# Futurority

# Narratives of the Future

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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines narratives of the future and their impact on late-modern constructions of the self.

The argument is made that neo-liberal narratives have effectively promoted an idealised narrative of the self that views the achievement of a desired future for individuals as primarily a function of personal autonomy, effort and intention.

The thesis contends that this narrative is promoted in society through multiple trajectories involving an array of social forms and institutions. Education policy and media are considered as exemplary examples of the sorts of social forms and institutions where this idealising narrative is promoted. A limited range of education policy narratives and media narratives are then examined.

The position is taken that the adoption of neo-liberal ideals of the self relies on a supporting context of other narratives of the self and society. These are explored.

A governmental framework (Rose, 1998) is used to consider the implications for child and adult subjects of the adoption of an individualised culpability for future success, or lack of success within what is argued is a subjectifying discursive regime of the self. Resistance to this governing regime is considered from a number of theoretical perspectives. The contention is made that effective resistance is likely to be local, partial and continuous rather than involving or resembling a disjunctive ideological shift.

The thesis engages with post-structuralist ideas and hence is written from a perspective that necessarily incorporates a local and personal narrative.

**Acknowledgements**

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**CHAPTER ONE: Introduction**

"The future is in your hands"

"What are your plans for the future?"

"Build a better future for yourself"

"Take charge of your future!"

 "Think of your future!"

**The research Topic**

Narratives of the future, such as the above examples, are pervasive truisms that most people in New Zealand are exposed to in one form or another on a very regular basis. Often such messages or narratives[1] are the scaffold that supports other narratives telling people about how they can and should obtain personal success or wellbeing. These kinds of narratives speak to how people are and ideally should be. Future narratives can be simply stated, for instance through the medium of advertising, or, more complexly through the norms and expectations that the education experience places on both children and adults.

Narratives of the future usually contain three elements:

1.   They speak of the self

2.   They speak of the future

3.  They purport some capacity for the self to shape the future according to desire

Taken together, these elements can be understood as 'instructional', in that they suggest people can and should be able to create the future as they wish it. They are also normative, in that to make sense of them, people need to accept or adopt some common norms or understandings about what the nature of selfhood is.

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[1] A Narrative is a story, an interpretative framework that gives meaning to experience (Bruner, 1986). A social constructionism framework, which I use, would see the truth of, or meaning, of any experience as a product of a dialogue of narratives contained within and produced by a social matrix which itself is a dialogue of discourses. From the viewpoint of this framework, any attempt to determine the truth of an experience by recourse to claims of an objective reality is merely to draw on yet another narrative (Gergen, 1995).

These future orientated narratives form a powerful thematic weaving amongst and through many other narratives of selfhood. In examining future narratives, other narratives that provide a supporting context need to be considered as well. Some other common narratives or stories of the self amongst which these future narratives can be woven include:

- The nature of the self
- The self's capacity for autonomy, agency and choice
- The relation of self to others
- The relation of self to self
- The relation of self to the larger world
- The processes of development of the self
- The role of desire and accomplishment in maintaining and developing the self
- The nature of successful well-being

This thesis is an examination of the ways narratives of the future impact on how people make sense of themselves and others and how they then act in their world and every day life.

**Governmentality as an approach**

Because the thesis is so interested in how people make sense of who they are, how this sense of self is arrived at, and the influences that help to determine what provides a functional sense of self, the main framework that is used for this examination is a 'governmental' one (Rose, 1999). A governmental framework is interested in a particular kind of power, or more accurately, a particular conception of what power is and how power behaves in a social context. At its simplest this kind of power might be described as the "conduct of conduct" (Rose 1999). Or; "the ethical relation of self to self (and) strategies for the direction of conduct of free individuals" (Foucault, 1991, pp. 19-29).

A study of governmental power always involves the study of the relationship between people being governed and how people then govern the self. The converse or opposite relationship is equally of interest!

Part of governing the self from a governmental perspective is the ways in which people understand themselves and make sense of success and of how well they are performing in terms of that sense of success. Definitions of individual success become important in determining what actions people are required to perform to attain that definition of personal success.

Governmentality looks at how specific forms of social organisation produce people in such ways that who they are, what they understand about themselves and what they decide to do reproduces those forms of social organisation. Definitions of success are often how organising social forms are mobilised. Governmental power does not usually steer people directly, but rather encourages people to take up a manner of self steering that then suits the interests or goals of certain sections of society. A governmental take on power sees power as diffuse forces. Power does not so much define or prescribe the relationships people have with themselves and others, but rather power is a productive function of how those relationships are conducted over a range of contexts.

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In this instance, I am interested in the manner in which people are encouraged to think and behave in ways that suit the interests of certain political and economic alignments, in particular, neo-liberalism. This thesis enquires into how narratives of the future and the self are part of this process for both children and adults.   The kind of governmental framework I use incorporates several key factors relating to governmental forces and narratives of the future:

1. Governmental forces are discernible as discourses, narratives, beliefs and actions that are reproduced in a number of fashions in more than one place.
2. Often governmental forces present themselves as narrating what is self-evident common-sense. As such they are narratives more available for commenting on other narratives rather than being available to critique the validity of what they them-selves propose to be self-evident.
3. Most governmental forces represent, at least partially, the interests of particular programmes, aims or ideals.
4. Governmental forces are 'productive' and produce or at least influence the ways in which people both conduct themselves and make sense of themselves.
5. Following this, at least some of the ways in which people then both conduct themselves and make sense of themselves are likely to be in alignment with, and of benefit to, the ideals, aims and programmes, of specific interests.
6. Those who are subject to, or influenced by a governmental force will tend to reproduce the force in their beliefs, actions and manner of relating to themselves and others.
7. Governmental forces can not be made sense of in isolation; the translation of any governmental force into sufficient meaning to have productive traction is dependent on a network or context of many other forces and influences that also create meaning.

**Questions the thesis raises**

This thesis enquires about narratives of the future as governmental forces that have productive social power and explores their link with the ideas, values, aims and projects of neo-liberalism.   Three central questions seek to consider this supposition.

1.  Have narratives of the future changed and / or increased since neo-liberalism found popularity in New Zealand in the late nineteen eighties and early nineteen nineties?

2.  Do the ways in which narratives of the future are performed in the daily conduct and understandings of New Zealanders serve the interests of neo-liberal programmes?

3.  What is the experience of people subjected to these forces?

The thesis looks at these questions across some of the policy, practice and media territory where children's experience and narratives of future and self intersect.  Because children's lives are not separate from the adult context in which their lives take place, the experience of adults is also considered.

**Where I am positioned; background and history**

My interest in the topic of future narratives and their impact on the self is rooted in my background and history. I come from a family line of social and political activists and, perhaps because of this, I have always been sensitive to the link between individual experience and the political climate of the day. In the nineteen seventies and early eighties I was politically active on a number of fronts. From the late nineteen eighties through to the present I have worked with groups, families and children experiencing hardship and difficulties. Like many workers involved in social practice during these times, I saw the dark underbelly of damage and trauma caused by the shifting winds of social policy and practice. In response to what I observed, I developed a critical stance about the neo-liberal influence on New Zealand social policies and was involved in a number of initiatives that aimed to ameliorate the neo-liberal[2] grip on policy.

During these years I have also got older, been a parent and a partner, lived through a major illness and had the usual quota of losses and personal difficulties. Increasingly in the last ten years I've used both a post-structural[3] and social constructionism[4] framework to make sense of the work that I do.

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[2] Neo liberalism is an approach to economics and society. Neo-liberal philosophy views the marketplace as the analogy that best explains the functioning of the world (Treanor, 2003) People are seen as part of the market place and possessed of natural faculties such as autonomy, competitiveness, and the capacity to choose. Freedom is understood to be a function of the market being unrestrained. In New Zealand, the neo-liberal influence on policy has been strong in the last two decades (Marshall, 1995).

[3] Post-structuralism is the approach which partakes of Lyotard's (1984) statement that "postmodernism is the obsolescence of the meta-narrative apparatus of legitimation" Applied to the structures of social organisation that policy represents; the approach means that any proposition that purports to capture the truth of any given matter is more properly seen as a proposition that by presenting itself as truth benefits some and sanctions others.

[4] Gergen offers a succinct definition of social constructionism: " I will take constructionism to represent a range of dialogues centred on the social genesis of what we take to be knowledge, reason and virtue on the one hand, and the enormous range of social practices born and/or sustained by these discourse on the other. In its critical moment, social constructionism is a means of bracketing or suspending any pronouncement of the real, the reasonable, or the right. In its generative moment, constructionism offers an orientation toward creating new futures, an impetus to societal transformation" (1995, p.1)

Perhaps as a result of the intersection of these parts of my life I have developed an abiding interest in how power functions. I have become fascinated in the ways people are positioned and produced by their relationships with social forces and the context of their lives. My work has followed my interests and my work now tends to be more involved with teaching and designing practice protocols and policies than it does interfacing with individual clients. Hence it seems a bit inevitable that I'm interested in how the social forces that are given voice, or narrated, by social policy position subjects[5] and produce certain kinds of selves.

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[5] 'Subject'is a term I often use in preference to terms such as 'person'. Subject, is both specific and slippery as a concept. Within poststructural thought, the word subject carries specific and multi layered meanings. Implicit to the word is the notion that persons are subject to forces and productive discourses, in particular, persons are determined to be persons by the nature of the discourses that they are subject to in detailing what personhood is. To put this simply; we are created as persons by the forces that tell us what persons are. We are made as subjects in relation to these forces. Discourses both position and constitute subjects. The use of the word subject does not imply a deterministic view of human nature, nor a view that people are the passive subjects of forces. Subjects are active, that is they are in active interpretative play with multiple discourses and forces. For instance when the question of agency arises, subjects can be thought of as active free agents and at the same time as subject to the performance of freedom in alignment with a particular conception of freedom. (Butler, 1998; Gergen, 1995; Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn & Walkerdine, 1998; Parker, 1999)

**How I came to this topic**

In regard to narratives of the future; I became fascinated for two reasons, one very personal, the other more to do with my work with children, families and the systems that aim to serve them.

Personally, I noticed some years ago that during traumatic times in my life I lost some degree of faith in my own capacity to control my future. When this happened I also noticed that I seemed to come under a certain kind of pressure. The pressure was to regain faith in a belief that the future is controllable by the individual. It seemed as if not to believe in the efficacy of individual agency to steer the ship of self to a better future was to somehow inhabit a place that was exterior to a common norm of the self. I found myself positioned on the other side of a boundary that seemed to function to determine what is a well, healthy or 'normal' self. The pressure came from a number of sources that included media narratives, literature, professionals, family and my self.

I was interested that it seemed so common-sense as to be almost banal that I and many others made sense of wellbeing as functionally dependent on a capacity to believe in the ability of the individual to control the future. My own sense of dissonance with the belief began to seem, not so much a symptom of ill-health, but perhaps more a matter of being at odds with a normative discourse or narrative of how the self should function. I wondered to what extent I was being influenced by a governmental force acting to produce certain understandings of the self. I began to look for that influential force and noticed the prevalence of future narratives in my own social and professional context. At that point I began to pay active attention to the social prevalence of narratives of the future and the self. I began to question their normative and productive power and began to speculate as to what interests in society might be served by them. The questioning extended into my work with children and families.

In the work I was doing as a family therapist, social worker, educator and designer of practice protocols, I met with children and families, had frequent contact with schools and child focused agencies, and had reason to read a great deal of policy and practice documents. I noticed what I began to think of as two linked narratives or stories that seemed to form a strong theme in many adult actions upon the actions of children.

Firstly, there was the narrative of the importance of the future. This was apparent not just in policy statements, but in the extent to which so much of what is done to children is done in reference not to their present experience, but rather in reference to what is imagined to be good for their future. This was particularly noticeable both in education policies for children and also in how their problems and experiences are defined. This narrative seemed increasingly evident through the nineteen nineties in the languaging of policies. It also seemed very evident in the languaging of how children's experiences are defined. It is rare to find a description of what a child does or is without that description being discursively linked to what it means about who they will be and what they will do in future (Shirley, 2000). Children's talents pertain to what they will accomplish in future; children's pain pertains to the harm it may inflict on future potential. This has been described as the regarding of children not as "human beings but as human becomings" (Qvortrup, 1994).

Secondly, there was the narrative about the purported evident good of the self believing itself to be able to control its own future. This seemed to be increasingly expressed in both education policies and also what was considered either good or problematic in children. This idea that children should understand themselves as capable of creating their own futures once they become adults seemed to be often tangled up or conflated with another prominent narrative, that of self-esteem. Children who were doing well were those with high self esteem who believed in their capacity to create their future. The children who were not doing so well had low self-esteem and either their words or their actions cast doubt on their belief in a capacity to control their future.

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These narratives seemed very ordinary, and, in seeming so commonplace, appeared to fit the criteria of a hegemonic ideology, that is, an idea or belief related to by the individual as if it were "common sense, the uncritical and largely unconscious way in which a person perceives the world. They (ideologies) are embodied in our social practices and communal (shared) modes of living and acting" (Gramsci, cited in Simon, 1982, p. 25).

It also seemed to me that it might be useful to think of these narratives as governmental forces, particularly in terms of the extent to which they contributed to people making sense of themselves and acting in specific ways that might serve specific interests. In terms of what interests might be served; a review of literature suggested links to what risk society[6] theorists have described as the late-modern increased individualisation of the management of future risk and opportunity (Beck, 1993; Elliot, 2002; Ford, 1995; Giddens, 1991). There also seemed a link to what has been described as the Neo-liberal effort to create people as individually prudential and responsible for themselves (Apple, 1991; Fitzsimons, 2002; Phoenix, 2003; Marshall, 1995; Mulderrig, 2003). These were the putative links I began to explore in researching what I then began to call 'futurority'. I gave the narratives this name because I wanted a mechanism to render them more discursively distinct.

The next step I took was to try and validate my proposition, or more accurately to give some form to what at that stage were more personal musings than a real proposition.

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[6]Risk theory is an academic discipline that considers how society and individuals distinguish risk from danger and determine what to do about them. Risk theory is interested in how citizens in societies seek to obtain ontological security, particularly under late-modern conditions, and what this then means for their relationship with the future and their own place in that future. Underpinning much of risk theory is the notion that the past has lost power in determining present action and has been replaced as a driving force by considerations of future need, risk and danger. Risk theory purports that under this condition virtualities of risk become amenable to political and economic commodification and exploitation (Beck, 1993; 1999).s

**Initial exploration of the ideas, establishing face validity**

The attempt I made to validate my ideas was grounded not only in the literature, but also in conversations with fellow professionals. These conversations operated as sounding boards, reference groups and informal pilot research. A number of conversations that took place in 2001 were particularly pivotal. My thinking in having these conversations was informed by Patti Lather's (1991) concept of 'face validity' as defined below. These conversations operated to develop the ideas and to explore where the narratives might be observed and what their effects might be. Much of the subsequent work has emerged as a result of these conversations.

> Face validity is relatively complex and inextricably tied to construct validity: Research with face validity provides a click of recognition' and a 'yes of course,' instead of 'yes, but' experience. Face validity is operationalised by recycling description, emerging analysis, and conclusions back through at least a sub sample of respondents
> (Lather, 1991, p. 56).

The people I spoke with in 2001 were four New Zealand European female professionals, a primary school principal, an experienced family therapist, a school counsellor and a lecturer at a College of Education. All of the above were women whose careers had commenced prior to 1990 and who were still active in their fields. Initially in these conversations, I described my speculation that the progressive nature of modernity and the demands of a neo-liberal field formed a powerful narrative (or ideology) with specifying effects on individual's relationships with self, others and the future.

My primary purpose in laying out this idea about future narratives was to validate it, to see if it made sense to others, particularly those who work in education and with children.

To my excitement, the response was overwhelmingly a click of recognition, followed by a 'yes, of course'! In further conversations I then asked my co-conversationalists to speculate about where and how the narratives had effect. I put the question as a comparative one over time; in particular, I was interested in any changes in the narratives, either of quality or quantity, that had occurred since the late nineteen eighties.

The following are a summary of the changes observed subsequent to nineteen ninety as described by the four professionals I spoke with, these were the effects and changes the professionals I spoke with felt were linked to what I was now calling futurority:

- A significant increase of fear and anxiety about the future in primary age children
- A culture of competition increasingly seen amongst children
- An increase in Ministry of Education driven practices of classification of competence amongst children with assessment and classification procedures commencing at earlier and earlier ages
- The increased slanting of curriculum toward future vocation with a resulting decrease in social awareness amongst children
- A push for teachers to ignore and sideline those with little future potential and a corresponding decrease in observable compassion amongst students.
- A high level of fear of failure amongst parents regarding their children's likelihood of future success and a concomitant ruthlessness of approach regarding things such as homework
- The ministry driven loading of primary age children with excessive amounts of homework
- Parents choosing to shift children out of schools perceived as 'soft' even when the children are happy and achieving, and subsequently sending them to 'hard' schools with the expressed intent being to prepare them in facing the tough, competitive demands of the 'real' world.
- A ministry and parental focus on identifying and resourcing the 'winners', those perceived as extraordinarily abled.
- The dominating of children's time with 'useful' for the future activities and the subsequent devaluing of free play.
- A high level of despair about the future, and nihilistic 'moment' driven behaviour amongst teenagers. Seen as perhaps a reaction against a dominating discourse of progress and future focus.
- Teenagers distancing themselves from the adult world and primarily referencing only to the concerns and interests of their own age group.

**How the topic is approached**

Subsequent to these conversations futurority seemed sufficiently validated for me to actively pursue some research, in addition, the question of how individuals behaved in response to these narratives was highlighted. In particular the conversations seemed to indicate that increased individualism and competitiveness was a feature. This also seemed to correlate with what I knew of neo-liberalism (Jesson, 1999; Kelsey, 1995; Marshall, 1995).

The research challenge then became to find a way to examine one set of narratives, narratives of the future, that are interwoven amongst all the other ordinary everyday narratives that people need to make sense of themselves and the world. Interestingly, amongst these other narratives, I have found that time[7] and the future are narratives that are frequently used in studies and in general talk, but are seldom studied as productive concepts themselves (Adams, B. 1995).

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[7] A comprehensive and sophisticated relationship with ideas of time, and movement through time, is integral to all human societies. As Barbara Adams in her excellent book on time suggests, there are no known human cultures lacking either the capacity to imagine, or the language to express, complicated concepts such as "yesterday's tomorrow is today and tomorrow will also have a yesterday" (Adams, 1995, p.25). Adams (1995) suggests that the complexity of the human relationship with time tends in the literature to be reduced to a series of cultural truisms that in appearing to adequately summate instead function to remove the matter from serious consideration. The truisms she identifies revolve around ideas such as western cultures having a linear relationship with time and collectivist cultures having a circular relationship with time. In her opinion (and mine) such truisms act to blinker us to the extent to which modern conceptualisations of time are dividing practices which act to inform our understandings and consequent actions upon what is understood to be a valid or invalid human experience, subjectivity, psyche or way of being.

Within the broader context of society, futurority, or narratives of the future, are hardly distinct objects and only exist, or rather are only discursively rendered into productive meaning as a result of a whole series of other narratives that describe how the self and the world function. It was apparent that to explore futurority I would also have to examine the supporting context of other narratives of the self and the world that not only made futurority seem so sensible and ordinary, but that allowed it to exist at all.

My choice has been to use literature to explore the context of how the late-modern self makes sense of itself, time and the future and what it is about these ways of making sense that allow futurority its discursive and productive grip. I also use limited amounts of education policy and populist media articles and advertisements to pinpoint the narratives of the future.

**A personal position on the work**

My approach is informed by a number of ideas that are important to me. Firstly, there is what I consider an important challenge made by Deleuze and Guattari (1996). Delueze and Guattari assert that all writings about subjects are acts that express aesthetic preferences and (potentially at least) produce subjectivity in line with those aesthetic preferences. Their position is that all dialogue, critical or otherwise about what constitutes or effects subjects always produces an assertion that is a statement of aesthetic preference about subjects and the nature of subjectivity. In other words, to write about subjects is to unavoidably take up an aesthetic position with some degree of productive influence. Deleuze and Guattari argue that anybody writing about subjects should write in such ways that their own aesthetic preferences are admitted. My response to their challenge is to make my position overt throughout the work by incorporating a personal perspective or narrative.

Secondly, and leading on from Deleuze and Guattarri's challenge is that this particular piece of qualitative research is just another narrative amongst many and in offering commentary on narratives of the future is inescapably perspectival. The perspective of course is my own. Qualitative research always has the researcher as central to the sense that is made of the material (Banister, et al, 1994, p2). The point can be made more strongly; that in investigating the habits of narratives of the future I am not examining a piece of data from a particular perspective instead I am constituting the data itself by creating a narrative about it.

Referring to the text[8] analogy as it is used in social research Bruner (1986) makes the following comment:

> It is not that we initially have a body of data, the facts, and we then must construct a story or theory to account for them. Instead…the narrative structures we construct are not secondary narratives about data but primary narratives that establish what is to count as data. New narratives yield new vocabularies, syntax and meaning in our ethnographic accounts; they define what constitute the data of those accounts (p. 143).

My account of futurority while drawing heavily on a wide range of the accounts and ideas of others remains my own account around which the narrative of this text is organised. To make this explicit, I include as much as possible my own organising suppositions, texts, bias and stories. On a more pragmatic note, I've found myself unable to make this story make sense to others or myself without writing myself in to it!

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[8] The text analogy was developed as a mechanism to make sense of the manner in which the ascription of meaning of an event or experience is able to survive across time. That is, experience is organised into meaning subsequent to the moment of experience and continues to be organised afresh in the light of new experience. The text analogy proposes that to be made into sense, experience must be storied and that these accounts or stories of experience can be considered as like texts around which people organise their stock of lived experiences. Hence the meaning of past events is determined by the current, or even future directed interpretation of a story of the past. People then interact around texts, or stories that create meaning and each new reading of the text or interaction with the text involves a new interpretation of the text and hence a rewriting of it (Bruner, 1986; Gergen & Gergen 1984; Geertz 1986).

**Structure of the thesis**

This thesis explores a range of ideas about future narratives and their effect on people. The story that sits behind the story is a sense of outrage on my part that conceptions of the self should ever be considered separately from the political economy. A range of social critics suggest this is more and more the case (Cushman, 1995; Elliot, 2002; Myers; 2003; Reul, 2001; Rose, 1999; Zizek; 2002).

Decisions that seek to influence who people are and how they act in the world become administered as if they were politically neutral. The social response to acts that defy politically aligned subjectifying norms of selfhood increasingly comes from within the portfolio of the medical rather than the political. I believe this to be particularly the case for children.

This thesis seeks for children's sake, my own and my clients to re-connect the political to the personal. In regard to linking the political to the personal in a manner that allows change. I take a position that follows Deleuze and Guattarri (1977 & 1996) that change is a function not just of shifting ideologies, but also of the lived experience of how political and productive forces are encountered and managed at a local level. Hence the instantiation of change that may restrain these productive narratives of the future is likely to be as much a matter of peoples creative response to effects at a local level, as it will be a matter of large-scale shifts in ideology.

**Function and order of following Chapters:**

**Chapter two** discusses the rise of neo-liberalism in the post-keynesian[9] era. How time and the future are considered is placed in a historical context. The chapter considers what has changed in the ways that people conceive of the world, the future and the self under neo-liberal conditions. In line with these changes, the current meanings and context of use of phrases such as; social inclusion and social justice are examined for their potential to produce neo-liberal norms of conduct and selfhood. Neo-liberalism itself is considered as a proselytising virtue ethic that contains a template, norm or fantasy of how the self should conduct itself. Future narratives are proposed as one of the organising principles that both mobilise this template of self-conduct and link it to other prevailing norms of the self. A link is also made to risk theory and discussion is given over to how the late-modern individualisation of managing future risk and danger contribute to making neo-liberal ideals seem more attractive and plausible.

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[9] The post Keynesian era is sometimes referred to as late-modern capitalism or disorganised capitalism and refers to a post nineteen seventies global shift toward a more deregulated, market driven and privatised style of capitalism (Kuttner, 1997).

**Chapter three** discusses the celebration of diversity in the late modern era and the manner in which post-modernism and social constructionism have become tactical lexicons of the modes of social and political action that are sometimes called identity politics[10] (Gergen, 1995). The construction and assertion of identity under these conditions is considered both as a tactic of resistance to dominant normative identity interpellations, and, as an approach to subjectivity that also makes normative temporal demands regarding how subjectivity should be conducted. Consideration is given to how tradition, time and the future are approached within the social movements that aim to legitimate plural identities.

**Chapter four** considers the normative doctrines of identity, subjectivity and time to which postmodernism and social construction attempted a countervailing and critical position. In particular, the chapter focuses on how understandings of the self have developed and become reified into truths of human nature subsequent to the enlightenment. The discussion considers the roles played by modernity, humanism, liberal democracy and psychology in constituting totalising and universalising truths of the human subject. It is proposed that it is these universalised truths of the subject that give future narratives their discursive potency and functional legitimacy. The discussion will include perspectives of modernity, humanism and psychology on human relationships with time, progress and self.

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[10] "Identity politics can be taken to stand for a mode of political activism in which the group generates a self-designated identity (group consciousness) that is instantiated by the individual identities of its constituents…. Identity politics differs from many social movements such as left-wing or fundamentalist christian activism, in that the constituents of the former - such as Women, Afro-Americans, Gays – are politically marked as individuals. Politics and personal being are virtually inseparable" (Gergen, 1995, p.1). In its academic guise, identity politics has made significant use of social constructionist ideas. Social constructionism provides powerful tools for subjugated groups to both deconstruct oppressive determinations of identity and to claim and validate more favourable or preferred versions, or stories of group and individual identity. In addition social constructionism and post structuralism more generally, provide political tools to critique the manner in which socially dominant 'truths' of identity tend to privilege some groups in society while constraining or oppressing others.

**Chapter five** hinges on a distinction between identity and subjectivity. The chapter speculates that the late-modern opening up of space for 'freedom of identity' has come with the cost of a political consequence for how subjectivity is performed. The cost or consequence is the increased legitimation and dissemination of a neo-liberal perspective on human nature and the world and the increased use of this perspective to determine what is a normal human subjectivity.

The argument is made that future narratives are the consensual bridge that make the promises and logics of neo-liberalism attractive to a very diverse range of the contestants of what are sometimes described as the culture wars, or identity wars (Gergen, 1995; Zizek, 2002). What is proposed is that narratives of the future and the self commonly operate as a shared point of reference for contesting groups whose legitimacy of purpose and action may be drawn from sources as different as the totalising verities of science, or the de-constructive rhetoric of the post-modern.

The supposition that this chapter explores is that amongst the late-modern diversities and contestations of culture and identity it is future narratives that form a shared conceptual theme that make sensible to all parties the persuasions and promises of neo-liberalism. The proposal that is put forward in this chapter is that neo-liberalism does not itself offer identity, but has normative power over the performance of subjectivity by the manner in which it offers recipes for how identity may be carried forward into a successful future.

The chapter makes the argument that late-modern diversity or freedom of identity has been accomplished at the cost of a degree of homogenising subjection to templates of subjectivity that are in alignment with neo-liberal ideals.

**Chapter six** considers method, particularly the use of a governmental discourse analytic framework for determining how future narratives both produce and represent particular social forms. The future narratives discussed are taken from education policy, populist media and advertising. The approach used does not pretend to the empirical and hence the argument is made that an overtly perspectival narrative approach is appropriate for the exploration of the material (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988 & 1996).

**Chapter seven** considers childhood and how the child subject is conceived of. This is placed within a historical context. Some discussion is undertaken of what has been described as the increased commodification of education (Lyotard,1984; Marshall, 1995) and how this relates to narratives of the future under late-modern conditions. Speculations are made as to the political and social constituencies that are served by current constructions of childhood, education and future risk.

**Chapter eight** uses a limited range of education policy documents and media narratives to examine the interplay of narratives of the future with constructions of the self in the lives of children, young people and adults. The policy documents are chosen as examples of directive or productive narratives. These are narratives that speak directly about what kind of people it is hoped and intended children will grow up to be. The media narratives are chosen for their demonstration of how the incorporation of future narratives into conceptions of the self has become normalised, and the extent to which this normalised state aligns with neo-liberalism.

The examination of these documents is undertaken from three linked positions: firstly, in terms of narratives of how the world or social field is portrayed; secondly, in terms of narratives of what kind of self people need to be to inhabit the world as the documents purport it to be; and, thirdly, in terms of how these narratives have become ordinary.

**Chapter nine** concludes. The chapter expands on the discussion begun in chapter five and considers implications for children and adults. The role of desire in supporting and reproducing late-modern capitalism is considered. There is then a speculative discussion about what shapes resistance to future narratives might take and what factors might impede or enable resistance.

The chapter concludes with the discussion of some admittedly personal aesthetics of future hope-fullness. These hope-full ideas incorporate the notion that any regime of knowledge that pretends to totalise truths of person-hood also creates sufficient contradictions at the local level that lines of thought and action that escape the regime are automatically traced (Deleuze & Guattari, 1977 & 1996).

**Chapter Two: Neo-liberalism**

My interest in neo-liberalism comes from recognising that in its capacity to mould the approach people take to life it represents a political tool that serves quite specific sections of society.  Neo-liberal ideologies vary, however a shared characteristic of all neo-liberal approaches is the belief that people are able to discern amongst options, are intrinsically capable of choice and are individually responsible for creating their own futures (Packer, 2004). When people are encouraged to understand themselves as individually culpable for their own future well-being then their approach to life and self will be somewhat steered by that understanding. Within the broader paradigms of neo-liberal thought it is narratives about the individuals capacity to control the future that organise and articulate many of these steering ideals of individual well-being, choice and freedom. It has been suggested that the great triumph of neo-liberalism in the last two decades is to have penetrated so far in determining for society what is normal (Apple, 1991; Fitzsimons, 2002). This determination of normality is not limited to economics but also penetrates into how people tend to make sense of what is normal behaviour and what a normal person is.

 In late-modern societies an ideal of the self as an individual, autonomous future-directed chooser is a reasonably unremarkable norm that is reproduced by policy, education and the media. This norm also somewhat aligns with a neo-liberal ethic of the self and it has been argued that the prevalence of this norm is partly a function of the neo-liberal influence on western societies (Apple, 1991). In alignment with this norm, which of course links with the norms of other influential understandings of the self, well-being choice and freedom are presented and understood as a matter of individual culpability and responsibility (Beck, 1999). The notion that one holds ones own future in ones own hands and is responsible for ones own life has become a normative template that is reflected in much of how society organises itself and acts on its citizenry. In particular, the concept of personal freedom is often organised around notions of individual choice and personal responsibility (Bush, 2004).

In regard to the social organisation of the concept of freedom, I follow the question Lenin proposed "that we should always ask whom a freedom under consideration serves?" (cited in Zizek, 2002, p.6).   In this chapter I am interested in whom is served by definitions of choice, freedom and identity[11] that I argue, are increasingly mobilised by a late-modern fantasy of the subject's relationship with time and self.  This fantasy being strongly informed by neo-liberal ideals of how people should be and act (Rose, 1999). I envisage this fantasy as a diffuse yet influential template of subjectivity that by its own internal logic weighs individual choice and agency as possessed of greater power in the world than the constraints and limitations of context.

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[11] Identity can be considered as a process of historically and culturally situated subjectification, in that as Rose states: "If we use the term 'subjectification' to designate all those heterogeneous processes and practices by means of which human beings come to relate to themselves and others as subjects of a certain type, then subjectification has its own history" (1998. p.25). Identity is also a narrative or set of personalised stories  that establishes for the subject a causal nexus through time. Identity is temporal, in that; identity provides a mechanism for subjects to perceive events through time as sequences with a personal meaning that can then determine appropriate response and action. Identity becomes an organising narrative that allows the events in an individuals life to be placed within human frameworks of cause and effect,  purposes and desires,  and, the limitations and opportunities of context. (Polkinghorne, 1988. P's 20 &.21). Deleuze and Guattari (1977) also propose that identity forms one of the many socially mediated exteriorities of forces, actions and injunctions that are woven into what is then experienced and articulated as the interiority of the individual self. This interiority, expereinced as a self with an  identity,   then becoming the loci for the creation of the  meaning of events and the purpose of actions that might be taken. Althusser (1977) also suggests that identity is interpallated into existence, with subjects being called into various identity positions that are then performed. From these view-points; identity can then be seen as both a uniquely personal and individual biography that lends meaning to passage through life and also as constructed around signifiers that are transpersonal and held within cultural and social forms. When this thesis refers to identity both meanings are drawn on. Some authors have suggested that a unique feature of late-modernity is the extent to which identity is portrayed as a mutable commodity amenable to choice. The choice of what manner of identity is performed undertaken in reference to commercial sector logics of gain and loss (Berlin, 1998; Elliot, 2002; Fitzsimmons, 2002). This portrayal of identity as a chosen mutability is positioned in dialogue with those other portrayals of identity that have identity as an irrefutable function of identification with ethnicity, culture, gender and / or sexuality. Both positions are politically subjectifying, in that both position subjects in alignment with, or subject to, a variety of programmes, goals and hopes.

**On a personal note**

I tend to think of this late-modern template of subjectivity as holding that for the well-self all choices are available excepting perhaps to choose to make sense of the self as not having a choice. The attainment of freedom and well being for the healthy individual then becomes the performance of a normative choice-able vision of what freedom is. To stand outside this norm is then to be understood as not well.

In my work as a family therapist I am continually struck at the potency of this specifying vision of freedom. This seems a vision of freedom that understands the self as having a choice in all matters in life. In my observation, it seems to have a special hold over the hearts of parents, horror striking when their children reveal themselves as standing outside this norm. In another area of my life I teach social workers a critical approach to counselling which deconstructs current constructions of self. This is another area in which I frequently observe the influence of the norm of the self as always having a choice about both present conditions and future options.

Perhaps not surprisingly it is a norm most ordinary to those whose choices in life have faced few constraints. Those from backgrounds of less privilege often struggle with this norm. However, what I am often struck by is that the norm of the self as autonomous chooser is seldom critiqued, but what is up for critique are the personal qualities, competence and good sense of those who at times, by virtue of what I would see as constraining context, have been bereft of choices. The onus of fault seems consistently to devolve to the individual rather than to the constraints of circumstance or history. I am impressed by the power of this norm of subjectivity to influence how people make sense of their own experience. The practice and teaching work I do makes me very interested in the power of this norm of the free self and also interested in who is best served by this template of freedom.

**A background to neo-liberalism**

To discuss neo-liberalism it is first necessary to describe the conditions that have allowed it its current prominence. Neo-liberalism became more popular during a time in western societies that is now thought of as representing a disjunctive break (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn & Walkerdine, 1998). This was a time when both economic policies and approaches to how the social world is made sense of were challenged and as a result of these challenges shifts occurred (Kuttner, 1997; Therborn 1995).

The economic context of the nineteen seventies has been described as "failure during the Keynesian watch" (Kuttner, 1997, p.2). Kuttner refers here to a combination of inflation and stagnation experienced globally during the 1970s. Much of the fault was laid at the foot of a Keynesian regulatory approach to the economy. It was in this area that neo-liberal approaches asserted some authority in offering solutions.

During much the same time span of the nineteen sixties and seventies, numerous social groupings now often described as the 'new social movements' critiqued the then social condition as constraining, oppressive and limiting on a number of fronts. Class based understandings of oppression gave ground to a new analysis that incorporated gender, ethnicity and disability (O'Brien & Penna, 1998). The accusation was made that the then current state of affairs served to maintain and support a racist and sexist society. In a degree of alignment with the critiques of the new social movement post-modern approaches also raised the charge that the authority of the institutions of science to deliver universal veracities was bankrupt.

The post-modern perspective suggested that statements purporting to represent universal truths of humanity or the world could more accurately be seen as the articulation of culturally located values that benefited some and constrained others (Lyotard, 1984; Gergen, 1995).

The post-modern critique was taken up in a variety of ways by the new social movements to abrogate attempts to impose norms of identity, sexuality, behaviour and culture (Fraser, 1989; Gergen, 1995; Laclau, 1994). The current late-modern social conditions that are somewhat more tolerant of certain kinds of diversity (Zizek, cited in Reul, 2001) are at least in part, a result of dynamic responses to these challenges and critiques.

It is important to make clear the distinction between the new social movements and neo-liberalism. In very broad stroke, the critical response of the new social movements to Keynesian policies centred around the oppressive effects on subjugated or marginalised groups. The critical response of neo-liberalism, centred instead, on what was claimed to be the stultifying effects of an overly regulated economy. However, a degree of linkage can be drawn between the two different critical positions of neo-liberalism and the new social movements. It was in the hopes for liberation of the new social movements and the promise of neo-liberal policies to liberate potential stultified by a regulated market that a degree of convergence occurred (Rose, 1999).

While the ideals of the neo-liberalism and the ideals of the new social movements are most emphatically not the same, nonetheless, the social and economic field of the current post-keynesian era is a function of how these diverse social and economic hopes, aims and ideals have sought to be answered. As well as the new social movements, neo-liberal philosophies also now play an active role in how late-modern society articulates the nature of identity, freedom, liberation and the expression of potential (Marshall, 1995).

**So what is neo-liberalism?**

Robert Kuttner, (1997) an economist who studies post-Keynesian markets, offers this statement about neo-liberalism:

> There is at the core of the celebration of markets a relentless tautology. If we begin by assuming that nearly everything can be understood as a market and that markets optimise outcomes, then everything leads back to the same conclusion-marketize!  If, in the event, a particular market doesn't optimise, there is only one possible conclusion - it must be insufficiently market-like. This is a no-fail system for guaranteeing that theory trumps evidence. Should some human activity not, in fact, behave like an efficient market, it must logically be the result of some interference that should be removed. It does not occur that the theory mis-specifies human behaviour (Kuttner, 1997, p.3).

Neo-liberal ideas are a further development of liberal ideas that emerged during the early Enlightenment.  At that time, Cartesian-empirical tools of reason and reductionism were applied to bring the natural world into the realm of the reducible, understandable and controllable. These scientific tools were applied to developing theories, or rules of understanding of the natural world of human behaviour and economics. A robust new approach began to sweep the world.  New technologies met with a Cartesian approach, which promised to make all aspects of life reducible to understandable and manageable pieces. In turn, the usage of these new technologies and ideas was put into the service of a laissez-faire approach to understanding the world and humanities place within it. All things were understood to be for sale; and the competitive free market was understood to be the analogy which best explained the functioning of the world. For the first time in history, economic theory took upon itself the mantle of ordained by, and therefore blessed by, the laws of nature. Liberalism, a product of this age of reason was, until 1850, as much a theory of politics as economics (O'Brien & Penna, 1998).

Politically, liberalism is concerned with a very particular conception of liberty or freedom for the individual; that is, the freedom to choose in an unrestrained manner. Within liberal thought this freedom is best achieved, or perhaps only achievable, within an unrestrained and free market.

Equality is also an important political concept within liberalism, where it is understood to mean equality of opportunity rather than equality of ability or outcome. Liberalism is implacably hostile to attempts to equalise outcomes for individuals. Equalising outcomes is understood to threaten the greater freedom of fairness of opportunity within an unrestrained market. The 'process' of market interaction is perceived as the best and only fair determinator of outcome. Anything, such as government regulation, which restrains the free flow of the market, is understood to restrain the 'process' that delivers human freedom, choice and liberty.

The entrepreneur, understood as someone who creatively responds to market forces of supply and demand, plays a special and honoured role within liberalism. Entrepreneurs are regarded as both exemplars of how to be and the driving force of societal well-being. The successful entrepreneur is competitive, autonomous and quickly adapts to market forces. Entrepreneurs understand themselves as responsible as individuals for creating their own desired outcomes, outcomes that are understood to be a consequence of the choices they freely make within, and in response to, the market place (Jesson, 1999).

Neo-liberal ideas are the extension of liberal ideas further into the realms of social, political and, in particular, personal interaction. The metaphor of the market, which under liberal thought was somewhat confined to goods and services, is extended as a moral guide into every arena of human life. All interactions are understood as contractual and contestational. The overt expansion of markets into new areas and the creation of new markets are seen as serving moral ends.

Paul Treanor offers this definition of what distinguishes neo-liberalism from earlier liberalism.

> The belief in the market, in market forces, has separated from the factual production of goods and services. It has become an end in itself, and this is one reason to speak of neo-liberalism and not of liberalism. A general characteristic of neo-liberalism is the desire to intensify and expand the market, by increasing the number, frequency, repeatability, and formalisation of transactions. Neo-liberalism is not simply an economic structure, it is a philosophy. This is most visible in attitudes to society, the individual and employment. Neo-liberals tend to see the world in terms of market metaphors. Neo-liberals tend to believe that humans exist for the market, and not the other way around: certainly in the sense that it is good to participate in the market, and that those who do not participate have failed in some way. In personal ethics, the general neo-liberal vision is that every human being is an entrepreneur managing their own life, and should act as such (2003, p.11).

It would be incorrect to suggest that neo-liberalism has supplanted liberalism. Neo-liberalism is perhaps more accurately seen as an umbrella term that describes those variants of liberalism that have extended the market metaphor further into the realms of human function than the originators of liberalism might have imagined possible or even desirable (Treanor, 2003). Another of the ways in which, some theorists at least, view neo-liberalism as varying somewhat from earlier liberalism, is that it does not reference as much as liberalism to discourses of morality that are exterior to its own philosophical propositions. Neo-liberalism is perhaps more tautologically complete in asserting the validity of its propositions by reference to its own moral philosophy (Ford, 1995; Marshall, 1995).

**Neo-liberal ideas  in education**

The history of New Zealand education is a history of somewhat time lagged changes that tend to reflect the political philosophies, imperatives and ideals of the government of the time  (Alcorn, 1999). Like other political philosophies, various neoliberal ideas have had an impact on schooling in New Zealand (Marshall, Peters & Smith, 1991).

Because neo-liberalism varies, with some tensions and differences in accent between its philosophical strands, it is unsurprisingly that these tensions were evidenced in how neo-liberalism was expressed in New Zealand education policies. In what follows I will outline some of the tensions or differences within neo-liberal thought, and then I will give a brief example of how these differences contributed to education policy in New Zealand.

The difference between neo-liberal strands is perhaps most apparent in how individualism is understood and in the role or capacity of individual rationality. For instance, followers of Hayek [12] tend to view individual reason as a modest force in the evolution of a satisfactory society and understand a healthy society to be an unintended outcome of the aggregate actions of many individuals freely competing in a free market.

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[12] Hayek was an economist, philosopher, author and educator who taught at the United Kingdom, 'London School of Economics'. He is sometimes credited with being the father of neo-liberalism (Hill, 1998). Hayek proposed that people freely associating in the market place naturally develop institutions, moral codes and social procedures to serve social needs, these might range from families to churches to business associations to social associations. Hayek viewed such natural developments as infinitely superior to state imposed or regulated solutions such as state welfare. Hayek asserted that imposed solutions to social problems will always lack the wisdom of the solutions generated by free people freely associating in a free market place. In effect, Hayek suggests that the sum of interactions of a free people competitively interacting in the market place produces vastly more intelligent solutions to social difficulties than deliberate social planning can achieve. Within this view the development of a moral society is a function of the free interaction of free individuals in an unrestrained market place. Regulatory social planning by the hand of man is understood to harm the development of social morality. This analysis is of course also amenable to a religious interpretation. Perhaps more than any other liberal theorist, Hayek's theoretical work is understood to have provided a conceptual bridge that made logical the joining of the forces of conservatism and liberalism. This joint movement is sometimes referred to as the 'New Right'.  The theoretical bridge developed in Hayek's work perhaps explains the puzzle of why neo-liberalism has been so attractive to a small number of conservative Christian groupings. This is particularly the case in the United States of America.  Followers of neo-liberalism are sometimes rather scathingly referred to as 'Hayek's acolytes' (Hill, 1998; O'Brien & Penna, 1998).

Another important theorist, Nozick, also views the free-market as essential to social health, but goes further to claim that social health is a function of free choice made by a considered individual rationality. Nozick holds that the prerequisite to freedom (a free society) is the right to gain and own property. For Nozick, freedom and social well-being are a function of the free individual being able to appropriate a portion of the world so that rational aims purposes and goals can be pursued.

The theories of Hayek and Nozick understand the ideal role of the state in maintaining freedom slightly differently. Hayek would see that it is critical that the state allow the market free reign; as freedom and well being for the individual are more a function or product of an unrestrained market than of individual rationality. Nozick however, would accent the importance of the state protecting property rights so that the individual can be free to pursue his own goals autonomously (and rationally). For Nozick, freedom and social wellbeing are a function of the individual being able to make unrestrained (rational) choices about the uses of their own property.

Perhaps a simple way of saying this is that each would define a good life differently. Nozick would define a good life as a function of the freedom of the individual to choose wisely. Whereas, Hayek would have that while individual decisions are insufficiently informed to be wise, the aggregate of multiple choices in the form of competitive market forces functions wisely in providing the conditions for a good life.

What is shared though, is that both approaches uphold the individual self, competition and the autonomous freedom to choose in the market as central to wellbeing. Both approaches view the actions of the individual undertaken on their own behalf as contributing more to social wellbeing than actions taken on behalf of any putative collective. It is an axiom of both approaches that the only effective mode of social planning is that mode which increases freedom of choice for the individual. Social planning which restricts choice, either by limiting choice for the individual, or limiting the reach of the competitive market, is understood to diminish wellbeing.

As a number of authors have argued, neo-liberal philosophies of different kinds have had extensive influence on education policy in the United Kingdom, Australia and America (Apple, 1991; Ferrier & Anderson, 1998; Meyers, 2004; Mulderrig, 2003). As the following example elaborates the two neo-liberal approaches described above have also had an influence on education in New Zealand.

In their examination of the 1990 moves toward the privatisation of education in New Zealand, Marshall, Peters and Smith (1990) identified the ideas of both Nozick and Hayek in operation:

> In the latest new right (neo-liberal) document to surface in New Zealand (Sexton, 1990) there is, we believe a version of individualism that is a mixture of Hayek and Nozick. Sexton in his argument toward privatisation says that we should have an education system of
>
> > - all self managing schools
> >
> > - real parental choice
> >
> > - competition within the system
>
> -funding largely on a per pupil basis
>
> (Sexton cited in Marshall, Peters & Smith, 1990, p.89).

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In alignment with the ideas of both Hayek and Nozick, Sexton's (1990) report promoted both increased reach of the competitive market into education and increased choice and ownership for individual consumers of education. This report on New Zealand education was commissioned in 1989 by the Business Round Table, a NZ neo-liberal organisation, and subsequently formed the basis of Treasury advice to the New Zealand Ministry of Education. The majority of the policy advice in this report was subsequently put into action within New Zealand schools (Marshall et al, 1990).

As outlined, even differing neo-liberal ideologies regard the healthy individual in much the same ways: as self-responsible and prudential, able to move through time making choices in a considered and self-interested manner. In terms of creating social and individual wellbeing: one strand accents the wisdom of individuals, the other accents the wisdom of the sum of individuals in the form of the market. There is little actual difference in terms of how the world is understood or what is held to be an ideal kind of person. The ideal of the individual as the active driver of their own lives, one whom is future-orientated, choice-able and unrestrained in their choices is understood by all the strands of neo-liberalism as the bedrock of the good society (Jesson,1997; Kelsey, 1995; O'Brien & Penna, 1998).

**The promotion of neo-liberalism as the natural condition**

A range of thinkers have suggested that neo-liberal thought flows from the view that the world is a competitive field of interaction between entities that need and want resources (Apple,1991; Jesson, 1999; Kelsey, 1995; Polanyi, 1965).The nature of the field or its rules of function are determined by the need for the entities of that field to manage, via interaction, the allocation of resources. A Neo-liberal view has it that the allocation of resources always involves a degree of contestation of one form or another. The larger field itself is considered to be maintained in a state of healthy dynamic equilibrium by the association of entities interactively contesting for resources. Contestation for resources might take the form of accommodation and trading, or of outright competition, or both. What determines the competence of any entity or grouping of entities is their success at acquiring sufficient resources for their needs.

Success at gaining resources for one entity or grouping is quite likely to mean another entity or grouping does not succeed. For one to succeed at the cost of another failing is not viewed as immoral or incorrect, but rather as a reflection of both how resources are naturally managed in the world and as a healthy function that maintains the world in a state of equilibrium.  This description of the world is not seen by neo-liberals as one metaphor amongst many that might describe the world, but instead as an accurate reflection of how things truly are. This explanatory narrative, or series of discourses of the worlds function has been described as related to by neo-liberals as "revealed truth rather than contestable logic"  (Myers, 2004). This understanding of the world is often summarised by recourse to the familiar metaphor of the market place.

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Bourdieu suggests that in late modernity the neo-liberal 'market' discourse is not just one explanatory discourse amongst many, but rather a "'strong discourse' in the same way psychiatry is a strong discourse in an asylum" (cited in Phoenix, 2003, p.3).

Much of the successful promotion of neo-liberal policies and philosophies can also be attributed to success in promoting its description of the world as a competitive field as: "the common-sense and natural way to understand the world" (George,1999). Once the world becomes understood in this way then the implementation of neo-liberal policies becomes simply a logical matter of responding sensibly to what the realities of the world demand. In New Zealand this was sometimes described as the T.I.N.A principle. (There is no alternative).

Michael Apple, writing in 1990 about the rise of the new right in America, follows Gramsci in asking the question: "the first thing to ask about an ideology is not what is false about it, but what is true. What are its connections to lived experience" (1990, p.8). Apple suggests that the effectiveness of neo-liberal ideology in re-presenting the world as a field of naturally competitive, choosing individuals was not simply a function of persuasion, but also a function of a capacity to link with widely held concerns, aspirations and fears in society. In particular, Apple saw this linking undertaken in relation to the perceived failure of Keynesian policies and also the rise to public prominence of the new social movements. He asserts: "What has been accomplished has been a successful translation of an economic doctrine into the language of experience, moral imperative and common sense" (1990, p.8).

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Neo-liberals have also used other methods to attempt cultural hegemony in determining for society the nature of the world. George (2003) suggests that neo-liberal advocates thoroughly understand Gramci's idea of cultural hegemony and have built a highly efficient cadre of institutes, foundations, research centres and publicists. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent promoting their ideology. George asserts that for neo-liberals this is money well spent as they have had some success in making a competitive market view of the world seem the natural and normal condition of humankind.

The extent to which a neo-liberal view of the world as a field of competition has become normal and normative is somewhat evidenced by how social justice, inclusion and equality are now made sense of, even by those governments who purport not to be advocates of neo-liberalism.

For example, subsequent to the year 2000, a political shift occurred in New Zealand and the United Kingdom with the re-introduction to education of themes of inclusion, equality and social justice by Labour governments. However; the re-introduction of these themes has not meant that neo-liberal norms are no longer promoted in education. Rather, the development amongst youth of norms, skills and values such as prudentiality, self-responsibility and competitiveness tends now to be promoted as the only way that equality, inclusion and social justice can be achieved.

The not so subtle shift is that these attributes in children are portrayed as necessary for individuals to do well in the purported natural world of competitive individuals, groups and nations. In accordance with this purported natural world, the role of education in preparing people for life, is not to protect them or promise good outcomes, but instead to equip them to compete. The nature of the world of the world operates as an un-debated given, what is left to debate and then administer, is how best to up-skill children so as to thrive in the world.

From the perspective of governance, to achieve social justice is then to be effective at increasing individual skills at competing. In line with this, UK educational theorist and third way critic Jane Mulderrig (2003) asserts that under the Blair Labour Government there has been a re-figuring of policy language and its meaning. The government now positions itself as; via education and the promotion of lifelong-learning, 'enabling' citizens to live in the 'real competitive market world' of globalisation. In her view, the portrayal of a market world as incontestably the 'real world' operates to mask the extent to which policy and government action is complicit in producing a globalised, competitive and individualised world that requires citizens to individually entrepreneur their own lives. Mulderrig states:

> They *(3$^{rd}$ way Education policy)* draw respectively on a traditional right-wing discourse, in which a thematic focus on standards in education is articulated within a complex of nationalist discourses (Stubbs, 1996), and a broadly social democratic discourse of *equality of opportunity*. They simultaneously evoke popular fears about failure and moral concerns with social justice. This weaving together of apparently contradictory right and left wing views illustrates the way in which New Labour rhetoric redefines social justice as the widening of opportunity to enter into competition – as Ainley (1999) puts it, 'creating opportunities to fail'. Equality and justice have been redefined as the right to succeed in an open competition; it ignores the fact that in any competition there must be losers as well as winners, moreover the social, economic and cultural advantage of some mean that the competition can never be absolutely fair  (Mulderrig, 2003, p. 6).

Mulderigg's analysis that social justice, participation and equality have been re-figured in meaning so as to support and promote norms of competition, prudentiality and self-responsibility also shows good fit with current New Zealand Labour education policy as will be further detailed in Chapter eight.

As Mulderrig's work explores, Government is able to re-position itself not as an active agent promoting a certain philosophy of life but rather as a benign 'we' caught in the same 'realities' of globalisation as every body else. The norm of the world as a competitive field becomes the unquestioned given that demands an accommodation equally from all citizens. Coercive processes of governance become less visible. Rather than an active agent influencing how the world functions, government portrays itself as a re-active 'we' doing its best to respond on the behalf of future citizens to the immutable realities of the competitive world. The productive power of government policy in creating the world as a competitive field is obscured or justified by its presentation as merely responsive to the immutable realities of globalisation.

Mulderrig asserts:

> Linking success and by implication failure with individual commitment and aspirations, potentially acts as a powerful form of social control. Not only does it establish a practice of lifelong learning and individual adaptability, with which to occupy and appease the unemployed, but it constitutes a  form, of self regulation in which the individual is responsible for and invests, through learning, in her own success. The coercive force comes not from the government, which is constructed as a facilitator, but from the implicit laws of the market. The lifelong learning policy is often described as a response to the instability in the labour market and the demands of the economy for rapid technological development, by creating a highly skilled, motivated and adaptive learning society. However, rather than being a 'response' to the globalised economic system, I would argue that this learning policy constitutes a key ideological mechanism in actively constructing and legitimising globalisation and our roles in it (2003, p. 5).

**How Neo-liberalism understands the self**

Moral philosophers call Neo-liberalism a 'virtue ethic' in that it offers the ideal of the autonomous, choosing entrepreneur as a model or template for human behaviour and ways of being. This model of the ideal self as autonomous, self interested, choosing entrepreneur is somewhat unique to neo-liberalism and differentiates it somewhat from early liberalism (Fitzsimons, 2003).

Self-improvement, education and attaining new skills form key components of the neo-liberal ethic of how the ideal self behaves. Education is seen as a life-long process, not for love of learning, but for the purposes of improving or re-forming the self so that maximum flexibility is maintained in responding to the needs and demands of the market. Within this ethic, knowledge and education are commodities to re-form individual identity in ways desirable to employers so that autonomy within the market is maintained (Lyotard, 1984). From the perspective of this ethic of the self, the correlate of personal freedom is the continual re-forming of the self into alignment with the needs of the market. To fail, which is to be judged inadequate by the market, is understood to mean choosing to be insufficiently flexible. Freedom carries the responsibility of adopting a subjective philosophy that outcomes of success and failure are a function of free choice.

There is a coda to the mutable personal identity encouraged by the neo-liberal ethic. To approximate the ideal subjectivity that allows the self to be sufficiently fluid or changeable so as to re-form itself as desirable to the market means paradoxically, that in some of the important ways people subjectively align themselves, they are required to be the same.

To be successful at personal identity flexibility means to some extent being subject to the market truths of the self that underlie the necessity for mutability. The needs of the market and what life within the market metaphor requires us to 'be', call for the standardising and homogenising of how subjectivity is both undertaken and how it regards itself.  Citizens of all ages are urged to govern themselves as projects in continual personal development so as to better be responsible for their own lives. In New Zealand and the United Kingdom one of the main trajectories of this governance are education policies that promote life-long learning.

Neo-liberalism as a project does not make much distinction between subjectivity and identity. For the purposes of this thesis, it is important that this distinction be made clear. Neo-liberalism (in as much as it can be spoken of in the singular) understands personal identity to be mutable and tends to view identity as a necessary series of projects of re-inventing the self.

These projects are understood to be deserving of much effort, particularly educational. The identity projects and the efforts that go into them are urged by the purported need to re-make the self to thrive better in what is presented as the only possible natural world, the competitive market. Much effort goes into these projects; both personal effort on the part of individual subjects and governmental effort to convince citizens of the necessity. In line with this, Olsen & Mathews (1997) suggest that:

> In the shift from classical liberalism to neo-liberalism, then there is a further element added for such a shift involves a change in subject position from 'homo economicus' who naturally behaves out of self interest and is relatively detached from the state to 'manipulatable man' who is created by the state and who is continually encouraged to be perpetually responsive. It is not that the conception of the self-interested subject is replaced or done away with by the new ideals of neo-liberalism, but that in an age of universal welfare, the perceived possibilities of slothful indolence create necessities for new forms of vigilance, surveillance, performance appraisal and of forms of control generally. In this new model the state has taken upon itself to keep us all up the mark. The state will see to it that each one of us makes a 'continual enterprise of ourselves' (Gordon, 1991) in what seems to be a process of 'governing without governing' (Rose, 1993) (Olsen & Mathews, 1997, p. 22).

The need of the market that citizens continually re-invent themselves, either precludes attention to what kind of subject one is required to be to endlessly undertake such a Sysiphean project, or, the attainment of this very specific mode of subjectivity is simply celebrated as healthy normality.

Neo-liberalism promotes little effort of thought and has little to say on what its norms require of subjectivity. Just as the natural field is pre-supposed to be the market, the natural self is presupposed to be one that is capable of what the field demands the subject be. The subjectivity of the self as individualised mutable autonomous chooser is not presented so much as a desired state, but instead quite simply, the normal state of human beings. The accomplishment of individual freedom becomes the conscious application of the inherent (normal) faculty of self-interested choice. This understanding of the free choosing self was tidily summarised by the American President, George W Bush, in his 2004 speech of acceptance of the Republican nomination:

> Many of our most fundamental systems - the tax code, health coverage, pension plans, worker training – were created for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow, Bush said. "We will transform these systems so that all citizens are equipped, prepared – and thus truly free – to make your own choices and pursue your own dreams"
> (Bush, cited in New Zealand Herald, 4.9.2004, p. B14 my emphasis).

What neo-liberalism as a philosophy does not address is that to be free according to its norms is to be subject to its norms and assumptions about the natural world and the natural self of that world. In effect, the state of freedom is the state of being subject to the revealed truth of the market as to what is natural, normal, healthy and desirable (Phoenix, 2003). This state of subjection is particularly so, when considering the frequent reiteration in late-modern life, of the conflation of choice with freedom. Fitzsimmons (2003) has the following to say:

> The theory of the autonomous chooser does not presume that choosers merely act in a choosing way but seems to postulate a 'faculty of choice' (a la Kant) that must be exercised in order for the individual to be whole (Fitzsimons, 2003, p.7).

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Neo-liberal social and economic interventions create an enterprise culture where the supposedly inherent faculty of choice is exercised with accelerating frequency. This was seen in education through the 1990s in New Zealand where parental choice and offering freedom of choice to young adults was used as the rationale for wide sweeping reforms. James Marshall (1995) of Auckland University, who studied the reforms and their underlying rationale summarises the situation as follows:

> Underlying many of the recent educational "reforms," their literature and the new practices and processes, are notions of freedom and choice. Students, parents, etc are presumed to be capable of deliberating upon alternatives and choosing between alternative educational programs according to individual needs, interests and the qualities of programs. Here it seems to be presumed that it is part of the very nature of being human to want to make continuous consumer style choices. But the normal notions of autonomy needed to make choices, and the notion of needs and interests, presupposes that such choices are the students (or choosers) own, that as choosers they are independent, and that needs and interests have not been manipulated or imposed in some way upon them (Marshall, 1995, p. 2).

These sorts of freedom driven reforms extend the need to choose further into people's lives. The equation of the increased exercise of the faculty of choice as the increased realisation of freedom drives the expansion of enterprise choice culture and in doing so, also positions the neo-liberal ideal of the autonomous choosing self as an attractive norm of well-being.
Marshall (1995) suggests:

Now it seems choice cannot be resisted. It is not just that human beings are autonomous, or that their autonomy can be developed, or that it is a duty to exercise autonomy, but instead there seems to be constituent faculty of choice which is necessarily exercised continuously on commodities, and which sweeps aside or overrides the traditional categories and frameworks of the human sciences on human nature (Marshall, 1995, p. 6).

If there is a set of values inherent to neo-liberalism, the value of choosing and its presumed correlate freedom are central to its assumptions of what are essential commodities of human well-being. The matter of values is a critical area to consider when discussing neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism as a moral philosophy does not tend to reference to any external grand narrative to legitimate its values. Fitzsimons (2003) asserts:

In a neo-liberal culture (as in any other), the individual is usually unknowingly implicated in creating a subjectivity that fits within the prevailing political rationality. And, as Marshall has argued through his notion of neo-liberalism, neo-liberalism (unlike liberalism) has no internal spaces within which to contest values (Fitzsimons, 2003, p. 12).

Neo-liberal philosophies have been described as tautological and lacking in internal discursive platforms able to question their own values and assumptions about the world and the nature of human beings (Phoenix, 2003). A neo-liberal approach to values is pragmatic. Some kinds of values are held to be good, not in reference to an external moral framework, but rather in reference to their utility as commodities. It might be said that the neo-liberal mechanism for determining ethics or values is contained not within its own philosophy but instead within the mechanisms of the market that determine the utility of any given values position. Unsurprisingly then, the values that are idealised and promoted by neo-liberalism are the market proven personal values that enable the self to function well in their ideal world of a free, choice rich, deregulated, market driven, capitalist society.

Edith Packer (2004) a psychologist with the "Jefferson School" (an American institute promoting neo-liberal and capitalist ideas) has defined the personal values and attitudes necessary for the individual to function well in a 'free' (neo-liberal) society. These values and attitudes are:

- A willingness on the part of the individual to accept responsibility for his own life
- An acceptance that the self is unique and special
- A belief that the self is worthy of good things and happiness and hence is entitled to seek after good things and happiness.
- An adventurous attitude that believes the world and reality to be attainable, comprehensible and conquerable.
- An understanding that the locus of control over events in ones life is internal not external. This means two things: current circumstances are understood to be a function of past choices – and, the individual is in control of the choices that determine their future.
- A respectful attitude to others that holds them to be more likely rational and decent rather than malicious

Edith Packer understands that holding these values (or being subject to such ideals of subjectivity) to be absolutely necessary for people to have the kind of identity that allows them to be functioning citizens of a free (capitalist) world (Parker, 2004, p. 5).

Other values that might understand the self as driven or controlled by supra-personal concerns or forces are likely to be viewed by neo-liberals as probable evidence of disturbance. At the least, to hold such values diminishes the chances of the individual establishing a mode of self that allows them to be a functioning citizen. Packer states that those who adhere to values that see the self as impoverished of choice - or who do not take full personal responsibility for their lives, are unfit to function in a free society and in need of psychological help. She puts it eloquently in her statement "The essential psychological requirement of a free society is the willingness on the part of the individual to accept responsibility for his life" (Packer, 2004, p. 4).

Within neo-liberal paradigms, values are debated only inasmuch as to further their promotion as necessary commodities for survival. This offers the well-used rationale that promoting neo-liberal values of independence and self responsibility is nothing more than a responsible act to assist citizens and future citizens to do better in the natural and ideal world of the market. Some authors also argue that neo-liberalism is so successful in promoting its values because success is attributed to adherence to its norms - and failure is attributed to the individual who has failed to live up to its norms. If the subject fails, they have failed themselves (Fitzsimmons, 2002; Hill, 1998).

Rose also asserts, neo-liberalism is so successful because, through the processes of governmentality, the neo-liberal project:

> achieves its effects not through the threat of violence or constraint, but by way of persuasion inherent in its truths, the anxieties stimulated by its norms and the attraction exercised by the image of life and self it offers (1999, p. 10).

He adds that under neo-liberal governance:

> The responsible citizen must be independent and autonomous or be: 'non-citizens, failed citizens, anti-citizens….those who are unable or unwilling to enterprise their lives or manage their own risk (1999, p. 331).

The norms of neo-liberalism taken as revealed truth about the world and human functioning lend urgency to ensuring that future individuals are made fit to take their place in the market. Specific logics of action become seen as necessary. In terms of education it seems likely that these logics have meant that schools are urged to implement the following:

- The encouragement of  competitive attitudes;

- Education re-figured as vocational training in preparation for the future;

- Frequent cautioning of children that the future is potentially hostile territory unless one is well prepared;

- Encouraging internal self-assessment for fitness and capacity;

- Encouraging a view of the self and its attributes and accomplishments as a commodity for the future;

- Encouraging a belief that the competent individual can 'choose' to be a success;

- Encouraging an individualist approach, rather than a collective one, as success for all is seen as dependent on the actions of individuals not the larger collective.  (Marshall, 1995; Olsen, 1997; Stephens, 1995)

The encouragement of these attitudes and norms is of course not something that can be laid completely at the feet of neo-liberal policies. It is also reflective of the pervading centralisation of the individual in how late-modern thought makes sense of risk, danger, opportunity and success. Risk society theory identifies a generalized post-Keynesian shift in where the responsibility for managing risk is understood to lie. Responsibility for managing the risks of the future has tended to become less collectively held and more individually held (Pavlich, 2001; O'Malley, 2001).

The shift in approach can be illustrated by comparing the thinking that informed Keynesian era polices to the thinking it might be imagined informs current policies. For instance, In the Keynesian era, prudence and reflexivity tended to be undertaken (somewhat and partially) on behalf of the individual by the state sector. This was sometimes characterized as the cradle to grave welfare system. This governing care for the well-being of individuals was understood by social engineers such as Lord Beveridge, designer of the English welfare system as, (at least partially), an important function of the larger collective undertaken on behalf of individuals (Williams, 1989 cited in O'Brien, et al, 1998).

In the latter parts of the Keynesian era when change was in the wind, attitudes like the aforementioned were sometimes lampooned as the 'Nanny state' (Kelsey, 1993). The collective management of risk and well-being was seen to undermine individual initiative, choice, freedom, well-being and identity. In late-modernity the attitude more tends to hold that individual and collective well-being are best served by prudence and reflexivity being the responsibility of the individual. Just as during the Keynesian era systems of governance reflected and created the thinking of the time, so too do current systems of governance reflect and create current thinking.

Unsurprisingly this thinking is reproduced in late-modern education policy and practice and in the kinds of people it is intended that young people should grow up to be. The linkage of well-being to individual prudence and reflexivity also offers neo-liberalism an ideal opportunity to present its policies and norms as the perfect vehicle for the perfection of the responsible prudential self.

## Fantastic grand narratives of the self, risk and well-being

The late modern post keynesian era, is sometimes described as an age in which a degree of faith has been lost in the grand narratives[13] of science and progress and in which the politics of class have been replaced with the politics of pluralism and difference (Henriques et al, 1998). Arguably, neo-liberalism contributes an influential strand of thought to this era (George, 1999; Marshall, 1995).

If, as has been alleged the grand narratives of progress and science carry less weight in late-modernity, then that is not to say that the phenomena of grand narratives influencing how people function and interpret the world has disappeared. Rather I suggest that the rise of pluralism and the diminishment of faith in science to provide progress for all; have not abolished the influence of grand narratives, but instead made room for a new series of grand narratives whose stories about progress are a little different. Perhaps these late-modern grand narratives are less normatively concerned with prescribing the identity forms of either individuals or groups, and instead more normatively concerned with how subjects conduct their approach to attaining and using what is purported to be a freedom of identity (Rose, 1999)?

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[13] A grand narrative is of course an influential shared social story containing norms and understandings of the world that are widely adhered to and acted on as truths. In an age where modern communication networks and social practices spread normative stories quickly, effectively and with authority, shared grand narratives are thought to be now more broadly influential than was the case in pre-modern eras. A variety of social practices such as medicine, education and the media present grand narratives about the world and human function as if they were universally applicable verities (Giddens, 1994). Put simply, there are a range of influential, hard to avoid, social forces which steer people to understand the world and how people function in much the same sorts of ways. Grand narratives are social platforms, which offer or even mandate perspectives on how life may be made sense of. Grand narratives operate as mechanisms that determine how other narratives are made sense of, or are interpreted. They are stories about other stories rather than stories about themselves. The focus of attention of grand narratives is not on the validity of their own propositions but rather on the validity of that which they are used to make sense of (Nuyen, 1995).

There is arguably an increased heterogeneity of identity in late-modern capitalist societies.  This is reflected in policy and media rhetoric that celebrates diversity and choice, both in terms of how individualised biographies of identity are performed, and also in terms of group identity performed around cultural, ethnic and sexual signifiers (Zizek, 2001). However, it seems likely that this increased freedom of individual and group identity has come at a normative cost. The cost is a homogenisation or standardisation of what is understood to be the nature of the well or competent human subject that is then by virtue of its nature, able to effectively choose how to make use of a range of identity options and positions. This more homogenised or standardised vision of the choice-able subject then becomes the subject that is administered to, or governed, by medicine, psychology, social policy, media and education.

The New Zealand education focus on the development in children of individual capacities of choice, responsibility, personal prudence, goal setting and high self-esteem while also fostering both diversity and strength of identity provides one example of how this ideal of healthy subjectivity is governed. These personal subjective capacities become understood as mechanisms that are necessary to allow the formation and maintenance of strong and effective identities that may then be either formatted around individual biography or identification with a group or more commonly both.  A strong cultural and / or personal identity and the aforementioned subjective modes and capacities are portrayed as co-extensive and unable to exist without each other.

What I am suggesting is that it is not so much the final product of identity that is now normatively governed or disciplined, but rather what is governed in increasing detail is the recipe for accomplishing identity. Put simply, while there has been an expansion of what is celebrated or allowed in terms of expression of identity, the capacities and processes that are deemed necessary for the effective expression of identity have become an area that is administered to in a standardised manner. Neo-liberal ideals and narratives of the future play an informative role in the governing of this new story of how identity freedom is to be accomplished.

Of course it is not just stories of free identities that are mobilised by narratives of the future and neo-liberalism, it is also stories of threat, risk and future dangers to be avoided. Perhaps what has somewhat replaced or overlapped the collective narrative of progress for humanity toward a better future are narratives about the need for personal prudence and the development of individual potential. These narratives dictate that individual subjects, and indeed groups formatted around specific cultural or ethnic signifiers need to be responsibly prudent in managing future risks and also responsible for developing or expanding their potential so as to be well positioned to take advantage of future opportunities.

In regard to these risk-avoidant and self developing narratives of the future, and the ways in which they influence the norms of the late-modern social environment, Ulrich Beck (1995), one of the seminal authors of risk theory, states that in late-modern society:

> The perception of threatening risks determines thought and action (Beck, 1995, p. 137).

And:

> The past loses its power to determine the present and its place as the cause of present day experience is taken by the future, that is to say, something non-existent constructed and fictitious (Beck, 1995, p. 139).

Beck's thinking parallels Henriques' et al. (1998) suggestion that science has lost some credence as a grand narrative. Beck suggests that the reassurances of scientific verities of 'what is dangerous' and what 'will be dangerous' tend to now be understood not as universal verities, but simply shades of opinion. Beck argues that in the late-modern era, the perception of risk is unavoidably multiply construed, speculative and virtual. He asserts that no particular regime of thought or tradition provides reliable certainty about future risks. This lack of certainty means that the onus of deciding what is a risk, and how should it be attended to is splintered out, multiply contested, and somewhat individualised.

Attaining ontological security then becomes an endeavour that is the responsibility of the individual. This is sometimes described as the late-modern individualising and responsibilising of risk management (Phoenix, 2003). What risk society thinking identifies is a social space that can be made good use of by neo-liberal promises to strengthen individual capacity.

**Risk governance and the neo-liberal self**

Pavlich, (2000) suggests risk driven governance achieves three effects:

1. Markets are increased.

2. The neo-liberal ideal of the responsible prudential self is optimised

3. The increased authority of disciplinary state power / knowledge regimes to stipulate and determine the nature of what constitutes a responsible or risky subjectivity are justified by the 'logics of risk'.

Pavlich argues that under risk logic regimes citizens become both more willingly subject to surveillance as potential risks themselves, and adopt the subjective understanding that protecting oneself from risk is an individual rather than collective responsibility (2000, p.134). The rather fascinating twist to this is that making the self, (or ones children) available to surveillance which screens for potential risk factors, is configured as a process of taking responsibility for ones own freedom and safety.

Pavlich contends that the frequent media reiteration that people are at 'risk from crime' also operates as a governmental strategy in service to the neo-liberal aim of responsibilising citizens so that they take individual charge of their own safety and by doing so create new markets. The future is portrayed as a site of potential danger and gains more influence over both how citizens then conduct themselves, and also importantly, in what are then understood to be the legitimate activities of the state.

In addition to individuals becoming responsible for their own safety, Pavlich suggests the creation of an understanding that we are at 'risk from crime' (and now terrorism) nourishes political rationales and power knowledge regimes that create many groups and individuals as problematic dangerous subjectivities to be monitored and controlled.

State actions of surveillance and control performed upon those we are made to fear are justified by political rationales of the risk they either currently present, or may one day present. Once individuals accept their 'responsibilised' status they are then, by virtue of accepting the individual freedom of managing risk created as ideal customers of new markets and, as more responsibly amenable to actions of surveillance and control.

The individuation of needing to manage the risk of crime is also somewhat in alignment with the retreat of government services from health, education and welfare provision. Safety, like health and education becomes a commodity that the individual must be prudentially responsible enough to ensure is on hand.

The rather interesting paradox is that along side the withdrawal of the state from some areas of people's lives there has been an increase in state processes of intervention, assessment and surveillance in other areas of peoples lives (Papadopolous, 2004; Olsen and Mathews, 1997).

State surveillance and intervention has increased in the areas of both encouraging and disciplining individuals to be self-responsible. This is particularly in regard to attempts to ensure individuals manage their own future safety and future risk. For instance, there is an increase in governing processes that aim to have people governing themselves as progressive enterprises who are then enabled to look after themselves (Mulderigg, 2003; Olsen and Mathews, 1997). There is also an increase in the disciplining (and pathologising) sanctions applied to those who seem unwilling. The drive toward lifelong learning might be considered as such a governing process. For children this process is expressed in a significant increase in the degree and scale of assessment of progress at school (Fancy, 2004; Marshall, 1995).

Another example of how risk driven governance operates are the increased processes of assessment to determine individuals and groups who are either at  risk themselves, or present a potential risk to others (Pavlich, 2000).  These processes encompass both educational strategies of identifying at risk children and also a more general increase of categorisation of the populace into grades of potential risk. Work place drug testing presents one example of this trend. The tendency within late-modern criminology to screen for biological explanations of crime is another. Yet another is the increased frequency and scope of surveillance for competency within the workplace (Papadopolous, 2004). What this governing processes makes apparent is that the future is made more present in the lives of late-modern subjects and that this instantiation is governed from a number of tangents which include attempts to perfect individual capacity and to perfect skills of individual risk management. What is also somewhat apparent is that both risk and the purported need to create responsibilised individuals are used to justify an increase in state surveillance, assessment and intervention.

**A fantasy of subjectivity considered as a late-modern soul**

The social forms and institutions of the late-modern era reasonably consistently portray the individual self as a bounded, autonomous self-aware entity with the capacity of choice and forethought and a number of intrinsic drives and desires (Belsey, 1985). This portrayal is regarded as an accurate description of the nature of people and is usually thought of as a-historical and a-cultural, in that it is understood to have been the common essential nature of humanity throughout all times and places (Atzmon, 1999; Cushman, 1995).

Differences of culture, lifestyle and identity are understood to reflect not the true nature of the human self, but more the diverse ways in which the essential nature of humanity can be expressed. In late-modern social systems, this portrayal of the self is then administered to by a range of social forms and institutions driven by the rationale that they operate in service to the true nature of what people are. A current example of this administering social form is the prevalence of developmental psychology in informing and justifying so many of the actions performed on children. The rationale behind these actions is consistent with an understanding that children can only develop the capacity to express or fulfil their true natures if certain intrinsic needs are met at the right time and in the right sequence (Burman, 1994).

What is understood to be the true nature of the self could be also described as an era-bound fantasy of the ideal self. Each era has had a fantasy or image of the nature of the self. These fantasies also determine an ideal of the self that operates as a benchmark of wellbeing. What is not uncommon to these fantasies is that they are held within each era as verities of the self that are not understood as located in time or culture but instead express universal truths of what people are (Cushman, 1995).

Each era has of course relied on its own methods to legitimate its truth forms. It is supposed that the pre-modern era lent on the authority of religion to legitimate its truths. The modern era is understood to have lent more strongly on the authority of science. In the late-modern era sciences such as psychology still hold a legitimating authority that determines much of the truth of human functioning (Cushman, 1995; Parker, 1999). However, what has also been suggested is that a pragmatic hyper-individualised responsibilised ideal of the self has emerged in late-modernity which relies on many of the truth forms of psychology but also augments its legitimacy by the authority of what the future may demand from individuals (Beck, 1999).

Another way of saying this is that perhaps scientific fantasies, ideals or truths of the self are now somewhat filtered, or rendered into active meaning, through a story that seeks to determine their relevance for the individuals future need. This notion, that the self is a series of stories rendered into active performative meaning through other stories, fits with a social constructionist view. This view would hold that ideals or norms of the self are created as social truth forms by the discourses, or texts about the self that are performed into active meaning in relationship with a shifting context of other social discourses. The interpretative performance of these social truth forms can then only ever be a function of a continual re-reading in the context of new circumstance. Each encounter with these texts is then a new reading with new meaning emerging in the light of shifting circumstance (Bruner, 1986; Gergen, 1995).

Regarding how these discourses of the ideal self are now read and performed, I am suggesting that an influential new context of reading is the prevailing late-modern norm that has individual survival into the future as a function of individual competence. Unsurprisingly then, texts of the self are interpreted and acted upon in new ways with new future driven urgencies, priorities and norms emerging and then being governed.

Perhaps it wouldn't be too farfetched to talk about this future mobilised fantasy or ideal of the self as a late-modern diffuse soul that informs and guides social practices.

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The idea of an influential late-modern soul offers a potentially useful discursive device and draws on my reading of the ideas of Lacan[14], Deleuze[15] and Marcuse[16]. I am attracted by their ideas because in different ways, all three of these authors and thinkers consider the self as inseparable from and, partially at least, generated by the social matrix. The device gives a way to talk about how late-modern practice in a sense much larger than the individual lends validity to a very specific type, or way of doing, 'subjectivity'. What social practices such as psychology and education then govern is the degree of conformity of citizenry to the shape of the soul. Part of the shape of the soul of course being the manner in which the self makes sense of itself and hence governs itself.

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[14] Lacan (1956) views the subject, or the self, as a fragmented partial endeavour. The self's movement through time is not characterised by a bounded or sequentised solidity, or any reliability of practice of the self. Instead, movement of the self through time is more a matter of a continuous unravelling and re-knitting of the self. This re-knitting and continual re-creation is mediated through discursively aligning the self with a socially constructed template of how the self should be done. This template of the self or what Lacan would call the 'other' offers, in the face of formlessness and change, a comforting and useful illusion or image of the self as being a creature of solidity, consistency and coherence across time and context. Who we are becomes the internalised reflection or mirror of the 'other' which by appearing coherent and continuous in its 'essential nature' through time reassures us that we too are coherent and continuos across time. Lacan suggests that while the 'other' which the self references to accomplish an illusion of coherence is initially familial, it is by nature of its continual need to be re-created, also a function of the image of the self contained within the larger social context. To know ourselves, then, is only ever to view the other. When the social matrix offers a vigorously portrayed 'other', or potent fantasy, of what the self is, then our knowledge of ourselves is also a reflection or mirror of that fantastic other.

[15] Deleuze's (1977) notion of 'enfoldings', describes how exterior truths, injunctions and norms are folded into an interiority subjects experience as the self. He suggests that subjectivity can be understood as an assemblage of lines and forces so layered and plaited as to form the subject. The self then being an enfolded exteriority with instructional lines and forces creating a hollowed out space, an ' interiority' we experience as the architecture of self. Under late-modern governance, the interiority of the subject, or as Deleuze would describe it, the assemblage of foldings, becomes the performance of injunctions that valorise an understanding of the normal self as having an interior that is self-responsible, choice able, and actively prudential about the future.

[16] Marcuse (1964) has suggested that it is correct to talk of people as having true natures but that it is more useful to think of these natures as 'second natures'. By this he refers to the notion that what is intrinsic and natural to people is usefully thought of as the sedimentation of history that becomes congealed into nature. In this view what is real and true about people is no less true and real for also being considered as an artefact of history. Following this view, a widely held and governed view of human nature as naturally future orientated can be considered as both a fantasy in service to particular ideologies and, as an accurate depiction of human nature.

In drawing on these ideas and In talking about a future orientated late-modern soul I am suggesting that there is a set of social structures that human nature is performed in reference to. These are also the social structures that determine the shape of personal success. Following this, in the late-modern neo-liberally influenced era, to know one-self as a successful subject is to enact allegiance to tautologies of individual choice as lever of influence on future outcome. My speculation is that to waver in such displays of allegiance is to know oneself as a failure and risk being exiled to the margins of what is considered the normal self.

The next chapter considers how the social authority of the future bound late-modern soul is augmented by the rhetorics and politics of identity.

**Chapter Three: Identity politics, diversity and the new social movements**

Identity and culture are words that often serve as political rallying points for social action and when attached to words such as 'celebrate' and 'diversity' form a style of rhetoric with which social institutions congratulate themselves on their tolerance and the success of their policies. This chapter examines how the concerns and successes of identity politics are vulnerable to being mobilised through late-modern ideals of the subject that appeal by promising the delivery of capacity to manage the needs, risks and demands of the future.

Narratives of future need and future competence provide the bridge that makes sensible and appealing neo-liberal promises to perfect the performance of this future capable late-modern ideal. This might also be described as the inadvertent reproduction of the late-modern soul.

**Historical context of the new social movements**

The rise of the new social movements and what has come to be called 'identity politics' occurred within a specific historical context. The criticisms made during the time of the Keynesian era were not restricted to economic concerns. There was also the perception by many activists and groups that the social systems and practices of the day enforced a brutal homogeneity of identity. The legitimacy of the political and scientific institutions that purported to speak for the needs of all was increasingly critiqued as smothering difference, disguising oppression and acting in service to a white, male, western, heterosexual hegemony. The following quote by Williams (1989) gives a small tidy example of how the institutions of the Keynesian-era state were critiqued:

> When Beveridge, (principal architect of the English welfare system) announced his attack on the five giants – Want, Squalor, Ignorance, Idleness and Disease – He hid the giants of Racism and Sexism, and the fights against them, behind statues to the Nation and the White Family  (Williams 1989, p. 162 cited by O'Brien, et al,  1998, p. 185).

Increasingly, groups such as; women, immigrants and indigenous groups experienced themselves as not only outside the Keynesian compact of state, capital and labour but actively excluded by the very compact itself (O'Brien, et al.1998, p. 185).

**The critique of modernity**

During this time of change the capacity of Keynesian or scientific approaches to adequately address social issues came under attack (O'Brien & Penna, 1998). The critique was made that modern reductionist practices were unable to address the concerns of marginalised groups without pejoratively categorising them and thus marginalising them even further. The very basis of how modern institutions sought to solve social problems came to be understood as part of the problem itself. The modern social processes for establishing the validity of marginalised discourses and knowledge came to be understood as also the processes whereby modernity reproduced the validity and authority of its own discourses, knowledge and approach to the world (Fraser, 1989).

The approach of Keynesian-era modern institutions was often accused of being the product of, and in service to, a hetero-centric, masculinist and euro-centric world-view. The charge was laid that the efforts of modern practice to establish the legitimacy of the truth claims of the new social movements operated to further subjugate those knowledges which relied for legitimacy on non-western epistemologies, or the lived experience of women and other oppressed groups. Traditional Marxist modes of analysing oppression were also critiqued as mimicking subjugating modern practice by subsuming all experiences of oppression into categories of class. A unified constituency of labour that spoke with one voice against capitalism was revealed as a mirage (O'Brien & Penna, 1998). Class was no longer the sole or even major loci of mobilisation for political and social action. The concerns of identity groups formatted around shared signifiers of culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or disability also became major rallying points for political and social action.

In consequence, the inhabitation or claiming of an identity also became the inhabitation or claiming of a political position. For any subjugated group defining itself by a commonalty of identity, the claiming of identity is of course politically purposeful. A shared identity has to be rendered sufficiently distinct so as to be recognisable as having distinct needs, interests and concerns of its own. The creation of a useful political platform relies on the claiming of a degree of uniqueness, which can then be portrayed as having needs and concerns that are distinct to that group. Gergen (1995) has pointed out that to render an identity distinct is to (usually) rely on a realist discourse, a discourse that is essentialist[17] in defining what constitutes the nature of its distinction.

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[17] In 'Ambiguities of essentialisms in new social movements', Anna Marie Smith (1994) suggests there are discrete moments within the ongoing discourses of the politics of identity around which resistance and analysis have mobilised. The first 'moment' of mobilisation occurs in response to those discourses which posit an essential identity, for example, black, female, gay, lesbian, disabled. Smith suggests that such essentialisms effectively provide a platform for calls for greater recognition of inequity and subjugation and greater moves toward increased access to resources and societal participation. The second 'moment' of mobilisation posited, occurs in response to the discourses that comprehend a singular naming of essence / identity as acting to mask the plural nature of identity. These are the discourses that articulate the operation of self performed across a range of possible lived identities. In effect these are the discourses that undercut the legitimacy of any singular description of essence or identity. Following Gergen (1995), Smith suggests that the shifting context within which identity is performed is like the reading of a text, in that, just as the act of reading a text rewrites it in ways that may undercut or deconstruct its legitimacy. So too does the performance of any identity legitimated by an 'essence-claim' potentially contain the seeds of its own deconstruction. The implication is that even when essence-claims are used effectively to plot antagonisms and lines of liberatory action they also contain their own undoing by the inevitable erosion of a purity of essential identity into a lived plurality of subjective position. Smith suggests that such 'moments' are always in intertwined fluid dialectical relationship to each other (Smith, 1994, p. 173).

I am in agreement with Smith. The moment / act of claiming an essential identity seems to co-inhabit the moment when such an essentialism becomes revealed as having both a paucity of definition and, a tendency to constrain the performance of identity to one site. However, what Smith does not mention in her discussion is that to presuppose a subject capable of mobilising resistance and calling for equity is to also presuppose a subject who is in potential at least, autonomous, and capable of choosing. What is inherent to Smith's argument and what Smith's analysis depends on for internal coherency are the notions of autonomy and choice as intrinsically necessary to seize the moment that allows voice. As Smith's work reveals, the inherent notions of autonomous choice and action to improve conditions (their possibility!) are essential component of the politics of new social movements. This seems to be the case no matter whether identity is conceived of as phenomena performed in one place or across a number of fields.

**The legitimation of distinctive needs**

After the Keynesian era, difference of identity and the voicing of diverse needs and preferences arose as a distinct type of political action. This type of political action, often called identity politics, now forms much of the late-modern political landscape. A feature of this mode of politics is the use of rationales for action that draw on the internal legitimating narratives, or traditions, of the group rather than the legitimating meta-narratives of science. However, mostly such groups stand in some relationship of need or complaint with the wider society. The use of internal legitimating narratives to gain social rights and recognition is of necessity undertaken in dialogical relationship with the meta-narratives of the larger institutions of science and society.

 Put simply, for the social institutions of society to address the unique needs of an identity group is a function of those needs being recognised as legitimate by those social institutions. Within the debate between identity groups and the larger polity, the question of how (or whether) distinct needs are sufficiently legitimate as to be acted on by the wider polity is always present in the dialogue. Fraser (1989) has described this as the process whereby marginalised needs discourses are tussled with by modern expertise and emerge as politically recognised need.  Fraser points out that this is a somewhat endless cycle, as the social transformation of marginalised discourses of need to politically legitimated need estranges those discourses from their origins and in the process creates new margins with their own unique needs (1989).

Gergen has suggested that the reliance of identity politics on 'essentialist discourses' inevitably results in the continual fracturing of identity groups into smaller contesting units (1995). His argument links well with Fraser's analysis. Gergen suggests that the legitimation of any need drawing validity from a groups essentialist identity claim is likely to also create new types of identity groups who derive their new uniqueness from the manner in which their needs are separate or distinct from the larger identity group. It is intriguing how this

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continual fracturing of groups into smaller contesting units then begins to resemble the neo-liberal view of the world as a field of contestation for resources

## Shared assumptions that allow dialogue

The dialogue between social institutions and groups claiming unique identity relies from necessity on certain shared assumptions on the nature of subjects. What has to be shared for even the most contentious of dialogues to take place is an understanding that subjects have a nature that is so sufficiently autonomous and able to act on desires and concerns as to choose to seek dialogue in the first place. Even the begrudging question asked of a group, 'what do you want?' presumes a wanting subjectivity with the capacity to formulate and act on goals and desires.

It is from both this very simple shared assumption about the nature of subjects and the need for subjugated groups to legitimate their identity needs that an opportunity for the promotion of neo-liberal discourses and a neo-liberal view of the world emerges.

## Success in the market as a mode of legitimation

Firstly, it needs to be remembered that from the functionalist neo-liberal perspective, identity is just another commodity, which may, or may not, contribute to success.

Secondly, for neo-liberal thought the nature of subjects may align with scientific knowledge about people but, the virtue ethic of neo-liberalism does not necessarily use science to legitimate its view. Rather, an understanding of what constitutes a successful or legitimate subject is a function, not of psychology, but instead the demonstration of autonomy and success in the market place. The validity of any identity subjects or subject groups may choose to express is demonstrated by virtue of firstly; its desire for success, and secondly; its accomplishment of success. In addition, the viewpoint that holds the world to be made up of contesting groups and individuals is a natural one to neo-liberalism, the rhetorics of legitimacy of need are not particularly relevant. It is presumed that all groups and individuals have desires and needs and will legitimate them in what ever ways seem most effective in getting the needs met.

For those groups leaning on their own identity discourses to legitimate their struggle, neo-liberal policies and rhetoric hold out a number of promises.

Firstly; the identity neutral position of neo-liberalism's market mode of subjective legitimation offers relief from the constant dialogue of identity legitimation. The question is no longer, what right have you to claim distinction? But rather, how will you demonstrate the value of your distinctive identity?  Secondly; there is also the promise of empowering strategies for the strengthening of capacity for identity expression and the meeting of the needs of that distinct identity formulation. The risk of taking up these neo-liberal promises is that concurrent with the strengthening of identity there will be some normative adoption of neo-liberal ideals of what constitutes an effective subjectivity in the market.  A number of authors have suggested that this is exactly what has happened (Papadopoulos, 2004; Zizek, 2001).

**The de-politicisation of subjectivity**

The partial adoption of the totalising norm that subjects (and by extension, groups of subjects who claim a commonality of identity) are self interested, autonomous contesting choosers is a fascinating twist to what some have described as the "identity wars" (Gergen, 1995, p. 2) or the "culture wars" (Zizek cited in Reul, 2001). The twist is the extent to which the growth of political contestation regarding the subjugated identity, can perhaps be seen as operating in inverse proportion to a diminishment of those concerns that understand subjectivity itself as within the territory of the political.

Zizek suggests the nature of human subjectivity seems to be now operated on as if it were an uncontested 'given'. The focus of governmental attention becomes the contestation of differing identity groups whose diversity is not seen as a function of any difference in their essential nature as humans, but is rather understood as how they are choosing to express their essential human nature which is common to all humanity. In particular, Zizek sees the global promotion of a plurality of contesting identities as contemporaneous with the departure of 'mode of subjectivity' from the arena of political debate.

To take this argument further, for an identity group to be empowered to claim itself is (necessarily) for that identity group to assume, in the act of claiming, a subjectivity with inherent capacity for choice. A call for freedom or recognition becomes also an interpellation that effectively creates or names the calling subject/s as having the complex capacity to desire and actively seek freedom. This interpellation is particularly potent, and lent social sanction, when the calling is undertaken within a liberal-democratic frame which relies for legitimacy on the notion that citizens are autonomous and able to choose (Rose, 1999).

The correlate of freedom of identity and its defence then becomes the adoption of at least some of the liberal-democratic norms of choice and autonomy. Subjective capacities of choice, autonomy and agency come to be understood as a necessary prerequisite to freedom.

A governmental response to calls for freedom, the recognition of unique needs or greater equity by any particular group claiming an essential identity, is likely of course to contain a degree of contestation. And, quite likely, under regimes influenced by neo-liberalism, a demand that the utility of the unique identity be demonstrated. However, as Zizek (2002) points out, a celebration or tolerance of some kinds of (useful) identity diversity seems to be a feature of late-modern social administration. The governmental administration of this tolerance, often presented as a moral task, relies on and produces a series of universalising and totalising presuppositions about the nature of subjects.

What governmental administration of the needs and desires of the unique identity reify, is the late-modern fantasy of the subject as an autonomous free chooser. In their examination of United Nations development projects in the third world, Dutton and Collins (2004) use the phrase *Homo incrementus* (p.16). They suggest that inherent to development projects (which often target subjugated indigenous groups) is the construction of the subject as a freedom seeking chooser always in development.  In their discourse analysis of U.N policy documents they find that:

Most significant are the notions of freedom and choice. *Homo incrementus* is constructed as being a choosing subject – indeed the declaration that 'human development is the process of enlarging peoples 'choices' indicates that choice lies at the core of its identity… the subject is constructed as being ideally free and able to exercise choice. These notions are central to the process of political subjectification in that 'liberal and neo-liberal' power assumes a 'free subject' – not an individual existing in an essential space of freedom, but one whose subjection is consistent with forms of choice (Duttons & Collins, 2004, p.16).

Following Duttons and Collins, I want to argue that there is a normative cost to the contestatory strengthening and diversifying of identity in late-modern cultures. The cost is that the presumed inherent subjective capacities needed to accomplish the development and strengthening of identity become sited outside of the arena of contestation. Under liberal-democratic truth regimes the subjective tools needed to seek freedom, such as, the inherent capacity to choose become incontestable givens (totalising truths). The subjective capacities of agency, autonomy, choice and fore-thoughtfulness become instead of contestable notions, the mechanisms whereby the debates and contestations for freedom of identity are able to take place within a liberal-democratic frame.

Late-modern debates on subjectivity become not, do people have a capacity for choice, but rather, how may we increase their choice? An inherent capacity for choice is pre-assumed. Governmental practices of policy, development, education, medicine, psychology or social work that position themselves as strengthening the capacity for the subject or group to be empowered as choosers are understandably seen as allies in the moral task of increasing capacity for choice. A market gap or perceived need is also created that invites proposals to strengthen capacities for forethought and autonomy. The neo-liberal project with its promise of stronger more choice-able self-sufficient people has been quick to assert its ability to fill this gap.

Zizek (2002) sees identity politics as being not so much just the new battleground, but as supplanting most previous battlegrounds. My contention is that this supplanting has enlarged the field of action (or reach of access) for the neo-liberal project's conflation of the free (claimed) identity - with the future directed, active, choice-able autonomous subject. This fantasy of the self (as I have discussed earlier) is attractive to those wishing to further empower the capacity to claim identity rights for themselves or their children (Rose, 1999). I repeat here what Rose has asserted regarding how the ideals and norms of neo-liberalism are insinuated into the lives of subjects:

> (It] achieves its effects not through the threat of violence or constraint, but by way of persuasion inherent in its truths, the anxieties stimulated by its norms and *the attraction exercised by the image of life and self it offers"* (my emphasis) (Rose, 1999, p. 10).

The ironic situation arises that to assert freedom of diversity of identity and choice, is to potentially assert the validity of a late-modern understanding of the free self, with the risk that the mobilisation of this understanding will be enacted through a neo-liberal social field. Identity rights, (culture, gender, disability, sexuality) are now mainstream political fields of contestation. The extent of contestation, and the truth regimes within which the contestations

take place, means identity politics becomes complicit in the hegemony of choice, autonomy and personal development as natural and desirable to the human condition. It is not surprising the 'constitution' of subjectivity becomes coaxed away from the table of legitimate discussion and is replaced by what must be seen from the reference point of the contestants as the far more critical matter of increasing freedom and choice for disparate groups.

**On a personal note**

Within liberatory praxis, questions of subjectivity are (in my experience) almost entirely used in the service of strengthening identity and exist in a difficult dynamic tension with those analyses of subjectivity leaning toward viewing the self and its actions as produced by context. Always it seems there must be a place laid at the table for agency and choice, without them there cannot be imagined the feast of freedom. To critically examine that which restrains agency or choice is to be praised as undertaking a liberatory act, a good act of praxis. However, to question or unpack the validity of the concepts themselves tends (I find) to be seen as tantamount to collusion with subjugation and oppression.

I have argued that the activities of those modes of social action called 'identity politics' are in themselves insufficient to challenge or restrain the social reproduction of the late-modern fantasy of subjectivity. I go further, and argue that identity politics can act to reproduce subjectifying late-modern norms of the subject. The instantiation of these norms such that subjects may then make sense of themselves, function and behave in ways that show a degree of alignment with neo-liberal programmes of governance. In the next chapter I discuss the social institutions such as psychology, humanism, liberal-democracy and modernity that operate to make so ordinary a view of the subject as in control of its own future.

**Chapter Four: Modernity and democracy**

This chapter ranges reasonably widely and examines some of the broad social forms, and corresponding thought forms, that coalesced during the era of modernity and are still actively with us today. Modernity is discussed as a social form that holds newness and the future to be of more value than tradition and the past.

What is considered are the manner in which modern social forms tend to make universal, and then reproduce and police, a normative and totalising specificity of human nature and its function. It is proposed these social forms that universalise truths of the subject are what give future narratives (which this thesis explores) their discursive potency, functional legitimacy and hegemonic grip on how subjects conceive of themselves.

Liberal democracy as a social form is considered as a structure that both legitimates, and is legitimated by, a modern totalising conception of the subject as unitary, autonomous and inherently choice-able. The psy-knowledges are considered as social forms that reproduce and police a liberal-democratic view of the human subject.

The question is asked; to what extent does the reliance of liberal-democracies on norms of the self as autonomous chooser create a colonising opportunity for neo-liberal ideals and policies? In addition, what is considered is the extent to which this colonisation is mobilised by either appeals to the needs of the future, or the need for subjects to live within parameters that have them believing they can control the future.

**Are we still modern after all this time?**

Put in a simple way, the dissemination of a standardised knowledge of human nature is made possible by a modern system of communication. The wide scale adoption of this standardised knowledge of human nature is made possible by modern apparatuses that legitimate knowledge.

The question arises of whether modern apparatus of legitimation retain authority in what is sometimes called the post-modern age? Three authors cast some light on this question.

Giddens (1991) suggests that the post-modern era could as accurately be described as modernity with a reflexive component, in that the essential parameters of modernity are much the same as ever, but in post-modern times more attention is given to the mechanisms whereby the authority of its knowledges are constructed.

Madan Sarup (1996) suggests that modernity remains a normative force to be reckoned with and perhaps post-modernity is best thought of as modernity merely turning its gaze upon its self and not always liking what it sees.

Alison Jones (1999) asserts that modernity is a method become living cultural mode. Jones suggests that Pakeha (New Zealanders of European descent) privilege a reductionist approach to seeking knowledge that conflates the gaining of authentic knowledge with progression into well-being. My reading of these authors suggest to me that modern power is active and current.

**Modernity and time**

Using a very broad stroke, Modernity might be thought of as a systematic conceptual approach, relying on 'reason' and acting upon ourselves and the environment we find ourselves in.  Often spoken of as a 'project', its genesis is viewed as the 18<sup>th</sup> century historical period known as the Enlightenment. Liu (2003) makes the following comment:

> The Enlightenment" is a periodization term that applies to the mainstream of thought of 18th century Europe…. A rational and scientific approach to religious, social, political and economic issues that promoted a secular view of the world and a general sense of progress and perfectibility… "The strongest claim by the West on modernity is derived from ideas and concepts generally grouped under the category of the Enlightenment  (p. 11).

In examining modernity Liu uses a 'modern' approach in suggesting that a way to understand the world-view of modernity is the countervailing method of looking at those remaining societies manifesting traditional world-views. From this perspective traditional societies take that which is 'handed down' (from the Latin tradere, to hand on) as a starting place or reference point to be departed from, only with care and regard for the integrity of custom and belief. Whereas, 'modern' (meaning new) world-views implicitly assume that the old is constrictive and oppressive, and the new is liberating and expansive.

The Enlightenment is often described as containing a project still in operation, offering a vision embodied in the idea of the inevitability and desirability of progress. Goran Therborn (1995) defines the modern era as an  "…epoch aimed toward the future…" (p. 4).  In his view, this necessitates a cultural requirement that past, present and future be sharply delineated. Rather than the future being a continuance of what was, movement through time is seen as a disjunctive progression from a less satisfactory past, toward a more

satisfactory future, this to be accomplished by the progressive accumulation and application of knowledge and expertise. Under the urging of this narrative the better future and knowledge become talismans of great attraction. The imagined needs of that better future, or the instrumentality that is required to get there, tend to override, justify and obscure the current lived effects of policies and practices.

Anthony Giddens (1994) also speaks eloquently to how modernity operates with a different relationship to time than pre-modern eras. Where in the past tradition might have operated as the primary compass in determining rightness and fitness of action, in the modern era tradition has been superseded by authoritative voices of expertise referencing to science's best effort at predicting what will be needed. As Giddens argues, the authority of the voices of modern expertise (and who may speak with authority on a given subject) are intimately bound up with the processes, mechanisms and institutions that modernity uses to assign certain knowledges the status of legitimate truths.

Madan Sarup (1996) also offers a very coherent definition of modernity, particularly in its aspect of social engineering:

> The ability to co-ordinate human actions on a massive scale; a technology that allows one to act effectively at a large distance from the object of action; a minute division of labour that allows for spectacular progress and expertise on the one hand and the floating of responsibility on the other; the accumulation of knowledge incomprehensible to the lay person and the authority of science which grows with it; and the science sponsored mental climate of instrumental rationality that allows social engineering designs to be argued and justified (p.49).

He adds:

> Modern mastery is the power to divide, classify and allocate in thought and practice (p. 50).

Sarup makes the important point that one of the primary attributes of 'modernity' is the suppression of that perceived as ambivalent or uncertain. In his view, that which falls between categories are sources of discomfort to a modernity inspired culture and hence invite either reductionist attempts to enforce classifiable status, or abolishment. Sarup suggests that when progress and well-being are seen as a function of attaining certainty, then the uncertain or ambiguous becomes a critical loci that demands attention. Sarup goes further and suggests that faced with the uncertain, modern practice will first attempt to collapse the ambiguous into known categories, attempt to marginalise it, or destroy it as a threat.

Smith (2004) who examined modern approaches to child protection, makes the same point more bluntly; "The quest for certainty leads to ever more normative and authoritarian responses to what we perceive to be threats to it" (p. 3). As I have mentioned, the belief that children (and adults) are replete with internal capacities that allow them to control their own futures tends to operate as a modern certainty. Responses to ambiguous positions suggesting other norms or beliefs about the self and the future are approached in ways that either collapse them into known categories of pathology or they are policed and sanctioned in such ways they become marginalised or eradicated.

**Modernity and self-governance**

Modernity can be thought of as a set of progressive epistemologies, or knowledges, about how to establish, then manage, the truth of the world and what should be done thereby. It is a particular set of ways to make sense or meaning of the world, and it is also (like any complex epistemology), a set of ideas and practices of self governance that offer guidelines on how to make sense of the self in relation to others and the world.

Of course for a person to make sense of the self, or to know the self, is, of necessity, to make use of some mechanism of intelligibility. Such mechanisms are complex, derivative of the social matrix and purposeful in that they have the purpose of offering some image or description of what a self is. These are the tools subjects use for establishing themselves as persons. Such conceptual tools are of necessity flexible and applicable across a number of contexts and are made up of bodies of knowledge that both reference to social origins and are internalised as a sense of self in the individual.  As much as anything, as Lacan (1956) suggests, such mechanisms of intelligibility are recipes for the maintenance of a coherent sense of self in the face of shifting context.

## Mechanisms of intelligibility

Following Butler (1997), the use of any mechanism of intelligibility makes one inevitably somewhat subject to the demands of its truths and norms.  Another way of saying this is that to know the self through any given set of ideas is to be somewhat subject to how those ideas interpret whom one is and what one should do.

I am suggesting that modern subjects often know themselves, or interpret themselves, using the norms and truths of modernity and that these norms and truths are at least somewhat instantiated in the modern and late-modern self. Such truths, fantasies or templates, while prescriptive of individual truths of the self are trans-individual and social in nature, located, and reproduced within multiple social practices. In line with their 'social life', these normative templates also somewhat mandate practices of governance, they offer logics of action that help to determine and legitimate governmental tasks.

**Growth, progress and the future as 'self' organising concepts**

As some theorists have pointed out, grand narratives of progress for all humanity don't carry quite as much weight as they used to (Henriques et al., 1998). However, this is not to say that the metaphor of progress and growth has lost influence, but rather that it may have undergone a subtle re-figuring so that the critical location for progress and growth becomes the individual rather than the wider society. Modern psychological knowledgrs and practices are thought to play a key governing role in the positioning of progress, development and growth as central organising concepts in how the late-modern self makes sense of itself (Burman, 1994; Cushman,1995; Jones, 1999; Myers, 2004). The organising concepts of personal progress and growth dictate a perspective on personal change through time and how that change is evaluated. From the reference point of these concepts the present self is ideally recognised as a more developed earlier self. Correspondingly, the future for the individual becomes a location or site where the self hopes and aims to know it-self as having further progressed. When the future is the site of residence of the better-improved-self it becomes a very important place and tends to inform and justify many of the actions of the present.

**Background to a universalised view of the self**

A critical question is what gives modern and late-modern understandings of the nature of the self such power? What are the larger social systems that make seeing the self as autonomous, progressing, choice able and future directed so perfectly ordinary for such a large proportion of the western world?

The late-modern norms of subjectivity that have become so entrenched as the ordinary and everyday, of course have antecedents that predate the neo-liberalism ascendance. In the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, psychoanalytic thought adopted the position that humans have internal natures that could be understood and therefore deserved the attention of science (Polkinghorne, 1988). The process of discovering or

researching these purported internal natures was approached in much the same way as the cataloguing and categorising of the natural world. These enquiries into human nature were undertaken in a progressive spirit. The searches were driven by a progress driven imperative to know about our basic drives and instincts. These psychoanalytic and psychological searches for knowledge of the self were not rapacious in intent but rather undertaken at the behest of modern promises of betterment (Jones, 1999). These searches promised, and still promise; increased choice, stronger more competent selves, greater beauty, greater lives, and greater hope.

Because of the authority given to the psy-knowledges in western cultures (Parker, 1999) the researching of the self by psychology in particular operates to invest what is 'discovered' with the status of truth and cements these 'truths' into totalising and a-historical verities of human nature (Cushman, 1995; Marcuse, 1964). Under what then becomes a totalising truth regime; (that states the inner self of people to be made up of a bounded choosing internally driven self-aware interiority), it is very difficult to discuss or think about the human subject without these 'truths' of the self determining the outcome.

The capacity for choice, self awareness and the self-experienced as having internal drives are ideas so solidly real and reinforced at so many social sites that they are steering notions become almost 'irrefutable'. We are steered to see any position that denies the existence of drives, interiors and capacity for choice as somewhat nonsensical. Marcuse (1964) suggests it is perfectly accurate to understand human nature as having real biological drives and internal capacities but provides the refreshing perspective that these irrefutable realities are made real by history. My own position very much concurs with Marcuse.

**How notions of the self become universally applied as truths**

Anthony Giddens, (1991) provides the perspective that space and time are separated in modernist cultures, and that this operates in such a way that a standardised past and a universally applicable future become a possibility. What is 'good' in one time or place tends to become 'good' for all futures and places.  Context subsides in relevance.  For instance, as Erica Burman (1994) has asserted, developmental 'truths' about children's progress and what manner of subjectivity they should display along a sequenced trajectory through time become almost universally referenced to in a normative manner.

Giddens (1994) also describes a shifting of the locus of trust and expertise within the social arena, from that and those who are locally known, to expert systems and their staff such as, researchers, doctors, social workers, psychologists, therapists, and teachers who are lent their legitimacy by science. This is sometimes spoken of as the de-traditionalisation and de-contextualisation of knowledge forms. Local knowledge forms, or truths, that are relevant and applicable to the particularities of a specific location or time become grist to modernity's legitimising mill of science, undertaking a journey through the sifting, categorising and legitimising processes of empirical attention. Knowledge emerges from this process, dislocated from origin, supposedly stripped of superstition, stamped as universally valid and widely available on application to designated experts.

In regard to how historically situated understandings of the subject are then congealed into universal truths of human nature, Giddens (1994) also speaks to the reflexive nature of modern society.   This modern reflexivity operates somewhat like an ongoing process of societal self-examination through both an individualised lens and the lens of science. Giddens asserts that for modern subjects their material and social life are subject to relatively frequent revision and change.

He suggests that science, operating from a range of sites, continuously studies society and the self and brings new information to light that is then available for citizens to make new sense of themselves with. In terms of what this does to subjectivity, what is accomplished is the construction of a mode of making sense of the self that implicitly demands that the subject constitute itself in such a way that it is able to be known and thereby better know itself. Under this kind of regime to be knowable and thus to know the self requires that the self be able to be articulated and thus be contained in language forms.

Foucault has described this phenomenon as the confessional self. This is a self that knows it-self by speaking its experience to those whom society and modern practice legitimate as experts authorised to validate the correct performance of subjectivity (Foucault, cited in Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998). People become reflexive about their own condition though the language of those that society deem to be expert on the human condition.

Following Foucault, under the requirements of a regime of modern reflexivity the subject is required to have (or be), a self that is coherent enough to be reducible to that which can be spoken, and spoken in such ways that it is available to the processes of reflexivity. The self becomes defined by the mode of articulation that permits it to be understood. In the modern case, these modes of articulation tend to involve languages of: affect, the development of responsible individuality and an inner self capable of transforming experienced desires to temporal goals within a social frame-work (Myers, 2004). The promised advantage of having this kind of tangible subjectivity, that can be known to others through the medium of language forms - is the promise of betterment, particularly in regard to increased autonomy and choice. The paradox of reflexive modern practice is that to have access to the knowledge that promises increased capacity at autonomy is to be somewhat docile in the face of the expertise that holds this knowledge. The subject is positioned as needing to make it-self available to be 'known' by experts, so it can better 'know' itself, so it can then gain greater agentive traction in the world. There is an enormous political risk inherent to this situation.

Those who are able to gain authority over the language forms that allow the self to be articulated, in effect are able to steer the manner in which large proportions of the populace make sense of themselves and conduct their lives.

**On a personal note**

My own experience as a sanctioned expert (family therapist) concurs with the ideas of Giddens, Foucault and Cushman. Adults who have children speak their experience to me in the hope that by my knowing of them - they will know themselves (through my expertise) more efficaciously as parents. Parents preference my expert system advice to advice from within their own context of tradition, family and locality. They become reflexive as to their own condition as parents through the lens and language of my expertise. Children are also urged by their parents to know themselves as the spoken self via my supposed expertise. Common encouragements are the phrases; 'You need to open up, tell the counsellor what's really going on, what you really think / feel and then he can help you'. I am asked to determine and prescribe normality. Interestingly, the encouragement of children to become the spoken self-defined by particular kinds of language forms is also a common thread in education. This is usually linked to education on the managing of the self via self-expression, and involves instruction in language templates that format experience into the language of inner feelings and thoughts (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993).

**The production of truth effects**

Modern normative forces that construct the self in ways that are regarded as applicable to everyone everywhere, are apparent at a variety of social sites, (such as schools), and operate through diverse tactics and informed by various rationales. As long as the self is acted upon within certain parameters of expectation it is not necessary that there be a singular intent or informing philosophy. The practices alone are sufficient to produce subjectivity in alignment with normative truths.

As Nikolas Rose (1998) has pointed out, the production of truth effects does not require a complex theory of epistemology.  An example of this might be the constant reiteration of themes of self-expression, choice and progress throughout a child's experience of education. No particular epistemology is necessary for a child to begin to conduct it self as a progressive being with an inner self who is able to make choices. Unsurprisingly this is exactly the kind of person that liberal democracies rely on for legitimacy.

**Liberal governance**

Assumptions about autonomy and individual choice both underpin and legitimise programmes of liberal governance. Following Rose (1998), liberal-democracy forms the prevailing legitimating co-ordinates of the apparatus that polices the late-modern understanding of what constitutes normality. Psychology and education form nodes of governance within those co-ordinates.

Liberal democratic governance relies for legitimacy on the assumption that people have an inherent capacity for choice, and that the freedom liberal democracy offers is a function of exercising that choice in arenas such as voting, work, lifestyle and consumption. Because of this, the presupposition that citizens are individually choice-able occupies a position of ontological privilege in liberal democracies. This conception of the subject as able to choose is generally accepted as the normal human condition, operating as both an incontestable given and as the conceptual reference point from which dialogue about how freedom is to be administered is able to embark.

In general, democracies which hold the image of the human subject as autonomous and choice able, draw on three strands of thought as rationale for why democracy is an ideal vehicle to serve the needs of the subject.  The three strands of thought are humanism, enlightenment modernity and liberalism. These three modes of thought are often described as contemporaneous in origin and in regard to some basic premises about the human subject hold a high degree of consensus. All three view the human

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subject as an individual conscious active agent with inherent capacity for choice. The following brief quotes highlight the similarities of these three traditions in how the subject is considered.

Enlightenment modernity:

> According to the spirit of the enlightenment, human beings are conceived as sovereign and autonomous individuals. The term 'individual' assumes that human beings are conscious free agents (Atzmon, 1999, p. 2).

Humanism (secular):

> The preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value."
>
> a rejection of a created universe in favor of the theory of evolution and a universe that obeys natural laws
>
> a rejection of divinely inspired ethical and moral codes in favor of codes derived by reason from the human condition
>
> the belief that full responsibility for the future of the world, its political systems, its ecology, etc. rests with humans. There is no God in heaven to intervene and save us from a disaster (Humanist Manifesto I, 2002).

Liberalism:

> Liberalism is not one simple, undifferentiated doctrine. As with other doctrines or ideologies, there are varieties of liberalism. All liberals agree on the primacy of individual freedom and individual choice  (Sally, 2002, p. 8).

Liberal and humanism are terms that are often conflated, and in the term 'liberal humanism' seem, in coming together, to represent both a fantastic idealised image of the subject and a progressive ideal of a political (and economic) system to best serve this fantastic subject. The following quote captures the conflation of fantasy and progressive ideal:

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The common feature of liberal humanism, justifying the use of the single phrase, is a commitment to *man* , whose essence is *freedom* . Liberal humanism proposes that the subject is the free, unconstrained author of meaning and action, the origin of history. Unified, knowing, and autonomous, the human being seeks a political system which guarantees *freedom of choice* (Belsey, 1985, p. 8).

The concept of the self as autonomous, agentive and choice-able is inherent to liberal, humanist and modern understandings of the subject. Many, if not most, of the social institutions we access to understand ourselves hold these ideas as central. Psychology, education and liberal democracy all uphold these ideals of people as; autonomous creatures making free and independent choices about their futures.

**The role of the psy-discourses in the liberal democratic self**

The normalising dissemination of this democratic ideology of the self has been given a great deal of assistance by the saturation of the late-modern social body by verities of what Ian Parker (1999) has called the "Psy-complex". (Cushman (1995) prefers the phrase "psy-discourses").  The psy-complex is the body of discourses, knowledges and actions that define through recourse to psychology, templates of the proper architecture of the self. Considered as a hegemony, the productive apparatus are the array of: books, magazines, web-sites, media, teachers, counsellors, psychologists, social workers, doctors, and all those others to whom society pays the compliment of having expertise at assisting the human self to guide its way through life.

The psy-discourses have been described by Ian Parker as 'generous' in that "they give themselves away everywhere"  (1995). The influence of developmental psychology on education practice is one example. For another example, Myers (2004) has suggested that American legislative debates that might once have drawn on religion to legitimate state action on behalf of children, now draw on psychological notions such as protecting or developing individual self esteem. A closer to home example is found in the regulations of

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the '1995 New Zealand Domestic Violence Act', whose mandated instructions and goals for children's programmes are clearly formulated according to psychological principles that conflate the articulation of feelings with individual and familial psychological well-being (1995).

Psy-discourses are understood by many theorists to have gained an extraordinary prominence as normalising points of reference for western productions of subjectivity (Cushman, 1995; Myers, 2004; Parker, 1999; Rose, 1998). In discussing the influence of the psy-complex on child welfare policies, Myers offers this definition of the psy-complex:

> Therapeutic discourse is the vehicle by which social and political issues are translated into "the language of individual responsibility". (Cloud, 1998) Through this individualising language we locate within individuals (and by extension families) both the locus of the problem and the site of change. This is accomplished in two ways. First, the rhetoric of psychotherapy emphasises conformity, usually by way of adjustment to, and accommodation of, prevailing social conditions. Second, therapeutic rhetoric has a persuasive function in terms of encouraging identification with certain values, namely "individualism, familism, self-help and self-absorption" (Cloud,1998). This individualising function is underpinned by a normalising function. The psychological intervention, by government workers, into family life is based on a premise that the behaviour of marginalised persons renders them unfit or incompetent to govern themselves and, therefore, should be modified to conform to that of the mainstream (Myers, 2004, p. 5).

**How neo-liberalism positions itself as moral force for democracy**

Liberal democracies promote a view of the self as being somewhat like a dancer through time. A self that is choreographed in choice of step and direction by a unique coherent and individual identity that while moving across landscape, and time-scape still holds an essence of unique identity separate from its travels. Such a view of the bounded independent self holds

commensurate understanding of the sequentiality of the subjects lived moments as being the consequences of a sequence of decisions. This view understands the subjects present as the subjects past chosen future. This is a view of the self that does pay partial deference to the buffeting of context. But! primarily, this view has people positioned like a bulldozer in relation to the territory of their lives, able with force of character and correct attitude to forge and create a good future. The self is seen as either response-able (responsible) for its own future or piteously dis-abled. The psy-complex template of the architecture of the self that supports this democratic view is of course somewhat of a palimpsest. However, there is a foundational image that could be summarised as the valuing and promotion of the human capacity to both envisage future possibilities and following consideration, seize them! When elected governments hold even the loosest of allegiance to the tropes I have outlined, two tasks emerge as urgent in terms of policies of governing. These tasks are particularly in regard to actions understood as necessary for children (future citizens) and those deemed in some way disabled (for instance the long-term unemployed). These tasks are:

1. A strengthening of individual capacity to choose and act, an encouraging of subjectivities with a 'sense of possibility' and the sense of responsibility and gumption to seize the possibilities that lie ahead.
2. A clearing of future paths so that ranges of possibilities and choices become ever broader.

In regard to the effective governance of these two tasks, (strengthening individual capacity and broadening choice in the future), the neo-liberal project continuously holds out and promotes a lucid and well-articulated promise of accomplishment.    Neo-liberalism's promise of competent delivery in these areas impacts on policy decisions ranging from – education – to the family - to welfare - to the economy (Kelsey, 1995). Neo-liberalism offers itself as an ideal through which a democratic vision of the subject as agentive and choice-able is first mobilised and then instantiated.

**On a personal note again**

In the somewhat fractured and individualised post-Keynesian era, liberal humanism in its democratic guise has provided a fertile platform upon which a neo-liberal formation has crystallised into the late-modern social field. Neo-liberalism continues to offer itself as an ideal principle of regulation to enable subjects to live up to the liberal-democratic ideal of the free and responsible citizen. There has been a great deal of very valuable critique of the human and social cost of neo-liberal economic policies (Kelsey, 1993 & 1995; Jesson, 1999).

There is another critique that is subtle but also important. This critique considers the extent to which the late-modern liberal-democratic co-ordinates of freedom are susceptible to colonisation by the language forms and norms of a neo-liberal hyper-individualised hyper-responsibilised view of the self. When individualising neo-liberal languages of competition, responsibility, choice and freedom become the normal words people make sense of them selves with, then what follows is a world where these things are normal. The critical psychologist Papadopoulos (2004) has made the extraordinary statement that the social institutions of late-modernity seem to no longer act on subjects as individuals but rather act on them as if they were "assemblages of capacities" (p.8). The self is then encouraged to understand itself as commodities for accomplishment. The worth or value of the individual is subsumed into competencies. I find this a frightening thought but one that seems consistent with what I observe to be the ever-present language of competencies, excellence and achievement. For myself, I don't want to be an enterprise.

The next chapter considers how future narratives act as the conceptual bridge that allows neo-liberal norms to be such a pervasive influence on so many of the contestants of what Zizek (1994) describes as the culture wars of late-modernity.

**Chapter Five: The celebration of diversity**

**What has been gained**

The new social movements have had some success at challenging oppressive systems and institutions. A great deal has changed since the early nineteen seventies. If freedom is taken to mean more recognition of cultural and individual diversity and a society that is more tolerant and supportive of difference, then by that measure, the new social movements have made solid gains in creating a freer society. A fairly ordinary late-modern position in political and education rhetoric is that societies strength is to be found in celebrating diversity and that individuals do better in life when they have a strong sense of cultural identity (Fancy, 2003).

Cultural goal posts have also shifted somewhat, with homophobia, violence against women and racism now mainstream issues of concern and considered unacceptable amongst much of the populace (New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, 2002). Another shift since the early nineteen seventies is that the overt public expression of diverse cultural identity through language, dress and other cultural activities is now undertaken almost as a matter of course. The expression of non-European cultural values is not quite as much the marginalised activity it may have been thirty years ago. All of these changes have been hard-won and the battles are by no means over.

**A space of freedom**

Perhaps one way of thinking about the changes is that the efforts and struggles of the many oppressed and marginalised groups against and within the institutions of modernity and liberal democracy have opened up a negotiated space of freedom. For instance, a diversity of cultural identities is now seen to be a national asset for a successful future (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2003). This negotiated space of freedom is however a space that operates in, and is a function of, the continual re-negotiation of its parameters.

What the co-ordinates of this flux like space create is more tolerance of different cultural and gendered values and more room for the expression of identity and cultural difference. It is important to note though, that this is not a separate space from late-modernity but rather a living negotiation with and inside the larger space of late-modern culture. Like any space opened within a larger system, it will always be somewhat of a conditional space whose character is in part formed by the social, economic and cultural conditions that allow the space to remain open. These conditions might be thought of as the late-modern co-ordinates that shape or determine a number of things.

**The late-modern co-ordinates of freedom**

Firstly, what these co-ordinates determine is how the freedom to express a diversity of identity can be successfully accomplished and maintained. Another way of saying this is that within the co-ordinates of late-modernity, identity is understood to be a key aspect of healthy subjects but its flowering into utility is understood as a function of the subject having been developed in the right ways. The right ways of course being a late-modern understanding, or developmentally driven psychological template, of how people grow into their maximised potential.

Secondly, what is determined by the co-ordinates are the purposes of identity, that is, what the freedom offered by diversity should be used to do. This is not a matter of expression of identity, but more a matter of what identity is seen to be for. Identity becomes understood as a key contributor to achieving a late-modern understanding of well-being and success.

A slightly paradoxical picture emerges. The more a subject is enabled through their growing years to occupy a strong identity that then empowers them with confidence and hope about their own future - the more completely do they then live within (and are subject to) the late-modern co-ordinates of what freedom is for.

**Conditional freedom**

Under this kind of regime of freedom the capacity to be an active agent in relation to the future becomes a central characteristic of the free self. Identity, which may be very free in its expression, tends to operate as an enabling mechanism for the expression of agency according to late-modern co-ordinates of freedom.

My supposition is that the lived occupation, or identity use of these co-ordinates of freedom, inevitably makes even the freest of identities somewhat subject to the conditions and purposes that allow this space of freedom to exist and be used. What I contend is that a critical node of these co-ordinates of freedom are the narratives of the future drawn from both the progressive dream of modernity and the late-modern individualisation of responsibility for the future.

I am not saying there is no freedom in late-modernity. Undoubtedly freedom exists and there is now far more room to move on the identity front than was once the case. However, this freedom is edged with certain co-ordinating stipulations that formalise and channel how freedom is performed and the purposes of that freedom.

The intent of this section is not to diminish the honour of the accomplishments of the new social movements. Instead, it is to draw attention to the extent to which when freedom of identity is undertaken within the co-ordinates of late-modern freedom, subjects are then normatively positioned in a degree of alignment with late-modern templates of subjectivity. This alignment is particularly the case in regard to subjects making sense of themselves as having personal control of the future.

Perhaps a very simple way of saying this is that while the achieved outcome of freedom of identity may be uniquely plural for different groups, the subjective mode taken up as necessary to claw its way to this unique plurality is

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somewhat singular. Whether identity is centred on personal biography or cultural signifiers or both, nonetheless, late-modern social practices portray the same subjective qualities, capacities and sequenced developmental experiences as necessary precursors to achieving and using distinction of identity. The assumptions that the capacity to express diversity is a product of a similarity of subjective capacity and nature effectively render us the same in some important ways. One of the most critical of these points of sameness is the centralisation of the future as a territory that subjects are enjoined to understand as within their personal control. A clue to the centrality of this subjective norm is to be seen in the manner that education systems regard success as the production of young adults with a strong sense of identity and co-extensively, the capacities and confidence to manage their own futures (Ministry of Education, 2003).

Identity politics is often represented as a force for freedom by virtue of its capacity to address oppression. What I want to suggest again and explore a little more thoroughly, is that because of its singular focus on the end goal of freedom of identity expression, it is so far insufficient in tending to matters of subjectivity that it instead acts to reproduce late-modern norms of the subject.. The focus of the following discussion is on the ways in which that which pretends to the capacity of identity liberation, can also act to reproduce subjectifying norms of the subject.

**How freedom of identity supports the neo-liberal field**

Zizek (2002) asserts that the new social movements have lost (or perhaps never possessed) a politically radical potential:

> The limit of these movements is that they are not political in the sense of the universal singular: they are one-issue movements that lack the dimension of universality; that is, they do not relate to the social totality (Zizek, 2002).

In a very broad sense, the identity politicians of the new social movements tend to rely on a vision of the subject that presupposes a person-hood potentially capable of choice and freedom. Under a liberal-democratic framework this self is understood to have concomitant rights to choice and freedom.

Following Zizek, (2002), I want to argue that reliance on this vision of the self can operate as a mechanism to silence, forbid or render almost unthinkable certain lines of critique. These are the lines of critique that might ask to what extent subjugation to ideals of autonomy, freedom and choice also have us subjugated to the project of expansion of a neo-liberal / globalised capitalist social and economic field?

Zizek offers a useful way to examine the question of how a formalised space of freedom cuts off possibilities that are not contained within its parameters. In discussing freedom and choice within liberal-democracy Zizek differentiates between formal and actual freedom:

> Formal freedom is the freedom of choice within the co-ordinates of the existing power relations, while actual freedom designates the site of an intervention that undermines these very co-ordinates (Zizek, 2002, p. 6).

What could be taken from this is that the current conditions of late-modern capitalism offer a latitude of formal freedom that allow and even encourage a diversity of identity and culture. However, the current conditions of freedom also proscribe or at least make difficult another kind of freedom. This is the freedom that might act to undermine a liberal-democratic (and neo-liberal) view of the subject as an autonomous future directed chooser.

The expression of this subversive kind of freedom might be thought of as the lived performance of acts that undermine what liberal democracies presuppose identity freedom to be based on. The active expression of norms of the subject that presuppose us to be something other than bounded individual autonomous choosers would threaten damage to existing power structures (and the ideal of subjectivity upon which they depend). In line with this thinking, Zizek also suggests that the multicultural tolerance that liberal-democracies praise themselves as enabling, acts as a buttressing ideological supplement to global capitalism (2001).

Following Zizek's, argument, the liberal-democratic celebration of choice and enhanced capacity for flexibility of identity masks the proscribing of some choices and actions. For example, proscribed choices and actions might be thought of as; to not consider and act on the self as firstly a free individual, or to not consider or act as a self capable of freely choosing.

Choices such as these would undercut the ontological framework of authority upon which liberal-democracy, neo-liberalism and capitalism itself depend. In line with this, Cushman (1995) suggests that people who make these kinds of proscribed choices and hence threaten the subjective norms of liberal democracy are often determined by state enterprises to be ill or in need of disciplining or isolating. [18]

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[18] Cushman asserts: '"the self of a particular era is constructed by the clearing of that era and thus develops certain particular characteristics" (1995, p. 25). Cushman argues that the predominant configuration of the self of an era determines the illnesses with which that self is characteristically afflicted. These historically created configurations determine both the institutions responsible for healing those illnesses and the technologies of healing for these 'era specific' illnesses. Cushman argues that the current 'self' of our age is one primarily created, and ministered to, by discourses of the psychological and medical. He states that in the administration to and healing of this created self, the psy disciplines are actively complicit in serving the political ends of 'late-modern', consumer society. Cushman also states**:**

**"**The process by which "the other" is constructed, defined, and used is the face of war in our time. The constructed content of "the self" and the determination of what is split off, disavowed and relocated into the unconscious and onto "the other" goes a long way toward legitimising political decisions regarding the identity of the enemy."

( p. 339) Cushman refers very clearly here to 'that which is turned away from', that which the subject should know itself 'not' to be. This turning away from or disavowal of how 'not to be' determines those whose actions mark them out as needing the intervention of current era expertise in the well-being of the subject. The self marked as unwell becomes the target for governmental efforts to re-align subjects into understanding themselves as bounded, autonomous, agentive and prudential.

These governmental efforts to change modes of subjectivity are not spoken of as politically charged actions; instead they are presented simply as the administration of well-being.

Political, medical and psychological rationales for the administration of corrective healing are legitimated by norms of the subject that are not acknowledged as era-specific.

**On a personal note**

My reading of these ideas suggests two (for me) rather ghastly correlates to identity freedom under late-modern co-ordinates. Firstly, all forms of cultural expression and identity difference are permissible and encouraged only if their expression supports the view that people have free choice. Even further than this, the free expression of identity and culture operates as a continuous validation of late-modern capitalism and by extension, at least some of the goals of neo-liberal programmes. The more freely identities are expressed the more the current late-modern social and subjective norms are entrenched, celebrated and expanded. Secondly, what is rendered less and less acceptable, and hence more rigorously disciplined and punished, are social forms and modes of life that have freedom attached to something other than choice.

Cushmans (1995) work suggests that the self viewed as the, free choosing conscious loci of control marks out not just health but the enemies of health as well. The American response to the Islamic renaissance has been cited as the response of late-modernity to a social form that has freedom located in the supra-personal rather than the choices of the individual self (Cushman, 1995). The imposition of democracy at the point of a gun seems to indicate how strongly late-modernity responds to notions of freedom and the self that threaten its norms of the future orientated unitary choosing subject.

**Governing agency, choice as a method to govern freedom**

Nikolas Rose (1998) and Zizek (1994) have a number of useful perspectives on how freedom is governed and how the subject is encouraged to govern itself in alignment with the understanding that choice, agency and freedom are all the same thing. Both authors speak to the manner in which the governing of agency can only ever be partial and incomplete.

In line with Foucault's work on power and the subject, Rose (1998) views the productive actions of governmental power as never solely an active performance upon a purely passive subject. Power can only act on those already active. Rose aligns with a Foucaultian perspective that views all relations of power as operating in a dynamic field of tension with other relations of power. Any governmental action designed to steer the conduct of citizens is then understood to impact upon an array of pre-existing actions, movements, constraints and injunctions. Subjectification is then always a partial phenomenon, with all efforts to subjectify or instruct receiving their 'partial grip' only via a complex grid of intelligibility linking to many other sets of potentially contradictory instruction.

There is a very clear link here to the celebration of diversity and how the subject, who can never be fully governed, or contained within any one regime of knowledge is encouraged to nonetheless conduct themselves in alignment with late-modern norms of the self. The free expression of identity is portrayed as reliant on such capacities of the self as being an active chooser and taking charge of the future so that identity can be ever more freely expressed. What comes to at least partially inhabit the interstices of identity freedom is the late-modern manner of accomplishing it and then using it.

Nikolas Rose (1998) asserts that any liberal programme of governance acts upon subjects not to construct them as agentive- but instead acts in such ways that assume a pre-existing state of agentivity.   The challenge of any programme of governance is then to 'conduct the conduct' of those whom are understood to be already autonomously conducting their own affairs. The late-modern notion that freedom is a function of being able to choose to express a diversity of identity, creates the expression of identity is one of the ways in which the mode of subjectivity is governed. Rose states:

> In the case that we are discussing here, the characteristics of persons, as those 'free individuals' upon whom liberalism depends for its political legitimacy and functionality, assume a particular significance. Perhaps one could say that the general strategic field of all those programme of government that regard themselves as liberal has been defined *by the problem of how free individuals can be governed such that they enact their freedom appropriately* (Rose, 1998, p. 29)   (my emphasis)

This problem of the appropriate enactment of freedom forms a breach into which neo-liberal polices have stepped with promises of effective solutions.

Freedom via neo-liberal policies is promoted as an ever-expanding range of choices for the individual or the group. To be offered or have a choice, (identity, lifestyle, education, employment, commodities, and relationships) becomes the point of reference whereby we are encouraged to understand ourselves as free. Under this kind of regime, making choices means acting in alignment with neo-liberal norms of the subject, which effectively acts to reproduce them.

**Choice as a normative interpellation**

Although any attempt at governance is always partial and incomplete, the self thought of as the autonomous, choosing active agent is a potent construct in modern and late-modern sensibilities. Choice and autonomy tend not to be thoughts we think about ourselves; rather they can operate as thoughts that think us. Judith Butler summarises this idea in her statement: "The subject becomes the principle of its subjectivation" (1997, p. 27). Neo-liberal thought conflates increased choice with increased personal freedom / well-being, and considered as a project within late-modernity, actively promotes more choices within its sphere of influence. This conflation of choice and freedom means that in the choices laid before the citizen of late-modern capitalism there is an interpellation (Althusser, 1984) that calls the subject into an understanding of itself as being actively able to choose. This understanding of the self might be thought of as an internalised nodal principle of intelligibility that in a consumer society is in a continual state of being reified.

I want to suggest that this continual reification though the presentation of choice operates as a powerful governing force operating at the level of self-governance. This is a force that continually invites, calls or positions subjects into a specific way of making sense of themselves. By the manner in which the subject engages with life as a series of choices, the subject is in attune-ment with governmental efforts that valorise the ideal self as an autonomous skilled chooser. What is also brought to the foreground and made a logical and moral necessity is the importance of subjects being able to live in the kind of choice rich environment that late modern capitalism promises.

**Freedom, choice and the expanding neo-liberal field**

When freedom for the subject becomes seen as both contingent on choice, and a function of applying choice, then the availability of things to make choices about becomes an important matter of human freedom. The increase of choice and hence freedom becomes the rationale for late-modern consumer-capitalism to expand into new areas. Deregulated consumer-capitalism offers itself as an ideal vehicle for attaining human freedom. Expanding late-modern consumer choice become the moral thing to do. Collins and Dutton refer to this expansive principle in suggesting that third world development projects act to produce third world citizens as autonomous choosers (2004). Their analysis of development policies indicate that expansion is justified as a moral project by a view of subjects that presupposes them to be autonomous choosers who wish to attain freedom by exercising their faculty of choice.

Linking back to identity politics, they also suggest that the empowering, or freeing, of the subjugated identity, (such as marginalised indigenous groups, or women) is often used as an additional rationale for action.

**Future narratives as a bridge of sensibility**

The question arises again of what is it that makes neo-liberalism and its attending ideal of subjectivity able to so effectively appeal across the boundaries of so many groups? It might be suggested that the lure of promises of enhanced capacity to create the ideal future are part of what makes neo-liberal policies so attractive to a range of cultural and identity groupings.

Zizek (2001) suggests that the 'subject' is inherently political, but, no longer acted on as such. He asserts that late-modern societies seem to operate from a social compact that seems to regard those matters of social decision making that are constitutive of and reproductive of, modes of subjectivity as if they were simple matters of administration. As Zizek states:

Zizek:" My idea is that the subject is inherently political, in the sense that 'subject', to me, denotes a piece of freedom - where you are no longer rooted in some firm substance, you are in an open situation. Today we can no longer simply apply old rules. We are engaged in paradoxes, which offer no immediate way out. In this sense, subjectivity is political.

Reul: But this kind of political subjectivity seems to have disappeared. In your books you speak of a post-political world.

Zizek: When I say we live in a post-political world, I refer to a wrong ideological impression. We don't really live in such a world*, but the existing universe presents itself as post-political in the sense that there is some kind of a basic social pact that elementary social decisions are no longer discussed as political decisions. They are turned into simple decisions of gesture and of administration.* And the remaining conflicts are mostly conflicts about different cultures. We have the present form of global capitalism plus some kind of tolerant democracy as the ultimate form of that idea. And, paradoxically, only very few are ready to question this world.

(Reul &  Deichmann,  2001, p. 8.  My emphasis).

Zizek's thoughts on the de-politicisation of subjectivity echoe with the notion that while identity in late-modernity has become plastic - the mode of subjectivity needed to achieve plasticity of identity has undergone a degree of capture by a late-modern vision of the ideal citizen as future-governed and autonomously choosing. I read Zizek as suggesting that politics now tends to be contained within a set of universalised and normative assumptions about what constitutes the self and hence what is good for the self. Part of this universalised assumption that is understandably adhered to by the groups who form the new social movements  is that control over ones future is important. This assumption lends great advantage to the neo-liberal offer of perfecting, via administration, a subjectivity that is able to seize the future.

In line with this notion of administration to a universalised future focused view of the self, Francis Fukuyama (cited in Phoenix, 2003) has described the post-Keynesian era as the "end of history". The implication is that the current democratic-liberal capitalist system of life is so in tune with the natural needs of the human (universalised) subject that large scale shifts in political or economic practice need never occur again. He implied a disjunctive break between an era of convulsive search for an ideal economy of life and the more current era, where that search demonstrated itself to have been accomplished (Phoenix, 2003, p.2).

Of course, theorists such as Fukuyama fail to mention the productive component of the late-modern era. The survival of the subject, or subject group in what is represented as the current 'natural' world mandates and produces a self that is standardised not in identity, but rather, in what is presumed to be the universally applicable nature of its intrinsic needs and capacities.

What the self of such a world becomes understood to be naturally equipped with forms a very distinctive architecture of the self. This internal architecture defines characteristics and behaviours such as:

- an awareness of the self as distinct from others

- the discernment to choose amongst a range of present options

- the autonomous capacity to formulate future goals; the individual desire, will and drive to actively envisage and seek the achievement of those goals

- and, a reflexivity that renders the self intelligible to itself as conscious of its own nature as agentive and responsible for the consequences of its decisions.

This distinctive architecture of the self, which perhaps not incidentally, fits admirably the neo-liberal psychological ideal, (Packer, 2004) is regarded and legitimated by modern social practices such as consumerism, education, medicine, psychology and democratic structures as the natural self of human

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beings in a healthy or well state. It is unsurprising that this view of the subject becomes normatively governed, not just by larger social institutions, but also by the efforts of both individuals, and groups whose identities might form around signifiers of ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality or disability. The administration of this future capacitised competent subjectivity becomes a matter understood as critical to well-being for all, and a point of consensual connection between what might appear to be groups with very diverse concerns.

**On a personal note again**

What I have suggested in this chapter is that the target of concern for identity politics has not so much missed the mark but hit another target as well. Aims of freedom become co-opted in the reproduction of a normative template of subjectivity. Identity politics has been and is effective. A great deal of my what I have done in my life might quite accurately be described as in support of the goals of identity politics. The problem with identity politics is not so much its struggles but more its successes.  When it is successful, its very success opens the door to the administration of its success by neo-liberal policies that reproduce neo-liberal norms of the self. If I am any gauge, these are norms of the subject that are likely to be profoundly unattractive to those whose work has been the struggle.

The next chapter considers method and proposes an approach to the topic of future narratives that has both the writer and reader as the author of meaning.

**Chapter Six: Method**

This chapter considers method, particularly the use of a governmental discourse analytic framework for determining how future narratives both produce and represent particular social forms. The approach used is decidedly not positivist and does not pretend to the empirical. Polkinghorne (1997) argues that the traditional researcher voice is that of a logician or debater. Polkinhghorne argues instead for a narrative voice or, story telling, suggesting that a narrative format is more effective in the journey to increase our understanding of human beings. He also argues that the logician's voice is in effect a particular form of storying anyway, albeit one that sometimes does not admit to merely telling a story. Polkinghorne suggests that given that any research report is but a process of telling a story that it is then best to transparently surface that process and tell the story as an admittedly local and perspectival narrative.

Following Polkinghorne (1988 &1997) I make the argument that an overtly perspectival narrative approach is most appropriate for the exploration of future narratives. In chapter eight I use written extracts drawn from education policy, populist media and advertising. I use this material because they are publicly accessible representative stories that when read through my story can be seen to enactment the governance of future driven social forms.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore narratives of the future which I have argued act as an important node of reference-for-meaning within the productive discourses of late-modernity, which I argue, in this instance, is strongly influenced by both modernity and neo-liberalism. The topic of futurority I explore is speculative, and analysis of any data necessarily relies for interpretation on my relationship with the data. Hence I use qualitative methods. "Qualitative research can be defined in a simple but quite loose, way. It is the interpretative study of a specified issue or problem in which the researcher is central to the sense that is made" (Banister, et al., 1994, p. 2).

I have followed authors such as Beck (1999), Marshal (1995) and O'Malley (2001) in asserting that subsequent to the Keynesian era, (Kuttner (1997) there has been consistent promotion in the western sphere of influence of a norm that holds individuals to be responsible for managing their own future risk and well-being. I follow Rose (1999) in referring to this as a process of governmentality. In this context I have taken governmentality to mean actions undertaken to promote the adoption amongst whole populace of values, beliefs, and understandings of the self, such that citizens then conduct themselves in alignment with the interests of particular political and economic programmes. Governmentality might also be taken to mean "the contact between technologies of domination of others and those of the self" (Foucault, 1988, p.19) and "strategies for the direction of conduct of free individuals" (Foucault, 1991, p. 29).

While this thesis is primarily theoretical and based around my interpretative reading of a range of literature, I do use aspects of a critical discourse analysis in furthering my enquiry. Wood and Kroger (2000) indicate that a critical discourse analysis emphasises "understanding of discourse in relation to social problems; to social structural variables such as race gender and class; and above all to power" (p. 21). They assert that critical discourse analysis is particularly well suited to attending to the relationship between language and power and as such is useful in the kind of social and cultural critique that this thesis attempts (Wood & Kroger, 2000). For the purposes of this thesis, the analysis of the discourses uses a governmental critical framework that is interested in how individual subjects are tied into macro-political systems and the attending social forms that then position or produce subjects in such ways that they reproduce the social forms. The analysis draws on the idea of 'subject positioning'. Wetherell, Taylor & Yates (2001) assert that existing systems of thought-structure 'position subjects'. That is, people are positioned by the systems of thought they inhabit in various ways, including taking up the ways of thinking and experiencing the world that are offered by the representative discourses of these systems of thought. Discourse analysis allows the examination of the inter-playing networks of representation that have specific social forms producing specific kinds of persons.

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The focus of my interest is on the productive and subjectifying aspects of discourses of the future and the self and to forward this interest I am then curious about four things:

1. Where subjects encounter these discourses?

2. What enables or eases the subjectifying adoption of these discourses by subjects?

3. How and to what extent are these discourses instantiated in the lives of subjects?

4. What are the ideals, aims and programmes it might be imagined are served by the instantiation of discourses of the future in the lives of subjects?

In approaching the research component of this thesis I have operated from the following two presuppositions which align with both a social constructionist approach (Gergen, 1995) and a critical discourse analytic (Wood and Kroger 2000).

Firstly, the representative discourses will speak to and attempt to guide both behaviour and self-perception such that they align with and reproduce prevailing social forms.

Secondly, the representative discourses will do so in part, by re-defining or re-presenting the nature of the world such that what is required of the subject makes sensible appeal to the common sense of the (new) world that is represented. I also presuppose that both the new-world and the common logics of action this world requires will be visible to an extent in the ordinary actions and sensibilities of those exposed to the discourses.

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To locate this enquiry in a site other than the purely speculative, what was needed was a location where discourses of the future are easily available and visible, in this case in written and stipulative form. In line with my assumption that such discourses instruct or direct persons, what was also needed was a location where the directional or instructional nature of these discourses could be seen to be acting in a directive or instructive manner upon the sensibilities of persons.

Because the primary focus of my enquiry has centred around children, who have to spend a lot of time at school, and because my area of study is policy, the logical first place for me to look for where these discourses or narratives are promulgated was education policy documents.
]
Following Polkinghorne, (1988) I have come to believe such documents tell a story. A number of authors have pointed out that education has always been a process that aims to fit people to prevailing social forms and their informing ideologies (Alcorn, 1999; Gramsci, cited in Simon, 1982; Stephens, 1995).

Put very simply, education might be thought of as the process of creating a series of stories designed to organise how people make sense of experience and self in relation to that experience.  I am considering this story creating process as a series of political driven actions expressed as guiding narratives that continuously act on the sensibilities, meaning-making and actions of children (and by extension the adults in their lives). I consider these guiding narratives to have three overlapping political themes or fronts:

The first front; the prioritising of the teaching of particular skills, values and capacities, which, as Fitzsimmons, (2002) and Dutton and Collins (2004) assert is a political act which determines what is considered of value in the world.

The second front; how the world is portrayed, and the skills, attitudes and capacities that will then in consequence be demanded of future citizens by the nature of that world. This too is a political act (Apple, 1991).

The third front; the manner in which success is portrayed, which usually links very clearly to the economic and social aims of political programmes and ideologies. (Ferrier & Anderson 1998; Stephens, 1995).

In undertaking this analysis of how narratives of the future inform children how they should make-meaning of their selves and their future lives, I am regarding these three overlapping fronts as forming the basis of what might be considered as the plot of a story for people to live by.

In line with this notion of a plot for people to live by, Polkinghorne, (1988) following Bruner (1986), asserts that there are two basic modes of cognitive functioning which operate to provide distinctly different modes of ordering experience, or constructing reality.  Both modes have distinct approaches to establishing the causality that might be interpreted from any given sequence of events. The first, is the logico-scientific mode which tends to seek for universal truth conditions to validate experience and establish causality. The second, is the narrative mode that looks for particular (local) connections between particular (local) events so as to make them meaningful as a whole.

Because I am interested primarily in the effect of local interpretations of meaning rather than anything as large as a universal truth condition, it is the narrative mode, rather than the logico-scientific mode that I lean toward. As Polkinghorne (1988) states in relation to narrative:

It [narrative] is the scheme that displays purpose and direction in human affairs and makes individual human lives comprehensible as wholes. We conceive our own and others behaviour within the narrative framework, and through it recognise the effects our planned actions can have on desired goals… The registering of relationship by the narrative scheme results from its power to configure a sequence of events into a unified happening. Narrative ordering makes individual events comprehensible by identifying the whole to which they contribute. The ordering process operates by linking diverse happenings along a temporal dimension and by identifying the effect one event has on another, and it serves to cohere human actions and the events that effect human life into a temporal gestalt (p.18).

This thesis might be thought of as the narrative framework (or story) that I use to read a new story out of a story that is continuously being read by children through the local interpretation of guiding policy documents.

Cushman (1995) has referred to this process as, "not so much reading a cultural text, but rather reading over the shoulder of those already reading a cultural text" (p.182). My new story narrates into meaning a framework that suggests that the stories told to children are the expression of politically linked social forms that seek to mould children's narrative frameworks so that the narratives of meaning and action they then use will reproduce those social forms.

In undertaking this story about stories I have drawn on the following six policy documents:

1.  *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*. (Ministry of Education, 1993).

2.  *A Future Tertiary Education Policy for New Zealand: Tertiary Education Review*     (green paper). (1997)

3.  *Improving wellbeing for all New Zealanders.*(Ministry of social development, 2002).

4. *Schooling In New Zealand – A Guide (*Fancy, 2003).

5.*Education priorities for New Zealand (*Mallard, 2003)

6. *Statement of intent – 2003 to 2008 (*Ministry of education, 2003).

I chose the first of these documents because it has been identified as influential on both how education is undertaken in New Zealand and also as clearly articulating the ideals and aims that underpin the current regimes of education in New Zealand (Marshall, 1995; Olsen 1997).

The second document is not a directive document as such, but instead outlines the purposes that education is understood to serve.  In addition it delineates the kind of persons education hopes to produce.

The third document is the 2002 briefing to the incoming minister of education and in its discussion of general wellbeing in New Zealand has much to say about the link between education's production of certain kinds of capabilities in persons and the well-being of the nation. This document also clearly speaks to the purported nature of the world that education presumes to prepare people for.

The fourth document is written for parents and acts as a summary of the purposes that education is considered to serve and also explains what skills are prioritised in education by making reference to what a specific picture of the world is purported to demand of future citizens.

The fifth and sixth documents set out the ambitions of the current (2005) government in terms of education. They both speak very clearly to a purported nature of the world and the kinds of persons that education seeks to prepare people to be in preparation for the demands of that world.

The documents are not presented in whole form but rather selected segments are used that illustrate the presence, intentions and supporting suppositions of narratives of the future.

I also use a number of newspaper articles and advertisements. The use of these articles and advertisements is not so much to explore narratives of the future, but rather to draw attention to how ordinary and unremarkable narratives of the future are. In using these anecdotal sources I am drawing on Bruner's (1986) notion that data is not a primary source which the researcher then analyses, rather the narrative frameworks that are used to make sense of any text, are what constitute the primary data itself.

In using these very ordinary texts, the data that is created is my perception of them as also extra-ordinary. In a sense, the data is my reading of these articles using discourses, narratives or ideas that suggest that a preoccupation with the future, and the belief that subjects can control the future, is no ordinary state of affairs but instead can be interpreted as extraordinary.

White and Epston (1989) have also suggested that when the effort is made to read the ordinary as extraordinary, new and useful information and interpretations are made available.  My selection of these particular articles is a function of the analytical framework and series of discourses that allow me to view narratives of the future as extraordinary. These articles and

advertisements 'caught my eye' by the manner in which they seemed to exemplify the prevalence and banality of discourses of the future. My personal response to these articles shows a degree of correlation with Lather's (1991) notion of face validity. I experienced a click of recognition and a moment of "yes, of course" (p.56).

Extracts from the documents are examined in Chapter eight. Preceding chapters have fore-grounded this examination by exploring a number of theoretical positions, perspectives, discourses and conjectures.

**Chapter Seven: Childhood**

Children are people. Sometimes they are shorter than me, sometimes younger than me. Other than that I strongly suspect that it is not possible to talk about childhood outside the social mechanisms that shape how childhood is perceived and acted upon. It is also not possible to talk about childhood without acknowledging the purposes of childhood held within any given social form. The focus of this chapter is on how childhood is perceived and acted upon and the purposes of childhood held within, in particular, neo-liberalism. Education and how knowledge is regarded are also addressed, as school is one of the main social forms that seek to shape the lives and subjectivities of children. For a description of the nature and experience of childhood that falls outside of these shaping purposeful social forms you will need to go and ask a child.

**The new social studies of childhood**

A new perspective on childhood has developed in the last decade that views the category of childhood as a social construction. This new approach suggests that historically children have seldom been studied or thought of, other than as extensions of the institutions, (such as families and school) in which their lives take place (Holloway and Valentine 2000; Jenks and Prout, 1998).

It is also suggested that children have not generally been seen as capable of being active agents on their behalf, rather they are seen as subjects to be acted upon. Consequentially, the ability of children to think, hold opinions and act on those opinions tends to be understood not as the behaviour of a subject active in their own life, but rather as the stage bound demonstration of capacities in training for the future (Qvortrop, 1994). These capacities are then only valued or acted on, in as much as they indicate future value to be realised.

This new approach also holds that the developmental paradigm has had a huge impact on childhood and how it is now acted upon. The impact of the developmental paradigm has meant that the interpretation of children's experiences and actions tends to be collapsed into categories of appropriate or inappropriate development. One result is that the voicing of concerns, wishes or opinions by children are re-figured in meaning so as to represent, not legitimate voices speaking from the authority of their own experience; but instead the expression of universalised stages of development (Burman 1994).

It is not accurate to say that children are not valued in society, but rather that they tend not to be valued as active beings participating in society, instead they are valued for the citizens it is hoped they will become. Because children are seen as passive potential to be shaped, rather than as the active shapers of their own experience, their governance is more active, instrumental and overt than is ordinarily the case with adults. The new social studies of childhood are beginning to have an impact on how children are treated. There is a move toward consulting with children as if they were active players in the larger social fabric, however the new approaches toward children have not yet penetrated to the level of influencing education policy.

**Studies of childhood**

Allport (1960), suggests that the main emphasis of childhood studies has been on children as passive recipients in the 'process of becoming' rather than as social beings actively engaged in life. Shirley, Adair and Anderson (2000) have suggested that the majority of the literature tends to have a research focus that has children as 'products of development'. Their conclusion, after widely surveying the literature, is that children tend to be primarily understood and talked about in terms of their movement to adulthood. Success in childhood is primarily understood in terms of 'progression' toward adulthood.

As Qvortrop (1994) observed, "children are often dealt with as 'human becomings', rather than 'human beings'" (cited in Shirley et al., 2000, p. 50). This tendency perhaps reveals a purposeful thematic to studies of childhood, a wish to discover by studying how products have previously been developed, how they may be better developed in future. An implication that this research suggests is that society attends to childhood as a site of intervention for the purposes of the future.

**Children as sites of intervention**

The observations made by Shirley et al. show a clear fit with Erica Burman's (1994) critique of developmental psychology and its impact on mothers and children. She notes that developmental 'milestones' and a child's movement, or lack of movement through these 'hoops', as she puts it, have become one of the main indicators used by mothers to measure their 'success' as parents. Each approaching 'milestone' is viewed with anxiety, each 'milestone' successfully negotiated is departed from with relief. The construction of the successful child and hence parent is measured by movement 'toward'. She makes the point that expert knowledge systems have in a sense colonised the parent child relationship, most particularly in regard to the time-bound measurement of success:

> Development thus becomes an obstacle race, a set of hoops to jump through, with cultural kudos accorded to the most advanced, and the real or imagined penalties of professional intervention or stigmatisation if progress is delayed
> (Burman, 1994, p.25).

Burman makes another point:

> The modern commitment to science as progress, with developmental psychology accumulating facts on the way to complete knowledge, is thus re-inscribed within the process of documenting the individual infants increasing maturity (Burman, 1994, p.25).

In similar vein to Burman and Shirley et al., Dr Tina Besley, a New Zealand school counsellor whose PhD focused on discourses that constitute children's subjectivities makes a powerful point about how children are often conceived of within New Zealand society and education. "Youth is idealised and institutionalised as a deficit state of "becoming", that exists and has meaning in relation to the adult it will "arrive" to be" (2002, p. 71).

UK critical psychologists, Satka and Mason, (2004) who examine the political uses of attachment theory as used by social workers and educators, make a somewhat similar observation. In particular they are interested in how modern constructions of children have them not as active subjects, but rather, as passive objects to be properly developed into adult subjects whose behaviour aligns with political and social goals:

> The goal that is emphasised is not only happier children, but the future of children as self-governing citizens and modern individuals. It is this future perspective that legitimates the marginal position of children while developing (Satka & Mason, 2004, p.99).

The literature seems reasonably clear that children tend to be made sense of and acted on in terms of who they will become.

**On a personal note**

My own work with children has involved family therapy, counselling, social work and more latterly crisis intervention with children who have witnessed violence against their mothers. In general, I've approached my work with children from a social constructionist perspective that is interested in how they make meaning of, think about, and act on, their own experience. For the children I meet, it often seems to be an unusual experience for someone to ask them their opinion. My observation of how expertise commonly deals with children is that questions are asked primarily to confirm what adults think they already know. In particular, this is in regard to the extent to which children measure up (or down) to the latest thinking on what might be expected from

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their supposed developmental stage. The voices of children are usually screened for fit with psychological norms before they are ever screened for meaning. In my experience of fifteen years it is rare to find adults treating children as if they were active conscious participants in the process of shaping their own lives. What this all tends to mean; and perhaps why I chose to focus on children in exploring narratives of the future, is that adult systems tend to regard children as legitimate targets for interventions designed to shape and guide who they are and what they think.

My own speculation is that because children are seen as passive objects, and, as cherished hopes of the future, they are the first to be practised on, when a new theory or ideology of the self gains social or political ascendance. The lives of children show the shape of governance very clearly, and they are often the first site of intervention to be considered when a new ideology is on the rise. As the following illustration begins to show, this was clearly the case when neo-liberals were first planning their assault on the bastion of the Keynesian State.

**The role of education in the promotion of neo-liberalism**

Promoters of neo-liberal ideas have always been aware of the centrality of education in fostering the conditions that make neo-liberal ideals seem ordinary common sense. Neo-liberalism is not a singular entity, however, it is sometimes spoken of as an active project and some groups of neo-liberal scholars and theorists are recognised as having had a profound influence on the direction of that project. The UK 'Institute of Economic Affairs', was one such very influential group. The institute has been described as a neo-liberal think tank inspired by the work of the economist, Hayek. The work of Debbie Hill (1998) illustrates how the neo-liberal project historically held intentions of using education to promote neo-liberal norms.

In her examination of the hegemony of neo-liberalism in New Zealand, Debbie Hill has explored the ways in which the philosophy or culture of neo-liberalism has been made the ordinary state of affairs. She quotes a seminal 1959 document written by the 'Institute of Economic Affairs' which summarises a plan for how market philosophies can be made the norm:

> There are three basic requirements for the establishment and maintenance of a free society:
> 1. The philosophy of the market must be widely accepted; this requires a large programme of education and much thought about how to finance it;
> 2. The transformation from a controlled economy must be eased by compensating those interests whose expectations will be disturbed;
> 3. The policies must be designed to make otiose all pleas for protection from the consequences of change that democratic politicians would have difficulty in resisting
> (Harris & Seldon, 1959, cited in Hill, 1998, p. 73).

Hill comments "In this manner the existing 'taken for granted' would eventually be re-conceptualised" (p.73). She moves on to add:

> The task of Hayek's apostles was that of gradually translating the outlook implicit in the average persons every day experience into a conception of the world which, as Eagleton (1991) conceives of the hegemonic process, 'is subtly, pervasively diffused throughout habitual daily practices, intimately interwoven with "culture" itself, inscribed in the very texture of our experience from nursery school to the funeral parlour' (p. 114). The dominance of the economic liberalist doctrine was thus seen to rely on slow and deliberate educative means as opposed to quick and decisive political intervention (Hill, 1998, p. 73).

The thrust of Hill's argument is that the promotion of neo-liberal ideology has been deliberate and incremental and that education plays a key role in its hegemony. One of the ways that neo-liberal ideas are made normal involves shifting the purpose that education is understood to serve. Following this, education is increasingly presented as firstly a mechanism for preparing young people for future careers. Pedagogical relevance is determined in reference to its efficacy at promoting vocational competencies and values that have the individual as responsible for their own future economic well-being.

**Education as commodity**

Under a neo-liberal regime, education becomes seen as a necessary commodity for the shaping of the self into forms pleasing to the requirements of the future market. The kind of self the child subject is required to be in the future, so as to be economically successful, becomes the rationale for the educational instrumentalities of the present. Future success is made the responsibility of the individual, with education's role being to provide students with the skills and attitudes that will allow them to successfully shoulder this individualised responsibility. Collective responsibility is re-conceptualized as preparing individuals to be responsible for themselves. This ideological framework also requires the subject to relocate the future into the present, the needs of the future become current demands of the present moment.

Dennis Lawton, an English educationalist, identifies some of this phenomenon in the call that is made by "modern conservatism" in Britain for education to be:

> useful, particularly in the sense of servicing the labour market with well trained and disciplined school leavers who have been convinced of the value of punctuality and hard work (Lawton, 1989, p. 50).

In his opinion, this approach to education has now become significantly more influential, with a concurrent fading in influence of a 'collectivist' approach to education policy.  In discussing Education objectives, Lawton states:

> One of the problems of modern industrial society is that work tends to take on a very powerful, even dominant significance for adults. Employers, parents and the young themselves, *often tend to see childhood and adolescence largely in terms of preparation for work"* (Lawton, 1989, p. 9, my emphasis)

The same shift seemed to occur in Australia. Observers of the Australian education scene have recognised for some time changes in government perceptions of the purpose of education  (Marginson, 1993, p.56, cited in Ferrier & Anderson, 1998).  Marginson describes the appearance of economic rationalism in the educational arena in the context of a drift from democratic political goals to market economic goals in education. He suggests that education policy issues in Australia are no longer a mix of social, cultural and economic issues, but rather they are perceived by government as primarily economic policy issues (Ferrier & Anderson, 1998, p. 93).

Education's drift from serving democratic political goals to market economic goals reflects the effectiveness of the neo-liberal project in making future success in the market understood as the natural purpose of education. This shift or change in the purposes education is understood to serve has been persistent and seems now well entrenched as an accepted norm. Education represents not just a territory in which the subject is directly governed (or acted upon), but also represents an ideal territory in which subjects can be encouraged to act upon themselves, (or govern themselves) in particular ways. Duttton and Collins (2004) make the point that the development or teaching of particular skills, capacities and orientations is a form of political subjectification. Once acquired, such skills and orientations lead to subjects automatically conducting themselves in ways that align with the objectives of political programmes. An example might be a child equipped with tools of: goal setting,

self confidence, a competitive attitude, a strong work / study ethic and a belief in their individual capacity and right to create by their own efforts a good future for themselves. While these may seem very worthy attributes to develop in children, they are also likely to lead to a life conducted in ways that closely align with neo-liberal ideals of the subject. Someone with such skills, abilities and attitudes is a citizen tailor-made for a free market economy and will likely conduct themselves accordingly.

In his book "Children and the Politics of Culture", John Stephens (1995) speaks to this aspect of governance that encourages the child subject to understand themselves and act in accordance with political norms:

> What role is now being created for children, and with regard to the educational process, what roles are children being prepared for in adult life? It seems that within the present educational climate in the United Kingdom, *we are preparing children to compete, to look after their own interests, to attach differential value to other children in terms of their abilities / disabilities*. Children are not being encouraged in the development of participatory democracies. *Currently the nation's politics of self-seeking individualism has become children's every day psychology at school* (John, 1995, p. 116 cited in Stephens, 1995, my emphases)

An examination of New Zealand's school policy documents and school promotional literature also shows them to often have the future and the individual self in a central position. Success is defined as the production of individuals fully enabled to excel in the future; definitions of success only encompass the current experience of children inasmuch as what that experience indicates about their future. The present lived moment of children at school becomes a commodity for the future

In the above writings there are themes and constitutive forces for children (and adults) that encompass both the future, the proper and 'natural' capacities of the self and the meaning of the self in relation to the future. The following are some of the themes that I believe emerge:

- That children must be prepared (got ready) for the future
- The present is naturally in service to the future. This is embodied in the idea of progress towards a good future (as that thing toward which much effort should be brought to bear) and which informs and justifies the actions of the present.
- The individual has the innate power to determine their own future and this natural capacity is to be nurtured
- Future betterment can always be obtained through effort.
- Seeking knowledge / skills increases the likelihood of effectively achieving betterment.
- The worth or fitness of children is determined by measuring them against natural universal milestones of progress.
- Holding goals for the future is natural to 'well-being'
- Children's worth is described in terms of their future contribution to society or the economy

For childhood, a coherent set of ideas emerge that might perhaps conceptualise childhood as: 'the emergent stretch of time before value is realised'. The subjective experience of this for children might be imagined as:

- That current pain is worth imagined future gain
- That their present experience is of worth primarily in terms of how it resources their future
- That who they are 'now' is valuable only in so much as it indicates who they will become.
- That current achievements are indicators of things to come, not ever solely treasures in their own right
- That a stance of vigilance and preparedness towards the needs of the future is essential to well being and must be maintained.
- That they as individuals, are responsible (now) for their own future well-being
- That the future will operate as an interrogation of their 'fitness' to do well and therefore is to be approached with the same preparedness, vigilance and, no doubt, trepidation that any other formal process of assessment demands.

I wonder if for children who are schooled under neo-liberally influenced regimes, the future becomes a high stakes exam, which while lying always ahead, sends back as a weighted precursor the constant present awareness of the possibility and dangers of future failure. Perhaps to be a late-modern child is to live with this understanding as the natural state of things.

**The neo-liberal use of the knowledge narrative**

As Jones (1999) has suggested, there is a progressive bias in modern cultures which conflates gaining knowledge with progress and betterment. Knowledge narratives tend to have a corresponding iconic status in societies that have been influenced by modernity (Sarup, 1996). For instance, 'gaining knowledge to better yourself' is a statement that tends to make immediate sense to people from western cultures.

Perhaps it is because gaining knowledge seems such a self-evident recipe for success, that neo-liberals have so successfully used increasing knowledge as a rallying cry to introduce their approaches to education (Fitzsimmons, 2002). The corresponding changes to the education system have somewhat re-figured the meanings of education, learning and knowledge. Education tends now to be seen not so much as a method for learning how to understand or make sense of the world, but rather, as specific sets of skills required for individuals to accomplish future success.

**The neo-liberal silencing of knowledge**

Under this kind of approach to education, knowledge becomes a commodity of measurable sets of skills with worth determined by a commercial sector logic of exchange-value. In discussing neo-liberalisms impact on education in Australia Fitzsimons (2002) charts the vocational shift toward education being promoted as the development of 'how to' skills rather than 'knowledge about'. Following much the same argument as Duttons and Collins (2004) Fitzsimons makes what I consider a very important point:

> Defining what is and what is not a skill is a political act
> (Fitzsimmons, 2002, p. 5).

My reading of this statement is that those who are able to define the skills and attributes that hold social priority, are also able to then define both what society holds to be valuable and what society holds to be worthless. This has extraordinary political advantages for any truth-regime that seeks to present itself as an ideal of how society should function. When knowledge comes to be understood as solely a set of skills that contributes to personal success, then what is prioritised is not a critical perspective on society but instead accommodation to a governing regimes definition of success.

In much the same vein, Jane Mulderrig (2003) points out that in the UK there has been a shift in the purposes education is promoted as serving.  She quotes the following sentence from the UK policy document *Schools achieving success* (2001):

> We must reap the skills benefits of an education system that matches the needs of the knowledge economy

Mulderrig goes on to say:

> the nature of learning is redefined toward greater economic relevance and the intrinsic value of education is subordinated to its extrinsic value to the economy (Mulderrig, 2003, p. 10).

Knowledge becomes a commodity serving a political purpose. The worth of knowledge becomes defined by its perceived future economic usefulness.  The development of the knowledge economy rhetoric in the 1990s was portrayed as a response to a burgeoning information technology. It can also be taken to be a neo-liberal capture of what defines knowledge and the purposes knowledge is intended to serve. Understandably, the children who have been schooled through this period understandably make sense of knowledge not as a tool to explore or critique the world with, but rather as a commodity for their future success.

**On a personal and anecdotal note again**

When my daughter was approaching high school age (2002) my partner and I visited four schools and read information on ten other schools. The mission statements of many of the schools struck me as reflecting norms I found rather different from those I experienced during my own years at school (early 1970s). Words like excellence, effort, success, and the future seemed to form the prevailing themes, with little mention made of other themes such as kindness, moderation or fitting in.

I speculated about this change. Instead of offering to form children as able to, 'find their own place in the world', schools now promote the capacity to form children as able to, 'individually make their own place in the world'.  Either the nature of the world has become truly harsher or it is now normal to portray the world as only having a place for those who make it by their own efforts. The next chapter details some New Zealand examples of policies and other documents that speak in an overlapping manner to:

Firstly, how the world is now portrayed;

Secondly, what kind of people this world is presumed to need, and:

Thirdly, how these perceptions of the world and people have become unremarkable in the public perception.

**Chapter Eight: Policies and media anecdotes**

**On a personal note**

From the words of my daughter at age eleven:

> Rea: I know you're always supposed to be thinking about your future all
> the time, but it's hard, 'cause me and my friends are more interested in
> the present.
>
> David: Where did you get the idea that you are always supposed to be
> thinking about the future?
>
> Rea: Oh, everywhere! (Personal communication, 2001, November)

What follows uses extracts from prominent policy documents that inform, guide and sometimes mandate how education is undertaken in New Zealand. The extracts I've used paint one picture (or narrative) of the norms of the subject that underpin the purposes of education. There are of course many other extracts I could have used that might have told a different story. Like all texts they exist and have meaning only in the experience of being read (Bruner, 1986). These extracts were used because they operate as points of departure for the argument I make that subjectivity is politically mediated and that the future has both become more prominent, and the responsibility for it more individually held.

Other readings of these texts might praise the efforts to capacitise young people and be pleased at the constant reiteration of taking account of cultural diversity. Other extracts I might have used from these same documents, detail the care that is now taken in attempting to ensure that the needs of diverse ethnicities are accommodated.

There is also within these documents a strong theme of care not to marginalise individuals on account of differing cultural norms and values. These efforts are absolutely praise-worthy and I do respect and admire much of the good intent that underpins these documents. However, my purpose is different. I am examining how even amongst these praise worthy efforts there exists a politicisation of subjectivity that attempts to form subjects so as to better perform within the prevailing social forms and the view of the world that is contained within those social forms.

My use of media material, follows much the same purpose. I chose the articles and advertisements because they caught my eye by speaking so precisely and exactly to the arguments I have been making.  Again, their meaning within this text is a function of my reading. In large part I picked the media material because they were so perfectly ordinary in expressing  norms and ambitions of the self that have become 'ordinary' and normal in the post-Keynesian era.

In using this admittedly banal material I am following White and Epston (1989) in aiming to make the ordinary extraordinary so as to make sense of it in new ways. In addition, I am also following Apple (1991) in looking for the ways that what began as an economic theory has become expressed or storied, as the everyday language of ordinary common-sense.

**Normalising neo-liberalism, portrayals of the world**

The following passage indicates the rationale of educational reform as a necessary response to a changed and changing world and is taken from the foreword to the *New Zealand curriculum framework.* This particular document is important because it forms the main guiding document of New Zealand education:

> Today, New Zealand is facing many significant challenges. If we wish to progress as a nation, and to enjoy a healthy prosperity in todays and tomorrows competitive world economy, our education system must adapt to meet these challenges. We need a learning environment which enables all our students to attain high standards and develop appropriate personal qualities. As we move toward the twenty-first century, with all the rapid technological change which is taking place, we need a work force which is increasingly highly skilled and adaptable, and which has an international perspective (O,'Rourke, 1991, p. 1).

The narrative of education as preparation for work in a challenging world is also visible in the policy advice given to the 2002 incoming Labour government by the NZ Ministry of Social Development :

> Key Messages:
> Jobs today demand more and higher skills and the ability to adapt to changes. Education and training needs to be more aligned with work and in particular with the needs of new and local labour markets (2002, p. 1 ).

Advice to parents about the purpose of New Zealand schooling also promotes a similar view of the world, the following is from, "Schooling in New Zealand, a Guide" written in 1999, by Howard Fancy, the Secretary for Education:

Students are facing many challenges now and in the *future*. Changing economic and social influences are also shaping the demands on schools. *New Zealand needs a workforce that is highly skilled and flexible if it is to compete successfully in a global market.* Quality education is key for *individuals to achieve their full potential and contribute to our economy.* Since 1989 there have been major reforms in the organisation and management of education in New Zealand (Fancy, 1999, p. 1, my emphases).

From the same document:

The New Zealand curriculum was developed to *take New Zealand education into the future.* It provides guidelines covering teaching learning and assessment in all New Zealand schools. The main principle of the curriculum is based on the belief that *the individual student is at the centre of all teaching and learning.* The curriculum outlines *the need for education to be both relevant and responsive to the needs of all students so that they are able to play a full part in the world in which they will live and work (*Fancy, 1999, p. 12, my emphases)

As well as an overall sense of a demanding future in this document by Fancy there is both a strongly individualistic theme apparent, and, a theme that has the production of future competencies as both what defines current needs and justifies responding to them. The individual child is constructed as a potential as yet unfulfilled, still in the process of needing to be developed into the fulfilled potential of a subject with the capacity for the mastery both they, and the New Zealand economy, will need.

My reading of this document suggests it holds an inherent understanding of the perfected adult self as a free active subject, flexibly positioned to both envisage a hoped for future and sufficiently resourced so as to be able to reach out and take it. It is interesting that the well-being of the collective is described in economic terms and seems to posit collective well-being as dependent on individual competencies, which hence become very important. Norms of collective responsibility and finding a place in life, rather than forging a place in life, are subjugate by their conspicuous absence. It is worth comparing these post-Keynesian school documents to education policy documents written before neo-liberalism gained its new ascendancy. The following passage was written in nineteen thirty eight by C.E.Beeby, New Zealand's Director of Education, 1938 – 1960, in collaboration with Peter Fraser, the then Minister of Education. It is reasonably widely accepted (Alcorn, 1999) as being the seminal statement that informed New Zealand education policy until the mid nineteen sixties:

> The Government's objective, broadly expressed is that every person, whatever his (sic) level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right as a citizen, to a free education of the kind to which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers. So far is this from being a mere pious platitude that the full acceptance of the principle will involve the reorientation of the education system (Beeby cited in Alcorn, 1999, p. 99).

In a later statement on curriculum, Beeby wrote:

> The community cannot afford to have citizens who are lacking a certain common core of knowledge and barren of certain experiences that seem essential to intelligent participation in communal activities (Beeby cited in Alcorn, 1999, p. 127).

The future and the individual are certainly present in this statement by Beeby, what is different though, is that the hopes for the future seem to revolve around not so much the individual but rather the need of the community for people who can intelligently participate in it. What is also striking is the implicit acceptance that abilities vary, for example:

> "…*every person, whatever his (sic) level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right as a citizen, to a free education of the kind to which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers….*" (Beeby cited in Alcorn, 1999, p. 99).

It is interesting to juxtapose Beeby's statement with the following sentence taken from the (1999) introduction of the 'curriculum framework', (which is quoted on p. 119 of this thesis):

> "…*We need a learning environment which enables <u>all our students</u> to attain high standards and develop appropriate personal qualities…*" (O,'Rourke, 1991, p. 1).

It does seem that rather that more is expected of people these days! The above juxtaposition can be read in the light of Mulderrig' s (2003) work. Mulderrig suggests that communal participation and inclusion have now been re-conceptualised to mean all citizens need to be prepared through education for the opportunity to compete. One interpretation therefore might be that there is now less room to acknowledge that being shaped into the kind of subjectivity that is able to successfully entrepreneur its own life, may be harder for some than others. The statement seems to indicate that everybody is required, and hence must be able, to have high standards and develop appropriate personal qualities, presumably for success.

The promotion of a 'life long learning' path now forms a central plank of education policy in New Zealand, the UK and Australia. This can be seen in the foreword to documents such as the NZ Ministry of Education, *Statement of intent – 2003 to 2008* (2003):

We are a government determined to build a strong future for New Zealand. Education is at the heart of this important endeavour…….The governments vision is for all New Zealanders to have the opportunity to participate in a quality education no matter their circumstances. *We see education as a lifelong process. To keep pace with a changing world, we all need to keep learning, regardless of age. It does not matter if you are five or 85: you need to keep learning"* (Mallard, 2003, foreword to Educational Statement of Intent, p.2, my emphasis).

It is interesting that the needs of society are now so urgent that eighty five year olds need to keep learning too! I speculate that the promotion of lifelong learning through the vehicle of education rhetoric is an effective tool to promote a mode of self-improving self-governance amongst those whom education has not traditionally had within its constituency. This aligns with the thoughts of Olsen whose full quote I use on pg 38, Olsen states that:

"…In this new model the state has taken upon itself to keep us all up the mark. The state will see to it that each one of us makes a 'continual enterprise of ourselves' (Gordon, 1991) in what seems to be a process of 'governing without governing' (Rose, 1993)
(Olsen & Mathews, 1997, p. 22).

The following lengthy quote is taken from *Education Priorities for New Zealand, Ministry of Education, (2003)*. The introduction to this document describes it as "setting out the key goals and priorities driving governments work to improve educational outcome" (p.1). The statements are the four key areas where the education system expects and intends to deliver results. Another way of reading this document is that it stipulates what people should be capable of as a consequence of education. The quote is as follows:

[Education should]

**Provide all New Zealanders with strong foundations for future learning.**

All New Zealanders need to master the basic skills of literacy and numeracy; to be confident motivated and healthy; and have a strong sense of identity. These basic foundations are critical for success in schooling, for coping with the demands of modern society and for engagement in learning throughout life. The foundation skills and attitudes need to include:

- The ability to read, write and communicate effectively;

- Sound numeracy skills;

- Self confidence; including a strong sense of cultural pride and
    identity;

- Social skills and competencies;

- Openness to diversity challenge and change, and:

- Learning skills and an enthusiasm for ongoing learning

General knowledge about New Zealand and the world  - who we are, where we come from where we live  - is also a core element of strong foundations. These foundations build resilience and provide a basis for self-improvement. The education system must provide and encourage foundation learning wherever it is needed, for people of all ages.

**Ensure high levels of achievement by all school leavers**

Strong foundations are necessary but not enough. We want all students to leave school having succeeded to the best of their abilities and with the skills and knowledge needed to:

- Pursue their ongoing education and development;

- Make a productive contribution to New Zealand society; and

- Become our future leaders and innovators.

All school leavers need good skills in problem solving, creative thinking, interpreting information, reflecting on learning, and relating to others. They must be able to apply these skills to different subject areas and in different contexts. Creativity must be fostered and allowed to flourish. Successful school leavers will have a strong sense of self-worth and identity, a keenness for learning, self-motivation, tolerance and respect for others. All students need to attain school leaving qualifications, which attest to this achievement and which enable them to make a successful transition to work, tertiary education and adulthood.

**Ensure that New Zealanders engage in learning throughout their lives and develop a highly skilled workforce**

Opportunities to gain good qualifications and training are as important in the workforce as for those entering the workforce. All school leavers and working-age adults need to participate in further learning to acquire new skills and knowledge – whether this is at work, home or in formal education institutions. In a diverse society and economy, there needs to be a wide flexible range of relevant and quality learning opportunities. Employers need to invest in skill development and training. New Zealand's tertiary qualifications need to be recognised as being world class if our country and our people are to succeed in the global stage.

**Make a strong contribution to our knowledge base, especially in key areas of national development**

The knowledge and research capability of our tertiary sector makes an important contribution to New Zealand's economic, cultural and social development through innovation and creativity, increasing workforce capability and lifting our productivity. We must make the most of this contribution and enhance our research capability, ensuring that the tertiary sector effectively interacts with other sectors (Education Priorities for New Zealand, Ministry of Education, 2003. p. 3).

There is a story about people within this document. A story that paints a very clear image of people who are confident about their own capacities to manage the future, strong in identity, and dedicated to continual personal growth and improvement. Within this document the push toward creating people as life long learners is very apparent, as is the use of a strong cultural identity as a capacity to ensure success. The successful 'product' of education is portrayed to be keen on learning as a lifelong project of self improvement. Education is seen to be the foundation for establishing that people continue to behave and regard themselves as an unfinished project, a project that needs to be in continual educational development.  There are numerous appeals to the nations need and the answer to these appeals appears to be that industry, the tertiary sector and the individual self should continually accommodate the need for personal development and improvement.

**Portrayals of the self**

The subjectivity necessary to live in the consensual field of neo-liberalism is one able to change itself, to make autonomous choices, to compete with others within the market and to take the chances and opportunities offered by the market.  The promotion of this mutable identity and the mode of subjectivity required can be glimpsed in *The Ministry's outcome focus and role* which forms the introduction to the first chapter of New Zealand Ministry of Education's 2003  *Statement of intent.*

> OUR OUTCOME FOCUS
>
> Our focus is on better learning for every New Zealander. This focus spans all stages of learning, from a child's initial learning to the adult becoming a lifelong learner.  It is vital that learners gain the strong learning foundations and the ability to keep acquiring the new skills, knowledge and attitudes that will give them the best chance to get good jobs and to share in the wider life of their community and society. Because our influences are indirect, we need to understand and focus on the most important influences that shape, support, encourage and determine learning outcomes (Statement of intent, 2003, p. 6).

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As previously mentioned, although under the Labour government of 2003 community and society seem to be back in the frame, the thematic of the mutable chooser who is able by their own efforts to 'get good jobs' is still very evident. Participation in the wider life of community and society derives from having a good job, belonging becomes a function of being individually successful. The role of governance becomes to ensure not the outcome of 'good jobs' for citizens, but rather citizens who are educationally and personally flexible enough to be able to find good jobs for themselves. Another theme also emerges, the government positioning itself as the 'enabler of citizens'. The presupposition behind such enabling is that government actions have nothing to do with the state of the world subjects live in, but instead are merely best efforts to ensure that citizens are equipped to live in the world as it 'truly is'. Causal links between modes of life or ways of being and governmental action are severed, and governmental actions that promote neo-liberal norms are re-positioned as socially responsible governance which is undertaken on behalf of wellbeing in response to inevitable forces of globalisation.

**Values and psychological recipes for success**

This next quote speaks to the values and norms that are expected of a healthy contributing person in society. These values and norms show some fit with the values and norms of neo-liberalism (discussed on pg 44) as described by Edith Packer in her work, *the psychological requirements of a free society* (2004). At least some of these values, or subjective commodities for success, can be glimpsed in the intentions expressed by the NZ Ministry of Education's *Statement of intent 2003 – 2008*:

Successful school leavers are *empowered* by their education. *They believe they can achieve their goals and that their expectations will be fulfilled. The system needs to have high expectations of all students. We want to embed the belief in educators, learners, families and communities that all children can flourish. This will help students to develop higher expectations of how they can achieve.* The system needs to be able to meet the needs of diverse students. This means recognising the spectrum of differences between and amongst students, the widening range of ethnicities, the varied social backgrounds and the varied social needs of students. We will encourage approaches to teaching that champion diversity. The schools sector will be better placed to do this if it *keeps the focus on student outcomes and achievement.* That is why we are putting so much emphasis on excellence in teaching, planning and reporting and on building leadership capacity for outcomes-focused management. Schools need to be supported to become flexible, *future focused* and responsive to change. We will work to support them in this important endeavour (Statement of intent 2003 – 2008, 2003, p. 15, my emphases)

Psychological values of the right kind (as expressed in the document above), are portrayed as essential prerequisites to child subjects inhabiting a mode of subjectivity that will allow future success and achievement in the world.

The next segment is extracted from 'The New Zealand Curriculum Framework', which was originally developed as part of the 1991 *Achievement initiative*. The New Zealand Curriculum framework' is the main steering document for New Zealand Education, in that, it mandates eight categories of essential skills that must be taught and that all children are expected to develop. These 'essential skills' are taught, promoted and assessed across the whole curriculum across all years of schooling. The New Zealand Curriculum Framework is important because its aims directly inform how teaching is undertaken in all New Zealand schools. It might be thought of as a narrative that since being put into action in nineteen ninety-one, has operated to define for New Zealand the parameters of what is considered appropriate education.

As such, it clearly speaks to the kinds of persons education is intended to produce. The section quoted below describes one of the eight essential categories and is titled: *Self-management and competitive skills.* The norms of the late-modern self as expressed by the psy-complex are very visible in this document. As Rose, (1999), Cushman (1995) and Myers (2004) have argued, the psy-complex is one of the late-modern social forms that seeks to fit subjects to prevailing social and economic norms and in doing so, reproduces at least some neo-liberal norms of the subject. And, as Parker (1999) has argued, the psy-complex has a great deal of influence on education.

What follows are the outcomes education aims to achieve for all students, as defined by the 'Self- management and competitive skills' category of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework. These defining ideals, can also be read as a solid working definition of the unitary, bounded autonomous, future focused, self-responsible, choosing individual that the psy-complex promotes as the healthy subject:

>    Students will:
>    - Set, evaluate and achieve realistic personal goals;
>    - Manage time effectively;
>    - Show initiative, commitment, perseverance, courage and enterprise;
>    - Adapt to new ideas, technologies and situations;
>    - Develop constructive approaches to challenge and change, stress and conflict, competition, and success / failure;
>    - Develop the skills of self appraisal and self advocacy;
>    - Develop self esteem and personal integrity;
>    - Take responsibly for their own health and safety, including the development of skills for protecting the body from harm and abuse;
>    - Develop a range of practical life skills, such as parenting, budgeting, consumer, transport, and housing maintenance skills;
>    (Curriculum framework, 1991, p. 18).

These may seem very admirable traits for young people to develop. Certainly the development of these skills will set young people well on the way toward being able to succeed in the prevailing social and economic conditions. However, to successfully achieve the above, is also for a young adult to inhabit, or embody, the figure of the bounded, individualised, responsible self delineated by the psy-complex. To inhabit this figure is also, as Rose (1998) argues a form of political subjectification, in that, the subjects capacities and self perception are formed in ways that align with the needs and aims of political, social and economic programmes. The subjectification is of course masked by the portrayal of these capacities as the kinds of skills and psychological traits that are necessary for a healthy successful productive life.

The following statement forms the first paragraph of *Education priorities for New Zealand, 2003.*

> Education is at the heart of what this government wants to achieve for New Zealand's sustainabl*e social and economic development*. We are working to build a world-class education system – one that *allows all New Zealanders to aim high and to believe they can achieve to their full potential (*Ministry of Education, 2003, p.1, my emphases).

This next statement is from the Chief Executives introduction to the Ministry of Education's S*tatement of intent 2003 – 2008.*

> Raising achievement and reducing disparity within our education system remains our overarching mission. It is a goal that encompasses all stages of learning, from a child's first spoken words of language to *the adult becoming a lifelong learner. People who keep acquiring skills, knowledge and attitudes gain the best chance to get jobs and to share in the wider life of their community and society* (Fancy, 2003, p. 2, my emphasis).

Again in these two statements there are themes of fulfilling potential and people believing in their own capacity to succeed. Once again lifelong learning is touched on, this time as a requirement for sharing in the wider life of community and society. Both of these statements are concerned with producing successful people whose individual success will then contribute to the well-being of the nation.

Another earlier example of individual success moving to the forefront of educational priorities is found in the *1997 Tertiary education review Green Paper*. This document predates the Labour government and was produced by the then National government who were more overtly market driven. However, the themes of Individual achievement; the fulfilling of individual potential and promoting a state of continual individual educational adaptation seem remarkably similar:

> New Zealand's greatest asset is, and in the future will be, a well-trained and educated population. Improved education outcomes will *enable all New Zealanders to lift their sights and realise their highest potential as individuals.* They can then contribute fully to the *economic and social development* of our country. As we move into the twenty-first century *we increasingly recognise that we* live in a world where knowledge, skills, and ideas, rather than commodities and minerals, determine *our* overall economic success. To ensure *our* prosperity New Zealand needs to be a *'learning society' recognising the importance for all of our people to develop new skills and knowledge throughout a persons lifetime*
> (Creech, 1997 Tertiary education review Green Paper 1997, p. 3. my emphases).

In a manner that aligns with what Mulderrig (2003) asserts in her UK study, these themes also draw on a nationalistic discourse invoking as rationale, the good of the nation, Interestingly, as Muderrig alerts us to, the use of government described as a 'we' is seen. This is a 'we' presented as merely recognising particular truths about the world, rather than as an active force in promoting those truths. Perhaps the most overt difference between National's *Tertiary Education Review Green Paper* (1997) quoted on page 131 and the quote from Labour's *Education Priorities for New Zealand,* (2003) on page 129 is that the order of words is reversed in the phrases, *social and economic development* as opposed to *economic and social development* :

Under this regime of rhetoric, which it seems is adhered to by political parties of a range of persuasion, participation in community becomes a function of the prudential individual living in such a way as to responsibly fulfil their economic / social potential via lifelong learning. A continual concern with what the future may need is made an imperative demand of the current moment and the responsibility for obtaining a good future devolves to the individual. As Mulderrig points out, the efforts of government become focussed on 'equalities of opportunity'. Success becomes defined as a function of both an individual responsibility and a fore-thoughtful capacity to continually (educationally) adapt oneself to the changing demands of a global market. What is also brought to the foreground is knowledge, which assumes a political dimension.

**The ordinariness of neo-liberal norms**

The achievement initiative reforms, of 1991 were undertaken by the then freshly elected New Zealand National Party and spearheaded the development of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework (Fancy, 2004)
(discussed on page 127).

It has been argued (Marshall, 1995) that the achievement initiative reforms also spearheaded the New Zealand movement to try and shift both the purposes of knowledge and how knowledge is conceived of. Marshal (1995) following Lyotard (1984) asserts that one effect of the achievement initiative reforms was to re-figure knowledge as primarily a commodity for future economic success rather than a method to understand and explore the world. I would argue that this understanding has now become commonplace and ordinary.

The Achievement initiative (1991) urged the need for changes in education so as to better "define a range of knowledge and skills for success in society and in a modern competitive economy" (The national curriculum of New Zealand, draft discussion document, 1991, cited in Fancy, 2004). What then also became seen as a matter that needed urgent reform was that assessment become more rigorous in two linked areas: Firstly the assessment of how well children were in fact, learning the skills and knowledge that the neo-liberally inclined government of the time deemed necessary for success. Secondly how effective the education system was in teaching children these skills and knowledge.

Unsurprisingly then, a call to increase the frequency, scope and depth of assessment formed an important cornerstone of the 1991 Achievement initiative. The espoused purpose was to better assist children to fulfil their potential, however the 'fulfilment of potential' in this context is politically defined. A fulfilled potential equated to the individualised development of skills, capacities and attitudes that fitted subjects to life in a neo-liberal field.

This politically purposeful mode of assessment is apparent in the *Achievement initiative* (1991) documents that had goals that include the following:

- clear learning objectives and attainment targets age 5 –15
- progress and achievement monitored at key points against those targets
- (on the basis of the results) additional resources to assist recovery teaching
- National Certificate: a new vocationally orientated qualifications option for 6th & 7th formers alongside existing school awards
- (Cited, in Fancy, 2004)

James Marshall (1995) has asserted that assessment in education is now greater in reach, detail and penetration than it was before the rise of neo-liberalism in New Zealand. Marshall also argues that the use of assessment and the kinds of assessment undertaken are now more solidly cemented to political and economic purposes.

To somewhat illustrate Marshall's point: Howard Fancy (2004) New Zealand's Secretary for Education stated in *Education reform: Reflections on the New Zealand experience* that:

> The achievement initiative reforms of the early 1990s gave new emphasis to assessment as integral part of a package of initiatives with twin goals. The first goal was to emphasise the importance of lifelong learning, and the second goal was to advocate an educational system that was able to support learning from the cradle to the grave (Fancy, 2004).

Following Marshall, I would argue that the purpose of learning and assessment became two-fold. Firstly, to ensure future citizens have the individual skills and attitudes needed to do well in a competitive economy. Secondly, to form those future citizens as natural lifelong learners, able to change continually in

response to new market demands. Marshall (1995) points out that, as predicted by Lyotard (1984), knowledge has been commodified in the current education system, with new curricula, standards and policies blurring distinctions between knowledge and training. Education is now commonly presented and generally understood as the uptake of specific modules of skills with the expressed intent of better enabling future workers to be flexible in the face of ever-shifting market demands. Vocational imperatives become the natural rationale for undertaking education, and education becomes a natural and ordinary lifelong vocational imperative (Marshall, 1995). What is also made more critical by these naturalised perspectives on education is that all worker / students develop a capacity for critical self-surveillance. In other words, what is required is that life-long learners engage in a continual process of self-assessment of how well their skills and capacities match what is needed by the market.

I want to suggest following (Mulderrig, 2003) that the governmental underpinning logic of these actions designed to steer the conduct of citizens holds that both children and adults need to understand and act on them selves as naturally progressive projects. Being subject to this particular regime of governance, means having the capacity to govern the self by a self-measure of progress and unsurprisingly then, progress becomes an important mechanism the subject uses to make sense of itself. As Maureen Ford (1995) responding to Marshall (1995) points out, governmentality is as much about the promotion of specific forms of self governance or self understanding as it is the overt steering of actions.

> Governmentality is: a form of activity which attempts or aims at the conduct of persons; it is the attempt to shape, to guide, or to affect not only the conduct of people *but, also the attempt to constitute people in such ways that they can be governed (*Ford, M, 1995, p. 1, my emphasis).

As already mentioned, psychologist Erica Burman has argued in her critical study of developmental psychology, that citizens in late-modern eras are

encouraged to understand themselves and their children as 'growing / progressing', or if not, that they are deficient in some manner (Burman, 1994). Any other view of the self tends to be regarded as either bewildering, incomprehensible or anathema. An individualised future orientated, progress driven ethic of self-development becomes an important and ordinary component of the many mechanisms both children and adults use to make sense of themselves.

It might be speculated that this progressive drive or self-surveying ethic would have implications for how parents act toward their children. I speculate that one consequence is that measurable progress in learning and development would become seen as more important by parents. Following this speculation, I use here an example that is anecdotal, but begins to indicate the social penetration and reproduction of future driven norms of the subject.

The example is the growth of out-of-school tutoring as an industry. An article in the Sunday Star Times on August 8, 2004 headlined *The new class division* describes the growth and popularity of out-of-school tutoring. What the article uses to exemplify this popular phenomena is the expansion of one business; the 'Kip McGrath' company.

 Apparently, the Kip McGrath company grew from one outlet thirteen years ago (1991) to ninety-seven outlets in 2004. According to the article, Fifteen thousand New Zealand children attended Kip McGrath in 2003. Reasons for the growth are variously described as "greater pressures on children to succeed"; "more competition"; "out-of-school tutoring", once seen as remedial, is now seen as preparatory for a future successful career" (Middlebrook, Sunday Star Times, August 8, 2004, p. A-12.)

The themes invoked in the article gesture toward something of a shift in how children's learning progress and achievement has become more prioritised for at least some New Zealand parents. It seems it has become perfectly normal to be concerned about children's fitness to manage the future. Unsurprisingly a new market has boomed in response.

The banality and ordinariness of appeals to future need is also displayed in the following advertisement which is fairly typical of its genre:

> _Bright_ MINDS
> _Bright_ FUTURES
> Senior College has a limited number of places for
> the 2004 academic year.  Consistently ranked as New Zealand's
> top educational school in bursary results, Senior College is
> recognised as a special place to learn grow and achieve
> academic and personal success.
> Contact us for more details of how we can provide you with a bright
> future
> (NZ Herald, 12.1.2004).

With the future looming so large in this very typical advertisement, and so ever presently needing to be managed, the lure of a bright future is, as Rose suggests (1998). counter pointed and lent weight by the un-stated but ever-present possibility of a not so bright future.

I have suggested that the success of neo-liberalism in establishing its norms as the natural social condition means that the neo-liberal project becomes a critical referential node around which norms of autonomy are mobilised. What the neo-liberal social field demands of the subject, becomes a sifting or refining mechanism for what instruction is taken up from liberalism, humanism and the psy-complex. Neo-liberal norms of individual prudentiality, responsibility, competition and choice become, in a starkly utilitarian way, what determines how the subject should uptake and perform its instruction in autonomy.

The following newspaper article headlined; *Young gifted and going for it*, was published in the 'Trends' section of the 'New Zealand Herald' on 6 September 2003. While of course anecdotal and presented in a populist style, it gestures toward both the naturalisation of a neo-liberal field and how such a future orientated field becomes a sifting mechanism for how norms of autonomy are mobilised amongst at least some of New Zealand's youth:

> A new teenage phenomenon is emerging, of determined, focused and ambitious teenagers who know just where their futures lie. But, asks reporter Eleanor Black, are they heading for early burnout? All too aware of what awaits them in the *"real world",* where university costs a bomb, competition for top jobs is fierce, and balancing satisfying personal lives with careers is increasingly difficult, they don't waste a second on adolescent rebellion and indecision. They envisage golden lives for themselves and they want those lives to start now, now, now. While they tend to be more materialistic than the generation before them, their constant search for the niftiest new thing is paired with a strong work ethic and an almost Depression-era belief that nothing comes for free. As Jenkins (19), says, "I'm pretty down to earth but I do like nice things, I want to work hard to get them.." The downside for these teenagers can be stress and worry. They fret about careers they have yet to start and can put undue pressure on themselves to be top performers in every arena.

Later in the same article…

> Sociology lecturer Dr Maxine Campbell points out that today's university students, many of them new teens, "find it very difficult to understand that 'New Right' ideology is just that". To these children of the 80s and 90s, conservative values, (including self-reliance, rather than collective responsibility, and an emphasis on accumulating wealth) are a given, not a political choice. Schools now aggressively market themselves as places where children can develop the skills they need to excel at tertiary institutions and far beyond. Students learn much more than

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maths and English – they pick up time management and goal setting skills, run mini businesses, test their public speaking, travel overseas, volunteer with community agencies and whip up curriculum vitaes noting all their achievements". Jacqueline Scorgie, principal of Corran School for girls says: "…the drive for greater achievement at schools, both academic and extra curricular, started about ten years ago, but has intensified in the past two or three years. Many teenagers are extraordinarily focused in their minds on the future. It used to be, the OE was the broadening experience, but now there is so much more… They are bombarded with ideas all the time. They are not stuck in one place. They make their decisions in ways that are different to anything I've seen before – not just planning jobs but looking at the whole life style, where they want to be, what kind of people they want to be"… Scorgie warns that there is potential for things to go wrong in a more serious way "when teens are so focused on success, although the trend should be a positive one for a country that tends to cut down its achievers." "Teens live life on the run", she says. "The sheer speed and competitiveness of everything does mean it's inevitable we see a proportion of people who suffer from the stress in various ways. Youth-suicide figures, young people giving up and falling away from studies, health and mental health problems may well be associated with the speed and sheer competitiveness of life" (Black, 2003).

The 'real world', or the neo-liberal social field of 2003, becomes the mechanism that determines for these young people what capacities of autonomy are needed. There is a very apparent valorisation of the capacities for individual forethought, choice, control of the future and choosing what kind of person they want to be. The activities of the present become commodities for the curriculum vitae of the future.

The article implies that autonomy is used in service to the goal of individual material well-being. Neo-liberal norms are understood not as ideology but as the reality in which one must live, hence how autonomy is conducted becomes a function of not an ideology but rather the requirements of reality. Educational facilities aggressive market themselves as able to equip young people with tools to manage the requirements of this presumed real world. The above article indicates the effectiveness of the neo-liberal strategy of governance; that by re-defining the nature of the world, what is also re-defined is the nature of those who must live in it.

**On a personal note**

One day in 2001 I went to visit a client at a school, I also had to meet with the school counsellor and I waited until she was available in the foyer of the schools counselling suite. As usual while waiting, I flicked through the magazines and was surprised to notice that there was only one option, multiple copies of the same cheerful presented, careers advisory magazine. This extracted statement comes from that magazine:

> Exciting? Vibrant? Fulfilling? Does this sound like you and your dream career? Then read on and we'll help you to achieve your goal by pointing you in the right direction. Just how do you make up your mind which direction you should take after leaving school? These days the choices are endless but with careful planning you can choose the right path that will get you where you want to go. THE ONLY WAY IS UP! (Vui-talitu, 2001, p. 5).

This advertisement is banal in its ordinariness and reasonably typical of its genre. What I was struck by though, was that it was the only reading material available to teens that were waiting to see a counsellor regarding the difficulties in their lives. It occurred to me that in terms of strategic placement that it could accurately be described as a political statement.

What more powerful statement is imaginable than to confront children in pain with the cheerful message that with careful planning and the application of choice that the only way is up? It is a particularly effective (or cruel?) way to promote a view of the self as in charge of its own destiny to those whose current experience is (predictably) that life is not in their own control. My encounter with that particular magazine has been one of the many drivers of this thesis.

The next chapter and final chapter considers some implications of narratives of the future and concludes on a hopeful note.

**Chapter Nine: Discussion and conclusion**

This chapter considers some of the implications of future narratives by introducing some new material on desire that link future narratives with consumerism and late-modern capitalism. An anecdote is used to briefly link this discussion back to the experience of young people. Subsequently some ideas on resistance are discussed, both from a theoretical perspective and with some putative examples. The thesis then concludes with what I consider some hopeful ideas, which offer the perspective that resistance to future discourses will be local and partial and a function of the discourses themselves.

**Consumerism, desire, capability and success**

As the newspaper article by Black (2003) (quoted in chapter eight, PGs 135 – 137) gestures toward, desire and success play a powerful role in late-modern capitalism. It is then perhaps unsurprising that notions of desire fulfilment and success achievement also play a large role in how late-modern subjects are encouraged to make sense of themselves and make sense of what they should be able to achieve in life. In this next section I want to look at some of the implications of what happens when a subject is encouraged to believe they are capable of achieving desires by honing and using their inner capacities of agency, personal responsibility and prudentiality. I want to suggest that desire becomes a point of mobilisation for a mode of governing the self that acts to strengthen what I consider an unrealistic and harmful norm that holds that the well or ideal subject can be anything, and achieve anything. In taking these ideas further, I will use some of the perspectives of Cushman (1995) and Lacan (1956) to explore how desire is made use of within the frameworks of intelligibility offered by late-modern templates of subjectivity. In addition, I will be asserting that these frameworks of intelligibility have desire in service to consumerism.

Initially, I will briefly outline the thoughts of Cushman and Lacan on desire. Cushman (1995) has described the American, (or western) subjectivity as the empty self. By this he means that the forces of the psy-disciplines have acted in alignment with consumer advertising to promote and normalise an image of the self as in a continual state of need. The self therefore becoming somewhat defined by that continual need or hunger. Cushman avers that within this construction of the self, health is understood as a state that is accomplished by the meeting of needs. Repletion and health become understood as co-extensive, the converse obviously applying as well. He asserts that this view of the subject holds that individual health or well-being is the state of being filled with appropriate relationships, actions, encounters, experiences and pleasures.

Cushman also offers the interesting perspective that the late-modern focus on exploring the inner self has a political dimension, in that, well-being in the outer world is portrayed as a function of unlocking the powers within. Cushman summarises this notion by talking about the self imagined as an enchanted interiority[19]. Cushman asserts that the psy-disciplines hold out the promise that to know, explore and expand the inner self in the correct way is to access inner powers and thereby be empowered to achieve repletion or satiation in the outer world.

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[19] Cushman (1995) describes how the late-modern subjectivity is promoted by the psych industries, media and advertising as an 'enchanted interiority'. The self of an individual under this regime of governance is understood as containing or being a unique interiority, a wonderful cavern or inner space of riches, beauty and power. Cushman suggests that this view of the self valorises a unique, richly furnished, inner individuality that becomes the reflexive reference point for the subject to know who they are and make sense of the world. He suggests that this late-modern mapping of the self is inherently a-political, or, perhaps more accurately, aligned with neo-liberal politics in being restricted to a political view-point that has the individual rather than social context as the causative locus of events. He also sees this ontology of the self as additionally a-political, in that worldly success or failure, are prone to be interpreted as a function of the individual self and a reflection of inner purpose and will. When an individual's position in society is considered from within this subjective understanding, the impact of context and origin are placed in secondary causative tier. For society (and the individual) priorities then shift away from the equalising of outcome. Priorities instead become - efforts to expand and liberate the energies of this potentially masterful inner self so its powers can be used more effectively in the outer world. (Sometimes this is spoken of as the 'fulfillment of potential', or, 'personal growth'). Cushman suggests that this mode of subjectivity is built on an illusionary foundation of individual omnipotence that lends itself to an over-reaching success driven individualism.

Cushman argues this image or template of the self is given veracity by modern practices of legitimation such as developmental psychology, psychiatry, psychotherapy and counselling. He suggests that this is a regime of the self that holds the fulfilment of desire or needs to be critical to well being.

Following Cushman, I want to suggest that within the parameters of this view of the self, the fulfilment of desire, or put another way, the experience of satiation, becomes conceived of, or acts, almost as a tangible or material substance without which the well self cannot exist. Because this reified substance of satiation is understood to be so manifestly critical to well-being, it becomes manipulatable in form and subject to commodification. A market demand is then created for forms, substances and commodified experiences to answer the call of the ever present, but ephemeral promise of repletion and satiation. Cushman argues and I concur, that the psy-complex creation of the self as endlessly hungry is also the creation of the ideal citizen of a consumer society. If what is added to this is the injunction that the causative loci of success is not context, luck or privilege, but instead a function of the inner self's competency and drive, then what is also created is the ideal citizen of an individualistic, de-collectivised neo-liberal consumer society.

Somewhat in line with Cushman's approach but from perhaps a more essentialist position, Lacan (1956) posits the human subject as inherently organised around a central 'lack' and a concomitant 'being in relation' to that 'lack'. Future narratives that have the self as individually responsible for creating an ideal satiated or fulfilled future might then perhaps be seen as one of a series of symbolic meaning systems or organising principles to attach itself to such a 'lack'. Lacan of course holds that the subject is always in process, innately contradictory and fragmentary. Within Lacanian thought, the self can only recognise itself through representation. The individual's continued capacity to maintain an 'illusion of coherence' is only achievable through a continuous organising of meaning which Lacan terms the symbolic

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realm. This organising of meaning is undertaken in response to, and dialogically with, experiences that have not as yet been organised into meaning, and hence present a degree of threat to coherence. Experiences that have not yet been made sense of through the symbolic realm are sometimes called (by Lacanians) the, 'real'. Because of the threat the real offers to coherence, Lacan would describe an encounter with the untamed or unorganised experience as a shocking encounter with the 'real'.

From a Lacanian perspective, encountering the experience of desire can form one of these discomfiting encounters with the real. For the self to maintain personal coherence, the experience needs to be organised into meaning. Within such a schema, future narratives might be thought of as one point of symbolic mobilisation that assists to create meaning by giving desire and lack ' form' as hope, fantasy and expectation.

Both Lacan and Cushman postulate systems of meaning that operate as frameworks of intelligibility for how the subject discursively negotiates-into-meaning the impact of desire. What is inherent to both these approaches is the assertion that the uptake of systems of meaning for managing desire is a socially mediated phenomenon and therefore amenable to a degree of governance by prevailing social forms.

The late-modern fantasy of subjectivity, (or late-modern soul, as I referred to it earlier), contains and offers widely socially available mechanisms-of-meaning to make sense of desire. Like all socially constructed mechanisms-of-meaning these will have political linkages, or as Foucault might have put it, all assemblages of enunciation link to knowledge regimes (1991). These meaning-making-mechanisms, (or fantasies) contain stipulations as to the self's relation with the up-welling of desire. Within this fantastic regime of knowledge production, achievement of satiation is seen to be a function of individual accomplishment and the desiring individual is made responsible, in that, success or failure at achieving repletion or satiation is seen as a function of individual capacity.

I want to suggest that a cost of remaining faithful to this masterful fantasy of the self that late-modern social forms and fantasies offer as a mechanism for maintaining coherence or stability of the self is that desire itself has the potential to become a wounding and pathologising interpellation. This interpellation acting to both wound the desiring subject and to further strengthen the fantasy itself.

To take this idea a little further: When the self is viewed as master of its own experience, and master of its future, then unmet desire acts to indicate a past failure of mastery. Un-satiated desire becomes an indictment of inadequacy to achieve the mastering of goals. The distinctive feature of this late-modern-fantasy of subjectivity and where its political links are apparent, is the assumption that the subject is able to meet all desires by using the inner faculties of choice, aforethought and will. Fulfilment becomes an individual responsibility and lack of fulfilment becomes an indicator that the subject is deficit in some inner capacity or quality.

I want to suggest that the unmet gap between desire and satiation is the phenomena that most renders the late-modern subject vulnerable to governing themselves in ways that places the fault within their own competence. In other words, the neo-liberal fantasy that all things are within reach to those who are competent enough operates as a slap in the face every time the subject finds that some desires are unattainable. The meaning-making-mechanisms of the late-modern fantasy of the self render unmet desires as a rebuke of the subjects basic and essential inner competence. The adoption of a norm of supra-contextual agency as necessary co-inhabitor of a well-subjectivity positions desire as a continual niggling rebuke, an indication of lack of wellness or competence. Under this regime of the self, to be 'desiring' or to be in a 'state of desire' signals a potential crack in the carapace of the ideal self. Under the sway of this kind of ideology of the self, unmet desires become a specific and immediate threat to the late-modern image of coherency.

This notion, that unmet desire acts as a painful and pathologising rebuke can be held against Gidden's (1994) argument that late-modern subjects are encouraged to make sense of themselves through universalised verities of the self that are administered by socially sanctioned expertise.

Following this, what is likely then to happen is that the rebuked desiring subject will turn to expertise for assistance to regain coherence. The rather unfortunate twist is that what is likely to be administered by experts, is the very fantasy that states that the individual is responsible for the achievement of their own state of well-being and satiation. Within these co-ordinates of the self, what is unlikely to be cited as at fault is the fantasy that stipulates that all desires are achievable to the perfected subject. Hence unmet desire has the potential to govern subjects in such way that they increase their efforts to live up to the fantasy that states; with enough effort everybody can be replete.

This ideology of the self holds within it a pathologising logical tautology, that it is only the damaged self that is left still desiring. I propose that it is this relationship of meaning-making regarding un-slaked desires that give the late-modern template of subjectivity its greatest reproductive influence. Personally I believe that the late-modern-fantasy of subjectivity holds out a very cruel promise. The promise is that to know the inner self in the right way, and with sufficient effort of will, all desires can, and should, be met. The promise is also pejorative because contained within its vision of competence is the converse. If desires are unmet, it is the fault of the subject and demonstrates both failure of will and a self whose inner knowledge and capacity are lacking.

Under this kind of regime of the self, the subject must be prudential regarding its own pleasure and the satisfaction of its desires. There are some important consequences to the ever-present rebuke that the late-modern fantasy of the self makes of the subjects unmet desires:

The first consequence, is the degree to which in order to avoid the sting of rebuke, the citizen becomes more willingly subject to governing aspects of the social body that promise a stiffening of agency and prudential capacity. This is perhaps what Papadopoulos (2004) is referring to in suggesting that late-modern systems increasing administer to assemblages of capacities rather than individual subjects.

The second consequence, is the extent to which desires (or that which is desired) become amenable to market commodification so that the subject can prudentially plan for their attainment. The injunction that the subject is responsible for its own future pleasures demands the capacity to pre-envisage, in order to plan for, what those pleasures are to be. Pleasure, the desired object, and satiation become available to reduction to product.

The prudential self is prudent, and in answer to such prudence the consumer society is able to offer pre-packaged and purportedly achievable satiation. Capitalism, and in particular neo-liberal capitalism, make attractive promises of a social field that will allow all sufficiently motivated citizens the purchase of satiation (Marcuse cited in Zizek, 1994, p.12). The expansion of deregulated capitalism is enabled.

Under this kind of framework of reference the present moments worth is measured against a pre-imagined packaged exactitude, which holds, or promises, a fantasy of contentment. The lure that is offered by the commodification of that which is desirable is the fantastical promise that the attainment of the desired object, or desired experience, guarantees contentment. If however, the experience of attainment does not deliver contented satiation but instead disappointment or discontent, the framework of reference holds the subject, not the promise, to be at fault.

The subject's agency, abilities, capacity, will or inner-being become a site of indictment.  What escapes from indictment under this frame is the notion that the desirable can be commodified in such ways as to guarantee contented satiation. What is also not indicted is the extraordinary expectation that the late-modern subject is somehow so individually powerful that it can personally guarantee the wresting of joy from the future.

In terms of the service of this construction of the self to political and economic programmes, two aspects are somewhat precluded from notice, in that, within this frame of subjective reference they enter the territory of the hard to imagine and hence challenge.

Firstly, what is made difficult to imagine and challenge are the constitutive forces that create people's lived performance of subjectivity, as so endlessly needful as to be the perfect customers of a late-modern consumer society.

And secondly, what is made hard to imagine and challenge are the constitutive forces that hold contentment to be primarily a function of individual capability and culpability.

## On a personal note

I dislike how often I encounter suffering children and adults who have been encouraged to make sense of their suffering as a function of an internal deficit of will or ability that needs correcting. Sometimes it seems a little like a late-modern magician's trick of misdirection that continuously directs attention to the inner capacities of the self rather than to how appallingly hard the circumstance of some peoples lives are. I read this magician's trick in the light of Zizek's (2001) comments on formal versus actual freedom. If the formal freedom is the freedom to always first challenge yourself when things aren't right in life, then the actual freedom that remains out of reach is to challenge the promise of late-modern capitalism, that all things come to those who try hard enough.

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What I have attempted to do in this section is to make more distinct the oppressive effects of late-modern fantasies about individual capacity to control the future. I've done this by describing those constitutive effects as if they were the consequence of subjection to a singular template of subjectivity. I have spoken to the extent to which deference to this imagined template requires the subject to reproduce it in how they make sense of themselves and their desires. I have accented the degree to which the subject is enjoined to have themselves as the centre of culpability and the extent to which this can serve to reproduce both consumerism and the fantasy of subjectivity itself.

In undertaking this section there has been a risk I have tried to skirt but could not avoid. The risk is the danger of the reader assuming that the template or fantasy–of-the-self I describe is itself postulated as possessing a degree of intentionality or agency. To speak to this, I would assert that intentionality is a function of looking forward. My 'fantasy of a fantasy' only exists in retrospection, is only visible or indeed is only discursively renderable by studying the detritus and wreckage of its past passage. It is reifiable only in so much as its shape can be inferred by the study of how the late-modern subject behaves and thinks.

**On a personal note again**

So what relevance for children?

I conclude this section on desire and what the late modern fantasy of the self demands of people, by finishing with a story about teenage experience that was given to me by my colleague and consultant in this project, 'Dorothea Lewis' (2003 & 2004). Dorothea has worked as a counsellor with teenagers in schools since nineteen eighty-seven and prior to that had a career as a teacher and a youth worker. Her experience is extensive and she is a highly regarded professional who now also teaches counselling at a tertiary level. Dorothea uses a narrative approach in her counselling work and teaching. The narrative approach incorporates amongst other things, a Foucaultian and social constructionist perspective (Epston and White, 1989). Dorothea has very graciously given me permission to use this story (Appendix A).

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While primarily told from Dorothea's perspective, this is also a story that is told in part through narratives of meaning that have developed as a consequence of my reading and thinking about the future and the self, and my sharing of these thoughts and readings with Dorothea. To explain this, Dorothea's story is a story about a counsellor's perspective on young women's experience that was told to me subsequent to some of my ideas about futurority being shared with her. In particular, what I shared with Dorothea were these ideas:

1. That (possibly) the future was increasingly dominating the present experience of young people and that was possibly linked to a neo-liberal thematic in late-modernity.

2. That (possibly) there is a socially prominent fantasy of subjectivity that encourages youth to understand that the competent or well individual has sufficient agency so as to control their own personal future (and as today is yesterday's future, by implication their present).

3. I also speculated that this fantasy might operate as a reflexive mechanism that reproduces the fantasy by re-configuring events of trauma, unfulfilled desire or unhappiness as the individuals fault rather than constraints of circumstance. In talking these ideas through with Dorothea, I also used the idea of a fantasy or template of subjectivity to which late-modern subjects might construct themselves at least partially in reference to. We talked a lot about the influence this instructional template of subjectivity might have on how young people might then make sense of the experiences of trauma, desire and disappointment .

What follows is the story Dorothea told me. It might be thought of as Dorothea's telling of the meaning of what she had observed in her work; using the new notion of futurority as a new plot line to weave a new meaning or narrative out of a series of events, encounters and relationships that had already been previously tied into a meaningful causal sequence. In a sense what this means is that a new perspective or story, unsurprisingly, in the light of new ideas, arose from the old.

In terms of this (new) story or perspective, what Dorothea thought it worth initially noting is that increasingly the concerns of young people she works with seem to centre around, not the difficulties of life - but their own incapacity to manage those difficulties.

Dorothea then told me of what seemed to her, almost a plague of self-vigilance and escalating self / peer measure amongst young women she encounters in her work. Many of these young women (ages thirteen to seventeen) were described (and described themselves) as having one of what she (and I) consider an era bound illness, 'low self esteem'. For these young women measures of worth of the self seemed to have become an unstable platform of dual reference.

The first point of reference; the normative expectations of the social / scholastic environment, (appearance, behaviour, fashion, popularity).

The second point of reference; the presumed inherent capacity of the self to be so sufficiently agentive as to be able to act, be and do, in ways that measured up to the normative expectations of their environment.

A failure to reflect or live up to the ever-changing normative expectations of the environment was understood by these young women as a failure of their own agency and ability to control the future reified as the present experience.
The young women became placed in a position of increasingly tense dual vigilance, both toward the normative demands of their environment, and

toward their own agentive capacity to meet those demands. Under this regime of the self, the reflexive point of critical reference for these young women became the agentive capacities of the self, not the impossible demands such an understanding of agency might place on ordinary young people. Failure to measure up, was not understood by these young women as a fairly inevitable likelihood of circumstance, but rather as a direct criticism of their inner capacities and ability to create the future and the present as they desire it to be.

In 2004, Dorothea, also described to me an additional feature regarding young women that had occurred to her subsequent to our 2003 conversation. This was what appeared to her to be an almost annual increase in the demand to 'act fast'; to complete the task of the moment at speed so as to be ready for the next moments need. She described an increasing adoption amongst the youth she worked with of a posture of tense, vigilant readiness. She speculated this posture of tense readiness was an attempt to always be ready to pre-empt and anticipate the next moment's need for demonstrating the capacity of active agency. She described it as being as if the future was continually present for these young people in ways that demanded an extreme vigilance. She also suggested that what seemed to accompany this ever-present demanding future was the threat of despair, often described by the young people themselves as low self-esteem. This despair, which seemed commensurate with a fear that the individual might at any moment fail in demonstrating a capacity for agency and mastery seemed to hover as a dark ever present spur driving the posture of vigilance. (Dorothea Lewis, personal communication, 2003 & 2004).

As seems to be the case with the young women described above, to be obedient to such a stipulative narrative is to effectively reproduce the narrative in the conduct of ones own life. Reflexivity under the regime of this future narrative becomes a dividing practice - that which the narrative renders into intelligibility as causal, and hence what ones consideration is given to, is the self's own competence. The narrative (operating as framework of intelligibility) is available to critique and measure our actions and hence not available to critique itself. The subject is then positioned to understand any difficulty presented by life as a personal failure, an occasion for remorse at agentive incompetence.

I will move on in the next section to considering resistance to futurority. The exploration is speculative and theoretical, in that, futurority offers no solid body to resist, but is rather a diffuse and admittedly putative phenomenon.

**Resistance, on a personal note**

I am not a great believer in the resistant potential of monolithic clashes of ideologies. I follow Deleuze and Guattarri (1996) in thinking that useful resistance against most oppressive forces tends to emerge almost unnoticed in multiple localised forms whose local expression does not necessarily designate a consanguinity of interests, concerns or meaning.

This does not mean that it isn't worth the effort of trying to make sense of potentially oppressive forces in terms of their impact on the larger social totality. It does have some implications though for what it is valuable to understand. Perhaps what it means is that local knowledge of effects is just as important to make sense of as the big picture story. I suggest that any constitutive force that is experienced sufficiently locally so as to influence how meaning is plotted through individual lives is also then, a local force that is likely to be understood and resisted in local particularities of knowledge. And of course, according to the particular circumstances of those it effects. I want to suggest that local knowledge is wise about local conditions and that while it may lack validity at other sites it offers useful potential for local change

What perhaps then follow from this is that the local particularities of a child's resistance to future narratives are likely to be very different from mine. A child whom for instance, might simply know and express that homework isn't attractive and that appeals to future need do not make it any more attractive at this present moment. I suggest that this too might offer a valuable story or perspective or power, resistance and change.

This thesis is also a local attempt at resistance by someone, (the author) whose particularities of circumstances include an interest in policy, reading post-structural literature and working with children. Subsequently, the perspective or resistant voice is different from that of most children. It does not however make it any less local or any less the expression of localised circumstances and perspective. This thesis is not much more than my attempt

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to articulate what I have come to see as the era-bound nature of future narratives. My resistant intent in doing so is to make the normative effects of future narratives slightly less influential at the range of sites in which my life takes place. The thesis is also an attempt to articulate and make more visible at these sites, the political interests that I speculate are served by what these narratives ask that we do to children and ourselves.

In undertaking this section on resistance I am not offering up a foe to be resisted, because, despite discursive laziness in this text that may have made it appear otherwise, I do not believe there is one foe to resist. What I believe there is to resist, is a range of local experiences that are understood within this story (the thesis) as being influenced by common themes of rhetoric about the nature of the world, time and people, and also (through this story) a commonality regarding whom this rhetoric benefits.

In particular, I am interested in this section in re-appraising 'as if it were resistance', the kinds of discontent and unhappiness that are often consigned to the categories of lack of individual capacity. The story-of-meaning I have developed about future narratives leads me to now appraise these unhappiness' and discontents as happening in consequence of late modern instructions about how the self should position itself toward the future. These 'discontents' or various expressions of unhappiness or dis-ease, are often used (or interpreted) by late-modern practice to indicate individual pathology, fault or lack. I will be attempting through my dialogue with the material to instead appraise these discontents as valid 'resistant' responses to palpable but elusive forces, which impact on our lives. To do so will require some discussion of what gives credence to the 'terms of reference' that understand 'discontents' as pathology. My hope and intention is that in the course of this dialogue, some possibilities of new 'reference points' may emerge so as to begin a dialectic of resistance with the diffuse locally experienced phenomena I have called futurority.

Resistance is perspectival and the word it self can be thought of from a number of perspectives. Resistance to future narratives could be described as a conscious, deliberate act of agency. It could also be described, as the quiet despair that afflicts those who find that performing the instruction to be vigilant master of ones own fate is not always contemporaneous with joy.

**Perspective and resistance**

Butler asserts: "One inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power, a subjection which implies a radical dependency" (Butler, 1997, p. 82). What is for me suggestive in this statement is that if resistance is to be construed as an autonomous act of agency it is then also inhabited by subjection to a power, by subjection to diverse and contestatory claims and demands on conduct and mode and manner of subjectivity.

Foucault (cited in Butler, 1997) suggests that the body is the prisoner of the soul, in that, what the body is, and does, is the operation of a complex series of normative principles and regulations. This is a series of principles, which act in, part through language, to position or determine subjects as unitary individuals, or groups, within cultural frameworks of intelligibility holding to those normative principles of self-hood. There is another notion that is also inherent to this idea of the body being a principle of the souls instruction. This is the notion that principles of instruction need to be multitudinous so as to instruct the performance of person-hood over shifting trajectories of time, context and circumstance. Hence, in any particularity of context, these instructions in person-hood will always exceed the necessary of any given moments need for principles of behaviour and understanding and because of this, contain a degree of discordance and contradiction.

**The 'psyche' as a discordance of contradictory impulses**

Rose (1998) suggests that the psyche can be considered as; those injunctions, demands instructions and forces which exceed at any one particular moment, that which is necessary to the task of discursively creating subjects as

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coherent individuals. The psyche within such a view 'resists' the regulatory demand of normative discourses. Such a schema might see subjects as composed of such heterogeneously diverse instructions and norms that inevitably, the performance of self in obeisance to any particularity of injunction involves a degree of contestation of performative truths and ideals of the self.

Instruction in self and the performance of these instructions in self, are then undertaken over a lattice of space, time, circumstance, opportunity and shifting relational arrays of power / knowledge, privilege and servitude that are never singular (Rose, 1998). Hence, responses at any given moment to any normalising impulse or instruction are similarly not singular but instead reflective of the diverse, contradictory unruliness of that instruction. Subjects are discursively performed as coherent, but, consistency of either response or initiative is not possible. Instruction has been too diverse to allow consistency.

The contradictory, oftentimes-incommensurate nature of instruction and what it demands of conduct leads inevitably, I would suggest, to lived experience more resembling a riotous assemblage of conflicting impulse than anything seamlessly choreographed. As subjects move through disparate and overlapping temporal and social contexts, they stand in various proportions of servitude to multiple incommensurate notions. For instance, following this, I would contend that most late-modern subjects understand themselves as having a unique capacity and right to display mastery over their lives, and also know themselves to be bound to restrictive social and familial norms, values and laws. The resistant impulse is inherent to such tensions.

What is very relevant though to this idea of contradictory conflicting instructions is that the disciplining injunctions of personhood, or as Foucault puts it "assemblages of enunciation" (1991) are as variously and unevenly legitimated as is the terrain across which they occur. Foucault has suggested that there is no assemblage of enunciation possible outside of relationally interlocking regimes of signs. In other words, all such enunciations track to

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sources of power which draw their varying authority from variously privileged knowledge regimes which operate in constant interplay across terrains of time and context. Both obedience and resistance to the normative demands of future narratives thus must take place across an unevenly legitimated terrain.

When considered as a governing influence operating across a range of terrains, future narratives speak from many of the sites of varying authority from which subjects take instruction in diverse aspects of life. Examples are: education, the psy-complex, the media, consumerism and; the interpretation of these instructions at the level of personal biographical narrative-of-meaning amongst families, individuals and groups linked by cultural, ethnic or gendered signifiers.

Resistance, or reluctance to obey these diversely sited instructions will also then be a function of the inter-playing relationship of persons with various sites of power. These are sites of power that are given greater or lesser legitimacy and authority by virtue of how the person is positioned by time and context toward and by these sites. For example, children are positioned in ways that give the developmental paradigm great legitimacy and a great deal of authority over how they are enjoined to act and to make sense of them selves. At the level of personalised narrative and how it informs meaning and action, parents are also positioned by this paradigm in ways that mean the terrain of parent – child interaction is often strongly influenced by this assemblage of enunciation.

Resistance to this particular paradigm places subjects in deficit terrain and is likely to increase the scope and range of its authority. For instance, at a very simple level, if I do not arrange schooling for my child at the 'developmentally appropriate age' I am in breach of not just the paradigm, but also New Zealand law.

For an act of resistance to claim any legitimacy, or indeed for it to be recognised as resistance at all, becomes a function of the perspective lent by the regime of signs through which the experience is articulated and given meaning.  Rose has this to say of resistance:

> If we choose to designate some dimension of these conflicts resistance, this itself is perspectival: It requires us to exercise a judgement. It is fruitless to complain that such a perspective gives one no place to stand in the making of ethical critique and in the evaluation of ethical positions. The history of all those attempts to ground ethics that do not appeal to some transcendental guarantor is plain enough – they cannot close conflicts over regimes of the person, but simply occupy one more position within the field of contestation (Rose,1996, p. 36).

**Making sense of variously legitimated resistant impulses**

In examining unequally legitimated resistant impulses I find Lyotard's (1984) concept of the 'differend' useful.  A differend is a dispute between parties that does not use a homogenous set of laws, legal language, courts and jurisdiction. Instead, a differend is when heterogeneity prevails and the discourses, or discursive language rules considered to lend legitimacy to one party of the dispute are considered inane empty, or useless by the other. In Lyotard's view, discursive forms are always coextensive with political power, their reach and capacity to totalise truth, or claim credit for a universally valid judgement is in largest part a function of political alliance.

Discordant impulses that resist future narratives, (for example, a sense of hopelessness about creating the future as one is instructed as being able to do, and a determination to forgo planning for the future) are likely to encounter impulses or instructions that are more powerfully legitimated.

In terms of futurority, and the terms that legitimate it or legitimate resistance against it. I share Lyotard's aim of not converting differends to the level playing field of litigation but rather, of recognising that they are happening and 'disarming' the power relations which conspire to keep them hidden. That is part of the resistant intent of this thesis.

**Interpellation as 'resistant' potentiality**

As has been discussed, there are multiple principles of regulation that render the self intelligible to itself through a shifting terrain of time, context and requirement. And, following Bruner (1986) each encounter with a new moments experience demands a review of the viability of the past moments regulatory principle.

Regulatory principles of person-hood can also be thought of as a series, or sequenced delivery of instructing interpellation that take place on the changing temporal terrain of what each new circumstance requires of the performance of selfhood.

To extend this argument further, the demands of the past moments regulatory principle will often then stand in incommensurate relation with the principle inherent to the interpellation of the new encounter. Butler (1997) suggests that amongst the changing array of circumstance, it is the erratic, unstable and partial appropriation of the newest interpellation that both creates the subject anew and in that re-creation, opens space for the subversion of the regulating principle.

Butler suggests that the subject is only able to remain a coherent subject through the continuous reiteration and re-articulation of subject-hood through interpellation (1997). Following Althusser (1977) she suggests that any interpellation that names or calls subjects into positions of self-hood is prone to misunderstanding and misrepresentation in the new moments circumstance. This is the case even with a wounding interpellation. When the interpellation of

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person-hood is cycled repetitively through each new performative moments need for normative instruction, they operate to create a renewal of coherence in new circumstance. However, amongst these changes in circumstance what is inevitable is that the meaning of any given interpellation distorts, is misunderstood or comes to shift in what it represents. Hence, as the principles that bestow an image of the coherent self shift, so too does the image of the self. Following this, Butler argues that the embrace or use of the interpellation for the purposes of person-hood inevitably distorts it, bringing to view new facets and new meanings that may allow new purposes and a new image of the self. Butler asserts that this process of distortion that follows as a consequence of the use or em-bodyment of even a wounding interpellation contains the potential for a resistant capacity to dis-mantle and re-form the subjectifying interpellation. Referring to Foucault (1977), Butler suggests that resistance to a power is also a function of that power.

Where Butler's work is critical for my thinking on resistance is the notion of reiteration, that to retain coherence we must wrench each moment into new meaning allowing a continuation or a renewal, of self's relation to self so as to comprehend itself anew as coherent. Butler's understanding also aligns with the text analogy of Bruner (1986) who suggests that each new reading of a discourse acts as a re-writing of that discourse. Butler suggests that within the continual wrenching of interpellation into meaning that must fit for the new moment, there exists the potentiality for some reconfiguration of terms that may offer the potential of resistance.

I found a small example of this re-configuration in marketing within youth culture. I live near a skate park and was struck that some number of skateboards were tagged with the icon, "A.D.H.D", referring, (I suspect) to Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. A.D.H.D is a disorder that might be described as the antithesis of the ideal of the prudential self, sufferers are sometimes characterised as prone to leap before they look. Some of the youths who spend time at the skate park also wear tee-shirts inscribed "F*ck the Future" (personal observation 2003). In my view these are very small examples of the wresting of wounding interpellations to new purposes that allow some new terms of reference. The question of whether such isolated and local shifts in reference offer any real potential for resistance remains for me rather moot.

## Distinguishing resistance from illness

Regarding the potential for future narratives to be resisted, or for discomfort with their demands to be named as resistance rather than lack of an internal quality or capacity, the norms and principles of selfhood that future narratives are aligned with are never static. Rather, these norms and principles are in constant interpretative interplay with other norms and principles that might, if sufficiently validated, be then used to distinguish:

resistance from misery as a consequence of lack of internal capacity;

valid objection from querulous complaint;

intrinsic flaw of the self from contingent damage as a result of futurority's demands.

As discussed, all principles, or knowledges, of self-hood are aligned with and the products of regimes of signs that are linked to sites of power. The authority of these sites of power of course varies significantly. In terms of the late-modern ideal of the self as being personally in charge of its own future, resistance confronts a difficulty that is associated with how late-modern social forms authorise and legitimate regimes of signs. The problem is a function of the authorising social forms which give an unbalanced legitimacy to only some

of the regimes of signs to which subjects would need to reference in order to distinguish between legitimate resistance and a deficit of will or internal capacity. Quite simply, some regimes of knowledge, such as the psy-complex, hold a great deal more authority in late-modern society than other regimes of knowledge such as for instance, spiritual knowledges that place the loci of agency and causality outside the individual.

This can be speculatively linked to the experience of children. The terms of reference that a child might draw on to offer principles of self-hood that could resist the normative demands of future narratives might draw on regimes of signs linked to the lived political experience of child-child and child-adult relationships. The norms and principles drawn from these terms of reference offer little resistant potential because arrayed against the social forms of education and the psy-complex they are not adequately legitimated.

Butler (1997) has suggested that to resist an injunction is not necessarily to thereby deconstruct it. Resistance to a force does not necessarily in itself contain the terms of reference needed to dismantle the force. When considering the wide spread dissemination and authority of norms of the future, it is more likely that the terms of reference used to make sense of resistance will be provided by the late-modern norms within which futurority is contained. The potential for the emergent resistant moment to then be subject to surveillance determining it as deficit is ever-present and given authority by the hegemony of an increasingly standardised psychological understanding of what constitutes the well self. Put simply, there is less interpretative room to move, and an increased singularity of voice from our late-modern oracles of ontology.

A function of this phenomenon in my opinion, is the extent to which matters of the subject have shifted from the portfolio of the political, the ethical, the religious and the social, to the portfolio of the medical and psychological. The responsibility for differentiating between fledgling political act of resistance and illness, now tends to lie with the doctor, the psychologist and the counsellor, rather than those active on the stage of politics. In line with this somewhat

bleak view that suggests that fledgling acts of resistance are likely to be immediately understood as pathology, I suggest resistance can be thought of in the following ways:

The first mode of resistance is to flail, inarticulate, against the lived experience or effects of any given injunction, command, demand, prescription. Such flailing often acts to enable the reproduction of the injunction being reacted against. Such flailing and thwarting, if possessed of no terms of reference but refusal, creates a site of investment.

For instance, in terms of futurority, for a child to 'school refuse' creates them as a site of investment that is reproductive of future narratives norms of person-hood. This kind of refusal identifies a deficit site where the norms of correct subject-hood are not enacted. An array of correcting forces will be brought to bear. Appeals to the needs of the future will be made and the child will be assisted to adopt a mode of subjectivity that understands these appeals as so urgent as to be un-refuseable. In this situation of a child refusing school, what is brought forth in crisp outline, is an inadequate subjectivity, a starkly illustrative negative template that in highlighting how 'not to be', invigours 'how to be'. Terms of reference brought to bear definitive of deficit, diagnostic of pathology and prescriptive of treatment will be those of the injunction resisted against, a future driven version of the human subject.

The second mode of resistance is to be possessed of, or discover, terms, ideologies, discourses, or reference points that allow the discursive dismantling of the performative injunction (Butler, 1997). Having these kind of dismantling terms may permit some discursive occupation of sites of injunction and a re-articulation of them in terms more favourable.

There is however a predictable problematic with terms that might allow the critique or dis-mantlement of late-modern understanding of the individuals ability to create the future as they wish it. The problem is the same problem that any critical discourse is likely to face when it seeks to undercut the co-

ordinates of existing power structures. As I have argued, future narratives form a key component of the late-modern perception of the self as a future able autonomous chooser. As Rose (1998) has argued, this view of the self is a key legitimating strategy of liberal-democracies. Any voice that is critical of this view of the self faces the problem of gaining the traction of validity. This is particularly the case when it is considered that the dialogue needs to take place, with and within, the social forms that police, reproduce and are functionally legitimated by a standardised view of the subject as a future capable autonomous choosing individual.

Terms of reference that might be seen as arguing for a smaller more timid self, in less control of the future, position themselves in opposition to a massively buttressed series of normalising verities of what constitutes human wellness. There is also the additional problem of future narratives being somewhat of a de-centred phenomenon. For discursive utility I have at times talked about these narratives as if they were a singular force. They are not of course. Narratives of the future's appearance in and influence on, the lives and understandings of subjects come from no one point and the multiply positioned voices of its demands do not easily reveal consanguinity. Following this line of argument, there are two co-extensive difficulties in discussing what terms of reference might allow a dismantling critique of futurority.

Firstly, is that there can be no central position to critique or resist from, as there is no visible central phenomena to resist against.

Secondly, as I have argued, narratives of the future form a standardised node of reference for late-modern norms of the self. Terms of reference that appear critical of what is understood to be fundamental to these verities of the ideal self will appear to be exterior to what is considered true and real about people and hence within the framework of those normative ideals be ludicrously non-verifiable.

**On a personal note**

I have found there are some problems in trying to find terms of reference to critique the ideal that the self should believe it-self able to control its future. Deconstruction is relatively easy, but the question continually arose, so if this view of the subject is not worthy or admirable, then what is worthy or admirable? I realised that in the act of deconstructing the notion of the subject as personally able to control the future I also unwittingly constitute a subject whose inhabitation of the interstices of this work could only be inferred by virtue of its voice of abrogation. This shadowed subject then possesses only terms of reference that are much the same as any resisting subject that possesses no legitimate terms other than denial and dislike. Divining its nature is only then possible by negative inference. I realised that by giving this shadowed subject no more useful voice than the voice of protest I was replicating the subjugated position that I imagine children to be in when resisting the demands of future narratives.

It then seemed very important to story this subject with the intelligibility of a plot line of that was richer and more respectful than denial. I needed to at least find some constructive terms of reference to sketch the outlines of its putative nature. What I did was to imagine the terms of reference that such a subject might use to govern or guide itself, and then I imagined how these terms of reference might be languaged as social instruction.

A good place to start seemed to be a life-skills programme. These sorts of programmes are one of the more overt forms of social instruction and are clearly intended to guide how young people self-govern. They are very common in New Zealand and I have been involved in quite a number through my work with children and youth. I even attended several as a youth myself.

What I then did was to design an imaginary life-skills programme for high school students. This is a pretend life-skills programme that draws on terms of reference that if followed, might be imagined as leading to subjects governing themselves rather differently than if they followed the terms of reference that inform late-modern norms of subjectivity. It sketches at least the outline of a very different kind of person.  I found it an interesting experiment and one that I shared with a number of colleagues.

The reaction of my colleagues was also interesting, most seemed to experience it as amusingly disturbing if not laughably alarming, particularly when they juxtaposed it against the life skills programmes they were all very familiar with. One school counsellor went as far as to say, (while laughing) that if I was to present it to a school principal, my professional credibility would be lost, my sanity questioned, and I'd probably be banned from the school property as a danger to children.

What follows is the imaginary 'life skills programme' that references to an ideal of the self that is smaller, less concerned with autonomy and less besotted with the notion that control of the future equates to happiness.  Immediately following this imaginary life-skills programme is a genuine one for comparison.

**"**Welcome to the: 'New Zealand Life Skills and Self Development Programme'

(for 13 to 17 year olds)

We are teaching skills, attitudes and ideas that will help you to make sense of life and live it well!

These are some of the themes we'll be covering**:**

- Your current happiness is as important as your future happiness.

- Happiness tends to just happen, you can't guarantee its arrival, enjoy it when it's there.

- Happiness is very important, but too much planning for it can lead to unhappiness.

- The future is not really yours, it tends to just happen. In the same way you can't always stop bad things happening you cant always make good things happen either.

- Often you'll be at the mercy of events, its best to be a little reconciled to this, remember,  controlling your life isn't the same thing as having a good life

- Anyway you can't really take complete charge of your life because lots of your life belongs to other people

- Imagining that you can be or do anything is good fun but sometimes a bit unrealistic

- You can have a rich inner life but don't be tricked into thinking the outside world will always reflect it.

- Goals are important but they wont always happen

- Remember that accomplishing goals is not the same thing as contentment

- Not everybody is successful, nor can they be, its ok to have an ordinary life.

- You are not particularly unique, why should you be? its ok to be ordinary.

- Who you are has just as much to do with what other people think of you as it does with what you think of yourself.

- Beware of trying to be too independent, it can make you lonely and miserable, you never really stop being dependent on others, that's why getting on with people matters so much.

- Its not only OK, but important, to fit in with others.

- The past has a lot to teach us about what's likely to happen in the future

- Sometimes what happens to you has more influence on who you become than what you yourself intend.
- High self-esteem is tiring because its such an effort to keep it pumped high, its perfectly ok to be just adequate, even ordinary
- Learn to appreciate today it will never happen again

The following is an actual (and fairly typical) life skills programme:

"Youth X-Factor Programme
Introduction

This 5½ day non-residential programme is for teenagers aged 13 to 18 years. It aims to assist youth to identify their X factor - that is, their unique qualities and potential.

We provide a supportive, high energy and FUN environment that encourages participants to create a vision for their life by identifying their X-Factor - their unique qualities and potential.

The key objectives are:

* Create a vision and direction for their future,
* Enhance individuals' general well-being,
* Increase motivation and positive attitude to life,
* Raise self-esteem and confidence,
* Overcoming Fears and Barriers,
* Develop leadership skills,
* Creative solutions to social or lifestyle problems,
* Encourage individual and social responsibility and respect.

Course outline:
Day One
A.M. Introductions, overview, expectations (theirs & ours). Group agreements & housekeeping. What is the X Factor that makes the difference?

P.M. Outdoor educational activity that builds a team atmosphere & rapport with participants.

Day Two

A.M. Barriers. Participants will be shown some tools for lateral thinking to help them find creative options.

P.M. Rural outdoor experiential based learning.

Day Three

A.M. Motivation. Participants will be encouraged to identify & cultivate their personal motivation anchors.

Day Four

A.M. Full day outdoor experiential learning. (Facing fears and building confidence and team work).

P.M. Same as morning.

Day Five

A.M. Goals & directions. A time to get clear & focused. Create a Vision for their life using their own X Factor.

P.M. Outdoor activity.

Day Six

A.M. Parents/Caregivers attending. Bringing it all together. What does all this mean for you? -- Gratitude, Learning, Promise.    The maze indoor exercise, graduation with certificates and prize giving."

(http://www.lifecoachassociates.co.nz/courses-youth.html   30.10.03)

There are terms of reference in the actual life-skills programme that show a clear fit with the late-modern fantasy of subjectivity. Themes of individuality, responsibility, prudentiality, inner uniqueness, and a focus on 'taking charge of your future' are readily apparent. As I have argued, the terms of reference informing the above are well supported by a wide range of late-modern practices. Of course my pretend life-skills programme does not have professionally sanctioned terms of reference, on the contrary it flies in the face of the late-modern ideal that every-one should believe themselves able to control their own future.

Speculatively, the terms of reference in the pretend life-skills programme do show a small degree of fit with some spiritual and cultural traditions that I would argue are somewhat at odds with late-modern norms of the self. For

instance: Confucianism (Nivison, 2001), Taoism (Robertson, 2001), Islam (Pickthall, 1956), Buddhism, (Arnold, 1948) and some perspectives of Hinduism (Macnicol, ed. 1948). However, my own suspicion is that despite educational calls for valuing diversity, these other potential terms of reference are somewhat marginalised in influencing how subjectivity is performed, understood and policed in the mainstream of late-modern societies such as new Zealand.

Because the terms of reference, or principles of self-hood drawn on by late-modern modernity are reproduced, legitimated and made normal by such a wide range of influential social forms, I want to suggest that future critiques of these terms of reference are likely to be de-centred and partial. I suspect that critiques or resistance to late-modern regimes of the self will in future revolve around no particular totality, but instead, the specific local effects of living under such regimes. The local effects that may be locally resisted can be guessed at, but not known. They may include, ecological effects, economic effects, effects of loneliness and isolation or, something completely unexpected that will surprise us in future. Some of the ideas explored in the next and final segment take this idea of local effects and local resistance further, and explore how oppressive or hurtful forces are, in consequence of the local effect of their actions, prone to be continuously unravelled.

**Hope, tracing creative lines of escape and conclusion**

This next to last section is driven by my personal aesthetics. I commence with a very brief review. I then briefly discuss some of the ways that futurority is currently being obstructed and resisted and then elaborate on ideas I find attractive because of the hope of change they offer for the future.

**On a personal note**

As mentioned in the introduction, Deleuze and Guatarri (1983) issue a challenge to anybody writing about subjectivity. They suggest that all dialogue

that includes any attempt to describe subjects is, in potential at least, productive of subjectivity. And hence, in that sense of production, such writing constitutes a series of aesthetic decisions that should be acknowledged as such. In responding to their challenge, I need to acknowledge two aesthetic aspects of this work.

The first aesthetic aspect can be seen in the overt critique I have made of the fantasy of subjectivity I have suggested that the late-modern figure is encouraged to inhabit. I have undertaken this de-constructive critique because I find the fantasy ugly. It is ugly in what it makes of the subject and the world and what it demands of the subject and the world. Secondly: there is the implicit constructive fantasy of subjectivity that haunts the interstices of this work and my thinking. This is the fantasy of subjectivity that I find attractive and that forms an imaginary person-hood. A person-hood that I got to know a little better through writing a life-skills programme in their honour.

It is a fantasy of a smaller more humble self. A self who is as concerned with making choices to better fit the world as it is with making choices to change the world. It is a relational self that understands its own identity as function of shifting relationships with context, place and other people. Because this self knows that the future is so often beyond its own powers to manage, it is very practised at using and enjoying the opportunities and pleasures of the available day. It is a self that is very careful to cherish relationships with place and people of place because it knows itself as inseparable from these things. Its this aesthetic fantasy that's been my constructive guide and prompt throughout this work. It is my own hope for the future that my fantasy of a humble subjectivity will have a chance to become a little more ordinary and less prone to being pathologised.

**Review**

During the course of this story I have proposed that future narratives can be discussed as a discrete and important aspect of the constitutive forces of modernity and neo-liberalism. I have discussed the social forces that tend to

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entrench and reproduce a singular view of human nature. I have considered the extent to which the promotion of a neo-liberal field has shifted the way the world is perceived and consequently shifted what is understood to be the ideal kind of person to live in the world. I have also proposed an experiment of thought: that late-modern understandings of the self operate as a fantasy of subjectivity and that late-modern citizens are encouraged in a variety of ways to inhabit this fantasy. I've suggested that the fantasy re-figures notions of what the individual self is capable of in ways that support consumer capitalism and reproduce the fantasy itself. The contentions I have made have been examined through an array of theoretical, archival and anecdotal material.

In my discussion of resistance I spoke to the difficulty of resistance to futurority needing to attend to the twin problematics of de-centred sites of influence and also a paucity of legitimating terms of reference.

I concluded that resistance is likely to be mobilised through the experience of lived effects rather than ideology. This suggests to me that any resistance undertaken, will inevitably be partial and local, and labour under the possibility of dominant truth regimes re-siting resistance into pathology. In consequence of these factors I would imagine there will be no protest marches against future narratives. However, because the impact of these narratives is so broad, the kinds of effects that might be resisted or challenged are broad too. Resistance and discursive efforts to obstruct or make otiose these effects will be particular local responses to the particularities of the local effect.

As I will move on to briefly describe, such local responses are already endemic, there are multiple voices and actions of protest at the environmental, personal and societal effects of the programmes that legitimate their actions by appeal to a progressive or market ethic. Also, the legitimacy of late modern prescriptions of selfhood has come under increasing attack from a range of sources. Ranging from the individual to large movements, there are many acts of protest, resistance and praxis for change against the constitutive forces within which futurority is embraced. All of them are in a sense, local responses to local conditions. In what follows I describe three examples that are

prominent because they might be described as movements. These are movements that I consider hopeful. There are of course, multiple other examples that could be drawn upon.  I will give three brief examples of what I consider hope-filled local responses and then move on to consider some ideas that I find attractive because of  their optimism.

**Brief examples**

In the academic field, the validity of the progressive choosing self of late-modernity is increasingly being taken to task by groups such as critical psychologists who aim to unmask the political rationales that underpin the assertions of traditional psychology (Burman,1994; Dutton & Collins 2005; Papadopolous, 2004; Parker,1999). Their actions and critical perspective represent a fundamental assault on what Lyotard (1984) described as the 'meta-narrative apparatus of legitimation' that claims the ability to speak neutral truths of person-hood.  The critical psychologists named above ask the hard question of who benefits from the social and scientific formations that produce particular kinds of person-hood? They have been particularly critical of the subjectifying effects of neo-liberalism and how psychology in particular reproduces these subjectifying effects. Critical psychology is a growing movement with many adherents. I recommend the reader to Journals such as the *International journal of critical psychology, London, Lawrence and Wishart.*

In the field of social practice, there is the Narrative therapy movement, initially developed by David Epston & Michael White (1989 & 1998). Narrative therapists use social constructionist approaches to deconstruct the dominant discourses of selfhood that are privileged by modern practices. Their aim is to create a discursive space that allows instead the re-privileging of subjugated versions of selfhood that are preferred by the client. Narrative therapy is also a contextualised discipline that understands truth to be a product of socially located relations of power and privilege. As such, narrative therapy returns the political to the personal in ways that are inherently de-stabilising of privileged regimes of truth. Narrative therapy is expanding in popularity and has

becoming increasingly influential in New Zealand school counselling  (Besley, 2002).

On the populist field, there are also movements such as the "slow food movement" (Foroohar, 2001).  The slow food movement commenced in Italy in the 1980s as a response to the opening of a McDonalds restaurant sited on an ancient and revered neighbourhood in Rome, the Spanish Steps. The slow food movement is an overt response or challenge, to what slow food advocates refer to as McGlobalisation.

McGlobalisation is described by slow food advocates as a dangerous ethic of life and work that has the individual in such a rush to get to tomorrow that they ignore the pleasures of today. The espoused purpose of the slow food movement is to cherish both tradition and community and to encourage an attitude to life that pays leisurely attention to the pleasures of the moment. They are interested in contentment rather than accomplishment. The slow food movement has proved immensely popular, spreading its influence throughout much of Europe. It has also spawned initiatives such the 'slow city movement' and even 'slow economics'. These are initiatives that seek to slow the pace of life through means of town planning and economic planning. The espoused purposes remain the encouragement of attitudes and ways of living that are more leisurely, more reverent of tradition, community and the moment, and less focused on future accomplishment.

**Hopeful ideas**

All of the above are in a sense local responses, in that, within specific territories of knowledge and experience they present ideas and approaches that act as challenges to late-modern norms of the subject. These challenges act in different ways to block the hegemony of futurority and the political philosophies that contain it. I regard these as hopeful opportunities for change.

In what follows I use the works of Deleuze and Guattari (1977& 1996) and Karl Polanyi (1944) to discuss the operationalisation of change may happen. I am attracted to their works because they posit, for different reasons, all structures of power as inherently containing the seeds of their own change. I also resonate with their suggestion that clashes of monolithic structures of truth merely create new repressive truth regimes. Hence then, perhaps disparate, humble and partial acts of resistance will prove more effective in facilitating liberating change than the clash of ideological titans. In line with this notion of diversely legitimated, unrelated acts that incrementally lead to change, they suggest that in escaping / restraining the oppressive effects of truth regimes; creative possibilities emerge in consequence of critiques and actions that arise from the principles and effects of the truth regime itself.

This closing examination of hope is of course nothing more than a statement of my own aesthetics. It is an attempt to voice some possibilities for a future of the subject that incorporates a wider and richer range of the ordinary.

Karl Polanyi (1944), was an economist who studied the history of laissez-faire economics. His research offers a way to think about how the restraint of what late-modern norms requires of subjects, can happen in ways that do not need grounding in new social epiphanies or ideologies. Going further, his ideas indicate that resistance and change operate more effectively for the lack of such grounding. Polanyi studied factors that restrain the actions of free-market economics. In regard to economic liberalism and market-driven views of history Polanyi (1944) had the following to say:

The habit of looking at the last ten thousand years as well as at the array
of early societies as a mere prelude to the true history of our civilisation
which started approximately with the publication of the Wealth of Nations
in 1776, is to say the least, out of date
(Polanyi, 1944, p. 48).

Polanyi was not a theorist who wrote to notions of subjectivity.  Instead, his
work was taken up with exploring the history of how market driven, laissez-
faire economic and social policies have been resisted and restrained. He
postulates resistance to have been almost Lilliputian in action, a web of tiny
restraints woven over time with each strand of the web having little in common
with other strands. He also argued against the effectiveness of ideology as
mechanism of resistance, and rather saw that resistance is commonly a non-
ideological phenomenon that is better understood as local responses to local
conditions.   Polanyi took the position that resistance was not a function of
singular ideologies, opinions or rhetoric. Polanyi asserted:

While Laissez-faire economy was the product of a deliberate state
action, subsequent restrictions on laissez-faire started in a spontaneous
way. Laissez-faire was planned; planning was not....… The legislative
spearhead of the counter-movement against a self regulating market, as
it developed in the half century following 1860 turned out to be
spontaneous, undirected by opinion and actuated by a purely pragmatic
spirit (Polanyi, 1944, p. 141).

Polanyi argues that pragmatism will always restrain the free-market, and in
discussing the mechanisms whereby that restraint was enacted made the
extraordinary assertion that the two most vigorous groups who resisted
laissez-faire, and thereby restrained it, were the very poor and the very rich
(Polanyi, 1944, p. 133).

He stated that both the poor and rich possess 'sensing organs' for feeling the immediate damaging effects of the market, the rich because their wealth is quickly threatened by market fluctuations, and the poor by the danger that market changes offer to their physical survival. The partial, piecemeal and local nature of any possible resistance to futurority attracts me to his work. I am very drawn to his optimistic tone, as I am drawn to the notion that minute acts of resistance can function to create a restraining web. The lesson I draw from Polanyi is that in terms of the thwarting of injurious experiences; what matters less than the construal of meaning is the very living of the experience itself. Regarding the free-market and its effects, Polanyi also stated:

> Our thesis is that the idea of a self adjusting market implied a stark utopia. Such an institution could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society; it would have physically destroyed man and transformed his surroundings into a wilderness (Polanyi, 1944, p. 3).

I would like to assert something similar about the late-modern fantasy of subjectivity. This fantasy, if lived in fullness, is also a stark personal utopia containing seeds that destroy social cohesion. Apart from the social effects, I contend that any person attempting to be faithful to its image of the subject will be burdened with maintaining a fantasy of personal and temporal omnipotence that will often stand in flat and painful contradiction to lived experience. I have argued that the fantasy is resilient, and contains mechanisms that promote its re-production in the face of painful contradiction. However, in hopeful mode, and following Polanyi's analysis, I believe it also contains a sufficiently annihilating quality, that like the laissez-faire philosophies that partially inform it, it will eventually be subject to degrees of restraint.

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I will now briefly describe some of the rather complex ideas of Deleuze and Guattari, Deleuze and Guattarri have a great deal to offer when undertaking any exploration of hopeful possibilities.   In their critique of capitalism, *Capitalism: a very special delirium* (1995) Delueze and Guatari take a position that dismisses concerns with ideologies as cause of repression, and instead turn their attention to the specificities of how power is organised and brought into play in the lives of subjects. Deleuze states:

> The problem of education is not an ideological problem but a problem of the organisation of power: It is the specificity of educational power that makes it appear to be an ideology, but its pure illusion. Power is in the primary schools, that means something, it affects all children (pg.3)

Regarding the oppressive effects of capitalism, they refute the notion that conflicts of ideology have potential to liberate subjects. Rather, they suggest, such ideological conflicts present a masking rationale or distraction for the way that power is organised and performed in the lives of subjects. In discussing capitalist ideology; they view the organisation of power as very much to do with social truth forms that organise or stratify the unity of desire and economic infrastructure. However, in their opinion, ideologies such as capitalism are only one of a vast array of totalising truths that create rigid oppressive strata. By strata, they refer to the rigid structures of truth that determine meaning and give form and shape to the mobilisation of desire and subjectivity. Strata territoralise, in that, strata claim the authority to define specific territories, of experience and in providing a monolithic determination of that territory, encode it into oppressive subjectifying rigidity.

Deleuze and Guattarri posit a fundamental flaw in language. They argue that language is unable to represent the flux like nature of existence. They suggest that events, people, structures and forms are more accurately portrayed as multiplicities of assemblages in transition, or as they would put it: "in flow, becoming" (1977) The following quote elaborates on their understandings of both the confining limits of language and what they mean by stratum:

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Basically, language is dependent on is-ness. It is a stasis discourse. When we speak of a dog, we employ the stasis word 'dog' that freezes 'dog-ness' into a stratum that can be seen and grasped. The word 'dog' functions as a stratum in that it grasps in its pincers a maximum number of intensities or intensive particles over which it spreads its forms and substances. The function of the word, indeed of any noun is to bind together a disparate set of unique multiplicities and to construct for those multiplicities a common stasis, a 'meaning' that is distinct from other stasis groups…. Thus any mis-description (any noun) becomes a force of stratification, a totalising theory that constructs the world according to its own model, restricting the free flow of particles and energy… Stasis nouns are deadly, in that they effectively kill the vital and unique energies of unique multiplicities by forcing them together into a group in which they may not belong, and to which they may not be attached, thus shutting down the available lines of flight of a given multiplicity. (Taylor, 1996, p. 8).

Inasmuch as any totalising truth locks down possibilities and creates a repressive territorialised strata of meaning and meaning performance, then future narratives operate as a strata that constructs a totalised subject whose possibilities are limited.

In a more hopeful mode, Deleze and Guattari also suggest that all strata contain / create the possibility of lines of flight that lead to the exterior of the strata. By lines of flight they mean those fluid moments where the contradictions and insufficiencies of description of the strata become momentarily apparent. Such moments signal a failure of the strata to capture the flux like fluid nature of subjectivity. They suggest these moments delineate lines of potential flight that lead to the exterior of the claimed territory.

**Tracing creative lines of escape**

Lines of flight might be thought of as those transitional experiences and thoughts that arise from within a territory of truth but are unable to be adequately explained by what that territory claims to define. Hence such experiences indicate an exteriority to that particular territory of totalising truth.

They suggest that the monolithic nature of any totalising truth claim or strata, is too cumbersome to fully contain or capture the quixotic multiple nature of life in flux. Their assertion is that just as the truth effects of any given strata are in continual production, then so too in continual production, are the lines of flight that indicate the insufficiency of the strata at defining the complex flowing totality of experience. They are intrigued by the ways that strata can be de-territoralised and re-terroritalised more usefully by the tracing of these creative lines of flight.

However they add a caution. Deleuze and Guattari are very cautious of the potential for any new theory which might itself commence as a creative line of flight, to become a totalising truth. They fear the possibility of any 'line of flight-become-truth' then operating as yet another confining strata, another repressive structure of meaning, that by presenting the fluid nature of experience as static, blocks off new possibilities. This concern perhaps explains their dis-like of concepts of ideology, and their critique that suggests that ideology, by freezing the fluid moment into structures of truth, operates to mask the repressive 'operations of power' of those structures of truth.

Delueze and Guattari are optimists and assert that all structured performances of meaning and action, both social and personal, contain both a creative nomadic enterprise or impulse and a stratifying state enterprise or impulse. The nomadic enterprise is the impulse that creatively, in the flux of 'becoming' acts to expand beyond and through rigid strata of meaning into new uncharted possibilities. The state enterprise is the impulse that shrinks possibilities by

seeking to stratify 'becoming' experience into layers of meaning that contain / explain experience into more rigid and persistent truth forms.

Delueze and Guattarri contend that nomadic and state enterprises are always co-extensive, with each inhabiting the interstices of the other. Their analysis indicates that even the most oppressive of totalising truths contains the potential for momentary lines of flight that embody the nomadic impulse. Even the most creative expansion beyond oppressive strata contains the impulse that eventually stratifies creative lines into new stultifying regimes of truth. Delueze and Guattarri argue for the revolutionary potential of the self positioned as continually taking advantage of creative lines of flight while also recognising that, extended too far, any line of flight will solidify into new oppressive strata of truth.

Delueze and Guattarri do not argue for the destruction of totalising truths or stratum. They recognise the value of stratified truth in lending form and meaning to subjectivity. Rather, they argue for a disruptive mode of continual escape and re-escape. They have called this mode of revolution the continual "tracing of creative lines of escape" (1983) they sometimes also refer to this mode as nomadology.

What I find so attractive in their ideas, and what resonates with Polanyi's analysis, is that the liberating potential arises from within the experience of oppression itself, and hence does not require a separate countervailing set of truths. Their work suggests that opportunities for change always arise. That nothing is ever static and that just as oppressive forces produce subjects in limited and constraining ways so too produced, is the continual possibility of change.

## Conclusion

I included the ideas of Polanyi, Deleuze and Guattari in this final section because their work offers hope and possibilities. Rather than a drab picture of the subject as locked within the framework of late-modern freedom, they instead offer an attractive image of a future of the subject that is irreducibly one of change and emergent new possibilities. Following their ideas it seems that the restraining impulse that might subdue futurority and allow new possibilities of subjectivity will always be an emergent continual becoming. A series of disparate phenomena, actions, thoughts, lines, possibilities and initiatives that flow as a consequence and irrepressible product of the oppressive force itself. I find these ideas sufficiently hopeful to end this story on. Again, my thanks and love to family, friends and colleagues that have cherished and inspired me.

A personal appendix of thoughts, musings, fragments and perspectives on the work.

A Foray into methodology

This is in no sense an empirical piece of work. Instead it reflects a series of responses to a series of personal epiphanies and bewilderments about time, culture and subjectivity. Theory has (for me) a perspectival function. My ventures through theory while initially driven by a desire to resettle that which had become unsettled, have led instead to the sequential fragmenting of a mundane boulder into handfuls of extraordinarily interesting and at times abrasive gravel.  The position I am left with is that commentary just like perspective is inevitably, even usefully, a fractured affair. My intentions in this work are aligned with Authors such as Nicolas Rose (1999) and Zizek (2002).  Rose and Zizek are both examining matters of subjectivity and the political - two realms or rooms of knowledge with an adjoining door our social structures seem to have let swing closed. They seek (as do I) to open that door. Their thinking (and mine, challenge the notion that conceptions of the self can be ever considered separately from the political economy.

Where I am Positioned

Once there was a goldfish in a crystal bowl who because of the clarity of the water and the fine transparency of the crystal had a perfect view of all his surroundings. The only thing he could not see clearly was the water itself.

Now I am 44, part of a family, a parent of two children, the youngest not long started school the oldest not long started College. I have worked in the Human Services all my life, first as a nurse; then a counsellor, then a community worker, then a family therapist, then a social worker; now a tutor of social practice. The last fourteen years I've combined these other paid endeavours with being at home with children. I am born into a family of many generations of social and political activists, with that heritage speaking more strongly in me all the time.

When I was nine, I began to read 'King Solomon's Mine' an adventure tale written in the 1890's and set in deepest, darkest Africa. I thoroughly enjoyed it and found the three white, male, heroic characters most likeable and admirable.  They seemed decent, kind, honourable and brave. When I came to the chapter in which they slaughtered 300 elephants for the fun of it, and worse, saw themselves as brave and good chaps for doing so, I was shocked. They no longer seemed so admirable. I found it hard to understand how decent people could behave so badly. I took my concerns to my mother. After some thought, she suggested to me that we are all inescapably products of our time and taken up with the concerns of our time. That by their lights and standards, they were decent, honourable men and that my seeing it differently did not make me more decent than them; but merely a viewer from a different time.

Those thoughtful words of my mother provided me with what I might now describe as a conceptual platform. A platform that allowed me to glimpse two things:

1.The totalising lure of any singularity of position be it located in time, thought or culture. (I was so sure of my own rightness and shaken to think they might have believed themselves just as much in the right as me.)

2. The inability of any singularly located world view to cross with full relevance into new contexts.  (I realised that try as I might, I would never be able to fully understand the world   as those men understood it, nor them, I suspected, my world. I found out early that knowledge is usually local, limited and an artifact of perspective.)

The above, along with a commitment to social justice, was one of many of my mother's gifts.  A legacy of her words that day is that I continue to carry a precious awareness that I am a product of my time and culture, produced by my era. In some ways how I align myself now to social practice and theory has come from what I realised then.  Those words of my mothers have left me 'knowing' two things:

1.   There are forces that produce who I am and who all of us are. These forces change through time and thus, we do too.

2.   Being produced by, and made up by these forces, I will never be able to get sufficiently distant from them as to be able to see or understand all of them.

They've also left me with a determination, or belief:  That it's an honourable, necessary and useful effort to try and understand the forces that are constitutive of oneself, the other, (loved or not) and how we are required to relate to each other and the world that we all must live in.  This needing to be done with the humility of knowing that the view of these constitutive forces will always be truncated and that usually we cannot even avoid a degree of complicity in their reproduction.

Thoughts on planning for joy

I would like to suggest that to our ancestors of not so long agoe, - the notion that the individual subject was responsible for, (or even capable of ) not only creating its own joy in the future but imagining in advance what that joy was to be,  would have lain somewhere between the laughable and the absurd. My grandfather would I am sure have acknowledged the role of planning in attaining and maintaining a reasonable life. I doubt though, that he would have seen joy as plannable for. Joy I suspect (to my ancestors at least) being understood more as a matter of happenstance conflated with right livelihood, attitude, luck and the unexpected blessing of grace.


 Speculations on cost

 Perhaps in the late-modern commodification of desire what is lost is the simple pleasure of faith? surprise? What is perhaps lost is the experience of landscape / timescape as not to be controlled / consumed but instead experienced as simply benign. Within the tensions of acuity and vigilance that such an overweening assumption of agentivity demands of us, it is maybe not just 'joy' that is diminished but also perhaps possibilities of what I can only call 'simple contentment'.

An apologia about necessary flaws in the project and a necessary diversion into the question of 'are we in a post-modern age?

I wish to render sufficient discursive coherence to what I might fancifully name as 'modernity's soul' so as to interrogate it. Ask after its nature. Track its spoor. Examine its habitats. The project contains its own demise, in that to undertake it is to imply perhaps agency where there is only process, intention where there is only the wreckage and detritus of passage. I admit that in speaking of a diversity as if it were a singularity is to invite multiple contradictions,  some of the contradictions leading to not just logical inconsistencies, but perhaps inevitably to irreconcilable conflicts. What I have become persuaded of though, is that it futurority is only coaxed into discursive visibility using an 'inconsistency' of view

The conflict within this project might be seen as revolving around two poles.

Firstly: A post structural position which might scoff at my attempt to reduce to an essentialist 'soul'  the partial, and multi-sited nature of modernity's local impacts on who we (partially) experience ourselves as being.

Secondly: A functionalist modern position, which might view my attempts to propose / describe a modern architecture of subjectivity (only available to view through its effects, its passage) as implying by my attempts to reduce the irreducible, that I am championing the existence of an essential extant identity. Identity of course being a concept irremovable from notions of purpose.  The proposition then immediately open to refute as the question becomes begged of "what purpose? Where is its intent to be seen?

Deleuze has implied that there is only ever 'becoming' no stasis, only laminate and transitional flow. Therefore to make coherent that which is pure process is to; (In thought at least) Kill it, never mind. Examining even the pretence of its corpse may be interesting.

I am undertaking the risk of straddling a post structural position on subjectivity yet positing a homogenising essentialism operating coherently and hegemonicly across multiple sites.  I am doing so because to speak of futurority, as if it were', an 'intentional object' an 'essential identity'  will,  (I hope) better enable me to not just track effects and passage, but move my enquiry and thinking closer to the possibility of pre-emptive prediction (of effects) and the articulation of other possible (alternative) modes of subjectivity

Some of the other tensions of the debate are between;  The essentialist view, (meta-theory / revealed truth) held by neo-liberalism, risk theory, and enlightenment modernity, that the future is necessarily a wild beast to be ignored at peril and preferably tamed for our own benefit using the inherently 'natural 'capacities of agency and choice. - And:  my own proposition that our understanding of it as such - is a constructed artefact serving very specific and particular ends … Those being in my view; the continuance of ourselves (late modern western culture) as docile bodies acquiescing to a progress driven consumer culture. Futurority being then an important, if not keystone, cultural component of advanced capitalism.

There are (for me) two strikingly extraordinary features to futurority, the extent of its penetration into our lived subjectivity's, and the extent of its invisibility. I argue that this is a function, a reflection, of the vigour of modernity and its practices; massively buttressed as they are by the economic, social, legal, psychological and military systems in which our lives take place. My proposition is only valid though if modernity is understood as still present. The question arises are we still in a 'Modern' age or are we now in the 'post modern' epoch?

Are we still modern after all this time?

Some have suggested that we are in a post-modern age, with mode of subjectivity a matter of 'conscious choice'. An ongoing reflexive project. (Giddens) I view such statements as offensively naive, ignoring the extent to which, as Pavlich would have it: We are subjectivity's in large part excreted by the legal, political, medical, and social systems in which our lives take place. (Pavlich, 2001). My position is that if there is choice, it is straitened choice, little to do with subjectivity and much to do with manner of consumption.

I certainly do accept that we are in a post fordist, post keynesian age, and concur with Beck and others suggestions that the burden of assessing and speculating about risk has been fragmented, peeled somewhat away from the sole purview of monolithic systems of authority.

But a post modern age? Don't hold the funeral yet guys.

Like the joke says: If this is really post colonialism, how come all you white guys are still here? My position, my professional understanding and my lived experience, is that the technichs of legitimation of knowledge's (of the subject) are still firmly in the grip of modern practice and that such practice is firmly in the grip of quite specific political and economic interests.

Some initial thoughts on resistance

My father was in the resistance, in that as a citizen of an occupied country (Holland during WWII)  he took part in such activities as sharing and hoarding food, installing and repairing hidden radios, sheltering and relocating Jewish children and assisting in the disposal of the bodies of two German couriers killed when they stumbled over a clandestine resistance training camp. He also disliked and argued with the "armed resistance" describing them as foolish boys who ignored the needs of the starving, and pointlessly blew up railway tracks at a cost of vicious reprisals that always seemed to be paid for by non-combatants.

All of this while presenting a benign face to the German soldiers mandatoryly billeted in his home.

These activities were crimes at the time, seen by the Nazi authorities as pathologies in the body politic. They were activities undertaken to thwart, dismay, stall and stand against both a fascist ideology (also an ideology the self) and a series of actions hateful to my father and the majority of his community. I think my fathers illicit activities served another function too; these activities of resistance functioned to re-claim and bring alive into the present moment, ideology's and sets of behavioural norms made illicit by occupation and oppression. To thwart the fascist ideology was not enough, I believe that for my father, of equal criticality was the need to 'keep alive' terms of reference that allowed its dismantling. Terms that allowed the dis-membering of a Nazi view of the hard facts of their lives and the re-membering, re-clothing, re-viewing of those hard facts of self-other-circumstance into stories of courage and decency.

My father was a generous and complex man. I listened as a child to many talks of those times with his old friends and family members. The re-calling of those days seemed to evoke for my father, hilarity, sadness, regret and much thought on the complex nature of evil, decency and the human subject. I am fascinated in retrospect how thoughtful those discussions were. They were not just war stories; they were stories of events that for my father and his friends demanded enquiry into ontological matters.

Personal thoughts on modes of resistance and reproduction

In speaking of the war, my Father described the 1941 Christmas experience of having his shoulder sobbed on by a German soldier overcome by sentiment while listening to German Christmas carols. My father obliged to offer comfort while knowing full well this man was actively complicit in a regime searching out children to send to the death camps. My father understood that this mans act of emotive expression was the performance of a functional act or ritual serving to locate him within a culturally referenced framework stipulative of how the self should understand and position itself to a wider sense of "Volk", duty, well-being, and ideals of personhood.  My father also knew that to express the contempt he felt would be (most dangerously) to denigrate not just this individual's personhood but also the very tangible regimes of power and knowledge from which he drew subjective legitimacy.

I heard hate in his voice only once: Thirty years after the war, while walking with him down the same village streets in Holland he nodded with a frozen smile to an elderly woman and then turned to me and hissed in a voice I had never heard before; "she was a collaborator!".

I speculate that such active hate after thirty years (1976) was his statement of dismay at what he perceived as her dangerous abandonment of allegiance to precious norms and ideologies his 'resistance' had served to keep alive. His resistance had in his view I think served in a small way to allow a subjugated ideology (socialist, humanist, tolerant) to become something close to a dominant ideology.

It is very easy from the perspective of today, (or 1976) to understand the moral and ideological contestations of that era as forthright and straightforward. My fathers re-telling of the murky ambiguity of what the lived experience of resistance meant at that time suggests it was anything but straightforward. My father also worked for the Germans. As an electrical engineer he maintained air raid sirens at an airfield. His greatest bitterness was reserved not so much for the Nazi's but for the American pilots who when not dropping bombs entertained themselves by strafing peasants in the surrounding fields. In 1945 he was grateful for the liberation but loathed the sexual behaviour of the Canadian forces. My Dutch aunt spoke of the problematic that survival talents and ways of being, forged during wartime were seen to be distastefully unbecoming in the housewife she was expected to be subsequent to the war. Within one year, what had been assets of resistance came to be understood as a deficiency of feminity. My father came to New Zealand in 1949. Many of the friends he made were WWII conscientious objectors, their 'acts' of resistance had cost them general contempt,  six years in prison camps and the subsequent twenty year sanction of exclusion from work such as teaching, lecturing, elected office, or any government post. Some number of them suffered from severe depression. I remember both their humour and sadness in my childhood. On quite another tangent, my Uncle, born in England, fought in Crete, was captured, escaped, (resisted) and subsequent to the war received a generous demob scholarship allowing him to train as a Surgeon. Until his retirement he occupied an important position in an Australian hospital.

I use these family examples of 'resistance' not to be facile or pretend that resistance against what futurority demands of our modes of subjectivity occupies the same terrain as wartime exploits,  but to assert that 'resistance' is a multivalent slippery concept. That the heroics, crimes illnesses and pathologies of the self and the selfs behaviour of one era can occupy a very different position in another.

To blow up railway tracks invited the refreshed vigour of Nazi retaliation. It identified (very accurately) a site not adequately occupied with obeisance to their view of correct actions of persons. It invited the stern correction of whole villages working under guns through winter nights to repair the damage.

The second mode of resistance is to be possessed of, or discover, terms, ideologies , discourses, or reference points allowing the discursive dismantling of the performative injunction. Such tools of dismantlement perhaps even allowing a discursive occupation of sites of injunction and a re-articulation of them in terms more favourable.

The statement this morning, (September 2003) by my newly six year old son's teacher, that his reading ability is inadequate for his age, and that a new regime of school / homework will necessarily commence; is rendered into potent performative meaning solely by my / his / the teachers, relation with multiple authoritative knowledge / power sites privileged with the capacity to determine, measure and enforce temporal norms of achievement. Lest the lines tracking to authority be questioned:  They are easily pulled into view by my knowledge that if I took him out of school, in regret at his potential loss of daydreaming time, my subjectivity would be: (as Pavlich, 2001 so eloquently put it), brought into contact with the law and excreted as a newly criminal subjectivity.  My sons teacher, (of whom I am very fond, let it be said) enunciated a discursive practice, those words, that assemblage, locating themselves relationally within quite precise supra-personal, pre-delineated, structured, and disciplining realms of obedience, agreement, normality, concern, strivings and implicit calls for action.

My daughter familiar with some of my ideas around futurority and very familiar with the concerns of being 14  made a musing comment while we were talking about drugs yesterday, (specifically, LSD, Psilocybin's, P, Ecstasy):

 " Its interesting how the drugs people like most these days, (P and  ecstasy) are the ones that make it so you don't have to think about the future or the big picture."
(Rea in conversation 20.9.03).

I am the only person (to my knowledge), speculating that the changing fashions in drug use are construable not as simple pathology, but also as unarticulated acts of resistance to futurority's demands that the self be a prudential one. Could the dance party drug scene with its insistence on the value of the current moment, be seen as a rebellion against, or abdication from a prescribed mode of subjectivity? A mode of subjectivity that conflates mastery of the future with well being and in doing so,  pulls considerations of the  future so close that they are painfully inescapable without drugs?  I have of course no authority to make this claim. While I can articulate it, there is no platform of legitimacy to authorise it. It is not in my opinion sufficient to possess terms allowing a dismantling.  Without reference to sites of authority or regimes of power, such articulation is doomed by lack of influence to  the margins.

Having become an adult in the post-keynesian era and having been party to many wrestles and contestations against what I've understood, as activity's oppressive of the subjugated voice. I have spent much of my life thinking of myself as a political activist. (Albeit sometimes on extended leave). I am now in somewhat of a paradoxical conundrum. Ideas of liberatory praxis, of the struggle for diversity of voice and influence to which I hold great loyalty, (and which I also teach) reveal themselves through my current examination of futurority's impact, as also acting in service to a totalising hegemonic homogeneity of the self, the subject. The baleful conclusion I am confronted with is that the primary mechanism of liberation I have held close at hand most of my life - also operates as mechanism of reproduction for a normalising template of the self that leaves much pain in its wake.

Beach thoughts

The present moment is only receivable into a matrix of history. The consciousness of present offering an easily comprehensible understanding of unconscious; that being; the tensions deficits, accords and disputes of a history of injunctions of performance.

As I crunch over an accumulation of pacific oyster shells,  themselves the sediment of a history of introduced time ( a foreign invader to beaches I "remember" 35 years agoe as smooth not jagged)  I stand next to a waterfall listening to my son and his friend (both six) refusing the sensible advise to come home out of the wind and cold. Caught as they are in the present moment. It occurs to me that there is a fundamental tension between futurority and the constitutive matrix of the past into which it is necessarily received. To have a subjectivity is to be a product of memory. A technology of recall. A re-calling of instructions as to the performance of the self. Commencing with instructions multiply recalled as to self's relation to self and spiralling, centring, around instructions / technes of what such a self is to do. Ironic that with my focus on the call of the future in describing how the self / subject is to perceive / do self,  such a series of action is inextricably bound to the past.  To be, is to be a product of received and retained information. Of stacked  normative instructions of that which is to be abrogated and that which is to be eagerly turned toward. Such stacking of course done in timely fashion and accessible only in timely ways.

I like the idea of finding the history inside the concepts of the self. What the word history implies for me is contestation of forces, paradigms and ideologies grappling for definitive position. Such contestation for ascendancy always taking place in service to particularities of interest, particular constituencies. These constituencies and interests encompassing and representative of; the political, the  economic, the military and of course the epistemological. What this idea of finding the history inside the concepts allows - is to then examine what ascendancies of interest  have come to inhabit the concepts of what must and does define the well self. Concepts such as the Childs drive to individuate, the inherent competitive urge, agency itself, come to be seen as both real things, and actions performed in service to forces become ascendant in our history.

In discussing futurority it becomes frequently necessary for me to "check myself", to wrestle with futurority's influence on how 'I' 'make sense". On how 'I' 'practice' that sense. The difficulty of the task of: 'making sense of how I practice making sense', is not to be underestimated. When I am able to catch glimpses, (which is all I ever manage). I am often intrigued and upset at the extent of futuroritys intrusion into my experience of, (for want of better categories) both thought and emotion. I am seized, gripped and bound as if by another and yet am the instrument of my own binding.

As Judith Butler put it most eloquently: "the subject becomes a principle of its own subjectivation" (Butler, 1997). I am also exploring in this section what has been described as an 'increasing homogeneity' of what is understood to be the 'ideal subjectivity'. I suggest that the fracturing out to the individual level of the 'burden of decision making as to the future' (described by risk society theorists) - lends a compelling degree of urgency to our producing ourselves and our children as 'agentively enabled' . 'Agentively enabled' sufficient to manage a complex future. Homogenous templates of the self, promising such agentive capacity then assuming the seductive glamour of the urgent and necessary .

While personally no great fan of ideas of the 'unconscious' I am certainly persuaded of the existence of forces in our social body that are assiduously, 'not attended to'. Forces, (such as futurority) whose reach of influence is in inverse proportion to the extent of their acknowledgement. Such 'forces', (whether thought of as 'meta-theories' or not) quite clearly linked in their service to the political economy, and circumstances of global power.

Futurority, in gaining the privileged status of: 'essential tool of the self' in managing that speculative diversity, a complex future, (that risk theory assures us is coming), assumes extraordinary penetrative power.

I am suggesting that futurority is an ideology that has taken up residence in, (even as) our heartfelt responses. It has colonised what we should worry about and what we should then do about those worries. It has colonised how we should desire our children to be, what attributes of the self we should fiercely hope for them to display.

Butler has suggested that - "one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power, a subjection that implies a radical dependency"
(Butler, J.  1997, 83)

Perhaps the passionate voice that brooks no modern claim on the matter of, 'who to be' has (in its passion), allowed instead, modernity to claim entititlement on the matter of:  'how to be'?

Without a discussion of desire any examination of the penetration of futurority into our social body, our ideals of subjectivity and our presumptions of normality would be incomplete. 'Desire' is of course variously understood. I am particularly interested in the Marcusian notion of repressive desublimation – that is: the recruitment of 'desire / drives' into the service of consumerist interests. What also informs part of this discussion is Zizek's, (2002) ideas on 'Joussance', the intense / joyous encounter with the unknown. I am speculating that the 'prudential' subjectivity futurority dictates as ideal, is ill-equipped to interpret 'joussance' as other than a failure of prudentiality, and that such a 'failure' becomes reproductive of futurority.

Desire in this context cannot be discussed without acknowledging the extent to which it can function as both operationalisation of futurority's norms and - 'mode of resistance' to futurority's demands of the human subject. I am suggesting that our discontents, our pains and lacks are both reproductive and resistant.

This notion of the 'empty self' must also be held up against the injunctions that have us as 'responsible for achieving our own repletion, our own joy'.

I  would argue that late modernity's valorising of the capacity to envisage, seize and attain the desired future, combined with a totalising channelling of 'conceptions of the desirable'  reduces the shock of  delight to the blander mundanity of accomplishment.

To render an experience of pleasure intelligible then,   is to measure it against a plan.

The normalising template of futurority decrying as personal failure that which shows any paucity of measure of joy. If joy (as I have suggested) is a function of the unexpected, then accomplishing pleasure at the cost of joy, 'we' as obediently consuming prudential subjects,   live in a perpetuity of disappointment and hence failure.

There is a terrible tensioning inherent to such a regime. A tensioning which operationalises a 're-turn' to modernity's template of the self. I am arguing here that our failures, our pain, our hurts, our resistance, become points of symbolic mobilisation. Such points of mobilisation offering us mechanisms whereby we make ourselves intelligible to ourselves. Our hurts become the mechanism whereby we know ourselves; whereby we know ourselves as failures. Such a regime ensures that we are wounded by our failure to create delight and assures us that our wounds are self inflicted. I suggest that a consequence of the commodification of desire and the valourising of the notion that it is the individuals responsibility to achieve their desires operates most effectively to reproduce norms of futurority within the subject. Disappointment and discontent, lead inevitably to our lives being lived in anxious referential deference to those forces of modernity promising enhanced agentive capacity. If we come to understand that agency is what delivers pleasure then to be without pleasure, to be 'discontent' becomes a statement telling us that we are doing our agency wrong.

This view of the subject as 'individually choice-able' is promoted at most of the sites that tell us what we are. To explore futurority and its grip on us, also requires exploring our infatuation with a subjectivity thought of as quite naturally 'agentive'. Exploring the implications of this way of thinking about the self also means exploring how we think about the world and our relationship with it. Understanding the self as agentive works as both interpretive mechanism and call to action. Our understandings of ourselves can't be separated from our understandings of the world, our place in it, and the actions such understandings mandate. This epistemology understands the individual as having a more powerful effect on the world than the world's effect on the individual. The modern infatuation with the self as agentive means that the 'outcome' of our lives is seen as more influenced by our decisions than our context.

Context and lifes travails becoming in such a subjective ontology, a set of scales to measure, not the weight of the world, but the selfs capacity to be agentive. Such an ontology  can be seen to operate somewhat as a 'grand narrative' of subjectivity, experienced as a revealed truth of the self insisting on deference to its verity's.  Such 'verities', being experienced as so evidently the nature of things that to contest them is to defy common sense. The point has been made that  such 'grand narratives' are inherently not reflexive as to their own natures.

Futurority resides within and is lent an almost unchallenged reign by just those  'elementary social decisions' no longer discussed as political and operating instead within the purview of sensible policy needing solely to be sensibly administered. In pursuing this thesis and asking questions of children and those who care for them, (act upon them), I hope and intend to create a platform where some of these simple decisions of gesture and of administration are made available to political critique –

As Rose states, the unification of life conduct around a model of 'appropriate' subjectivity can be seen as the objective of 'particular programmes', of ideologies and economic models,  I think it important to 'highlight',  this is no phenomena of linear causality.  This is not a process of training people to take up the reins of a particular programme. Rather the reins are there! Present! and hence, must be taken!  The training is what the 'taking' requires of us. The training is that series of actions, genuflections, understandings, and self-regulatory principles that are 'necessary' to enable the 'competent' picking up of the reins of a particular programme. This is not a phenomena of sequential planned intentionality. Rather, it is, to reference again to Gramsci, the hegemonic process whereby we come to see things as quite naturally necessary, as quite ordinarily the way of things.

I have argued that 'modern practice' contains an illusory yet influential image or mirror, or other of the self. Such an illusion / image layered and pleated into our myriad bodies by our normative social institutions, our cultural fantasy's of a personal utopia and the social research processes of reflexivity of which we are all made necessarily complicit.

I describe this as a modern 'fantasy of subjectivity', offering us a dangerous to refute illusion of coherence stipulative of what the self should best be. An idealised template or ideology of the self, a mirror constantly before our eyes that is an image of subjectivity that promotes itself as the best measure of health and best hope of survival into the future. I will explore in more detail the role of 'still desiring' in the maintenance and reproduction of the 'modernist fantasy of subjectivity'

Again, there is a terrible and savage tensioning inherent in what I have described. When personal satiation becomes the measure of the well self, and desire becomes the rebuke of failure; there is no easy exit from an escalating cycle of desperate impossible search for the reassurance of coherence from sources that tell us our discontent is our own fault and requiring of greater effort. (In terms of servicing sectional interests, (consumerism) discontent perhaps, is extremely good for business)

The enactment of such a fantastic subjectivity is not of course confined to institutions. It is a living body of modern practice. (A practiced ideology) It lives in us, our bodies, our social relationships, our movement through time, our desires. Our pursuit of those desires, (perhaps a utopian quest fractured out to the individual level), being both the field upon which this modern fantasy is continuously inscribing itself and too; the instrument of inscription itself. I am suggesting that Modernity can be understood as imbued with a recognisable subjectivity and that 'we', en masse and individually, are the performance of that subjectivity. If modernity had a soul then the manner of our performances of subjectivity is where that soul might be seen to reside.

Aligning myself with an understanding of the subject as created artefact, not universal self in diverse cultural garb, creates a broader and different terrain to traverse.

When futurority is considered an influence, (even a warping one) on an a-historical self, then some particularities of concern emerge;  questions of ethics, questions of damage, questions of social well-being. When instead (as I am doing) futurority, (which I suggest, is intrinsic to certain programmes),  is understood to be constitutive of the very nature of 'being', then the concerns are of a different type. The questions become more; what kind of creature are we becoming? And what price are we prepared to pay for the change?

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