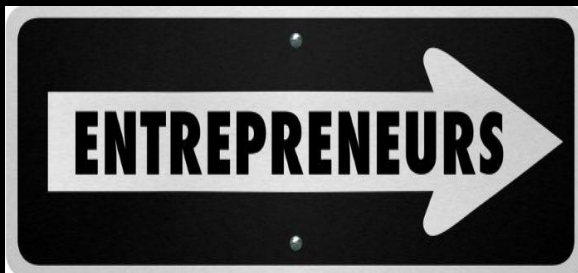




The Making of the Neoliberal Academic: The State, the Market and the PhD

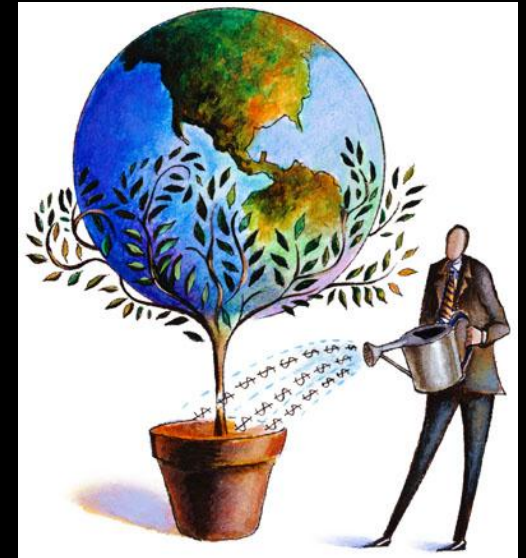
John Pryor



<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cheer>

Neoliberalism as economic system

- Freedom to trade – the market will provide
- Competition - free to compete rather than free exchange (Gane 2012)
- Deregulation – of some sort
- Regulation by the state to foster the freedom of market - ‘a state under the supervision of the market rather than a market supervised by the state’ (Foucault 2008:16)
- ‘Cannibalizing’ the public (Lipman 2013:557)



Neoliberalism as social system

- Pursuit of the maximal material good for the maximal numbers
- 'There is only one true and fundamental social policy: economic growth' (Foucault 2008: 144)
- The market as 'principle, form and model' (2008:17)
- Neoliberalism 'as a governmental practice that is constitutive of a particular type of subject as its necessary correlate: it produces an economic subject structured by different tendencies, preferences and motivations than the political or legal citizen of a disciplinary society or a society of sovereignty. (Oksala 2012)
- The neoliberal subject is understood as an
- atomic individual whose natural self-interest
- and tendency to compete for economic rewards must be fostered and enhanced (Oksala 2014:1128)



Neoliberalism as conspiracy

THE NEOLIBERAL ASCENDANCY

FIRST PHASE: THE SET UP

Devise a pseudo-economic model (designed specifically to appeal to the wealthy economic elite) based upon the absurd idea that greed is the only virtue and supported by a collection of facile generalisations and simplistic justification narratives

Infiltrate all political parties, including nominally left-wing ones (Neo-Labour - UK, Democrats - USA, Solidarity - Poland, ANC - South Africa, etc)

Infiltrate undemocratic international institutions (IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organisation, EU, etc)

Infiltrate academia and the mainstream media to ensure that pseudo-economic neoliberalism becomes the unquestionable economic orthodoxy.

INFILTRATION

SECOND PHASE: FEEDBACK LOOP

Watch neoliberal pseudo-economic dogma spread across the global economy.
(mass privatisation, financial sector deregulation, destruction of welfare, tax cuts for corporations and the rich, regressive tax raises for the poor and ordinary, attacks on labour rights and working conditions, trade union busting, globalisation, removal of democratic control over the economy)

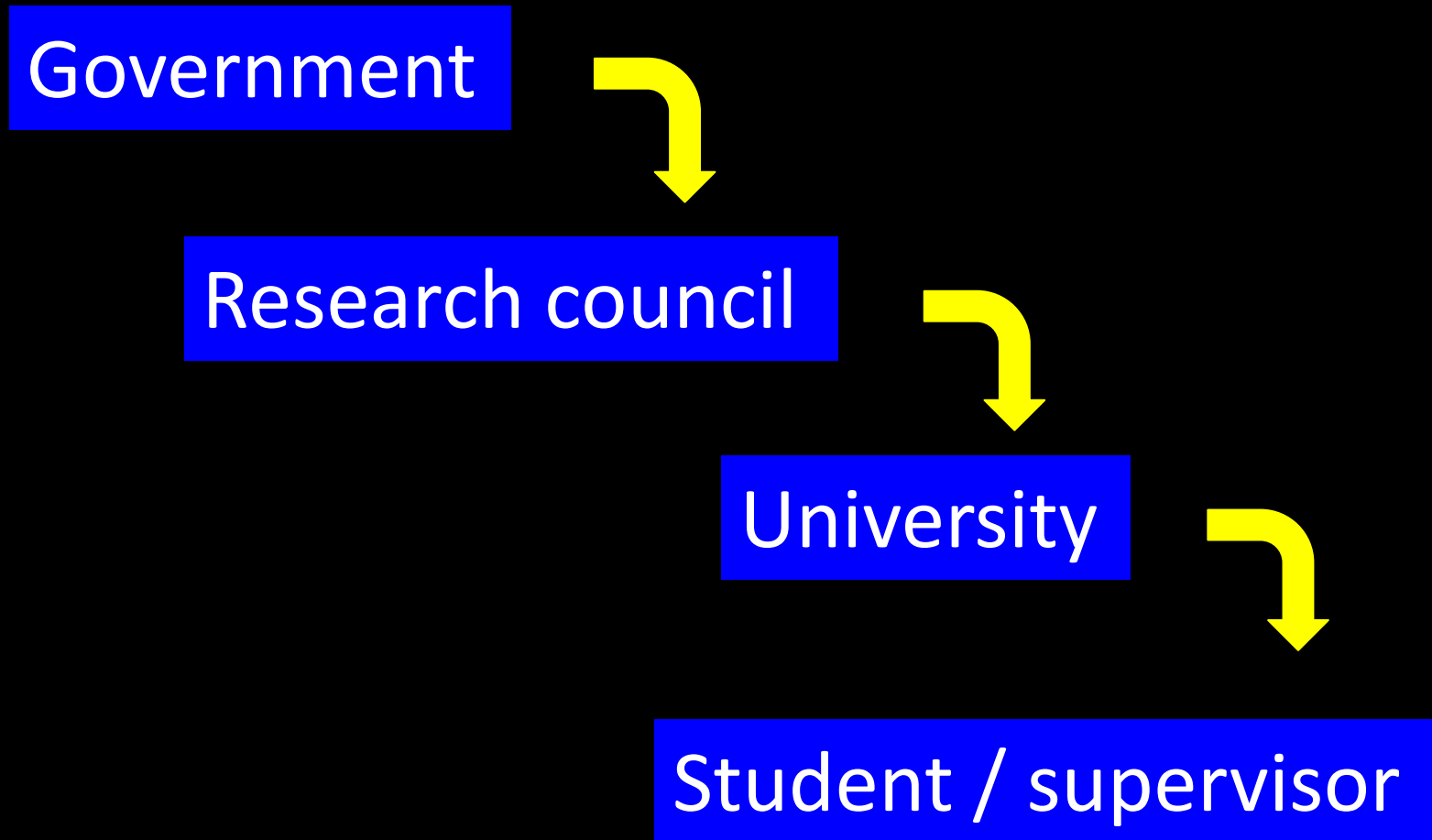
Get rich as the tiny economic establishment (which now includes neoliberal pseudo-economists like you) massively increase their share of global wealth at the expense of everyone else.

When the unrestrained greed and corruption eventually trash the global economy, get taxpayers to bail out the super-rich guilty parties, invent a justification narrative that excessive spending on welfare caused the crisis, then crudely repackage the same old defunct pseudo-economic neoliberal dogma as "austerity" and insist that there is no alternative.

CONSOLIDATION

Source: Tom Clark
<http://anotherangryvoice.blogspot.co.uk/>

The state supervises the research



UK Higher education is under the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills



Five Main Themes

1. **Enterprise:** Making it easier to start and grow businesses in the long term
2. **Skills:** Promoting more opportunities for individuals in realising their potential
3. **Knowledge and Innovation:** Promoting excellent universities and research *and increased business innovation*
4. **Markets:** Creating markets that serve businesses' and consumers' long terms interests
5. **Trade:** Supporting UK trade overseas and inward investment

What we do:

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) is the department for economic growth. The department invests in skills and education to promote trade, boost innovation and help people to start and grow a business. BIS also protects consumers and reduces the impact of regulation.

BIS Research Priorities


Themes

- Industrial Strategy
- Enterprise
- Knowledge and Innovation
- Skills
- Markets
- Trade
- Prosperity right across the country



BIS Research Priorities

Themes

- Industrial Strategy
 - Enterprise
 - **Knowledge and Innovation**
 - Skills
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- 
- Investment
 - SME innovation:
 - Human capital
 - Access to finance
 - Local innovation
 - Research spending and performance
 - Public and private funding
 - User-Led Innovation

BIS Research Priorities

Themes

- Industrial Strategy
 - Enterprise
 - Knowledge and Innovation
 - **Skills**
 - Markets
 - Trade
 - Prosperity right across the country
- Pathways through the labour market and education/training interventions
 - Understanding the dynamics of local labour markets:
 - Student decision making and the influence of finance
 - The “marginal” student
 - Understanding differences in HE participation
 - Postgraduate study
 - Human capital and growth

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The economy is demanding higher skills and individuals are rewarded for obtaining higher skills. However it is possible that barriers within the postgraduate market which affect supply. Work is underway to understand the motivations of mature postgraduate students, with further work required to improve our understanding of the demand for and returns to postgraduates, attitudes to debt and possibilities for funding postgraduate study

Research Council

What we do

- We are the UK's largest organisation for funding research on economic and social issues. **We support independent, high quality research which has an impact on business, the public sector and the third sector...** At any one time we support over 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students in academic institutions and independent research institutes.
- We are a non-departmental public body ...and receive most of our funding through the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Our research is vigorous and authoritative, as we support independent, high-quality, relevant social science.

Our role is to:

promote and support, by any means, high-quality basic, strategic and applied research and related postgraduate training in the social sciences advance knowledge and **provide trained social scientists who meet the needs of users and beneficiaries, thereby contributing to the economic competitiveness of the UK**, the effectiveness of public services and policy, and the quality of life

Doctoral training centres /partnerships

- 'Our' research.
- Universities consortia compete for recognition - awarded through a grant
- Winners and losers:
 - Excellence = Compliance with agendas / emulation
 - Investment – match funding – involvement of non academic collaborators
- Steers and benchmarks
 - Economics and advanced quantitative methods
 - Behavioural science / psychology
- Grant based studentships only for (commissioned) large grants
- Centres for doctoral training – further concentration

The Doctoral Training Centre

- Pathways and themes that reflect priorities
- Collaborative target
- Devolution of organization – emulation for compliance
- Small budgets and competition:
 - overseas fieldwork; research training support grant
- Policing through annual monitoring
- Large data sets - interdisciplinary (with STEM).



The doctorate ...

.... within a neoliberal structure

... as a set of neoliberal practices

... as research serving the neoliberal enterprise

... the schooling (training) of the neoliberal
subject

- Commodification of training – consumers of training
- Inequity
 - Elite cohort – more resources
 - Diversion of resources from other student support
- Entrepreneurial (Vitae developed) researcher:
 - Bidding for resources
 - Making impact
 - Collaborating with non academics
- Compliance across university includes non-funded students

The New Academic

- Research council policy documents and programme calls form a key part of the 'assemblage' that scholars work with, respond to, and attempt to appropriate and operationalize in pursuit of their own research interests (Torrance 2015).
- Disciplined subjects – there is no alternative, this is what research is about.



Resistance



- ‘Depressive complicity’ with a neoliberal model (Burrows 2012:356).
- Truth – the political neutrality of economic facts.
- Exit and voice
- Subversion of funding decisions
- Subversion of elitist cohort within institutions
- Critical social science (Danvers 2015)
- Thinking with (Leaney & Webb 2015)

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