

# NEOLIBERALISM, NEW MANAGERIALISM AND EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES

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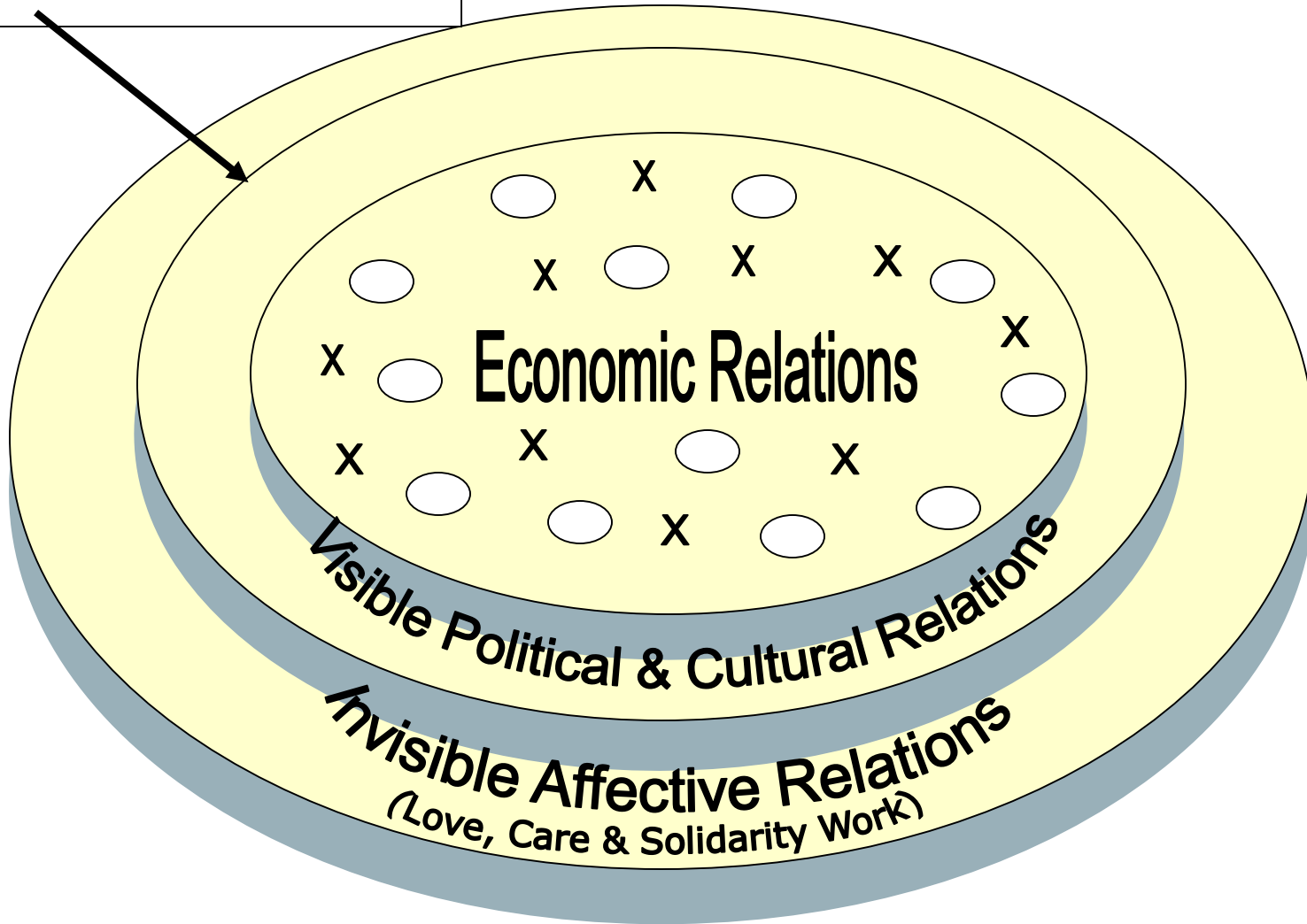


## Neo-liberalism – the market citizen

- Neoliberalism is premised on the assumption that a person's relationship to the State and other members of society is mediated via the Market
  - It builds on the idealisation of choice in classical liberalism, which **prioritises freedom over equality**
  - **Freedom is defined in consumption terms:** citizens are redefined as 'customers' with market preferences rather than democratic citizens with human rights and public interest obligations
- Neoliberalism is fundamentally Hobbesian in character, focusing on creating privatised citizens who manage their own 'risks'. **Focus on individual responsibility for failure and 'owning' success – the development of the 'actuarial self'**
- New educational and social subjectivities are being created

Market Model of the Citizen- person is valued for performance - Rational Economic Actor (REA)

Competing Rational Economic Actors



O = Self interested, Calculating, Competing Economic Actors.  
X = Competition Between Actors.

# Running the country like a business – the case of Ireland

- The Public Service Management Act (1997) instituted a technician approach to management, strongly driven by business rhetoric:
  - ✦ *Advocates of ‘running the government like a business’ and practitioners of the NPM [New Public Service Management] .....have sought, at least in part, to have the public service operate according to ‘market-like models’. NPM is based on an economic understanding of governance in which the market – or approximations to it – is regarded as the ideal mechanism for the allocation and delivery of public services. Central to this approach is the perception of the citizens as customers.* (Collins, 2007: 31).
- Collins, Neil (2007) ‘The public service and regulatory reform’ in Collins, N., Cradden, T. and Butler, P. (eds.) *Modernising Irish Government: the politics of administrative reform*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan

# Encoding market values is ubiquitous – citizens are mutating to ‘customers’

- Department of Education (has a Customer charter)  
- <http://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Customer-Service/Customer-Charter>
- Department of Social Protection – over 2,200 references to ‘customers’ on their website
  - <http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Customer-Charter.aspx>
- Revenue Commissioners – There are 1,562 references to ‘customers’ on its website
- Unemployment Assistance changed to Jobseekers... ‘Probation and Welfare’ changed to ‘Probation’...(Dependency is increasingly demonised)

## New Managerialism as the organizational form of neoliberalism

Lynch, Grummell and Devine (2012, 2015) *New Managerialism in Education: Commercialization, Carelessness and Gender*

- *New Managerialism* involves institutionalising market values, systems and processes in the governance of all types of organizations, including schools, universities, the civil service, public sector bodies and NGOs
  - It heralds a new mode of governance that **provides a unique type of moral regulation** of staff and students
  - It involves institutionalising commercial values in their systems and processes by changing **their nomenclature, systems and operations.**
- New managerialism does not just imitate market values, it replicates them within institutions and processes: the market becomes the primary producer of cultural logic and cultural value, the measure of worth
  - The iphone, the ipad symbolise the importance of the possessive 'I' factor in marketing: **the self, defined through Consumption**

## New managerialism – focus on the product

- Success is judged by *measurable performances* (rankings of colleges/schools/ people) – the educationally/professionally vulnerable are a threat to a good performance appraisal – **care becomes a secondary value**
- Educational ‘Failure’ is construed as an individual problem ‘Self responsabilisation through *choice*’ is the norm, so **structures are made invisible and absolved of responsibility**
- When efficiency is prioritised **ethics are subordinated to pragmatism** – **equality becomes a secondary value**

## New Managerialism: impact on educational culture

- **Focus on Appearances** -promoting /fabricating positive images of self/school /college becomes a new priority (websites, photographs, twitter accounts, Facebook)
- **Pressures to define students as ‘customers’** which would alter student- teacher relations as education would no longer be a right but a market service
  - *Education is a human right: one cannot be a customer to a human right as it is not a market commodity*
- Ireland has always had a ‘school market’ – competition is not new! BUT **Competition between individuals and service providers is now a virtue**—*Schools with unequal resources cannot compete and both students and staff are often demoralised*



## New Managerialism: impact on education and culture

- As education is increasingly forced to focus on what pays, *Market accountability replaces democratic responsibility: marketable courses are prioritised while those who do non-market work are penalised...e.g. adult and community education, educational support services, educational guidance*
- *To ensure that the Managerial project is delivered, there is an increased centralisation of authority (new modes of authoritarianism develop): responsibility is devolved locally but with the centralisation of power & resources*
- *An elision of the difference between public, private or voluntary education: difference between public interest values in education and private or commercial interests are trivialised ...*

# New managerialism – a new moral regulation

- Mediating education through business models of operation legitimates the pursuit of individualised *economic self-interest and credentials among students*, and *career interests* among staff
  - *Habitual conceptualisations then become normalised ways of interpreting and structuring experience (Bruner, 1987/2004)*
- If schools are forced for financial reasons to institutionalise commercial values in their systems and processes they will move over *time from being centres of education to service-delivery operations with* productivity targets
- A focus on product/output leads to a profound *shift in the cultural norms of education*, from nurture (*educare*) and development to producing *human capital*: ‘outputs’ such as PISA scores, Leaving Cert. Points scores, KPIs

## New Imaginaries – New Subjectivities

- Increasingly measured, monitored, ranked (market-led) education will create new ideal-type citizens and organisations
- Educational relationships become defined in **transactional terms** – mean-to-an-end (high productivity, good results, rise in ranking)
- A focus on market efficiency over-rides and weakens other values
  - **First order social and moral values are reduced to second-order principles:** trust, integrity, care, compassion and solidarity are subordinated to regulation, control and competition
  - With the glorification of competition and productivity, **the amoral becomes the necessitous** – documenting scores, attainments, ranks, citations, etc. becomes an industry in itself

## Operationalising the new morality: Measurement

- Digitalised forms of Taylorism are increasingly central to systems of educational regulation – notably **standardisation, quantification (rankings/league tables) and surveillance (KPIs, score cards, PISA scores)**
- Numbers, as signifiers of value, operate symbolically and can be interpreted cross-culturally without the messy complexity of words - powerful in their **trans-world communicability**
- With measurement new imaginaries develop – re-framing how we think of ourselves and our futures in measurement terms
  - **Quantifiable Workers (QW) and Quantifiable Students (QS) ..not entirely new, but now it is normalised and morally unquestionable**

## A Tyranny of numbers?

- Numbers present a **semblance of objectivity** – a myth that what can be hierarchically ordered can be incontrovertibly judged -Lead to self-fulfilling prophecies
- Because numbers have the **status of absoluteness** and **unassailability**, numerical records (**including 'Points from the Leaving Certificate**) league tables, ranking have an unwarranted truth standing that does not apply to narrative evaluations
- Those ranked or rated lack control over their public definition – **done to you** even if you do not participate
- **Rank ordering numbers are emotional in their impact:** they operate through fear
- As rankings and ratings are public events -they regulate through **lauding and shaming simultaneously**

# Numbers: neither neutral nor innocent

- Ranks, league tables, GPAs, SATs, psychometric indices etc. create a common, but grossly simplified, cognitive space for judging individuals, colleges and schools
  - Heterogeneous activities that are often incommensurable are collated and ranked
  - Rankings/ratings designed for one purpose are used for purposes for which they were never designed at institutional - ARWU ,(formerly Shanghai Jao Tong ranking is used to measure whole universities although mainly focused on STEM subjects); Psychometric aptitude tests (pen and paper tests) to predict for jobs with multiple skills across the life course (HPAT for medicine)
- Reification of identities develops (good or bad) through familiarity and ubiquitous citation of numbers, even if neither objective nor valid

## Rankings/Grading - Subjective impact

- Individuals are in a constant psychological state of measuring themselves up and down
- Development of the entrepreneurial/actuarial self
- Fabrication of self images (individuals, schools, colleges) through PR exercises -rise in 'gaming' to improve rank/citations etc.
- Politics of envy is exacerbated - when competition is made a virtue, this undermines co-operation/collegiality

## Instrumental rationality prioritised over Substantive rationality

- In the new managerial system, **substantial rationality (based on values)** is over-ridden by **instrumental rationality (ends-means)** (Weber)
- Any form of rationality that is not measured in input-output models is deemed irrational/illegitimate– refusal to engage
  - Resistance to new managerialism is seriously constrained within a system of singular instrumental rationality focused on competitive gain/profit/success as there is a hegemony of one moral code – **silencing of dissent**



# Reconstitution of the educational person and educational practice occurs under new managerialism

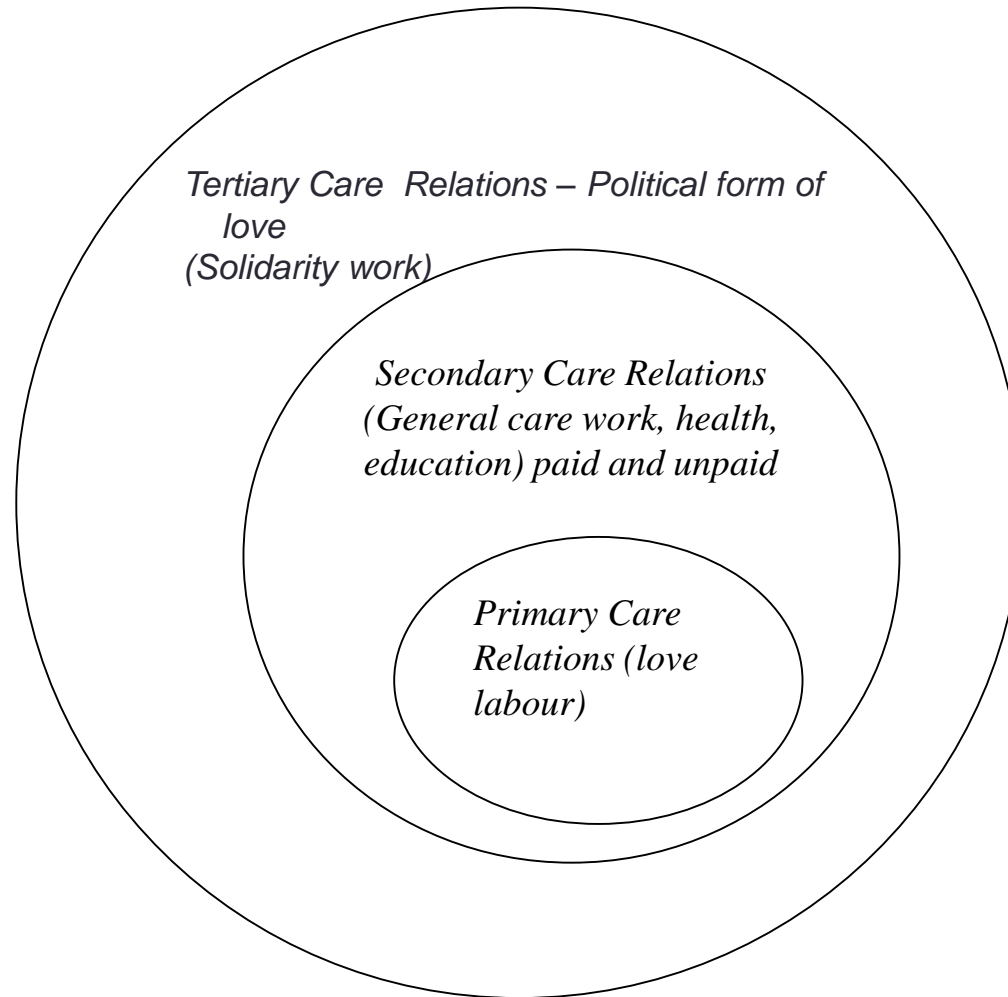
- Lower moral worth accorded to persons and forms of education that are not of market value : declining interest in education of the 'disadvantaged', intellectually disabled, older people who will not be in employment...
- Almost all state-aided further education is labour-market driven
- Demoting critical thinking that is endemic to the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences: STEM subjects are hailed as solutions for all societies' problems
- Return to the *deserving poor* ideology e.g. reflected in growing disinterest in educating Travellers/lone parents/disabled people/cuts to BETI
- Challenges:
- In a new managerial era –the care, equality and developmental dimensions of education are undermined so we have to fight to maintain them.

## Conceptions of Citizenship impact on how we define people in education – neoliberalism is a variant on liberalism

- Core Neo/Liberal view of what constitutes a valid citizen prevails within Ireland/EU: *full citizen=employed adult*
- Citizenship is equated with paid work especially with profitable work (Attack on public service work, public servants reflects the lack of respect for work that is not profitable/business led)
- **Caring is not citizenship-defining work – yet care is a fundamental value of education** - *educare= to nurture*
- Care work in education is increasingly misrecognised (*cuts to guidance services, supports for students with disabilities, language supports for immigrants*)
- The *inevitable dependencies of life*, increasingly questioned, yet dependency in childhood, illness, old age, is endemic to the human condition *and we are all interdependent*

# Care-full model of citizenship: Primacy of relations of love, care and solidarity

source Lynch 2007 (*Sociological Review*) and 2009 *Affective Equality: love, care and injustice*



## Affective care relations

- Primary care relations are love relations.
  - These refer to relations of high interdependency where there is greatest attachment, intimacy and responsibility over time. Love labouring is the work undertaken to create, maintain and enhance primary care relations
- Secondary care relations are lower order inter/dependency relations.
  - While they involve care responsibilities (in education, child care, elder care, health care), they do not carry the same depth of moral obligation in terms of meeting dependency needs, especially long-term dependency needs.
- Tertiary care relations refer to relations of solidarity and do not involve intimacy (e.g. expressed politically through taxation, campaigns for justice etc.)
  - Solidarity is the social and political form of love.

## Why love, care and solidarity are political issues

1. **Survival** – depends on love, care and solidarity (LCS)
2. **Human flourishing** – requires caring and loving, and political, economic, environmental and cultural solidarity
3. LCS is **Productive** – it produces **outcomes** and lack of care/poor care produces negative outcomes- fear, a sense of being unloved and unwanted, anxiety; poor health, including poor public health
4. LCS involves **Work**– physical, mental and emotional work that requires attentiveness, responsibility, commitment, responsiveness; it takes time, competence, energy and is both burden/pleasure. It involves stress and conflict as well as joy

# Why Love and care matter for education

- Love and care relations play a primary role in producing people as social and intimately capable – produces human beings in the relational sense –without the investment of nurturing, people cannot be created relationally
- LCS matters politically, socially and economically as public goods - without LCS, life is significantly less than it has the capacity to be
  - Love relations are analytically and socially distinguishable from other forms of caring especially as they are non-substitutable (see Cantillon and Lynch, 'Affective Equality: Love Matters', *Hypatia: journal of feminist philosophy*, 2017)

## The logics of love, care and solidarity

- Love labouring, secondary caring and showing solidarity have a different **Temporal Logic** to other work – they cannot be done in measurable time: nurturing needs dictate the time frames not economic or policy logics
- Love and care labour time is **not infinitely condensable**; you cannot do it in less and less time. It is not possible to produce ‘fast care’ like fast food in standardised packages – **time-defined care often leads to pre-packaged units of supervision**
- Care is dictated by needs – Love, care and solidarity work has no **clear boundaries**, always open to negotiation in time, effort, investment – site of conflict and stress
- The **rationality of caring** is different from, and to some degree contradicts, scientific and bureaucratic rationality. There is no hierarchy or career structure to relations of love labouring; they cannot be supplied to order. There is no identifiable beginning, middle and end.

## Why love, care and solidarity matter for Democracy

- *Democracy is not neutral in its object or purpose; it needs to have a goal...* (Joan Tronto's idea of *Caring Democracy*, 2013)
- **Care** is not just a **mode of action**, it is also a **disposition** in action and a **goal of action**
- **Care is a way of relating ethically** through attentiveness, responsiveness, co-operation, informed other-centredness
- An ethic of care frames how we relate to each other collectively and how we relate to all living creatures and the environment



## Education is a moral practice

- Education becomes an amoral practice where issues of value are reduced to issues of technical re-organisation
- New Managerialism is informed by the logic of the market; it can and will reframe how we do education unless we challenge its core values of competition and possessive individualism
- Need to reclaim the ethic of nurture and care that is at the heart of good education – most of which cannot be measured in KPIs, Rankings or League tables, SAT scores, Points, PISA scores

## Research funding Market-led and STEM-led: Case of Ireland

*Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering group 2012*

- 14 research priority areas in Ireland –**no reference to the arts, humanities education or social sciences**
- All 14 are in the STI (Science, Technology and Innovation/STEM)-field and are deemed to be market relevant:
  - Future Networks and Communications;
  - Data Analytics, Management, Security and Privacy;
  - Digital Platforms, Connected Health and Independent Living... focused on *technologies that facilitate remote delivery of healthcare and assisted living*,
    - Medical Devices
    - Diagnostics, Therapeutics
    - Synthesis, Formulation, Processing and Drug Delivery,
    - Food for Health - building the capacity to develop and produce Functional Foods,
    - Marine Renewable Energy,
    - Smart Grids and Smart Cities,
    - Manufacturing Competitiveness,
    - Processing Technologies and Novel Materials,
    - Innovation in Services and Business Processes