Challenging marketization by recognising complexity and fostering creativity
How did we get here?

- Diploma disease (Dore, 1976)
- Qualification inflation
- High stakes assessment
- Measurement
- Education as a product/commodity
- Marketization
- College Inc

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/collegeinc/
I see you did well in school, but what real-world skills do you have?

Tests. I can take tests.
Thinking about complexity

• Contexts (situated learning)
• Cultures
• Agency
• Pedagogy

Sites of learning tend to be

• public places
• multidimensional
• sites of simultaneity
• busy and can be unpredictable places

No simple solutions
A basic framework for thinking about the complexity of teaching and learning (adapted from Kyriacou, 2009)

**Context variables**

*Lecturer characteristics:*
e.g. gender, age, experience, social class, training, personality, ideology

*Student characteristics:*
e.g. age, ability, health, values, personality, social class, gender, cultural background, interests, friendships, previous experiences, attitudes to learning

*Cohort/group characteristics:*
e.g. size, range of ability, social class and cultural mix

*Subject characteristics*
e.g. subject matter, level of complexity, links with general interest

*Learning environment:*
e.g. space, layout, resources, flexibility

*Characteristics of the occasion*
e.g. time of day/week, weather, time of academic year

*University characteristics*
e.g. size, buildings, facilities, ethos, status, reputation, admissions system, intake, location, local socio-economic issues

*National characteristics*
e.g. political regime, policy context, education policy, historic systems, affluence, population density, geographical location, national and local economy

**Process variables**

*Lecturer perceptions, strategies and behaviour*

*Student perceptions, strategies and behaviour*

*Characteristics of the learning activities and tasks*

**Product variables**

*Educational outcomes: these could be short, medium or long term and diverse in nature.*

For example: changes in student motivation, engagement, understanding, confidence, independence, empathy, progression, exam results, skill acquisition.............
Variables on your courses

• Identify some important context variables
• Note down how these context variables influence the process variables
• Share your thoughts with 1/2 colleagues
• What product variables are strong on your course, what would you like more of?
• What limits the process variables? What would you like to change?
• Share your thoughts with 1/2 colleagues
Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

Albert Einstein
Lave and Wenger (1991)

- Situated Learning
- Communities of practice

- Your courses/subjects
- Your colleagues
- Your students
- Your Pedagogy
References

• De’Rosier, John: Real world skills cartoon.
RETHINKING EDUCATION
Whose knowledge is it anyway?

ADAM UNWIN AND JOHN YANDELL

NEW INTERATIONALIST
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Education is held to be a universal good and its fundamentals are rarely questioned. Yet the education system increasingly resembles a production line: schools are forced to chase a higher league-table position; students learn to pass tests rather than how to think; teachers, increasingly paid by their pupils’ results, are ground down by the machine. Worse still, new edu-business corporations are rolling out this model to the Global South.

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Legitimate Peripheral Participation

- **It is legitimate** because all parties accept the position of “unqualified” people as potential members of the “community of practice”
- **Peripheral** because they initially are on the edge of the important stuff, do the peripheral jobs, and gradually get entrusted with more important ones
- **Participation** because it is through *doing* knowledge that they acquire it. Knowledge is situated within the practices of the community of practice, rather than something which exists “out there” in books.