

THE MARKETIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: RECONCILING THE
POLARIZED WORLDS OF MARKETS AND UNIVERSITY LEARNING

By

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ABSTRACT

The policy initiative to marketize higher education linked to the incremental rise in the amount that students pay for their education has had a huge impact on university life. While the introduction of market mechanisms has been defended as a positive intervention for both funding an expanded system and raising quality, it has been resisted by those who believe that higher education should retain its standing as a public good and/or that a consumer model is detrimental to pedagogic relationships. Accepting that the market model is here to stay, this study seeks to reconcile or re-balance key points of tension between those who support and those who oppose the marketized university with a particular focus on teaching and learning.

Goodman's metaphor of 'worldmaking' is used as an overarching motif for exploring how opposing systems of reference relating to money and markets are constructed and might be re-constructed in order to achieve the aim of re-balancing the marketization debate. The history-focused methodologies of Michel Foucault and Ian Hacking are applied as a means of revaluing the values that characterise current positions.

Major points of contention reviewed include the limits of monetary value that determine what should and shouldn't be included in markets; the scope of commodities; the focus of economic modelling used in policy; and constructions of the student consumer identity. In each instance, arguments are made to show that moral and social values often associated with higher learning can and should be encouraged to function within a marketized higher education system.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

My professional role

For the past twenty years I have worked within the field of academic development in a series of academic and management roles. Most recently my work has included overseeing professional qualifications and recognition for academic staff and supporting quality processes linked to higher education course design and assessment. Increasingly roles such as mine are being positioned within universities to implement institutional strategy, which in turn derives from government policy designed to shape higher education, often with sector consultation. I belong to a professional group that frequently finds itself straddling a divide between institutional imperatives and academic communities who resist those imperatives. In my context this tension has sometimes been expressed as the 'centre' or 'university' versus the 'college' and at other times categorised as managers versus academics. It hasn't been unusual for me to hear academic colleagues complaining about central university services and initiatives with reference to terms such as managerialism, professionalization, performativity, consumerization, or neoliberalism. I find myself conflicted. From one perspective, I identify myself as an academic and sympathize with resistance to protocols that seem to obfuscate, or worse still obstruct meaningful academic activity, and from another I am sceptical of oppositional narratives that seem overly partial, and lack the thoughtfulness and precision often given to other aspects of academic life. For me, one of the learning points of being a middle-manager has been to appreciate the complexity of demands behind the workings of universities.

My choice of research topic is rooted in what has possibly become the most divisive issue that impacts on my role and the UK higher education sector more broadly: how to situate the mission or missions of higher learning within their current market framing and associated regulation. I took my first university position in 1997, and one of my earliest experiences was attending a vice-chancellor briefing on forthcoming changes to the university sector resulting from recommendations set out in the Dearing Report published in the same year. I recall the vice chancellor of my university emphasizing that higher education was about to enter a very difficult period. I didn't realize at the time that the Dearing Report signalled an important policy shift that would impact on my entire university career, or how extensively the ambition to marketize higher education aligned with the introduction and incremental rise in student tuition fees would impact on education itself.

Owing to my role, I have been most connected with aspects of the marketization agenda that relate to teaching and learning, principally the re-framing of educational identities and relations between students, their teachers and their institutions; changing approaches to curriculum design; and the challenges of creating explicit and public measures to assess the quality of university teaching. The overarching tension I have encountered is a perceived conflict between markets – along with associated ideologies, metaphors used to describe them, and infra-structures designed to support them – and the core, and implicitly or explicitly superior purposes of a university education. For many academics the marketized university seems to conflict with other, sometimes deeply held beliefs about the processes and outcomes that should underpin higher learning, and at the early stages of my

investigation I co-authored an article that supported such a view with reference to market mechanisms designed to improve the student experience (Staddon and Standish, 2012).

Other concerns manifest in, for example: the potential for grade inflation to enhance university brand; dumbing-down curricula and assessment to optimise student satisfaction; focussing on instrumental values of learning; teaching for popularity over learning as coined in the term 'edu-tainment'; and empowering students conceived as consumers to make unreasonable demands that undermine both their learning and their lecturers' authority. In a text dedicated to the meaning of being an academic, Fanghanel (2011) expresses this conflict as a discrepancy between the macro-level of policy and the micro-level of academics' practice in relation to their students. She associates the former with a 'production' ideology of education that 'represents higher education as a commercially competitive gateway to employment', and the latter with 'a reproduction ideology and a desire to educate into a discipline according to the tenets of peer-reviewed knowledge, or a transformative orientation in which higher education is seen as having a direct impact on individual or societal transformation' (pp.49-50).

Accepting that the marketization of higher education is likely to persist as a global as well as a UK trend, a key motivation for my study is to revise my own initial position and to explore whether the apparent *impasse* between these ideologies or orientations can be reconciled so that the broader range of educational values associated with higher learning can be conceived as a part of, rather than distinct from, a market framing. This requires identifying and analysing specific points of tension to assess whether they might be re-configured in a

convincing way. Achieving this would open up new ways of organizing the discourse about the marketization of higher education.

Polarization of positions

In a contribution to an edited text on the marketization of higher education, Barnett (2011) writes specifically about the polarization between pro-and anti-market supporters: in one camp, he claims, are those who hold that marketization is a necessary funding intervention either on the grounds of efficiency or effectiveness, and in the other camp are those who object to marketization either because they believe higher education should retain its status as a public good, or because they hold that reconceiving students as customers has an adverse effect on pedagogic relationships (p.39). Barnett maintains that debate between these two positions is rooted more in ideology than empirical evidence, the latter being both 'fuzzy' and 'fluid' regarding marketization, and questions whether a less-value laden view can be developed that reconciles the two. Focussing largely on pedagogic relations he concludes that while markets and higher education make 'uneasy bedfellows' there is no *necessary* reason as to why marketization should impair approaches to teaching and learning (p.46). He proposes that, contrary to anti-marketer claims, it is possible for a market relation to result in a greater and beneficial 'putting in' from both teachers, who engage more with the teaching function of their role, and students, who take a heightened interest in their learning. Premised on the notion that marketization is an ideology and all ideologies have both 'virtuous' and 'pernicious' aspects, Barnett proposes that the 'crucial pedagogical challenge of our times' is to ameliorate the pernicious, and heighten the virtuous aspects of marketization (p.50).

The questions that motivate my study largely echo the challenge raised by Barnett. In particular, I am interested to determine if there is something intrinsically or necessarily problematic with the marketization of higher education, or whether there might be positions that offer a reconciliation of the stated polarization. Barnett's thought-piece goes as far as suggesting that marketization is just one factor among many that might impact on higher education pedagogy, and that market relations, while problematic, don't necessarily undermine pedagogic relations. I intend to take the question of reconciliation further by identifying and examining particular aspects of the debate more systematically. Barnett also premises his argument on the claim that the polarization evident within higher education is ideological. He doesn't give an account of his understanding of the term 'ideology' beyond suggesting that ideological positions are 'fixed' and 'value laden' and that ideologies can be pernicious when they are 'overbearing, brook no dissent, have only a partial reading of situations and claim to know persons' interests better than those persons themselves' and virtuous when they are 'energising, engendering collective spirit, and offer putatively rational bases for action'. The association that Barnett makes between markets and ideology is an important one for me to tackle head-on as a preface to my study for two related reasons. First, the field of economics, which I must inevitably refer to in my study, is also imbued with an ideological polarity that frequently conflates political orientation with theory (Hodgson, 2019). I will need to steer a path in relation to this. Second, positioning the debate as ideological suggests that any reconciliation to be reached will be found within the sphere of politics. I will need to set out my own approach to the debate along with my

disciplinary affiliation and interest to show how I intend to explore reconciliation from a range of perspectives beyond political science or political philosophy.

Ideological positioning

In a text that addresses the future of heterodox economics, Hodgson (2019) analyses the social processes – institutions, culture, and habits of thought – that enable and disable progress within the broader discipline of economics. Regarding the social sciences in general, he stresses the importance of ‘viewpoint diversity’ for promoting constructive dialogue and claims that ‘political tolerance and ideological pluralism’ are just as important as ‘theoretical pluralism’ (p.3). Regarding economics specifically, Hodgson appreciates the inevitability of ideology as a motivating force for economists, but argues that ideological preference shouldn’t be used as a criterion for differentiating between good or bad science. Indeed, in his view the ‘over-politicization’ of economics has held back economic research (pp.9-10). Ideology, he states, sometimes overpowers and at other times is conflated with theory to such an extent that mainstream economics is erroneously conceived to lead to pro-market and pro-capitalist conclusions, while heterodox economics is tied to leftist and anti-capitalist positions (p.10). Hodgson acknowledges that many heterodox economists are socialists but wonders how a field replete with such theoretical diversity can lead so ‘logically and inexorably to a critique of capitalism’ (p.10). He cites John Maynard Keynes as an example of a heterodox economist who supported capitalism.

Barnett and Hodgson’s accounts together provide several pointers for my study. First, is to be on the look-out for ideological bias masquerading as theoretical or scholarly argument.

Being educated mostly in the humanities and social philosophy, I have myself been exposed to traditions of thought most aligned to socialist ideology – namely Marxism – as integral to the works of critical theorists and their followers. Writings by philosophers such as Adorno and Horkheimer have held a particular allure for me in the past. Second, is a steer towards my methodological orientation. I aim to build my methodological approach on the works of thinkers who provide tools for questioning how narrative accounts or frames of reference – which I will later refer to as ‘worlds’ – are constructed. If I am to look for a reconciliation between pro-market and anti-market positions, I will need disassemble some of the more fixed positions or predilections that have featured in the debate about marketization to date.

Early steps in exploring marketization

My initial interest in the process of marketizing higher education as a study theme was triggered by an observation rather than any ideological leaning. Put simply, I was struck by the notion that paying for something affects our attitude towards it. This understanding is evident in the government’s stated rationale for establishing the new funding regime based on a student loan system rather than a graduate tax (Success as a Knowledge Economy, 2011). At an early stage of my research, I found a study of a child-care centre where a monetary fine had been introduced to deter parents from arriving late to collect their children at the end of the day (Gneezy and Rustichini, 2000). Instead of having the desired effect, introducing the fine resulted in a significant increase in late-coming parents, a phenomenon that persisted even after the fine was subsequently removed. The authors concluded: ‘we assume that the fine changes the agents’ perception of the social situation in

which they are involved.’ In this instance, the suggestion is that adding a financial sanction to a hitherto non-financial social situation changed parents’ perception of that social situation in a way that endured. I found other, anecdotal, commentaries relating to paying or not paying for services that added different twists to this social aspect again, this time relating to paying for psychoanalysis. First is an extract from Silvia Plath’s diary in which she reflects on feelings towards her analyst:

Angry at R.B. for changing appointment tomorrow. Shall I tell her? Makes me feel she does it because I am not paying money. She does it and is symbolically withholding herself, breaking a “promise,” like Mother not loving me, breaking her “promise” of being a loving mother each time I speak to her or talk to her. That she shifts me about because she knows I’ll agree nicely & take it, and that it implies I can be conveniently manipulated. A sense of my insecurity with her accentuated by floating, changeable hours and places. The question is: Is she trying to do this, or aware of how I might feel about it, or simply practically arranging appointments?

(cited in Maroda, 2004)

In this reflection Plath wonders if not paying for her analysis means that her analyst is somehow less committed: if Plath had paid, the analyst might have felt more tied into a promissory arrangement in which she invested more of ‘herself’. Speculation about the monetary (or non-monetary) dimension of the arrangement between Plath and R.B. triggers a series of entirely personal reflections about her more intimate relationship with her mother, in particular about the power dynamic between them.

Lacan (1991) adds another perspective on the monetary aspect of the psychoanalytic relationship, this time from the analyst’s perspective:

I don’t mean to insist on it, but you might gently point out to me that we, who spend our time being the bearers of all the purloined letters of the patient, also get paid somewhat dearly. Think about this with some care – were we not to be paid, we would get involved in the drama of Atreus and Thyestes, the drama in which all the

subjects who come to confide their truth in us are involved. They tell us their damned [sacré] stories, and because of that we are not at all within the domain of the sacred and of sacrifice. Everyone knows that money doesn't just buy things, but that the prices which, in our culture, are calculated at rock-bottom, have the function of neutralising something infinitely more dangerous than paying in money, namely, owing somebody something. (p.204)

From Lacan's perspective money payment in exchange for being privy to the analysand's darkest secrets spares the relationship from any other, and more threatening form of indebtedness. It balances, or neutralises, the transaction between analyst and analysand so neither is indebted.

The three instances I have cited illustrate in different ways how monetary transactions have a bearing on social interactions that changes their character. Expressed another way, monetary payment mediates social relations. Exploring monetary exchange from this perspective differs from treating 'marketization' as exclusively political or ideological, and relates instead to what might best be termed the 'sociality' of money. Dodd (2014) captures the same orientation in a recent text entitled *The Social Life of Money*, in which he draws on an extensive and varied literature base to re-envision the nature of money. Central to his thesis is the notion that money is a process rather than a thing, 'whose value derives from the dynamic, ever-changing, and often contested social relations that sustain its circulation' (ix). Dodd explains that he selected the term 'social life' to 'draw attention to the sense in which money's value, indeed its very existence, rests on *social relations between its users*' which in turn are shaped by a range of historical, cultural, political, and institutional factors. These relations are complex but 'open to renewed – and urgent – critical questioning'. I intend to include this sense of a sociality of monetary relations as a feature of my study. It is highly appropriate to conceive of paying for learning in terms of a social relation that is

shaped by a range of external factors, and viewed this way, such relations have potential for opening up rather than closing down the possibilities of monetary exchange.

Disciplinary positioning

My study best sits within the discipline of philosophy. My focus is philosophical because I am primarily interested in questions that relate to theories and values that attach to markets and monetary relations rather than searching for any kind of technical solutions. Frankel (1977), who himself writes on the philosophy of money, sets out parameters of the field of study in this way:

... there are basic monetary questions which are not “scientific” or “technical” but depend on a particular vision of what men and women hold to be the truths, principles, or values which do, or should, govern them. The philosophy of money consists in analysis of such questions. (p.1)

I am for the most part concerned with the configuration of particular visions linked to economic structures and encounters along with normative questions about what money should and shouldn't be used for. More specifically, my study can be located within the discipline of philosophy of education: the central subject matter is education and my methods are philosophical (Noddings, 2018). Philosophy of education is a branch of practical philosophy that links to the parent discipline of philosophy and educational practice, as well as to other relevant disciplines (Siegal, 2009). With relation to the parent discipline, most relevant branches for my study are moral, social and political philosophy. Regarding other relevant disciplines, Siegal refers specifically to associations between philosophy of education and developmental psychology, cognitive science and sociology. Due to the

nature of my theme and interests, I will draw most consistently from the fields of economics, history of ideas, sociology, anthropology and psychoanalysis.

Like Dodd, I intend to draw on an eclectic literature base. To some extent this reflects my educational background, which includes higher education study in English Literature, Social Philosophy and Ethics, and Psychology of Education. I am also used to drawing from a broad range of disciplines in my professional role in academic development where I aim to engage diverse academic communities on postgraduate study in higher education. More significantly though, there is a strong methodological rationale for using sources from a range of academic disciplines. The frames of reference used to critique the marketization of higher education are more often than not tied to disciplinary affiliations or orientations, and universities are in turn organized via disciplinary units that don't necessarily have much cross-over. Within these disciplines, right versions are debated, contested and continuously revised, but at the same time canons, conventions and changes in focus can entrench beliefs within particular conceptual framings that are unhelpful for my purposes. Debra Satz (2010) gives such an example in an account of the evolution of the discipline of economics, which has resulted in elimination of the social effects of markets from its scope. Following Satz's chronology, classical economists such as Adam Smith, Karl Marx and David Ricardo 'bequeathed a rich tradition of critical social thought ... tied to their respective visions of a good society' in which they differentiated between kinds of markets and 'worried about the shaping effects of labour markets' in particular (pp.57-61). They were, however, succeeded by a new era of scholarship in the 1870s which focused on allocation of resources and

amalgamated all markets into a 'single set of equations' so that the social relations in which they are situated were 'abstracted away'. Now, Satz claims:

...almost everything that the classical economists considered interesting in economic life – in particular their crucial insights into the social effects of different markets on human capacities and social relationships and the ways that different markets are socially embedded – has been omitted. (p.61)

When it comes to questions of ethics, 'most economists purport to employ a division of labour whereby they explain only the economic consequences of the use of particular markets for efficiency while others worry about ethics' (p.34).

Again, my intention to reconcile current points of tension between those who support and those who oppose the marketization of higher education will be enabled by retrieving historical schools of thought that precede the kinds of 'division of labour' described by Satz. Drawing on a diverse, or eclectic selection of literature from a range of disciplines will allow me to make a series of novel provocations to challenge binary positions and reframe the marketization debate.

Methodology

Isaiah Berlin (2013) observes that a defining feature of philosophical questions is that we not only don't know the answer to them at the outset, but we also don't know how to go about answering them: 'One of the surest hallmarks of a philosophical question ... is that we are puzzled from the very outset, that there is no automatic technique, no universally recognised expertise, for dealing with such questions' (p.146). If there were, the questions would cease to be philosophical.

Accepting that my project is necessarily uncertain at its inception, it is entirely possible (and necessary) to formulate a conceptual foundation that will support rather than overly determine its progress. To this end, and as already alluded to, I will draw from a set of complementary perspectives that relate to what Bell (2013) describes as 'world-making practices' (p.262). The impetus behind marketizing higher education relates to a vision for forming a world rather than describing the world as it really is. It involves establishing symbolic frames of reference which in turn are used to shape the structures and modes of teaching and organizing learning. I will use aspects of works by Nelson Goodman, Michelle Foucault and Ian Hacking to establish a methodological base on which to consider how 'worlds' are made and potentially remade. Collectively, their claims about world-making provide a meta-view of how symbolic frames of reference are established and potentially reformulated, rather than any particular theoretical lens through which to develop a single thesis or argument. A methodological approach that deals with the process rather than a particular form of world-making will enable me to draw on a variety of theoretical content to both question and re-envision current and often binary understandings about the character of a marketized higher education. And since 'world-making' involves creation of very real institutions and practices which in turn are occupied and performed, my study will include reference to an empirical component. As Satz (2010) points out, '[t]o evaluate markets and their alternatives we need to examine messy empirical cases' (p.33).

Structure of thesis

My central quest is to find ways in which polarized positions on the marketization of higher education might be reconciled. This matters because higher education has been re-structured to align with market principles and because critics maintain that this alignment conflicts with its fundamental purpose. I will achieve my aims by first identifying assumptions that underpin the polarization and then by making a series of interrelated provocations with the intention of challenging and resetting those assumptions in order to provide alternative and less binary ways of framing a marketized university system. As a philosophical exercise, these provocations will be theoretically rather than ideologically focused, and will signal greater 'viewpoint diversity' than entertained within current discourse by drawing from diverse theoretical sources that frame the debate in new ways.

In Chapter 2, I will review selected literature to identify the key points of tension within the pro- and anti-market debate. Source material will include policy documents and commentary that provides the pro-market rationale along with critique from the fields of higher education studies and philosophy of education.

In Chapter 3, I will develop my methodological approach with reference to a set of complementary ideas about the mechanics of world-making, based on Goodman's irrealism; Foucault's genealogy and 'history in the present'; and Hacking's historical ontology and dynamic nominalism.

In Chapter 4, I will evaluate contrasting theoretical conceptions about where the boundary between monetary values and non-monetary values should be drawn in order to ascertain how non-market values should be embedded within conceptions of markets.

In Chapter 5, I will challenge the scope of the economic framing used in higher education policy and argue that it is possible to retain a marketized version of higher education by using alternative models that explicitly include ethical and developmental dimensions.

In Chapter 6, I will review conceptions of the consumer on which the idea of the student consumer is based and propose alternative interpretations that incorporate civic as well as individual interests. This chapter will include review of empirical evidence relating primarily to students' adoption and perception of the consumer notion of value-for-money in order to evaluate the extent to which students are embracing behaviours and attitudes ascribed to them by those who both promote and reject a consumer identification.

In Chapter 7, I will make a comparison between paying for a psychoanalysis and paying for higher education to illustrate the scope and versatility of commodities to include commodity-challenging features.

In Chapter 8, I will review key themes from each of my provocations, and identify cross-cutting themes that can be used to sharpen future debate.

CHAPTER 2: WORLDS APART

In this chapter I build on the themes raised in my introduction by considering more systematically the polarization that I have experienced in my professional role. My review will include policy documentation that establishes a market framing for higher education, and scholarship that focuses on conceptions of how the intended marketization of higher education impacts or infringes upon educational values and relations. In particular, I am interested in how student fee payment influences understandings about these values and relations, which also links to purposes and values attributed to a university education more generally.

I have already referred to Barnett's comments about the polarization of standpoints in my introduction. Others have also alluded to polarization within discourse regarding monetary scholarship. Dodd (2016), for example, argues that debates have been trapped in 'rigid dichotomies' such as state and market that 'force our thinking into unhelpful paths of dependency that restrain us from imaginatively engaging with the future of money' (p.x). My intention is to analyze how much, and in what ways opposing positions are expressed, developed and explored in order to identify points of tensions more distinctly.

This review exercise requires me to be selective regarding choice of texts due to the vast range of possible sources spanning several subject disciplines and types of discourse. My aim is to identify the range of core arguments or patterns of arguments linked to pro- and anti-marketisation positions rather than to achieve a comprehensive review of literature. At the

end of this exercise, I will be in a stronger position to identify key themes that need addressing in order to configure a new understanding of how market values and higher education values can work together, or at least how tensions might be tackled productively. I will have a more expansive understanding about the frames of reference within which conflicting standpoints sit. I will begin with a summary of the main policy documents, which promote and defend the marketized higher education system, and progress to examining selected literature from the fields of higher education policy and philosophy of education that respond to the marketization agenda.

Policy review

Most relevant for my purpose are key documents spanning the Dearing Report of 1997, which was the first to recommend student tuition fees, to the most recent government White Paper of 2016 entitled *Higher Education: Success as a Knowledge Economy (SKE)*, which gives fullest expression to marketization. Also worthy of reference is the latest review of post-18 education and funding, *The Augar Review* (DoE, 2019), which recommends a shift away from full reliance on a market system, though has not been acted on by the government to date. Noteworthy in itself is the sheer volume of policy publications generated throughout the period, amounting to three funding reviews (1997; 2010; 2019), one green paper (2015), three White Papers (2003; 2011; 2016), and a strategy document published by the Labour government in 2009. I will support my summary of policy developments with commentary by David Willetts, who was Universities Minister between 2010 and 2014, and provides background insights into the marketization policy in his recent

book, *A University Education* (2017). It should be understood that the documents under review relate to English policy primarily.

The trajectory of policy has been consistent across governments throughout the period. The overarching stated aim has been to achieve an expanded higher education system that is supported by a sustainable funding model and at the same time ensures fair access and retains and improves teaching quality.¹ The rationale given for growing the sector has been two-fold: a perceived need for more graduates to service a knowledge-based and globally competitive economy, and a social justice commitment to replacing a hitherto elitist system with one that gives anyone with the potential to succeed access to higher learning.² Overall, higher education has been portrayed as beneficial to the economy, society and individuals, although, as will become clear, the sum of benefits has been presented with varying emphases. The key means of funding an expanded system has been to gradually remove government block funding from all but a few subject areas and to introduce and incrementally raise the amount that students pay towards their learning, latterly by means of a loan that is underwritten by government and paid back by graduates once they earn above a given threshold.³ This shift in payment has been accompanied by a shift in accountability, with universities being positioned by consecutive governments to be ever more responsive to the needs of their fee-paying students, who in turn have greater rights to demand high standards. Adjustments have been made to the regulatory architecture of

1 This expansion has been successful to the extent that the number of young people engaging in full-time higher learning rose from below 20% in 1990 to almost 50% in 2019 (Augar Review, 2019).

2 As first recommended in the Robbins Report of 1963.

3 The initial fee contribution established in 1998 was a maximum of £1000. Fees were increased in 2006 to £3000, and again in 2012 from £3,290 to a maximum of £9,000 (Augar Review, 2019).

higher education to empower and protect students within this new arrangement and increase sector accountability, key strategies being to create greater competition between providers in order to give students more choice, provision of better information about teaching quality and graduate outcomes to enable those choices, and better redress for poor service. A closer look at how this policy narrative has evolved will show that while it has been consistent, the emphasis or weighting has changed over the years towards higher education reform expressed in more narrowly instrumental and market-oriented terms.

The Dearing Report (1997)

The Dearing Report established an agenda for higher education policy that has been largely followed and developed ever since. Primary importance was given to the need to address a substantial funding deficit resulting from previous expansion without extra resource. Overall, the Report supports continued expansion of the sector to address economic needs and widening participation, including a reduction in under-representation from lower socio-economic and ethnic groups, and individuals with disabilities.

The Report proposes that the costs of expansion should be shared between the 'various beneficiaries' of higher education, presented in terms of a 'new compact ... between society, as represented by the Government, students and their families, employers and providing institutions' (p.282). Graduates are identified as major beneficiaries within this compact on account of the measurable benefits they gain from higher employment and wages, providing the rationale for them making an increased financial contribution once they are in work (p.289). Also promoted for the first time is a model where public funding follows students'

choices in place of block grants. Related changes to teaching and learning involve a greater responsiveness to students envisaged as committed lifelong learners who should be 'placed at the centre of the learning process', and a stronger focus on equipping students with key skills and attributes needed for 'a changing world of work' (p.34 & p.57).

The Report explicitly focuses on the 'material benefits of higher education to the economy' but claims to 'keep in mind the values that characterise higher education and which are fundamental to any understanding of it' (p.2). Stated values include, amongst others, 'commitment to the pursuit of truth', 'a responsibility to share knowledge' and 'freedom of thought and expression' (p.79). The Report also recognises multiple purposes of higher education, which, in addition to serving the needs of the nation's economy, include individual development and promoting democracy. Knowledge and understanding are conceived as valuable 'for their own sake' as well as for their 'application to the benefit of the economy and society' (p.72). The diverse purposes and values attributed to higher education are unified within a single notion of a learning society: '[t]he aim of higher education is to enable society to make progress through an understanding of itself and its world: in short, to sustain a learning society' (p.72).

The Report's recommendations are contextualised within wider social and cultural changes impacting on higher education. First noted, is a changing trend in the relationship between government and those who receive public funds whereby 'stronger interplay of market forces' has been encouraged to increase competition between providers to improve efficiency (p.60). Second, is a changing relationship between institutions and the individuals

they serve, with greater recognition given to the individual as customer or consumer (p.64)

These trends, the Report notes, can already be seen in higher education through new approaches to quality assurance and a change in focus from 'provider' to 'consumer'.

However, the Report also predicts that future students will not see 'themselves simply as customers of higher education but rather as members of a learning community' (p.64).

Policy 2003 – 2016

The stated policy imperative for higher education to expand remained constant up until 2016, the primary rationale being to retain global competitiveness while at the same time widening access to a broader socio-economic demographic. By the time of publication of SKE in 2016, almost 40% of young people were reported to be attending university and the message changed from a need for expansion to the needs for more graduates to find highly skilled employment, closing an employer skills deficit, and doing more to enable the 'university system to fulfil its potential as an engine of social mobility' (p.7).

The endeavour to establish a sustainable funding model to enable sector expansion persisted until 2012 when the new Coalition Government tripled the tuition fee cap to £9000 following recommendations of the Browne Report of 2010. As with previous policy, the Browne Report claims that the cost of higher education should be shared between its beneficiaries. However, graduates are identified as the main beneficiaries who should bear 'more of the burden of funding' with the private benefits outweighing the public benefits (p.2). Defence for the increased student contribution is couched in stronger instrumental terms than previously, placing more onus on universities who 'must persuade students they

should 'pay more' to 'get more' (p.4). A degree is described as a good investment (p.5). This narrative is sustained in SKE, where it is acknowledged that most funding for tuition now comes 'from those who benefit the most from it' by means of loans that are 'backed by the taxpayer' (p.7). The benefits of higher learning are couched in costs-benefits terms, with higher education continuing to be a 'sound financial and personal investment with a wide range of societal benefits' (p.7). All amendments to funding throughout the period follow the principle that fee payment should not deter anyone who has the ability from accessing higher education, and this commitment is supported by the introduction of up-front loans along with various initiatives to lessen the financial burden on disadvantaged individuals.

Statements about the multiple purposes and values of higher education that characterise the Dearing Report are fewer in later policy publications. The White Papers of 2011 and 2016 provide very little contextual comment other than reference to higher education's instrumental importance to the economy. The trend towards framing relations between governments, providers and individuals in market and consumer terms tied to teaching quality and accountability also dominates later policy and associated legislature. Fortright promotion of a competitive higher education system begins with the Browne Report that envisages a model whereby 'HEIs actively compete for well informed, discerning students, on the basis of price and teaching quality, improving provision across the whole sector within a framework that guarantees minimum standards' (p.8). The Report's proposals are 'designed to create genuine competition for students between HEIs, of a kind that cannot take place within the current system' (p.8). Recommendations are adopted in the White Paper, *Students at the Heart of the System* (SHE) of 2011, which makes a commitment 'to

opening up the higher education market' to alternative providers as a means creating a responsive sector that meets the 'changing needs of employers, individuals and their communities' (p.7). The notion of competition becomes the cornerstone of policy in 2016, when the continued perceived shortcomings of higher education are attributed to 'insufficient competition and lack of informed choice' (SKE, p.8).

Mandated mechanisms to improve informed choice throughout the period include introduction of the National Student Survey in 2005 to directly address teaching quality, institutional improvements on giving student feedback, publication of summaries of external examiner reports, better and more transparent complaints procedures, more information on teacher qualifications, course content and academic and employment outcomes, and, most recently, the Teaching Excellence and Outcomes Framework (TEF). The last of these is designed to both raise the status of teaching and to 'provide clear, understandable information to students about where teaching quality is outstanding' and 'send powerful signals to prospective students and their future employers, and inform the competitive market' (SKE, p.13).

The Dearing Report proposal that students should be 'placed at the centre of the learning process' has also been maintained and strengthened as leverage for universities to raise teaching quality, underscored by the claim that those who fund higher education have the right to demand good standards from their providers. This drive is reinforced by the notion of value-for-money, with universities being urged to ensure that fee income 'delivers overall value for money in improving the quality of teaching and learning facilities for students (The

Future of Higher Education, 2003. p.83). The primacy of students is captured in the phrase 'students at the heart of the system', first mentioned in the Browne Report (p.4) and subsequently adopted as the title for the 2011 White Paper (SHE). The same phrase is reiterated in slightly different forms thereafter, for example, '[t]his Government has therefore chosen to put choice for students at the heart of its higher education reform strategy' (SKE, p.11).

Students were first referred to explicitly as consumers in 2011 when government announced plans to give the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) a major new role as 'consumer champion for students and promoter of a competitive system' (SHE, p.6). In the same Paper, however, it is stated that '[a] good student is not simply a consumer of other people's knowledge, but will actively draw on all the resources that a good university or college can offer to learn as much as they can' (p.33). In 2016 the government announced its intention to replace HEFCE altogether with a new Office for Students designated as a 'consumer focused market regulator' for the sector, operating 'on behalf of students and taxpayers to support a competitive environment and promote choice, quality and value for money' (SKE, p.16 & p.63).

The Augar Review (2019)

The pre-election Augar Review of post-18 education signals a return to the multi-purpose rubric absent from the 2012 and 2016 White Papers by referring to post-18 education benefits to the economy, employers, society, and graduates, and charting a range of social, as well as economic values. The Review also re-instates the Dearing principle that the cost of

post-18 education should be shared between taxpayers, employers and learners, rather than singling out students as the main beneficiaries as reflected in a recommendation to lower the contribution made by students to £7,500. There is no mention of students as consumers or customers within the Review.

While supporting many aspects of the previous higher education policy direction – including widening access, the remit of the OfS to promote competition and student choice and interests, and the TEF as a means of motivating universities to ‘renew their focus’ on teaching and learning – it is the first inquiry to claim that higher education cannot be left entirely to market forces (p.8). The Review identifies a number of areas where marketization hasn’t worked as predicted: there is little price competition, some universities spend excessive amounts on marketing, and some offer inducements to prospective students which signals ‘unacceptable use of public funds’ (p.78). The Review also highlights negative impacts of market competition on academic practice including grade inflation, lowering of entry requirements, and irresponsible use of unconditional offers. On the issue of information, while wholly supportive of the TEF, the Review stresses the need for metrics that are ‘robust and command confidence’ and raises concerns about risks of ‘gaming the system’ (p.75).

Policy overview

It is evident that the marketization of higher education is tied to establishing a stable funding system that has supported significant expansion of the system: putting more of the upfront cost on the student loan means that higher education is much better financed *per capita*

than at the beginning of the period under review, although the long-term costs to the taxpayer remain to be seen (see McGettigan, 2013). The policy argument has been that those who pay should have more choice and a much greater say over the quality of provision, and mechanisms have been introduced to establish individual agency in the form of a reconfigured regulatory structure that champions students' interests. However, it would be a mistake to completely tie the realignment of accountability to payment: the NHS, for example, has followed a similar trajectory regarding patient choice even though no money changes hands between service providers and users. The restructuring of higher education along market principles based on competition and choice aligns with a broader ideological shift in public policy alluded to by Dearing back in 1997, based on the economic theories of Milton Friedman and Friedrich von Hayek first introduced in Conservative government reforms of the 1980s, and continued by New Labour during the late 1980s and 1990s. The most recent White Papers are framed in cost-benefit terms, which gives the impression that the purposes and values of higher education are instrumental to the economic interests of both the nation and individual graduates. With regard to the graduate repayment scheme in particular, Willets records that the origins of the modern graduate repayments scheme are founded in human capital theory: 'the idea that we can consider education as an investment in our human capital and that this capital is increasingly important to both individuals and economies' (p.78).

Two critical and related questions emerge from the process of marketizing public services: what sorts of things can or should be incorporated into a market ideology and to what extent do market values subsume or enable other sorts of values? Willetts provides answers

to both of these questions with respect to higher education. On the first, he recognises that 'opportunities to harness the power of choice and competition' come 'with a lot of ideological baggage' but makes a pragmatic argument for marketization on the basis that other systems have benefited from such competitive pressures (p.220). He conceives of marketization as a way of balancing out the higher education system in which the incumbents are already in very strong position through 'more challenge, competition and choice' (p.277). Moreover, he maintains that greater market competition 'leads universities to focus more on the classic quality of the academic experience' and that establishing a direct link between the university and the student makes it: 'impossible for the university to say they cannot afford to educate a student properly – she can point to the fee being paid on her behalf. It gives her a kind of consumer power...' (p.70 & p.277). Indeed, any interventions to raise quality will only gain traction when they are 'reinforced by empowering the student as consumer' (p.220).

On the question of values, Willets argues that the economic focus of policy doesn't mean that other values can't co-exist. He admits to the 'pretty dreadful bureaucratic prose' of his own White Paper of 2011 and the one that follows, and acknowledges that it can appear as if policy makers miss the point about the value of universities, 'only ever talking about the plumbing of a building and failing to appreciate the beauty of its architecture' (p.276). While politicians can seem 'utilitarian and reductionist and unsympathetic', he argues that ministers should stick to their own responsibilities rather than trespassing on those of others: 'higher education policy is about providing an environment in which students and academics can work creatively and not about prescribing what they should do. Universities

function within a framework of regulations, contract and financial arrangements' and the job of ministers is to get these right even though they don't capture the ultimate value of the university (p.276). Willetts also sets a parameter on the scope of cost-benefits analysis by making a distinction between motivation and consequences:

Evidence showing how university study helps make life better does not mean that these types of betterment are the reason for choosing to study at university. When economists calculate benefits and costs they are looking at consequences: they are not psychologists offering an account of human motivation. Many academics and students are driven by pure intellectual curiosity. It is a deep human instinct. People can and should study subjects they love because they love them. The evidence they reap personal benefits from studying a subject is not a claim that those benefits are the reason they do it. (p.148)

Willetts maintains that higher learning benefits individuals and society in economic and non-economic ways, and that 'citing any one type of gain should not exclude the others'. He represents these ways on a quadrant that includes non-economic individual (e.g., better health and well-being), economic individual (graduate earnings), wider economic (more graduates are good for the economy), and wider non-economic (e.g., graduates commit less crime, are more socially engaged) (p.123). Correspondingly, the relationship between students and their universities is complex with just some of the elements fitting the consumer model. Willetts identifies three aspects that belong to the consumer relationship and which require regulation in order to raise academic standards: exercising choice between institutions, the need for information before making that choice, and a financial contract subject to law (p.280). It is clear from reviewing reforms since the 1990s that establishing comparative measures that enable students to exercise choice based on information has proved challenging, with the TEF being the most recent and contested attempt to communicate teaching quality of individual institutions to students. Willetts

recognizes that there is still a lot of work to be done to create appropriate metrics and acknowledges that those used in the TEF represent just the start of a journey (p.219). He also raises, but does not answer, some challenging questions about the limits of the consumer identity: 'What if you do a philosophy course that dismantles your religious or moral beliefs, leaving you more confused than ever? What is a course in English literature leaves you unable to enjoy the novels of D. H. Lawrence anymore?' (p.220).

I will hold these themes in mind as I turn to academic scholarship that makes normative – rather than empirical – claims about the consequences of the marketization of higher education on educational values and relations. I will see how the themes identified so far are debated and developed, beginning with higher education literature.

Higher education literature and marketization

In order to both give a parameter to my study of higher education literature and to guard against personal bias through unsystematic selection of texts, I will focus this part of my review on the two edited volumes that have been published on the theme of marketization within the last ten years. As multi-authored texts, these promise a range of responses. The first volume – *The Marketisation of Higher Education and the Student as Consumer* (2011) – is introduced as a collection of articles with a common interest in 'demystifying the workings of the marketisation of higher education' with the view that concepts like marketization, the higher education market, student choice, the branding of universities or the meaning of consumption need be unpacked and carefully analysed (Furedi, p.6). The second volume – *Dimensions of Marketisation of Higher Education* (2016) – is positioned more ambiguously

by its editors: on the one hand it is described as a *Festschrift* to Roger Brown, a committed opponent to marketization, and a collection that will 'contest ... much of the discourse that surrounds the logic of the market' and on the other hand, it proposes that the 'tensions and dilemmas' of marketization experienced by 'academics, students, academic leaders and managers ...can be managed through re-balancing the relationship between the market dimension and the educational dimension' (p.3). These texts together, with their complementary aims of demystifying and rebalancing, should highlight key issues related to my project. Only articles that have a bearing on education and educational relations have been selected for review, with emergent themes categorised under four key headings.

The impact of neoliberal ideology on higher education

Numerous authors concentrate on the neoliberal ideology behind the marketization agenda so that, in effect, higher education becomes a 'stand in for neoliberalism' (Scullion *et al.*, 2011, p.228). The meaning of neoliberalism is sometimes assumed and sometimes defined, but mostly perceived to have a negative impact because the values engendered by market rationality and mechanisms are considered to conflict with the social aims of higher learning. A major objection lies in how the neoliberal emphasis on economic growth is perceived to make education instrumental to the economy. As Nordensvärd (2011) expresses, 'in a neoliberal world order where the state becomes a corporation and the society is a market, education itself becomes more centered around solving economic problems than social problems' (p.167). Williams (2011) contrasts Cardinal Newman's vision of the purpose of the university as 'the cultivation of the intellect, as an end which may reasonably be pursued for its own sake' with the 'instrumental purpose of economic utility' that has 'come to dominate

HE' and attendant consequence that 'the aim for many students becomes obtaining the outcome, a degree, rather than a full engagement with the learning process' (pp.171-172).

A further set of objections focus on how neoliberal policy is dismantling public services, along with an associated ethos of social responsibility. Higher education, it is held, is more properly conceived as a public good that confers wider social benefits than a private and commodified good that serves the interests of individuals as consumers (John & Fanghanel, 2016, p.233). Naidoo (2016), for example, calls upon 'academics, students and managers to oppose market fundamentalism and the neoliberal drive to impose the logic of the commodity on every possible common good and social relation ... particularly when such commodification is seen to be destructive of the public good, ethical social relations and social justice' (p.45). A linked theme is how 'economic reform and neo-liberal policies and processes' have 're-shaped' universities 'to create increasingly individualistic academics and consuming students' (John and Fanghanel, 2016, p.233). Promoting individual self-interest is perceived to impoverish the role of universities to 'act as sites of citizenship' (Naidoo, 2016, p.43) and to reduce the scope of citizenship itself. As Nordensvärd (2011) expresses, 'the citizen becomes understood ... through market logic as an individual ability to maximise lifestyle through choice'. While there are some convergences between being a consumer and being a neoliberal citizen, the model of neoliberal citizenship is very narrow in scope and does not take other ideological understandings of being a citizen into account (p.158).

Also disparaged is the impact and effectiveness of market mechanisms designed to enable student choice by means of accessible information about teaching and learning at individual

universities. Brown (2011) warns that the influence of ranking and league tables shouldn't be underestimated (p.21). Longden (2016) challenges the quality of information currently provided by league tables that is based on the assumption that all universities are comparable, and proposes instead a cluster analysis model for accounting for student experience that: uses metrics which measure between institutions with comparable missions; is less dependent on commercially produced ranking tables; does not reduce quality to a single number; and avoids hierarchical measures between clusters. Such a model, he argues would better satisfy the needs of the public (pp.80-91). Maringe (2011) questions the extent to which evaluation scores of student surveys reflect the direct quality of teaching (p.145). Naidoo (2016) highlights the inadequacy of market mechanisms to address systemic inequality. She points to numerous studies which show that 'inherited cultural capital of students and their families result in differential access to the resources required to negotiate contextual and institutional mechanisms of choice', and argues that market forces do little to penetrate a 'national system of higher education that is already stratified by status and wealth', with elite universities having reputation, research success, intergenerational social capital and reserves of wealth on their side (pp.41-2).

While not necessarily endorsing marketization, a minority of authors take a more balanced view of neoliberalism. Some highlight that higher education has always had market qualities. Scott (2016) observes that UK higher education has always been a partial market in the sense that it is an autonomous institution and students have always had freedom to choose which institution to apply to (p.23). Others remind that academia has always been highly competitive, with individual universities competing for research funding, resources and

students as well as setting up their own private companies and selling research outputs, and academics competing to further their own reputations despite the need to collaborate (Furedi, 2011; Foskett, 2011). Barnett (2011) suggests that the market dimension is only one factor among many that bears upon the pedagogic relationship, with others including:

the institution, the discipline, the presence of research and scholarly opportunities, the relationship between a research strategy and the institution's parallel learning and teaching strategy, the degree and intensity of administrative requirements, the accountability and quality regime, the presence of the corporate sector, the student:staff ratios, and the institution's ethos and its care for students are just some of the background factors. (p.42)

Scott (2016) questions whether neoliberalist policy has had much of an impact, and speculates that the catch-all term 'marketisation' is a misnomer rather than a representation of the 'paradigm shift' heralded by Browne: 'Less may have changed than the ideological *furore* suggests'. While there is more student choice in formal terms, it is not clear that traditional distinctions between selecting and recruiting universities are breaking down; there is no functioning price mechanism because most universities charge the maximum amount; and neither the small number of new and private universities nor further education colleges are successfully competing with established public institutions (pp.22-23). Due to the limits of the transferability of the market to higher education, Scullion *et al.* (2011) refer to a 'market orientation' as opposed to marketization (p.228).

Higher education as a commodity

Concerns about how the process of marketization transforms higher education into a commodity provides a second key theme. For some the process inevitably makes higher learning instrumental to other ends, a point made forcefully by Furedi (2011) who claims

that commodification transforms 'what is an abstract, intangible, non-material and relational experience into a visible, quantifiable and instrumentally driven process' that 'inexorably leads to standardisation, calculation and formulaic teaching and reduces quality into quantity'. He also stresses that academic teaching 'becomes something else if it becomes commodified and bought and sold' (p.6). Williams (2011) makes a similar point when she contrasts higher education conceived in relational terms between lecturers and students with politicians' focus on outcomes which promotes the idea of a degree as product.

Some authors develop arguments about the reductive effect of commodification by likening higher education as commodity to other sorts of commodity. More simple examples range from goods such as pizzas from Pizza Hut and fish-and-chips, to services such as haircuts, holidays, bank accounts and restaurants (Nordensvärd, 2011, p.157; Maringe, 2011, p.144; Scullion *et al.*, 2011, p.230). Also negatively linked to commodification is the idea of 'buying' a degree. Maringe (2011), for example, compares higher education institutions to 'factories for the production of degrees which students can purchase using real money and their brains' (p.144). Nordensvärd (2011) identifies educational products as 'programmes of study and support' which students consume with the motive of furthering their own 'human capital' to boost their employability, which means they either 'buy skills' or 'buy degrees'. He identifies these with three consumer attitudes, all of which reflect an acquisitional motives: gaining transferable skills so they can compete with other students; purchase of a 'fetish form of education where the degree itself is a strong signifier or commodity that can be owned but not traded or shared'; and buying an educational service just for pleasure, like a buying a DVD or CD (pp.159-60).

Others recognize that higher education is a more complex commodity and that it can be difficult to identify and evaluate as a product. Brown (cited in White 2016) labels higher education as a '*post-experience good*' whose effects 'may not appear for many years or be traceable to a particular educational experience'. It is also 'an intangible product ... as in any professional service it is not always clear to teacher or student what the outcome will be' (pp.93-4). White himself identifies higher education as a '*credence good*' requiring a relation of trust because its qualities can only be observed by the consumer after purchase making it difficult to assess for utility (p.96). Scott (2016) lists a series of characteristics that complicate or undermine higher education's status as a commodity and make it very difficult to price: for most it is a one-off experience; it is a positional good, which means its value is defined predominantly in terms of its accessibility and/or scarcity; it doesn't become obsolete; its value can only be determined over a long period and is under constant review over a graduates' lifespan. On the idea that a degree can be bought, he stresses that academic qualifications can't be put for sale but must be earned by sustained study and associated assessment where success is not guaranteed. Furedi (2011) maintains that the impossibility of standardizing and pre-packaging academic and research knowledge means that the '*tension between academic life and marketisation is ultimately irreconcilable*' (p.6).

The consumer model and pedagogic relationships

A major concern with marketization relates to how the consumer model impacts on pedagogic relations, summarised by Furedi (2011) as the '*attempt to recast the relationship between academics and students along the model of a service provider and customer*' (p.2).

Most critique identifies a contradiction between market and pedagogic relations. Barnett (2011) summarizes the key arguments used to claim that the deep learning associated with higher education will be compromised by marketization: teachers will focus on student expectations to have a high quality experience and attain a good degree to the detriment of learning itself; students will expect a return for their investment that will diminish their readiness to invest themselves; and institutions will become nervous about awarding low grades so that standards will fall (pp.41-43). Numerous authors across volumes build on these themes.

One set of arguments emphasizes that education is necessarily a mutual endeavour that can't be encapsulated within a service model. Maringe (2011), for example insists that higher education is a 'fundamentally a conjoint activity of both teachers and learners' where new knowledge is gained through their 'conjoint effort' (p.148). Naidoo (2016) similarly claims that consumerism misses the 'fundamental importance of the relational and collaborative aspects of teaching and learning' in which students need to 'trust expert authority in the educational process, and academics need to understand the needs, interests and experiences of students' (p.41). Instead, 'the threat of student litigation and complaints, together with requirements to comply with extensive external monitoring procedures may encourage academics to opt for 'safe teaching' locked into a transmission mode where pre-specified content can be passed on to the student and assessed in a conventional manner'. Even more importantly, 'the reduction of the pedagogic relationship into a commodity relationship may crowd out intrinsic motivation as well as the pure joy and pleasure of

teaching' (p.41). Naidoo (2016) identifies a brand of 'co-creation' as an alternative and more dialogic model to counter the notion of a passive and instrumental student consumer.

The idea that the transactional character of market relations contrasts with pedagogic relations built on trust is re-iterated by several authors. White (2016) claims that the market model damages trust and authority that is key to a 'cohesive and healthy society' and which should be exemplified within higher education via trust in the authority of academic teachers (p.93). He builds a complex argument based on the political works of Hannah Arendt to suggest that the various attributes of markets not only undermine but 'screen out' the moral dimension of trust and authority that should be integral to education, and which involves 'commitments and promises between persons'. He identifies a disjunct between academics and students, with university teachers being more likely to understand their commitment in 'epistemic terms or in terms of attitude towards developing a sense of intellectual curiosity and even love for a particular subject' while students are encouraged by higher education policies and practices to 'understand the university teacher's commitment on a different horizon of skill development in preparation for paid employment'. New financial arrangements such as the £9000 tuition fee generate mistrust rather than trust and undermine academic authority: 'Gradually, education, especially higher education, is losing its moral dimension, crowded out by value-free market norms' (pp. 93-99). Joanna Williams (2016) analyses how transactional nature of student charters, which are mandatory in England, replace and undermine relations built on trust. Charters, she claims, present relationships between students, academics and their universities as a customer service and encourage students to be passive by creating the impression that the responsibility for their

education lies with the teacher or instructor. The 'good students' become 'those who comply with predetermined regulations' rather than those 'who are sufficiently engaged with their chosen subject that their pursuit of knowledge takes them into terrain perhaps even unfamiliar to that of their lecturers' They can infantilize students by 'removing opportunities for them to negotiate individual responsibility, behaviour, relationships and learning' and at the same time their existence 'circumvents the need for individual academics to negotiate specific relationships with their own students'. Overall, '[d]elight in being a student is sacrificed to an instrumental focus upon complying with specified regulations in order to ensure a return on the tuition fee investment' (pp.76-78).

Gibbs (2011) challenges the consumer model by setting up an opposition between temporalities. Drawing on Heidegger's complex perspective on time in relation to being – *Dasein* – he contrasts the concept of time implicit in the notion of *paideia* (transitional personal growth) or non-sequential 'originary' time with the notion of time implicit in consumerism and associated marketing practices, which follows 'ordinary' or 'clock-measured' time and involves the 'for-the-sake of' acquisition of commodities. He argues that education should play a role in challenging consumerism by 'developing our authentic being' rooted in the former rather than 'just delivering consumer ideology and practice' (p.59). Similarly, those who market higher education should 'attempt to promote a community where individuals seek to reclaim their existential temporalities through trust and meaningful engagement with their world' rather than promoting 'educational propaganda' (p.61).

Others focus on the effect that the market model has on development of critical thinking. First is the idea that markets have the capacity to appropriate anti-consumer as well as consumer practices and hence to 'quash' reflection and 'inhibit' thinking that is external to market ideology (Scullion *et al.*, 2011, p.229). Another stream of critique focuses on the role of research-based learning as a means to 're-invent the relation to students and combat the consumer agenda' (John and Fanghanel, 2016, p.238). Norton (2016) surmises that marketization and quality assurance between them are 'damaging pedagogy', with expectations for recompense in the form of increased chances in the labour market resulting in employability-based curriculum design with 'pedagogies such as work-based learning, problem-based learning and skills acquisition' being prioritized over 'more liberal-inspired values such as knowledge, wisdom and criticality' (p.160). She advocates pedagogical action research is a way of resisting the marketization and instrumentalization of higher education, with the goal to encourage criticality and energize teaching. Neary and Hagyard (2011) propose a challenge to the consumer model in the form of a highly politicized 'pedagogy of excess' which they claim re-engineers the ways in which teaching and research are configured in universities by connecting 'academics and students to their own radical political history'. They reference in particular the Paris student protests of 1968, which they claim 'provide a powerful historical and political framework within which to re-conceptualise the relationship between teaching and research' and propose a model that transcends the constraints of consumerism 'through collaborative acts of intellectual enquiry, working with academics and each other, on subjects that look beyond their own self-interest and identity as students'. Through the process of 'real collaboration' with academics, the student is reinvented as 'producer of knowledge of real academic content and value'. Teaching and

learning becomes political when based on an 'agenda of contestation and struggle rather than the managed consensus of university bureaucracies' (pp.209-216).

Several authors focus on the value of choice, described by John and Fanghanel (2016) as the 'corner stone in the rhetoric of marketisation' (p.237). Furedi (2011) holds that the ideology of choice – while seldom realized – 'has a powerful influence on shaping students' identities and works to distract them from realizing the potential of their intellectual engagement (pp.5-6). Nixon *et al.* (2011) challenge the assumption that choice is wholly positive when applied as either as a feature of consumer ideology or a pedagogic concept associated with deep learning. Choice, they claim becomes a burden or an obligation rather than an expression of freedom. Many universities have committed themselves to increasing flexibility and student choice within their programmes, but students often make poorly informed curriculum choices: consumer choice 'privileges instant gratification' and the more individuals define themselves in terms of their own tastes, wants and desires articulated as needs, the more the role of tutors is reduced to service provider who must meet their immediate needs (p.199). Naidoo (2016) agrees that choice as endemic feature of contemporary society can produce more anxiety than happiness, and also argues that student choice is tokenistic rather than real. She recognizes that reconceptualizing students as consumers has brought some advantages, providing greater opportunities to choose between courses and universities based on more information that includes student 'voice' via mechanisms such as student surveys, but various other factors work against choice being impactful or fair. The 'student voice' associated with consumerism doesn't provide opportunities to influence the fundamental nature of provision. Students don't necessarily

have the tools to retrieve multiple sources of information and many institutions don't have transfer and exit mechanisms that enable them to enact choice. Moreover, the fact that universities have the power to award or withhold a degree has 'important ramifications for student-university relations' (pp.40-41).

Students as consumers or customers

The impact of marketization on the identification of students as consumers or customers is the last major relevant theme within the higher education literature. In an article dedicated to examining the affordances and constraints of the metaphor, Maringe (2011) focuses on the extent to which customers are the best judges of the quality of their education: the 'most damning indictment of the consumer metaphor', he claims, 'is the assumption that the customer is always right' (p.148). While acknowledging the democratic value of 'placing the student at the centre of decision making in HE' to achieve greater accountability and enhance quality, he argues against this being done in a manner that 'marginalises the expertise of staff and dis-empowers [sic] them from the educative processes of their roles' (p.149). Student ratings, he states, rightfully apply to aspects of the university experience such as availability of library resources and catering, but students should not be the sole authorities on teaching techniques, learning resources and assessment. Maringe stresses the importance of a multiple view of quality whereby the 'quality, relevance and usefulness' of the experience is assessed by students 'in conjunction with their lecturers, parents, employers, government and other interested parties' (p.149). To strengthen his own observations, he reinterprets the following summary conclusions made by McMillan and Cheney on the shortfalls of the student as consumer metaphor back in 1996: it distances

students from the educational process because students should be 'active producers in the creation and co-creation of shared understanding and ideas' rather than 'passive recipients of knowledge and information'; the focus on customer satisfaction is misplaced because the educative processes of 'reading, writing and doing assignments are difficult experiences which require discipline, effort and sacrifice on the part of students' and the 'rewards of an educational process takes long to be realised'; data processes trivialise the educative intention because they are mostly in the format of self-completion questionnaires that discourage students from 'reflective evaluation of their experience'; meanings are lost in translation because 'wholesale application of concepts and ideas from the commercial sector' fails to capture the 'real values of HE' (pp.150-151).

The theme of transferring into education the concept that the customer is always right and must be satisfied is addressed by other authors across the edited volumes, who similarly assert that the implied shift in the balance of power between students and their educators is detrimental to learning. Like Maringe, Furedi (2011) assumes that the 'logic of marketisation' means that 'the customer is always right'. He links the notion to an underlying agenda to 'discipline academic life through consumer pressure' and an ensuing culture of complaint which has led to a form of 'defensive education' devoted to minimising the potential for litigation. He claims that courses are modified to be 'customer friendly' and academics are 'discouraged from exercising their professional judgment when offering feedback or responding to disputed marks', being more inclined to 'flatter' students than point out weaknesses. He also contextualizes the commercialization of education by referring to the beginnings of philosophy when Socrates criticised the Sophist teachers for charging money

for their services, a sentiment echoed by J.S. Mill when he rebuked teachers who are paid to 'attain their purposes' not 'by making people wiser or better, but by conforming to their opinions, pandering to their existing desires, and making them better pleased with themselves and with their errors and vices than they were before'. Furedi contrasts making student satisfaction a central objective of the university with developing a 'stimulating and creative academic life' in which 'students need to be placed under intellectual pressure, challenged to experience the intensity of problem solving' (pp.3-5).

Cuthbert (2011) expands on the idea that academics should have more agency over what is best for students and argues that David Willetts was wrong to hold that market forces will drive up quality: while students should indeed be central, 'only academics themselves can drive up academic quality, supported by the right kind of institutional management'. Rather than students being at the centre, he proposes the need to 'create within each institution an academic culture which recognises that the heart of the system is learning, which staff and students do together' (p.54). Williams (2011) echoes similar fears about the potential for the demand to satisfy consumers to impact on pedagogy by leading some lecturers to provide 'entertainment rather than education' (p.173), and adds that universities encourage students as acts as consumers through mechanisms such as course evaluation forms and student-staff committees. She notes an irony in how promoting satisfaction might be seen as a response to the perception of students as consumers, but it also enhances the trend towards construction of the consumption model. The more universities present themselves as responsive to student demand, the more students are encouraged to see themselves as behaving correctly in demanding satisfaction (p.173). Nordensvärd (2011) challenges

consumer identity because it represents a narrow understanding of citizenship, and proposes an alternative conception of student as citizen based on rights and responsibilities and alternative ideological perspectives to open up more roles that a student can take on within society. With reference to Bauman, Scullion *et al.* (2011) observe that consumerist culture 'crushes the critical faculties of individuals as citizens in favour of individuals as shoppers' (p.231).

Only Barnett (2011) presents a more balanced reflection on the student as consumer or customer. First, he makes a distinction between a consumer as someone who 'consumes the service extended to him or her' and a customer who 'extends his or her custom to the provider' with the consequence that customers have a greater influence in market relations because they can take their custom elsewhere (p.43). Barnett then argues that markets should be regretted or resisted in so far as they 'induce passivity' or a 'consumer-like stance', but that it is 'far from clear that this is the typical mode of student being in the face of a market' and in any case this same stance could be taken even if education were free of charge. He also argues that students taking on some aspects of being a customer is only problematic if it leads to a commodified view to learning in which the student absolves themselves of responsibility. It could also be possible, he argues, that students in a market system take a 'heightened interest' in their learning, which would be a positive consequence (p.46).

Higher education literature overview

With a few exceptions, the general tenor across the edited volumes is one of both accepting the inevitability of marketization and finding ways to oppose, resist or counterbalance its

effects (Scullion *et al.*, 2011, p.228; John and Fanghanel 2016, p.238-9). Objections to marketization encompass the overarching aims of higher learning, and its effects on pedagogical relations and identities of students and academics. Commonly rejected are economic approaches that are conceived to fully characterize markets and which focus on outcomes and make higher learning instrumental to economic ends. In the policy documents, while not always stated, there is an assumption that economic ends can co-exist with individual motivations and values. In the higher education literature, the economic ends are more often conceived to override non-economic values to the detriment of learning. There is a conviction that the marketization agenda leads to a wholesale adoption of commercial traits across all domains, despite the recognition from some that higher education is better described as market-oriented than fully marketized. Moreover, the market values 'crowd out' other values, be they social, political, educational, or moral.

Arguments against the consumer model are often based on assumptions about the traits of both commodities and consumers. The policy literature promotes a single narrative about the importance of student choice and the need to protect consumer interests, and is based on a political ideology aimed at empowering individuals and improving efficiency and standards on behalf of multiple stakeholders, whereas the higher education literature more often draws on conceptions about the workings of consumer culture. For example, it focuses on how payment transforms higher learning into a commodity and attaches various meanings to commodities often envisioned as goods and services in the form of tangible and measurable products. The transactional nature of market relations is largely conceived to conflict with pedagogic relations that should be based on non-transactional interactions

which are defined by trust and authority, or collaboration. Correspondingly, students conceived as consumers are depicted as purchasers of goods who must by definition be right, be satisfied and be passive. Consumers are also contrasted with citizens who are more motivated to promote their own interests at the expense of the social or civic mission of universities. Only Barnett initiates a line of argument that suggests a consumer or customer identity might be both partial and beneficial to learning.

Finally, while policy has consistently focused on establishing the conditions to enable universities to function as markets by mandating measures to increase competition and choice via information such as the NSS and the TEF, the higher education literature questions how these mechanisms impact on teaching and learning. For the most part they are perceived to reduce learning to outcomes measures that don't do justice to the complexity of learning and to undermine the authority of academics who feel pressured to please rather than challenge students.

Philosophy of education literature and marketization

In this section, I will review the five articles that are relevant to my theme published in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* since 2005, omitting several articles with economic themes because they do not address pedagogy directly. While numerous authors within the higher education literature draw from the work of philosophical thinkers, such as Heidegger and Arendt, it is to be expected that these authors will make more sustained philosophical arguments.

Love (2008) is concerned with the impact of what he refers to as the 'business paradigm' on the student encounter, and with the danger of surrendering an old and distinct form of social relationship between teacher and student in favour of a reconfigured customer and service-provider relation. He accepts the capacity of the world of business to subsume the world of education to a degree, and defends the business model against simplistic critique: history shows that education has always involved 'a more or less explicit form of immediate economic relationship between teachers and students', and the business model has the flexibility to encompass laudable values in the form of educational 'products', including those associated with a traditional liberal education: 'The customer, for instance, could well be in the market for a 'fully rounded educational experience.'" Further, a customer-care approach based on tenets such as customer need, considered interaction and preparation, accessible 'after-sales' feedback and support, and restitution processes, transfers well to a learning context. However, he opposes total incorporation because it elides something that is distinct to education. Love's understanding of markets reflects and develops upon themes already encountered in the higher education literature. He refers to the different temporalities of business and education: the internal logic of markets means that customers continuously demand more for less and academics as 'retailers of knowledge' are compelled to respond ever more rapidly with the consequence that greater importance is given to breadth over depth of knowledge; the business model demands constant change, whereas a community of learning reaches into past and future with an 'awareness of intergenerational obligation' (p.21). Love also contrasts consumers with citizens: 'the entire policy direction at tertiary level, consciously or otherwise, seems less concerned with the formation of citizens and more concerned with encouraging individuals to become consumers' (p.21). And he

cites Marx to express concern about the appropriation of higher education by a capitalist system that reduces 'all human relation to 'mere money relation' (p.22).

Love endeavours to counter appropriation by finding expression for what is intrinsic to education: such an articulation of education 'in itself' would counter the reductionist customer model of higher education along with any other form of relativism that ties education to the good of something else. He uses Levinas' neologism 'excedence' – in contrast to 'transcendence' – to capture the nature of education: 'Beyond any economy of need and satisfaction ... to be educated would be to discover oneself opened to an interior exteriority that puts the oneself at issue in itself'. Love phrases this notion more succinctly by claiming that 'to be educated is to be *put in question*'. (p.27) This questioning is continuous since no truth is 'immune to the question' and the educational community might be conceived as the 'community of the question' that provides the 'conditions necessary for the emergence and continuation of the question'. Such an understanding 'exceeds any economic interpretation that 'wraps up' higher education as mere segment of the new global economy'. Correspondingly, teaching is not about providing answers so much as to '*instigate or allow the student's questioning exsistence of his or her self and his or her world*'. The teacher 'is not there to satisfy the student but to dissatisfy; not to provide but to demand'.

Regan (2012) also addresses the distinction between educational and consumer relations.

While accepting that it may be necessary to engage with the consumer model at an institutional level, she argues the model is inappropriate for the pedagogic relation between

student and lecturer due to the reciprocal moral obligations attached to their respective roles. She begins by outlining some common views about why the consumer model is ill-suited for defining the relation between lecturers and their students, mostly drawn from American literature. The main problem, she recites, is that the consumer model seems to promote adversarial rather than collaborative learning relationships. A mismatch between what students feel they are buying – oftentimes, a degree – and what their lecturers think they are selling leads to disengagement and passivity amongst students, who do not recognise the need to invest sufficiently in their own learning (p.16). The consumer approach might be applicable to aspects of higher education, but it shouldn't define the teaching and learning relationship, which is not 'intrinsically economic'.

Regan interprets the dangers linked to customer identification to mean that 'students have lost sight of the function of a student *qua* learner, rather than as a consumer', and that they will be unaware of the moral obligations of being a student if they don't identify with that role. She develops her alternative model by combining a version of Hardiman's concept of moral role obligations with Aristotle's 'function argument' to claim that lecturers and students have moral obligations to one another based on the functions of their roles. She provisionally ascribes these functions, claiming that lecturers should 'use their professional knowledge and skills, in order to take actions that could reasonably be expected to facilitate learning for all students with whom they have a learning and teaching relationship', and students should 'participate fully with all aspects of their learning, to the best of their abilities' (p.20). Moreover, the moral obligations derived from these functions, 'oblige those

who are voluntarily occupying those roles to *only* take actions consistent with the student or lecturer function' (p.21).

Regan suggests that focussing on what the lecturer is morally obliged to do for the student puts a positive pressure on universities to deal with failing lecturers, irrespective of higher student fees. And the student who fails to fulfil their moral obligation will see this reflected in their assessment grades and degree classification; they won't be in a position to demand from their lecturers any action that is inconsistent with the function and obligations deriving from the lecturer role, including demanding a degree merely because they've paid directly for their education. Regan urges academics to both engage students in reflecting on how they can fulfil their own role obligations as students, and articulate their own role obligations more effectively. She highlights that fee payment has not changed lecturers' obligations towards their students, but it has shifted the balance in favour of students so that these obligations need to be expressed more clearly. Framing the relationship in terms of moral obligations in a way that can be owned by both parties has several advantages: it improves upon the 'student contract' type approaches taken by some universities, which have the potential to perpetuate the problems anticipated with a consumer approach, and can be used in various teaching and learning contexts, such as group learning and end of module evaluation, to encourage students to reflect on their own contribution rather than focussing solely on what lecturers provide. Overall, Regan suggests, the role obligations model offers a more balanced position than a consumerist model.

Staddon and Standish (2012) focus on the aspect of higher education policy that uses marketization as a lever for improving student experience. While acknowledging that there is good reason to improve the experience of students and provide better information to enable choice, they highlight how the measures designed to improve standards along with the centrality of students as arbiters of their learning experience endangers the qualities that matter most to teaching and learning. Overall, they argue that the 'insistent vocabulary' of 'consumer satisfaction, value-for-money and utility' that places the student as primary customer put them into a new relation with their learning that deflects from quality teaching.

First, they argue that constructing higher education as a consumer-good has a distorting effect by putting the emphasis on generalized procedures and the 'control and monitoring of performance' rather than on the 'substance of curricula' itself. Drawing from previous critique by Hart (1997), they emphasise that quality should be internal to subject disciplines so that, for example, 'good historical writing is judged by standards intrinsic to history. It is good *as* history – not judged as fit-for-purpose or value for money' (p.367). Quality itself, they argue is more a matter of judgment than measurement, and it is important for judgments to be contested within disciplines. Disagreement makes maintaining standards possible by providing the stimulus to prevent them from becoming stale.

In a similar vein, Staddon and Standish challenge the generalized nature of the information made available to students – such as contact hours, learning support and assessment regimes – along with the focus on qualifications as products. By contrast, they argue,

meaningful understandings of teaching, learning and assessment require 'greater confidence in the quality internal to a disciplined subject of study' (p.637). Significantly too, measures of quality and rankings such as those presented in the National Student Survey are unreliable. Far from driving up quality, requirements for transparency undermine trust by making it more likely for institutions to cover-up bad practice than learn from it, and competition leads to 'defensiveness and wariness in the face of reputational risk' (p.638).

Staddon and Standish also explore how the service model in which students pay more towards their tuition and expect better quality teaching deflects from teaching and learning. They argue that it is reasonable to expect that some services, such as mobile phone providers or ski instructors, will adapt and develop in response to consumer demands because someone purchasing these services generally knows what they are letting themselves in for. However, the situation is different for students because they don't know what they don't know, and by letting them determine the worth of what is studied 'authority is now being ceded to the novice' (p.635). Within a service model too, choice and satisfaction combine in what Staddon and Standish refer to as a 'closed economy' in which 'desire prompts choice, and choice is satisfied' so that the circle is completed 'without remainder' (p.642). By contrast, the impetus of education can fall outside this kind of 'circumscribed space' as an individual's commitment to a subject, research, or teaching 'deepens the more it is honoured' and the desire to learn 'intensifies the more it is pursued' (p.643). The role of a university teacher within this more open form of economy is to foster a sense of standards in a particular area of study that helps them to form new wants and possibilities of satisfaction. Ultimately, Staddon and

Ultimately, Staddon and Standish claim, making student choice into the arbiter of quality is an 'abnegation of responsibility on the part of providers' in which market mechanisms replace professional judgment. The dominance of 'proceduralism' involves submitting everything to the 'logic of consumer capitalism' and drives out other forms of rationality when the kind of progression of the sort that should belong to higher learning requires a much wider understanding of rationality that enables wider society to conduct its own debates. This kind of progression requires contestation and an element of freedom that exceeds standard measures of good pedagogy.

Martin (2015) constructs an argument relating to the social purpose of higher education, which he claims should be conceived as a free, basic social good on a par with schooling and healthcare rather than as an economic privilege tied into a consumer-choice and debt-financed funding model. He predominantly challenges a previous argument made by John White (1997) that the consumer-choice model is the best for supporting autonomy, but his focus is on how student debt precludes the full range of choices that all but the most privileged students can make about their course of study. This restriction, he argues, is detrimental to the wellbeing of both individuals and a democratic social vision.

Acknowledging that freedom of choice is a distinguishing feature of higher education because it provides for adults rather than children, Martin sets up a contrast between a weak form of autonomy, tied to the current consumer-choice model, and a strong form of autonomy, tied to higher education conceived as a social good. Weak autonomy enables students to make uncritical choices that best satisfy their individual preferences within a

range of study options. Accordingly, Martin depicts a weakly autonomous person as someone, 'who chooses a program of higher education from a range of available programs and competing institutions, accepting without question the view that higher education is simply a means to increasing one's own socioeconomic life chances'. Martin claims that governments encourage this form of weak autonomy by placing more emphasis on employment and other outcomes related to individual life choices than on broadening horizons, personal development and citizenship. Strong autonomy moves beyond this freedom to choose to 'a more substantive, effective freedom' (p.363) that embraces self-development and reflection necessary for both living a good life and promoting a social vision. Martin depicts a strongly autonomous person as someone, 'who chooses a program of higher education after reflection on the nature and importance of higher education within her life as a member of the larger democratic community' (pp.361-2). He argues that individuals should be able to exercise freedom in their study choices to include consideration of the social significance and other, perhaps civic aspects of their identity, in addition to anticipated income (p.362). Further, the value of higher education should be reconceived to promote this autonomy-supporting role for adults. Such a mission, he claims, would mitigate against the dangers of a market model: 'critical theorists and cultural critics have long observed that the media influences and market forces of advanced capitalist society can wear down the political will of liberal citizens otherwise inclined to lead a strongly autonomous life' (p.360). It would transform higher learning from being a 'privileged opportunity for individuals with specific tastes to a morally important good that has value for all citizens.' (p.363).

Martin's key argument is that the debt-financed model unreasonably forces students to make weakly autonomous choices based on future income and employment because they cannot risk the burden of educational debt over a long period of their working lives: they are not in a position to learn what they would like to learn because of the harm it will do to their economic wellbeing. He also projects that the detrimental effects of the model extend to the wellbeing of wider society. Incurring debt means that students make a demand on their future selves rather than on the community at large to pay for their development, which limits their obligation to monetary repayment to a (usually) private lender. The democratic community has no moral claim on them to share their learning for the good of a larger social vision of society, and they are effectively, 'liberated from the demand to pursue an other-regarding, strongly autonomous life'. In contrast students who are able to claim the kind of self-development linked to strong autonomy as a matter of justice are much more likely to feel recognized and respected as full members of society, and to feel an obligation to give something back to the society that supported them. Martin suggests there is some evidence that, 'debt financing of higher education comes at an overall cost to the wellbeing of society as fewer citizens opt to contribute to the larger social vision'. In contrast, he dismisses the potential for 'free-riding' under the social model as non-philosophical and as something that might be addressed during earlier education.

Fulford (2016) is concerned with the kind of collaborative relations that are proper to higher education, which she considers through an economic lens. She outlines both what she considers to be prevalent views about collaboration in contemporary higher education, and Jeremy Rifkin's conception of 'collaborative commons' in which he signals a new economic

paradigm with the power to transform capitalist structures from within. She rejects both these versions of collaboration in favour of an intersubjective and dialogic understanding of exchange based on Buber's conception of *I-Thou* relations.

Fulford begins by claiming that talk about collaboration in education policy and practice is usually tied to production of measurable outputs. For both institutions and academics tied to those institutions, collaboration is often driven by the perceived benefits for the respective parties, paradoxically servicing individual rather than collective goals. She likens this kind of mutual arrangement to Paul Standish's (2005, p.53) notion of a 'closed economy ... that totalises the field of concern'. This form of exchange in education, Fulford claims, tends to exclude 'the opening of a space for the kind of mutual relationship with the other that is marked by a focus on something other than the exchange of 'things' or of 'services'. Within a closed economy of exchange, 'there is little focus on the kind of relationship in which I am responsible for another' (p.376).

Fulford entertains the potential of Rifkin's conception of 'collaborative commons' as an alternative. Rifkin observes a paradigm shift in economics made possible by exploiting technology that can be used to bypass markets, transforming consumers into 'pro-sumers' who produce, consume and share through 'social commons' that are unregulated by government or private enterprise. Fulford recognizes that the marketisation of higher education makes it a 'fertile ground for the emergence of the collaborative commons', and identifies technology-mediated learning, virtual universities and publication of research as potential sites for this kind of transformation. But she also resists the model for education

because it is still predicated on the notions of goods and services, and production and consumption, perpetuating the capitalist ideology that it purports to subvert (p.374).

Turning to the work of Martin Buber, Fulford consolidates the contrast between these impoverished forms of collaboration, and the kind of educative communities that she wants to promote. She likens Buber's *I-It* relations to the kind of 'marketized relationship' that she wishes to reject. These are 'technical' relations where individuals serve merely as objects to be used in order to meet particular interests. In the same way, Fulford refers to 'technical collaborations' that are prevalent in higher education, in which 'the object of my collaboration is solely driven by such specific—and often narrow—expectations of benefit or outcomes' (p.377). On the other hand, she proposes a richer kind of reciprocity rooted in language that is expressed in Buber's *I-Thou* relation:

Buber describes how our human relationships can be played out by way of our encounters with each other *and with language* through a 'life of dialogue' (1961, p. 37), where to be human is always to be-in-relation through language. For Buber, the encounter with the other, and the responsibility that this brings, is indicative of an *I-Thou* relationship, one characterised by mutuality, exchange and reciprocity. (p.379)

For Buber, 'true community arises through ... taking a stand and living in mutual relation with one another', which Fulford further describes as 'a mode of being-with, and living together, that is predicated not on the production or sharing of objects, but on our willingness to enter into dialogic relations that are truly educative'. On this account, 'our education is dependent on encounters that are outside of the self, in moments of relation bound by speech'. These relations offer the 'possibility of a different kind of collaboration, a community ... where there is a dynamic facing of the other'. While Fulford observes that Buber warns against making a contrast between a 'redemptive' *I-Thou* relation and a

demonized *I-It* relation, she stresses the 'distinctive' and 'educative' aspects of former against the reductive character of the latter. She also claims that Buber's *I-Thou* is the 'truly ethical relation': 'Here, I enter into the life of dialogue not with a view to what benefits I might gain, but because it is only in relationship with the other that I can truly be I.' (p. 379)

Fulford finally asks whether there is a place for a new economics for higher education that is not based on neoliberal ideals and 'the closed economy of exchange in our collaborations' with special reference to the tutor-student relationship. She returns to Standish's work and to his reference to an 'economy of excess where my responsibility is never discharged'. She argues that such an economy 'does not arise from an imperative, a set of prescribed rules, or even a general law'. Nor can it be 'reduced to a tick box list which, when completed, demonstrates that we have discharged our responsibility to the other'. Instead, it is 'characterised by an attentiveness and readiness to respond to the other in our everyday relations and conversations in education' (p.381).

Philosophy of education literature overview

As in the previous section, the main impetus of the philosophy of education literature is to expose how the market model fails to account for pedagogic and academic relationships. Love is perhaps more generous towards the possibilities of an overlap between the customer service model and the learning context as expressed with reference to 'customer-care', and also accepts the possibility that the 'product' of an education might align with more liberal than outcomes-based aims. Regan also concedes that the consumer model

might fit the relationship between students and their universities, if not the relationship with their teachers.

However, overall, the critique contains numerous similarities with the higher education literature based on the inappropriateness of using market terms such as goods, products and services, and provider and consumer to describe educational relationships. There is an assumption that values attached to markets 'appropriate' or 'subsume' educational values in ways that reduce education and its measures of quality to instrumental, procedural, and sometimes capitalist ends, and that the consumer model establishes adversarial rather than collaborative relationships in which students more often than not think they are buying a degree and lecturers become 'retailers of knowledge'. It is also assumed that students as consumers are looking to be satisfied – in this case with 'answers' rather than questions – that represent a 'closed economy' that deflects from the open-ended possibilities of immersing oneself in a discipline. Moreover, market ideology inclines students towards self-interest, and individual and political passivity.

Arguments are largely developed by establishing or assuming dichotomies. Examples that relate specifically to students include consumer versus citizen and consumer versus learner, which obviously implies that an individual can't identify as both simultaneously. In terms of the learning process, consumers seek to be satisfied whereas learning should aspire to intensify, dissatisfy and demand rather than to provide. In terms of quality, Staddon and Standish make a contrast between quality as measure and quality as judgment. Regan, Martin and Fulford all associate pedagogic relationships with a moral or ethical dimension

that is missing from market relations that are built on contract or self-interest. Regan claims that the moral role obligations of teachers and learners need to be emphasized in order to offset the shortcomings of the consumer model. Martin associates the consumer choice model with a form of weak autonomy in which he binds together uncritical choices with individual preferences and socio-economic outcomes. He contrasts this with a public good model which he associates with a strong form of autonomy that comprises the moral elements of self-development and reflection needed for living a good life and promoting a social and democratic vision. Fulford, despite Buber's warning against demonizing the *I-it* relation, sets up an opposition between marketized relationships characterized by a transactional, objectifying and tick-box-like 'closed economy' and the 'truly ethical' open-ended and dialogic 'economy of excess' in which responsibility towards others is never discharged.

The authors of these articles also introduce some important new themes. Love adds another perspective to Gibbs (2011) on the idea of contrasting temporalities linked to markets and education, stressing how educational communities have an intergenerational responsibility that is absent from the market imperative. Fulford introduces the notion of 'pro-sumers' and although she rejects this identification, it challenges the passivity routinely associated with consumers. Regan makes an alternative case for quality enhancement based on moral rather than economic values, though it would be interesting to know how lecturers and students might be persuaded to adopt their respective role obligations. Finally, Martin is one of few authors to address the impact of debt on students' sense of social responsibility by claiming that once students have settled their monetary account, they are 'liberated' from any

further responsibility to share their learning with the larger community. Whether or not this is the case, Martin touches upon how monetary and social relations interact.

Key points of tension

As highlighted, a primary source of division within the marketization debate is an ideological difference between neoliberal and anti-neoliberal approaches to politics. Policy makers defend a market approach by championing competition linked to student choice as a means of improving the quality of higher education. A large number of anti-market scholars object to neoliberalism *per se*, with recent changes to higher education representing one example of a general trend to reconfigure public services as markets. Fundamentally marketization is associated with an individualistic rather than a community-oriented polity. Also, neoliberalism is linked negatively to inequalities attributed to capitalism. For my project, this ideological divide is relevant to the extent that conceptions associated with both sides do or might infringe on educational values and pedagogy considered proper to higher education. The most relevant points of contention that will enable me to explore and potentially re-frame debate about marketization and its processes in the following chapters are:

- The extent to which values associated with markets pervade or preclude educational values, including moral and social values sometimes linked to the broader mission of higher education. Within the policy rationale, it is assumed that market mechanisms co-exist with, rather than subsume educational values such as trustful relations based on authority, curiosity, responsibility to others, and pursuit of truth for its own sake, but these are largely omitted from policy documents. In contrast, anti-

marketers for the most part conceive of marketization as a negation or appropriation of other sorts of values.

- Linked to an understanding of the scope of markets, the extent to which marketization enables or reduces the mission of higher education by making it instrumental to economic ends. Policy documents predominantly communicate higher education's economic value to the nation in terms of global competitiveness and to individuals in terms of a graduate premium, with the task of policy conceived as creating economic stability for higher education. Anti-marketers resist a conception of higher education defined by its economic outcomes, asserting instead the intrinsic or non-economic value of higher learning to individuals and society more broadly.
- Claims that markets promote individual autonomy (or choice) versus claims that markets privilege a negatively construed individualism that conflicts with the kind of 'citizen' higher education should aim to cultivate.
- The extent to which the consumer model facilitates or impedes higher learning by identifying students as consumers or customers, and higher education as a commodity. For policy makers, the consumer model establishes a productive accountability between students and providers. For opponents, the model disrupts the balance of pedagogic relations, for example by putting the onus on consumer

satisfaction, whereas higher learning should be predicated on generating new wants and desires, or even dissatisfaction.

- Consumer identification is construed as empowering for pro-marketers who emphasize choice and a relation of direct accountability, and as destructive to anti-marketers who cannot reconcile how the student as consumer can be an effective learner. For the latter, consumer identity erodes trust between students and their teachers and/or encourages passivity on the part of learners.
- Higher education conceived as a commodity is objectionable to anti-marketers who commonly identify commodification with products (a degree), which undermines the process aspect of learning and encourages students to conceive of learning as acquisition.

I will address these tensions in the following ways:

In Chapter 4, I will explore ways of conceiving the scope of monetary value and the market to determine what range of things can and should be included within the monetary sphere and with what consequences. This will enable me to assess the extent to which educational and economic values might co-exist within a marketized model of higher education. In particular, I am invested in finding ways of conceptualizing a marketized higher education system in which monetary and non-monetary aspects can work together.

In Chapter 5, I will review the economic model that underpins higher education policy, which portrays education as a series of costs and benefits and an investment for students. I will use the work of Adam Smith and contemporary scholars who use his moral theory to explore alternative economic approaches which marry economics with ethics.

Chapter 6 will focus on the history and traditions that contribute to the making of the consumer figure who lies behind conceptions of the student consumer. My aim will be to propose a conception of the consumer who transcends the binary portraits depicted by pro- and anti-marketers in a way that is aligned to higher learning. In addition to re-configuring the notional consumer, I will investigate the extent to which real consumers and real students reflect the labels that are attributed to them by adopting consumer traits. This will be achieved with special reference to how students relate and use the consumer term of value-for-money. The value-for-money metaphor gets to the crux of the marketization debate in the sense that it invites individuals to assess which values they offset against payment for learning, and the extent to which payment mediates their experience.

In Chapter 7, I will probe the scope of commodities by making a comparison between paying for a higher education and paying for a psychoanalysis. The aim behind choosing psychoanalysis as a comparator is to extend discussion beyond the more usual analogies made between higher education as commodity and goods that can be 'bought'. Like education, psychoanalysis can be conceived as a highly complex commodity that encompasses unpredictable processes and outcomes.

Together these studies will subvert the binaries identified in the literature by positing new ways of framing the marketization. But before exploring these themes, the next Chapter will be dedicated to consolidating a methodological approach that enables me to dismantle the dichotomous positions I have identified.

CHAPTER 3: WORLDMAKING PRACTICES

In my introduction, I expressed an orientation that draws upon a set of complementary perspectives encapsulated by what Duncan Bell describes as ‘worldmaking practices’ (2013, p.262). Both the educational policy and normative beliefs about the missions of higher learning that trigger any need for my study can be well-described as ‘worldmaking’ enterprises, albeit enterprises that often depict conflicting world versions. This is because they involve constructions of symbolic frames of reference, each aiming to create particular versions of the educational world. In the case of policy, these constructions are also explicitly promoted by new regulatory structures designed to embed a vision of the world into practice, such as creation of the TEF to spur universities to prioritize teaching and learning and to communicate teaching quality to students, and aligning quality assurance to consumer rights legislation.

My own aims involve looking for ways of realigning opposing frames of reference that result in the various dichotomies identified in my literature review, such as the polarization between the intrinsic and instrumental values of higher learning or between consumers and learners and citizens. In terms of a methodology, I am looking for some theoretical tools to help me to both un-pick frames of reference and open up possibilities for their reconfiguration. My ambition is not to uncover truths or to propose a particular version of a right way forward for higher education epistemologically, politically or morally. I will however make my own attempt at worldmaking by dismantling prevalent binaries and offering new persuasions. As Bell points out, scholars themselves are world-makers,

‘narrating descriptions and crafting stories that can sometimes (re)orient the beliefs and attitudes of others’ (2013, p.261). My approach to ‘crafting stories’ will be to configure a series of provocations that destabilize the binary positions that I have identified and suggest alternatives that make a marriage between markets and higher learning both imaginable and possible. In this Chapter, I will explain more fully how I interpret the notion of worldmaking practices and how related contributions from three philosophers in particular provide tools to facilitate the process of both disassembling and reconfiguring systems of description linked to the marketization of higher education. My overall aim is to give analytical substance to the worldmaking metaphor. To this end: Nelson Goodman (1978) provides an initial account of the metaphor along with a provisional overview of the structures through which worlds are made and re-made; Michel Foucault (1977 and 1980) adds a historical dimension to worldmaking by stressing the value of using material from the past to re-critically engage with a re-envision the present; and Ian Hacking applies the approaches of both Goodman and Foucault to the processes of making up particular ‘things’ such as classifications of people that in turn provides new ways of being.

Ways of Worldmaking

The ideas of Nelson Goodman (1978) provide the source for the ‘worldmaking’ metaphor along with a useful initial summary explanation of its meaning and application. To contextualize, in *Ways of Worldmaking* Goodman describes himself a nominalist – a system that ‘speaks only of individuals, banning all talk of classes’ – and defines his philosophical position with respect to worldmaking as ‘radical relativism’ with ‘severe constraints’. By this

he means that there are many individual and viable world versions as opposed to any single version that corresponds with 'the world' as such, but not all versions are equally fitting or true: '[w]illingness to accept countless alternative true or right world-versions does not mean that everything goes, that tall stories are as good as short ones, that truths are no longer distinguished from falsehoods, but only that truth must be otherwise conceived than as correspondence with a ready-made world' (p.94).

With reference to William James, Goodman recalls that in one sense questioning whether there is one or many worlds is pointless: 'If there is but one world, it embraces a multiplicity of contrasting aspects; if there are many worlds, the collection of them all is one. The world may be taken as many, or the many worlds taken as one; whether one or many depends on the way of taking' (p.2). However, he stresses, we might usefully talk of the multiplicity of worlds in the sense that there are many different world versions and there is no call upon us to reduce one to another: 'many different world-versions are of independent interest and importance, without any requirement or presumption of reducibility to a single base' (p.4). In this fashion, Goodman gives a simple illustration of how seemingly contradictory statements might both be true: 'The sun is always moving' and the 'The sun never moves'. These statements may be true although at odds with one another because they sit within different frames of reference. Frames of reference themselves belong less to what is described than to the 'systems of description' to which they belong, which in turn confine the 'ways of describing whatever is described'. In this way, contrasting versions of the world can be relative to one another, with each being right under a given system, for a given

science, a given artist or a given perceiver and situation: 'Here again we turn from describing or depicting 'the world' to talking of descriptions and depictions...' (pp.2-3).

An important question for Goodman relates to the notion of the 'rightness of rendering', which links to the 'severe constraints' part of his irrealism or radical relativism. By 'rendering' he refers to all the ways of making and presenting worlds, and by 'rightness' he refers to both notions of truth and standards of acceptability (pp.109-110). He claims that the truth of statements and the rightness of descriptions, representations, exemplifications and expressions is 'primarily a matter of fit: fit to what is referred to in one way or another, or to other renderings, or to modes and manners of organization' (p.138). Knowing or understanding relates to 'the discovering and devising of fit of all sorts' rather than to acquiring true belief. Accordingly, the rightness of any categorical system is more about persuasion than truth: 'what needs to be shown is not that it is true, but what it can do. Put crassly, what is called for in such cases is less like arguing than selling' (p.129).

When it comes to the matter of how worlds are made, Goodman looks for overall patterns of organization: if 'contrasting right versions not all reducible to one are countenanced, unity is to be sought not in an ambivalent or neutral *something* beneath these versions but in an overall organization embracing them' (p.5). He tries to find this overall organization by studying types and functions of symbols and symbol systems, arguing that 'universes of worlds as well as worlds themselves may be built in many ways' (p.5). An important feature of worldmaking is that worlds must be made from other worlds since they can never be made from nothing: 'Worldmaking as we know it always starts from other worlds already on

hand: the making is a remaking' (p.6). Goodman is concerned with how we build a world out of others.

Although many of Goodman's examples of worldmaking relate to claims designed to challenge metaphysical realism – such as the movement or non-movement of the sun – his conception of the range of methods of worldmaking spans many symbolic forms of reference and is as applicable to works of arts as to correspondence theories. World versions can be made up of many kinds of symbols – pictorial and musical as well as verbal (p.94). Taken as an overarching metaphor then, his depiction of worldmaking provides a useful scaffold for my project. First, conceiving of the worlds of higher education and markets as distinctive linguistic frames of reference that fit within broader systems of description helps to articulate why there is a debate in the first place. Aside from observing any altered behaviours of students and academics as a result of the process of marketization, work is needed at the level of description to conceptualize if and how the two worlds can work side-by-side. Policy makers have for the large part constructed a rationale for the reform of higher education on an economic system of description involving a rudimentary depiction of how markets work. For the anti-marketeters, it seems as if the system of description that belongs to markets is being imposed onto a different and superior system of descriptions that should be used to depict higher education. It is a mis-rendering. That education is often paid for and hence commodified in various other sectors and contexts is not so much the issue as that it appears as if there is an attempt to reduce one world to another. As Goodman states, '[t]o demand full and sole reducibility ... is to forego nearly all other versions' (p.5). Second, the idea that worlds can be re-made opens up the potential for

reframing some of the points of contention or differences between marketized and educational versions and visions of higher learning as described in my review of literature. Can the sphere of markets be interpreted to encompass process, as well as instrumental aims? Can moral and social values be incorporated into economic modelling? Can the consumer model be envisioned to encompass richer relations than those of self-interested consumer and service provider? And can consumers also be conceived as citizens? Third, and perhaps with ironic relevance to my study, Goodman points to the importance of 'selling' world versions whose rightness is based on fitness with other renderings or modes of organization. A part of successful worldmaking must involve convincing others to accept any new system of description. With respect to the marketization of higher education, it is clear that the government has tried to convince fee-paying students and the public more generally of both the rightness and the coherence of a new mode of organization in which students who pay have the necessary information to make good university choices and hold their universities to account with regard to quality, a message that has been reinforced by repeated use of metaphors such as value-for-money and putting students at the heart of the system. At the same time, those with influence in higher education have attempted to offset perceived undesirable aspects of consumer identification with an alternative vocabulary, such as the notion of students as partners (Ramsden, 2008; Wenstone, 2015). A noticeably unsuccessful attempt to build a new world version from old renderings was New Labour's initiative to embed the notion of citizen-consumers, a failure that Clarke *et al.* (2007) attribute to a lack of fit between the consumer centred imagery of New Labour and public responses.

While of philosophical interest, questions concerning the persuasiveness of Goodman's irrealism are less relevant to my project than his descriptions of various strategies for worldmaking.⁴ Goodman compiles a list of ways of worldmaking with the aim of setting out 'something of the variety of processes in constant use' rather than creating a comprehensive, clear-cut, or mandatory set of classifications. He observes that no systemization could be ultimate because there is 'no more a unique world of worlds than there is a unique world' (p.17). His list includes the classifications of composition and decomposition, weighting or emphasis, ordering, deletion or supplementation, and deformation, which may overlap or be combined in the process of worldmaking (pp.5-6). An overview of these will provide some analytical tools that I can use for both loosening and re-making world versions:

- Composition and decomposition consist of 'taking apart and putting together, often conjointly'. We divide wholes into parts and partition 'kinds into subspecies, analyzing complexes into component features, drawing distinctions'; or compose wholes and 'kinds out of parts and members and subclasses, combining features into complexes, and making connections'. The process of composition or decomposition is often effected, assisted or consolidated by applying labels: 'names, predicates, gestures, pictures etc. Thus, for example, temporally diverse events are brought together under a proper name or identified as making up 'an object' or 'a person'... Metaphorical transfer – for example applying taste predicates to sounds – may effect

4 For critiques of Goodman's irrealism see Putnam (1979); Mitchell (1991); Cox (2003).

a double re-organization, both re-sorting the new realm of application and relating it to the old one (pp.7-8).

- Weighting (or emphasis): we might say that two worlds contain the same classes sorted differently into relevant and irrelevant kinds. ‘Some relevant kinds of the one world, rather than being absent from the other, are present as irrelevant kinds; some differences among worlds are not so much in entities comprised as in emphasis or accent, and these differences are no less consequential’ (p.11).
- Ordering: ‘Worlds not differing in entities of emphasis may differ in ordering; for example, the worlds of different constructional systems differ in order of derivation. As nothing is at rest or is in motion apart from a frame of reference, so nothing is primitive or derivationally prior to anything apart from a constructional system’. Modes of organization, such as daily time marked off into twenty-four hours, are not ‘found in the world’ but ‘built into the world’ (pp.12-14).
- Deletion and supplementation: ‘...the making of one world out of another usually involves some extensive weeding out and filling – actual excision of some old and supply of some new material. Our capacity for overlooking is virtually unlimited, and what we do take in usually consists of significant fragments and clues that need massive supplementation’ ... ‘That we find what we are prepared to find ... and that we are likely to be blind to what neither helps or hinders our pursuits, are commonplaces of everyday life...’ Memory edits, and even within what we do

perceive and remember, 'we dismiss as illusory or negligible what cannot be fitted into the architecture of the world we are building' (p.15).

- Deformation: some changes are 'reshapings or deformations' which might be considered either corrections or distortions. Disparate examples include physicists smoothing out rough curves that fit their data and the distortions of caricaturists (p.16).

These classifications provide some useful vocabulary for analyzing depictions of the marketized higher education system. For example, the composition of such a 'world' has involved attaching new labels to students and universities conceived as consumers and service providers; the stated rationale behind higher education policy might be understood as an exercise in weighting to enable government to fulfil its economic mandate, or an exercise in deletion if this economic framing is understood to encapsulate higher learning; the pictures of the educational world created by both pro-and anti-marketers might be accused of 'caricaturizing' students as either choosers or passive consumers or customers.

Worldmaking in the academic disciplines

While useful as an analytical tool, Goodman's classifications tell us nothing about the context in which various worlds are created, or even perhaps appropriated or destroyed. Duncan Bell (2013) draws attention to a double sense in which worlds may be 'taken', pointing out that while Goodman 'offers a powerful analysis of the ways in which human classification works – or the various cognitive tasks, routines, and strategies employed in

recreating worlds – he does not explore how specific worlds came to be made in the first place or how they displace others’. By proposing a general framework that applies in principle to all symbolic systems – past, present and future – he doesn’t touch upon political dimensions relating to how ‘power relations distribute world-making opportunities and capacities’ (p.260).

Bell makes particular reference to the human sciences, and claims that they can at least in part be described as ‘disciplines focused on the study of world-making practices’. A key reason for conceptualizing them in this way is to ‘help dissolve disciplinary boundaries’ and ‘to highlight the potential similarities across different domains and scales of human activity’ (p.262). All of the human sciences, he claims, ‘concentrate on the way in which human actions, beliefs, and intentions fabricate the very worlds in which we live and between which we move’. Intellectual historians in particular, he maintains, are ‘world makers ... conjuring up forgotten worlds and at their most successful, helping audiences see things afresh, make connections and juxtapositions that alter fields of vision’ (pp.262-263).

Bell cites the production of theory as one form of worldmaking, claiming that, ‘[t]heoretical models construct worlds, and those worlds sometimes have performative effects in reshaping practices.’ He illustrates this with the specific example of neoliberalism as a worldmaking project in at least two senses: first it conceptualizes and disseminates a world of ‘radical atomism’ with:

All humans modeled as rational utility maximizers, and of communities as mere aggregates of deracinated individual choosers. Here *homo economicus* is a universal specimen, stripped of culture, place and history. While articulating a reductive,

dehumanizing social ontology, neoliberalism also instantiates its own epistemological regime, one in which positivist science ... could provide fruitful theoretical models and, above all, predictive capacity regarding the social world. (pp.267-268)

It is also worldmaking in a second sense because it is an 'explicit political project supported by powerful social actors' (p.268).

While Bell, may be charged with communicating a simplistic notion of neoliberalism – a term that is used globally but in multiple ways – and the neoliberal project – as if it were just one – that perhaps echoes rather than refreshes a field of vision, he adds some useful material to Goodman's conception of worldmaking by stressing both historical and political dimensions that also reshape practices, and making the connection between worldmaking and academic disciplines. Identifying theory-making as a worldmaking activity and suggesting that the worldmaking metaphor provides a useful way of breaking down disciplinary boundaries supports the way I intend to use the concept: dismantling polarized views on marketization will involve reworking theory drawn from a range of disciplinary fields. Still missing, however, from my methodological approach is any kind of in-depth understanding of how particular worlds are made in the first place. This matters because the kinds of worldmaking that I am exploring are largely historical in the sense that the frameworks used for understanding monetary and educational values are rooted in historical narratives and influences that have presumably themselves involved continuous processes of composition and decomposition, weighting, ordering, deletion or supplementation, and deformation. In the following sections, I will review relevant aspects of the work of Foucault and Hacking in order to add this historical orientation to worldmaking to my analytical scheme.

Foucault's 'history of the present' and genealogy

It would contradict the character of Foucault's work to make any attempt to construe it in terms of a particular theoretical model. Foucault valued theory as an instrument rather than as any means for systemizing or fixing meaning. As Garland (2014) explains, Foucault took:

a decidedly pragmatic approach to the development of theory and the use of concepts. This approach led him to regard "theory" as a toolbox of more or less useful instruments, each conceptual tool designed as a means of working on specific problems and furthering certain inquiries, rather than as an intellectual end in itself or as a building-block for a grand theoretical edifice. (p.366)

Consistent to his approach, however, is using history as a means to critically engage with, or disturb, the present. This method is expressed most fully in his later works through the related concepts of 'history of the present' and 'genealogy'. Not given to explaining his methodological approaches so much as using them, Foucault (1977) uses the phrase 'history of the present' just once – in *Discipline and Punish* – where he stresses that in writing a history of the prison he is interested in the 'history of the present' rather than 'writing a history of the past in terms of the present' (p.31). The beginning point for this approach is diagnosing a current problem or situation: historical analysis begins 'from a question posed in the present'. Also, in *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault adopts Nietzsche's conception of 'genealogy' for the first time. Garland describes genealogy as a 'method of writing critical history: a way of using historical materials to bring about a "revaluing of values" in the present day'. Foucault's genealogies trace 'how contemporary practices and institutions emerged out of specific struggles, conflicts, alliances, and exercises of power, many of which are nowadays forgotten' (pp.368-373). The aim is not to search for origins, from which we are too far separated, or to establish solid foundations that can be used to project into the

future. Instead, the intention is to 'trace the erratic and discontinuous process whereby the past became the present: an often aleatory path of descent and emergence that suggests the contingency of the present and the openness of the future'. As Foucault himself writes, 'The search for descent is not the erecting of foundations: on the contrary, it disturbs what was previously thought immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself' (cited in Garland, 2014, p.372). Garland highlights that by 'reconnecting contemporary practices ... with the historical struggles and exercises of power that shaped their character, the genealogist prompts us to think more critically about the value and meaning of these phenomena' (p.373). And again, Foucault explains, 'experience has taught me that the history of various forms of rationality is sometimes more effective in unsettling our certitudes and dogmatism than is abstract criticism' (cited in Garland, 2014, p.373).

Of the various methods used for setting out problems to be addressed, one is 'historical juxtaposition' which is used to show 'how modern conceptions differ from those of previous eras' (Garland 2014, p.377). Another is encapsulated in the notion of a '*dispositif*' – usually translated as 'apparatus' – which Foucault (1980) describes as:

A thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. (p.94)

I will be selective in my use Foucault's approach. My point of departure – a currently perceived conflict between educational and market values – is far too broad and complex for any kind of systematic genealogy that meticulously traces historical struggles or exercises of

power. Nonetheless, I will challenge some dominant lines of thinking about money and economic values and uses by referring to past thinkers who have been misinterpreted in the present day, which represents a form of discontinuity or juxtaposition and has the potential to unsettle current 'certitudes'. I will also draw from material of thinkers who have been influenced by Foucault's approach or used historical comparison or analysis to shed a light on contemporary assumptions. I have already given an example in my introduction of how the evolution of economics as a discipline has resulted in a disjuncture between economics and the social effects of markets and between economics and ethics (Satz, 2010). Carrier (Carrier and Miller, 1998) gives another perspective on the process of economic abstraction, which has culminated in what he terms 'virtualism' and results in a world view that also ties in neatly with Goodman's worldmaking, or in this case the exercise of reducing all worlds to one. Carrier uses Polanyi's term 'dis-embedding' to describe the 'removal of economic activities from the social and other relationships in which they occurred' to a 'context in which the only important relationships are those defined by the economic activity itself' (p.2). This abstraction, Polanyi claims, happens in practical activity where people and organizations carry out activity of production and circulation of objects and services, and also at a conceptual, or formal level, in the ways that 'people think about and understand their economic lives' (p.2). Carrier claims that abstraction at the conceptual level 'leads at least some people to adopt an abstract-economic world-view' in which 'the world is seen in terms of the concepts and models of economic abstraction ... taken to be the fundamental reality that underlies and shapes the world'. Carrier equates this view of the world with living in a 'virtual reality' that seems real but is 'dependent upon the conceptual apparatus and outlook that generate it'. A final relevant example that illustrates the workings of

‘struggles, conflicts, alliances, and exercises of power’ within academia itself can be found in Hodgson’s appraisal of the failure of heterodox economics to make any sustained impact on the discipline of economics, which he attributes to the ‘institutions, culture and habits of thought that can enable or disable the forces of change within economics’ rather than to any theoretical or empirical flaws. He writes about ‘academic power and powerlessness’ within the discipline of economics (2019, pp.2-3).

Hacking’s historical ontology and dynamic nominalism

Hacking draws from both Foucault’s historical method and Goodman’s nominalism to develop two further worldmaking concepts that provide additional methodological tools to enable my study. He labels these ‘historical ontology’ and ‘dynamic nominalism’. To contextualize and to strengthen my own philosophical orientation, I will first outline Hacking’s defense for incorporating history into philosophy.

In *Two Kinds of New Historicism*, Hacking (2004) explores how some kinds of history matter to doing some kinds of philosophy (p.54). He asserts that many philosophical problems are ‘essentially constituted in history’ (p.63). He begins with Locke, who thought that we ‘understand concepts and knowledge better when we understand what puts them in place, what brings them into being’ (p.63). Hacking refers to this as the ‘Lockean imperative’ – that is, ‘to understand our thoughts and our beliefs through an account of origins’. He traces this approach from Comte and Kuhn, to Pickering and Latour, and Schaffer and Shapin. These thinkers, he claims:

put historical substance on the bare scaffolding of Nelson Goodman's *Ways of Worldmaking* (1978). Where Goodman wrote pithily about versions of the world and right and wrong categories, these men say *what* the versions and categories are and *how* they came into being. (p.66)

Hacking observes that the focus for most of this work has been on natural science, and that there is a dearth of 'any serious philosophical-historical consideration of moral kinds and moral knowledge' (p.66). He argues that in ethics 'there has been far too much fixation on the abstract – the good, the right, and the just' rather than real things. While J. L. Austin encouraged a focus on 'what is small and alive' rather than 'grand and abstract', most people picked up on his study of speech acts rather than his 'fine attention to the nuances of ordinary language'. Similarly, little heed has been paid to Iris Murdoch's plea to examine 'thick' concepts. Hacking claims that Bernard Williams has most consistently repeated this plea, but not with an understanding that 'moral concepts are historical entities whose form and force have been determined by their past'. In contrast, this kind of work has been undertaken outside of the discipline of philosophy. Examples include Labeling Theory, which addresses how the invention of a classification of people affects how we think of, treat and try to control them, and how they see themselves, and the Agenda-Setting school, which undertook quasi-historical studies of how particular social kinds of behavior became immoral, such as drink driving (pp.67-68).

Hacking stresses the importance of context in philosophical study, going so far as to claim that '[p]hilosophical analysis is the analysis of concepts' and:

concepts are words in their sites. Sites include sentences, uttered and transcribed, always in a large site of neighbourhood, institution, authority, language. If one took seriously the project of philosophical analysis, one would require a history of the words in their sites in order to comprehend what the concept was. (p.68)

Hacking illustrates what he means with reference to his own study of child abuse, claiming that the category of 'child abuse' came into use around 1960 and is an example of how an absolute value in the form of an absolute wrong has been constructed 'before our very eyes' (p.69). Following the Lockean imperative he explores how a present conception was made, and how the conditions for its formation limit present ways of thinking (p.69). According to Hacking, the only sustained philosophical model for this sort of enquiry can be found in some of Foucault's work.

Hacking's defense of treating some philosophy as historical, then, gives weight to my own methodological orientation. The marketization of higher education involves new understandings of pedagogic relationships: it is constituted in history that involves calibrating historical understandings of market relations and historical conceptions of higher learning both of which have moral implications. My question relates to real or 'thick' applications rather than to abstract and timeless philosophical questions. Marketization involves forming new possible relations, and ways of thinking and being based on economic relations underpinning the consumer model. Market terms are used across a variety of sites and institutional settings – by politicians, academics, university leaders and professional bodies, and students and their representatives – linked to distinct intentions to influence.

Historical Ontology

The term 'historical ontology' is lifted from Foucault's essay entitled *What Is Enlightenment?* in which he twice refers to the 'historical ontology of ourselves' as a name for a possible

study concerned with ways in which we 'constitute ourselves' across three axes of knowledge, power and ethics. These axes are defined as the 'truth through which we constitute ourselves as objects of knowledge', the 'power through which we constitute ourselves as subjects acting on others' and the 'ethics through which we constitute ourselves as moral agents' (Hacking, 2004, p.2). Hacking (2004) adopts the same notion of 'constituting ourselves' and extends it to questions about how both people and things come into being. His use of 'historical ontology' conveys an interest in 'things in general' including material things along with classes, kinds of people, and even ideas.

Hacking cites two examples to illustrate the workings of historical ontology. The first is psychic trauma. Whereas trauma once referred to a physical lesion or wound, it is now used to refer to a psychic wound so that traumatology has become the 'science of the troubled soul' (p.18). Hacking outlines the historical ontology of psychic trauma using Foucault's axes of knowledge, power and ethics. The second is child development. In this case, Hacking claims that over a period of 150-years child development has come to 'determine in the most minute details how we organize our thinking about children' so that our very idea about 'what a child *is* has been formed by a scientific theory of development' (pp.20-21). Neither of these concepts can be described as 'transcendental' but they are used for the 'intellectual and practical organization of a panoply of activities'. Both are 'historically situated and their present versions are highly colored by their predecessors' (p.21). Both also came into being through specific historical processes and they direct us to 'what it is possible to be or to do' (p.22).

A final important feature of historical ontology relates to choice in context. Again, Hacking draws directly from Foucault to stress that free choices can only be made from among actions that are available to us within social systems, and that our ways of being, whether chosen freely or otherwise, can only come from possible ways of being. Hacking's conception of historical ontology relates to 'the ways in which possibilities of choice, and for being, arise in history' and is not so much about the 'formation of character as about the space for possibility for character formation that surround a person, and create the potentials for "individual experience"' (p.23).

Dynamic nominalism

Hacking (2004) rejects the most extreme version of nominalism which suggests that we make up all categories that we use to describe the world (p.39). He argues, for example, that it is 'preposterous' to hold that only thing common to horses is that we call them horses. While we might quibble over admitting or excluding Shetland ponies, the similarities and differences between horses are 'real enough' (p.106). Similarly, 'what camels, mountains, and microbes are doing does not depend on our words' (p.108). However, while Hacking maintains that strict nominalism is 'unintelligible' for natural objects such as these, he subscribes to a form of nominalism with respect to the making up of social categories. Making up people, he claims, is more plausible than making up the world. He opens his essay on *Making up People* with a series of examples to build his point. First, is Arnold Davison's observation that there were no perverts before the late nineteenth century because perversion was not created as a disease. While there have always been odd people, the pervert as a diseased person was only created in the nineteenth century (p.99-100). A

second example is the making up of homosexuals. With reference to Plummer's *Making of the Modern Homosexual* (1981), Hacking records that homosexual and heterosexual as kinds of persons only came into being once the categories were created: there had been 'plenty of same-sex activity in all ages' but not 'same-sex people' and 'different-sex people' (p.103). Based on his own study of the official statistics of the 19th century, Hacking also observes how new categories were created into which to 'fit and enumerate people' that changed every ten years. Social change, he claims, creates new ways for people to be and people 'spontaneously come to fit their categories' (p.100).

As part realist, and spurred by theories about the making of the homosexual and his own observations about statistics, Hacking develops a version of nominalism which he refers to as 'dynamic nominalism' to capture how a kind of person comes into being at the same time as the category itself is invented: 'In some cases, that is, our classification and or classes conspire to emerge hand in hand, each egging the other on' (p.106). Hacking also proposes that making up people in this way 'changes the space of possibilities for personhood': recalling the nominalist proposition about sexuality, it would not have been possible to be a heterosexual before the nineteenth century because that type of person was not there to choose (p.107).

Hacking claims that the doctrine of dynamic nominalism holds greater human interest than scholastic forms of nominalism because it 'contends that our spheres of possibility, and hence ourselves, are to some extent made up by our naming and what that entails' (p.113). He also claims that we cannot generalize about the making up of people – each category of

person has its own distinct history. However, he does suggest a partial framework for describing such events expressed as two vectors – the first is ‘labelling from above, from a community of experts who create a ‘reality’ that some people make their own’. The second is the vector of ‘autonomous behavior of the person so labelled, which presses from below, creating a reality every expert must face’. One vector might be more pronounced with one label and less with another (p.111).

In a later address to The British Academy (2006) entitled *Kinds of People: Moving Targets* Hacking develops his notion of ‘dynamic nominalism’ to include additional factors – other than naming – that bolster the making up of people within the human sciences. First, as well as making up people, we think of many kinds of people as objects of scientific inquiry. There may be many motives for this – perhaps to control them, help them, organize and help them, keep ourselves safe, change for their own good and the good of the public, or perhaps to admire, understand, encourage or even emulate. But more important is the idea that our investigations into kinds of people ‘interact with the targets themselves, and change them’ and once they are ‘changed, they are not quite the same people as before. The target has moved’. Hacking refers to this phenomenon as the ‘looping effect’ (p.2). Next, he proposes that names are only part of the dynamics. He extends his earlier vectors model to formulate a five-part framework:

In the case of kinds of people, there are not only the names of the classifications, but also the *people* classified, the *experts* who classify, study and help them, the *institutions* within which the experts and their subjects interact, and through which authorities control. There is the evolving body of *knowledge* about the people in question – both expert and popular science. (pp.3-4)

Hacking elaborates on each of these categories using the classification of the multiple personality to illustrate. The people are the kinds of people who are moving targets, and in the case of the multiple personality, this could be a person who is non-judgmentally described as unhappy or unable to cope. The institutions tied to the case of the multiple personality would include clinics, meetings of the Society for the Study of Multiple Personality and Dissociation, training programmes for therapists, and even television talk shows. Knowledge can be divided into two kinds that 'shade into each other'. The first is the expert knowledge of professionals, and the second is popular knowledge shared by a 'significant part of the interested population'. The experts or professionals are the people who generate, judge and use the knowledge, work in the institutions that authenticate their status and study, help, or advise on the people who have been classified. According to Hacking the 'roles and weights will be different in every case' and he stresses again that each case of making up people is different: there is 'no reason to suppose that we shall ever tell two identical stories of two different instances of making up people' (p.5).

With particular reference to the human sciences (from sociology to medicine) Hacking also attributes to the process of making up people a series of 'engines of discovery' listed as count, quantify, create norms, correlate, medicalize, biologize, geneticize, normalize, bureaucratize, and reclaim our identity. The first seven items in the list link to discovery, the eighth Hacking defines as an engine of practice, the ninth of administration, and the tenth is resistance to the experts and institutions by the kinds of people who have been medicalized, normalized, or administered, which sometimes results in creating new experts and institutions (pp.9-10). The engines of discovery are also the engines of making up people.

Hacking uses examples of autism and obesity to describe how these engines make up people in different ways. So, for example the creation of the Body Mass Index (BMI) enables quantification of obesity and has a 'normal range' that helps us to gauge deviation from the norm. Normalcy and deviation come hand in hand. Significantly, all ten categories produce effects on the kinds of people to which they are applied. They change the boundaries and characteristics. The kinds of people are not fixed.

Together, Hacking's notions of historical ontology and dynamic nominalism provide additional tools for analyzing in particular the new identification of students as consumers. Attaching the consumer label to students potentially alters the 'space of possibility for character formation' and creates difference potentials for their 'individual experience'. At the same time, the notion of a 'consumer' has been historically formulated within numerous contexts or 'sites' that warrant closer scrutiny. Hacking insists that each case is different, but his rubrics provide a heuristic for considering the different elements involved in particular instances of 'making up people' including the experts, institutions, and knowledges that form, normalize and sustain classifications, as well as the people themselves. The idea that the people who have been labelled might influence or resist their label as 'moving targets' and become experts themselves seems particularly apt with reference to students as consumers of higher learning.

Worldmaking practices and the marketization debate

Important to my argument so far is the idea that the worldmaking metaphor is useful for describing conflicting depictions of the marketized university. Those who promote and those who oppose marketization engage in worldmaking practices in the sense that they

conceptualize the marketized university using particular frames of reference with the aim of influencing its organization and relations. My orientation aligns with Bell's claim that constructing theoretical models that may also have performative effects is a form of worldmaking. A key purpose behind using the worldmaking metaphor is that it highlights the 'making' aspect of theorizing so that the more or less credible processes behind various renderings can be made explicit, and these same processes can be used to make new renderings possible either through re-making or critical re-engagement that unsettles prevalent conformations. Bell highlights how this creative possibility can be used to undermine disciplinary boundaries, which is also a part of my intention as I attempt to re-assemble depictions of the marketized university in novel ways.

Specifically, Goodman has provided a set of organizational devices that describe how 'worlds' can be composed and recomposed from particular configurations and weightings of symbols and systems of symbols, in my case linguistic, that have been used to create the polarized conceptions of a marketized higher education. Both Bell and Hacking highlight that Goodman's account of worldmaking lacks an important dimension that deals with how worlds come into being in the first place. Foucault's notions of 'history of the present' and genealogy can be used to address this shortcoming by stressing the importance of using history to reconnect contemporary practices with their past and unsettle assumptions and rationalities that have become fixed in the present. Hacking effectively combines the ideas of Goodman and Foucault by selectively applying nominalism to the formation of social rather than natural categories, and by tracing histories to uncover the making of particular types of people and things; while emphasizing the unique history behind the making of every classification, he provides a useful conceptual framework to account for their formation including the people themselves, experts who name, institutions, and evolving bodies of knowledge.

In the chapters that follow, devices from all three thinkers will be used to frame a series of provocations that aim to disassemble the current frames of reference that determine the marketization debate and create new propositions that make reconciliation of positions

possible. This will be achieved by drawing on the ideas of a range of thinkers from diverse disciplinary fields and times in order to destabilize current divisions. Rather than developing a single line of argument, each chapter will provide a new possibility with respect to a particular point of contention within the marketization debate.

CHAPTER 4: THE WORLD OF MONEY

This chapter considers the scope of monetary value, that is, what makes up the sphere or world of monetary valuation and the extent to which placing something into that world determines its character and the values attached to it. Exploring where and how to place limits on monetary value will help to situate and address issues relating to how payment for a higher education might be conceived or not conceived as compatible with educational values. My aim is to find conceptualizations that will facilitate more nuanced discussion about how educational and economic values might work together. Goodman's (1978) notion of worldmaking applies to this task. In my case, it refers to 'descriptions and depictions' of the world or worlds of money relations that can or can't be reconciled with frames of reference associated with pedagogical relations. I will be considering how the world of money is or might be composed.

Radin (2001) makes a distinction between 'literal markets' in which money changes hands and 'metaphorical' or 'rhetorical' markets in which social interactions that do not involve monetary exchange are treated as if they did (p.1 & p.13). While the two types interact, my focus in this chapter is largely on metaphorical markets, and normative arguments about the proper limits of monetary value. It is especially relevant to explore meanings in this way because the marketization of higher education can be interpreted as rhetorical as well as literal (See Chapter 2). Later Chapters will explore more closely issues relating to the realization of a market ideology, and the potential for individuals to endorse, progress, reject, or subvert that ideology. As Dodd (2014) points out, '[m]oney is not an entity that has

a fixed value, which it somehow contains within itself'. Instead, it has a 'social life' that opens possibilities for change (p.ix). I will begin by providing a context for discussing the scope of monetary valuation by making some general observations about ways of conceiving money's relation to markets and to values in general.

Questioning what can rightfully be sold for money is a conventional approach, taken by liberal theorists in particular, for exploring and delineating the proper domains of markets. Theoretically, anything that can and should be bought and sold belongs to markets; anything that cannot or should not be bought and sold is excluded from markets. This rhetoric has been adopted by critics of the marketization of higher education: Shumar's 1997 text based on higher education in the US is entitled *College for Sale: a critique of the commodification of higher education*; Williams' 2013 text is entitled *Consuming Higher Education: why learning can't be bought*; and Brown's 2013 text is entitled *Everything for Sale? The Marketisation of Higher Education*. The message behind each of these titles seems to be that higher education is not the sort of thing that should be bought and sold, or unproblematically framed within a market or market processes of commodification or consumption. While the scope of money and markets can be seen as one and the same thing, and I will treat them this way, it should also be noted that markets can be conceptualized as more than just a domain of free exchange. To illustrate, Dworkin (2002) uses the concept of 'hypothetical markets' in *Sovereign Virtue* as a means of modelling how markets can be adjusted to bring about social equality, and Posner (1979) uses the same term to describe instances where monetary exchange is made involuntarily through fines, such as paying compensation for damaging someone's property (p.120). It is possible to apply marketing or monetary

concepts to nonmarket environments such as legal systems or family life, and an important question to keep in mind is how useful or otherwise it is to use marketing rhetoric to shape understandings of particular institutions, whether or not money changes hands.

With respect to value more broadly, questions about the scope of monetary value relate to beliefs about the commensurability of values. An extreme contention is that all values can ultimately be described in terms of a single value, in this case monetary value. If all values can be framed in this way, it should also be theoretically possible to claim that all goods can be bought and sold in markets, and that educational values can be expressed and promoted in monetary terms. More common however are pluralist claims about value that maintain there are categorically different kinds of value, some of which are, or should be, irreducible to price. Moreover, these different sorts of value deserve to be treated differently (Dick, 2017, p.124).

For something to fall within the sphere of monetary valuation, it must embody a particular set of qualities. First, it must be objectified in some way. Money is always exchanged or exchangeable for something that is qualitatively different: to put a price on something requires identifying some objective thing – a product or service – against which cost can be measured. Giving something a price, makes it into a commodity; products and services that are bought and sold are, by definition, commodities. And for commodities to exist, they must be alienable, that is separate from the holder. Money valuation also makes all commodities commensurable, that is, interchangeable with every other commodity in terms of exchange value (Radin, 2001, p.3). In summary, in order to have money equivalence,

there must be objectification or alienation, and commensurability: objectification in order to isolate in some way what is being exchanged for money, and commensurability because money is the metric to which value can be reduced (Radin, 2001, p.118).

Determining the proper sphere for money valuation, then, involves deciding what should and should not be included in markets, and what can, cannot, should or should not be treated as commodities. Positions span from claiming that nothing should be commodified to claiming that everything should be commodified, with a range of possibilities between regarding what should and shouldn't be commodified. I will not address arguments that nothing should be commodified because non-market ideologies are not relevant to my project. I will however focus on arguments for complete commodification – adopting Radin's (2001) use of the term 'universal commodification' – to describe the implications of this monist view about value, and arguments that some things should be commodified or partly commodified aligned to pluralist views about value.

Universal commodification: many worlds as one

Within the world of commodities, money has a special claim for being a universal value because its success as a form derives from its neutrality: money *is* universal to the extent that it is a representation of value that is exchangeable for any other commodity. It is this neutral character that makes money representable in non-material forms.

Claims for universal commodification maintain that everything that is desired or valued is a commodity. Such a scheme also implies a particular understanding of the individual as both

‘commodity-holder’ in the sense that ‘all things of value to the person, including personal attributes, relationships, and religious and philosophical commitments’ are conceived in monetary terms, and ‘commodity-trader’ in the sense that ‘all these things are assumed in principle to be alienable; they are capable of being exchanged for money’. Accordingly, universal commodification:

assimilates personal attributes, relations and desired states of affairs to the realm of objects by assuming that human attributes are possessions bearing a value characterizable in money terms and by implying that all these possessions can be and should be separable from persons to be exchanged through the free market.

(Radin, 2001, pp.2-6).

Arguments for universal commodification are most often based on claims about freedom and/or efficiency. Freedom is conceived in the sense of negative freedom, which creates the conditions for individuals to make their own choices without interference from the state. It is claimed that *laissez faire* markets – themselves value-free – optimize this kind of freedom (Radin, 2001, p.5 & p.56). Arguments for efficiency are most often made on the utilitarian principle of optimizing the greatest pleasure for the greatest number, with economic valuation providing a metric against which to aggregate happiness or utility (or ‘welfare’ within in the field of welfare economics).

Established examples of philosophically situated claims for universal commodification can be found in the works of the Chicago School of the 1970s, notably the writings of Gary Becker and Richard Posner. In his theory of human capital, Becker claims that neoclassical economic analysis based on the principle of utility maximization can be applied to almost all social settings, for example child rearing and schooling, which can be monetized with reference to

substitute services that may or may not be sold in actual markets. Things such as schooling and training, medical care, and lectures are all conceived as capital because they 'improve health, raise earnings, or add to a person's appreciation of literature over much of his or her lifetime' and it is therefore 'fully in keeping with the capital concept as traditionally defined to say that expenditures on education, training, medical care etc. are investments in capital' (1992, p.85).

Legal theorist Richard Posner (1979) develops – with what he calls 'elegant simplicity' – an ethical system that is also rooted in economics in which he proposes using the principle of wealth-maximization to guide ethical decision making in place of the utilitarian maximand of happiness or utility (p.136). Posner defines wealth as the value in money of everything in society, which can be measured by what people are prepared to pay for something and what they demand in money to give something up. He claims that monetary value provides a far better measure for guiding both conduct and policy than the elusive maximands of either happiness or utility. Posner additionally claims that his wealth-maximization principle leads to outcomes that align better to our moral intuitions than other key ethical systems. The principle encourages and rewards esteemed capacities such as intelligence, for promoting efficiency, and virtues, such as honesty and altruism, that reduce market transaction costs. At the same time, it discourages monopolies because they obstruct wealth-maximization, and promotes a system of exclusive rights as instruments of wealth maximization that extends to all valued things including real and personal property and the human body and ideas, which would initially be vested in those who are likely to value them most. Posner also stresses that markets place constraints on individual desires as well as opportunities:

lawfully obtained wealth is created only by doing things for other people – offering them advantageous trades. The individual may be completely selfish but he cannot promote his self-interest without benefiting others as well as himself.

Posner and colleagues developed conceptual tools for applying this kind of economic analysis to nonmarket, or social behaviours. A particularly bold example that is worth summarizing is Landes and Posner's defense of a free baby adoption market. It is bold because the undesirability of buying and selling humans is often used to argue in favour of restricting markets to particular domains (for example, see Walzer 1983). Firstly, Landes and Posner develop and apply a model of supply and demand to show how the current pattern of regulation that mostly limits adoption to agencies that may charge a fee but not anything approximating a market price for babies is inefficient. This inefficiency is evident in long waiting periods that signify a 'baby shortage', and thousands of children in foster care, that signifies a 'glut' akin, in Landes and Posner's terms, to 'an unsold inventory stored in a warehouse'. Legal restrictions that prevent the market operating freely also results in a thriving black market which puts prices up and is susceptible to fraud with no legally enforceable guarantees. Their analysis suggests that both a baby shortage and a black market in baby selling are the result of restrictions that prevent the market from operating freely in the sale of babies. Allowing price systems to equilibrate the adoption market could, they argue, be an improvement on the current monopoly held by agencies, speeding up the adoption process so that more adults adopt and more babies are adopted, and could potentially lead to lower prices than those on the current black-market since the only real net cost of adoption is the search fee (since the cost of the pregnancy and childbirth itself

including health care and loss of earnings is merely transferred from one woman to another).

Landes and Posner themselves acknowledge and defend against some of the numerous objections that can be made against this kind of analysis. While accepting that baby selling differs from many other kinds of sales because the satisfactions of the babies themselves need to be factored in, they are not convinced by arguments that claim that baby-selling would not serve the best interests of the children involved. For example, background checks of adopting parents are perfectly possible within a market system (in the same way that you can only hire a car if you have a license), and adopted children are protected by a host of existing laws against slavery, abuse, and more. Moreover, they claim, 'willingness to pay money for a baby would seem on the whole a reassuring factor from the standpoint of child welfare' (p.343). It is also the case that in a free adoption market more mothers might carry their babies to term rather than having an abortion. Landes and Posner contest the idea that the emotive character of baby adoption means it cannot be reasoned about in the same way as goods and services more usually traded in the market, accepting that other emotive phenomena are marketized, such as medical care. Moreover, they claim, studies of marriage and procreation have shown that people do in fact calculate in family matters, whether implicitly or explicitly, in the same way as they do when purchasing ordinary goods and services. However, Landes and Posner acknowledge that antipathy to an explicit market in babies may be part of a broader wish to disguise facts that might be uncomfortable if widely known, most notably racial ranking of prices resulting from different supply and demand conditions that might exacerbate racial tensions. Acknowledging the claim that a market

might lead to 'baby breeding' because any market will generate incentives to improve the product as well as to optimize price and quantity of a product, they stipulate that as long as the market for eugenically bred babies is limited to infertile couples or those with serious genetic disorders, the impact of the market on genetic composition of the human race should be small. They also point out that symbolic objections to baby sale should be compared to the substantial costs that the current system imposes on childless couples, aborted fetuses and children who end up in foster care.

Critique of universal commodification

A review of universal commodification exposes several issues of relevance to the scope of monetary value. First, it makes an appeal to including economic valuation in ethical discourse when efficiency matters, that is, when moral judgements are to be made in relation to limited resources. As Posner (1979) points out, '[w]hile nowadays relatively few of the people in our society who think about these things consider wealth-maximization or some other version of efficiency the paramount social value, few judge it a trivial one' (p.110). Including monetary valuation in ethical debate may lead to critical questioning about the effectiveness of some forms of regulation and expose uncomfortable truths about how decisions are made: societies do sacrifice individuals based on economics linked to efficiency, and economic consideration using cost benefit analysis is defensible in ethical decision making. The work of NICE provides a good example of this in its use of Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs) calculations to determine which drugs should be funded based on providing the most benefit to the greatest number.

Reviewing the extreme position of universal commodification also helps to identify the limitations of reducing all value to a single scale. As Walzer (1983) reminds us, these valuations can be made, but 'something is lost in the process' (p.97). Most significantly, universal commodification 'cannot capture – and may debase – the way humans value things important to human personhood'. Something that is 'important to humanity is lost if market rhetoric becomes (or is considered to be) the sole rhetoric of human affairs, excluding other kinds of understanding' (Radin, 2001, p.9 & p.122). This is illustrated in Posner and Landes' descriptions of babies in terms of supply and demand, and gluts.

Second, although Posner distances his wealth-maximisation principle from utilitarianism, his model falls prey to some of the same criticisms. Most importantly its key mechanism depends on individual preferences. Posner argues that markets are the most efficient means of maximizing wealth and markets function by individuals making (purportedly) rational choices. While Posner, argues that there would be many bi-products of wealth maximization that align with our moral intuitions, even altruism, others claim that an ethic which functions on individual preferences alone is impoverished. Hodgson (2014), for example, expresses the argument that moral judgment has an emotional as well as a rational component, and that our moral sensibilities are developed via learned cultural norms and rules that are established over time and apply to communities. Morality, he claims, is a 'group phenomenon involving deliberative, emotionally-driven and purportedly inescapable rules that apply to a community' (p.84). Over and above questions of preference, 'it is a matter of right or wrong, or of duty, of "doing the right thing," irrespective of whether we like it or not'. Part of being human is our capability for 'considering moral rules, and understanding

that their observance is more than a matter of personal whim or satisfaction' (p.87).

Hodgson also stresses the importance of moral motivations over and above moral consequences: 'A society or economy cannot function without moral bonds and rules. Our understanding of social institutions and organizations is inadequate unless we appreciate the moral motivations of individuals within them, and how those institutions help to sustain and replicate these moral sentiments' (p.84).

The arguments set out for and against universal commodification can be expressed as disagreements over commensurability versus incommensurability, or between monist versus pluralist views about value. By making everything commensurable to monetary value most thinkers agree that we lose something important to our understandings of the individual with dignity; by building an ethic on wealth maximization, we fail to acknowledge the rule-based, socially constructed dimensions of moral judgement, and we miss out the complexity of motivations that lead people to moral action. It follows from this that some things should not be commodified and some things should not be alienable because putting a price on them fails to recognize some other sort of value they hold: 'By letting something be for sale, we might be mistreating it by failing to recognize or respect the non-financial value that it has' (Dick, 2017, p.123). However, it remains to be determined how distinctions should be made between what should and should not be commodified. As Dick contends, '[s]ome would restrict it from places that others would extend it to' (p.121).

Some things should be commodified

A starting place for thinking about qualitatively different kinds of value, and one that has been used by several thinkers with an interest in the limits of monetary value, is Emanuel

Kant's distinction between 'price' and 'dignity' as set out in his *Groundwork of the*

Metaphysics of Morals:

In the kingdom of ends everything has either a *price* or a *dignity*. What has a price can be replaced by something else as its *equivalent*; what on the other hand is raised above all price and therefore admits of no equivalent has a dignity.

What is related to general human inclinations and needs has a *market price*; that which, even without presupposing a need, conforms with a certain taste, that is, with a delight in the mere purposeless play of our mental powers, has a *fancy price*; but that which constitutes the condition under which alone something can be an end in itself has not merely a relative worth, that is, a price, but an inner worth, that is, *dignity*.

(1998, p.42)

Kant's reference to dignity ties into a complex metaphysical argument about morality in relation to free will, and this passage relates to the humanity formula of his categorical imperative in which he states that we should never act in a way that treats humanity 'as a means only but always as an end in itself' (Johnson & Cureton, 2019). Kant is often interpreted as making an either/or distinction between means and ends. Anderson (1993), for example, claims that Kant's moral philosophy provides a 'particularly illuminating example of how goods differ in kind' and that 'everything is either a mere means, with a price or relative value or an end in itself'. From this she deduces, 'Kant's ideal of human rationality is grounded in his distinction between the way we should value a person and the way we should value things' and that people value mere means by using them, but they value persons with dignity by respecting them. On this reading, Kant seems to be proposing that the two sorts of value are mutually exclusive.

Others have argued for more differentiated distinctions between values. Walzer (1983) makes one of the better-known cases in his *Spheres of Justice*, where he sets out a liberal theory of distributive justice based on eleven domains that correspond with distinct understandings of social goods that are historically and culturally formulated. Important to Walzer's claim is that distribution within each sphere should be non-reducible to the others. He describes the sphere of money and markets to include, 'all those objects, commodities, products, services, beyond what is communally provided, that individual men and women find useful or pleasing' (p.103). And 'market relations' themselves 'reflect a certain moral understanding that applies to all those social goods that count as marketable.' The monetary domain should not spill over into domains such as political or ecclesiastical so that, for example, wealthy people should not be able to purchase state offices. While the exercise of power belongs to the sphere of politics, what goes on in the market should approximate an exchange between equals – a free exchange. (p.10).

Moving from the theoretical to the empirical, Walzer claims that the 'abstract universality of money is undercut and circumscribed by the creation of values that can't easily be priced, or that we don't want to be priced.' He describes the places where money shouldn't be used as 'blocked exchanges' and lists these as: human beings buying and selling themselves as slaves, though they can buy and sell their labour power and the things they make; political power and influence, criminal justice, prizes and honors, love and friendship, desperate exchanges that threaten liberty, and basic welfare services (pp.100-103). Some of the items link to a notion of respect for persons, or dignity. Others might be classified as what Dick

(2017) refers to as 'invariably transformable goods' – that is, the process of exchange for money changes them into something else, as is the case with friendship, love and honors.

Anderson (1993) takes issue with Walzer's approach to identifying domains through social meanings attributed to them based on the grounds that many social meanings are contested, and proposes instead her own 'socially grounded' and 'ideal-based' pluralist theory of value. She claims that freedom and autonomy, often used to defend the primacy of markets, in fact require 'multiple sphere differentiation' – as opposed to sphere segregation – to enable individuals to express diverse valuations. This involves establishing boundaries between both market and state, and 'between these institutions and other domains of self-expression such as family, friendship, clubs, professions, art, science, religion, and charitable and ideal-based associations' (pp. 141-2). Indeed, she argues that a 'proliferation of pluralisms' is required, understanding pluralism to mean that 'goods differ in kind if they are properly valued in different ways that are expressed by norms governing different social relations' (p.14).

Problems with domain theories

Domain theories rely on making distinctions relating to both normative and literal claims about markets that are not always applicable. Returning to Kant's bipartite distinction between price and dignity, while it might be intuitively appealing to interpret him to mean that we should only ever treat ourselves and others as ends in themselves and never as means to ends, and that everything is one or the other, this is not what Kant argues. Kant

does not rule out using people as means to our ends, as Johnston and Cureton (2019) point out:

Clearly this would be an absurd demand, since we apparently do this all the time in morally appropriate ways. Indeed, it is hard to imagine any life that is recognizably human without the use of others in pursuit of our goals. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the chairs we sit on and the computers we type at are gotten only by way of talents and abilities that have been developed through the exercise of the wills of many people. (p.22)

More accurately, we should not treat humanity in such a way that it is a *merely* a means to our ends. As Kant states, 'the condition under which alone something can be an end in itself has not merely a relative worth, that is, a price, but an inner worth, that is, *dignity*'.

Johnston and Cureton also stress that Kant is claiming that it is not human beings themselves who must be treated as ends so much as the 'humanity' in human beings, 'that collection of features that make us distinctively human' such as 'capacities to engage in self-directed rational behaviour and to adopt and pursue our own ends, and any other rational capacities necessarily connected with these':

Thus, supposing that [a] taxi driver has freely exercised his rational capacities in pursuing his line of work, we make permissible use of these capacities as a means only if we behave in a way that he could, when exercising his rational capacities, consent to — for instance, by paying an agreed price. (p.23)

In this instance, paying a fee for something is also a way of respecting someone's humanity. It therefore becomes reasonable to entertain the possibility that something can both have a price and be priceless at the same time, and that there is no binary choice to be made about whether something should be wholly inside or outside the market (Radin, 2001, p.20).

Moreover, establishing categorical boundaries between monetary value and other kinds of value can both misrepresent and constrict the scope of both market ideology and market

relations. Radin (2001) refers to the potential for misrepresentation when she warns against restricting some domains to the influence of market ideology: 'The traditional liberal view prevents us from appreciating the nonmarket aspects of our market relations; it prevents us from seeing fragments of nonmarket social order embedded or latent in the market society (p.30 and p.104). And Hodgson (2014 stresses that, 'even firms and markets are unavoidably infused with moral considerations' (p.103). The potential for limitation exists both between and within domains. Distinctions between domains can give the impression that various institutions and associated value structures stand in opposition to one another. As Debra Satz (2010) illustrates with reference to state and market, they 'are not opposite terms: the state shapes and supports market processes. Laws and institutions underwrite market transactions – which makes them a public not private concern of all citizens whether or not they participate directly in them' (p.16). At the same time some attributes might be excluded from market relations because of the set of narrow definitions attributed to the economic domain. For example, while allowing for mixed practices between spheres, Anderson attaches a set of norms to the economic ideal of freedom that includes 'impersonality' suitable for regulating the interaction of strangers such that 'each party to a market transaction views his relation to the other as merely a means to the satisfaction of ends defined independent of the relationship and of the other party's ends' and 'egoism' such that participants in markets are free to pursue their individual interests without considering the interests of others (p.145).

The claim that something can be both monetizable and non-monetizable, rather than that all things are monetizable, or that some things should be and others should not be, merits

further exploration (Radin, 2001, p.102). A better understanding of how price and pricelessness might be reconciled within the same object could provide insights into higher education envisaged as both a means and an end in itself. At the same time, conceptualizing elements of what might more usually be understood as a 'nonmarket social order' within market ideology and relations offers the potential for situating higher education in the market so that it encompasses a broader set of values that might better reflect the multiple aims of higher learning. I will explore these notions further by drawing on two perspectives: sociologist Charles Cooley's depiction of the sphere of monetary value, and Margaret Jane Radin's conception of 'incomplete commodification'. Though coming from quite different disciplines and viewpoints, both challenge the idea of universal commodification by contesting atomised conceptions of self in relation to society. Both are pluralists about value, but propose alternatives to domain theories which compartmentalize monetary value.

Cooley's spheres of monetary value

Cooley's account of money valuation needs brief contextualization within his wider approach to sociology and valuation in general. The central theme behind most of Cooley's work is that there is an organic link between self and society. Using his term, they are 'twin born'. Building on the work of pragmatist William James, Cooley opposes the Cartesian distinction between thinking and knowing subject and the external world, and claims instead that a 'separate individual is an abstraction unknown to experience, and so likewise is society when regarded as something apart from individuals' (Coser, 1977, p.305).

Correspondingly, Cooley's approach to sociology is holistic. He speaks of society as an organism in the sense that it is a 'complex of forms or processes each of which is living and

growing by interaction with the others, the whole being so unified that what takes place in one part affects all the rest' (1918, p.28). He opposes the individualism of utilitarianism as the basis of classical economics: 'So strong is the individualist tradition in America and England that we hardly permit ourselves to aspire toward an ideal society directly, but think that we must approach it by some distributive formula, like the 'greatest good for the greatest number' (p.417). At the same time, Cooley follows Weber with respect to sociological method by emphasizing that 'the study of the social world must be centred on attempts to probe the subjective meanings people attribute to their actions' (Coser, 1977, p.311).

In *Social Process* (1918) Cooley sets out his conception of the systemic relations between social processes, including processes of valuation as such, and monetary valuation in particular. With respect to valuation, he identifies three components on which various classifications of value are based: an organism, a situation, and an object. The organism is central as a system of life within which values function – there must be a worth *to* something. The organism can be a person, a group, an institution, a doctrine, or even an animal or plant. The situation is the 'immediate occasion for action, in view of which the organism integrates the various values working within it ... and meets the situation by an act of selection' (p.284). Objects such as grain, stock-values, books, pictures and doctrines, are indeterminate unless defined by the organism and the situation. For example, a book can have various kinds of value such as literary and pecuniary and maybe valued differently by different people of groups (p.285).

Within Cooley's account, the idea of valuation can be applied to almost any kind of human activity with all systems of values being systems of practical ideas or motives to behaviour that involve social and mental competition, selection and organization. Cooley illustrates what he means with a simple analogy:

Suppose I wish to drive a nail and have no hammer by me. I look at everything within reach with reference to its hammer-value, that is, with reference to its power to meet the special situation, and if the monkey-wrench promises more of this than any other object available, its value rises, it fits the situation, it is selected, it "works," and becomes a more active factor in life. (pp.283-284)

Following his holistic approach, there are many ways of classifying values, but 'taken as a whole' they 'express the diversity and complex interdependence of life itself.' Different kinds of value, such as moral, aesthetic, legal, religious or economic represent 'differentiated phases of the social system' with some, such as legal and economic systems, being more 'definitely organised' than others (p.330). These phases overlap as 'aspects' rather than separate things, and as motives for action their classification is 'somewhat formal and arbitrary.' For example, the 'value to me of an engraving I have just bought may be aesthetic, or economic, or perhaps ostentatious, or ethical ... It may well be all of these: my impulse to cherish it is a whole with many aspects' (p.331).

Significantly, Cooley identifies a 'kind of commensurability' throughout the diverse 'world of values' based on a mental weighing up of options in a given situation:

...in a vague but real way we are accustomed to weigh one kind of value against another and to guide our conduct by the decision. Apart from any definite medium of exchange, there is a system of mental barter, as you might call it, in universal operation, by which values are compared definitely enough to make choice possible. You may say that the things that appeal to us are often so different in kind that it is

absurd to talk of comparing them; but as a matter of fact we do it none the less.
(pp.331-332)

Everyday examples include the choice between meeting a friend at the station or having dinner at the usual time, and gratifying our sense of honour by returning excess change or our greed by keeping it. In effect, Cooley claims, 'almost any sort of value may come, in practice, to be weighed against any other sort ... Our behavior is a kind of synthesis of the ideas, or values, that are working in us in face of a given situation, and these may be any mixture that life supplies' (p.332).

Overall, the function of values is to guide conduct, with conduct being a 'matter of the total or synthetic behaviour of a living whole in view of a situation.' When faced with a 'crisis of conduct' all the motives or values relating to it 'however incommensurable they may seem, are in some way brought to a common measure, weighed against one another, in order to determine which way the scale inclines'. Commensuration of this kind is 'psychical' rather than 'numerical', and, according to Cooley, 'we are far from understanding its exact nature' (pp.311-312).

Monetary valuation

Cooley outlines both the function of monetary valuation within an integrated system of values and how this function is only partly realized, largely due to the workings of the market as a flawed institution. In terms of potential, he suggests that the distinctive function of money valuation is to 'generalize or assimilate values through a common measure', giving them the 'reach and flexibility, so that many sorts of value are enabled to work freely together throughout the social system, instead of being confined to a small province.' He

gives an example of this reach as earning a thousand dollars for teaching bacteriology, and using the money to pay for something like a guide in the Alps who has never even heard of bacteriology (p.309). Such 'mobilization of values through the pecuniary measure' makes the 'latter an expression of the total life of society'.

However, values can only be successfully mobilized in this way if they have been 'translated into pecuniary terms' in the first place (pp.309-310), and Cooley claims that there is a particular resistance to assimilating higher values into monetary value: the pecuniary sphere is unnecessarily 'circumscribed and confined' to 'a special and ... inferior province of life' in which only 'coarser and more material values can be measured in money, while the finer sorts, as of beauty, friendship, righteousness, and so on, are in their nature private and untranslatable, and so out of reach of any generalizing process' (p.311). Cooley states that there is no reason why the 'highest as well as the lowest things' can't be brought within the pecuniary sphere, and that both individually and collectively we do in fact weigh things like honor and beauty in monetary terms: 'honor may call for the saving of money to pay a debt' so that in effect 'we buy our honor with money' and '[b]eauty is on the market, however undervalued, in the form, for example, of music, art, literature, flowers and dwelling sites.' Significantly too, mothers sacrifice their health for money to support their children, brothers are educated in place of their sisters, and even among the 'well-to-do' possible children are renounced due to cost (pp.313-214).

Cooley argues that the limitations placed on monetary valuation relate to its character as an institution rather than to any incommensurability between values. Money values derive

from an economic system that should be beneficent but which instead 'creates or exaggerates' some sorts of values – often those with 'little human merit' – and 'ignores and depreciates' many other, higher values (p.333). The values that are recognized derive from the whole history of the pecuniary system 'so that the wrongs that may have worked themselves into that system are implicit in them' (p.315). Cooley identifies two main ways in which institutional conditions 'intervene between psychical values and their pecuniary expression.' The first, he claims, operates once monetary demand is already in place, and is largely the result of class. As with any institution, the pecuniary system is overseen by a particular group of specialists that is partly driven by public interest and partly by self-interest or 'agrandizement' (p.335), in this case a 'technical class' which controls the system and works with a degree of independence from the rest of society. This commercially ascendant class has the 'prestige and initiative' to set fashions and control markets, and is tied into and often the same as the buying power of the most wealthy. The consequence is that 'psychical values, in the course of getting pecuniary expression, pass through and are molded by the minds of people of wealth and business function to an extent not easily overstated.' This class is also supported by legal institutions with associated rights of inheritance and bequest that protect their interests (pp.335-336). Also interwoven with the influence of class is that of institutional process. Pecuniary valuation works through established mechanisms and only values that conform with certain conditions can be translated into pecuniary terms. Values can only be expressed in the market when they have become standardized as objects of 'extended recognition in some exchangeable form' and part of a competitive system (p.336). Put succinctly, 'the progress of market valuation, as a rule, is a translation into pecuniary terms of value which have already become, in some

measure, a social institution' (p.338). Moral value is excluded from the monetary sphere, not because it is essentially non-pecuniary – 'people will pay for righteousness as readily' as anything else 'when it presents itself in negotiable form' – but because 'pecuniary valuation is essentially an institution, and values which are anti-institutional naturally stand outside of it' (p.338).

The other main way by which monetary value is inhibited relates to larger social processes that are usually considered to be outside the realm of economics. Cooley recognizes that the market will never become an adequate expression of ideal values due to the conservative nature of institutions. However, he also holds that the market and the 'values that express it' should be under constant reform and guided by the primary motive of social betterment (p.316 & p.340). He uses the term 'progress-values' to describe values that are 'not yet incorporated into the pecuniary systems, but which, because of their intrinsic worth to human life, deserve to be...' (p.341). These values may be aesthetic, scientific, moral or industrial, and concern 'any field of life that admits of progress'. Examples include labor-saving inventions that no one is yet willing to pay for, and creation of 'social work' as a socially worthy new profession with a market price in the form of salaries (pp.340-341). At the same time Cooley stresses that 'production has not always lacked ideals; nor does it everywhere lack them at present.' They can be found 'when the producing group gets a corporate consciousness and a sense of the social worth of its function.' He names the medieval guilds as an historical example, which developed and held their members to 'high traditions and standards of workmanship' and conceived of themselves 'in terms of service, and not merely as purveyors to a demand.' The same can also be said in present times for

trades and professions whose sense of workmanship has been cultivated by tradition and training:

Doctors and lawyers are not content to give us what we want in their line, but hold it their duty to teach us what we ought to want, to refuse things that are not for our best good and urge upon us those that are. Teachers, artists, men of letters do the same. A good carpenter, given the chance, will build a better house than the owner can appreciate; he loves to do it and feels obscurely that it is his part to realize and ideal of sound construction. (p.343)

Building from this argument, Cooley argues that the scope of monetary value should be increased rather than delimited: 'the principle that everything has its price should be rather enlarged than restricted' and 'the widest possible range of values should be convertible to it' (p.326). Such increased scope would enable the market to more fully 'express and energize the aims of society.' Conceiving of pecuniary value as part of one large and general system of values that includes moral and aesthetic values, a part of its function is to bring these latter values onto the scope of the market. By contrast, the effects of separating monetary values from these other values is to 'cripple both, to cripple life itself by cutting off the healthy interchange among its members.' Progress is to be achieved, 'in part at least, not over commercialism but through it; the dollar is to be reformed rather than suppressed' (p.327-328).

It should be stressed that within Cooley's scheme, increasing the scope of monetary value is not the same as reducing all motives to the pecuniary motive. The pecuniary motive is technical in character, and on its own excludes 'vast provinces of life.' While a whole range of 'finer human values' such as personal and social development, public improvements, the arts and sciences have a pecuniary aspect, 'a money demand alone cannot beget or control

them.’ On the contrary, Cooley claims that great achievements in fields such as literature, art, science and religion are generated in ‘non-pecuniary tracts of thought and intercourse’: values such as ‘love, beauty, and righteousness may come on the market under certain conditions, but they are not, in the full sense, market commodities’ (pp.318-319). So, while assigning:

a very large and growing sphere to pecuniary valuation ... even at its best and largest, it can never be an adequate basis for general social organization. It is an institution, like any other, having important functions but requiring, like all institutions, to be brought under rational control by the aid of a comprehensive sociology, ethics, and politics. (p.320)

Similarly, at an individual level pecuniary value can be a motive for stimulating and guiding productive work, but there is a distinction to be made between motivation for money and motivation linked to self-expression, the latter including influences such as ‘emulation and ambition, the need for activity for its own sake, the love of workmanship and creation, the impulse to assert one’s individuality, and the desire to serve the social whole’ (p.321).

Pecuniary motivation can be a form of indirect self-expression to the extent, for example, that someone works hard to earn money to buy particular items. But this is different and inferior to work that is directly self-expressive when someone feels that what they are doing ‘is joyous and rewarding in itself’ and worth doing whether or not they are paid for it. Cooley attributes this feeling to artists, poets, skilled craftsmen, and ‘born’ teachers or lawyers. He describes it as ‘the deepest need of human nature, required for self-respect and integrity of character’ and proposes that it should be encouraged so that its reach becomes much more common (pp.321-322). More extremely still, claims that the ‘onward things of life usually come from men whose imperious self-expression disregards the pecuniary market’ which

means that the pecuniary system should be tolerant towards non-conformity (pp.322-323). Importantly, though, while pecuniary valuation, represented here in the form of wages, will neither produce good work or contented people on its own, it can be 'allied' with conditions that encourage self-expression of the sort described so that the two motives work harmoniously together (pp.321-324).

Radin's conception of incomplete commodification

Radin's main interest lies in what she refers to as 'contested commodities' such as babies, sexual services and body parts, which force us to consider what can and can't be properly bought and sold, and to make decisions about the appropriate scope of markets (p.xi).

Overall, she challenges the notion that there is any rigid dichotomy between what can and can't be commodified. Finding both theoretical extremes inadequate – that is, at one end theories of universal commodification that place everything in markets, and at the other end theories of noncommodification that would place nothing in markets – she argues instead that there can be 'co-existent commodified and noncommodified understandings of various aspects of social life' (p.xii). Whereas Cooley set out a holistic view of valuation, she establishes a continuum between monetary and non-monetary values and depicts and explores the 'middle way' between them (p.xiii).

Radin entertains the possibility that we can both know the price of something and know that it is priceless, or that commodified understandings of some transactions can coexist with noncommodified understandings, through her conception of 'incomplete commodification.' She describes an incomplete commodification as a 'partial market-inalienability', and an

important building block in her argument involves finding a way of thinking about market inalienability that both resists a simplistic subject/object distinction whereby things that are 'internal' to a person are inalienable and things that are 'external' to a person are freely alienable, and 'supersedes' liberal compartmentalization of the kind proposed by Walzer. Achieving this, she claims, requires 'reimagining personhood and human flourishing' while at the same time retaining – and in her case reformulating – the important liberal ideals of freedom and identity. Freedom with respect to personhood is defined as an individual's will or power to choose for oneself: 'in order to be autonomous individuals, we must at least be able to act for ourselves through free will in relation to the environment of things and other people.' Identity is defined as the 'integrity and continuity of the self' that is required for individuation: 'to have a unique individual identity, we must have selves that are integrated and continuous over time' (pp.54 -55).

Radin rejects universal commodification on counts of both freedom and identity, finding its negative liberty based on being able to trade everything in free markets too narrow, and its insistence that 'personal attributes, relationships, and philosophical and moral commitments' are all 'monetizable and alienable from the self' harmful to personhood. She illustrates the latter with reference to Posner's treatment of rape within a rhetorical marriage and sex market in which, she highlights, an individual's bodily integrity is treated as a 'fungible object that can pass in and out of the person's possession' without effecting the person concerned. Bodily integrity, she stresses, is far too personal to be conceived as property at all, let alone fungible property (p.88). She claims that a 'better view of personhood' should understand' that 'many kinds of particulars – one's politics, work,

religion, family, love, sexuality, friendships, altruism, experiences, wisdom, moral commitments, character, and personal attributes' are 'integral to the self'. Understanding any of these as 'monetizable or completely detachable from the person', for example, the idea that one person's moral commitments are commensurable with those of another 'or that the "same" person remains when her moral commitments are subtracted' violates 'our deepest understanding of what it is to be human' (p.56).

Like Cooley, but using different terms, Radin argues that self and society are inextricably linked: personhood can only be understood in relation to context, with context referring to the 'physical and social concerns' that are 'integral to 'personal individuation' along with 'self-development'. She argues that a positive meaning of freedom emerges when this contextual aspect of personhood is recognized because any plausible conception of freedom of persons must be attached to a particular enabling context: human freedom cannot exist without a social structure to support it. This suggests that even markets should not be left to their own devices because the conditions for individuals to act freely within them must be enabled by regulatory structures (pp.56-57).

Personhood construed in context also has a bearing on how individual property is conceived, and enables Radin to make an important distinction between two main types. Beginning with the claim that self-constitution includes being connected with other human beings and things in the world, she claims that this connectedness applies to some property that is neither 'wholly "outside" the self, in the world separate from the person' or 'wholly "inside" the self, indistinguishable from attributes of the person.' Such categories of property 'bridge'

or 'blur' the boundary between 'self and world, between what is inside and what is outside, between what is subject and what is object.' She labels this kind of property as 'personal property' and observes that it is also morally justifiable because to disconnect it from the person would harm or destroy the self. Personal property is inseparable from the holder, and so connects with inalienability. It also represents incommensurability and an associated pluralist understanding of value because such personal items are not 'interchangeable with a like item or with money without affecting self-constitution' (pp.57-60).

The second type of property is 'fungible property', which describes categories of property that can be understood as separate from the self and associated with self-constitution. Radin claims that a lot of 'things that people own have little to do with self-constitution' and gives the examples of money and investment items which are held instrumentally and may be used to buy other things that they would rather have. Such property items 'are understood as outside the self and do not blur the boundaries of self or subject'. Fungible property relates to commensurability in the sense that its value is unitary, or reducible to a common metric such as money, or at least that it can be placed on a single continuum ranging from less to more valuable. This kind of property is interchangeable, and can be valued in market terms of exchange (pp.57-59).

Radin stresses that her use of 'personal' and 'fungible' property marks out the endpoints on a continuum rather than a binary divide. The distinction is useful because certain categories are understood as 'corresponding to the continuum's end points or close to them' but many items lie somewhere between and can more usefully understood as 'incompletely

commodified.' These items are 'neither fully commodified nor fully removed from the market' and 'we may decide that some things are or should be market-alienable only to a degree, or in some aspects. Such decisions relate to cultural commitments rather than to any form of 'transcendent' understanding. That is, they are socially constructed. The home is given as an instance of property that might be more or less conceived as a locus of personal grounding depending on different cultural norms (p.20 & p.58).

Having set up how incomplete commodification is rooted in personhood constituted in community or context, Radin explores more closely the ways in which commodified and noncommodified transactions can co-exist. She begins by making a tentative distinction between 'contested concepts' that are external to the person, and 'internally conflicted meanings' that are internal to the person. Contested concepts relate to instances where conflicting understandings of particular goods are well 'crystallized' so that some people adhere to a commodified understanding and others to a noncommodified understanding. She gives views on adoption and compensation for personal injury as such examples, where only a section of society accepts a commodified understanding. In other instances, conflicting understandings are not so well crystallized, and the same person can find themselves understanding a situation in different and conflicting ways so that 'neither commodification nor noncommodification' accurately describes their conception of an interaction. For example, someone can feel that a painting is priceless and yet have it valued for the purposes of insurance (pp.102-103). This observation resonates with a stage of 'weighing up' Cooley's conception of holistic valuation.

Radin also identifies how incomplete commodification in both external and internal senses is and should be reflected in social policy. In situations where:

... different meanings co-exist in society as a whole or in persons themselves, it becomes simplistic to think of our social policy choice as binary: either complete commodification or complete noncommodification. Instead, it becomes important to recognize both our social division over commodification and the non-market aspects of many transactions that can be conceived of in market terms (p.103).

Rejecting the 'domino theory' that holds that whenever market and non-market understandings co-exist, the market understanding will 'win out', she argues for a more 'nuanced' approach to understanding the pervasiveness of market rationality. For each case of 'contested commodification' she recommends that 'we should look and see how powerful the market conceptualization is in context' and 'consider whether under some circumstances market understandings and non-market understandings can stably coexist, either as contested concepts or as internally conflicted (plural) meanings.' Accepting this possibility – with complete commodification and complete noncommodification as 'hypothetical end-points on a continuum' – opens up a broader range of policy choices than can be achieved by drawing a line between market and non-market realms. Incomplete commodification, or partial inalienability, has the potential to both reflect our conflicted understandings of some interactions and to substitute for complete noncommodification in instances when following our ideals 'causes too much harm in our non-ideal world' (p.104).

Again, echoing Cooley, Radin illustrates what she means by incomplete commodification with reference to work. She begins with the claim that while most people in a market society such as ours are paid for their work, much more than payment is involved: 'ideals about

work do not turn on capitalist rationality' and what people hope to get out of work is about more than money. She adopts the distinction between 'labour' and 'work' to differentiate between commodified and noncommodified elements. Labour, she argues, is fully commodified and conceived separately from real lives and selves, and the value of what a labourer sells is fully exhausted in the measure of exchange value. By contrast, most work contains a noncommodified human element. As well as taking money, workers in many occupations also give their time. Money is not their only motivation to work and does not exhaust the value of their activity. Work can be both a way of making a living and also a constitutive 'part of ourselves' that includes relations with others and even, in its ideal form, contributes to 'our conception of human flourishing.' This identification is not limited to teachers, artists, and public servants, but extends across much of the market economy which embraces the concept of doing a good job for the sake of pride in one's work, for the sake of the user or recipient, and for the sake of one's community as a whole.' People who sell products can care about the people they sell to (pp.105-106).

Radin observes a common concern that market rationality is displacing the more caring and personal aspects of work, which is increasingly characterized in terms of relations between buyers and sellers. However, she resists the simple choice between commodified or noncommodified alternatives in favour of her notion of incomplete commodification that can describe situations where 'things are sold but the interaction between the participants in the transaction cannot be fully or perspicuously described as the sale of things'.

Significantly, sales that 'retain a personal aspect even when money changes hands' can't be fully described as 'sales of commodities. They involve internally plural meanings, and an

‘irreducibly non-market or non-monetized aspect of human interaction’ between parties.

Radin argues that the way to achieve a less commodified society is to recognize and promote these non-market aspects of buying and selling and ‘honor our internally plural understandings’ rather than to ‘erect a wall’ that excludes a small number of things from markets and ‘abandons everything else to market rationality’ (pp.106-107).

Radin also explains how the notion of incomplete commodification operates at a societal level, as reflected in situations where society as a whole recognizes the non-monetizable significance of participant interactions, and regulations are established to protect individual freedom and identity. Returning to work as an example, she lists reforms such as collective bargaining, minimum wage, restrictions on working hours, health and safety regulations, unemployment and retirement benefits, prohibition of child labor, and anti-discrimination requirements as evidence that work has been incompletely commodified on moral grounds. Regulations such as these account for and foster ‘personhood’ and the ‘non-market significance’ of interactions, and ‘shield’ individuals from the impact of market forces alone (p.109).

Overall, Radin claims that recognizing and accepting the prevalence of incomplete commodification as related to appropriate ideals of personhood and community is far more satisfactory than any argument for ‘piecemeal noncommodification of specific items’ that leaves everything else to market forces or market rhetoric. Far from accepting the potential for market rationality to pervade non-market domains, she proposes that the values of

personhood and community should be more fully instilled into markets, altering them from their pure free-market form (pp.113-114).

The world of money and higher education

My aim in this chapter has been to find conceptualizations relating to the scope of monetary value that can inform discussion about the marketization of higher education by reconciling any perceived disjunct or incompatibility between educational and economic values. Policy makers have tended to assume that market values can co-exist with other values, and anti-marketers have tended to assume that market-values override other values by commodifying education and reducing pedagogic relations into those of commodity provider and consumer. A brief review of universal commodification affirms the inadequacy of framing all aspects of social life in monetary terms. Assimilating everything into the one world of money – even as a metaphorical exercise – occludes a whole set of other values that make up the rich and varied understandings of individuals and society that are rightfully entertained and contested within a university. It represents the worst-case scenario expressed by those who oppose any marketization of higher education by promoting an impoverished depiction of self as economic being operating in an instrumentally focused world of education. A pluralist conception of value that begins by accepting that something can be both a means and an end, and can at the same time be monetizable and nonmonetizable offers a constructive way forward.

Cooley and Radin provide accounts of valuation that transcend both binary oppositions between monetary and non-monetary value and domain theories of value that limit monetary valuation to its own distinctive market sphere. They compose the world of money by formulating particular conceptions of individuals in contexts or situations in which they are able to entertain or integrate competing values, and by blurring the distinctions between individuals and society.

In his holistic scheme of valuation, Cooley conceives of values as motives to action in any given situation in which individuals may well attribute multiple values to the same object. Monetary valuation can co-exist with other types of valuation and commensurability is achieved in a psychical, rather than a numerical sense that forces monetary measurement onto qualitative experience. Monetary value is one form of value at work within an integrated whole. If we apply this to higher learning, students have the potential to weigh up for themselves how monetary valuation serves as a motive to action alongside other competing and qualitatively different values. This provides a glimpse into a different and deeper way of understanding student 'choice', allowing that different students might make different valuative decisions that accord with their own motives for learning. Moreover, omitting monetary value from the possible mix of values means that students are making valuative decisions based on an incomplete understanding of the situation.

According to Cooley, the only thing that prevents us from applying monetary value to the higher things of life – that may well coincide with the aims of higher learning – is limitations imposed by the wider economic system as an institution that is controlled by individuals

with a vested interest maintaining the status quo. He puts the onus on other institutions to continuously challenge and reform the market institution so that the 'values that express it' more fully reflect motives for social betterment. Far from recommending imposing limits around the monetary sphere, Cooley argues that it should be expanded to encourage greater self-expression and to 'express and energise the aims of society'. This could suggest a role for higher education – itself an institution – to embrace rather than reject its place within a market system and to direct its intelligence towards remedying the historical flaws that are embedded in a class-based economic system so that these higher and progressive aims are realized.

Following a different line of argument, Radin also inverts the idea that the monetary sphere should be curtailed by arguing that a better way to challenge the dominance of market rhetoric is to recognize the non-market elements of many market transactions. While complete commodification of higher education would make alienable aspects of learning that we might prefer to identify as self-constitutive, the possibility of part, or incomplete commodification opens up a way of envisaging university learning as something that is paid for by students but not fully described as the sale of a commodity. Incomplete commodification means that a 'personal aspect' is retained even though money changes hands. Accepting a midway between complete commodification and no commodification offers a richer way of considering the marketization of higher education as a unique case of a 'contested concept'. More important than arguing for or against commodification, discussion could focus on how market and nonmarket understandings might 'stably co-exist' in the particular case of higher education. Also to be recognized would be the 'internally

conflicted meanings' of the individuals who function within higher education. Both students and their teachers might at times need to confront inner tensions between the noncommodified and commodified aspects of higher learning without recourse to simplistic binary choices.

CHAPTER 5: SHAPING THE WORLD OF ECONOMICS AND MORALITY

The theme of the previous Chapter was the scope of monetary value. I proposed ways in which binary boundaries between monetary and non-monetary valuation might be reconciled by conceiving of valuation either holistically or as on a continuum so that a wide range of values can co-exist alongside money values. In this Chapter I shift my focus to the narrowness of the economic approach that underpins the policy rationale for the marketization of higher education, and which also animates a good deal of the opposition to marketization as identified in Chapter 1. I will argue that the reasoning behind that paradigm implicitly diminishes conceptions of higher learning, along with conceptions of the individual who engages in educational activity. But I will also question whether this in itself provides an argument against marketization. While the economic model embedded in policy lacks a moral dimension that many may wish to associate with the aims of higher education, there are possibly other ways of conceptualising or situating market functions that can embrace a fuller picture of individuals and social motivations, and that could also engender a richer depiction of students and the civic aims of higher learning. Most specifically, I will explore the potential for reconciliation between markets and educational values by seeking out ways in which economic approaches might encompass individual moral motivation and a socially situated and oriented ethic.

To support his part of my enquiry, I will focus on the work of Adam Smith and selected subsequent thinkers who have used his reasoning to review the nature and scope of contemporary economics and its relation with moral motivation and behaviour. Smith is

commonly referred to as the father of modern economics by virtue of being the first to explain the 'usefulness and dynamism' of the emerging market economy in his *Wealth of Nations* (Sen, 2011, p.259; McRorie, 2015, p.676). This text is still commonly referenced to justify claims for *laissez faire* market economies underpinned by rational self-interested behaviour, and it would seem reasonable to look there for a robust defence of this position. However, close reading soon shows that such attributions to Smith are misplaced. Recent scholarship that contextualizes Smith's political economy within his social and moral theory as set out in his earlier work – *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* – provides a much more complex picture of a morally defined social world within which market economies work. So much so, that these texts have become a source for attempts to re-envisage the ethical landscape of contemporary economics.

In terms of methodology, the current exercise will draw on Foucault's (1977) formulation of history of the present: a process of recovering ideas that have been lost or misunderstood in order to shed light on contemporary thought. While any attempt at tracing a genealogy of the continuities, discontinuities and power relations at play in the persistent misinterpretation or narrowing of Smith's thought is well beyond my scope, I will at least highlight these with reference to recent scholarship dedicated to reframing his corpus as a whole. Walsh, for example, cites increased interest in Smith's work as signifying the beginning of a second phase in the 'revival of classical theory' in order to achieve 'an enriched present day classicism' (2000). And Smith and Wilson claim that *Moral Sentiments* 'is the foundation for lost insights into a quintessentially humanistic science of economics' (2019, p.160). In particular, Smith predates disciplinary distinctions between the subjects of

economics, philosophy, psychology and sociology, and conventional themes and methodologies that have evolved within those disciplinary boundaries are more legitimately integrated within his works under the purview of moral philosophy. Walsh claims that Smith's texts offer a 'rich tapestry, interwoven with threads of analytic economics, rich description, and explicit moral philosophy' (2000, p.20). Also relevant are Hacking's claims about philosophy in context. In this instance, it is important to be aware of Smith's overarching defence of commercial society as a superior alternative to feudal economies that were still prevalent in parts of Scotland during his lifetime (Herzog, 2013, p.18), and his identification with schools of thought embedded within what is now referred to as the Scottish Enlightenment. Herzog (2013) emphasises that ahistorical readings of Smith's thinking that focus on the *Wealth of Nations* from the perspective of contemporary economics miss the bigger picture, and that the 'meaning and place of the market' within his theory can only be understood by taking other dimensions into account, including beliefs about nature and religion (p.29). To ascertain what can usefully be recovered from Smith, I will draw on a small portion of this revisionist literature and review works of contemporary economists who have used his ideas to develop alternatives to orthodox approaches, namely Sen (1987; 2011) and Smith and Wilson (2019). An important question to keep in mind is whether a policy model based on market rationality is able to incorporate or bridge the multiple values of higher education, as intimated by the Dearing Report and by Willetts, though left undeveloped.

The present: contemporary policy and economics

The stated impetus behind higher education policy as outlined in Chapter 1 has been to create a sustainable and fair funding model. Willetts (2017) informs us that the repayment scheme on which the new model is based originates in human capital theory (p.78). As the name suggests, human capital theory conceives of human beings themselves as capital. It assumes that all human behaviour is based on the economic self-interest of individuals who function within competitive markets (Fitzsimons, 2015). Within this model, the student loan can be understood as an investment – overseen by government – in an individual’s human capital to be paid back once they become tax paying citizens. In principle, individuals themselves benefit from the increased ‘capital’ accrued through their education and so does the economy as a whole, especially in nations that base their global competitiveness on knowledge and learning capacity rather than material production. In the UK scheme, loans are written off if graduates earn under a given income threshold over a period of time so that wider society rather than students themselves bears the cost. It also falls upon the government to create the conditions in which students can operate within the higher education market, as Milton Friedman specifies: ‘[I]ndividuals should bear the cost of investments in themselves and receive the rewards, and they should not be prevented by market imperfections from making the investments when they are willing to bear the costs’ (cited in Willetts 2017, pp.78-79).

Human capital theory was predominantly developed by Gary Becker (1964; 1976) and is itself rooted in what is variously named mainstream, orthodox or neo-classical economics.

Becker maintains that his 'economic approach' is an 'application of neo-classical economics' which can be applied to all human behaviour (1976, p.8 & p.15). It is this potential for applying economic theory to across a whole range of behaviour and decision-making that makes it applicable to social policy formation, despite deficits associated with 'universal commodification' as already outlined in Chapter 3.

The key methodological foundation of neo-classical economics is utility maximization – or Max-U – which seems to have endured as the 'guiding framework of analysis that serves to identify the discipline and channel its research' since the late nineteenth century, largely due to its versatility, predictive capability, and possibly its non-falsifiability (Hodgson 2019, p.97). Smith and Wilson (2019) locate recent evidential support for Max-U in a series studies of experimental markets beginning in the 1960s, which, simply described, involved nominating participants as either buyers or sellers in a series of trading periods and observing how markets converged to 'competitive equilibrium price' over time through a process of buyers accepting the lowest asking price and sellers accepting the highest bid price (p.6). Essential to Max-U is a concept of the individual who operates in markets as a rationally self-interested being. While economists are of course aware that individuals can act irrationally and might not always seek to maximise utilities, these non-rational behaviours are excluded to retain the integrity of economic modelling (Fitzsimons, 1999, p2). Sen (1988) outlines two main features of the 'rational behaviour' that plays such a key role in modern economics and which is treated synonymously with actual behaviour: rationality is associated with consistency of choice, and it involves maximisation of self-interest (pp.10-12). Likewise, with reference to human capital theory, Becker claims that the 'combined assumptions of

maximizing behaviour, market equilibrium, and stable preferences, used relentlessly and unflinchingly, form the heart of the economic approach as I see it' (1976, p.5).

With even a brief insight into the principles of the neoclassical or economic approach of human capital theory, it is plain to see how they have been used to frame higher education policy as a series of costs and benefits giving the impression that higher learning is wholly instrumental to the economic interests of individuals and the wider economy. As illustrated in Chapter 1, students themselves have been depicted as the major beneficiaries of learning as a consequence of the measurable benefits they get from higher employment and wages, and university degrees have been described as a good investment. Higher education itself is described as a 'sound financial and personal investment with a wide range of social benefits' (Success as a Knowledge Economy, 2016, p.7). The student as instrument of human capital at the 'heart of the system' is 'well-informed' and 'discerning' and someone who should be persuaded that they need to 'pay more' to 'get more' (Browne Report, 2010, p.4). The government itself has set about rebuilding the regulatory architecture to encourage competition and to protect students from market failures, though with limited success to date as indicated by the recommendations of the Augar Review (2019).

Whether or not Willetts (2017) is right to claim that the economic focus of policy – concerned with consequences rather than motives – doesn't rule out the presence of other values that might better describe the purposes and processes of higher education for a broader range of stakeholders, it is not surprising that many academics have protested against such a narrow construal of education and the individuals engaged in learning. A

particular economic approach that conceives of all human behaviour as economic and measurable in costs and benefits has effectively been overlaid onto a domain which has its own tradition of framing educational values and purposes (see Chapter 1). As Pigou (1920) points out, 'efforts devoted to the production of people who are good instruments may involve a failure to produce people who are good men' (p.14).

One way of addressing the *impasse* between pro- and anti-marketization positions is to reframe the economic modelling that underlies policy. A close review of the work of Adam Smith as both champion of market society and moral philosopher should provide insights into how economic and ethical elements can be bridged within a market system, which in turn promises a richer conception of a marketized version of higher education. As already mentioned, an advantage of revisiting the work of an eighteenth-century theorist is that he writes from outside the constraints of contemporary disciplinary boundaries so that we can see the present from a new perspective. The selective use of Smith's work from within the narrow scope of modern economics has resulted in truncating and misrepresenting what he really said about the individuals who operate with a market society, whereas a fuller account that incorporates his moral theory has provided some modern scholars with important insights into how to restore ethics to the field of economics (McRorie, 2015; Sen, 1987; Smith and Wilson, 2019).

Adam Smith's world

The first edition of *Moral Sentiments* was published in 1759, seventeen years prior to publication of the *Wealth of Nations*. In the former text, Smith sets out his own complex

version of a moral sense theory that responds to variants proposed by his Scottish contemporaries – notably David Hume and Francis Hutcheson. Moral sense theories attach primary importance to human features in the form of desires, emotions or sentiments that account for our moral judgments. For Smith, judgments about what should and shouldn't be approved relate to both motive and effect.

Moral Sentiments has historically been treated separately from *Wealth of Nations*. Indeed, the connection between the two texts has been a source of bewilderment as expressed in the so-named 'Adam Smith problem' coined by a group of late 19th Century German critics who couldn't reconcile the tenets of Smith's moral philosophy with his economics (Herzog, 2013, pp.20-21). One explanation for a perceived disjunct between the two texts – and hence between Smith's moral and economic theory – was that Smith changed his views over time, although this belief has been discredited since it is now known that Smith continued to revise *Moral Sentiments* until the end of his life.⁵ More recent scholarship by historians of economics has concentrated on understanding the connections between these major works (McRorie, 2015). Rather than being treated separately, it is argued that they should be understood as 'integral parts of what was supposed to be a unified system' (Herzog, 2013, p.20). Following many of his Scottish Enlightenment contemporaries, Smith formulates an account of human nature in its social state in *Moral Sentiments* that serves as a foundation or 'prelude' for studying sociological or philosophical themes, in his case the emerging political economy of market society (Skinner, in Smith, 1986, p.15). We should expect,

⁵ Hanley (2009) goes so far as to claim that Smith's addition of a section on virtue in the sixth edition of *Moral Sentiments* was made as a direct appeal against the corrupting potential of commercial civilization as set out in *Wealth of Nations*.

therefore, the moral psychology of *Moral Sentiments* to provide a basis on which to understand the political economy of the *Wealth of Nations*. Rather than signalling any 'de-ethicization' of economic life, the *Wealth of Nations* should be read as both a work of economics and a work of moral philosophy (McRorie, 2015). Smith conceptualises the market 'as part of society and not as a separate entity' and should be treated as a 'social theorist' in a wider sense (Herzog, 2013, p.39).

A holistic interpretation of Smith's works

Amartya Sen (2011) summarises three key misreadings or false 'lessons' drawn from Smith's work by those who champion profit-based market capitalism, which are the 'self-sufficiency – and the self-regulatory nature of the market economy', the 'adequacy of the profit motive as the basis of rational behaviour', and the 'adequacy of self-interest as socially productive behaviour' (p.259). These themes provide a useful structure for making a more holistic interpretation of Smith's work that is relevant to critique of the marketization of higher education. The first opens up questions about the role of the state and the workings of competition. The second and third link more directly with understandings about individuals in markets.

Self-sufficiency and self-regulation within markets

Smith unquestioningly had a benevolent view of market society as part of his greater vision for a system of natural liberty. In *Wealth of Nations* he demonstrates the benefits of free trade for economic prosperity through specialization of production and economies of scale (Sen, 2011, p.259). Markets evolve from the practical imperatives of the division of labour

because specializing in one branch of industry necessitates acquiring all other goods needed by means of exchange (Herzog, p.31). In a free market the price of commodities is regulated by the balance of supply and demand (WN I.VII, p.157), and to this extent markets are self-adjusting. As Herzog explains, '[m]arkets ... take over a task of coordination which could never be accomplished by any individual human being or government' (p.32). In Smith's view the state cannot possibly have sufficient wisdom or knowledge for 'superintending the industry of private people, and of directing it towards the employments most suitable to the interest of the society' (WN IV.IX, p.274). However, this should not be interpreted to mean that the market economy as a whole should be self-regulating. The commercial society that Smith describes is embedded within a fundamentally moral social order, and supported by multiple institutions that remediate the negative potentials and consequences of markets.

Smith attributes three duties to the state: defence against invasion, administration of justice – which involves protecting all citizens as far as possible 'from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it' – and oversight of public works and institutions which benefit society at large (WN IV.IX, p.274). Justice – a concept that is developed in *Moral Sentiments* as 'the pillar on which the whole edifice of society stands' and later applied in *Wealth of Nations* – is essential to a well-functioning market society in which:

Every man as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest in his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man, or order of men. (WN IV.IX, p.274)

As well as functioning within the laws of justice, individual freedom is premised on a framework of personal and property rights, with the right to the fruits of one's labour being

the 'most sacred and inviolable' of man's properties (Herzog, 2013, pp.69-70). The key advantage of a market society, understood by Smith to include all phenomena that involve voluntary exchange of goods, is that everyone has something to offer: 'Everyman ... lives by exchanging, or becomes in some measure a merchant' (WN, I.IV, p.126). Exchange enables individuals to develop different talents that all become part of 'a common stock' in which 'every man may purchase whatever part of the produce of the other man's talents as he has occasion for' (WN I.II, p.121). Smith envisions a society that protects the equal rights of all human beings, rather than privileging some groups over others as is the case with the 'unnatural and retrograde order' of feudalism (cited in Herzog, 2013, p.28).

At the same time as championing a market society as 'freer, more just and more opulent' (Herzog, 2013, p.39), Smith recognizes its limitations. Sen (2011) highlights in particular Smith's deep concern about 'the incidence of poverty, illiteracy, and relative deprivation that might remain despite a well-functioning market economy' (p.266). Additionally, Smith places the responsibility on politicians to advance the natural liberty of citizens rather than giving in to 'merchants and manufacturers' who want to restrain the open market via privileges and monopolies (Herzog, 2013, p.39).

Smith identifies public provision of basic education as one means of offsetting the negative consequences market society for some members. He recognizes that the division of labour in 'every improved and civilised' society results in some individuals doing the most monotonous of jobs, the 'torpor' of which 'renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender

sentiment, and consequently forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life' (WN V.III, pp.368-369). Because of this, Smith proposes that education in a 'civilized and commercial society' might focus more on the 'common people' than those of 'some rank and fortune' (WN V.III, p.370). With respect to college education, however, he promotes competition in favour of state funding on the basis that 'rivalship and emulation render excellency'. With reference to university teachers in particular, he opposes subsistence by salary rather than direct payment via student fees because it gives them no incentive to teach well. The teacher's interest is:

...set as directly in opposition to his duty as it is possible to set it. It is in the interest of everyman to live as much at his ease as he can; and if his emoluments are to be precisely the same, whether he does or does not perform some very laborious duty, it is certainly his interest, at least as interest vulgarly understood, either to neglect it altogether, or, if he is subject to some authority which will not suffer him to do this, to perform it in as careless and slovenly manner as that authority will permit. If he is naturally active and a lover of labour, it is in his interest to employ activity in any way in which he can derive some advantage, rather than in the performance of his duty, from which he can derive none.
(WN V.III, p.349-50)

Presumably based on his own experience, Smith attacks the University of Oxford in particular where he claims 'the greater part of the public professors have, for these many years, given up altogether even the pretence of teaching' (WN V.III, p.350).

The profit motive as basis for rational behaviour

The erroneous conception of Smith as champion of rational self-interest is encapsulated in George Stigler's often quoted claim that the *Wealth of Nations* is 'a stupendous palace erected upon the granite of self-interest' (1971, cited in Herzog, 2013, p.17). This 'standard view of Smith' has been used by many writers to support arguments in favour of using profit

motive as the defining feature of rationality, with rationality being identified as 'intelligently pursuing only one's self-interest. If you do something for any one else, this can be rational, in this theory, only if you get something from it yourself' (Sen, 2011, p.263). Yet, in *Moral Sentiments*, Smith develops a far more complex depiction of the human individual. This individual is driven by a carefully distinguished mix of natural propensities that are socially benevolent as well as self-regarding, and which are properly regulated by reflective reason, moral rules and institutions, all of which are socially driven and necessary for social stability.

The core principle underlying Smith's theory is that our moral sensibility is cultivated through a natural ability to sympathise with others. Smith defines sympathy as follows: 'Whatever is the passion which arises from any object in the person principally concerned, an analogous emotion springs up, at the thought of his situation, in the breast of any attentive spectator' (TMS I.I, p.15). Sympathy has both an affective dimension, in the sense that we are able to feel the plight of others by imagining how we would feel in the same circumstances, and a cognitive dimension because we appraise the 'propriety' of their sentiments by assessing the context in which they are expressed:

If, upon bringing the case home to our own breast, we find that the sentiments which it gives occasion to, coincide and tally with our own, we necessarily approve of them as proportioned and suitable to their objects, if otherwise, we necessarily disapprove of them, as extravagant and out of proportion. (TMS I.III, p.24)

Other natural sentiments, all essentially social, include love, desire for approval, gratitude, and resentment against wrongdoing. Significant to Smith's moral theory is that some of our natural tendencies benefit society and should be reinforced, while others should be curbed

or channelled (Herzog, 2013, p.25). In some instances, the wisdom of Nature should be supplemented or corrected by conscious human action.

Smith uses the objectifying notion of the 'impartial spectator' as the primary device for making reasoned judgments about when to endorse or reject natural tendencies. The impartial spectator is an internalised authority – a 'man within the breast' – who provides the criterion for making fair and equitable appraisals regarding our own conduct, the conduct of others, and even institutions. Our moral approval is secured if we judge that every impartial spectator would sympathize with both the motives of an agent and the consequent gratitude of someone affected by that agent's action. In contrast, our moral disapproval is secured when we judge that every impartial spectator would sympathise with the motives of an agent and consequent resentment of the recipient:

... [resentment and gratitude], as well as all the other passions of human nature, seem proper and are approved of, when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them, when every indifferent by-stander entirely enters into, and goes along with them. (TMS II.II, p.84)

Significantly, we make moral judgments about conduct based on motives to action rather than actions themselves or the consequences of actions:

To the intention or affection of the heart, therefore to the propriety or impropriety, to the beneficence or hurtfulness of the design, all praise or blame, all approbation or disapprobation, of any kind, which can justly be bestowed upon any action, must ultimately belong. (MS III, pp.111-112).

Only beneficent actions that 'proceed from proper motives' deserve reward because these alone 'excite the sympathetic gratitude of the spectator.' Whereas, only hurtful actions which proceed from 'improper motives' deserve punishment because these alone 'excite the sympathetic resentment of the spectator' (MS II. I, p.95).

To examine our own conduct, we divide ourselves 'as it were, into two persons' so that 'I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into and judged of' (MS III.I, p.135-6). We can only form judgements about ourselves by removing ourselves from 'our natural station' and 'endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them' (MS III.I, p.133). The impartial spectator can also endorse institutions if they lead to good consequences for everyone concerned, without sacrificing the interests of some to others (Herzog, 2013. pp.27-28).

Smith also acknowledges that this internalised 'impartial spectator' is insufficient on its own for making us morally fit for society. We are prone to self-deceit (TMS III.IV) and our passions might get the better of us since by nature, '[e]very man is much more deeply interested in whatever immediately concerns himself, than in what concerns any other man' (TMS II.II, p.100). Other sources of control beyond our own self-command, but still linked to our moral psychology, include general rules of morality or behaviour and the rules of justice that must be learnt and observed by the members of any social group. We learn to follow moral rules within our communities because we instinctively desire approbation from others – we seek praise and praiseworthiness and try to avoid blame and blameworthiness. Following Aristotle, Smith identifies a series of virtues such as courtesy, kindness, thoughtfulness, compassion, honour and integrity, which contrast with self-interested motivations and 'have the implication of taking people away from selfish pursuit of their own interests' (Sen, 2011, p.264). Again, these stem from judgments tied to our natural sentiments:

To be amiable and to be meritorious; that is to deserve love and to deserve reward, are the great characters of virtue; and to be odious and punishable, of vice. But all

these characters have an immediate reference to the sentiments of others. Virtue is not said to be amiable, or to be meritorious, because it is the object of its own love, or of its own gratitude; but because it excites those sentiments in other men. (MS, III.I. p.136)

Moreover, virtues engender benevolence – a positive morality – that cannot be coerced or legislated for. They enable society to flourish – are the ‘ornament which embellishes’ (MS II.III, p.104). It falls upon the system of justice, facilitated by our natural propensity to resent wrong-doing and approve of punishing injustice (TMS II.I), to enforce morally acceptable behaviour. Smith and Wilson (2019) express Smith’s aims of justice as, ‘to nip hurtful action in the bud, to be neither excessive nor inadequate to restrain and protect the innocent while pointing the aggressor to a better way (p.xv).

A large part of *Moral Sentiments* is dedicated to explaining the source of moral action and how it is sustained within our more intimate social groupings, or ‘circles of sympathy.’ Men naturally care most for those near to them – their family, friends and neighbours – and they devote most energy to ‘the little department in which [they] have some little management and direction’ (MS VII.II, p.343). In these the ‘man within the breast, the abstract and ideal spectator of our sentiments and conduct’ often has to be ‘awakened and put in mind of his duty, by the presence of the real spectator (MS III.III, p.177). These ‘circles of sympathy’ create a strong web of sympathy in which, ideally, every member of society is embedded (Herzog, 2013, p.25).

When it comes to relations in commercial society, Smith recognises that we cannot rely on the benevolence that characterises these networks as a guide since commerce depends on

co-operation and assistance from a much more extensive network. However, commercial activity is also rooted in natural propensities. First, the essential building block on which markets are made is the human propensity to ‘truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another’ (WN I.II, p.117). And the pursuit of wealth is grounded in the desire for approval:

What are the advantages which we propose by that great purpose of human life which we call bettering our condition? To be observed, to be attended to, to be taken notice of sympathy, complacency, and approbation, are all advantages which we can propose to derive from it. (MS I.III, p.63)

These propensities attribute a psychological foundation to commercial activity, and also link the desire to better one’s condition to what McRorie (2015) describes as a ‘morally complicated admixture of the shallow search for external approbation and mere status alongside the more commendable striving for deserved respect’ (p.689).

The adequacy of self-interest as socially productive behaviour

The common conclusion drawn from Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* is that the accumulated effect of individuals acting on their own self-interest through markets benefits society as a whole. The ‘self-interest’ component of this assertion is usually supported with reference to the well-known passage in the opening book of the text:

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love. (WN I.II, p.119)

Read in context, various interpretations challenge the idea that ‘own interest’ productively governs market society. Sen (2011), for example, stresses that Smith is referring here to the ‘very narrow phenomenon’ of ‘what motivates trade and people’s inclination to participate

in exchange' as opposed to making any larger claim about 'the adequacy of self-seeking for the success of a society or even of the market economy' (p.264). Smith is simply explaining how normal market transactions work and that 'we do not have to invoke any objective other than pursuit of self-interest as a motivation for trade' (Sen, 1987, p.23). McRorie (2015) provides another interpretation that ties the human propensity for exchange to sympathy as the 'bedrock upon which exchange is built.' Highlighting that Smith's statement about self-love follows a long passage about the difference between humans and animals, she argues 'it is the imaginative capacity to stand in the place of another that distinguishes humans from animals, and allows us to bargain with each other toward mutual advantage' (p.688). Smith and Wilson (2019) give another reading again, emphasizing Smith's insistence on the pursuit of self-interest within the 'laws of justice' so that acting in one's own interest doesn't necessarily involve putting one's own interest above another's. Quoting from a later chapter of *Wealth of Nations*, they claim that '[a]ppealing to the self-love of the butcher, the brewer, and the baker means "allowing every man to pursue his own interest his own way, upon the liberal plan of equality, liberty and justice'. In *Wealth of Nations*, they claim, 'we learn that the pursuit of private benefit, under the governing rules of justice, is what enables specialisation and wealth creation for human economic betterment' (p.5).

A more comprehensive review of Smith's works informs us that the way we conduct ourselves in markets is governed by moral rules (Smith and Wilson, 2019, pp.4-5). As Sen (2011) points out '[s]uccessful market economies demand a variety of values, including mutual trust and confidence' and he cites just one example from the *Wealth of Nations* in which Smith emphasized the importance of prudence:

When the people of any particular country has such confidence in the fortune, probity, and prudence of a particular banker, as to believe he is always ready to pay upon demand such of his promissory notes as are likely to be at any time presented to him; those notes come to have the same currency as gold and silver money, from the confidence that such money can at any time be had for them (p.266).

Attention must also be given to what Smith means when he uses the term 'own interest' and 'self-love'. The individual who exchanges in the market may be motivated by a form of self-interest, but of a very different kind from the rational self-interest imposed by neoclassical economics. In *Moral Sentiments*, Smith recognizes that that it is entirely 'fit and right' for individuals to attend to their 'own care' (MS II.II, p.100). Although, as Herzog (2013) points out, this reflects their status as human beings with limited powers and understanding compared with God whose business is universal happiness, rather than self-centred interest (p.26). With respect to looking after 'own interest', Smith invokes the virtue of prudence, which puts a demand upon individuals to cultivate an element of self-command so that they prioritize long term benefits rather than impetuous or present desires.

Smith also develops a distinction between kinds of self-love. First, is a natural propensity towards selfishness which leads us to be always most 'deeply affected by whatever concerns ourselves'. The 'selfish and original passions of human nature' make our own small losses and gains seem vastly more important than the greater losses and gains of those with whom we have no connection (III.III. p.157). However, this form of self-love is countered by a higher form of love that is rooted in reason, principle and conscience in the form of the 'inhabitant of the breast'. It is the voice of our inner impartial spectator that can counter the excesses of 'self-love', reminding us that 'we are one of multitude, in no respect better than any other in it; and that when we prefer ourselves so shamefully and so blindly to others, we

become the proper object of resentment, abhorrence, and execration' (MS III.III, p.159). The desire for praiseworthiness is itself based on a stronger love of 'what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur, and dignity, and superiority of our own characters' (III.III, p.159).

The second component of the claim is that following individual self-interest also benefits society as a whole. Smith uses the metaphor of the 'invisible hand' to convey the notion of unintended consequences, itself a recurring theme within the Scottish Enlightenment, in a way that challenges Mandeville's use of the idea in *The Fable of the Bees*. By constructing a much richer account of interactions between motives and effects, Smith resists attaching 'economic salvation' to any single motivation (Sen, 1987, p.24). However, he does identify two main benefits to markets that occur by co-incidence rather than by human design. First, by attending to their own local interests, individuals unintentionally maximise national product (Herzog, 2013, p.32-3). Smith supports this claim with reference to a general preference for employing capital in domestic rather than foreign industry because an individual 'knows better the character and situations of the persons whom he trusts' along with 'the laws of the country' should he be deceived and need redress. Though intending his own gain 'he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention' (WN IV.II, p.32). Second, markets lead to the distribution of wealth in society so that everyone profits. While a wealthy landlord might be motivated by his own selfish desires, he is unable to consume everything he harvests for himself and is therefore 'obliged to distribute among those, who prepare ... that little which he himself makes us of' (MS IV.I, p.214). Smith comments that everyone gains a share of the 'necessities of life' from the 'luxury and caprice' of the rich, over and above what could be

expected from their 'humanity or justice.' Through seeking their 'own conveniency' from the labour they employ, 'they divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements' (MS IV.I, p.215).

Uses of Smith's theory for understanding economics

Overall, Smith constructs a complex account of the human individual whose inherent moral sentiments, which are themselves tied to universal reason, are cultivated within local spheres of sympathy and ultimately overseen by a system of justice. Actions of individuals are judged on motives – the sentiments behind actions – rather than on actions themselves or their consequences. Some of our natural propensities facilitate a well-functioning society, while others require correction to enable everyone to enjoy equal freedoms. Trade is indeed underpinned by a human propensity to 'truck, barter and exchange' for the sake of one's own interest but, understood in context, this propensity is just a motivating factor that stimulates market activity rather than an account of the workings of markets themselves. Moreover, self-interest properly cultivated is guided by the individual virtue of prudence that guards against instant gratification, and the excesses of 'self-love' are checked by an even stronger propensity towards approbation, praiseworthiness and a nobility of character that refrains from harming others for the sake of personal gain. Overall market society is an improvement on feudal systems because it promotes individual freedom within a wealthy state: everyone has something to exchange and has the potential to succeed based on merit, and everyone is protected by the state against oppression by others.

Sen (1987) asserts that the 'narrowing of the Smithian view of human beings' that is evident in modern economics is 'one of the major deficiencies of contemporary economic theory' and associates this 'impoverishment' with the 'distancing of economic from ethics' (p.28). Next, I will review two alternative approaches – both influenced by Smith's moral theory – to restoring this ethical dimension to economic modelling, and assess whether they successfully address objections made by critics of the marketization that higher education has been reduced to the narrowly instrumental ends of the economy.

Sen on ethics and economics

The central argument of Sen's *On Ethics & Economics* (1987) is that the discipline of economics could be made more productive 'by paying greater and more explicit attention to the ethical considerations that shape human behaviour and judgment' (p.8). Sen traces two distinct origins of economics that are both related to politics. One is concerned with 'ethics' stretching back to Aristotle, and involves deliberation on how money-making can best serve both 'the good of man' and 'how one should live'. The other is concerned with 'engineering' in the sense of dealing with 'logistical' or technical problems in economic relationships, especially the functioning of markets (pp.4-5). Sen recognizes the value of the engineering approach, which, he claims, has provided better understandings of many issues including the workings of social interdependence, but he also challenges the way it has come to dominate the discipline of economics, which he argues should encompass a more comprehensive ethical dimension.

Sen begins by arguing that ‘moral sentiments’ must feature in any plausible account of rationality. He makes direct reference to how Smith’s claims about self-interested behaviour have been misrepresented, and challenges the standard contemporary assumption that self-interest maximisation is a good characterisation of actual behaviour and that the ‘so-called “economic man”, pursuing his own interests’ provides ‘the best approximation to the behaviour of human beings, at least in economic matters’ (p.16). Sen points out that ‘while assertions of conviction are plentiful’ there is very little factual evidence to support such a claim (p.18).

Sen progresses to assert that attributing the success of free markets – measured in terms of efficiency – to self-interested behaviour fails to take into account ‘what *motivation* lies behind the action of economic agents in such an economy’ (p.18). Using Japan as an example, he claims there is empirical evidence to suggest that ‘systematic departures from self-interested behaviour in the direction of duty, loyalty and goodwill’ have played a major role in its industrial success. He stresses that both motives and effects must be included in any viable ethical account of rational choice, with something at least being demanded of the ‘correspondence between what someone tries to achieve and how one goes about it’ (p.13). Sen maintains that the ‘self-interested view of rationality involves *inter alia* a firm rejection of the “ethics-related” view of motivation’. Doing one’s best to achieve what one wants to achieve may well form a part of rationality, but ultimately Sen claims, viewing and departure from self-interest maximation as irrational must also ‘imply a rejection of the role of ethics in actual decision-making’ (p.15).

Sen develops his anti-utilitarian stance further by means of a critique of welfare economics in which he insists that human 'agency' must be included as a measure of human well-being. He defines welfarism as 'the view that the only things of intrinsic value for ethical calculation and evaluation of states of affairs are individual utilities' and identifies two distinct flaws with treating utility as the only source of value with respect to welfare. First, it is incorrect to claim that a person's success can be judged exclusively in terms of their well-being since a 'person may value the promotion of certain causes and the occurrence of certain things, even though the importance that is attached to these developments are not reflected by the advancement of his or her well-being.' While well-being matters to a person, so does 'agency', which involves 'recognising and respecting' someone's 'ability to form goals, commitments, values etc'. Sen claims that the dichotomy between agency and well-being 'is lost' in a model that is exclusively based on self-interested motivation because 'a person's agency must be entirely geared to his own well-being' (pp.40-45). On the contrary, a person may have many reasons for 'pursuing goals *other than* personal well-being or individual self-interest' and 'respect for the agency aspect of *others* can also lead to similar departures' (p.55). Second, the maximand associated with well-being is problematic. Criterion such as happiness or desire-fulfilment are inadequate as measures for judging well-being since they are influenced by contingent circumstances: a 'person who has had a life of misfortune' may be more 'easily reconciled to deprivations' than those 'reared in more fortunate and affluent circumstances' with the effect of distorting the extent of their deprivation.

Sen also questions the sufficiency of the utility approach by challenging the idea that an individual's advantage is best understood in terms of their achievements in either well-being

or agency: advantage might be 'better represented by the freedom' that someone has rather than what they achieve on the basis of that freedom (p.47). Rights-based theories, he claims, are not so easy to dismiss and any 'moral acceptance of rights' signals a departure from the 'behavioural foundations of standard economic theory' (p.57).

On the basis of these arguments, Sen proposes that a fuller set of information about a person should be used to assess their well-being. He identifies four distinct categories that should be considered, including well-being achievement, well-being freedom, agency achievement, and agency freedom. Welfare economics, he argues, reduces this plurality to a single category: only achievement counts because freedom is only instrumentally valuable and all agency is geared to self-interest (p.61).

While objecting to a fully utilitarian methodology, Sen also warns against ignoring consequences when dealing with intrinsically valuable objects. When searching for ways of expanding variables and influences within economic analysis, economists might not find the solution they are looking for within ethics literature, which tends to set up rights-based and consequentialist philosophical reasoning as oppositional. Sen argues that consequentialist positions don't have to be such a threat, and provides a series of reasons for their retention. Among these, is the fact that all activities – even those that are intrinsically valuable – have consequences:

The intrinsic value of any activity is not an adequate reason for ignoring its instrumental role, and the existence of instrumental relevance is no denial of its intrinsic value. To get an overall assessment of the ethical standing of an activity it is necessary not only to look at its own intrinsic value (if any), but also at its

instrumental role and its consequences on other things, i.e. to examine the various intrinsically valuable or disvaluable consequences that this activity may have. (p.75).

Sen also claims that it can be useful to retain consequentialist reasoning without accepting consequentialism as such. Indeed, to 'ignore consequences is to leave an ethical story half told.' Consequentialism as a philosophical position demands that the rightness of actions be wholly judged on the goodness of their consequences, whereas '[c]onsequential analysis may be taken to be necessary, but not sufficient, for many moral decisions.' The dichotomy between the two philosophical positions, he argues can be lessened by conceiving of consequences in broad terms that include 'the value of actions performed or the disvalue of violated rights.' (pp.75-76)

Sen also defends instrumental ethics in a fuller analysis of the Max-U notion of self-interested behaviour in which he claims first that behaviour is socially as well as individually oriented, and second that both individual and social aspects can be accounted for with reference to instrumental value. He identifies three separate features of self-interested behaviour: self-centred welfare (a person's welfare depends on their consumption only); self-welfare goals (a person's goal is to maximize their own welfare without attaching importance to the welfare of others); and self-goal choice (each act of choice is guided immediately by pursuit of their own goal, and unconstrained by the recognition of mutual interdependence of respective successes, given that other people are also pursuing their own goals) (p.80). These features, Sen argues, are compounded in standard economic theory, but undermine the validity of self-interested behaviour when treated separately. Self-goal choice is identified as especially problematic because within a community of people

with different goals 'each person's goals' may well be 'less fulfilled than they would have been had they followed a different rule of behaviour.' Experimental games such as the Prisoner's Dilemma show how each person's goals can be better served by cooperative rather than individual strategies, and games like these are analogous to real-life situations such as when achieving high industrial productivity depends on the efforts of everybody (pp.82-3). Sen concludes that behaviour is ultimately social as well as individual: other people's goals may not be incorporated into our own, but recognizing interdependence 'may suggest following certain rules of behaviour' that are of instrumental rather than intrinsic importance in 'enhancing the respective goals of group members' (p.85). Sen argues that the language of economic theory 'makes it hard to discuss behaviour patterns of this kind, since it is very tempting to think that whatever a person may appear to be maximising ... must be that person's goal' (p.85). Sen refers to Smith's claims about the instrumental importance of 'rules of conduct' which, 'when they have been fixed in our mind by habitual reflection, are of great use in correcting misrepresentation of self-love concerning what is fit and proper to be done in our particular situation' (cited p.87). Sen concludes by stressing the possible importance of a 'complex instrumental ethics' within 'social morality' (p.87).

Sen formulates an alternative to Max-U in his more comprehensive capability approach, which he first introduced in his paper 'Equality of What?' in 1980. Sen acknowledges that the approach links explicitly to aspects of Smith's work, and describes it as 'a particular approach to well-being and advantage in terms of a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being' (1993, cited in Walsh, 2000, p.14).⁶ The core elements of the model

⁶ See Walsh (2010) for a fuller account of Smith's influence on Sen's capability approach.

connect individual achievement and individual agency expressed as ‘functionings’ and ‘capabilities’:

A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. Functionings are, in a sense, more directly related to living conditions, since they are different aspects of living conditions. Capabilities, in contrast, are notions of freedom, in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead. (Sen, 1987, cited in Saito, 2003, p.21).

In essence, capability refers to the alternative combinations of functionings that an individual can choose from, with freedom understood as the range of options available to them so they can decide what kind of a life to lead (Saito, 2003, p.25).

While Sen’s capability approach relates most specifically to the fields of economics and philosophy, its application to education has not gone unnoticed. Saito (2003) explores a range of roles that education might play in developing capabilities. One important benefit, she claims, is the way it ‘illuminates’ how education comprises a mix of intrinsic and instrumental values. Saito outlines how Sen explores the relationship between human capital and human capability, and although ‘both seem to place humanity at the centre of attention’ the former ‘tends to concentrate on the agency of human beings in augmenting production possibilities’ while the latter ‘focuses on the ability – the substantive freedom – of people to lead the lives they have reason to value and enhance the real choices they have’ (Sen, 1993, cited in Saito, 2003, p.24). In order to clarify the distinction, Sen expresses the role of capabilities as three distinct categories – their direct relevance to the well-being and freedom of people, their indirect role through influencing social change, and their indirect role through influencing economic production – and attributes human capital to the third

category only. Human capital received from education can be conceived as commodity production, however Sen argues that 'education plays a role not only in accumulating human capital but also in broadening human capability' (p.24). Benefits of this kind to a person might be 'in reading, communicating, arguing, in being able to choose in a more informed way, in being taken more seriously by others and so on' (Sen, 1995, cited in Saito, 2003, p.24). Capabilities of this kind, Saito points out 'play a role in influencing both intrinsic and extrinsic values' (p.25).

Saito develops the idea that education has a role in expanding capabilities with particular reference to children, bearing in mind that they do not have the same degree of freedom as adults. Expansion can relate to expansion of capacity or ability by learning something new. It relates to expansion of opportunities, such as how learning mathematics widens any individual's autonomous choice to become a mathematician, physicist, banker and so on. These new opportunities and capabilities would not have been within their 'capability set' prior to learning mathematics (p.27).

A further way that Saito claims education should make a contribution to developing capabilities is in addressing the values that 'should govern the exercise of capabilities'. Sen proposes that a set of 'meta-rankings' is required because an essential part of freedom is developing the discernment to decide which options to prefer so that, in effect, freedom, rationality and capability are joined in an 'iterative reflection on the worth of things – that might reasonably be described as learning' (Gough, 2009).

Smith and Wilson's humanomics

Smith and Wilson (2019) contextualise their study by drawing attention to two distinct worlds within the modern world – the personal social and impersonal economic – highlighted by Hayak (1988), but also traceable to Smith as already outlined. They identify a 'conflict in modern life' that results from 'living simultaneously' in these two worlds that are 'governed by distinct rule systems.' The first are 'the caring other-regarding rules of our close-nit social groups, like our families, neighbors, and friends' – that is, Smith's 'circles of sympathy' – and the second are the 'extended order of markets' that treat 'everyone we do not know precisely the same' including rules such as 'do no harm by stealing, deceiving, or breaching a promise' and 'let freedom of choice ... called competition, do the rest' (p.1). The 'solidarity and love' that belong to the personalised world are inappropriate for the world of markets and *vice versa*. But Hayak suggests that 'we must learn to live in two sorts of worlds at once' (p.2).

Smith and Wilson argue that Smith succeeds in connecting these two worlds into a 'unified social and ethical science of human beings' (p.2). They use the neologism 'humanomics' to propose a corresponding new form of economics, which they claim is useful for contemporary social theory and can be applied in particular to experimental studies that have hitherto yielded unpredicted results (pp.2-3). As already alluded to by Sen, whereas Max-U has been used successfully to predict outcomes in markets, it has failed to do the same in simple trust and ultimatum games. In a series of laboratory-based trust games, anonymously paired individuals have behaved as co-operative, caring and other-regarding,

and their trusting actions have generated trustworthiness in response. In ultimatum games proposers have offered generous splits of twenty dollars in direct violation of the self-interested prediction, and responders have accepted generous rather than lower offers. Smith and Wilson conclude that Max-U used as a theory for human decision making 'fails decisively to predict the extent of cooperation in the study of two-person interactive games' and claim that Smith provides tools for explaining experimental results that can't be explained using orthodox economic methods. Smith's insights on moral sentiments, they propose, provide a better way of modelling human social relations that 'explain and generate testable predictions for why people do what they do' (p.8 & p.27).

Several core elements of Smith's moral theory are used to create these tools. First, Smith and Wilson identify that 'common knowledge of self-love' enables individuals to judge 'whether, and for whom, an action is beneficial or hurtful' and they stress how this contrasts with Max-U where information about what benefits and hurts others is irrelevant (pp.9-10). Next, they highlight the importance that Smith places on social context or circumstances for making interactive decisions: 'each person adaptively learns to respond in ways that "humble the arrogance of his self-love, and bring it down to something which other men can go along with"' (p.10). Social maturity requires learning to follow rules that regulate 'inconsiderate pursuit of one's self-interest' and cultivating 'self-command' in order to conduct oneself in an other-regarding fashion (p.10). Consequently, in Smith's system there is 'no unresolved observed contradiction between people pursuing their own interest, say in money, and choosing actions that are other-regarding. One's own interest includes living harmoniously and ethically with others, and choosing socially fit actions' (p.11).

Smith and Wilson summarize how they interpret and develop the logic of Smith's system as follows:

People have common knowledge that all are self-interested and are locally non-satiated – more is always better, less is always worse from any reference state. Otherwise, we cannot be socially competent rule-followers because we cannot be sensitive to who benefits or who is hurt by our actions, and to properly balance concern for ourselves and concern for others. Our rule-following judgements are highly context dependent. The situation, and the pattern of benefits or hurts, together effect the action chosen. What enables such sociability is our capacity for mutual fellow-feeling; we cannot reach maturity without being shaped to a highly variable extent by our experience of others and the mark they leave on our development. Our desire for praise and praiseworthiness, and to avoid blame and blameworthiness emerges from this maturation. (pp.11-12)

An important component of Smith and Wilson's project involves contextualising and translating the vocabulary used by Smith and his late 18th century contemporaries, which expresses concepts that no longer have precise equivalents. They observe that Smiths' vocabulary blends feeling, thinking and knowing in ways that are unfamiliar to us today so that the key terms he uses require deconstructing. For example, Smith bases his observations on human sociality on the notion of 'conduct', which is far more substantial than the meanings we attach to our contemporary use of 'behaviour.' When people 'conduct themselves well or ill' their actions are 'signals of rule-following conduct' and irreducible to outcomes or utility (p.41).

Smith and Wilson transpose Smith's conception of moral rules of conduct as they have interpreted them into a series of axioms and principles that can, in turn, be used as propositions that they argue successfully explain findings of previous decision-making

experiments and provide predictions for new ones (p.74). Their axioms are elementary statements upon which, they claim, Smith builds higher level principles and proposition that make up his model of human sociality (p.68).

Smith's modelling of the 'subjectively rational individual' who 'selects actions in his social or economic exchange environment' provides them with an alternative way of understanding individual economic agents than the objectively rational version conceived by contemporary experimental and behavioural economists. Observing that Smith 'reaches first for a model of the social then the economic person', they too assume that it is necessary to know how individuals perceive the world – the alternatives they see and consequences they attach to them – in order to predict how 'economic man' will behave. Essentially, they 'look at participants as if they peopled the world modelled' in *Moral Sentiments* – that is a 'personal relational environment' in which 'the propriety of conduct is the mediator of action' (pp.97-99).

Overall, Smith and Wilson conclude that *Moral Sentiments* offers 'a comprehensive theory of human sociability' wherein 'individual actions are signals of rule-governed relational conduct, where context matters because it gives meaning to outcomes' (p.159). While Max-U served 'well-enough the observational demands of decision in market supply and demand experiments under perfect enforcement of property' it is inadequate for the 'interactional world of personal social exchange'. They claim that *Moral Sentiments* is about 'ethical rules that constitute the character of an inherently sociable person who strives for a better life' and that it has a 'predictive power' where Max-U fails (pp.159-60).

The world of economics and higher education

The economic model that underpins higher education policy gives central importance to students as the bearers of capital, and perhaps omits rather than negates ethical aspects of individuals in relation to society that anti-marketers claim is integral to any plan for a university system. Closer study of the work of Adam Smith and contemporary economic theorists who have been influenced by his morally situated vision of market society signals ways in which the marketization of higher education might be better conceived to counter the instrumental and individualistic focus of policy based on human capital theory. Referring back to Barnett's term, they have the potential to ameliorate the 'pernicious aspects' of market ideology (2011, p.50).

While the tenets of modern economic theory based on markets are often attributed to Adam Smith, it is evident that reading *Moral Sentiments* and *Wealth of Nations* as complementary works provides a model of society that can be used to counter those same tenets. Taken together, the texts bridge the personal world characterized by care and trust and the impersonal world of markets because the moral sentiments of the person who engages in markets are rooted in empathy and have been cultivated so that they conduct themselves in an other-regarding manner. Self-interest may be construed as a proper degree of interest in one's own affairs and betterment, but any excesses of 'self-love' are countered by self-command and an even higher regard for nobility of character. Smith and Wilson devise their model of 'humanomics' based on Smith's moral theory, and claim that it better

predicts non-self-interested behaviours exhibited in decision-making experiments where Max-U fails.

Smith also attributes moral judgment to motive rather than to actions and their consequences, and gives a much fuller account of the range of motivations that guide behaviour than assumed by Max-U, which conflates all motives to the single motive of self-interest. As Sen stresses, self-interest alone fails to account for economic success in the free market, which might be governed by non-self-interested motives such as duty, loyalty and goodwill. There is also an important distinction to be made between the meaning of moral judgments and individual preferences. Hodgson (2019) additionally suggests that a moral judgment is different from a preference because it involves a claim to universality, and proposes that that policies should be determined by richer explanations of motivational dispositions and behaviours: 'Policy design can often appeal to moral values as well as pecuniary incentives. Apart from the work of Sen and a few others, there is little sign of economics moving in this direction and reinstating the 'moral sentiments' of Adam Smith' (p.107).

In developing a more comprehensive model that recognizes both agency and achievement, Sen helps us to combine the instrumental and intrinsic elements of human well-being on which an economic model of higher education could more convincingly be based. Like Smith, Sen stresses that instrumental self-interest has a part to play in decision-making, and he also claims that instrumental explanations can be given for social behaviours where individuals recognize that it is in their own interests to cooperate with others. His capabilities approach,

however, shifts the emphasis onto the range of opportunities that individuals have to autonomously choose how to live. Human capital becomes a sub-set of a more comprehensive understanding of the role of capabilities that includes freedom to choose and influencing social change, both of which might be considered to align well with educational purposes. Saito considers how Sen's capability approach might be applied to the education of children, but expanding an individual's capacity or ability in order to increase their opportunities to become a mathematician, physicist or whatever, applies just as well to students in higher education of any age. Policy recognizes well that education increases opportunity in terms of human capital and the mission to widen participation should improve life chances for more individuals, but the capabilities approach provides an explicit framework for broadening the scope of education to include the positive freedom of choosing how to develop as a person. Moreover, an education that addresses the values required to enable learners to make reflective decisions about which options to choose relates to the notion of 'becoming' that some critics of marketization of insist is integral to the mission of higher education.

Gough points out that relinquishing the narrow focus of Max-U for a wider conception of economics makes engagement with philosophical questions more commonplace, most likely because 'human becoming' assumes more relevance. Whereas 'mainstream economists' works on the 'powerful and useful – if limiting' assumption that human preferences remain constant, for educationalists and philosophers it is usually really rather important that such preferences are to some degree malleable' (Gough, 2009, p.276). Sen's capability approach provides an alternative to Max-U that incorporates both developmental opportunities and

possibilities for social change that starts with a 'given learner, embedded in a particular context characterized by its own peculiar opportunities and constraints' (Gough, 2009, p.277). Both Sen and Smith and Wilson provide alternative models to Max-U that incorporate a much fuller ethical range. As with my review of the scope of the monetary sphere in Chapter 3, maybe the biggest problem regarding higher education is not marketization *per se*, but the narrowness of the policy model used to connect the market with learning.

CHAPTER 6: CONFIGURING THE STUDENT CONSUMER

In this chapter, I turn my attention to the individual learner by focusing on how configuring students as consumers impacts on conceptions of educational relationships. A key theme that emerged from my review of policy and academic literature in Chapter 1 related to the kind of agency attributed to students within a marketized model. From one perspective, policy documentation attests to an incremental and positive identification of students as consumers. That label was consolidated in the Consumer Rights Act (2015) and the Higher Education and Research Act (2017) which mandated creation of the Office for Students in 2018 as the new regulatory body for higher education with the specific remit of championing the student experience and protecting their consumer rights. From a contrasting perspective, a major objection expressed by critics of marketization is the detrimental effect that a consumer identification has on the teacher-student dynamic and approaches to learning. It is evident that each party in the marketization debate attributes different meanings and, or emphasis to the notional consumer. My overall aim in this chapter, then, is to examine these conflicting conceptualizations and their sources more closely, and explore the possibility of constructing the notional consumer as someone who can also embody desirable attributes associated with being a university student. I will argue that conflicting images of students as consumers evolve from distinct disciplines and traditions that attach diverse meanings and normative judgments to the consumer label, and that any reconciliation requires taking a multi-disciplinary approach. As Bell (2013) claims, a part of 'worldmaking' involves dissolving disciplinary boundaries to highlight the potential similarities across different domains. Spanning disciplines usefully unsettles systems of

reference that might have developed an internal logic, but should not be straightforwardly or even unwittingly transferred to other domains or 'worlds' (Goodman, 1978). A second aim of this chapter will be to evaluate empirical studies that explore the extent to which students themselves identify with the consumer label that has been created for them. As mentioned in my introduction, an important element of assessing markets and their alternatives involves examining 'messy empirical cases' (Satz 2010, p.33).

For this part of my study, I will apply key methodological ideas introduced in Chapter 3 relating to Hacking's dynamic nominalism, Foucault's genealogy, and Goodman's world-making. From Hacking, I will draw particularly on the notion of 'making up people' in order to evaluate the recently made-up classification of the student consumer. While Hacking applied his notion to classifications of people as objects of scientific inquiry such as suicides or the homeless, aspects of his formulation provide a useful heuristic for my project. As outlined in Chapter 3, Hacking identifies a series of elements that contribute to making up classifications. As a preliminary, he stresses that each case of making up people is different, which suggests in my case that attention must be given to the specific history and context of making up student consumers and to the particular conceptions of consumers that are being transferred or tied to students. Hacking also stresses the roles of experts and knowledge in creating classifications. His distinction between expert and popular knowledge is highly relevant to the case of the student consumer since media sources have contributed to establishing and shaping the label as well as politicians and academics. Useful too, is Hacking's (2006) emphasis on the interaction between names created and individuals who are named – the looping effect – so that the name creates the individual, but the individual

also shapes the name. A key question for my study is the dynamic between consumers as constructed, and consumers as individuals in actuality. There are two angles to consider. First, is how conceptions of students as consumers impacts on the 'spheres of possibility' and identities of students. Second, is the opportunities that students conceived as consumers have to shape the meaning of the label for themselves. The possibility that students themselves might embrace the potential to shape what it means to be a student consumer or even the extent to which they identify with the label seems well aligned to the kind of criticality that many would wish to encourage in higher education students.

From Foucault, I will again draw on the notions of 'history in the present' and 'genealogy' to gain insight into the uneven historical processes that have established explicit identification with the consumer label. Tracing the historical rise of the consumer figure should shed a new light on contemporary conceptions of consumers, which in turn determine interpretations of the student consumer. In particular I will trace the historical 'birth' of the consumer as outlined by Frank Trentmann in his study 'The Modern Genealogy of the Consumer' in which he claims that charting the 'evolution of the consumer from multiple positions opens up some constructive perspectives for current debates' (2006, p.52). In particular, he argues, it shifts a debate that 'has become stuck in the civil costs and benefits of neoliberal consumerism', evidence of which can be seen in my review of literature in Chapter 2.

If Hacking and Foucault provide tools for exploring the context and process of making up people, Goodman provides a meta-language for explaining how domains or worlds are delineated and organized. I will use Goodman's ideas on worldmaking to show how the

consumer figure has acquired different roles and attributes within diverse disciplines and traditions, and sketch an alternative cross-discourse approach proposed by Gabriel and Lang (2015) that provides a potential rubric for reconfiguration. Setting out to 'rejuggle' traditions, Gabriel and Lang formulate ten overlapping 'portraits' of the consumer figure which both problematize and extend the sphere of possibilities for the consumer figure. For my purposes, these provide a more nuanced set of possibilities for shaping how students might be encouraged to identify themselves as consumers.

Tracing the 'making' of the student consumer

Using Hacking's formulation, it is meaningful to talk about the 'making' of the student consumer because it is a relatively new way of describing students. Williams (2013), for example, refers to the 'birth of the student consumer' (p.2), and Barnett (2014) refers to the 'emergence' of the student-as-consumer (p.8). Significantly, naming students as consumers provides them with new ways to be and behave in relation to their education and those who educate them, and has also led to creation of systems to protect their consumer identity. Depending on which side of the marketization debate one stands, a consumer identification is conceived as either beneficial or disadvantageous to learning. I will begin by revisiting and expanding upon the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 to seek out the origins of the student consumer as a classification and how it is depicted in terms of the spheres of possibility it opens up or closes down with relation to learning.

The student consumer and policy

Explicit reference to students as customers or consumers within policy documents was first made in the Dearing Report of 1997, in connection with the wider political context in which higher education functions rather than the introduction of student fees. The Report registers the general trend to frame relationships between government and those who receive public services and associated institutions in market terms. People, it claims, expect more from public services than in the past, and in the case of higher education these raised expectations are evident in the, 'introduction of new funding methodologies, new approaches to quality assurance and an emerging focus on the "consumer" rather than the "provider"' (p.64). While the Report anticipates that these trends will continue, it predicts that future students will not see themselves 'simply as customers of higher education but rather as members of a learning community' (p.64).

No further explicit identification of students as consumers is made within policy documents until the White Paper of 2011, *Students at the Heart of the System*, where the consumer term is used more frequently, and primarily with reference to consumer advocacy and protection. Student identification as consumer is implicit in a noted expression of interest to improve and expand information for prospective students from the consumer organization *Which?*. Additionally, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is given an extended remit to protect student interests: 'We see the development of a dedicated 'consumer champion' for students as a positive proposal for all students, and a strengthening of their interests in higher education' (p.40). The Paper includes one direct

reference to how students might identify as consumers in connection to their learning, which echoes the Dearing Report: 'A good student is not simply a consumer of other people's knowledge, but will actively draw on all the resources that a good university or college can offer to learn as much as they can' (p.33). Also highlighted is the English higher education tradition of stressing 'autonomy and independence of both learners and institutions' (p.33). In these statements, the Report underlines a contrast between consumers, conceived as passive, and students, conceived as active and independent.

In the most recent White Paper of 2016, *Success as a Knowledge Economy*, consumers are mentioned more often again. General reference is made to the rationale for creating competitive markets – including in higher education – as an incentive for providers to 'raise their game, offering consumers a greater choice of more innovative and better quality products and services at lower cost (p.8). Following the New Public Management model, students here are clearly characterised as consumers whose agency through market choice acts as leverage for improved quality and value for money. Consumer identity is also assumed via reportage from a *Which?* survey that found that three out of ten students rated their academic experience of higher education as poor value (p.42). All other references to consumers relate to various requirements for higher education institutions to comply with consumer law via existing consumer bodies and mechanisms, and baseline quality assurance standards established by the new Office for Students. The Augar Review of 2018 makes no reference to students as consumers.

So while, as explored in Chapters 2 and 5, policy documents reflect an increasing emphasis on market mechanisms and instrumental ends of higher education, explicit reference to how

the consumer identity might be impacting on learning rather than teaching quality are minimal. In the two instances where reference is made to learning, it is stressed that students are more than just consumers. This part-identification is re-iterated by Willetts (2017) when he claims that 'the relation between student and university is a special one which goes beyond just consumption' and identifies particular consumer features as 'exercising choice between institutions, need for information to enable choice, and a financial contract subject to law (pp.279-280). Absent from policy documentation is any explicit naming of 'student consumers' as a primary identity.

The student consumer and academic literature

Whereas policy makers portray consumer and student identities as compatible and have little to say about their interaction within the learning process itself, academic literature mostly targets perceived tensions between the two identities. Some critics acknowledge that there are service elements of the university experience where fee-paying students might reasonably be conceived as consumers, but most speculate on how consumer identification undermines pedagogy. The pairing of student and consumer, expressed variously as student consumer, student-as-consumer, or student-consumer is most often used in this contested sense. When framed as a metaphor, the intent is usually to stress how the consumer or customer element impinges on or negates the student element, for example, when Regan observes that customer identification means that 'students have lost sight of the function of student *qua* learner, rather than as a consumer' (p.16). This example from Regan also illustrates how 'consumer' and 'customer' are used interchangeably, despite a few attempts to differentiate between them. A hyphenated student-consumer, grammatically at least,

suggests the possibility of some form of hybrid concept, but is not used with this harmonizing purpose in mind (for example, see Williams 2013).

The student consumer metaphor is perceived as problematic because it casts students and their teachers in the wrong sort of dynamic and it encourages students to adopt attitudes and behaviours that conflict with learning. Critics highlight how consumers can only exist in relation to products, producers or commodity providers. As Naidoo (2016) expresses, the 'pedagogic relationship is construed into one that is dependent on the market transaction of the commodity. It constructs students in the position of consumers of those services and the lecturer as the commodity producer' (p.41). Negative consequences are attached to both parties within this positioning. Love (2008) refers to an 'upward spiral of expectation' whereby academics framed as 'retailers of knowledge' must continuously respond to 'fluctuations in customer demand' (p.20). Others stress the passive quality of students as consumers, who are encouraged to see themselves as recipients of knowledge and understanding, and are focused on getting or buying a degree as product rather than engaging in an active process that necessitates sustained effort and participation. In effect, the consumer identification undermines the requirement for students to be producers themselves, or at the very least co-producers engaged in 'conjoint activity' with their teachers (Maringe, 2011, p.148).

The consumer and producer dyad is also conceived to be devoid of the kind trust that should be integral to teaching and learning relationships (Naidoo, 2016). Regan (2011) goes so far as to claim that the consumer model promotes 'adversarial' learning relationships due to a 'mismatch between what students think they are buying – oftentimes a degree – and what

lecturers think they are selling' (p.16). And White (2016) similarly claims that the consumer and producer model 'encourages the student to adopt a non-reliant or even distrustful stance towards the teacher' (p.99). Others maintain that a consumer identification gives too much authority to students as encapsulated in the adage that the customer is always right and linked notion that the customer should always be satisfied. On the contrary, critics claim, students should be intellectually challenged in ways that may well lead to their dissatisfaction. As Love (2008) summarizes, the role of the teacher is not to 'satisfy the student but to dissatisfy; not to provide but to demand' (p.28). Williams (2011) argues that promoting satisfaction as a response to the perception of students as consumers perpetuates consumer identification: the more universities present themselves as responsive to student demand, the more students are encouraged to see themselves as behaving correctly when they demand satisfaction (p.173). Maringe (2011) associates customer satisfaction with 'pleasure-filled' experiences and instant reward, whereas the educational process can be difficult and its achievements can take a long time to be realized. Choice, too, integral to consumer identity, is targeted for its disruptive effects on educational aims. Furedi (2011) claims that the 'ideology of choice ... has a powerful influence on shaping students' identities' and distracts them 'from realizing the potential of their intellectual engagement' (pp.5-6). John and Fanghanel (2016) summarize objections to student choice made by numerous authors in their edited volume as cultivating a 'form of false consciousness in the public and the student' that should be redressed by educators (p.237-8). Martin (2015) underscores the self-serving character of consumption, which in economic terms 'satisfies the preferences of the individual consumer. The reason I am

consuming that good is because I believe that it will make *my* life better in some way' (p.353).

The belief that consumers are by definition self-interested connects with another set of objections to consumer identification that relate to the aims of higher education to cultivate individuals with a sense of social responsibility: the notion of the consumer is assumed to oppose the notion of a citizen, and a key purpose of higher education is to create citizens. Love (2008), for example claims that the 'entire policy direction at tertiary level, consciously or otherwise, seems less concerned with the formation of citizens and more concerned with encouraging students to become consumers ... Are we creating avid consumers rather than educated citizens?' (pp.21-22). Nordensvärd (2011) proposes a citizen metaphor as an alternative to a consumer metaphor. Moreover, citizen commentary is sometimes linked to anti-capitalist ideology. Love (2008) cites Marx to question if customerization of student-teacher relations diminishes humanity: 'In enshrining this consumer ideal in everything we teach, do we encourage an unfettered capitalist system to reduce all human relation to "mere money relation?"' (p.22). Nixon *et al.* (2011) similarly convey the pervasiveness of consumer identity:

Contemporary life is ... guided by a consumer ethic where the market satisfies *all* life spheres so that our experience as consumers permeates *all* that we do and are. Not only is our identity now based on being consumers, but consumption has come to embrace all concerns, such as health, transport and education, that would once have been considered, if not exclusively, then largely in the political domain and therefore for us to ponder as citizens.' (p.198)

Citing Bauman, Scullion *et al.* (2011) refer to the 'amorphous dominance of consumerist culture, which among other things, crushes the critical faculties of individuals as citizens in

favour of individuals as shoppers' (p.231). This concern about the consumer identity subsuming all other identities reflects the 'domino theory' highlighted by Radin (2001), which holds that commodified understandings will always 'win' over non-commodified understandings (also see Chapter 4).

Within and beyond the academic literature included in my literature review, a few authors make either concessions or arguments that are more sympathetic to consumer identity. Love (2008) maps ways in which a customer care model can usefully be applied to learning. And John White (1997) defends a 'consumer preference' model over at least some claims for an emancipatory model of higher education because he believes it more fully reflects the autonomy of students as adults who should be able to 'decide what direction their learning will take' rather than having aims imposed on them (p.12). Predominantly, however, the student consumer label belongs to the anti-marketers. Student choice and leverage over quality that is valorized and protected by policy is encapsulated in the *persona* of the student consumer characterized as demanding, distrustful, self-interested, and generally ignorant about what studentship entails. More pejoratively still, use of terms such as 'avid', 'pleasure-filled', and 'instant reward' associate student consumers with greed and hedonism. References to Marx and use of Marxist terms such as 'false consciousness' add an ideological dimension to the student consumer identity as a diminished individual who has fallen prey to the perils of the advanced capitalism.

The student consumer and public knowledge

Accepting that a minority of individuals with a stake in higher education read policy documents or related academic literature, media reportage and other bodies that interface

more directly with students and their supporters should provide better indicators of popular knowledge about the existence, formation and characteristics of the student consumer. I will make a brief analysis of selected media coverage along with material from the National Union of Students (NUS) and Office for Students websites to illustrate how higher education policy changes have been interpreted and used to construe and construct the student consumer identification in the public realm.

Media coverage

Williams (2013) credits the popular media with both representing and constructing the student consumer as a 'generally positive social development' in which students are 'increasingly empowered to influence their experience of university' (p.3). The student consumer she identifies from her own analysis of mostly broadsheet newspapers from 2000 is an exaggerated version inferred from the policy vision. Reports, she concludes, 'present a generation of student-consumers demanding value for money on their educational investment in return for a graduate-premium in their future employment'. They 'champion the moral cause of the student-crusader's quest for satisfaction over the reserve of the academy'. At the same time as being empowered by their consumer status, Williams identifies ways in which the media constructs the student consumer as vulnerable and lacking autonomy. Portrayals of predominantly middle-class parents as the real consumers or at least co-consumers of 'what is considered to be a family purchase' reinforces the creation of students as both emotionally and financially dependent on their parents. The construction of students as consumers, she claims, erodes 'individual subjectivity' and is at least partly responsible for a shift in students perceiving university as 'stressful' and

themselves as needing support with their studies. Correspondingly, universities reinforce these notions through 'proliferation of institutional mechanisms for providing emotional, practical and academic support' that furnish students with a 'tangible product' that also acts as a satisfaction measure for their university experience. Williams notes a further 'disempowering consequence' of the student-consumer model in the 'restricted sphere of influence' that it permits. While students might be encouraged to complain about sub-standard service within their own universities, their status as consumers seems to limit their agency to these local and sometimes trivial expressions of dissatisfaction rather than to broader societal issues (2011, pp.177-180).

Turning to more recent primary sources, media interest in higher education obviously heightens when there are key policy changes or debates linked, for example, to general elections. Findings from surveys such as the annual HEPI Student Academic Experience Survey also make consumer related media headlines relating to value for money and student satisfaction (see Chapter 7). Some of this reportage seems to reinforce Williams' claims about media endorsement of the consumer status of students. For example, Eleanor Harding, Education Correspondent for the *Daily Mail*, reported on a speech made by Jo Johnson as Minister for Universities just after the 2017 election with the headline, 'Students will be able to sue universities which flout contracts on teaching hours and standards under tough new government plans designed to lift standards'. Harding is referring to one aspect of a general defence of policy made by Jo Johnson in which he outlines a directive for the new Office for Students to lead a consultation on the potential benefits of system-wide formal contracts between students and universities. In the article itself, Harding qualifies the

strong language of the headline by referring to the proposed contracts as ‘consumer-style protections’ against poor teaching and poor value-for-money, and she quotes Jo Johnson’s references to ‘effective consumer protection for students’ and their ‘rights as consumers’. Students are clearly identified as consumers to the extent that they require protection to ensure they receive value for money, but both Johnson and Harding stop short of labelling students as ‘student consumers’.

A search for online material that refers directly to student consumers or students as consumers in *The Guardian* and the BBC since 2010 yields a small number of articles by journalists and academics, which provide a more mixed picture than the one depicted by Williams. As in the academic literature, those who oppose marketization policy tend to use consumer and customer synonymously and to make similar arguments about how customer and student identities are antithetical. A recurring theme is the distorting effect of assuming that the customer is always right. Writing in 2011, Paul Greatrix, *Registrar at the University of Nottingham*, formulates an objection to the student consumer figure, which he erroneously claims to be the ‘centrepiece’ of Browne’s rationale for change. After outlining a range of ways in which higher education is not like other businesses, he stresses the inadequacy of the concept of student as consumer under the heading ‘The customer is often wrong’. Echoing objections made by other academics, he argues that the student as consumer ‘fails to capture’ the ‘essence of what really makes a high quality education for students’ and, reminiscent of Dearing, proposes a more ‘subtle approach’ along the lines of ‘membership’ whereby the student is ‘seen as a full member of the university community’ and a ‘full and active participant in the learning process’. In a BBC feature entitled ‘Is the Student Customer Always Right?’, Education Correspondent Sean Coughlan (2011) highlights

that 'consumer rights are showcased' in the White Paper of 2011 and that the higher education market 'will mean students have to be treated as valued customers'.⁷ Like others, he interprets this to signify that the 'customer is always right' and raises doubts about how this approach can work in a university system. Alex Campbell, writing for *The Guardian* in response to the White Paper of 2016, focuses on how increasing the consumer status of students will disempower already beleaguered academic staff in an article entitled 'Staff will be held to ransom by student consumers'. While acknowledging that students should come first and that lecturers should provide the highest quality education, he rejects what he conceives to be 'slavish deference towards student satisfaction' proposed in the Teaching Excellence Framework, along with the 'back-breaking prostration before the idol of student choice'. Under the heading of 'The Customer is Always Right', he argues that lecturers 'may be forced to field unreasonable requests from students, who as consumers, are being given carte blanche to determine how university administrators rate their frontline employees'. He also speculates that the imperative to please students will lead to 'laxity in marking, deadlines and attendance' that will not prepare them for the realities of work after university.

A later article published on *The Guardian's* Academics Anonymous page and entitled 'My students have paid £9,000 and now they think they own me' seems to corroborate the worst fears of the anti-marketers by claiming that students are indeed embracing their customer identity in its most crude form.⁸ The author asserts that students seem to think they are 'buying a degree rather than working for it', and that learning has shifted 'from an

intellectual achievement to a commodity'. This observation is substantiated with a series of anecdotes: a student who requested a tutorial at 8pm because the lecturer office hours were not convenient to her and she wanted to recuperate time lost due to illness that had costed her £160; a student who was disappointed with his grade because he had "paid so much money"; a student who had been asked to leave a seminar for not completing the reading responding with, "I pay you to teach me what's in the article, not the other way around." Added to this, the author notes an increased volume of complaints about grades and the reluctance of students to do any work that doesn't impact directly on their achievement. The author regrets being treated as a service provider rather than as an academic, and wishes they were given more respect for all the extra support they give to students over and above appointed workload hours with no difference to their wages. The argument of the article hinges on a set of oppositions: young people can't behave both like students and customers, it isn't possible to be both an academic and a service provider, and learning can't be both an intellectual achievement and a commodity.

A second set of articles reflects a scepticism towards the student consumer configuration while at the same time signalling ways of transcending or circumventing its destructive influence on teaching and learning. Eric Bohms writing for *The Guardian* in response to the Browne review in 2011, acknowledges contention about the concept of students as consumers but sides-steps the debate by asserting that the 'real question is not if we are comfortable with the "consumer" tag' but how students will 'view themselves in the light of the fee increase in 2012'. As director of a company that has completed a large survey on module evaluation, he urges universities to improve survey administration to capture

evidence-based course feedback. He both recognises that consumers 'vote with their feet' and that there should be 'increased student involvement' so they can 'engage not just as consumers, but as stakeholders in the process'.

In an article entitled 'Let students be students – not customers' written in the run up to a general election and prior to introduction of the Consumer Rights Bill of 2015, Patrick McGhee, Assistant Vice-Chancellor at the University of Bolton, claims to be suspicious of calling students anything other than students. He argues in a similar vein to Williams that conceiving of students as customers, in any traditional sense at least, limits our perceptions of them and undermines the potential for relationships with their universities which would benefit them most: while the customer label 'superficially appears to empower students' it really disempowers them by 'restricting how we treat them and discuss them, and how they perceive themselves.' Additionally, he points out, narrow notions of the consumer don't account for the benefits of learning to society at large as well as to individuals. While generally opposing the notion of the student as consumer or customer, McGhee injects ambiguity into his argument however. By limiting his objections to 'traditional' and 'narrow' conceptions of the customer/consumer, he hints at the possibility of alternative, more productive conceptualisations. He points to a possible softening of the boundaries between education and business by observing the irony of universities being exhorted to treat 'learners as customers at a time when businesses are increasingly trying to treat customers as learners'. Business analysts, he observes, have identified a relative shift from 'having' to 'creating' as successive generations spend 'less on things and more on experiences, desiring collaboration, creativity and transparency'.

A second article on *The Guardian's* Academics Anonymous page entitled 'My students support our strike – they don't want to be passive consumers' (2018) gives an opposing account to the first. Reporting on how students have actively responded to the lecturer strike over pensions at one institution, the author challenges the conception that they are behaving like de-politicised and passive consumers and suggests instead that students share their teachers dislike of the marketization agenda. Students understand, it is claimed, that their lecturers need decent working conditions and are exercising 'the very skill we're here to teach them: the ability to think critically.' The author notes that the marketization of universities rests on an assumption that 'if we treat students as consumers, they will act like consumers' but claims there is a 'gap between what we think students want and what students actually want if you ask them'. Unimpressed by the 'usual neo-liberal treatment' in the form of 'big, shiny building projects', students want timetabling to work, essays to be marked on time and classes kept a reasonable size. The author recognises that 'many students may seek the path of least resistance to a 2:2 classification and treat the university with little more than weariness' but resists playing to this minority: 'In the classroom, we still give them rigorous expectations: we give them a chance to show up for themselves. And on the picket lines too, they've showed up. As political actors rather than passive consumers, they'll continue to show up – if we let them'.

Overall, this snapshot from the media literature, while being far from comprehensive, demonstrates that the student consumer figure has some currency in the popular imagination. As in the academic literature, the label belongs primarily to critics who

challenge the metaphor by identifying student consumers with customers who are accredited with the wrong sort of leverage over the academics who teach them. At the same time, notional consumers are generally assumed to be diminished and passive individuals, such that even writers who depart from the 'customer is always right' narrative recommend that the way forward is for students to be more than consumers or even to reject a consumer identity in order to be full and active members of their learning communities.

National Union of Students (NUS)

As a campaigning organization made up of students committed to both shaping higher education and defending and extending the rights of students, the NUS sits in an ambivalent position with regard to consumer identification. On the one hand, it has taken a politically oriented anti-consumer stance as reflected in publication of *A Manifesto for Partnership* in which author, Rachel Wenstone (2015), aims to 'eclipse' consumer rhetoric with the concept of students as partners in an attempt to protect the transformative possibilities of higher education (p.6). Wenstone claims that 'conceiving of students as consumers' represents a 'thoroughly impoverished way of describing the relationship between students and their institutions' that 'ought to be one of mutual trust, care and respect'. She also claims that consumer power is a weak form of power: 'it is the power to 'like' or to 'recommend to a friend', or to make 'a choice between five identical glossy marketing brochures' rather than the kind of power to 'intervene and change things'. She also argues that the consumer is a stunted figure: 'the consumer never grows, is never challenged, is never made to understand the vastness of knowledge that exists and that has yet to be created. The consumer is not asked to imagine unthought possibilities' (p.5). On the other hand, the NUS has benefited

from initiatives to improve consumer rights and protections. Consumer rights focused material on the NUS website includes the *Which? Review of HE providers' rights to change courses* (2015), which outlines an investigation into higher education practices regarding changes to courses after enrolment and advice to Students Unions on what they can do to remedy bad or even illegal practices within their own institutions; Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance to UK higher education institutions on how to comply with consumer law to ensure the rights of students (2015); and a legally drafted 'NUS Briefing Paper – Students' Rights as Consumers in Relation to the UCU strike' (2018). The double and conflicting interests of the NUS are reflected in a BBC interview in 2013 on the theme of value for money following publication of the most recent HEPI student experience, when Wenstone simultaneously rejects the marketisation of universities and complains about the lack of redress when institutions don't provide what they have promised: government changes, she claims, encourage students to behave like consumers but denies them "any way of holding their institution to account" if they are dissatisfied.

Beyond a successful campaign against a proposal for differential fees at the time of the Augar Review, issues relating to marketisation have not been a recent priority for the NUS with the exception of an article entitled *Graduates: Are we consumers, not students?* posted by Student Journalist Lucy Pegg in 2018. Pegg assumes that consumer and student identifications are mutually exclusive as she expresses her disappointment at being treated like a 'consumer' rather than a 'student' as she graduates from her university. Fond memories of her 'course, university and community' are offset by the excessive costs attached to graduation and being 'bombarded' with marketing from the university's career

department and alumni office with 'unrelenting' offers of postgraduate study with financial incentives. This experience leaves her with the sense that, 'University is now a business ... the price tag attached to us is perhaps more important to many than the degrees we've just graduated with'. Important to note is that Pegg differentiates between her learning community and the university itself, suggesting it is simplistic to understand the consumer and service provider relation in a single dimension and also that the institutional messages can in some way taint the educational experience.

Office for Students

The Office for Students (OfS) website includes a page on students as consumers as part of a larger guide on how the organization protects their interests. The page communicates that all providers are required to complete a self-assessment to show they are giving 'due regard' to guidance on compliance with consumer law and provides a link to Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines, which in turn set out a list of requirements relating to application, offer and enrolment stages, and to provision of fair terms and conditions and complaints handling. In summary, students can expect providers to make sure that: prospective students can access information to enable them to make best choices; all students understand what they expect in terms of teaching and support; students have access to 'clear, accurate and timely information' on course content, structure and cost across all stages of their education; contracts are 'understandable, fair and transparent'; and students have access to clear complaints processes if things go wrong. Overall, the information on the OfS site fulfils commitments made in the White Paper of 2016. The range of ambitions over choice, information and redress are modest when compared to the some of the hyperbole in the academic and media messaging.

Finding the consumer behind the student consumer

Reviewing the various knowledges about the student consumer has given closer definition to a range of associated and sometimes conflicting assumptions attached to the figure.

Through a consistent campaign of promoting choice, value for money and consumer protection, successive governments have challenged prior conceptions of students' relationships with their learning and those responsible for teaching them. Giving leverage to students is designed to have an impact on the sector by setting up more direct accountability between students and their universities. Policy makers have had little to say about how this impact might play out in pedagogic relationships, leaving academic communities, institutions, and the public more generally to make sense of the changes. As mentioned in my introduction, antagonism between academics and central university management seems to have been exacerbated by conflicting responses of resistance and compliance. For the most part anti-marketers have mobilized the notional student consumer to capture the incongruity of imposing market ideology on higher education, though attempts have also been made to steer a conciliatory path by emphasizing counter concepts such as partnership and collaboration in order to encourage trust and a sense of joint endeavor conceived to be missing from market-type relations. The consumer figure behind the student consumer is generally conceived negatively, depicted as an individual who is superficially empowered through choice but ultimately disempowered and deluded by the limits to authority and autonomy that define a consumer in the first place. The active and discerning chooser of policy discourse who has a stake in the quality of their learning is reinterpreted as a self-interested and passive recipient of products who makes ignorant demands of services provided. The next step in my analysis is to explore the origins of these

various character traits by reviewing works of authors who have examined the meanings attached to the consumer figure itself. By identifying what is particular to the making of the consumer, who in turn stamps an identity onto the student, I will seek some kind of reconciliation that moves beyond the caricatures of both sides of the debate.

The particular features of the consumer

The consumer is unlike classifications that Hacking analyses in the sense that everyone can be classed as a consumer to some extent. Since almost anything can be understood as an object of consumption, ranging from luxury goods to necessities such as drinking water, and services from entertainment to healthcare, everyone can also be described as a consumer. At the same time, being a consumer most often only constitutes a small part of any individual's identity. As Claus Offe expresses, consumers 'constitute an abstract category which defines certain aspects of the social actions of almost all individuals. Everyone and at the same time no-one is a "consumer"' (cited in Trentmann 2007, p.19).

Gabriel and Lang (2015) expand on the abstract malleability of the consumer, which they claim has become a clichéd term since it plays a central role within so many diverse traditions and discourses. They assert that '[f]ew concepts have been claimed by so many interest groups, ideologies and academic traditions as that of the consumer', and identify economists, sociologists, social psychologists, cultural critics, postmodernists, Marxists, Conservatives, advertisers, journalists, pop-semioticians, marketers and marketeers, historians of ideas, environmentalists and activists as among those with a stake in the figure who have each constructed their own distinctive representation (2015, p.226). Alongside a 'theoretical softness' which makes the consumer an 'obedient and polite guest in almost any

discourse' they also detect a one-dimensional 'moral hardness' that is quick to either romanticize or demonize the consumer figure. Whereas some commentators 'celebrate the rise of the consumer' as a 'mature individual who seeks to enjoy life by making choices and exercising freedom' others 'lament consumerism as the final stage of commodification, where all relations are finally reduced to usage and exploitation, in which the consumer is easily co-opted'. The consumer, they maintain, is variously a villain, heroine, victim, villain, or fool (2015, pp.2-3). Trentmann (2007) also highlights how moral judgements are attached to consumers depending on or even determined by the objects of consumption under scrutiny: a focus on luxury goods, for example, may well imply that a consumer is greedy, self-serving and never satisfied, whereas the same is not the case when focussing on a necessary commodity such as water.

Also observed, has been the lack of communication between different groups and traditions with an interest in the consumer figure. Gabriel and Lang claim that while individual traditions and discourses invent their own representations, each with its own 'specificity and coherence', they are 'wilfully oblivious to those of others' (2015, p.2). In a study on New Labour public services reform, Needham (2010) additionally warns of a danger that different understandings of the consumer result in communicating at cross-purposes.

Trentmann (2006) distils the various configurations into three dominant, or 'essentialist' approaches which serve to summarise core traditions behind the formation of the consumer. The first is the universal economic consumer, who has already been outlined in Chapter 4. To re-iterate, this is the consumer who belongs to mainstream economics and is

depicted as a rational individual who acts to maximise his or her own well-being and makes purchasing choices based on independent and stable preferences. This figure is recognizable within the policy framing of a marketized higher education 'with students being depicted as rational economic agents whose main goal is to reap future economic benefits as a result of making an investment in their HE' (Tomlinson, 2016, p.151).

Second is the consumer as product of commodity culture that expanded from the eighteenth century onwards. This consumer has been a longstanding object of study within the humanities and cultural studies stretching back to Veblen's idea of the 'conspicuous consumer' through to works by Marxist critical theorists of the Frankfurt School, and subsequently to authors such as Marcuse (*One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, 1964) and Baudrillard (*The Consumer Society*, 1970). This consumer figure emerges from largely negative visions of consumer culture and consumption. Sassatelli (2000) outlines how 'consumer society' has been used 'more to convey condemnation' than to comprehend actual consumer practices, serving to 'stigmatise what appeared to be a growing and uncontrolled passion for material things' (p.5). She describes the consumer belonging to critical theory is as 'a slave of commodities' who buys more because they are induced to rather than because they want to. The average consumer is represented as a 'passive and heteronomous degeneration of autonomous, active and self-determined forms of subjectivity'. Postmodernist pessimism embodied by Baudrillard denies consumers the 'ability to respond creatively, or at least actively, to the siren-songs of contemporary consumer culture' (Sassatelli, 2000, p.74).

Third is the 'active consumer' as product of postmodernity or of an 'advanced type of liberal governmentality associated with neoliberal capitalism and public sector reform' (Trentmann,2006, p19). Clarke and Newman (2007) refer to this consumer as the citizen-consumer, tracing its origin to public choice theory of the 1970s and its visibility to policy changes introduced by Conservative governments of the 1980s and 1990s such as the 'right to buy' public housing and establishing parental choice in secondary school selection, and subsequently to the New Labour government's modernisation programme that aimed to transform public services to include more markets, competition between providers, devolved management, governance from a distance, and a conception of services based on the needs and wants of 'consumers' (p.739). Though, as will be shown, Trentmann locates the emergence of the citizen-consumer in the early twentieth century.

All three of these approaches are evident in depictions of the student consumer. The first belongs distinctly to policy; the second underlies assumptions behind a good deal of academic critique; the third overlaps with the first two and belongs to both sides of the marketization debate, with the consumer construed favourably or unfavourably depending on ideological positioning over the influence of markets on public life and notions of citizenship. Also evident is the potential for miscommunication between the distinctive approaches, each with its own history and established frames of reference that determine the character of the consumer within an economic, cultural or political context.

Three possible ways of disassembling or unsettling these distinct approaches or 'worlds' within which consumers act present themselves. First, I will outline Trentmann's (2006)

genealogy of the formation of the consumer as a social identity and category of knowledge from a global perspective, an exercise that can also inform configuration of the student consumer. In particular, Trentmann aims to ‘problematize and loosen the rise of the consumer from the history of commodity culture and the study of consumption as practice’ and to challenge all three essentialist approaches identified (p.20). Next, I will draw from the work of Gabriel and Lang (2015), who challenge what they refer to as ‘one-dimensional views the consumer’ by identifying a broad set of consumer characteristics which transcend the various traditions with a stake in consumer identity. Finally, I will consider ways in which the behaviours of consumers themselves might influence how the label is understood.

The genealogy of the consumer

Trentmann begins his historiography in the eighteenth century by dismissing the claims of commentators who tie the growth of the consumer to the early modern growth of consumption in the Western world. Finding the consumer ‘virtually absent’ from any discourse of the period, he concludes that such claims are deductive ascriptions based on an essentialist notion of the consumer rather than on any form of self-identification (p.22). In both Europe and America, he stresses, meanings and practices of consumption were embedded in older social identities defined by craft, land, trade and production (p.23). While ‘by the late eighteenth century most people in the Atlantic world had become deeply engaged in a commercial system of consumption, but few saw themselves or their neighbours as “consumers”’ (Brewer and Trentmann, 2006, p.6).

Trentmann also rejects what he describes as the conventional Anglo-American liberal narrative, which traces the rise of the consumer figure based on markets, exchange and the rational utility maximising individual from neoclassical economics to neoliberalism. Rather, he locates the birthplace of the consumer within knowledge systems that are sceptical of market society. Finding no essentialist individualistic consumer within either early or late liberalism, he locates the 'intellectual pursuit of the consumer' to 'public intellectuals and reformers outside or at the margins of liberal economics'. Significantly, these reformist visions of the consumer 'were mobilized for their civic and collective characteristics, not some inherent economic individualism'. In particular, he references national or historical economics as an alternative site of knowledge, whose investment in the consumer was driven by an interest in 'national power and resources and with social welfare and mores' (pp.28-29).

Having rejected any direct link with either commodity culture or liberalism, and being cautious not to convey a sense of there being any kind of universal history of the consumer, Trentmann locates the formation of the real consumer in civil society of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries. He argues that configuration of the consumer required 'political synapses' by which he means 'political traditions and languages through which actors were able to connect material experiences to a sense of belonging, interest and entitlement' (p.21). He explores the workings of these political synapses in two 'conjunctures' in the 19th century.

The first conjuncture is located in disputes over utilities and taxed necessities – first water and then gas – in Victorian England. Recording protests over water in particular as the ‘single most fiercely contested good in nineteenth-century London politics’, Trentmann outlines how utility ‘users’ became ‘consumers’ through a series of civic protests over supply, access, quality and price. Consumer identification began with activism by property-owning rate payers, especially male householders and commercial users of utilities, and was bound to campaigns over particular goods rather than being a universal category. The contestation over water in particular ‘left behind an enriched sense and symbolism of the consumer as representing the public interest’ (p. 33 & p.35).

Locating the birth of consumer self-identification in disputes over utilities ties its formation to collective political action rather than to any notion of individual choice, and to goods provided by private monopolies rather than commercial markets. Trentmann points out that while commercial traditions created the ‘discursive openings for the formation of collective consumer identities’ in Britain in particular, initial identification was not so much associated with ‘consumer society’ as with demands for public control of necessary goods. Consumers ‘acquired their voice in an arena of consumption that lay outside the widening universe of commodity culture’ (pp.32-33 & p.36).

Trentmann asserts that the initial focus on necessities and taxed goods was significant in the British case because it enabled the construction of an organic public interest around taxpayers, and surmises that this happened in Britain more or earlier than other countries such as Germany or China due to earlier commercialization of society and mobilization of the

tax-paying citizen linked to a liberal tradition. This in turn provided the foundation for later 'radical and progressive traditions' to 'invoke the civic, community-oriented outlook of a citizen-consumer'. Notably, the identity of the consumer in political culture remained largely distinct from that in commercial culture: this consumer was a 'citizen with a social conscience and with shared basic needs, not the flâneur or flâneuse exploring infinite desires, nor the utility-maximising individual of neoclassical economic theory'. The consumer in Britain was therefore, 'largely able to withstand the charge, so overwhelming on the European continent and in Asia, of being a selfish, apatriotic individual whose obsessions with universal cheapness eroded the collective good' (p.42).

The second conjuncture explored by Trentmann is global, and relates to the growth of economic nationalism, imperial tensions, and endeavours to protect national culture at the turn of the twentieth century: '[a]gainst a background of increasingly global circulation of food and commodities, and a shifting balance between town and country, consumption became a contested site globally in debates about agricultural and trade policy, social reform, racial strength and the relationship between citizen and nationhood' (p.21 & p.37).

Trentmann claims the evolution of consumer identity was 'uneven' between nations because of the 'contrasting ways in which consumption was politicized' and different 'traditions of citizenship and social and national solidarities' (pp.37- 41). In Britain, the consumer as 'ubiquitous' rather than 'bounded' character emerged from the Free Trade movement during the Edwardian era in particular, when fiscal debates extended use of the term beyond propertied rate payers and specific commodities to all individuals affected by duties. Free Traders were concerned with a wide variety of goods beyond necessities and

specific social groups, and all Britons were grouped together in discussions about duties paid by the 'home consumer' rather than the foreigner (pp.32-39). Trentmann stresses the importance of retrieving this 'earlier moment of an association between civil society, citizenship and the consumer' rather than 'picturing a natural synergy between the consumer, individualism and liberal economics' (p.42).

Trentmann attributes the 'populist consummation of the consumer' to the First World War from which he claims 'subjects graduated ... with an elementary education of themselves as consumers and citizens'. Scarcity and inflation resulted in consumer boycotts and demands for representation along with state-sponsored recognition of consumer interests and campaigns for thrift that emphasised the economic contribution of consumers in securing national survival and gave them new 'social, ethical and political responsibilities'. In Britain, 'consumers now advocated secure provision and regulation, instead of cheapness and freedom of trade'. Trentmann also records how the consumer politics of 'war and welfare' began to diverge from those of earlier years, with the consumer increasingly characterised as individual citizen or private end-user rather than 'commercial or collective' user. State planning attributed socioeconomic rights to a universal private consumer, and those with international interests positioned consumers as instruments for economic recovery and peace as it became increasingly clear that consumption rather than production should be the new focus for growth (pp.43-44).

Post-war, the consumer also had a role to play in asserting the liberal alternative to totalitarian ideologies in which producers are subject to the closed networks of the state.

Trentmann claims that advertisers in Britain and America positioned themselves as 'guardians of democracy by embracing the consumer as king', and the term 'consumer sovereignty' was circulated 'to explain the favourable mechanisms of social harmony and political consent in a market society in which consumers were able to exercise their power through demand'. Consumer sovereignty combined 'a sense of freedom for consumers with an atmosphere of restraint for producers' and most importantly communicated the values of tolerance and respect for difference: 'the state and producers did not seek to steer or dictate consumption but accepted that society was a mix of different, conflicting, tastes and preferences' (pp.44-45).

Trentmann links the increased attention given to consumers in matters of citizenship and economic policy to a larger social and cultural trend of extending their domain to an increasing set of diverse practices, goods and services. Consumer interests expanded beyond food and utilities to encompass 'health, housing, leisure, and collective forms of consumption'. Examples include consumers of health referred to by cooperatives in France, consumers of adult education referred to in an investigation by the British Institute of Adult Education, and consumers of housing referred to by the US federal government's Consumers' Division. Thus, Trentmann observes, the 'enrichment of the social body and practice of the consumer' was well established by the time John Milton Keynes made the consumer central to the creation of wealth and employment in his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* published in 1936 (pp.45-46).

Trentmann also stresses that the growing focus on the consumer in society, culture and political economy during the inter-war years was neither uniform nor uncontroversial. Many Asian societies were ambivalent towards the term, and in America and Europe the 'liberal upgrading of the consumer' triggered debates about the character's 'civic nature and limits'. Keynes himself was 'deeply critical' of mass consumer society and hoped that abundance 'would eventually be enjoyed by people who "cultivate into a fuller perfection, the art of life itself and do not sell themselves for the means of life"'. Others began to ask 'how the growing emphasis on individual choice and demand could be reconciled with the universal principles of citizenship or the ethics of forming social solidarities'. Trentmann illustrates with two different responses. First, in the *The Discovery of the Consumer* (1928), Beatrice Webb questions how much the state could 'resemble an association of consumers ... before eroding itself as a community of citizens'. Likening the new style of government to an Association of Consumers, she questions how the common requirements of so many citizens across so many goods and services can be effectively and democratically organized, and how the asymmetry arising from most social services being used by a minority and paid for by the whole community can be reconciled. She argues instead that some areas of public life require an association of citizens led by a municipal government in order to attain a 'national minimum of civilized life'. Second, Trentmann illustrates how the New Deal in the US provided a 'very different political synapse for citizens and consumers from earlier traditions' by marshalling state power to encourage consumers to spend for the public good. Historians have traced two stands of consumer identity emerging from this period. One strand focuses on the rise in consumer rights and activism and new state support for the 'citizen consumer' and the other focuses on the concept of the 'rational consumer' rooted in

an ethical as much as a material interest in how individuals make choices, emerging from the US home economics and consumer education movement of the early 1900s. The impetus for the rational consumer was to encourage the evaluation of choice as a 'moral and active instrument involving questions of motives, values and ends' and had nothing to do with the notion of the utility-maximising individual of neoclassical economics. John Dewey was influential within this movement, stressing the reflective element of consumer empowerment, and how freedom of choice that links values and actions enables individuals to develop stronger social and personal ethics. Trentmann reports that by the 1930s 'questions of value, the position of the consumer in society and educational theory were as familiar in consumer education as labelling, quality and price' (pp.46-49).

Ending his study in the 1930s, Trentmann stresses how reviewing the evolution of the consumer figure from multiple positions unsettles the prevalent debate in Europe, America and Asia between neoliberal supporters who maintain that the 'introduction of market-style rational consumer in public services as a way of empowering citizens and democratizing public institutions, as well as of creating choice and efficiency' and critics who 'warn that consumerism will unravel the sources and solidarities of citizenship themselves' (p.52). Most significantly, tracing the birth of the consumer from civic action against monopoly providers of utilities to post-war mobilization for economic recovery and a stake in liberal and democratic development and freedom loosens the consumer from the grip of both commodity culture and neo-classical and neoliberal economics. Consumer identity can be tied to civic and collective action as well as to making individual choices within markets. Contextualizing the politically infused origins of phrases such as 'customer is king' and

‘consumer sovereignty’ along with an ethical intent to consumer ‘choice’ restores to these terms a depth of meaning that has been lost in contemporary narrow readings of the consumer viewed as overly empowered, self-interested and self-serving.

Accepting that there are – as Trentmann upholds – multiple versions of the consumer figure that have evolved from different traditions and political contexts, would suggest the need for discernment when constructing the student consumer. Of primary importance is considering the nature of the commodity itself. There is little merit in applying a set of concepts that have evolved about consumers of luxury goods to the consumer of higher education, with the result that students become tied to systems of reference that characterize them as pleasure-seeking, greedy, or hedonistic. Consumer identity rooted in collective action over supply of utilities invites a distinctly different set of value judgments and emphasizes the importance of looking at consumers in context to avoid simplification. Holding the three essentialist traditions identified by Trentmann in mind, it is evident that policy has imposed onto students a version of the state-supported citizen consumer in addition to the economistic individual of neoclassical economics, as evident in its dogged attempts to create mechanisms that enable choice and protect rights. Critics have objected to both the economistic traits of consumers and also focussed on the consumer as stigmatized product of commodity culture. For them, the concept of the citizen provides a means for challenging the consumer label: as Needham expresses, there is a sense of ‘rivalry’ between these two identities so that ‘the more one is a consumer, the less one can be a citizen (Needham, 2007, pp.27-8). The consumer and citizen binary also sits within a larger network of ideological binaries that are reflected in critique of the student consumer,

namely state versus market, public versus private, collective versus individual, and de-commodified versus commodified (Clarke *et al.*, 2007). However, seeking out the history of the formation of the consumer suggests a softening of these binaries by showing, for example, how markets and politics intersect and how consumers can embrace both individual and collective interests. As Trentmann (2004) suggests elsewhere:

...why necessarily presume a trade-off between a sense of personal entitlement and a sense of social commitment? People might become more involved and assertive consumers because they feel a sense of entitlement *and* because they want to support their community (p.339).

Re-making the consumer

The second approach to resetting current debate is to disentangle the consumer figure from the various traditions that have created and fixed its character in order to re-envisage boundaries. Such a project has been undertaken by Gabriel and Lang (2015), who express their impatience with traditional depictions which they claim are too 'tame, predictable and one-sided' and fail to 'come to terms with the fragmentation, volatility and confusion of contemporary consumption'. They coin the term 'unmanageable' to express the fluidity and 'recalcitrance' of the representation of the consumer are aiming for, and apply this term to both theoretical understandings and the unpredictable character of what consumers actually do as individuals and collectively:

As consumers, we can be irrational, incoherent and inconsistent just as we can be rational, planned and organized. We can be individualist or may be driven by social norms and expectations. We can seek risk and excitement or may aim for comfort and security. We can be deeply moral about the way we spend our money or quite unfettered by moral considerations. Our feelings towards consumption can range from loathing shopping to loving it, from enjoying window-shopping to finding it utterly boring, from being highly self-conscious about the car we drive to being quite indifferent to it. (p.4)

They argue that the unmanageability of the consumer makes it an 'essentially contested concept' because the term embraces various meanings and different arguments elicit particular meanings while excluding others. At the same time there is 'no way to adjudicate between different meanings, yet not all meanings have an equal claim to be valid'. Moreover, attempts to manage consumers fail because, '[e]ven as they are constantly typecast and pigeon-holed, consumers are becoming more unmanageable, eccentric and paradoxical' (p.232).

Like Offe, Gabriel and Lang also highlight the particular feature of the consumer as part-identification and inseparable from other aspects of individual agency:

Ultimately, our actions and experiences as consumers cannot be detached from our actions and experiences as social, political and moral agents. The fragmentation and contradictions of contemporary consumption are part and parcel of the fragmentation and contradictions of everyday living. Being a consumer dissolves neither class membership or citizenship; it is not the case that one moment we act as consumers and the next as workers and citizens, as women or men, or as members of ethnic groups. We are creative composites of several social categories at the same time, with histories, presents and futures. (p.5)

They also reject any sense that today's Western consumer is the 'terminus of a historical process' to be duplicated in other parts of the world. It is rather a stage on the way to something else. Gabriel and Lang challenge political ideologues who romanticise consumer choice and fail to imagine a future different from the present. They assert the importance of debate about the 'global and historical implications of Western modes of consumption and the legacy that it is likely to leave for future generations' (p.5).

To create their version of the consumer, Gabriel and Lang identify and juxtapose a variety of approaches drawn from the writings of academics, journalists, advertisers, consumer advocates and politicians to generate ten portraits or 'faces' of the modern consumer. These portraits create an overlapping and sometimes contradictory set of consumer traits, which they claim restores an element of 'critical edge and prickliness' that has been lost as the label has become 'all things to all people'. Each portrait, they maintain, highlights an aspect of the consumer's 'physiognomy' while 'at same time obscuring others'. Each contains tensions and contradictions. Each tends to mutate into other portraits. Each has strengths and weaknesses. While some portraits may be more relevant to the student consumer figure than others, it is important to give a summary of all the faces that Gabriel and Lang include in their physiognomy to convey the scope of their conception and to avoid inadvertently omitting an aspect that should be held in mind when sketching out the full range of possibilities for the student consumer.

- Consumer as chooser: Gabriel and Lang place choice at the 'heart of consumerism, both as its emblem and its core value'. Choice signifies freedom. In free markets, consumer choices are the 'driving force for efficiency, innovation, growth and diversity' and consumer capitalism brings increasing aspects of our social and personal lives 'under the ambit of choice', including 'identity, reproduction and fertility, gender and sexuality, career and work, even when and how to end one's own life'. Choice is also a 'supreme political value' within democratic systems where citizens are free to choose their political rulers. While not wishing to diminish the importance of choice to people's lives – something which is often taken for granted –

Gabriel and Lang also question its supremacy as a value, and identify a series of limitations or even a 'dark side' to choice. Significantly, information is essential for making choices but there are questions to be answered about what kinds of information are appropriate, how much is given, and by whom. Choice is also conditioned by what is available: choice between similar options is only marginal choice, and choice limited to those with resources can disenfranchise those without. Not all choices are open to everyone. From another perspective, too much choice leads to 'diminishing returns' and can induce anxiety linked to making the right choice. Choice can also be used as a 'smoke screen' for 'shedding responsibility' onto the chooser when something goes wrong. All choices also have consequences, some of which are not intended and may entrap consumers into further choices or even forced actions. Choice does not guarantee freedom because some choices may expose us to other forms of control that undermine our privacy and freedom (pp.25-26).

Gabriel and Lang emphasize how the logic of 'the more choice the better' has permeated all aspects of our lives as communicated through the metaphor of the 'menu' which individualizes consumption and can be both liberating and onerous. They also stress that choice is 'inextricably linked with morality' and may well involve 'issues of right and wrong, good and bad rather than tastes and whims or a desire for difference'. As a central concept that features in every discussion about contemporary consumption, Gabriel and Lang claim that the consumer as chooser also informs or mutates into many other faces of the consumer (pp.27-29 & p.46).

- Consumer as communicator: this face can be traced back to the works of Veblen and Simmel, and is rooted in the idea that objects of consumption represent a 'live communication system, through which cultural meanings are conveyed and contested'. Objects ranging from 'food, clothes, cars, buildings, organizations, politics or even our bodies' can all be understood as texts that carry messages. Gabriel and Lang reiterate the claims of cultural theorists who argue that '[c]onsumption as communication opens numerous windows into our relations to the physical objects that surround us and the ways we use these objects to express meanings, feelings and social distinctions'. Recognizing that 'goods tell stories' and that these stories carry their own symbolism, they note that 'consumption becomes strangely re-humanised' – even seemingly irrational and absurd consumption becomes sensible when viewed as an expression of confused humanity. Gabriel and Lang observe that the consumer as communicator face works well for prestige goods, but is less illuminating for more mundane goods that are consumed with little fuss (p.47 & p.68).
- Consumer as explorer: Gabriel and Lang again draw primarily from cultural theory – in this case since the 1980s – to highlight how the image of exploring has become synonymous with shopping. Markets provide consumers with multiple spaces to explore new products and experiences 'with which to create meaning in their lives'. Fuelled by curiosity, their 'quests' might include hunting for bargains or value-for-money, searching for difference, or even seeking out spiritual fulfilment. The internet has become a prime site for the consumer as explorer 'turning the home into a

temple of consumption'. Gabriel and Lang also highlight that once an object or a service has been paid for, it 'begins a new life as an object of consumer exploration' that might involve disappointment, lead to further quests, or to developing a relationship as the commodity is absorbed into self-perceptions or initiates a further exploration of identity. Limits to this portrait include its failure to 'illuminate what makes things or spaces worth exploring in the first place' and how its 'aspirational and youthful' character 'obscures' the many instances when consumers seem to 'strive after the familiar and the safe'. The metaphor portrays an individualistic notion of consumption and also ignores those who have become 'disenchanted with all aspects of consumerism ... and have opted for different lifestyles'. Gabriel and Lang also attach a frivolity to the consumer as explorer, which must seem like a 'cruel joke' for the large numbers of people on the breadline (pp.69-85).

- Consumer as identity-seeker: this portrait illuminates a consensus within discussions about Western consumerism that consumption is the area 'where personal and group identities are fought over, contested, precariously put together and licked into shape'. Gabriel and Lang observe that the consumer as identity-seeker is frequently portrayed as 'thirsting for identity and using commodities to quench this thirst'. They explore numerous ambiguities behind concepts of psychological and social identity, which they claim is mostly construed as a 'uniquely modern problem'. Ultimately, they argue that behind identity-seeking are 'more fundamental cravings for respect and self-love, born out of the injuries that modern life inflicts'. In the absence of other cultural role models and ideals, consumerism 'throws up ephemeral images' to identify with such

as pop stars, sports people, and television celebrities who promise to boost our ego-ideals. Gabriel and Lang highlight two contrasting views about consumption and identity formation: consumers are either the beneficiaries of freedom and choice who more or less successfully build identities that command social respect and inspire self-love, or they are victims because buying more and more commodities ultimately reinforces rather than assuages their discontent. They also argue, however, that any view which conflates identity with consumption is simplistic because identity formation might include both consumerist activity and resistance to consumerism, and might also be sought elsewhere. Work, family, social networks, religion and class are all possible sites for fashioning identity. Preoccupation with identity itself might even be seen as a passing fashion (pp.86-107).

- Consumer as hedonist: Gabriel and Lang claim that 'pleasure lies at the heart of consumerism' which 'celebrates the diversity of pleasures to be obtained from commodities' without guilt or shame. They attribute hedonism to certain qualities of contemporary consumption: 'the thrill we get when we acquire an object we like, our insistence on what we like and what we do not like, and our ability to derive pleasure, thrills and fun out of seemingly disagreeable experiences'. They differentiate between different kinds of pleasure, but claim that views on the nature of consumer hedonism coalesce around the idea that pleasure lies in emotional experience rather than physical sensation: '[w]hile the experience may be fantastic or delusory, the pleasure is not delusory at all'. Among the various interpretations of consumer hedonism, Gabriel and Lang subscribe to the view it is 'neither entirely playful or innocent'

because 'pleasure derived from material and symbolic manipulation of people and objects entails a substantial amount of aggression and the pursuit of this type of pleasure may be ultimately futile'. In summary, hedonism is neither the only principle that drives consumers nor the 'liberating force celebrated by its apologists' (pp.110-128).

- Consumer as victim: victimhood is understood as the 'flipside of consumer sovereignty' whereby instead of 'making choices with full knowledge of their consequences' consumers are 'coaxed into decisions that are against their interests'. Although the idea is less popular than in the post war period, Gabriel and Lang argue that 'consumers can still easily become victims'. Globalized trade and internet shopping in particular create new opportunities for consumers to be 'manipulated, used, exploited, defrauded, humiliated' with possibilities for 'deception and swindling' exacerbated by 'impersonal markets where buyers and sellers have no personal bond and no enduring relationship'. Gabriel and Lang highlight that there are conflicting views about how consumers should be protected against victimization, that is the extent to which they should be protected by law and the extent to which markets can self-correct by the free sharing of information. Consumer activism is also a source of consumer protection. They also outline a transition in the focus of cultural theorists from conceiving of individuals as victims of mass advertising and late capitalism to the postmodern interest in consumerism's potential for creativity and liberation. The former is expressed by Marcuse's 'one-dimensional man' who is an individual 'locked into a vicious cycle of false needs for different consumer products and experiences for

which he or she sacrifices an ever increasing part of his or her life in alienated work’.

The latter is represented in the semiotic puzzle-solver and *bricoleur* as well as other faces of the consumer as explorer, identity-seeker and rebel (pp.129-146)

- Consumer as rebel: there are two aspects to this consumer, the first ‘uses the objects and images of consumerism to communicate opposition to the status quo’ and the second refuses ‘to buy and use the goods and services of consumerist society, seeking alternative sources of meaning and pleasure’. Gabriel and Lang argue that this consumer has many layers and list the following: cool consumer who chooses unorthodox objects; youthful rebel ‘without’ a cause that includes joy-rides, ram-raids and eating disorders; rioter who loots, steals or shoplifts; politically conscious consumers who see buying as voting and boycott brands or buy local; temporary rebel who engages in ‘alternative consumption’ such as pop festivals; ethical rebel who, for example, uses local currencies; disenchanted and alienated consumers and anti-consumers who are anti-brand, make their own, rediscover crafts and more. Gabriel and Lang question the extent to which is possible to be anti-consumption and reference authors who have argued that rebellion is actually the ‘lifeblood’ of consumerism: ‘far from being a threat, resistance is itself consumerist in that it expresses and breeds new ideas, products and ways of being’ (pp.147-150)
- Consumer as activist: this face is rooted in a long tradition of consumer activism in the form of movements dedicated to promoting the ‘rights, consciousness and interests of all or particular groups of consumers’. Gabriel and Lang identify four waves of

activism – the co-operative movement, the value-for-money movement, Naderism, and alternative or political activism – all of which they claim are evident and effective in contemporary consumer organizations. They identify the common characteristics of consumer activism as desire for change, concern with rights, values (consumption as a form of moral action), public good, collectivity and organization (to achieve maximum impact). Value-for-money activism, according to Gabriel and Lang, has the highest profile of the different types and aims to make the marketplace more efficient and champion the interests of consumers rather than offering any radically different vision of society. This is achieved by providing independent information and education to enable individuals to act effectively as consumers and promoting rights to both information and redress when things go wrong. The fourth wave of alternative, ethical and political activists emerged from the 1970 and 1980s, and includes green consumerism and ethical consumerism that stresses the moral dimension of consumer choice. Gabriel and Lang highlight how the new wave of consumer activism that incorporates animal welfare, fair trade, and ethical consumption translates consumerism into citizenship (pp.170-192).

- Consumer as citizen: Gabriel and Lang recognize attempts to align the consumer and citizen figures through the hybrid concept of the citizen-consumer, which they attribute to progressive companies which have tried to incorporate collective values into markets; the Conservative party attempt in the 1980s to redefine the citizen as consumer; and the aforementioned ethical and political activism. However, unlike Trentmann, they mostly focus on the longstanding ‘chronic tension’ between idea of

the consumer and the idea of the citizen which they maintain have different 'pedigrees'. The idea of the citizen, they state, implies 'mutuality and control as well as balance of rights and duties'. Citizens are active members of communities who have to 'argue their views and engage with the view of others' and '[m]aking choices as a citizen leads to a very different evaluation of alternatives than if one chooses as a consumer'. Consumers by contrast, need not belong to a community or act on its behalf. Morality, Gabriel and Lang claim, is 'systematically kept out of the world of the consumer'. However, while the citizen 'may appear to be in retreat, under pressure from consumerism' they argue 'there are signs that environmental, community and political concerns are restoring the idea of collective spaces and rights, and the shared responsibility to defend them' (pp.193-208).

- Consumer as worker: this portrait challenges the long-held distinction that has been made between production and consumption reflected in the idea that 'work is where value is generated, while consumption is where value is dissipated'. Gabriel and Lang refer to Alvin Toffler's neologism 'prosumer' to convey how the two have been fused in recognition of the work involved in consumption. Examples include 'digital labour' on the internet, self-service at supermarkets and self-build furniture from IKEA. Moreover, wealthy consumers work hard with their architects to design their own houses and people on low incomes work hard to improve their credit-scores. Working customers are active rather than passive. They use ATMs, book their holidays online, crowdsource and rate the performance of employees. MOOCs provide an educational example of what Gabriel and Lang refer to as 'prosumption-as-consumption' where

the burden of control for learning is placed on the student. Consumers as workers also stand in an interesting relation to other faces of the consumer, for example they may seem to contrast with 'consumers as victims' but possibly represent a new form of exploitation with every space becoming a work-space and 'more and more consumers ... working unpaid as part of production and distribution' (pp.207-225).

In their overall formulation of the consumer, Gabriel and Lang claim to have 'brought together traditions that do not normally address each other enough'. They stress that their intention in doing this is neither to present the totality of contemporary consumption nor to provide an opportunity to pick and choose between preferred aspects. Instead, they propose that each of the images they identify 'represents a position within a contested terrain' and acts as an 'initial gambit on which one is prepared to place a stake'. Each face is discrete and has its own character, but also has the 'propensity to fragment or to mutate into a different face' such as chooser to victim and rebel to identity-seeker. They also contend that different social and economic circumstances are likely to 'draw out one or other face' so, for example, in times of austerity, the consumer as rational and thrifty outshines the consumer as 'compulsive, hedonistic and spendthrift' (pp.227-228).

The individual faces created by Gabriel and Lang are more or less relevant to the student consumer, and on balance provide richer accounts of the consumer as shopper than the consumer as citizen or user of services, public or otherwise. Nevertheless, even shopping is portrayed as far from a superficial activity and each face has something to contribute to how we might envisage and discuss students as consumers of higher education. The student

consumer is not primarily a shopper or a browser, and yet may well browse the internet to make initial university choices. While the prospective student in the higher education market might have little in common with the consumer as hedonist or pleasure-seeker, university marketers are acutely aware of the emotional appeal depicted in advertisements where they compete for student applications. Students will most likely internalize brand associated with their university to form identity, and to communicate personal meanings and social distinction. The portrait of consumer as rebel demonstrates the possibility for consumption to be political, ethical and even anti-consumerist in motivation while operating within a market system. Identifying consumers with work challenges old distinctions between consuming and producing that are highly relevant to education. The activist role has been championed by government itself to promote value-for-money for students and government also has a moral role to play in protecting students against becoming victims of its own policy (see recommendations of the Augar Review in Chapter 2). While the consumer as citizen sketched out by Gabriel and Lang lacks the detail or historical perspective that Trentmann gives to that particular identity, it offers some small promise of collective rather than individual action. And if consumers choose, there is clearly an educational imperative to encourage individuals to make good choices and even to determine the meaning of 'good' behind good choices (also see Sen's capability approach in Chapter 5). Whichever aspects of the consumer are assumed, this is only part of any student's identity because individuals are well able to identify with several social categories simultaneously.

Collectively, the multiple faces of the consumer mitigate against imposing any single or 'one-dimensional' conception of the consumer onto the student consumer. As Gabriel and Lang

summarize, some of the faces they describe are 'active, others are passive, some are adventurous, others are conservative, some are rational, others are impetuous, some are conformist, others are rebellious' (p.227). Taken together, they represent contested terrains with the potential to energize debate about the consumer aspect of student identity that moves beyond current cross-communications between the policy view that promotes a limited version of choice and the critics of marketization who tend to stereotype the student consumer as passive recipient of learning. The portraits amalgamate various knowledges about the consumer figure – both expert and popular – which effectively builds a new world from existing worlds, and by linking advantages and disadvantages to each face a 'critical edge' is retained that has the potential to enliven debate about student consumers.

Real consumers

Both Trentmann and Gabriel and Lang make a distinction between theoretical traditions or categorizations of consumers and consumers in actuality: Trentmann's genealogy pitches the self-identification of consumers against the three core essentialist approaches that characterize consumers as economic, products of commodity culture, or products of liberal governmentality. Gabriel and Lang argue that consumers don't behave in ways assigned to them by those who wish to manage them. Both sets of claims suggest the workings of 'virtualism' that seeks to make 'the world conform to the structures of the conceptual' (Carrier and Miller, 1998, p.2). This final section will broach ways of redressing the balance by considering how consumers actually behave and potentially shape the meaning of the label.

First, as already intimated by Gabriel and Lang, the field of anthropology demonstrates that monetary and consumer activity is intimately tied to meaning-making such that individuals assimilate commodities into their own lives and effectively set about decommodifying them.

As Sassatelli (2007) states:

If consumer society is that in which daily needs are satisfied in a capitalist way through the acquisition of commodities, it is also that in which each consumer has to constantly engage in re-evaluating these objects beyond their price, in order to stabilize meanings and social relations ... each of us relentlessly tries to preserve personal identities and relations from the logic of market and price. (p.5)

She gives an example of this kind of meaning-making in gift giving, where we remove the price label, and gift receiving, where we don't ask the actual price.

Second, as claimed in different ways by Cooley (1918) and Radin (2001) as outlined in Chapter 4 and Gabriel and Lang above, it is also the case that we can't compartmentalise our consumer selves. Sassatelli (2007) illustrates this with reference to leaving a toddler at kindergarten: 'we demand that the employees look after the little one not only because they are paid but because the child – which appears as the quintessential human being, unmarked by society, politics, economy – deserves attention and affection' (p.5).

Miller (2001) gives a further example:

When a mother shops for her child she may feel that there are a hundred garments in that shop that would be fine for all her friends' children but she loves her own child enough that the exact balance between what his or her school friends will consider 'cool' and what her family will consider respectable matters hugely to her, enough for her to reject the lot and keep on searching until she finds the one article that satisfies this subtle and exacting need. (p.230)

Miller (1998) also argues that consumption can act as a negation of the 'abstraction and universalism' that is embodied in capitalism when 'brought down to the level of ordinary human practice'. Individuals and small social groups confront objects that may well 'express the very abstraction of the market and the state' in their production, but which, through their purchase and possession, can be used to 'create worlds that strive to be specific and diverse precisely because we wish to escape from our sense of alienation from the vast institutions of the market and the state'. Miller gives an example of male and female householders on government housing estates in London who exchanged their respective skills in DIY labour and interior design to transform their kitchens, developing social relations that directly 'negated the stigma attached to their situation at the lowest end of state services and market provision'. He also observes how in more affluent circles even the most critical of academics enjoy consumption goods such as restaurants, word processors, and summer holidays which they object to when generalized as mass consumption, but enjoy in practice without ever considering themselves as superficial or passive. According to Miller, the twentieth century showed that it is through consumption rather than production 'that commodities can be returned to the world as the embodiment of human potentiality'. He does not claim that all consumption negates capitalism, but that it has the potential to (pp.192-194).

Applying these observations to the student consumer would suggest that students who pay to study at university would similarly re-evaluate their 'purchase' beyond the logic of price in order to both preserve and construct personal identities and meanings. Over the course of several years of studentship they have ample chance to forge meanings and identities tied

both their degree as commodity and a whole range of other influences such as disciplinary affiliation, professional values and work experience. For some students, this could involve negation of capitalism, for others not. Some might seek out the emancipatory opportunities of higher learning and others might not. The argument that students conceived as consumers can't also be critical and grow is misconceived.

An important aspect to formulating the student consumer is to move beyond speculation based on notional consumers and to conduct empirical studies that enable students to express and shape how they relate to the label. A limited number of studies of this kind have been made and will now be outlined with specific reference to the adoption of the consumer notion of value-for-money.

The Real Student Consumer and Value-for-Money

UK higher education students have been actively encouraged to evaluate their educational experience in value-for-money terms since they began to make a larger contribution to the cost of their study. The phrase has been used in all major policy documents since 1997 to bolster claims that universities must improve standards and efficiency on behalf of students who pay towards their own learning and was the subject of a recent inquiry by the House of Commons Education Committee (2018) in which it is reported that students 'increasingly want to know where their money is going, the quality of the product they will receive and what they should expect in return' (House of Commons Education Committee, 2018).

This depiction of student interests aligns most closely with Gabriel and Lang's notion of activist consumerism, which aims to empower individuals to be effective consumers by

providing information that supports rational decision-making and empowering rights of redress. In the case of higher education, the government has taken on the role as consumer champion via the Office for Students (OfS), which identifies value-for-money for students as one of its primary objectives.⁹ The OfS identifies choice over courses, teaching quality and cost as key measures of value-for-money, and claims that quality of teaching along with qualification, job and salary at the end of study are especially important for many students. Applicants are directed to government mandated tools – Discover Uni and TEF ratings – as key sources of comparative information between university courses, with the former incorporating student satisfaction data from the National Student Survey (NSS). The OfS has bolstered means of redress by, for example, referring students to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education for complaints against institutions, and insisting that all providers publish student protection plans which set out what students can expect if their course, campus or institution closes.

From the other side of the debate, those who oppose marketization have objected to measures that encourage students to adopt a transactional approach to learning (Standish 2004) and expressed apprehension about value-for-money becoming the dominant way of evaluating the core elements of higher education (Tomlinson, 2017).

The degree to which mechanisms put in place by policy makers to promote activist consumerism are having a positive or negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning can only be settled through empirical research that assesses whether and how

⁹ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/about/our-strategy/> [accessed 30th October 2022].

students are using new information and tools available to them, and how they are evaluating their higher education and with what effect. Such a review of the limited number of studies published to date indicates that student reaction to value-for-money valuation is equivocal.

One cluster of studies suggests that students are internalizing monetary assessment as a means of evaluating their university experience. The annual Student Academic Experience Survey asks students across the UK each year to give their views on the value-for-money of their course, the results often being used by politicians and journalists to support the idea that students are demanding better value (e.g., Johnson, 2015). Between 2012 and 2017 the survey charted a steady overall decline in the number of students who thought their course was good or very good value-for-money from 53% to 35%, along with a corresponding rise in the number who thought their course was poor or very poor value, from 18% to 34%. While survey results in 2018 and 2019 indicate a reversal of this trend, the number of students who thought they received poor or very poor value (44%) exceeded the number reporting good or very good value (29%) for the first time in 2021 as a result of disruption caused by the pandemic. Asking students to rate their course for value-for-money assumes that the measure is meaningful for them, and recent surveys have additionally asked students to identify from a menu of options what they had in mind when they made their judgment. In 2020, the three top reasons given for high ratings were teaching quality, course content and course facilities/resources (Neves and Hewitt). A few anomalies relating to the survey should be noted however. First, students across the whole of the UK make value-for-money ratings regardless of funding regime, including those from Scotland who don't pay fees. This implies

that the concept is being used at least by some as a net measure of value, independent of any financial cost to the student. Second, nearly a third of students each year report their course as being neither good nor poor value-for-money. It is impossible to ascertain whether this is because they find it difficult to make a judgment, or choose not to.

A significant qualitative study indicating that current UK students are embracing value-for-money thinking is a Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) sponsored study conducted by Kandiko and Mawer (2013). These authors found that students in all year groups, subjects, and institutional types had a 'consumerist ethos' towards their education, with value-for-money being an 'important factor' in shaping their experience. Study participants tended to associate tuition fees with contact time and used this along with other tangible features such as new buildings to assess value-for-money, notably seeking more high-quality contact time in the form of 'close support' rather than more time in lectures. Participants also resented additional costs for items such as textbooks, field trips and printing, which they felt should be included in the tuition fee. Yet while students in this study readily evaluated their university experience in terms of cost, Kandiko and Mawer also observed that their evaluations linked more closely to policy discourse on student experience than to financial input itself: there was no evidence that students had chosen particular institutions on grounds of price or considered alternative routes to reach their goals, and students who paid a lower fee rate were just as disposed to framing value in terms of tuition fees as those who paid a higher rate. This again would suggest that value-for-money is being used by some students as a general, rather than an economic costs-and-benefits measure for assessing the value of their educational experience.

In a study designed to examine the mediating influence of consumer orientation on academic performance within English universities, Bunce *et al.* (2016) found an association between greater fee responsibility and a consumer orientation, which in turn was linked to lower academic performance as measured by features of 'learner identity' and grade goal. As a consequence of their findings, Bunce *et al.* recommended further investigation into the ways in which fee responsibility drives consumer orientation and also claimed that drawing attention to concepts like value-for-money might inadvertently encourage students to view their education as an exchange of money for services.

In contrast, another set of studies suggests students' responses to the concept of value-for-money are more complex, resistant, or even indifferent. Within the field of consumer research, qualitative findings have indicated that students find it difficult to equate their educational experience with value-for-money: a series of focus groups conducted by *Which?* as part of a mixed methods study dedicated to student perceptions of value-for-money before, during and after going to university, exposed that students at all these stages found it difficult to reflect on value. The study concluded that high-headline satisfaction scores 'can obscure concerns that sit beneath' (2014).

A report into the financial sustainability of the UK funding model by the Higher Education Commission (2014) challenges the idea that students are behaving more like consumers. Its focus groups revealed a lack of understanding about the nature of tuition fee loans and repayment arrangements, with students reporting they 'felt very detached from the money they spend on tuition', which they never see in their bank accounts.

In a UK-based qualitative study into the rise of the 'student-consumer' that included exploration of student attitudes towards fees and its impact on thinking towards higher education, Tomlinson (2017) identified a shared concern among students about getting an equitable return and value from their higher education, and an increasing equation of value with cost. However, this concern was linked to 'variable levels' of consumer identification that put into question the pervasiveness of consumerist approaches to higher learning overall and the extent to which notional references to consumerism are informing approaches and behaviours. At one end of the scale, Tomlinson identified what he encapsulates as an 'active service user' attitude that is receptive to transactional discourse and conceives of students as rational agents with a substantial role in demanding improved service to maximise value. Students taking this position tended to assess value in 'calculation-based ways', including measures of how much each learning session 'was costing them' (p.8). At the other extreme were students who actively distanced themselves from a consumerist approach on the grounds that commodification of higher education distorts the learning experience and devalues the degree qualification. While these students expressed similar concerns about cost-related value, they resisted the idea that a higher education can be framed in transactional language and foregrounded substantive educational values instead, with reference to alternative terms such as 'personal development' and 'life experience'. The majority of students positioned themselves more ambivalently between these two extremes, at the same time accepting the inevitability of consumerism under a market model along with greater rights to question value-for-money and acknowledging the limitations of this approach.

A UK-wide mixed methods study commissioned by Universities UK (2017) identified a range of student perceptions relating to customer identification, value-for-money, and what they most value about their relationship with their university. Indicators of value-for-money in both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study reflected a focus on both the study process and outcomes after graduation. In the survey, good value-for-money was most highly associated with study facilities such as library and lab facilities, career prospects, high quality lecturers and tutors and course content, and academic challenge. In focus groups, the 'student experience' – including social life, independence, and extra-curricular activities – was an important aspect of value-for-money judgments in addition to facilities and teaching quality. Rather than simply buying services, students perceived themselves as 'co-producers of their university experience' who valued their independence 'both academically and more generally'. They also understood that different courses require different amounts of contact time. Top reasons cited for poor value-for-money in the survey included not enough contact hours, poor lecturers and tutors, poor quality course content, and poor interaction with fellow students. While insufficient contact time was a driver for perceptions of poor value-for-money, it was not a driver for perceptions of good value-for-money. In focus groups many students cited 'lectures and lecturers not meeting their expectations' as a reason for poor value-for-money, often linked to 'a feeling that lecturers were not engaged with students or providing personal feedback as much as they would have liked'. Overall, the report claims that while some students expressed a more 'transactional' perspective, they generally 'recognise and value the unique educational relationship they have with their

university and in particular a 'personalised and collaborative relationship that gives them confidence that their university cares about their educational interests'. (p)

Finally, a mixed methods case study of an English Russell Group university involving more than 250 students across four subject areas explored student perceptions of value-for-money along with related views about what tuition fees pay for and the extent to which payment impacts on educational experience (Staddon, forthcoming). Staddon draws on the limited theoretical literature on the concept of value-for-money to create a framework for assessing the extent to which students use monetary evaluation as an effective consumer tool, including active understanding and use of the term, perceptions of agency and rights of redress, informed choice, and the extent to which students weigh up cost or sacrifice against values that they attribute to study and/or attaining a degree. Qualitative data gathered in 2016 revealed that students quickly and unquestioningly framed their educational experience using value-for-money terms, routinely using comparisons with other students and subject disciplines to make their judgments. These comparisons were generally based on local information from family, peer and friendship groups rather than public channels, although some references were made to information received from the media. However, not all students had engaged with the concept previously with respect to tuition fees, and their evaluations faltered when they realized they couldn't account for what their fees paid for, reflected on their learning needs in contrast to simple measures of value such as contact hours, and entertained other sorts of value that can't be given a price tag. For these latter sorts of value participants tended to draw on the more holistic and qualitative notion of 'experience' to express the value they attached to factors such as making friends,

networking, gaining life skills, and the opportunity to pursue a subject or career they were especially interested in. Getting a good degree from a university with a good reputation was of key importance to students, but not considered as something that could be bought or as an isolated measure of value; other process outcomes were important to them alongside gaining a qualification. The study yielded minimal evidence that students conceived of payment as leverage for better quality and no evidence to support the claim that they were using value-for-money as a tool for demanding a good degree in return for their money, or as their primary measure of educational value. There was also negligible evidence that information had steered students' choice to apply to their particular university. In general, students made reference to choice in one of two ways: they either emphasized a lack of choice over cost or going to university in the absence of any alternative routes or because it had been assumed that they would attend university, or they acknowledged that by choosing to go to university they knew what they were signing up for and so there was no point in questioning the cost. Most students in the study had taken out a tuition fee loan, and while survey results confirmed that they were concerned about debt, other findings in both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the study indicated that fee-paying students had remarkably little sense of the cost or sacrifice attached paying for their education. Most significantly students found it difficult to relate to cost versus benefits because they never see or have the money to spend. Lack of concern about cost was supported by common perceptions that repayment terms are generous and that the debt incurred is unlike other debts; students showed little understanding about how universities are funded and how loans will be repaid. Overall, findings of this study suggested that students were neither using the consumer notion of value-for-money as intended by the policy agenda, nor

expressing a consumerist ethos towards their education. While value-for-money provided a readily understandable rubric for assessing the value of higher education, it was not used as a primary measure or in any specific sense involving informed choice and a sense of cost versus benefit in particular.

Evidence collected to date then gives a mixed picture about how students relate to the consumer notion of value-for-money. There are indications that students make value-for-money judgments against tangible features of their learning experience, such as contact hours and library facilities, but also use the term more generally to assess the net value of their experience such that their assessment links only imprecisely to any real monetary sacrifice. There is also evidence that while some students take a calculation-based approach to assessing value, others resist or find it challenging to frame their educational experience in transactional terms, perhaps accepting that there is a tension between transactional and non-transactional elements of their experience. Value-for-money evaluation seems to be an accessible term, but once students begin to apply it to their study, it becomes difficult to reconcile experience with cost. Significant to note is that the process of identifying 'value' against cost operates in a particular way when it comes to individual consumer value-for-money assessment where there is a host of factors that can influence satisfaction. As Woodall *et al.* (2014) stress with relation to services in general, cues that make up 'customer value' include a whole series of factors including price, indirect cost, time and effort and brand along with a 'complex web of intrinsic prompts' (p.50). While students are guided towards particular measures of value via the comparative information they are given, they will also have their own personal and social markers or orientations that will determine their

valuation and which will be subject to change across the duration of their degree study and beyond.

The Consumer of Higher Education

Review of the 'making' of the consumer highlights the extent to which the role is configured differently within numerous disciplines, its notional character ranging from empowered and free at one extreme to exploited and duped at another. The dominant traditions identified by Trentmann that have defined the consumer figure align with prevalent conceptions of the student consumer, and in this part of my study I have aimed to unsettle the opposition between the policy depiction, which is predominantly rooted in the economic and political tradition, and academic and media depictions, which are predominantly rooted in the cultural studies tradition. This unsettling has been achieved in three ways. First, study of the genealogy of the consumer challenges all three dominant traditions and leads us to conclude that the student consumer should be characterized with reference to the particular kind of commodity under review: while it might be appropriate to attach attributes such as pleasure-seeking or greedy self-interest to the consumption of luxury goods, these attributes are not properly transferable to the consumer of education. Study of consumption of other sorts of goods show us that consumers can, for instance, embrace collective, political, and ethical interests.

Second, taking a multi-disciplinary perspective both exposes the malleability of the consumer label and provides a means for transcending the various traditions in order to configure or re-configure the notional the student consumer. Bringing into scope a variety of

different faces of the student consumer without overly identifying with one face enables a broader range of features to be brought into scope. Students may well shop around at the application stage, and brand or reputation will matter to them, but they might simultaneously identify with more subversive or rebellious elements of being a consumer in terms of their political and even anti-capitalist orientation. A student consumer can have many faces. Identifying advantages and disadvantages attached to the difference portraits of the consumer figure also retains a critical dimension that has the potential to animate discourse for all stakeholders – including students – about consumer identification.

Third, anthropological and qualitative empirical studies provide insights into real consumers in contrast to the labels created for them by experts, and reinforces the claim that we can't compartmentalize our consumer selves. Such studies enable us to trace ways in which consumption becomes a means through which individuals construct personal meanings and identities that extend beyond the logic of price as reflected in the value they place on personalized and collaborative educational relationships.

CHAPTER 7: A COMPARISON BETWEEN PAYING FOR A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND A PSYCHOANALYSIS

In the previous chapter, I challenged dichotomous conceptions of the student as consumer by reviewing consumer identity from historical, cross-disciplinary, and empirical perspectives. The potential for 're-making' the consumer figure dissipates a major point of tension between pro-and anti-marketers by invoking more versatile understandings of how students might identify with the label. In this chapter, I will focus on a related dimension of the marketization debate: the issue of conceiving of higher education as a commodity.

Explicitly tying funding to student fees that are paid upfront by definition makes higher education into a commodity (as outlined in Chapter 4). University study will most likely yield a product in the form of a degree qualification, and some facilities provided by universities can be unproblematically equated with monetary measurement, such as access to library and IT resources, and student accommodation. Grades, classifications, employment status and even 'cultural capital' might all be added up as important outcomes, or products, of a higher education. However, as those who oppose marketization stress, these by no means account for the whole value of higher learning, and possibly fail to capture its most important aspects (Standish, 2005). From an oppositional perspective, framing higher education as a commodity seems to relinquish important transformational or process elements of learning that are best left open-ended because expressing them in transactional terms and outcomes prescribes or demeans them.

In Chapter 4, I explored the possibility of part-commodification as a way of reconciling elements of higher learning that should and should not fall within the sphere of money measurement. In this chapter, I will address the commodification problem by exploring the scope of commodities themselves in order to establish how far higher education as commodity might encompass processes and values attached to learning as well as its tangible products. In the spirit of provocation, I will demonstrate by analogy that a commodity can encompass the broad range of aims and values of higher learning often espoused by those who oppose marketization.

I will draw specifically from Goodman's list of devices for composing or decomposing worlds to support this part of my project, referring in particular to how worldmaking involves making distinctions or connections, and combining features into complexes (1978, pp.7-8). A common rhetoric used by opponents of the market model has been to liken higher education as commodity to other commodities in order to illustrate the limitations or even the banality of conflating the world of commodities with a hitherto or properly non-commodified world. The most basic analogies have been those that compare paying fees with making an off-the-shelf purchase or buying a pizza or fish-and-chips. The implication of these analogies is that higher education has been transformed into a similar kind of commodity that engenders the same kind of rudimentary shopping behaviours from the consumers who purchase them. Pro-marketers have also used analogy, in their case to show how paying for a higher education can be more nuanced than buying easily consumable products. One better known analogy was made by Baroness Ruth Deech back in 2012 when she compared paying tuition fees with going to a gym: 'One has to go every day and make

every effort until exhausted and even then there is no guarantee that one will become fit and lose weight'. This comparison successfully captures the viability of paying for something that puts the onus of effort onto the consumer with no assured outcome. But it only partly touches upon the multi-faceted nature of paying for a university education, which involves a substantial and personal investment over a sustained period, qualitative change or transformation often associated with the notion of 'deep' learning, and a complex set of relations with both an institution and individual members of that institution – and all with high stakes, since a successful outcome will enhance both quality of life and life chances for graduates. Accepting that we pay for a range of experiential goods and services whose value lies in intangible experiences as well as or rather than tangible products, such as holidays, funerals, medical care and even going to a restaurant, I have set myself the task of identifying and developing a new analogy – paying for a psychoanalysis – that might serve to expand rather than reduce ways of conceptualizing higher education as a commodity and which includes elements of pedagogy, indeterminacy, personal transformation and risk, all of which can be associated with process elements of higher learning. Developing this analogy constitutes worldmaking in a creative sense: by comparing two seemingly disparate worlds, I am stretching how far the use of analogy can be used to change perceptions about one world by transposing from another. I will preface my comparative exercise by setting out more specifically how paying for a psychoanalysis and paying for a higher education are different and yet share a set of similarities that make developing the analogy productive.

University study versus a psychoanalysis

With nearly 50% of young people attending university,¹⁰ it has become a routine life stage for many, a possibly unquestioned next step after school and a conventional way of progressing oneself personally, culturally and/or professionally or vocationally. Paying to go to university is sometimes described as an investment in an individual's future. With respect to payment, a student who is expected to meet the cost of his or her education can access a loan to cover the annual fee and might never part with any money as such. The fee is paid to his or her institution rather than to an individual academic tutor or professor. A psychoanalysis on the other hand is more usually undertaken by someone with psychological or psychosomatic symptoms that are presenting in ways that make everyday life difficult or intolerable; the psychoanalytic process in a classical sense assumes the existence of painful past experiences – conscious and, or unconscious – that require some form of cathartic release. Freud describes psychoanalysis as a prolonging of education for the purpose of overcoming the residues of childhood, making it a wholly restorative exercise although educative nonetheless. The sole focus of a psychoanalysis is the analysand him or herself, who most often, although not always, pays the analyst directly at regular intervals.

With regard to similarities, both enterprises represent a financial commitment that is substantial and long-term. Both involve exchanging something quantitative – money - for something qualitative in the form of a sustained process whose value cannot be determined in advance. As already mentioned, the qualitative element of both might be described as 'learning' and the benefits of that learning might only be fully evaluated over the course of a

¹⁰ According in the Augar Review (2019)

lifetime, which defines them as experience or credence goods. In the case of a psychoanalysis, depending on which method is followed, the qualitative goals might include strengthening the weak ego, or, contrastingly, loosening up the rigidity of the ego, relieving guilt, letting go of loss, and even finding happiness, all of which resist objective measurement. There is no exit qualification or other similar form of external validation, and the ultimate arbiters of success are the analysands themselves. These features of a psychoanalysis might usefully be compared with the hard to measure elements of a higher education.

Perhaps most significantly, a psychoanalysis shares with higher education the special feature of being what might be termed an anti-commodity commodity. By this, I mean that both exist as commodities in the sense that they are marketable services offered to satisfy needs or wants while at the same time a part of their function is to subvert or challenge the very kinds of wants and needs that lead individuals to invest in them in the first place. To get the most from either endeavour, initial needs and wants will shift, and perhaps radically. A psychoanalysis understood in a classical sense represents an extreme example of an anti-commodity commodity because a key part of its therapeutic function is to bring about an adjustment to reality by exposing and letting go of unrealizable desires. Fink (2011) expresses this goal as letting go of a loss: 'to stop trying to recover something that is irrecoverable' (p.23). A psychoanalysis might be deemed as anti-consumerist to the extent that it aims to disillusion analysands from purchasing fetishes that only appear to lead to happiness, or put another way, to come to terms with dissatisfaction.

An added benefit of using payment for psychoanalysis as a comparator for paying for an education is that the meanings and significance attached to money and fee payment have been explored within the psychoanalytic community itself. So named ‘first-generation’ psychoanalysts – Freud, Ernest Jones, and Sándor Ferenczi – all framed the origins of money and the ‘capitalist instinct’ to accumulate or hoard in biological terms. There is a resemblance between the rational self-interested individual of economic neoliberalism and Freud’s ‘ego’ that reflects ‘reason and common sense’, but this reason becomes irrational or even neurotic when individuals mistake or fetishize money by attributing it with intrinsic value (Bennett, 2011). Freud makes a particular connection between money and faeces in both folklore (for example the figure of the *Der Dukatensheisser*) and the individual psyche, suggesting that the contrast between the most precious substance known to man and the most worthless has led to a special identification between them. In ‘Character and Anal Eroticism’ (Gay, 1995), Freud describes a pattern among a group of patients whose childhood anal eroticism results in parsimony regarding money in adult life, and Ferenczi (1952) develops Freud’s observations further by outlining the series of developmental stages through which an interest in faeces is sublimated into an interest in money: ‘Pleasure in the intestinal content becomes enjoyment of money, which, however, after what has been seen is nothing other than odourless, dehydrated filth that has been made to shine’.

Imbued with such psychic significance, the analysand’s responses and attitudes towards paying for their treatment can usefully become an explicit part of the psychoanalytic process: as Schonbar (1986) expresses, highly charged behaviours relating to the fee ‘might facilitate the therapy by providing an immediate and sharply focussed paradigm of his

distorted interpersonal operations' (pp.33-4). Similarly, Lacanian psychoanalyst Fink (2011) observes that 'the analysand's financial situation always has an impact on the analysis – on its dynamic and course – and enters into the analysand's libidinal economy' p.28).¹¹ And it should be remembered that fee payment infiltrates the psychoanalytic relationship from the perspective of both the analysand, in the form of transference – where the analysand projects thoughts, feelings and behaviours from a previous relationship onto the analyst – and the analyst, in the form of countertransference – where the analyst projects thoughts, feelings and behaviours onto the analysand. There is an onus, and some would claim a reluctance on the part of analysts themselves to reflect on their own attitudes and behaviours relating to charging a fee. In a letter to a colleague Freud (1899) himself wrote 'My mood also depends very strongly on my earnings. Money is laughing gas to me' (cited in Bennett 2011, p.8). Freud was also the first to write formally about the procedural arrangements regarding fee payment in 'On Beginning the Treatment', a text in which he sets out a series of rules or recommendations aimed at less experienced practising psychoanalysts. Freud suggests that analysts should point out to their patients that money matters are treated in civilized society 'with the same inconsistency, prudishness and hypocrisy' as sexual matters, and that they should counter this attitude by treating money with a 'matter-of-fact frankness' to show they have 'cast off false shame on these topics' (cited in Gay 1995, p.369).

The field of psychoanalysis, then, provides material for reflecting on the meanings that both the profession and those who use its services attach to money and monetary transactions.

¹¹ The notion of 'libidinal economy' used by Freud refers to the idea that we exchange and accumulate desires, fears and fantasies. See Bennett (2016)

Nobus refers to these meanings as a 'psychoanalysis economy', and I will explore this economy to determine how the commodity-challenging or commodity-stretching features of paying for an analysis might apply to paying for a higher education. These will be expressed as a series of provocations with the aim of enriching how we might think about paying for the commodity of a higher education.

Statement 1: the trajectory of a psychoanalysis is unpredictable and not within the gift of the analyst (Freud, 1913, in Gay, 1995)

Conventional understandings of markets make consumer information central: markets only function when consumers have choice, and information about products and services must be available to enable them to make reasoned choices. However, it isn't possible to give specific information about a psychoanalysis in advance. In 'On Beginning the Treatment' Freud prefaces his recommendations for practising analysts with an overall acknowledgement that there can be no hard and fast rules about the procedures that analysts follow, stating that the 'extraordinary diversity of the psychical constellations concerned, the plasticity of all mental processes and the wealth of determining factors oppose any mechanization of the technique'. Sometimes a course of action that follows the rule may prove ineffective and *vice versa*. In essence, prescriptions cannot be made when dealing with matters of the psyche and mental processes, and the procedure that Freud sets out for analysts – based on his own experience – merely aims to be 'effective on the average' (Gay, 1995, p.364).

Defending against the understandable wish that patients have to limit their expenditure by negotiating the shortest possible course of treatment, Freud stresses the unpredictable character of psychoanalysis which the analyst can oversee but not prescribe:

The analyst is certainly able to do a great deal, but he cannot determine beforehand exactly what results he will effect. He sets in motion a process, that of the resolving of existing repressions. He can supervise the process, further it, remove obstacles in its way, and he can undoubtedly vitiate much of it. But on the whole, once begun, it goes its own way and does not allow either the direction it takes or the order in which it picks up its points to be prescribed for it. (Gay, 1995, p.368-9)

On a similar tack, Fink (2011) uses Lacanian terminology to stress that analysands themselves do not and should not know what they are signing up for at the beginning of the psychoanalytic process. On the premise that human development is rooted in a 'fundamental loss' early in life and that psychoanalysis itself involves loss in the form of relinquishing symptoms that mask even deeper loss, the analysand is going to have to give up 'satisfaction or joy (*jouissance*) in their own suffering':

few psychoanalysts tell their prospective analysands that they are going to have to give up what is currently their greatest *jouissance* in life and find something else. For although they may experience their loss as anything but enjoyable, their attachment to ... fixation ... constitutes a symptom, a symptom that secretly makes good a loss. All too simplistically stated, the symptom is a way of deriving satisfaction from misery relating to loss, and it is that satisfaction in misery or self-pity that must be given up in the course of analysis. (p.23)

Put another way, 'few analysts are so bold or foolhardy as to announce at the outset that in the course of the coming work, the analysand will undergo castration' and any who do, 'will likely find that their waiting rooms quickly empty out unless they end up with a clientele of exclusively masochistic patients' (p.23).

Fink also develops links made by Lacan between Pascal's observations that gamblers must expect to lose at least as much as they put in and that life itself is a gamble, and analysts' claims that 'we must reckon from the outset with the existence of an inevitable, structural loss of whatever we stake in life'. Among several parallels made between economic risk-taking and continuous human endeavours to recover something that was priceless to us, he

highlights the propensity of economic and political experts to mask the risk element of speculating in markets with the more conservative notion of 'investing' (p.20).

Overall, we can understand from these readings that paying for a psychoanalysis requires levels of unpredictability in terms of trajectory, and that there can be no guarantee of success. There is an inevitable element of risk in setting out on the psychoanalytic journey and it is impossible for the analysand or the analyst to prescribe the outcome in advance. If we apply these same ideas to paying for a higher education:

1. Students can't know what they are signing up for. The kind of information that can be made available to them such as contact hours and assessment types and employment after graduation will not communicate the most important aspects of the experience to follow. The trend towards transparency and highly prescriptive curricula broken down into programme and module learning outcomes should not be conceived as representing the most significant parts of the educational transaction.
2. Education is a process that is unpredictable at its best. Applying Freud's notion of the 'plasticity of all mental processes' to education means that each student will have an individual experience. Flexible learning represents more than modes of study. It involves a responsiveness to individual learning trajectories.
3. The role of the teacher is to supervise rather than prescribe the learning pathway. Anyone who teaches knows that students accept their offerings variously. The teacher 'can supervise the process, further it, remove obstacles in its way' but cannot dictate the direction and order of student learning.

4. Higher education has increasingly been framed by politicians and students themselves as an 'investment' in their future. Any element of risk is disguised by use of the notion of investing. Individuals should more fully embrace the element of risk in any venture.
5. Higher education shares a paradox with psychoanalysis in that if students get what they expect, they will not have had a transformative education. The elements that are predictable are not the most important or educationally significant.

Statement 2: analysands must pay to do most of the work themselves in order to achieve good results (Fink, 2007 & 2011; Nobus, 2013)

With many service goods, payment is made on the basis that the service provider does all the work, although the consumer may undertake initial work in choosing whose services to engage (Gabriel and Lang, 2015, Chapter 11). In contrast, Fink and Nobus both argue that a successful psychoanalysis requires the analysand to do most of the work. Fink makes a comparison between other forms of psychotherapy 'where the therapist works by providing knowledge and advice' and psychoanalysis which 'emphasises the work involved on the analysand's part'. In effect, rather than paying the analyst for their work, analysands are made to pay 'for the privilege of working' and '[n]ot only is their labour unpaid, but they are obliged to pay someone who often seems to them not to be working nearly as hard as they are' (2011, p.31). This is justified because the primary task of the analyst is setting the analysand to work, either consciously or unconsciously, so that she begins to make associations and interpretations herself, a process which is not confined to the sessions themselves but includes work done in the time between sessions. Rather than being tied to

‘some specific number of minutes that elapse while they are in each other’s presence’ the fee is paid for the analytic work that the analyst gets the analysand to on the basis that the ‘associations and interpretations that occur to the analysand herself are generally far more convincing to her than those made by the analyst’ (Fink 2007, p.49 & p.59). Nobus (2013) makes the same sort of claims with reference to ‘analytic value’, which is ‘more fundamentally conditioned by the analysand’s rather than the analyst’s labour’. As well as being unpaid, the analysand sometimes has to cover the cost by getting another job himself. Nobus goes so far as to describe the analysand as ‘more or less self-employed’ in the sense that the analytic work is primarily of use to the person who actually performs it. She cannot sell her work to the analyst, given that she is or maybe the sole benefactor of that labour (pp.165-166).

This reference to who benefits from analytic labour is important because it shows that psychoanalysis does not fit a straightforward model of money paid for goods or services received. Fink suggests that the use-value of the work done by analysands is primarily to themselves, but adds with reference to Winnicott that it is also useful to the analyst who relies on the analysands’ work to be trained and who also uses their discoveries in other cases (2007, p.31). Winnicott acknowledges this in his dedication in *Playing and Reality* (1971) which reads ‘To my patients who have paid to teach me’.

There is a clear set of parallels between these observations about psychoanalysis and higher education. An objection to the commodification of higher education has been that students will become passive recipients of learning rather than actively engaged and this will be

detrimental to their learning. However, psychoanalysis provides a strong example of a commodity that requires the purchaser to do the work. The implications for higher education include:

1. Payment might best be linked to the provision of a learning environment that gets students to do the work, which was the purpose of the aforementioned gym analogy. In the case of the student and the analysand, the stimulation to work should be both within contact time and between. Fees should not be called 'tuition fees' on this account. Like the analyst, the role of academic teachers is to motivate students to do the work. This approach reflects the thrust of dominant pedagogical models of active learning based on constructivist theories of learning that insist on student engagement rather than transmission. The challenge is to communicate to students that this approach still requires the academic expertise of their teachers, and that their universities are not simply taking their money and leaving them to teach themselves. Within a social constructivist model, an important idea to convey is how the teacher scaffolds learning.
2. Also relevant is the question of who benefits the most from the labour. The student is portrayed in more recent policy statements as the key benefactor, and it would seem that increasing the numbers of individuals with a university education does not benefit the larger economy directly (Wolf, 2002). But that isn't the whole story: exchange between students and their teachers represents a particular form of interaction, which Georg Simmel's observations on exchange help to illuminate. In the first instance, Simmel (2004) argues that even seemingly one-sided activity can be

based on reciprocity, and he gives teaching as just one example of this. The teacher, like the orator and journalist 'feels the decisive and determining reaction of the apparently passive mass' (p.86). Indeed, he argues, every interaction has to be regarded as exchange: 'every conversation, every affection (even if it is rejected), every game, every glance at another person' (p.86). However, Simmel also stresses, we can differentiate between kinds of exchange. Economic exchange – whether it is of objects of labour or labour power invested in objects – always signifies a sacrifice of an otherwise useful good. By contrast when we 'exchange love for love, we don't have any other use for its inner energy' and we don't sacrifice any good. Similarly, 'when we share our intellectual resources in a discussion, they are not thereby reduced'. In cases such as these 'the increase of value does not involve a balancing of gain and loss; either the contribution of each party lies beyond this antithesis, or it is already a gain to be able to make it, and we accept the response as a gift which is made independently of our offering' (pp.86-87). It follows from this that when a student pays for their higher education they are making an economic exchange that involves sacrifice, but within that experience, they engage in a series of exchanges that don't involve sacrifice. When students and their teachers engage in a seminar discussion, everyone can gain. In this sub-context, it is perfectly possible for students and academics to be conceived as co-producers in learning.

Statement 3: progress or success is not measured in labour-time; results are not proportional to the amount of time either party puts in (Fink, 2011; Nobus, 2013)

Psychoanalysis functions in the marketplace in which it competes with other psychotherapies whose services are conventionally charged by the amount of time spent

with the therapist, usually expressed as an hourly rate. The issue of time and fees has been explored within the psychoanalytic community with reference to both the length of individual sessions and the duration of the treatment as a whole (Freud, 1913, in Gay 1995; Lacan, 1992). Both Freud, and Lacan and followers observe that there is a timeless quality to the psychoanalytic process that makes its length and progress difficult to predict, but they respond in different ways when it comes to assessing the relationship between time, cost, and success.

Freud states that 'the question as to the probable duration of treatment is almost unanswerable' but a psychoanalysis is never quick because of the character of the work: it is 'always a matter of long periods of time' and cannot be rushed because of the 'slowness with which deep-going changes in the mind are accomplished — in the last resort, no doubt, the 'timelessness' of our unconscious processes'. He considers it a duty to explain this to patients before they begin treatment, stating it is 'altogether more honourable, and also more expedient, to draw his attention — without trying to frighten him off, but at the very beginning — to the difficulties and sacrifices which analytic treatment involves, and in this way to deprive him of any right to say later on that he has been inveigled into a treatment whose extent and implications he did not realise' (Gay, 1995, p.368).

Freud regrets the tendency to underestimate the magnitude of the psychoanalytic work and likens it to other types of work that require more rather than less time:

No one would expect a man to lift a heavy table with two fingers as if it were a light stool, or to build a large house in the time it would take to put up a wooden hut, but

as soon as it becomes a question of neuroses - which do not seem so far to have found a proper place in human thought - even intelligent people forget that a necessary proportion must be observed between time, work and success. (Gay, 1995, p.368)

Overall, Freud defends the cost of therapy by expounding its benefits. While psychoanalysis might be expensive, its benefits outweigh the cost of the alternatives:

When we add up the unceasing costs of nursing-homes and medical treatment and contrast them with the increase of efficiency and earning capacity which results from a successfully completed analysis, we are entitled to say that the patients have made a good bargain. Nothing in life is so expensive as illness - and stupidity (Gay, 1995, p.371)

When it comes to individual sessions, Freud advocates charging by the hour for the sake of both the analyst and the analytic process. With regard to 'arrangements about *time* and *money*' he claims to 'adhere strictly to the principle of leasing a definite hour. Each patient is allowed a particular hour of my available working day; it belongs to him and he is liable to pay for it, even if he does not make use of it'. Moreover, the price at which Freud values this time is expensive because he has expertise in the form of 'methods of treatment which can be of use'. Not only can the analyst not afford to lose the income of missed appointments but, Freud asserts, no other arrangement is possible because non-attendances become more frequent if tolerated, and tend to occur when the psychoanalytic work is at its most formative (Gay, 1995, p.366).

Relations between payment, time, effort and success in relation to the timeless quality of psychoanalytic work are handled differently by Lacanian psychoanalysts. For Fink 'a certain number of hours of effort does not automatically lead to productive results' when 'unconscious wishes are timeless' and 'epiphanies and changes sometimes occur in a split second' (p.30). And Nobus (2013) makes the same point with reference 'analytic value',

which cannot be measured by length of time because it is determined by the quality of intervention rather than the volume (p.165).

Fink (2007) argues that the fixed-length session recommended by Freud and others gives analysands the wrong impression that psychoanalysis is like other services they might pay for where they can be sure of what they are getting for their money. He recommends that it is more appropriate to think about paying for a psychoanalysis in terms of paying for a job, regardless of how long that job takes, and that this is quite standard in numerous other practices where something might take a longer or shorter time (pp.58-59). From the analysand's perspective, imposing a 'strict temporal regularity upon the process, with a pre-agreed frequency and schedule of consultations and fixed duration for each session' might seem like good value-for-money but can be counter-productive (Nobus, 2013, p.164).

Analysands often 'pad' sessions with everyday detail before getting to the most important content when they know they have a certain time-slot to fill in order to get their money's worth. (Fink, 2007, p.71). Moreover, hard work does not necessarily yield the best results:

Consciously working hard at something in analysis does not mean you necessarily achieve results. Obsessives work hard so they can feel they are putting in their time and getting their money's worth, but this often impedes the kind of non-goal-directed associative work psychoanalysis requires. Just as time is not money in psychoanalysis, work does not equate with results' (Fink, 2011, p.28).

Controversially, Lacan challenged the general equation made between money and time by jettisoning the fixed-length session in favour of the variable-length session – or scolding – which refers to when the analyst puts an abrupt end to a session. The variable length session 'emphasizes the work accomplished in a session, not its duration' and in theory could involve either lengthening or shortening a session from what is considered to be standard (Fink,

2011, p.31). For Lacan, scansion meant ending the session on the most striking note, that is when the analysand articulates the most striking statement or question of the session, which often can be understood in several ways so that the analysand is left pondering over possible meanings: 'Not only does one remember what one heard (oneself say) last, but an unfinished task often occupies the mind more than a finished one ... A polyvalent, ambiguous, or enigmatic statement is often far more useful in making the analysis progress than an unequivocal, crystal-clear statement' (Fink, 2007, pp.48-49). Or as Nobus (2013) expresses:

In remaining silent throughout or offering the analysand but a small discursive punctuation, more may be accomplished than through a long, laborious exposition of the latent, unconscious significance of the analysand's associations. And in throwing the analysand off balance with a sudden, unexpected intervention such as the cutting of the session mid-sentence or after a very short period of time, the analyst may achieve more than by adhering to a standard, formal set of rules and regulations. (p.165)

Decoupling time and payment in this way of course raises questions about exploitation.

Nobus (2013) reports on anecdotal claims that at the end of his life, Lacan was seeing approximately ten patients per hour using this technique, with one patient relating how his variable-length sessions with Lacan became shorter and shorter over time: 'I could hardly say more than three or four words. Sometimes the session was finished before I had even opened my mouth by an 'until tomorrow,' which didn't leave me with any choice' (p.163). He also observes how in practice the fee seems to relate to the 'presumed prestige of the person offering it ... the patient does not just pay for his analysis; he also pays for his analyst, and the more so as the analyst is more notable, more renowned, and more experienced' (p.181).

These considerations about the relation between payment, time, effort and success transfer to higher education in the following ways:

1. Freud recommends vigilance about communicating with prospective patients the demanding nature of psychoanalysis. This raises the question of what information should be communicated to students at the beginning of their studies, and the extent to which they should be informed about the challenges and unpredictability as well as the benefits of studying.
2. Value is often assessed in terms of allocated contact hours. Students might be promised at least a quota of the most expert tuition for their money in the form of classes with successful researchers rather than novice academics or PhD students, which is not dissimilar to paying good money to see an esteemed psychoanalyst. Yet, if the mental processes of learning are anything like psychic processes, it would be a mistake to measure value primarily in terms of hours spent with lecturers and tutors. Quality of interaction should overshadow duration of interaction, and that interaction should be designed to stimulate further learning beyond the class rather than provide answers. The hour-long lecture might be a source of intense learning for a student, but it might also become a lazy routine for both lecturer and students with both parties 'padding' out the session. Lecturers for example might produce neat handouts that appear to be giving good value, and students might produce a lot of notes that make it seem as if they are working hard. Students seem to be getting something quantifiable for their money, but might learn more effectively from less

contact time and more of the kind of work that leaves questions unresolved so they do the work, making their own associations.

3. In higher education, learning as well as tuition is nominally equated with time.

Learning credits are linked to notional learning hours, with one academic credit being linked to ten hours of learning. Students might mistakenly equate hard work alone with success. Moreover, overly goal-directed approaches to learning might be counter-productive because they fail to recognize the non-goal-directed associative work that is required. Simple equations between time, money and success suggest possibilities for truncating degrees into ever shorter time periods without understanding the complexity and depth of mental processes, in particular the 'slowness with which deep-going changes in the mind are accomplished'.

4. Decoupling time and payment is risky because it raises the question of what is being paid for and what students get for their money, although these are already decoupled to an extent by value placed on reputational factors leading a student to settle for less time from a renowned academic at a prestigious university than at a less prestigious university. Equally, explicitly decoupling effort and success is risky because both students and lecturers might not be the best judges of what makes up quality learning or teaching.

Statement 4: a good analyst resists slipping into roles that the analysand wishes them to fulfil but will be counter-productive (Nobus, 2013)

If the aim of psychoanalysis is to surface unconscious meanings, the role of the analyst is to facilitate the process and not get in the way. This requires the analyst to be vigilant, as Lacan

implies when he says, 'The patient demands and the analyst responds. But the analyst's response must be disciplined so as not to let deeply unconscious meaning be 'adulterated' by the demand' (1992, p.2).

Nobus (2013) explores some of the ways in which the analyst must be disciplined, which contrasts with conceptions of how other health professionals might be understood to provide a service. Significantly, he claims, an analysand is not paying for 'specialist care that will allow her to regain her mental health, at least not in the traditional sense of paying for a special treatment plan that has been purposively designed to alleviate the symptoms and improve the patient's overall sense of well-being'. The analyst is also unlike a life coach, who gives 'professional and personal advice' and 'individually tailored support and guidance'. On the contrary, the psychoanalyst 'could not be further removed from the position of "skilled helper", less because he lacks clinical skills, but primarily because he deliberately steers away from offering the patient aid, counsel, and assistance' (pp.168-170).

Nobus points out that the analyst is 'not even supposed to be animated by a desire to heal' and explains why this is so with reference to both Freud and Lacan (p.169). Freud was dismissive of the idea that psychoanalysts should be motivated by the desire to cure others. In 1909 he wrote to Carl Jung, 'I often appease my conscious mind by saying to myself: Just give up wanting to cure; learn and make money, those are the most plausible conscious aims'. Several years later in 'Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psychoanalysis' he states 'Under present day conditions the feeling ... that is most dangerous to a psychoanalyst is the therapeutic ambition to achieve by this novel and much disputed method something that will produce a convincing effect on other people'. And later again, in a paper on transference-love, he claims 'human society has no more use for the *furor sanandi* [the

rage to cure] than for any other fanaticism.’ Lacan adopted the same position in ‘Variations of the Standard Treatment’ where he asserts, ‘While he thus views cure as an added benefit of psychoanalytic treatment, he is wary of any misuse of the desire to cure’ (p.169).

It is evident that the discipline required from analysts is to refrain from allowing their own desires to obscure the analytic process. Turning this around, it is appropriate to ask what exactly an analysand *is* paying their analyst to do. Expressed more specifically, what does the analyst sacrifice in return for payment? One possibility is that the analysand pays for ‘analyst’s interpretations, his punctuations, citations, articulations, and oracles, in short his precious words, no matter how sparse they may be’. This might extend to the value of what the analyst leaves unsaid: ‘the analyst’s golden silence, for the quiet acquiescence of his existence as an attentive listener, or *mutatis mutandis* for the right to remain silent himself when words escape, or when speech cannot do justice to the meaning of the experience’. The analysand might be paying for the ‘presence’ of the analyst, not as passive presence but as someone who constantly recreates ‘an open depository where the analysand can store his trials and tribulations without running the risk of them being rejected’. This makes it acceptable to pay for the ‘special privilege of being listened to and heard in a non-judgmental way’ (Nobus pp.170- 171).

Fink (2011) takes a similar perspective when he proposes that in psychoanalysis ‘we pay to talk ... for the opportunity to talk to ourselves’ and most importantly to ‘talk however we feel like talking’. Unlike other interlocutors in our lives, analysts accept our ‘projections, interpellations and transferences’ and are willing to ‘play a part’ or indeed as many parts as we project onto them:

They accept the projections and try not to take them personally, which is not always easy. They get paid to be actors, to play all the roles in our daytime and night-time dramas. We pay so that we can assign the analyst to whatever role we want, knowing that the analyst will accept to serve as a placeholder. The analyst comes to occupy the place of the cause of our desire, Lacan says, and we use and abuse that cause as it seduces us or drives us to distraction. (p.32)

One of the most common types of transference involves the analysand falling in love with their analyst, and Nobus claims that neutralizing the connotation of love that the patient may project onto the analyst's receptive presence is 'hugely expensive':

...although the analysand may love his analyst, he may not expect this love to be reciprocated. The analyst may always be there for her patients, but this presence is not an act of love. Regardless as to the quality of the 'analytic service' that is being provided by the analyst, the analysand should not assume that it is delivered with love. (p.172)

Payment serves a 'technical purpose' by 'evacuating the meaning of love' that could be attributed to the analyst's presence. But it also prevents the analysand from feeling they 'owe' something to the analyst, that they are 'indebted' or should be 'deeply grateful' which might be detrimental to the analytical process (p.173). This works in the same way as paying a prostitute – it stops the 'service user' from thinking that the prostitute is having sex out of love or from thinking they should give anything in return beyond payment (p.174). Fink makes the same point when he says that 'Payment means they are not doing it out of charity, because they love us, or because they think we are good-looking or charming or might turn out to be useful to them in some way. Payment means they are doing it because it is their job to do so' (2011, p.32).

The analysand pays in money. Nobus suggests that the analysand might be asked to pay a little more than they can afford in order to prevent them from relating to analysis as an 'object of consumption. This 'forces him to commit himself to it, in a way that is fully

engaged' and defines the analysand as someone who is 'dedicated and devoted ... Being found willing to pay more for something than one can actually afford must indicate that one loves it very much, so much that one is prepared to go the extra financial mile' (p.176).

However, money paid is not measurable against satisfaction. In the market economy, providers are generally keen to guarantee customer satisfaction and in many cases offer a money-back guarantee. This is not the case in the psychoanalytic economy where there is no reimbursement if the analysand is not completely satisfied with the treatment outcome. On the contrary:

In a Lacanian framework, it is a certain loss of enjoyment ("jouissance") and a certain reduction in happiness, rather than an enhancement of satisfaction, that is aimed for ... *less* rather than *more* satisfaction is what she has been paying for! Paradoxically, only the analysand who comes of this analysis with a sense of complete satisfaction would technically be entitled to a refund...' (Nobus, 2013, p.167)

In this respect Nobus claims 'Psychoanalysis is worse than capitalism: the analysand pays in order to work and is not even supposed to enjoy what he gets out of it'. They pay for something that leaves them feeling 'less satisfied than before' (p.167).

From the analyst's perspective, Lacan (1992) claims:

the analyst has to pay something if he is to play his role. He pays in words, in his interpretations. He pays with his person to the extent that through the transference he is literally dispossessed. The whole current development of analysis involves the misrecognition of the analyst, but whatever he thinks of that and whatever panic reaction the analyst engages in through the 'counter-transference' he has no choice but to go through it. He's not the only one there with the person to whom he has made a commitment. Finally, he has to pay with a judgment on his action. That's the minimum demanded. Analysis is a judgment. (p.357-358)

These judgments are made, even though the analyst is 'fully aware that he cannot know what he is doing in psychoanalysis. Part of this action remains hidden even to him' (p.358)¹².

Numerous parallels can be drawn with higher education:

1. If the role of the lecturer is to facilitate learning, this role might involve having the resolve to avoid giving students what they think they want. Student transference onto their teachers is a well-recognized phenomenon (as is lecturer transference onto students). If we accept, as most higher education theorists argue, that teaching is about enabling students to learn rather than transmitting knowledge, lecturers must learn how to facilitate the relational aspect of the student-teacher relation. Robertson (1999) suggests that developing as a teacher leads to the realization that teaching is facilitating student learning, and that a helping relationship with learners is a 'complex, dynamic, intersubjective system to promote the student's learning' in which the subjective experience of both teacher and student is important (p.165).

Transference is a common factor in such relationships, and he gives recommendations on how to manage it based on an extensive literature review. Recommendations, among others, include, readiness to accept the unconsciousness at work in oneself and students, exercising active awareness, setting and maintaining clear boundaries, anticipating the kind of transference that one's stance tends to provoke, and cultivating and switching to different personae to benefit student learning (pp.161-165). Working with transference puts the learning relationship before giving students what they think they want.

¹² Also see Lacan's observations about payment in Chapter 1.

2. Just as it is useful to ask: what is the student paying for from their lecturer? Student feedback often indicates that students most appreciate the teacher who goes over and above their duty and who is always there for them. But this might not be the best reflection of what students need and it might lead to unfairly giving some students more attention than others.
3. The notion of 'satisfaction' is problematic in higher learning just as it is for psychoanalysis. Mary Beard (2012) is just one of many academics who object to the idea that students should be satisfied. She opposes the National Student Survey for giving the wrong message to students by treating them as consumers and asking them if they are satisfied:

Who after all wants to see their kids go off to university, at great expense, for a diet of dis-satisfaction? But from where I sit, dissatisfaction and discomfort have their own important role to play in a good university education. We're aiming to push our students to think differently, to move out of their intellectual comfort zone, to read and discuss texts that are almost too hard for them to manage. It is, and it's meant to be destabilizing.

In higher education, a way has to be found of balancing out the elements that might reasonably be attached to 'satisfaction' criteria to and the elements that should not be subjected to that measure. Evidence suggests that it should not be assumed that students don't want to be challenged because many say that they do.

Statement 5: a price is paid for something incalculable that may only be evaluated a long time after completion (Nobus 2013)

The process of commodification brings objects into the money measure, and relating objects to money changes those objects in some way (Simmel, 2004, p.90). Commodities are

brought into a scale of value that makes them commensurable with all other objects via the universal commodity of money. Yet, psychoanalysis as commodity does not sit easily within such a scale of value. Nobus (2013) goes so far as to claim, 'when it comes to psychoanalysis it is impossible to place the operation on a scale of value whereby it would enter into a monetary calculus' (p.181). He recognizes that other commodities share this characteristic but that psychoanalysis is an extreme example:

The same problem, which is commonly designated as the issue of commensuration, also applies to other commodified objects, such as body parts, works of art, and intellectual property, but in the case of psychoanalytic treatment, which does not involve the procurement of material good and in which the exact nature of the service remains opaque, it would seem particularly acute. (p.181)

Nobus also claims that the 'value of the psychoanalyst's presence is inestimable, in the sense that its benefits cannot be measured by any reliable standards, so that the costs associated with it will be equally incalculable or may only be evaluated in terms of their fairness retrospectively, long after the treatment has finished' (p.182). Again, psychoanalysis stands out as a commodity whose value is especially hard to assess.

On the lack of reliable standards, following an intimation from Lacan, Nobus proposes that since the fee is part of the analytic process, the analyst should be responsible for establishing the 'psychoanalytic economy' case by case and should be held accountable for the fees s/he charges and able to explain how a certain fee is appropriate in each and every individual case.

These ideas resonate with higher education in the following ways:

1. Higher education shares with psychoanalysis the feature of being evaluated over a long time. but for individuals the value attached to a university degree might be subject to appraisal over a lifetime.
2. The value of a higher education is incalculable. It is possible to measure the costs and benefits of higher learning by measuring outcomes such as graduate income and other factors such as use of health services and contributions to the local community, but its value can't be calculated at the level of the individual.

The use of the analogy

Overall, the purpose of developing the analogy between paying for a psychoanalysis and a higher education has been to show the extent to which commodification might be stretched to include a wide range of objects and services. By comparing higher education with an extreme example of a commodity that is indeterminate and whose value defies calculation, I have tried to open out ways in which we can begin to productively conceive of its commodification as a type of service that is both unique and complex. For example, the temporalities that govern deep learning cannot be measured in the labour time of either the teacher or learner. And while being drawn into a market economy, higher education contains features that are non-instrumental and resistant to valuation, that is, the point at which we pin values onto higher learning is the point at which we undermine its process. Higher learning might even subvert the economic model through which it is governed and administrated.

This is perhaps not so surprising, since a price can be attached to just about anything, as Marx himself pointed out when portraying the evolution of monetary value. While Marx argues that socially necessary labour-time is the objective measure for calculating value and that price is the expression in money of the magnitude of value within a commodity, he also progresses to show how quantitative and qualitative incongruities are inherent in the price-form. The process of transforming magnitude of value into a price opens up a discrepancy between them. A product that expresses a fixed amount of socially necessary labour-time may be sold for a greater or lesser price depending on market circumstances. This creates a quantitative incongruity that Marx argues is a strength rather than a defect of the money-form because it services modes of production that work with crude averages. The same discrepancy between magnitude and value also leads to qualitative contradiction because it is perfectly possible for price to stop representing value altogether:

Things which in and for themselves are not commodities, things like conscience, honour, etc, can be offered for sale by their holders, and thus acquire the form of commodities through their price. Hence a thing can, formally speaking have a price without having a value. The expression of price is in this case imaginary.

(1990, p.151)

If price is 'imaginary' in this way so too are the measures of value-for-money promoted to persuade students that they are receiving a good deal for their sacrifice. It is more a matter of persuasion than objective measure.

A by-product of developing my analogy is that psychoanalysis provides particular ways of conceiving of individuals and their engagement in economic activity that both contrasts and intersects with the self-interested and rational individual of mainstream economic theory.

The 'ego' that forms one aspect of the psyche might be described as rationally self-interested. As Bennett points out, '[l]ike neoclassical economics, Freudianism equates reason with self-interest or egotism', but if love of money is carried to excess – as in Marx's money fetishism – and mistaken as intrinsically valuable, it 'becomes irrational and hence neurotic' (2011, pp.14-15). Moreover, Bennett explores how monetary models and metaphors have been used to shape the history of sexuality and psychology. The self has been construed as an 'economy of vital energy or desire' and sexual energy and secretions have been likened to money that can be 'frugally spent, prudently saved, productively invested or pleasurably wasted' (Bennett, 2016, p.7).

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

My project began with the aim of finding ways to reconcile conflicting views on the marketization of higher education based on the assumption that marketization is here to stay. This has been achieved by means of a series of short studies, each tackling the debate from a different angle, that propose alternative ways of conceptualizing the blend of markets and higher learning. In essence, I have made a systematic investigation of Barnett's undeveloped claim that there is no necessary reason as to why markets should impair approaches to teaching and learning (2011, p.46). I have also provided new material that addresses John and Fanghanel's (2016) intentions in *Dimensions of Marketisation of Higher Education* to re-balance the relationship between the market and educational dimensions of higher education.

From a review of selected literature on the topic, major points of contention between pro- and anti-market views were identified as: the extent to which values associated with markets support or appropriate educational values linked to teaching and learning; the economic focus of policy and whether it provides a sustainable framework for higher education which can embrace other values, or whether it constrains higher learning to instrumental ends for both students and the economy more generally; how far the market model supports constructive accountability between universities and their students or imposes a consumer and commodity relation that undermines important aspects of pedagogic relations such as trust and challenge; and the impact of students conceived as consumers on attitudes and behaviours related to their learning and their teachers.

These points of tension have been addressed by using the 'worldmaking' metaphor as a device for reviewing and revising the distinctive world views that characterize the marketization debate. Using Goodman's classification, I have explored how these worlds have been composed and suggested some ways in which they might be re-composed. The philosophical approaches established first by Foucault and then by Hacking have also provided useful tools for this exercise in re-composition. They have prompted a review of markets and morals based on the thought of Charles Cooley and Adam Smith, whose works pre-date contemporary practices that tend to split economics and social or ethical enquiry, and supported a historical appraisal of the multiple traditions that both challenge and account for current conceptions of the consumer figure attributed to students as consumers. The worldmaking metaphor has also provided a useful way for considering 'weighting' or 'emphasis' within academic disciplines or even sub-disciplines, and lends support for taking a transdisciplinary approach to generate new perspectives as demonstrated by Gabriel and Lang's portraits of the consumer. In my project, addressing binary beliefs about marketization has involved spanning disciplinary boundaries to look at marketization from economic, legal, cultural, social, moral, and political perspectives.

In Chapter 4, I explored the limits of monetary value and thereby markets to determine what range of things can and should be included within the monetary sphere and with what consequences. I proposed ways of conceptualizing commodities so that monetary and non-monetary aspects can work together. Both Cooley (1918) and Radin (2001) promote pluralist accounts of valuation that transcend binary positions between commodification and non-

commodification and avoid limiting monetary value to a distinctive market sphere that is subjected to the kinds of morality-free ideals outlined by Anderson (1993). Cooley conceives of values as motives to action in any given situation, in which individuals attribute multiple values to the same object. Understood this way, monetary valuation co-exists with other sorts of valuation and commensurability is achieved in a psychical, rather than a numerical sense. Within his scheme, excluding monetary valuation would undermine the potential for properly holistic valuation. Cooley also argues that the limits put on the scope of monetary valuation are rooted in institutional failings, and that there is nothing other than history and vested interest to prevent increasing the scope of monetary value to encompass higher sorts of values for the betterment of society. On this view, a marketized higher education system could be directed towards a progressive social agenda. Building on a different set of arguments underpinned by a conceptions of personhood that blurs the boundaries between self and world, or subject and object, Radin also recommends investing markets with non-market values. Challenging the binary opposition between complete commodification and complete non-commodification, she suggests that many commodities sit somewhere in between as partly commodified. On Radin's recommendation, higher education should be considered as a particular case of an incomplete or contested commodity, and debate about the merits or drawbacks of this could be focussed more productively on where market and non-market understandings can co-exist. The public and private debate becomes a diversion. It should also be expected that individuals within universities themselves will have 'non-crystallized' or 'conflicted' understandings of the market and non-market elements of their experience. Recognizing that teaching and learning both has a price and is priceless provides a more mature starting place for critical reflection.

The focus of Chapter 5 was the narrow scope of the economic model that underpins recent higher education policy based on human capital theory. Here, I argued that deficits of the marketization model in which higher learning is portrayed as instrumental to economic ends rests with the modelling employed and its associated rhetoric rather than with markets themselves. A policy vision expressed in fully utilitarian terms only partly captures the ambitions of higher learning, which should appeal to both moral and pecuniary motives. Designed for different purposes, Smith and Wilson's 'humanomics' and Sen's capability theory both draw from the moral theory of Adam Smith to capture a more comprehensive rubric for decision-making. Smith and Wilson's model accounts for altruistic rather than purely self-interested behaviour, and Sen's capability model combines agency and achievement to achieve a conception of well-being that aligns better with the developmental aspect of higher learning. Attributing to individuals a positive freedom to choose and to influence social change – possibly at the expense of their own well-being – creates a more credible and richly autonomous picture of the higher education student than the negative freedom to choose from a limited range university options. Whereas Max-U rests on the assumption that individuals remain the same, capability theory embraces possibilities for individual development and different futures and ascribes a role to educators to teach in ways that enable good choice-making.

In Chapter 6, I explored conflicting conceptualizations of the consumer and also stressed the importance of studies into real individuals who probably only ever partly identify themselves with the label. I identified two theoretical approaches that transcend the contrasting

portraits that are most often communicated by pro- and anti-marketers. In tracing the historical origins of the consumer figure, Trentmann identifies core traditions that demonstrate both why different parties within the marketization debate communicate at cross-purposes and how their binary positions might be relaxed. Both Trentmann and Gabriel and Lang reject 'one-dimensional' understandings of the consumer and provide more comprehensive depictions that might be applied to the particular case of the consumer of higher education and which include the possibility for collective rather than individualistic identification. Finally, the importance of studying the consumer attitudes and behaviours of real individuals is stressed in order to mitigate against prescriptive formulations. Studies from the field of anthropology suggest that individuals don't compartmentalise their consumer-selves and that consumption is intimately tied to meaning-making with the potential to decommodify commodities and undermine capitalism. Empirical studies reveal the extent to which students are adopting the consumer rhetoric attributed to them, their equivocal and sometimes confused responses reflect both 'non-crystallized' understandings about higher education as commodity, and holistic valuation whereby they weigh up economic and non-economic values together.

In Chapter 7, psychoanalysis was used as a comparator with higher education to show that commodities can be extremely flexible in terms of their features because, as Marx points out, even things that are not really commodities acquire the form of commodities when a price is attached to them. Although quite different entities, some of the extreme features of paying for a psychoanalysis resonate with higher learning which might involve students paying for something that is unpredictable in terms of learning trajectory, paying in order to

work themselves, paying to be in some ways dissatisfied, and paying and for something whose value is incalculable.

Through this series of studies, I have made a set of provocations that weave together a range of scholarship in novel ways and cut across disciplines. Common to all is a resolve to craft new persuasions based on theoretical rather than ideological argument. When considered collectively, all the studies breakdown binaries by re-appraising how economic and non-economic aspects of things can be conceived as working together, whether with respect to individuals, institutions, or within and between academic disciplines. A summary of the strongest cross-cutting recommendations that could most usefully shape future higher education debate include:

- A revised notion of commodities: the proposal that some types of property, and thereby commodities, are woven into self-constitutive aspects of personhood make it entirely feasible to think in terms of part-commodification whereby a given object is both alienable and inalienable, has a price and is priceless. Payment is made for a whole range of commodities that blur the boundary between subject and object in this way, and it is more appropriate to situate them on a continuum than insist upon either complete commodification or noncommodification. Looked at another way, commodities conceived as objects can embrace an indefinite set of characteristics, and at its most extreme money can be exchanged for things that subvert the capitalist culture that promotes its use. On these accounts, debate might more profitably be directed towards considering higher learning as a particular commodity in context and

focusing on how market and non-market elements can co-exist. Engaging students and their teachers in this dialogue would enable them to explore their own internally conflicted understandings about the commodified and non-commodified dimensions of higher learning.

- A revised notion of students as consumers: firstly, it is unlikely that any individual fully identifies themselves as a consumer; while students pay for their education, being a consumer will more likely only define some of their interactions. Moreover, when valuation is considered holistically and in context, individuals routinely make multiple valuations by weighing up economic alongside non-economic motives to action. More productive than transposing any single and reductive consumer label onto students, which in turn shapes conceptions of teaching and learning, would be to entertain the range of ways in which they might usefully construe the consumer aspect of their identity. This could partly be achieved by drawing on multiple and historical meanings attached to the consumer label that tie it to citizenship as well as purchasing power, and partly by attaching a much richer notion of 'choice' to consumer decision-making than rational choice based on self-interest. Choice can much more meaningfully be tied to the positive goals of education when linked to development of individual agency and determining what it means to make 'good' choices linked to one's own well-being and the well-being of others. Including students in dialogue about the 'consumer' aspect of their university study would ensure that the term retains a critical edge for all stakeholders that extends beyond higher education to social policy and beyond.

- A revised notion of markets: conceiving of the market as a distinct domain or ideal creates a false boundary between money and non-money values and consequently impoverishes conceptions of markets. This is represented in miss-readings of the work of Adam Smith and a brand of economic modelling that fails to account for the type of individuals who engage in markets and their complex relations to each other and their communities. Furthermore, linking the limits attributed to money valuation to the limits of financial institutions rather than to any ethical incommensurability between so called low and high values, places the onus on institutions themselves to continuously reform markets so that they are guided by the primary motive of social betterment. It would seem that both universities and policy-makers have a stake in this goal so that, returning to Willett's metaphor, both the 'plumbing' and the 'beauty of the architecture' are embraced, articulated and communicated.
- Revising how economic reasoning is embedded within and between academic disciplines. An underpinning philosophical position that makes the co-existence of economic and non-economic factors attainable is the claim that intrinsic and instrumental values both apply in any given context. This counters the tendency within the field of Ethics to position rights-based and consequentialist philosophical reasoning as dichotomous, and the tendency within the field of Economics to depend wholly on consequentialist modelling in the form of Max-U. More productive for the higher education debate is an acknowledgement that the intrinsic value of something doesn't negate its instrumental role, and the instrumental value of something doesn't

negate its intrinsic value. From a disciplinary perspective, closer alignment between Ethics and Economics could be achieved by reclaiming what Sen refers to as the 'ethics' tradition of economics that stretches back to Aristotle and questions how money-making can serve the endeavour of determining how to live a good life. Methodologically, drawing on historical scholarship that pre-dates current disciplinary divisions in order to address current philosophical problems enables lost connections between Economics and Ethics to be re-made, as is evident in renewed interest in the scholarship of Adam Smith.

Overall, my aims have been relatively modest in aiming to progress the debate about the marketization of higher education, and I am particularly struck by the proposal that the best way to resist current market rhetoric is to infuse markets with non-market values, or at a disciplinary level to bring economics and ethics and economics and the philosophy of education into closer alignment. I hope to have shown that this is entirely possible, and areas for future exploration include the role of higher education institutions in achieving such a goal so that students can make informed choices in a profound rather than superficial sense. An entirely unanticipated outcome of my study that also deserves further study relates to the theme of temporality associated with markets and education. This theme emerged repeatedly in my study with relation to time and learning, time and money, time and knowledge, time and markets, and even time and policy, with the implication that both education and policy must incorporate the capacity to project into a future that is different from the present.

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