

## THE TEACHING/RESEARCHING SUBJECT: A CONSUMING SUBJECTIVITY

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An inspiring image for this project was one of the institutional accountability movement and its disciples dressed up as lepidopterists hunting down creativity and criticality “the way lepidopterists chase down butterflies before hanging them out to dry” (Eggleton, 2004: 60). “Seamless” education is represented in the conflation of teachers’ colleges and universities now operating under the Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF) in New Zealand. It is in this site that an homogeneous identity of “researcher” is presumed, which I call “the teaching/ researching subject”, and it is here that a call for deterritorialisation of traditional boundaries of “research” is needed. Firstly, this discussion examines the nature of PBRF, then follows with a focus on “becoming the neoliberal teaching/researching subject”. This is presented as a consuming subjectivity that becomes an all-consuming process, the effects of which may be damaging to the broader educational project. I examine the social effects of “knowledge capitalism” (Peters, 2003: 115) in terms of the neoliberal teacher/researcher, with the intention to provide a critical response to the ideological assumptions embedded within the New Zealand PBRF policy from the point of view of an art and music academic, educator and researcher. The focus is particularly upon teacher education within the discipline of Education.

### **A starting narrative**

*“Modernism, schmodernism, deconstructions, fractions, frictions, ructions”*, were the words occurring in the middle of a farewell song written by my daughter and myself about and for someone – a prominent art educator who was leaving New Zealand for an appointment on farther shores. Hers was the language of deconstruction and the arts, and, in the broader project of education, we chose to privilege this language in song and dance at an official institutional farewell. Other scholarly colleagues joined the performance and thus willingly acknowledged the creative potential of the arts – and teachers’ work – in academia.

The above event acts as my starting point to consider the politics of marginalisation of alternative voices and the consequent devaluing of certain practices in educational work. In a sense there is a doubling of marginalisation at work here as both teachers’ work and creative artists’ work struggle to claim recognition and establish value in the new accountabilities of audit of which Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF) is the New Zealand example.

A number of academics have written about Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF), the context of its introduction to tertiary education in New Zealand, the relevant policy documents from the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC), and the reports emerging from TEAC (see Roberts, 2002, 2006: 186). The descriptive details of implementation of the Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF) have been discussed in depth by scholars such as Middleton (2005), Ashcroft (2005), Smith & Jesson (2005) and Roberts (2006). *Punishing the Discipline* (Smith & Jesson, 2005), for example, provides a forum that brings into relief the conditions of academic practice under the Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF). Its authors are clearly cognisant of the vital and central role that critics have to play in resisting ideological corrosion of democratic institutions. Power (1997: 10–13) also insists that the explosion of audit has emerged with transformed administration dismantling “the public–private divide”. He points to the problems of enforced combinations of financial and non-financial logics of evaluation and the increasing role of audit proposals favouring arcane managerial values over other cultures of performance. Audit culture, he argues, signifies a peculiar stage in the development of advanced economic systems as it deals with the “production of risk, the erosion of social trust, fiscal crisis and the need for control – all under the umbrella of accountability” (1997: 14). Organisational legitimacy is produced via what he terms, “ritualised practices of verification”. It should be noted that audit and external accountability characterising new managerialist discourse and action is a manifestation of global economic power and not peculiar to New Zealand.

When capital has become almost weightless, spatially mobile, “extraterritorial [and]... unencumbered and disembedded” it is often enough to hold “territory-bound political agencies” to ransom to achieve its purposes (see Bauman, 2000: 149–150). In this vein, the introduction of the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) in New Zealand has augmented the governance of “fast capital” and neoliberalism in education at the tertiary level. Within these moves, educators are asked increasingly to legitimate what they are doing and are evaluated for the viability of their scholarship as commercial performance. The effect of this process is that educators can easily become complicit in their own self-sovereignty as accountable subjects in systems of knowledge transfer.

Emerging from capitalistic frames of reference under advanced liberalism the audit culture embedded in policy frameworks of the New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), is manifested in what Bowman names a “ ‘standards’ and ‘advocacy’ frenzy” (2005: 37). The so-called “free” *individual teaching/researching subject* and the research produced is thus shaped, controlled and funded by the governmentality of neoliberalism and its economic rationalist agendas with the systemic powers of quantification as evidenced in the PBRF system.<sup>1</sup> Such processes of investment in neoliberal governance are led by positivist approaches in the networks of managerialist ideology. In the contest for funding, disciples are likely to be the most financially rewarded beneficiaries, for “the ‘lion’s share’ of funding” is achieved within these networks.

Sue Middleton’s (2005: 153) discussion on the impacts of the PBRF on education academics in New Zealand concludes with this telling comment: “As Foucault’s work suggests, politicians, policy-makers and managers, such as those involved with the PBRF, often ‘know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don’t know is what what they do does’ ” (Foucault, 1982, cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982: 187).

## The nature of Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF)

The Performance-Based Research Funding (PBRF) culture has become a normalising institutional practice within the cultural and political texts of tertiary education and through it, academic and professional educators are streamed into “A”, “B”, and “C”-grade researchers. The large majority “Research Inactive” individuals are the others who have not made the grade. The PBRF is now firmly constituted as a part of the processes of institutional production through which academic roles are situated, enframed and performed. The identity for teacher educators from a practice-based professional background shifts from “identity as teacher” to one of “identity as researcher”. For many whose professional career paths have taken strength from a strong practitioner base, rather than through academic research performance, this conflation of identities is likely to cause difficulty.

Foucault sought to understand the relationship between authority and identity. He asked about how and why questions of identity, self and subjectivity have absorbed us (Foucault, 1988; see also Dean, 1996). Foucault questioned how “regimes of government” come to work through “regimes of conduct”. He pointed to the way the “conduct of government was linked to the government of conduct”, and asked why we now problematise our politics and our being so that identity, subjectivity and self become anchored to politics, authority and government (Dean, 1996: 211). Through PBRF, the conduct of self becomes regulated through the relations of power in the transfer of authority via institutions such as university funding bodies.

The ideal of “seamless” education represented in the conflation of teachers’ colleges<sup>2</sup> and universities, and in the knowledge policies now operating under the PBRF system, must surely necessitate a call for a deterritorialisation of the boundaries of “research” and “researcher” identities for the *teaching/researching subject* (in particular teacher educators). This discussion suggests that PBRF appears in its present form as a material manifestation of a traditionally elite form of power. If this is so then we must make room to scrutinise the defining and legitimating procedures in the discourses and power relations of “research”, as a category of knowledge performance; and we may ask which regimes of truth operate in the constitution of research and knowledge (see Grierson & Engels-Schwarzpaul, 2004: 9, 1). The attempt to bridge gaps “between the academic and professional dimensions of the subject Education”, which previous policies such as “professional degrees, and amalgamations of institutions” were designed to achieve (Middleton, 2005: 153) has paid official lip service to possibilities of new identities for teachers’ college staff. However, there has been via the PBRF policy a reinscribing of the status binaries that “seamless” education was supposed to break down. As Richard Smith (2005: 50) argues, the PBRF is a funding and accountability strategy the purpose of which is to realign and return the sector to a “bifurcated system of professional education and vocational education”. Middleton (2005: 153) also affirms that the PBRF system “could encourage a downgrading of the grassroots engagements traditionally carried out by Education staff with teachers and classrooms...”. Constructing forms of identity and subjectivity (“researchers”) through policies of advocacy creates collisions when the reality of the context in which people work is denied, as Smith and Jesson’s book *Punishing the Discipline* (2005) demonstrates. Advocacy often makes grand gestures of promise while forgetting to address the circumstances under which the promises might be realised. Thus small matters of contingency remain unacknowledged.

In its present form, the accountability mechanisms of PBRF appear to preserve the modernist status attached to “pure” (academic) research, as though there is some ontological essence to the meaning of “research” and its educational value at the tertiary level. Teacher educators, once viewed ambivalently by “real” academic educational researchers are now expected to produce research of excellence as a public indication of the quality of their performance. This expectation is in addition to considerable professional educational service contributed via a multiplicity of administrative and professional teaching and nurturing duties towards the instruction and well-being of student teachers. Teacher-educators are to aid the financial standing of their employing institutions and, given the diminishing presence of philosophical and cultural critique throughout neoliberal politics of employment in academic institutions, this process is largely without the oppositional gaze of criticality. O’Neill (2004: 2) questions the extent to which “the affective and nurturing and often tacit processes of socially progressive education [are] amenable to ‘scientific’ research and policy making that is all too often obsessed with measuring observable behaviours and outcomes in schooling?” And he asks, “are socially and politically committed teachers ... likely to want to undertake or accommodate within their complex, fluid classroom environments the kind of sanitised, context-free research valued within the academy and the state policy-making apparatus?”. Neoliberal orthodoxy and its underlying assumptions embodied ideologically within PBRF policy are promoting corporatisation, privatisation, commodification of knowledge and a market world view of life. In terms of the artistic, musical, cultural, social and other immeasurable dimensions of teachers’ work, these views would appear to be inadequate and inappropriate as a means of judging, naming and framing the categories and criteria for educational value, its issues, its research, and its funding.

What are the dangers in the regimentation of performance-based research models for the future of teacher education? Will this level of control result in further marginalisation of teachers’ work; and what of the work of the creative art, music and dance educator? What will such a metamorphosis of the teaching/researching subject mean? Will social relations of teaching be reconfigured as irritants that are fundamentally unsettling to institutions? Avis (2002) has suggested that the reconfiguration of social relations as “irritants” with the capacity to agitate, disturb or unsettle the smooth functioning of institutions and the social formation becomes normalised as part of good institutional management. These irritants may be overpowered and made incapable in order to restore efficient and effective practices. Thus, as Avis explains, a *politics of difference* is rendered impotent to the extent that they are eliminated by effective management practices.

Under these conditions, how does PBRF affect the neoliberal teaching/researching subject in terms of research, teaching practices and subjectivities? Where do questions of difference and identity figure when the neoliberal “will to certainty” (see Grierson & Mansfield 2004; Mansfield, 2005) and “the permanent quality tribunal” (Masschelein & Simons, 2002: 597) preside to define quality and educational value along limited and exclusionary dimensions? How do such discourses position and value bicultural and multicultural research, its researchers, cultural collectivities, identities and associated pedagogical practices in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere? The preoccupation with quality and its manifestations is by now a feature of “the entrepreneurial self”, according to Masschelein and Simons (2002: 597), which is an identity the neoliberal teaching/researching subject is likely to assume.

The PBRF mechanism values acquisitiveness and “development” of the researcher as a form of human capital (see Devine, 2004; Sutherland, 1994). With human capital seen as a tradeable commodity capable of being organised through market exchange, what is taken for granted is that the social behaviour (performance within PBRF) of the market individual, *homo economicus*, is reshaped by and within the instrumentalised strategies of the economy. According to David Cole, in discussing the nature of the modern, liberal democratic state and its strategies for designating some kind of unity, capitalism cannot work without expansion: “it creates schizophrenic flows of sign-signifiers that are checked and regulated by the despotism of paranoid over-coding” (Cole, 2005: 86). Academics are required to conform via a myriad of accountability practices of self-reporting that now characterise institutional life. Cole suggests that “the coding of social activity by capital produces a plane of immanence or smooth space, where dysfunctional action is required to enable the development and exploitation of surplus value” (Cole, 2005: 86). In this case, research surplus value may express itself in “performances” of abundant amounts of unreflective research that may not even be read (see also Hall, Morris-Matthews & Sawicka, 2005). This brings to mind Power’s (1997) suggestion of the “pathologicality of the ‘audit society’ ” (1997: xii).

### **Becoming the neoliberal teaching/researching individual subject**

If the line of discussion on global capital and PBRF is brought into relation with subjectivity then we may see that the public service ethic, long associated with educators working in the public space, is showing signs of being undermined under the PBRF systems. In New Zealand, PBRF reinscribes and promotes the individual, humanist, knowing subject as it joins the race to reconstitute “the moral and cultural order” in the service of universalising the “entrepreneurial form” (Olssen, 2003: 198). Performance becomes the focal point and object of governance. Yet the idea that it is not just the individual subject alone that we ought to consider but the individual subject *and* others is something missed by the PBRF system in its focus on grading and categorising performing individuals. As Middleton’s research shows, some staff are describing themselves as becoming “more calculated, self-conscious, [and] less spontaneous in their decisions to take on tasks like supervision, reviewing, consulting or public presentations” (2005: 147).

The politics of power operating through neoliberal agendas of governance and funding normalises the social practice of public naming and grading of individual researchers, or as Hey (2001) and Smith (2005: 45–46) say, “the naming and shaming” of individual teachers. There is somehow an assumed agency and “speaking space” (Grierson, 2005: 30) for the neoliberal teaching/researching subject. The so-called free individual researcher reinscribed as a human liberal subject of knowledge is forced to conform to idealised notions of “truth” about research and its value. Art or music academics and others who identify with creativity, risk-taking and playfulness in education may be more likely to become, as Ella Fitzgerald sang, “bewitched, bothered and bewildered” as they refuse the constraining categories of officially funded research. They become too easily and inadvertently the “disobedient researching others” whose applications for funding are inevitably refused by research funding authorities. Such authorities might be described as those that deploy certain grids of intelligibility (Dean, 1996: 222) in the process of becoming governable.

Thus “being” a teaching/researching subject under neoliberal governmentality is experienced, with difficulty, according to my argument and the evidence produced by others (see Ashcroft, 2005; Davies, 2005; Hey, 2002; Hey & Bradford, 2004; Masschelein & Simons, 2002; Middleton, 2005; Smith & Jesson, 2005). Middleton (2005: 142–143) shows that after the initial round of PBRF grading (2003) teachers experienced a number of manifestations of anxiety from the effects of the performance regime: anxiety over gaining or retaining grades, feeling “demotivated”, and “under-valued”. Further, being down-graded by PBRF to “Research Inactive” when one is a curriculum leader, an examiner, a curriculum writer, reviewer, or editor of a teachers’ journal is an unhappy experience (see Middleton, 2005: 144). Yet, we should ask what the value of an Education discipline is when it is so manipulated by the logic of audit that the service components of educational professionals’ work are diminished. There is a need to scrutinize the politics of truth in the constitution of research and knowledge and to ask which forms of truth operate as defining categories within the PBRF policy that now presides over the academic domain. In order to be successful in terms of performance and its accountability, the researching subject maximises opportunities as an individual, autonomous, responsible subject producing knowledge commodities of “value”. As Cole aptly states, “teachers are already dismantled. They are cyborgs plugged into the “stress software from central office” (2005: 85).

By decontextualising the teaching/researching subject from conditions under which he or she experiences the demands of producing “research outputs” for the PBRF (i.e. by removing context and complexity), policy celebrants and promoters neutralise the performance conditions for the teacher/ researcher. This neutralisation makes research appear easily manageable and doable and legitimises the pressure to produce. The successful (“effective”) academic educator under PBRF, categorised as the A-grade teaching/researching subject, is “in synch” with performative culture accompanied by new managerialism and its infatuation with outcomes. The image produced is one of “effective” schools full of “effective individuals” and “competent children”, “excellent” teachers and people generally “making a difference”. Educational institutions are businesses and knowledge is now in the business of excellence.

### **Consuming the subject: “I am” culture**

Fundamental to social and economic policy under neoliberalism is the construction of a certain type of Being – *homo economicus*, the rational autonomous utility maximiser, the self-interested, competitive consumer (Peters & Marshall, 1996; Roberts, 2006: 189). In the act of researching, what is the link between “existential anxiety” (Dean, 1996: 213) (ontological risks) and managerialism, audit and entrepreneurship? Progressively deepening divisions of labour in academia find contract researchers and temporary lecturers (mostly women) “exhausted, exploited and poor” (Hey, 2001: 67). “Relations of trust, obligation, mutual responsibility and solidarity” she argues, “are likely to be compromised or at the very least constrained by ... material inequalities” (Davies, 2005; Hey 2001: 70; see also Grierson, 2006a; Julich, Mansfield & Terrell, 2006).

Controlling technologies such as PBRF recruit our behaviours as knowledge workers through rewards and punishments for fast, efficient, obedient research providing useful knowledge as a commodity form. Where will there be time for reflection and the contemplative in such a technologisation of research? For teachers within the discipline of education, whether

academic educators or teacher educators, strategies of resistance to repressive policies of audit and accountability have been in vain (see also Hey & Bradford, 2004). What are the forms of devaluation that make less possible the realisation and appreciation of certain teachers' assets in the marketplace? What are the costs of not being counted in the "performative state?" Hey asks what are the politics of commodified intellectual work at the level of process and output? (2001: 71).

What indeed is *consuming* the teaching/researching subject? What is the effect of this regulation by PBRF on academic work? These are issues for further investigation. Remaining invisible and "research inactive" when one is a tenured academic would be difficult. Work-place relations infused with anxiety and competition are likely to arise from an "ontological anxiety" (Ball, 2000 cited in Hey, 2001: 76) emerging from "visible and invisible" multiple measures of performance (see Hey, 2001: 76; Reay, 1999, cited in Hey, 2001) as redundancies start to appear on the academic job horizon. These heightened levels of concern have been revealed in Middleton's (2005) recent research in New Zealand, and Hey's research in Britain (2001; Hey & Bradford, 2004; see also Ashcroft, 2005; Codd, 2005, cited in Smith & Jesson, 2005). Peters, in this vein discusses a "new 'prudentialism' in education ... the prudentialization that results when education is addressed to the ... responsibilized self" who must guard "his or her own welfare ... to ensure the individual against risk to the individual" (2005: 123).

This presents an exhausting and depressing scenario and must deeply affect the morale of educators many of whom operate along the multiple dimensions of creativity either in thought, word or deed. Aminata Traoré "denounces the imposition of totalising ideas as 'viol de l'imaginaire' – rape of the imagination" (2002a, b, cited in Jickling, 2005: 257); and Grierson (2006b) asks, "Where is the speaking space" in research for poetry, art, music, dance, and song? Heidegger, in his seminal essay, *The Question Concerning Technology* (1977), saw the saving power of art as a way of revealing the entrapments of a technologically driven society.

Resources, expertise, and educational research are poured into the "characterisation of the irregularity", argues Cole (2005: 86). As generic performance is needed by fast capitalism (see Bonal & Ramba, 2003: 174), even arts curriculum policy adopts the audit language of homogeneity that signifies the performativity of generic pedagogy. Thus technologies of government are inserted into the practical domain (see Mansfield, 2000; Olssen, 2003). Difference and identity are thereby diminished.

### **"Knowledge capitalism" and the teaching/researching subject**

The idea that teaching and research have become increasingly commodified has been well rehearsed in scholarly discussions as has Lyotard's notion of "performativity" (1984). Complex relations of accumulation demand the implementation of performance regimes and the colonisation of all forms of conduct by "enterprise form" (Peters, 2005: 123). But what are the effects of the local and global performative criteria upon the local teaching/researching subject? Olssen and Peters, (2005: 340) cite Bourner *et al.* (2000):

We live in a social universe in which the formation, circulation and utilisation of knowledge presents a fundamental problem. If the accumulation of capital has been an

essential feature of our society, the accumulation of knowledge cannot be dissociated from the mechanisms of power; complex relations exist which must be analysed.

They further argue that teaching and research under neoliberal governmentality is subject to a “structural selectivity” that modifies the attributes of professionalism. A diminished autonomy of teaching and research results from external pressure applied to the academic role, as competitive relations are inscribed via funded contract research, performance and accountability. Manipulated and “managed” (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 325–326) or “closely shackled” (O’Neill, 2004: 1) research works to homogenise assessment and performance systems. Olssen and Peters criticise the likelihood under “knowledge capitalism” of the quantity of research income generated counting for more than the quality of scholarship (2005: 327).

How is “knowledge capitalism” represented within New Zealand learning institutions involved in teacher education? To what extent may Education as a disciplinary subject be complicit in the production, ownership and innovation of knowledge capitalism (see Olssen & Peters, 2005: 338)? Knowledge capitalism is represented in the types of research conceived to ensure funding, and in the dwindling, deletion or diminishing of criticality and philosophical approaches that would place neoliberal ideology under scrutiny and potentially expose related “social antagonisms”.<sup>3</sup> Relevance to the labour market is to be demonstrated via instrumentally rational and valuable classroom-related research, its value emerging from devotion to “improvements in knowledge about how we can transform inputs to outputs in the production process” (Olssen & Peters, 2005: 332). The PBRF policy seems a site of contradiction in that its system of conferring value via grade awards, tends to have the effect of delegitimising academic “work” that is closer to the chalk face (i.e. teacher educators largely labelled “Research Inactive”; see Alcorn *et al.*, 2004; Middleton, 2005; Smith & Jesson, 2005), at the same time as encouraging classroom-related and “relevant” research. Thus there is a reinstatement of the status binaries between “education/training”, “professional/vocational”, and “mental/manual”.

The teaching/researching subject of knowledge capitalism must therefore conceive of investigation that falls into line with government notions of research. In *The Audit Society: Rituals of Verification*, Power (1997) argues that audit and new managerialism have been the main mechanisms for risk management. The neoliberal teaching/researching subject is swamped with what Hey and Bradford (2004: 700) call “ontological risk”. A transformation in worker subjectivity is seen to emanate from macro-level changes, and “being” an educational professional has metamorphosed self-descriptions and identity. In this context, “real” research takes on a new meaning as obedient research. Thus we may legitimately ask what is the link between existential anxiety (ontological risks), managerialism, audit and entrepreneurship in research as academic work? The teaching/researching subject of “knowledge capitalism” is encouraged to be obedient to the accumulative research regime as an “entrepreneurial subject rather than [a] reflexive subject ...” (Bullen *et al.*, 2004: 15).

The effect of the state’s “appropriation distribution, and circulation” of educational theories, and of the inclusion and endorsement of certain research groups or persuasions and the exclusion of others gives rise to a diminishing of democratic participation and an increase in panoramic surveillance. But which values, we may ask, are thus aggrandised when the “techno-economic” (Bullen *et al.*, 2004: 10) paradigm appropriates the discourse? Are we courageous enough to



bring criticality to the domain of “institutional governance” (Grierson & Engels-Schwarzpaul, 2004: 6). And what are the costs to the public domain of its diminishing presence?

### **Affirming interpretations**

The accountability mechanisms of the PBRF operate as manifestations of the performative state to preserve the modernist status binaries attached to elite research. Yet to image research in terms of the binaries of (real) researchers and the research inactive others is a devaluing process for teacher educators from a practical background. Concern over boundaries of “research” and “non-research” in valuing and grading educational professionals under the PBRF must be counterproductive to work relationships and fail to open up the multiple spaces of educational action and value.

The process of reducing professional educators’ knowledge to an abstract quantity (“A”, “B”, “C” and “Research Inactive”) ignores and represents inadequately many of the complicated and human social processes involved in professional knowledge and work of both teacher educators and academic researchers. Teachers are “always constructed as though they are in debt to the state and as such, subject to an increasing intensification of discipline and punishment” (De Lissovoy & McLaren, 2003: 131).<sup>4</sup> Teacher educators’ knowledge is far from identical to the PBRF test score of “Research Inactive” that it most often receives (see Middleton, 2005; Smith & Jesson, 2005). There is residue. De Lissovoy and McLaren (2003: 133) point to the violence of the erasure between particularity and difference, which then works to hold back the teacher/researchers as it spreads out “the obligation to become identical to become total” (Adorno, 1995: 146, cited in De Lissovoy & McLaren, 2003: 133).

More critical questions need to be asked such as what valuing entails and what should it entail? Somehow we must be able to move beyond the nihilistic anxieties that PBRF promotes. The partiality and bias of the PBRF aura of so-called objectivity ought to be revealed, and there is an ethical obligation to find ways in the performance stakes of acknowledging the responsibility, involvement, fidelity and generosity that teacher educators exhibit in their work with students at the chalk face. The fluidity, contingency and plurality of experience have immeasurable value that eludes easy definition via containment in a “Research Inactive” score. In its present state this latter works towards a “nihilistic ‘degradation’ of Being” (see Irwin, 2003: 231).

In an age of uncertain knowledge and contested meaning, is there a space for officially funded research that is outside the *modus operandi* of global capital, that cannot be “reterritorialised or overcoded” by what Cole terms, “despotic state signifiers” (Cole 2005: 88)? Or are we dreaming? What of research that is slightly irregular and that does not fit models of fixity and stability and that yet may still inform, excite, inspire, romance teachers, teacher educators and other researchers including government education policy officials? It is the “mobile, complex, ad hoc, messy, and fleeting qualities” (Humes & Bryce, 2003: 179) that may begin to surface in such irregular research and may excite the educational imagination in multiple ways. The “middle and the muddle of life *per se*” (Semetsky, 2003: 223) signify a transformational pragmatics, which may inform educational value and identities both in and out of “research”.

## Final comments

I have shown PBRF as a localised condition of globalisation evident in the knowledge economy of New Zealand and revealed its classificatory impulse as the “object and instrument of struggle” (Bourdieu, 1989: 169). I have discussed the likely effects of pressures on education staff to live up to the demands of performativity in a climate where commodified knowledge is being encouraged, valued and displayed.

I have suggested a way of humanising these globalising influences through the empowerment of teacher educators’ knowledge. This may enable the fairer valuing of their contribution to the educational project as a means of confronting and moving beyond the disabling effects of a performativity culture based on the power of exclusion. Through acknowledging the artistic, musical, cultural, social and other immeasurable dimensions of teachers’ work, I have challenged the idea of original values in research when they assume a purity of academic presence as though the meaning of research and academic educational value is categorical and final.

A “low-trust” approach to people in general and to educators in the multiplicities of their contributions to the broader project of education may be counterproductive to education and its overall mission. There is also a colonising potential for some managers to become, despite the best of intentions, passively nihilistic under such pressure.

I have sought a language of augmentation that may acknowledge the work of those marginalised groups in teacher education and the arts, and throughout the discussion have kept the focus on the problematic relations of teaching and researching for the teacher educator in the PBRF regime. It is there that the multidimensional generosity of the work of teacher educators may be recognised. For generous it is.

When a creative form of language was used at an academic farewell – “*Modernism, schmodernism, deconstructions, fractions, frictions, ructions*” – it acted as a signifier for those voices marginalised and under-valued in the performance systems, those cultures that largely remain hidden. Through another sort of performance – that of writing this article – something has come out of hiding. I dared not mention poetry, song, and playful neologisms at the beginning of this article. I have the courage now.

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## Notes

1. According to Bauman, “the unprecedented freedom which our society offers its members has arrived, as Leo Strauss warned a long time ago, together with an unprecedented impotence” (2000: 23).
2. For example Massey College of Education’s amalgamation with Massey University (June 1996) and Auckland College of Education’s amalgamation with The University of Auckland (September 2004).
3. James Avis (2002: 76) refers to the English experience as an “attempt to construct a settlement organised around managerialism located in a value frame that marginalises social antagonism and thereby silences dissent”.
4. According to Roberts, “Underpinning the PBRF process is the assumption that tertiary education institutions ought to be held accountable for public money invested in research. Few would argue against the principle that those funded by government, and hence by taxpayers, have a responsibility to ensure that the money is well spent. ‘Accountability’ and ‘responsibility’ are rather different concepts” (2006: 191).