment. These are not small requirements and an institution that is prepared to ask itself ethical questions is essential to addressing the structural injustice this process contains.

Also significant is that transitions are not simply something that happens at the beginning of an academic journey. Certainly, a student transitions to university but they also transition into their faculty, into their second and subsequent years, into postgraduate study or into the workforce. Transitions are ongoing features of the academic journey and they need to be understood as such by the institution.

When institutions begin to look at the ethical outcomes and implications of their structures, they are much better positioned to begin to understand that many of these implications (if they remain unaddressed) will last for the entire length of the student academic journey (presuming the student manages to accommodate themselves to the academic territory). They are much better placed to address issues of success and retention and, most significantly, they are much better positioned to understand and address issues of structural injustice.

16.2 Thresholds

A continuing theme in the pursuit of a transformed institutional habitus will be the need for institutional honesty and, perhaps, institutional courage. Transformation requires an awareness of context, ideology and external forces. This, of course, returns us to Bourdieu's claims of misrecognition and this must surely be the only, and the last, remaining justification that universities can use in order to avoid recognising and confronting internal structural injustice. Misrecognition is the last refuge of those who

would wish to portray themselves as moral persons and entities but who are not prepared to do the intellectual work in order to discover whether or not this is actually true. Continued misrecognition by institutions that operate within the academic field is, at best, simply lazy and, at worst, a cynical manipulation in order to pursue economic outcomes. In the context of institutions, misrecognition is a challenging issue to critique. On the one hand, its identification via Bourdieu is relatively simple. Once the concept of the reproduction of systems of domination is accepted, a very simple power analysis quickly highlights misrecognition and the way in which it functions. However, as an individual (and the institution is made up of individuals), I can't know that I am 'misrecognising'. In this case, I have not questioned the context or the outcomes of the structures with which I am engaged. As Bourdieu has noted (see Part 1), I simply accept that what is taking place is normal and acceptable (in neoliberal terms, it is best practice). If I do become aware of misrecognition, then I am no longer misrecognising and cannot excuse myself on that basis; I am knowingly culpable. This knowing culpability is what I believe institutions (as strategic entities governed by senior management) are undertaking. A non-culpable institutional misrecognition would require some kind of collective psychosis, where all members were 'simply following orders' or apathetic/lazy enough to avoid reflecting on their practices and the outcomes for their students. I don't believe this is the case in my institution. It is my claim that the senior 'management' of my institution has knowingly bought into the ideology of neoliberalism and its entrenchment and reproduction of structural injustice (see Chapter 17 and misrecognition as an institutional practice). Furthermore, we have used the idea of concepts like 'best practice' to ensure that the defence of misrecognition and the practice of misrecognition are viable for large numbers of our staff. This is cynical in the extreme but is also an unsurprising outcome of the marketisation of education under neoliberalism (see Part 2).

Thresholds as processes and as points in the academic journey are completely within the control of the university (via its different schools, faculties and academic boards). There can be no claim here that others (parents, students, other educational systems) are responsible for any issues as the institution has complete oversight of them. The lack of awareness in relation to the implications of thresholds seems to be related to two assumptions (although it is also realistic to assume that many

institutions or parts of institutions would not even be aware that these are questions that can and should be asked – ignorance is protective). The first is that thresholds are morally neutral and the second is that they serve the interests of academic standards and academic integrity (for example, the maintenance of academic standards/academic integrity is used as a justification for the non-confirmation of doctoral students at my institution). The first assumption, I have previously (in Part 3) shown to be plainly false as thresholds act as both gatekeepers and as tools to ensure the entrenchment and reproduction of existing systems of domination. The second assumption – the protection of academic integrity – seems reasonable at first glance but I suspect it masks something more sinister. The protection of academic integrity, when used by the institution, begins to feel a little like the neoliberal use of the concept of excellence I noted in Part 2. Nobody is likely to argue against excellence – which results in appeals to, or claims of, excellence being difficult to critique. Yet the concerns remain in that case. Who defines excellence? Whose interests are being protected? Appeals to excellence in this case are used to shut down any of these kinds of question. The same method is evident in appeals to academic integrity. Who defines this integrity? Whose interests does it serve? How is it measured? Is it available for critique? The usefulness of masking relates to being able to avoid having to defend positions. I do not reject the importance of maintaining academic standards and expectations but I do resent the assumptions that enable people and institutions to avoid having to defend (or even notice) systems, structures and practices that are clearly unjust.

It is of concern that institutions (by and large) have not devoted any significant time to understanding thresholds and the way in which they impact on their students (if they had, we would not be experiencing the amount and type of disadvantaging that is rife within university education). A transformed institutional habitus would require the institution to be aware of (and to act on) three key points that constitute thresholds. These are: that they shape academic membership and academic belonging; that there are often significant ontological implications for students associated with 'troublesome knowledge'; and, finally, that these transitions are not one-off occurrences but they continue to reappear throughout the student journey. Successful

negotiation of one threshold does not guarantee successful entry into any academic field or practice.

That academic belonging, to the individual school, the faculty and the university, is key to success and retention of university students is well known within the tertiary education sector. Given that this is the case, and given that thresholds are the gatekeepers to academic fields, it is hard to fathom why universities have not paid more attention to this area. If they wish to increase student retention (and they all claim to want this), then ensuring that students are not excluded by academic thresholds would seem to be an obvious place to start. The key to making progress here is to begin by addressing three key issues: two that are practical and one that is philosophical. The practical issues are relatively easily to address and these are: (1) making threshold requirements easily identifiable and explicit; and (2) providing directed and targeted support to enable students to navigate the thresholds successfully. The philosophical issue is likely to be more challenging for institutions (and what, in my experience, is their embedded distaste for self-critique). This requires the acceptance and ownership of the fact that thresholds have been and continue to be used as methods of exclusion in their role as gatekeepers to academic fields, and that their role in the entrenchment and protection of existing hierarchies and systems of domination often results in a disadvantaging of some students that is fundamentally unjust.

The second requirement is an awareness that students will not all have the same experience of transitioning through a threshold. 'Troublesome knowledge' (as noted in Part 3) can be both a positive and a negative experience. When thresholds require exposure to this kind of knowledge, and it is challenging, we may wish to say that it is a beneficial part of the student journey. However, when this 'troublesome knowledge' is threatening and/or produces anxiety, it becomes a different matter entirely. The key here is awareness of which thresholds exist and what they require from students. The current situation is one of institutional guilt by omission. Institutions simply do not know what the threshold requirements of their academic fields actually are or, if they do, they make little or no attempt to make these explicit. Identification of thresholds, of threshold requirements and of threshold implications is the first step in a transformed institutional habitus.

Finally, institutions require an awareness that thresholds are a recurring theme of any university academic journey. Any support to be offered should not be loaded at the front of the academic journey but should continue to be available through a student's time in the university. Threshold issues and implications cannot be addressed by a single or a few interventions (a transactional approach will not suffice); support needs to be flexible and it needs to be ongoing.

A transformed institutional habitus in relation to thresholds would require four key stages. First, it would require institutions to understand how thresholds function; second, it would require the identification and ownership of misrecognition. Thirdly, it would require the active uncovering of implicit threshold requirements and the making of these explicit. And, finally, it would require the institution to acknowledge the current issues and to accept the responsibility of ensuring that none of its students are fundamentally disadvantaged by its use of thresholds in the academic journey.

17 Institutional Habitus and Structural Features

The key requirements of a transformed institutional habitus, in relation to the structural and systemic features of structural injustice, are very simple. They focus on misrecognition and its implications. As I have alluded to elsewhere, I am less forgiving than is Bourdieu (who considered misrecognition a simple outcome of the maintenance of systems and structures of domination). This may be because of the way that neoliberalism has shaped the educational field but misrecognition now seems to me to be a 'practice' rather than an unintentional oversight. While we may be prepared to offer businesses and others the assumption that misrecognition is unintended, I am not prepared to provide this concession to universities. Universities operate within the academic field. They are constituted as academic enterprises in the pursuit of knowledge. A refusal to acknowledge the amount of material written on misrecognition and its implications is simply wilful ignorance and, because of the ongoing (and often devastating) impact on students, it is entirely unacceptable.

The idea that misrecognition within (and by) the institution is more than simply an oversight based on ignorance requires some unpacking. It is my contention that, in addition to Bourdieu's conception of misrecognition (which is also present), institutional misrecognition has become wilful. As such, it is an intentional practice. Three kinds of misrecognition seem to exist. First is the Bourdieuian notion of misrecognition that functions as a result of a lack of awareness (recognition) by both the dominated and those doing the dominating. Second, is misrecognition that comes about as a result of 'wilful ignorance' on the part of those doing the dominating. Here, the institutional actors choose not to explore the reasons for unjust structural practices and defend this position with stereotypical claims like 'the university is not for everyone', 'it has always been this way', 'we must protect academic standards', etc. Finally, it is my contention that there is a cynical approach to misrecognition, which (with full awareness of the existing structural injustices in operation) uses the idea of misrecognition as a tool for plausible deniability. Bourdieuian misrecognition is largely morally neutral in its operation. Agents (whether dominators or those being dominated) unintentionally misrecognise what is actually happening within their particular contexts. What has changed is that my personal experience of institutional behaviour has led me to believe that the existence of the concept of misrecognition

has allowed the institution to act in the educational field in such a way that the idea of misrecognition can be used as a justification for unjust practice and processes. In this sense, it can be seen as a 'fall-back' position designed to protect institutional actors who are tasked with delivering or maintaining 'unjust structural practices'. This is incredibly hard to prove because it is not contained in public documents or academic articles. It is a case of the institution having 'plausible deniability' and yet, for those of us within the institution who identify this kind of approach, it is very troubling indeed.

In terms of the more traditional approach to misrecognition, Bourdieu introduced the idea as an explanatory device to account for three things. The first was for the way that systems of domination function, the second was to explain how those systems were legitimated, and the third purpose was to explain the way in which they managed to reproduce over time and to do so without widespread resistance.

There are some key assumptions associated with Bourdieu's position. The first is that misrecognition is largely unconscious – that is, it is well established/embedded in the contextual practices and, as such, is largely implicit. Secondly, it is in the interests of those benefiting from systems and practices of domination for misrecognition to remain unchallenged. And, finally, once misrecognition is uncovered, it can no longer serve to legitimate existing systems and structures of domination (structural injustice) and this should, therefore, lead to change.

My concerns, then, relate to why, when structural injustice is so easily identifiable, it is still continuing in university practice. The obvious conclusion is that it is in the interests of those benefiting from the system for it to continue, and this continuation requires either a decision to ignore (or refuse to acknowledge the reality of) misrecognition or a wilful decision to acknowledge that it exists and to use it as an intentional and beneficial strategy.

In my particular context (university student support services – separate from faculty), we have three distinct groups of actors/agents: the student, the 'ground level' support staff and senior management. It is insightful looking at responses to misrecognition from these groups, given that the legitimation of structural injustice requires misrecognition at all three levels.

For students and for 'ground level' staff, we recognise that 'something is not right' but we cannot easily identify exactly what this is. My experience within the area of peer support makes it clear that students tend to go with existing and implicit stereotypes around intelligence, work ethic and cultural abilities. Ground-level staff members, on the other hand, tend to push a bit deeper and may even talk about cultural capital or academic skills shortfalls – but tend to approach this from a deficit perspective and work at 'raising the level' of student academic skills and competence. Most of us are allowing misrecognition to fulfil its function and this group of 'ground level' staff is one of the primary targets of my research. There are, however, some key factors that play a role in our responses to misrecognition. The first is that our neoliberal approach to student support skews our focus to assessment results (to the measurable and to the uniform). These are the outcomes by which we, as staff, are assessed and this approach encourages a very shallow notion of student support that does not naturally lend itself to exploring other options. Secondly, internal institutional distinctions between 'allied' (or non-academic) and 'academic' staff have allowed the establishment of an environment where engaging and critiquing theories, ideas and practices are seen as the domain of academic staff; this is not a space that is willingly shared. And, finally, the consequences of uncovering and combatting misrecognition are that jobs are put at risk. As fully paid-up members of the precariat, 'allied' staff members are well aware of possible and potential risks to their employment.

Senior management, in my context, feels particularly absent from the day-to-day experience of both the students and of staff. There seem to be three possible and visible responses to the issue of misrecognition. The first is the possibility that senior management is ignorant of the issue: that they are simply not aware of it and have therefore, not taken it into account (this is, I think, the more charitable Bourdieuian position). The second possibility is that, given the increasing preponderance of technocrats rather than educators that occupy these positions, senior management simply lacks the background, confidence or competence to engage actively in the critique of ideas, philosophies and associated practices. And, finally (as we saw in Part 2), this group is victim to the overriding neoliberal agenda to compete with other tertiary institutions (and it may be that the members simply and knowingly accept the neoliberal agenda, and approve of its consequences). This essentially entails the

creation of 'measurable outputs' like increasing graduation numbers, increasing profitability (cost cutting), climbing international rankings and ensuring the measurability of all practices.

The first possibility is the least ethically damning response from senior management and it is one that allows for the addressing of unjust practices and processes. The second possibility is somewhat more disturbing; however, again, it allows for the possibility of change and of structural injustice being able to be addressed. The neoliberal agenda, however, makes addressing the practice and process of structural injustice, via uncovering misrecognition, exceedingly unlikely as it puts all those outcomes at risk. It is my contention that misrecognition is the device/practice by which my institution enables itself to focus on the profitability of education rather than on whether or not that education system is either ethical or just.

This chapter will also focus on two examples of this misrecognition (and its implications): epistemic othering and institutional interpellation.

The key outcome of epistemic othering is the alienation of the student, caused by the rejection of what are core and constituting ontological values. This othering can be devastating for the students concerned, particularly so because it is implicit and it is unexpected. In this chapter, I will reflect on how the institution can address this issue and will argue that this will require overcoming the issue/strategy of misrecognition, and the ownership of ethical/unethical acts, omission and outcomes. And, finally, I will consider the making explicit and the explanatory justification of embedded epistemologies.

My approach to institutional interpellation will focus on the issue of misrecognition and also on the ontological issues involved in 'calling forth' students as transactional problems requiring solutions. I will argue that a transformed institutional habitus will need to address the issue of misrecognition as well as the lack of interpellative consistency and the ontological implications of transactional interpellation.

17.1 Epistemic Othering

Epistemic othering, as noted by Kloot (2015), is rooted in the ontology of the university and is, therefore, deeply structural and is "part of the genetic codes of the disciplines" (p. 25). Because of this deep, structural and embedded nature of epistemology, the injustice of epistemic othering is based on its assumed 'rightness' or naturalness. Critical theory (see 1.3.1), however, tells us that no position, process or structure is 'natural'. All of them are created by humans and, as such, act to protect existing forms and hierarchies of advantage and of power. They are not morally neutral or implication free.

This requires us to ask whether epistemic othering is misrecognised or whether it is simply not recognised due to either a lack of awareness of its existence or a lack of critique of its function. Again, I resist giving the university as an institution the easy way out here – given that its constituting role requires ongoing academic engagement and discussion. Laziness (in terms of the 'path of least resistance') allows for the assumed 'rightness' of the existing order (in this case, epistemology) to act as a protection against the need for self-critique. Added to this is the assumption that, in some fashion, acts of omission are somehow less culpable than are acts of commission. This is clearly unacceptable. One of the key goals of my research is to remove the option of misrecognition and its associated acts of omission from university institutions and university staff. I want them/us to be forced to own the consequences of our system, structures and practices. Structural injustice then becomes a moral choice and responsibility for it becomes easily identifiable. I want to see misrecognition as a protective tool to no longer be a default option for universities.

The uncovering of what counts as knowledge, the explanation of the reasons that it is chosen (for its function, efficiency and acknowledgment within the academic field, etc.) and the justification for its preference/privileging over other epistemologies would go a long way to addressing the structural injustice present within current practice. There are a variety of positives for the institution in this approach. The uncovering (or making explicit) of implicit epistemological commitments and requirements allows students to experience these in a non-threatening fashion. It provides the students with the opportunity to assimilate their existing epistemologies and, therefore, significantly lessens the chance of 'othering' (it also lessens the

brutality of a process that undermines and rejects ontologically constituting epistemologies). This allows opportunities of reterritorialisation (accommodation) or the creation of a secondary (academic-task-focused) habitus.

The justification of the significance and the efficacy of existing epistemology allows self-critique by the institution and the exploration of whether or not assumed understanding continues to be both relevant and useful. One outcome of this self-reflection is that the making explicit of epistemological commitments also allows for the re-examination and the fine-tuning of cultural capital requirements.

The benefits to the academic field that accrue from avoiding epistemic othering should be quite obvious. Firstly, the field ceases to do ontological violence to some of its students and this impacts directly on the success, retention and experience of belonging of its students. Secondly, allowing for the possibility that other epistemological perspectives and commitments might challenge or provide insights into the content, practice and distribution of cultural/academic capital within a field can only make the field both stronger and more relevant externally.

This second part requires the practitioners and educators within the field to have a high level of self-confidence. Contemporary academic field insecurity (related to pressures from neoliberal orientations and expected outcomes, and internal field competition) and, in some cases, arrogance, may make this difficult. Here we need to return to Bourdieu's multidisciplinary approach to his theories. By not being confined to the rules and expectations of a specific academic field – and by not being dependent on that same field's distribution of its cultural capital – he was able to offer challenging and penetrating insights that field members could not provide because they were dependent on the 'rules of field competition', and its rules of cultural capital distribution. The loosening of the 'death grip' of embedded epistemological orthodoxy may allow something similar to happen.

17.2 Interpellation

The key problems concerning institutional habitus in relation to interpellation fall under three main areas: misrecognition (and/or a complete lack of awareness); a lack

of consistency (multiple interpellations that are often dissimilar); and the ontological impact of interpellations that assume a highly individualist (homo economicus) ontological constitution.

Whilst interpellation is an action, a 'calling forth' of certain kinds of student, it also reflects an underlying ideology. Institutional interpellation is not accidental and this puts it in contrast with individual interpellation by lecturers, which may be unintentional, misrecognised and, often, simply not considered. I wish to distinguish between these two types of interpellation so that I can focus on the institutional interpellation as reflected in university practices and processes (structures) rather than on interpellation by individuals. I do this in order to make the process of critiquing university interpellation both manageable and teleological in focus. This is appropriate because this thesis addresses the issue of structural injustice rather than individual practices of injustice – and these may well be significantly impacted when misrecognition is no longer a justification for bad pedagogical practice.

Institutional interpellation takes place throughout the student journey. Some of these interpellations are explicit and others much more implicit. It is present before enrolment through recruitment advertisements – where students are encouraged to join 'the university of the future' – or through other such descriptions that are designed to create in the potential future student a desire of belonging and of becoming. University recruitment is focused around creating an attractive sense of identity for prospective students and there is no guarantee that this identity is based in any real-life experience or, if it is, whether or not it will apply to all students or just to those with the requisite cultural capital.

Institutional interpellation is present in the transition experience. Here the 'carried over' interpellation from university recruitment meets the reality of successful, partially successful or unsuccessful transition. Here, the promises of what the student can be meet the realities of their cultural capital surplus or deficiency and the additional lack of transitional support for those not adequately equipped. Students who may have been 'called forth' to be 'future leaders', 'innovators' or 'practisers of excellence' may find themselves to be victims of a false interpellation.

Thresholds also contain institutional interpellation but, in this case, it is much more implicit. Assessment results are the method of institutional interpellation and students are interpellated as good/bad, successful/not successful or intelligent/not intelligent enough. And this interpellation has a far more profound effect that do mere academic results for any particular assessment. This interpellation acts to define the student as a person and this is reflected in whether or not they succeed in their transition through the threshold to academic membership or remain outside. Students are beginning to find their place within the academic field and the mistaking of intelligence with 'having the requisite skills and dispositions' brings into being an interpellation that is based on a flawed (or, at best, only partial) understanding of what constitutes a successful student.

Administrative encounters are key locations of institutional interpellation. Some may argue that students having to 'stand in line' is of little significance when critiquing how the university functions; after all, university is about teaching, research and accreditation. I take the opposite view. I think that the way in which institutions treat (and, in this case, interpellate) students in their daily interactions is a direct reflection of the institution's ideological commitment. The transactional interpellation applied to this area by the neoliberal university sends a clear message that each student is understood as a series of assessments that need to be completed successfully and that they are a series of problems that need resolution in the shortest possible time frame with the smallest resource requirement. This interpellation is all about production and the maximisation of educational surpluses. It is not about producing critically thinking citizens or about testing theoretical boundaries and uncovering new knowledge. It is, rather, a direct reflection of the marketisation of education and it brings into being self-interested, critically unreflective students whose sole role is to graduate as quickly and as efficiently as possible. The kind of student interpellated by this transactional interpellation is not the kind of student envisioned in the universities' recruitment messages. As we shall see in Chapter 19, pockets of staff, support teams and programmes, operate under different conceptions of what kind of interpellation is preferable. However, working against the ideology of the institution is challenging at best and hopeless in worst-case scenarios.

It is also worth noting that the university acts to interpellate students through the process of graduation. However, by this point, all the structural advantaging and disadvantaging has taken place. Graduation, therefore, tends to be focused on positioning the graduands (and, by association, the institution) within the workforce and the larger society.

So, the key form of injustice that results from institutional interpellation is concerned with its ontological implications – especially the emphasis on cultural capital, on a transactional methodology and on the ontological assumption that the 'homo economicus' model best represents and reflects its student body. Transforming this institutional habitus will require the addressing of five key areas. These are: the identification and ownership of institutional interpellation; the need to make interpellation explicit; the need to link interpellation to intended outcomes; the importance of consistency of interpellation; and, finally, the provision of an interpellation that is challenging but that does not do ontological violence.

Misrecognition, as we have noted, is the justification for avoiding self-critique. One way to deal with this is to identify and recognise points and processes where institutional interpellation is taking place. Only when interpellation is identified, can it be critiqued as being useful or as being alienating. This, of course, also requires the institution to take ownership and, thus, responsibility for the practice and for the outcomes. When this identification and ownership has taken place, then, and only then, can interpellation be focused on specific intended outcomes (and these outcomes, given they will be intentional and thus explicit, will be open to critique). An explicit interpellation or series of interpellations has the advantage of being able to be critiqued by all parties (including those being interpellated) and thus can avoid outcomes like ontological violence and alienation. From an institutional perspective, it allows for the creation of an intentional (not by ideological default as is the current state of affairs) interpellation that allows the institution to assess accurately the kind of student it wishes to help create/interpellate. This will result in a consistency of message with which all parties will be able to work. And, finally, an explicit and consistent interpellation allows the institution (and its membership) to identify and address areas of concern when and if they arise, making the process not just more effective but also significantly more responsive to student issues and experiences.

One point that requires further unpacking is the extent to which individuals, working within a system, are culpable for that system's acts or omissions of injustice. This particular point is raised in line with comments from some of my colleagues within the university context who like to make the point that issues of cultural capital shortfall are much ado about nothing and, unless I can make a 'facts'-based argument, the issue is of very little importance to them. They see my approach as simply Sociology 101 and merely a reporting of how things are. This response reflects three key positions. First, it is a reflection of the apathy (and disconnection) engendered by neoliberalism – where increasing academic and bureaucratic workloads leave little time for self-reflection, institutional critique and future vision. Second, it is a reflection of the marketisation of education where, increasingly, it becomes viewed as just another job (with associated KPIs) rather than as a 'calling' and an opportunity to help shape and envision contemporary and future society. Finally, it is a reflection of the brutality of a system that makes implicit cultural capital requirements of its 'clients'/ 'customers' (students) and makes them responsible for both uncovering these and then meeting the standards.

18 Institutional Habitus and Individual Transformation

In this chapter, I want to shift the focus from exploring the ways in which the institution can address its own acts and omissions in relation to structural injustice and turn to look at how it might support its students' responses to these issues. I will address the following questions:

- What does the creation of a secondary habitus require of the institution?
- What are the requirements for responses of decolonisation?
- How can the institution support deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation?

There is a fourth associated issue and that is the issue of the institution having or creating the courage required, and recognising the ethical imperative, to address its own pedagogical failures and shortcomings.

However, given the reality of institutional resistance to self-critique, to change and/or to identification of the institution's own practices of misrecognition, a realistic approach needs to take the following three factors into account.

The first is that there can be no expectation of revolution within the institution. Embedded privilege will not be given over without significant struggle so attempts to address the structural issues and processes of injustice need to be moderated by the expectation that wholesale institutional change is unlikely. The second point is that I am expecting that there are pockets of resistance and support in terms of staff and students throughout the institution who recognise and are motivated to address the issues of structural injustice. Many of these individuals and teams are already engaged in this space. And, finally, this body of research is an attempt to inform, and contribute to, that conversation and that process. It is an attempt to provide an academic critique and an academic argument to support and, potentially, to help shape the struggle for structural justice within the university as an institution.

18.1 Secondary Habitus

The creation of a secondary habitus is one way of addressing the cultural capital and disposition shortfall that results in experiences of structural injustice (it is a

legitimate approach but not my preferred option – see 13.2 and 19.3.2). But the creation of a secondary habitus is not simply an attempt to accommodate oneself within an otherwise hostile academic context (as we saw with possible reterritorialised responses). A habitus is more than a collection of skills, dispositions and attributes. It is also a reflection of aspirations and ontological constituents.

So how can the institution support the creation of a particular kind of secondary habitus that addresses the issue of structural injustice? It needs to begin by noting that the support needs to be intentional/explicit rather than defaulting to the standard position that skills, attributes and dispositions are acquired by exposure through some kind of osmosis. Furthermore, we need to distinguish between institutional responses that focus on simply trying to teach certain academic skills (the treating of perceived cultural capital deficiencies) and support for a secondary habitus that includes attention to ontological outcomes and implications, and to the impact on aspirational horizons.

The purpose of a secondary habitus is to enable the student to engage successfully with an academic field/context in which they might otherwise struggle. There are four key components to this successful engagement and the secondary habitus needs to deal with all of them. The first is the most obvious and concerns academic skills issues. Here, the secondary habitus is required to address the issue of a deficiency in cultural capital (in relation to implicit cultural capital requirements by the institution) and to add these skills and dispositions in order for the student/agent to achieve assessment and accreditation outcomes. The second component relates to epistemological issues and is concerned with the exposure to new and/or different ways of observing, understanding, engaging and knowing that are required by the particular academic field (and the transitions and thresholds therein). Here lies the possibility of 'epistemic othering' and the secondary habitus needs to provide the dispositions required to make navigating these a challenge rather than an assault on student identity.

This links to the third component, which relates to ontological issues and is concerned with the necessity to engage with embedded ontological assumptions (homo economicus) that are alien to the ontology of many students. A secondary

habitus needs to be able to challenge the assumptions but also requires a level of pragmatism in order for the student to progress through their academic journey. In that sense, it needs to be flexible if accreditation is part of the intended teleology. The fourth key component relates to aspirational issues and the expanding of aspirational horizons that is an outcome of university education. As we have noted, a person's primary habitus acts to shape their aspirational horizons. In this case, a secondary habitus can be used to moderate that and to allow the possibility of an expansion of the existing aspirational horizon. However, another possibility here is that a secondary habitus can be useful in reverse – in the provision of a reality check for aspirations that have fallen under the sway of 'desire construction' via online technologies, processes and the marketisation of areas that were once 'commerce free' (university recruitment advertisements are an example of desire construction in students – they play heavily on this and act to create and entrench the neoliberal notion of subjectivity). Not everyone can be an A-list actor, a music superstar or a reality TV phenomenon. A secondary habitus can be used to moderate the unrealistic (and unhealthy) aspirational assumptions portrayed via a media determined to sell aspirations at any cost. Of course, this moderation of aspirations can be seen as 'dangerous ground'. Am I simply advocating another means of controlling students on terms that I find more acceptable? I hope not. However, the point still seems to be pertinent – that simply widening aspirational horizons is not a good in itself if the widening of these horizons is not also linked to some kind of reasonable expectation of their being realised.

Institutional support for the creation of a secondary habitus also has benefits for the university. The institution has no ability to impact the primary habitus of its students. They simply arrive with the cultural capital, in terms of skills, dispositions and aspirations, that they possess. Support for the development of a secondary habitus allows the institution to contribute to the moderation of a student's primary habitus; essentially, it is positioned to address the issue of cultural capital or disposition deficiency and can then seek to support academic skill acquisition and academic disposition acquisition, and to influence both academic confidence and academic expectations. This secondary habitus support has a direct impact for student success and student retention – areas that universities are constantly monitoring and trying to improve. Less measurable (but a contributor to both success and retention) is the role

that a secondary habitus can play in the maintenance and enhancement of student identity – which is especially significant given that some degree of destabilisation of student identity is a consequence of critical engagement within most academic fields.

However, there are also risks to the institution in the support of the creation of secondary habitus. These lie primarily in the area of potential dissatisfaction with existing practices. Current support models are focused on the provision of (deficient) academic skills rather than the support of a secondary habitus. This enables the institution to keep the student focus on assessment and accreditation rather than on a deeper engagement with aspirational and epistemological insights, perspectives and practices. It allows the institution to allocate the responsibility for the 'lack of success' as being a student responsibility rather than an institutional one. Support structures in their current orientation support the entrenchment and reproduction of existing structures and positions of privilege while, at the same time, allowing the institution to convince itself that it is addressing areas of student concern.

In terms of what institutional support for secondary habitus might look like, one key point comes to the fore: that a secondary habitus is distinguished from a primary habitus by the fact that it is the deliberate acquisition of specialised skills and dispositions, and is agent focused and motivated rather than structurally imposed. Guanglun and Ning (2016) highlight the institution-driven approach to the issue when describing how repeated 'counter-training' acts to transform a primary habitus. However, there are some issues with this contention. First, and most significantly, it is unclear whether the changes they note are the result of a changed habitus or, rather, whether that habitus is simply no longer being expressed in that context. That is, the students they identified simply withhold (protect) that part of their habitus which comes in for ridicule within their educational contexts. What may be happening here is a repression of primary habitus as a means of accommodating oneself within a hostile environment. (This would fit with the experience of some of the students we work with in learning communities and is an example of a reterritorialising response.) Guanglun and Ning's conclusion reflects a problematic issue often associated with the interpretation of collated data: the assumption that outcomes can be traced to specific processes. In this case, the recorded fact that some students in their study changed their accents as a result of 'counter-training' does not automatically imply that their

primary habitus has shifted and, if it has, whether or not this is considered to be a positive outcome (certainly the ontological implications may well be alienating). What seems equally possible is that, as a result of ongoing and consistent negative feedback from both the teaching staff and their fellow students, the 'rural students' simply acted to protect both themselves and their cultural and social identities. What seems to have been taking place could just as easily be described as a process of forced uniformity and a desire to erase 'otherness'. Therein lies the risk of institutionally driven habitus changes. A secondary habitus that is not agent driven can very easily become a coercive practice of academic cultural homogenisation. Part of the attraction in the idea and process of secondary habitus creation is the fact that it does not require ontological 'othering' and institutional support for the process needs to ensure this is taken into account.

Institutional support, if it is not to be in the form of a repressive de-othering, needs to take account of the agent focus of secondary habitus. The issue here is for the institution to be focused on creating an environment/space where students, deliberately, choose to acquire specialised skills and dispositions – rather than on an approach that, essentially, involves instances of repeated 'counter-training'.

There also needs to be an institutional awareness of the likely impermanence or transitory nature of a secondary habitus. It is motivated by the student/agent seeking to achieve a certain outcome (perhaps whilst protecting existing ontological and cultural features) – accreditation, academic field membership and/or a sense of belonging (or at least not 'being other'). Each of these goals would benefit from a different focus of support (i.e. academic skills training, mentoring and pastoral care) and we will look at an attempt to do this in Chapter 19.

Institutional support for secondary habitus also needs to be cognisant of the fact that there can be transition problems related to the creation of a secondary habitus. How does a student/agent deliberately acquire skills and dispositions when they may be alien to their primary habitus? Difficulties can arise in cases where the primary habitus does not provide the framework/groundwork in which the acquisition of new skills and dispositions makes sense. Support, therefore, cannot be a 'one size fits all' process and practice. It needs to be able to take account of the differing student/agent

needs and levels of confidence (or lack of confidence) in specific areas. This is in conflict with the neoliberal impetus towards uniformity and the desire for institutional practices to be transferrable to any context.

Finally, it is worth noting that support for the creation of a secondary habitus allows the institution to target and support different student cohorts more accurately. Current support (in Aotearoa) for 'underperforming cohorts' tends to be targeted along the lines of cultural and ethnic membership. It is based on generalised assumptions about cultural capital deficiencies and, largely, does not distinguish between successful and struggling members of those cohorts. Support for secondary habitus does not need to replace these initiatives (many of which clearly make a difference) but, if it runs alongside, it allows the institution to be significantly more flexible in targeting specific student need and in targeting it in a way that (due to the fact that it is inherently student driven) is likely to be significantly more effective.

18.2 Decolonisation

How might the university as an institution support the acts and processes of decolonisation by some of its students? This question is not quite as simple as it first seems and some work needs to be completed in preparation before we can examine the issue. In this discussion, I want to begin by clarifying the issues, then move to look at the associated problems and what is at stake for the institution if it offers this kind of support before, finally, briefly touching on the practices of decolonisation that may usefully be supported in anticipation of Chapter 19.

Discussion of decolonisation (from an institutional perspective) raises some key issues/contentious points. The first is the subject of what is being decolonised. As I have explained in Part 3, the decolonisation at issue is an ideological/philosophical one. This ideological decolonisation may well also impact on the after-effects/consequences of a physical colonisation (in fact, in my context, I would expect that to be the case) but the focus is on dealing with a colonisation that is based on ideas, theories, perspectives and practices. Secondly, because this decolonisation is targeted at ideological colonisation, it will contrast interpretations (between individual and institutional perspectives) of transformation. For example, a neoliberal model of

education contains an implicit notion of transformation that can be described as transforming the raw material (students), via the process of education (a series of uniform and measurable assessments), into compliant and accredited individuals whose goal is to support the economy. This contrasts with more traditional understandings where the intention of education and its transforming effect is to create critically engaged citizens, who can contribute to the well-being of their society (whether that is by supporting the economy, by critically engaging with politics or processes, or through other opportunities).

And third, it raises the issue of the role and place of resistance in university education. The kind of decolonisation I have in mind can be thought of as resistance to discrimination (the advantaging and disadvantaging of students on unjust grounds), as resistance to the arrogant assumptions and practices of cultural and epistemological monopolies, and as practical resistance to apathy and the 'path of least resistance' as practised by many institutional employees.

The obvious associated problem with institutional support relates to how realistic it is for an institution to support a decolonising process when the target of that decolonisation is embedded in the institution's habitus, and in its practices and processes/structures. The institution can thus be at odds with itself. The subject of the decolonisation is so embedded in its habitus and its practice that any attempt to challenge or critique it can be taken as an attack on the identity of the institution. This is a significant challenge to any process of decolonisation – trying to make the institution aware that what is at issue is not the institution itself by rather the practices and processes that spring from an unhealthy ideological commitment. However, moderating this is the fact that many of the members of staff who make up the institution have had the prevailing ideology imposed on them by stealth (without discussion, often without their awareness, and accompanied by the increasing administrative requirements that act to distract them from what is really happening). So, there exists a natural body of participants who are inclined to support (or at least are not hostile to) ideological decolonisation.

It is also important to remind ourselves that no ideology or practice is natural and/or without associated vested interests. Despite the neoliberal intent to present

itself as natural wisdom (simply best practice, in pursuit of excellence, etc.), it very clearly privileges certain positions within its hierarchy (technocrats in particular) and clearly acts to embed, legitimate and reproduce its structures and processes of domination. However, neoliberalism is not the only game in town. Bourdieu (in his work on fields, examined in Part 1) makes it clear that all fields contain poles. Within contemporary university education, we have the neoliberal (public choice theory) at one pole and the Humboldtian notion (see 7.1) of the creation of national identity and culture at the other. Institutions can and do move between these poles and often may spread across both places at the same time (neoliberal practice has colonised the administrative practice of most faculties but lecturers within those faculties can and do opt into significantly more just and equitable pedagogical practice). In addition, the ethos of the traditional university, as a place of critique, academic engagement and the discovery of new knowledge, provides an historical theme and a link to change and exploration that provide room for processes of decolonisation. Therefore, the possibility exists and has a home within the context of the academic field.

Institutional support for decolonising processes needs to be aware of what is at stake when support is provided. It is not without cost within the contemporary context. Practices of decolonisation will target and challenge issues like privatisation, uniformity, the measurement fetish, and the implicit and embedded notion of homo economicus as the default ontology.

In terms of what this support needs to focus on, there are four key areas. These are: the development of a critical consciousness and a critical orientation to practices and processes; the ability to reflect critically on the self and on the student's engagement within the academic field; an explicit commitment to collaboration between individuals, teams and communities (academic communities and social communities); and, finally, a belief and trust in the values and abilities contained in student/agent habitus, and in the possibility of positive transformation as a realistic outcome. Chapter 19 will explore what this support might look like in practical terms.

18.3 Deterritorialisation and Reterritorialisation

How might student responses of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation be supported by the institution? Perhaps this question may be broken down most effectively into two further questions. The first is 'how might the institution support negative student responses to territorialised spaces?' while the second is 'how might the institution support reterritorialised responses?' These may relate to three key areas: accommodation within the territory (this is not the same as the creation of a secondary habitus – although that may be one option of reterritorialisation); efforts to change/impact the territory; and transitions out of the territory (note that this last point can be either a deterritorialised response or a reterritorialising response and highlights the occasional interpenetration of both notions).

In general terms, contemporary institutional support is focused largely on the first issue – support for accommodation within the territory and existing support structures like mentoring programmes and student learning centres are evidence of this approach. However, it is significant that these processes and 'services' can and do operate within a context of ongoing entrenched misrecognition. That is, they do not require the institution either to uncover existing misrecognition or to take account of the ethical implications of its processes and structures. They are, in effect, the most cost-effective means of addressing student issues (of lack of success) without having to accept any responsibility for that situation. Those of us working in this area allow (by default) the institution to misrecognise its ethical responsibilities. We do this when we seek to meet 'student problems and issues' rather than engage our institutions in the critique of their structures, practices and processes.

Institutional support for responses of reterritorialisation that seek to change/impact the academic territory is, in effect, an exploration of what might happen when misrecognition is identified, when institutional responsibility is accepted, and when the ethical and ontological implications of structurally unjust processes and practices are accepted. And, finally, support for transitions out of the territory, are an acceptance of the reality that university study is not for everyone – and this relates to cultural capital, contextual circumstances (like family obligations or contexts, financial issues), and the inability (and this is increasing) of accreditation to fulfil its promises in relation to employment opportunities and social relocation.

Before I move to looking at what the institutional responses may be, it is important to recognise that, for any meaningful response by the institution, some prerequisite factors are required. Institutional responses need to begin with a critical awareness of what territorialised spaces are. These include the institutional recognition that territorialised spaces (academic fields) are not somehow natural objective entities. They contain and reflect embedded epistemological commitments, and they entrench and reproduce existing systems and structures of power, priority and privilege. There needs to be a recognition that access to territories (in any meaningful sense of academic membership) is controlled by the institution via transitions and thresholds – and these act as gatekeepers and sorting systems to ensure access to those with the 'right kind of cultural capital'. And finally, these territories are not value neutral – they provide the physical, intellectual and aspirational possibilities within the academic context. Without this recognition as a starting point, any institutional responses will be aesthetic at best and without the ethical commitment to impact the situation meaningfully.

Whilst acknowledging that individual staff members and individual programmes may have different motivations, institutional support for reterritorialised responses aimed at accommodation are the prevalent responses in the tertiary education sector. They are motivated by institutional attempts to address the issue of student success and retention, and are motivated, essentially, by the marketisation of education and the requirements to meet external funding requirements. This motivation for addressing the issue is significant. They are not motivated by issues of justice, equity or equality and, thus, even when they are deemed successful (where success is measured by assessment and accreditation results, or a version of student feedback), they do not impact on the areas I consider to be significant. They do not impact on the territory/academic field. How the field operates, the thresholds it uses and its gatekeeping requirements remain unchallenged in the same way that pedagogical practice and pedagogical outcomes are not critiqued in any meaningful way so there is no fundamental critique of the institution and/or its practices. This, therefore, allows the misrecognition of practices, processes, requirements and structures to continue – in the face of the same student issues appearing year after year.

The issue becomes one of how success in this area is to be constituted and understood. My insistence is that it must be based on more than simply student academic assessment outcomes. It also needs to consider how habitus is impacted (in terms of aspirations and aspirational horizons), its impact on meaningful engagement and participation within the study programme, and the sense of belonging or lack of belonging experienced by the student. A successful institutional response to reterritorialisations aimed at accommodation must also relate to addressing the inherent structural injustice within the process and this is best begun by uncovering practices of misrecognition and then applying the courage required to ask ethical questions about the implications of this misrecognition. Institutional honesty and institutional integrity must come to the fore. I also consider that institutional support for student attempts at accommodation within what is a 'hostile' environment should be thought of as the beginning of the support process rather than as the final outcome – as is currently the situation.

On the other hand, institutional support for a reterritorialisation that is aimed at challenging/impacting the territory would create a watershed moment. Support for this kind of reterritorialisation would require at least five areas of response from the institution. The first is that an institutional response supporting a challenging/impacting of the academic territory runs counter to neoliberal impulses and requirements (see Part 2 for an account of how neoliberalism has captured and impacted the educational sector) – which require effectiveness, efficiency, measurability and uniformity. When viewed through this kind of ideological lens, the incentive to undergo this kind of student support is clearly lacking. (yet why should an incentive be required to support students to the best of your ability?) Secondly, this kind of support requires intellectual bravery and intellectual honesty. In the current neoliberal environment, outcomes that are not directly measurable are given little in the way of attention and resource. Unless the institution sees itself as more than simply a business (and the proof of this is in its actions not in its values claims and other advertising), the energy and attention required for a truly honest assessment of its processes and structures will simply not happen. Attention will instead be diverted to 'competitive strategies' and 'market positioning'.

The third requirement is the ability to commit to self-critique and to be prepared to question both tradition and established practice. It requires acknowledging that tradition, embedded privilege and embedded epistemology are contributors to the structural injustice experienced by some of its students. And that the motivation required to change this outcome comes from both self-reflection (a challenging institutional process) and engagement with ethical questions, and the perspectives and insights gained through encounter with 'other' epistemologies and ontological constitutions.

The fourth component is the addition of an ethical element to institutional practice. By this, I do not mean simply addressing external requirements and expectation like due process, natural justice, health and safety regulations or human rights requirements in relation to race, gender, sexuality, etc. What is required here is ethical accountability from the institution and the internal expectation that its practices, processes and structures are just, moral and equitable.

Finally, the institution needs to be prepared to examine the role and content of thresholds (and embedded epistemologies), and to distinguish between those elements that are required for active, involved intellectual engagement and those that serve, instead, to entrench advantage, privilege and existing hierarchies.

18.4 Transformationary Requirements

What does a transformed institutional habitus look like and what are the key issues that need to be addressed? This question is probably best addressed by highlighting three major areas of concern. The first of these is the issue of misrecognition and the associated assumed moral neutrality of university practices and processes. Second, is the area of ethics and the commitment to asking questions about the ethical implications of the institution's practices, structures and processes. This area includes the recognition of implications and the commitment to act on those. In part, this relates to the assuming of responsibility for structural outcomes and it requires a level of institutional courage that is seldom evident in day-to-day institutional operation. Third, is the necessity of addressing the implicit nature of many university expectations in relation to cultural capital skills and dispositions, and the

importance of explanatory justifications for why and whether these are essential for academic membership.

These major areas of concern can be addressed most effectively by the institution engaging in three kinds of response. The first is a move from an aesthetic focus (where consideration is focused on the way in which systems and structures appear and a definition of beauty that is related primarily to 'smooth' and efficient functioning) to an ethics focus in relation to processes and structures: that is, a focus not on what the processes look like or whether or not they are effective in addressing certain KPIs but, rather, on what the implications are for those required to carry out the process (staff) and those who experience it (students). This shift is essential for a couple of reasons. First, it acts to humanise the academic journey. It shifts the focus of the institution from measurement and uniformity to who and what comprises its workforce and student body. And, secondly, it allows the institution to shift from a shallow, numbers-based perspective to an awareness of what is taking place at a more subtle level – at the level of structural implications. It provides the process for the institution to engage meaningfully with its (ground-level) staff and with the most important part of its operation – its students.

The second key response required of the institution is to address the ontological issue. What is required is a move from an assumed and implicit ontological focus on the 'homo economicus' model (which translates itself into the institution having a 'transactional' relationship with 'the customer') to a position that allows for a variety of ontological models – thus reflecting its diverse student base (and not simply replacing 'homo economicus' with a communitarian alternative). The institution's interactions can then be based on how students actually present rather than on an assumed model of privatised self-interest. This helps to widen the understanding of what university study is about. It allows the possibility that the academic journey is more than simple accreditation. A key problem with neoliberalism and capital efficiency is that it assumes that the most efficient way to the intended outcome (in this case, accreditation) is the best option – this ties in nicely with an ontological model of the student being primarily constituted as self-interested and almost entirely self-regarding. An institutional awareness of other legitimate ontological models provides the room for, and opportunity to find, other valuable features within the academic

journey: changed perspectives, critical academic engagement, and student growth and well-being.

The third required response relates to intellectual honesty and institutional courage. Whilst the responsibility to stop the intentional process of misrecognition lies with every member of the institution, it is first and foremost captured and expressed by the habitus of the institution. Universities (as academic institutions) normalise this misrecognition whilst paying lip service to higher values through their institutional strategies and values statements. There is often little or no relationship between what is publicly espoused and what is practised internally. Institutional habitus legitimates the practice of misrecognition and it becomes a by-product of the structures and processes that the institution practises and finds acceptable, convenient and efficient. This disconnect between values statements and neoliberal practice is simply unacceptable, particularly for an institution located within the academic field. It requires action on the part of the institution: action in the form of intellectual honesty to accept and take responsibility for its practice of misrecognition. Also, it takes intellectual courage, then, to choose to address the implications and outcomes of this same misrecognition.

This courage to identify and act on its practice of misrecognition is linked to the third and final requirement, which is the recognition that institutional practices and processes are not morally neutral. While this (moral neutrality) is primarily an assumption, it is also, essentially, another form of misrecognition. The assumption that processes and practices are somehow objective and impartial reflects an intellectual laziness and a breath taking ability to ignore consequences or even to acknowledge that they exist. Any meaningful transformation of institutional habitus will demand that it addresses the embedded privileging that accompanies this assumption of neutrality and that it acts to ensure that its assumptions are open to ethical questioning and institutional self-reflection.

19 Transformation and Institutional Resistance

In this final chapter, what I wish to accomplish is to move this discussion from the theoretical to the practical and to examine it through the lens of my actual university practice and pedagogy. Given an institutional context of resistance to change and to self-critique and self-reflection (this is the reality for most of us within Western university contexts), I wish to explore a way forward that acts to subvert institutional resistance whilst addressing the issue of structural injustice. I intend to do this in four stages. In the first, I will begin by outlining my own pedagogical praxis within the university and locating it within the context of this research. The second stage will explore the extent to which the key outcomes identified for institutional habitus transformation are present within my practice and their degree of effectiveness will be noted. The third stage will be focused on identifying which elements were/are missing from my current practice. Finally, the fourth stage will explore and propose a model to be used as a starting point for other individuals or communities within the university institution who wish to engage with the issue of structural injustice.

19.1 Groundwork for a Transformed Institutional Habitus

I began this research project within a few weeks of taking up my current position at the Auckland University of Technology. The two roles, therefore, of researcher and practitioner have operated hand in hand over the last few years and have continually informed each other – although often at a subconscious level. I was employed to create (plan, design, train) and run a peer support programme to address university concerns and expectations around student success and retention. The programme was intended to use 'best practice' models of peer-to-peer support to enable students to succeed academically at the institution as well as to provide a sense of belonging and community. Early work-related research and investigation was focused on problem areas/papers and identified poor, lazy or ineffective pedagogical practice and support (or lack of support) as key contributors to a lack of student success and retention within these areas.

The original focus of this thesis was to design a pedagogical support system to work alongside existing services to help 'at risk' students succeed academically. However, early thesis-related research soon indicated that the disadvantaging of

certain students was not limited to particular papers, campuses or contexts but was implicit within the structure of the institution itself. Attempts to address the issue would, therefore, require a critique of the institution as well as a critique of the wider academic field.

My peer support programme has taken shape within the context of a growing understanding about the institutional causes of disadvantaging and injustice but without the much deeper understanding that this thesis brings together. In that sense, it is not a response that is shaped by the conclusions of this research but it will serve as a tool to examine how some of my conclusions have played out 'in the real world' and it can serve to identify what is currently absent from the way my support programme operates. Very briefly, my 'learning communities' peer support programme has two full-time members of staff (as at the end of December 2015), 91 part-time mentors – working an average of four hours per week – and, in the 2015 academic year, those mentors had 11,991 one-on-one half-hour meetings with students seeking academic content, general academic skills or pastoral care support. The mentors themselves were split into four separate cohorts targeting different student groups: General academic support, Māori academic support, Pasifika academic support and Chinese academic support.

19.2 Subversion and Praxis

As I am a staff member of an institution that allows and practises structural injustice, it seems appropriate that I apply the transformation standards I wish to apply to the institution as a whole to my own work within that context. As I have mentioned previously, I do not expect willing institutional change, given the resistance evident in relation both to change and to critical self-reflection. However, the opportunity to impact institutional habitus still exists for those of us within the system who are prepared to examine those requirements within the framework of the work we do on the institution's behalf. I have identified seven key factors that I believe are of significance in the creation of a transformed institutional habitus and I will test my own praxis against those requirements.

19.2.1 Addressing misrecognition

A primary theme in my examination of institutional habitus transformation has been the need to address and combat the practice of misrecognition. This is quite possibly the most important component of institutional habitus transformation as it impacts at a general level (across the whole institution) in terms of the creation of an unequal, non-level playing field, and also at the level of each faculty, school and paper in terms of transitions, thresholds, and academic field membership and competition. While this is possibly the most important element in institutional transformation, it is also the easiest to address. In the context of my 'learning communities', I have chosen to address the issue of misrecognition both by naming it and by training my mentors in the way the process works and what is really happening in relation to the advantaging/disadvantaging of students. Misrecognition can be effective only when it is legitimised by those doing the dominating and by those being dominated. By training my mentors to understand how the institutional structures enable this injustice, we, at the same time, show the process for what it is and, thus, remove most of its power. The 'uncovering' and naming of misrecognition and its consequences is not without cost. For mentors and students (like myself) who have been advantaged by the institution – based on who we are and the cultural capital we possess – there is an associated guilt that accompanies the enlightenment that results from identifying misrecognition. Our academic success suddenly seems less dependent on our natural intelligence and hard work, and more dependent on our ability to meet implicit cultural capital requirements with confidence (and, in Bourdieu's terms, our ability to 'play the game'). Being the unwitting beneficiaries of an unjust system does not sit comfortably with most people. However, being made aware of the institution's structural injustice is even less comfortable for those who have been disadvantaged by it. Discovering that you have been disadvantaged due to a perceived cultural capital shortfall, of which you had been unaware, is a cause for potential anger. Working through both the guilt response and the anger response is part of the process and is mostly done one on one via fortnightly supervision sessions.

There are also benefits to uncovering the misrecognition that allows for the embedding and reproduction of structural injustice. The key one is that it builds a deep sense of compassion in my mentors – particularly in those who have been advantaged

and who might have assumed previously that students 'at risk' were usually in that position because of their own shortcomings, lack of work ethic or lack of the required level of intelligence. It also allows for the identification of areas of cultural capital shortfall; this means that mentors have an easier task zeroing in on what is 'missing' and are, thus, better equipped to be involved in the creation of a secondary habitus. Similarly, uncovering misrecognition enables mentors and students to recognise and identify the 'rules of the game' and this works to help enable reterritorialised responses of accommodation. Finally, the uncovering of misrecognition and its consequences allows for the identification of areas and processes of injustice and helps shape and enable responses of decolonisation.

This response to the issue of misrecognition was an intentional and explicit choice. However, its weakness to this point is that it targets only the mentors working for me and, as such, impacts only a very small proportion of the institution. I have no process for engaging the students that we see other than by mentors passing on the perspectives and insights or by a process of osmosis – the very charge of which I accuse the institution. This is a shortcoming and one that would need to be addressed in future practice and in future research.

19.2.2 Institutional honesty, courage and subversion

I am, like most of the employees of the institution, a reluctant member of the precariat and, as such, only ever three weeks away from unemployment. This is a sad but particularly relevant concern when it comes to addressing issues of structural injustice. Uncovering misrecognition is, to all intents and purposes, an accusation against the/your institution of being fundamentally structurally unjust. It is the planting of a stake in the sand and the implications are not for the faint hearted – aggressive and defensive responses almost invariably follow. Even supportive contexts can be challenging. The immediate response I had from fellow managers when I spoke about wanting to teach my mentors about structural injustice was – "you can't do that", "they won't let you do that" and "can't you call it something else? – don't mention injustice". These are legitimate responses from members of a neoliberal institution and they are exactly the reason that structural injustice is so deeply embedded and why it continues to reproduce itself. Addressing structural injustice requires honesty; it requires the naming of what is happening and not to do so simply

ensures continued misrecognition. Addressing structural injustice requires subverting the existing practices and processes. It requires standing against what has come to be seen as acceptable behaviour and acceptable process. It requires the courage to see things for what they are, and to name those systems, structures and practices of injustice. And it requires the acceptance of risk and potential alienation by and from the institution.

19.2.3 The move from aesthetics to ethics

Another key requirement of a transformed institutional habitus is the ability and commitment to see practices and processes as ethical rather than aesthetic objects (see Chapter 16). As noted, neoliberalism within educational contexts sees and judges practices and processes, based on their uniformity and their measurability. A transformed institutional habitus requires the ability to critique systems, practices and processes, based on their ethical implications and their ethical outcomes. In my 'learning communities' context, we have attempted to do this by maintaining the notion of 'kindness' as our first and most important virtue, and by unpacking the concept of misrecognition. We privilege these two approaches as the best means of engaging with students in a way that is most beneficial for them. We do not assume that they have the same experience of the institution that we have, nor do we assume that they are advantaged or disadvantaged in the same way that we are. We make room for a variety of experiences but are prepared for those situations in which the student's experience of the institution is largely negative. We are aware (via the uncovering of misrecognition) that institutional practices and processes are not value free and we attempt to create a space in which students can acknowledge and/or express that.

However, there is one obvious weakness to our role in meeting the needs of student success, retention and belonging. That is, we are regularly faced with the choice/requirement of providing support that, while benefiting the student, allows for the continued practice of bad pedagogy and bad systems of academic support. A significant factor in a student's academic struggles can be located in poor pedagogical practice. We are regularly asked to assist faculties and programmes where this poor practice is acknowledged but where 'political' factors ensure that the faculty/programme coordinator is unable to address this. We then step in to support

the particular paper but do so knowing, without doubt, that we are enabling poor practice, which directly contributes to injustice, to continue. This is an ethical quandary that I have been unable to resolve.

19.2.4 Addressing implicit cultural capital requirements

Addressing the implicit nature of many cultural capital requirements in university study goes directly to the heart of the issue of the advantaging and disadvantaging of students. The implicit nature of cultural capital requirements plays a leading role in the disadvantaging of students without the required cultural capital and it impacts their ability both to identify what is required and then to seek to gain these skills and dispositions. The implicit nature of these requirements has other associated consequences. Chief among them is that it allows participants (students, lecturers and support staff) both to interpellate (in terms of calling into being good versus at-risk/not-successful students) and to impact the identity of students based on unjust and unequitable factors. Implicit cultural capital requirements are particularly relevant in relation to thresholds – where a clear and concise understanding of what is required to pass the threshold plays a major role in student academic success – in academic field membership, and in access to and ability to compete for field capital.

In one sense, addressing 'perceived' cultural capital shortfall and implicit cultural capital requirements is the core role of peer support services and yet it is not something that we have formally addressed (although it is addressed in some supervision sessions). We have identified structural injustice (as an issue and as a practice) and have identified the privileging of some kinds of cultural capital, but our training has not included work on identifying threshold requirements and threshold issues. I have felt some reluctance to make mentors responsible for the critical education of the students with whom they are working. In some ways, this is a paternalistic stance and probably not helpful as it allows students to continue thinking that they are somehow always responsible for any cultural capital shortfalls. Our focus, to this point, has been (unsurprisingly) primarily on impacting assessment results – it needs to move to include critical education of our students and to allow them to become aware of the structural injustice and make their own responses as a result of that.

19.2.5 Supporting the creation of a secondary habitus

The successful support of a secondary habitus is not simply support for addressing a perceived shortfall of cultural capital. As I have noted, the creation of a secondary habitus needs to be agent (rather than institution) driven. The secondary habitus needs to serve the needs of the student, not the needs of the institution, and, by definition, it is a process where the student actively seeks to identify and accumulate the cultural capital and dispositions necessary. Similarly, cultural capital is not the only concern of a secondary habitus. This new habitus may also be required to deal with the consequences of epistemic othering and, as such, needs to be able to help shape and protect student identity. As we know, even a secondary habitus will have an impact on aspirational horizons and this needs to be taken into account when supporting its creation. For these reasons, institutions need to support rather than establish or control the creation of any secondary habitus.

Institutional support systems (like mine) are fairly well equipped to help students identify, establish and grow cultural capital skills and dispositions that are required for assessment success. We can work with students to support the understanding and practice of academic skills and we can work with them to model appropriate dispositions. However, we are not (currently) equipped to deal with the full spectrum of secondary habitus support. Mentoring is a many-layered process. We do engage with student identity issues and, much more regularly, with aspiration issues (particularly in pastorally focused teams) but supporting a habitus that carries the student initially through the awareness of, and then the experiences of, epistemic othering requires a level of skill for which, currently, we do not train. This issue is certain to raise questions from the institution about the appropriateness of students providing this support to other students – in light of other professional services that exist (counselling and well-being). That point is taken but misrecognition is not the sole province of the strictly academic parts of the institution and I suspect that responses of accommodation rather than of the creation of a secondary habitus are likely to result from what is, in effect, an institutional response.

19.2.6 Supporting deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation

The key to this area is to provide explicit support rather than to support by default – which is the current practice in most support services (mine included).

Current practice is problematic because, invariably, it is aimed at and measured by assessment results. The success or otherwise of any support/interventions is invariably reduced to numbers. Neither deterritorialisation nor reterritorialisation can be assessed meaningfully in this fashion. In fact, assessment as a concept seems entirely inappropriate. Deterritorialised responses are student/agent driven and student/agent determined. Support for what, essentially, are acts in response to negative experiences of territorialised spaces is difficult to plan for. They do not lend themselves to strategies and multipoint plans. Support in this case needs to be intentional/explicit but also able to encompass a variety of student responses. This is something that peer support programmes can sometimes support by default. By offering the physical, intellectual and emotional space for students to feel able to respond to academic journey issues, a level of support does exist. However, again, it is not something we have made explicit in my programme and it is not included in our training for mentors.

This issue of peer support not being explicit is also evident in my programme's support for reterritorialised responses. We recognise that territorialised spaces are not value neutral and we recognise that decolonisation may be required (although this requirement for decolonisation is not made explicit). We are good at providing support to help students accommodate themselves to the requirements of academic study. But we have not trained our mentors to think about those actions explicitly. We provide that support by default. In a similar fashion, we support students who have decided to transition out of the university but we have not considered that we might be the place in which students seek their reterritorialised responses to focus on challenge and change for the institution. Our implicit assumption that we are measured by and focused on assessment outcomes means that we have accepted the neoliberal world view and effectively limited our own aspirational horizons.

19.2.7 The challenge of decolonisation

Decolonisation (in the sense that I am using the notion) is, essentially, the subversion of the existent dominant institutional ideology and the addressing of its implications. It is, by definition, a challenge to the force and process that has done the colonisation and it contains an expectation of change. It is the type of process that needs to be carried out by those seeking to bring or to establish change – it cannot (nor should) be done on their behalf. This point shapes the kind of involvement any

supporting process or intention can take. Support can really be offered only in terms of creating an environment conducive, initially, to thinking around decolonisation and then a space from which to practise (reflectively) what is needed. Institutional support then needs to focus on creating this environment and that requires addressing misrecognition and supporting critical reflection.

The notion of decolonisation raises some critical issues/problems for institutions. These relate to control over the content of what is being decolonised, issues around the competence of students to make these decision (an inherent paternalistic institutional response) and issues around the implication for students who pursue decolonisation. These include hostile institutional responses, possible employer responses and a likely direct confrontation with ontological assumptions in terms of self-interest and the homo economicus model. As such, wider institutional support for attempts at decolonisation is unlikely to be forthcoming as it relates directly to having to give up institutional control, and support, if there is any, is likely to come from smaller pockets or programmes that have recognised its significance.

There are two main approaches to the support of decolonisation. The first is the choice to decolonise by members of the institution and that is part of the point and purpose of this thesis. Support for the decolonising responses of students is the second approach and that will require at least four key responses. The first is to create an environment of belonging. Decisions to work towards decolonising are tough decisions and are not without consequence. A support environment that is welcoming and that is 'safe' is essential to this approach. It links nicely to the second response/requirement which is to create an environment where critical engagement and critical dialogue are the norm. It is somewhat surprising that this is not the experience of all university students – it is, after all, a key component of a more traditional understanding of what university education is all about. However, as we have seen, the marketisation of university education has shifted attention from critical engagement to assessment outcomes and accreditation. The expectation of critical engagement now plays a very subservient role.

The third supportive requirement relates to ontology and requires the rejection of 'homo economicus' as the privileged model of student constitution and the

recognition that a variety of models, with a variety of dispositional and cultural capital features, exists and that these will shape how decolonisation is expressed. This leads to the final essential requirement and that is an acceptance that there will be a variety of decolonised responses. They are unlikely to follow the same path and they may well look to focus on decolonisation of subjects other than neoliberalism.

In terms of how my peer support programme supports decolonisation – it is not something we currently support intentionally. The major reason for this is that, until I undertook this body of research, I had not been aware of either its significance or its legitimacy. We have worked to establish an environment of belonging, and one where critical dialogue and critical reflection are valued. We have also paid attention to the significance of alternative ontological constitutions and have provided targeted support for this – however, most of this support has been implicit and focused on meeting assessment outcomes rather than on decolonisation responses. To support decolonisation in an explicit fashion, we would need to address three areas. The first is the necessity for clarity around the point and purpose of the support. Current support exists almost by default so we would need to make all participants aware of the explicit nature of this support. This segues nicely into the second requirement, which is to create intentional training and practice to help prepare our mentors to identify, engage with and then support issues of decolonisation. And finally – perhaps most significantly – it would require us to step well outside the current institutional/neoliberal framework of expectations and requirements. This is would be a very bold step and would likely put the whole programme at risk; therefore, it would not be undertaken without considerable thought. Support for decolonised responses is, for me, a work in progress and it may be that it is not feasible within my current context.

19.3 A Model for a Transformed Institutional Habitus

This final section is intended to provide a model of transformed institutional habitus that can be used as a starting point for university staff members interested in addressing the issue of institutional structural injustice. I want to outline what I consider to be the key features of a transformed institutional habitus that can function

to address the issues and practice of institutional injustice present within contemporary Western universities. Figure 10 below provides a visual representation of this.

Figure 10. From misrecognition to recognition. 2017, diagram, A Nobbs

Those of us working within the institution, essentially, have three realistic responses in the face of the structural injustice present within our workplaces. We can continue the practice of misrecognition and allow the status quo to continue to privilege some kinds of student while deliberately disadvantaging others – and we can

hold to the belief that the student is entirely responsible, and that this is due to their native intelligence or their work ethic. This response reflects the choice of the majority of my colleagues. The second potential response is based on the idea of accommodation within the system/institution. Here, staff members are prepared to acknowledge at least some level of injustice and they seek to limit the damage to students of the implications and consequences of the institution's practices and processes. I locate myself within this particular group. Finally, we can choose to reterritorialise the institution's practices and processes intentionally and look to start addressing the issue of structural injustice by subverting the institution's dominant ideology: in this case, neoliberalism. This is where I would like to see myself and this is the point to which my research has led. This final section is, therefore, an attempt to describe some of the features required to do two key things – to attempt to combat institutional structural injustice and to subvert the dominant neoliberal ideology of the institution. It is my contention that a meaningful transformation of institutional habitus cannot happen without these responses/factors.

19.3.1 Transformation dispositions

I consider it useful to break the transformation responses/requirements into two distinct areas. This first part will deal with the dispositions, attitudes and attributes required in the process of institutional habitus transformation and the second part, below, will focus on the practical requirements of this transformation.

An institutional transformation will require a specific kind of approach in order to succeed and this will include:

- Courage, intellectual honesty, critical reflection and critical self-reflection
- Risk-taking
- An openness to a variety of student responses and a preparedness to give over control of some processes/responses
- A commitment to being intentional and explicit
- Being cognisant that processes and practices are not morally neutral
- An awareness of the need to shift from an aesthetic approach to processes and practices to an ethical approach to the same.

These attributes provide the essential groundwork necessary for a transformation that can address the issue of structural injustice. As we have noted, misrecognition is not just a key factor in the experience and reproduction of structural injustice, it is also, increasingly, an institutional practice. Change requires courage in order both to accept and to acknowledge that the injustice exists and to apply the critical reflection required to address the issue. It requires courage because it involves the critique and the calling out of the institution that provides our livelihoods. Neoliberal institutions do not have good track records of tolerating dissent. Change (within any change-resistant culture) incorporates risk. I have experienced the reluctance of many colleagues to involve themselves in addressing structural injustice based on the (perceived?) risk to their employment and to their ability to meet outgoing costs. Addressing the issue of structural injustice will require leaving our 'comfort zones' and that is not without consequence.

Transformation will also require a preparedness to give up the kind of total control universities now practise. As we have noted, student responses of reterritorialisation and of decolonisation are, by definition, student/agent driven. They will not happen if the space for them to develop is shut down or if the institution seeks to maintain control. Loss of control is anathema to an ideology that worships measurement and uniformity – and, yet, it is essential for any meaningful change to happen.

A commitment to intentionality and to being explicit is essential for combatting misrecognition and dealing with the issue of implicit requirements and expectations. Once the ways in which implicit requirements play such a significant role in the advantaging/disadvantaging of students have been clearly identified, the solution is remarkably simple. It is to let students know what is required, provide an explanation of why it is important, and provide the support needed to enable students to meet the requirements successfully.

Recognition that practices and processes are not morally neutral is a vital ingredient in a context that espouses equality and equity. Institutional values commitments are full of the socially acceptable statements that ensure funding for those institutions from government and from the private sector. However, the proof of

their commitment to these values is to be found in their practices and assuming that students operate on a level playing field simply flies in the face of all available evidence. What is required is the critical evaluation of processes and practices, and the identification of whose interests are being served. This task is helped immeasurably by a shift from an institutional focus on the aesthetics of processes and practices to an ethical emphasis that identifies the moral and ethical outcomes of what we say and do.

19.3.2 Practical transformation focuses

In terms of the practical requirements of transforming institutional habitus, I have identified six key areas that need to be part of our praxis and our pedagogy. These are:

- Targeting misrecognition
- Identifying and uncovering implicit institutional requirements and expectations
- Secondary habitus creation
- Decolonisation
- Deterritorialisation
- Reterritorialisation.

The targeting of misrecognition is an ongoing theme in my research. As Bourdieu has pointed out (see Part 1), systems of domination can function and reproduce themselves only when they are legitimated (in this case – misrecognised) by both those doing (and thus benefiting from) the domination and those who are being dominated. Uncovering instances of misrecognition renders that process unable to be legitimised. The 'defence' of misrecognition is, then, no longer available to the institution or to individual practitioners. The institution may choose to continue its practices but any moral justification is now removed. This is essential for any transformed habitus.

As noted above, the implicit nature of many institutional requirements is a direct contributor to the disadvantaging of some students. Uncovering these requirements allows students (and support processes) to work actively to support student success. It not only makes the process of support more effective (because it is targeted at specific dispositions or cultural capital) but also works against the entrenchment and reproduction of unjust systems and practices. This is also the area where we can engage with the identification (and justification, where appropriate) of embedded epistemology and epistemic othering. This is the point of intervention where we can act to avoid, or at least mitigate, the risk of epistemic othering and the alienation of our students.

Secondary habitus creation is one means of seeking to limit structural injustice. The previous two responses should have allowed for the identification of the perceived cultural capital shortfall and a secondary habitus can be created in order to address these issues. However, there are three important factors to take into account. There needs to be an awareness that secondary habitus creation is not simply about addressing cultural capital shortfalls/perceived deficiencies. A secondary habitus will also impact on a student's identity and on the shaping of their aspirational horizons. Creation of a secondary habitus is an opportunity to engage much more profoundly with student growth than is the simple addition of academic skills. The second factor is the importance of recognising that a secondary habitus needs to be student/agent driven. This is not a process that can be enforced or that should be driven by the institution. The attention here needs to be on the creation of a context/space that encourages critical reflection and where students can discover for themselves the usefulness of a secondary habitus – a process that will be made significantly easier if the requirement for intentionality and being explicit has been followed. Finally, we need to avoid the risk of absolving the institution of its responsibility that comes with the creation of a successful secondary habitus. When our institutions use uniformity and measurement as keystones in any evaluation of themselves, our ability (as staff) to help students succeed with assessments can allow the institution to believe that issues like structural injustice are either non-existent or insignificant. The creation of secondary habitus should be thought of as a stopgap measure (while decolonisation

and reterritorialisation are taking place) rather than as a final solution to structural injustice.

Real, meaningful and long-term solutions are to be found in the final three responses: those of supporting decolonisation, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. The best that we can do (as agents of the institution) in addressing the issue of structural injustice is to attempt two things. The first is the mitigation of its worst affects (by addressing the implicit nature of requirements and the provision of support to address cultural capital shortfalls) and the second (primarily by uncovering misrecognition) is making the institution uncomfortable enough that it will begin to explore its moral and ethical obligations to the whole of its student body. What the three student-driven responses to territorialised spaces offer is the opportunity to address structural injustice fundamentally. The three responses provide the possibility of a real change that includes the following: the acceptance, revaluation and recognition of alternative epistemologies; an opportunity to revaluate cultural capital (without defaulting to conservative 'academic integrity protecting' systems of domination) and cultural capital requirements; and the recognition and revaluation of alternative ontological understandings – where the student is understood as significantly more than a purely self-interested individual in competition with other individuals for scarce resources.

20 Conclusion

Figure 1 at the beginning of the thesis is a visual metaphor of the beauty that is discarded by the university when it operates a system that is structurally unjust. The issue and the reality of the advantaging and disadvantaging of students based on who they are is a stain on the reputation and ethical practice of Western universities. That this structural advantaging and disadvantaging goes largely unnoticed and seems so generally accepted and tolerated is an indictment of all of us who work for such institutions.

The goal of this thesis, as stated in Chapter 1, has been to explore, uncover and understand the issue of structural injustice within Western university education, and to identify means and methods of confronting and challenging this injustice. I have attempted to provide an account of social transformation and the intimately related cultural/structural disjuncture. To this end, I have explored the ways in which: injustice embeds itself within university structures; these unjust practices come to be seen as normative (misrecognition); and how this structural injustice manages to reproduce itself over time. In addition, I have provided a critical account of the way that the educational landscape of the university (educational field, in Bourdieu's terms) has been and is shaped by the dominant ideology of neoliberalism, and how this impacts and limits its institutional habitus.

My major contribution to my field of study has been to provide the twin transformationary paradigms of individual and institutional habitus transformation as theoretical models (and both practical and academic starting points) for directly confronting the disadvantaging encountered by many of our university students. What I hope to have provided in this body of work, also, is the framework of an account which makes both individual and institutional misrecognition increasingly difficult to sustain. I hope to have provided a critique that destabilises misrecognition and the outline of a paradigm that will enable interested parties to begin (or continue) to address the issue of structural injustice explicitly.

I do not expect our institutions and their senior technocrats to experience sudden changes of heart because I believe that: they lack the moral courage to address the

issue; the majority of our leaders (as technocrats rather than educators) do not possess the academic confidence to engage critically with the theories and concepts at issue; and because neoliberalism (as the dominant ideology) has almost totally captured the field of education.

However, what I do wish to accomplish, via the highlighting of misrecognition and structural injustice, is to remove the option of ignorance as a defence for the practice of structural injustice by the institution. I want institutions to have to acknowledge and to own the ethical implications of their unjust practices and processes. I want these to be named for what they are – the unjust, implicit discrimination against students whose habitus and cultural capital endowments are different from what are, essentially, privileged middleclass cultural features and mores.

I also hope that, for those of us working within the institution who are quietly (or not so quietly) seething at the injustice present within our practices, requirements and processes, I have provided a means of redirecting the anger and the frustration we feel. I hope to have provided the outline and perhaps the starting point that we can use to either begin to work at subverting the institution or that we can use to shape, fine-tune and inform our current work and strategies. The risks and the realities of working to change the perspectives and practices of our institutions can very easily lead to enervation. The task seems so daunting and the precarious nature of our employment does not support the courage required to speak out or to introduce new practices and processes designed to challenge or mitigate the institution's unjust structures and practices. The deathlike grip of neoliberalism has brutally narrowed the aspirational horizons of both the institution and its staff. This thesis is an attempt to provide the academic groundwork required to address this.

I have sought to do this by focusing, in Part 1, on exploring the process and experience of structural injustice by using Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital, habitus, symbolic power, fields and misrecognition to provide an overview of the landscape of structural injustice and to provide an account of how structural injustice manifests itself, embeds itself and reproduces itself over time.

In Part 2, I shifted the focus to explore the features of the 'meta' context within which universities operate and sought to identify the key internal and external factors

that allow structural injustice to continue to function. I provided an account and a critique of neoliberalism as the dominant ideology and explored the ways in which it shapes institutional expectations, strategies, practices and processes.

Part 3 then sought to examine in detail how institutional practices impact on students and to name these factors. In particular, I explored how transitions, thresholds, epistemic othering and institutional interpellation are used to disadvantage some students, to reproduce inequality and to act as gatekeepers tasked with maintaining existing hierarchies. The second section of Part 3 then explored the concepts of deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation, the creation of a secondary habitus and decolonisation of the mind as methods by which an individual could look to transform/reshape/modify their own habitus in order to address structural injustice and disadvantaging.

Finally, Part 4 set out to explore what addressing the issue of structural injustice would require of the institution in terms of the transformation of its habitus and to provide an outline of what this transformed habitus may look like. I began by exploring injustice located within the context of university study and focused on issues relating to transitions and to threshold concepts and requirements. Here, I argued for an institutional commitment to supporting student transitions, and for making thresholds and threshold requirements explicit. I then examined the structural features of the universities' habitus and argued that the institution needs to address its own misrecognised actions – particularly as this related to the outcomes and implications of epistemic othering and institutional interpellation. I then explored the key factors in a transformed institutional habitus and argued that this would require addressing the issue (and practice) of misrecognition, the practice of institutional courage and a shift in methodological focus from aesthetics to ethics. Finally, I explored what is required for the university to support the transformation of student habitus.

In terms of how the paradigms in this thesis may be developed in the future, I intend to focus on their practical application. I have presented what I consider to be starting points for both ongoing discussion (with interested parties both internal and external to the institution) and for developing a praxis that seeks to confront and change the practices of injustice embedded within the structures of the university.

Putting these into practice (and an ongoing critical reflection on this) is the next step on the journey.

At a personal level, this thesis has been, in part, an attempt to find out whether or not there is room for people like me within the university context heading into the future. It has been an attempt to explore how realistic it is to expect meaningful institutional change and to explore some of the key strategies required. Once Bourdieu's task of uncovering misrecognition has been fulfilled what, then, is our response? This thesis is my response to the 'what next?' question. It is my contribution to the ongoing discussion about the ways in which we make the university a better place and a more profound experience for all parties, and the way we seek to shape the future thinking and direction of our society.

Through writing this thesis, I have found that meaningful change needs to be structural and it needs to be strategic. For those of us whose role is primarily operational, rather than strategic, there are only a few methods available for addressing structural injustice. We can tweak our programmes, we can fine-tune our practices and be intentional in their delivery but we are always constrained by the context within which we operate and that can be changed only at the strategic level. Without that strategic change in focus (in our case, the challenging of neoliberal theory), we are only ever 'playing at the edges'. In terms of individual responses, meaningful change requires at least three things. First, it requires compassion: compassion for students who are struggling to succeed through no fault of their own, and compassion for our colleagues who choose (and that choice may be the lesser of two evils) to remain within a system that offers very little in the way of future hope. Secondly, it requires intellectual rigour and intellectual engagement. As Part 2 has highlighted, neoliberal theory is inherently anti-intellectual and discourages dialogue and critical engagement. Meaningful change requires participants to critique their practices, to critique institutional systems and structures, and to critique the implicit teleology of the institution. Dialogue and critical reflection are vital parts of any meaningful change. Finally, meaningfully addressing the issue of structural injustice requires intellectual and moral courage. Enervation is a real risk when confronting the enormity of the task, as is the risk to employment when directly critiquing one's institution and, by implication, one's colleagues and management. It also requires the

courage to acknowledge one's own role in the system. I am acutely aware of this as I am someone who has been advantaged (and whose children have been advantaged) by the structural injustice of the university system.

Writing this thesis has changed me in a variety of ways. It has made me more compassionate with the students I come in contact with and it has deepened my respect for those students who have been unjustly disadvantaged by the institution but who have continued to struggle and pursue their goals despite this reality. I have also become more critical and less patient with the institution. This is particularly: in relation to the lack of intellectual and moral courage displayed by the institution; in its strategic avoidance of addressing structural injustice; and in its slavish pursuit of neoliberal measurement and uniformity. Finally, institutional resistance to intellectual engagement – in terms of critical thinking and critical forums – makes a mockery of any claims to be taking staff and student concerns around equity issues seriously.

In terms of ways forward, I am still unsure of whether or not there is space within the institution for this kind of criticism and, if there is, much likelihood of its making a difference. The 'jury is out' at this point but, as an advocate of 'courageous action', I am looking for ways of remaining within the institution.

I set out at the beginning of this thesis with the goal of contributing to bringing 'justice, equity and compassion to a context sorely in need of all three'. This contribution has been evident in the practical outcomes for the peer mentors with whom I work, particularly in relation to how they interact with their students and in terms of how they look both to support and to interpellate them. What I hope that I have also provided is a framework for the disruption of systems of domination and injustice that are embedded within university practices and processes. I hope that I have provided the academic grounds upon which those of us committed to addressing the issue of structural injustice within the university can continue to make our stand.

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