Class Precarity and Solidarity in Education: Social Value Co-creation and Non-ownership Social Infrastructures

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Abstract
This paper builds on my previous work in this journal (Hafiz, 2017) on the potentialities of prosociality as a remedy and response to widespread precarity. The aim is to ground prosociality in co-operative social and educational practices rooted in the conscientisation of social and solidarity economy. Pedagogical practices based on principles of solidarity, reciprocity and sustainability can be directed to the production of knowledge (and its associated benefits) in order to meet the basic needs of food, energy, housing, energy production, social caring and well-being in general. This paper deepens the account of prosociality by treating it as a means for cooperation to produce social infrastructures that have a protective function. These infrastructures provide important underpinnings of a universal basic security to be delivered through a social and solidarity economy. I illustrate this from precarity in higher education in the North-West of England with particular reference to the widening participation agenda. This enables me to extend the previous analysis by linking it to the sociospatial complexities of class in higher education and precarity. Specifically, I argue that class differences should be analysed in relation to a differential relationship to the interrelated variables of global dependence – glocal potential that interact with the generative mechanisms of precarity.

1. Introduction[1]

This paper presents a taxonomy of precarity-security as a heuristic device to explore and critically interrogate recent classifications of occupational class in Britain. It proposes that class stratification has important sociospatial aspects and is determined by the technical and

[1] I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Distinguished Professor Bob Jessop, Cultural Political Economy Research Centre, Lancaster University. This article is the result of discussions about key themes presented in this paper.

social division of labour in the local economy. This more comprehensive analysis allows for finer-grained analysis that highlights the multidimensional, intersectional nature of inequalities. This can provide guidelines for a critical education for precarity in the university environment. The co-creation of social value and non-ownership social infrastructure may protect undergraduates from crisis-induced and social-relational precarity through radical post-politics and self-organisation. Key principles for delivering this project include a commitment to social value production, non-ownership shared resources and social infrastructure through social co-operation, social production, the social economy, crowd funding, the gift economy and social giving.

It is suggested that it is the circulatory patterns of precarity-security that significantly determine undergraduates' ability to plan for the future hence the extent to which they can experience genuine social stability and continuing security over the life course. This analysis enables practitioners to imagine a critical education for precarity that integrates class as a crucial factor in precarity-security into critical pedagogical practice.

Social classes have a dual relevance in social analysis. On the one hand, they are often opaque and complex emergent products of objective social relations of exploitation and domination. On the other, they are *constructs* that shape lived experience and identity formation (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2010), providing grids or interpretive frames. 'Low participation neighbourhood' or 'working class' identity connotes particular antagonisms, values to be upheld and restrictions to be removed (Featherstone and Griffin, 2016; Gillborn, 2010). In terms of class and education, the aforementioned authors provide a 'standing out' and 'fitting in' framework of analysis for working class student identities. The heterogeneity of working-class students is complex and there are many variations. However, class action in the learning environment must recognise a differential disadvantage based on differing levels of resources and support pre-and-post university. The experience of Northern undergraduates is one of being a 'fish out of water' among a prevalence of 'laidback learners' (Reay et al., p. 119). Clearly, the working-class experience in higher education involves the student learning new ways of being and making sense of their experiences. To acknowledge class difference in education is to presuppose (rightly or wrongly) that students from other 'classes' come to university with desirable forms of social and cultural capital, which favour class mobility because they mirror, anticipate or prefigure the prestige and status of particular

jobs and social positions into new occupations and work identities in the knowledge-based economy. This makes higher education an important vector of promoting equality and mobilizing diversity and helps us make sense of the recent outcry over institutional racism in the curriculum and the academy (Bouattia, 2015; Bhopal, 2017). Race and class can seldom be separated without distinguishing between minority and white members of the working class. This is especially salient in the former industrial towns in NW England and Pennine Lancashire which comprises of a number of towns where the 'excluded' are constituted on the basis of ethnicity and/or socio-economic circumstances. All universities face the risks of pathologising particular class identity types, whether through government policy or through pedagogical practice.

Class action in education has been valorised as promoting social mobility through lifelong learning (Leitch, 2006). It is argued here that in the contemporary moment political action towards an evening out of class disadvantage is limited to barriers to entry. In order to include class as a basis of critical pedagogy we need to acknowledge social relational difference and act against prevailing conditions that do not promote a prolonged and continuous insecurity over the life-course. Despite decades of policy designed to widen participation, social inequality in education achievement actually worsened in the UK during the 1980s and early 1990s (Chowdry et al, 2010) and in recent times, drop-out, degree completion and degree class depends far more on the human capital available at the time of joining university (Crawford, 2014). Certainly, the barriers to entry have been somewhat equalised through student loans (HESA, 2018), but pre-existing social and cultural capital remain key determinants of translating a degree qualification into wage-security/wage-adequacy.

Maintaining equality in the opportunities to acquire a higher qualification rely on favourable economic conditions and welfare support networks over the life-course pre-and-post-university. More and more high skilled work does not provide wage-security/wage-adequacy and therefore this work is not able to defer precarity due to pre-existing student debt. At the same time, shifts in welfare policy and labour markets are creating further insecurity for graduates. To cope with economic crisis is an essential survival skill in complex, networked societies that experience rapid and unpredictable social and economic interactions, mediated through economic policy and networked social relations. This calls for a conscientisation of structural vulnerabilities based on examining how the global-local are

interacting with the local sphere and exploring potential responses through place-and-network based action for social production. This requires solidaristic and prosocial modes of thinking and behaving that inform cultural practices of co-operative exchange, social value production, non-ownership shared resources and social infrastructures.

Social class relations can have different spatio-temporal depth, breadth, and horizons of calculation: from the longue durée of path-dependent historical legacies to short-term or momentary conjunctures, from local to global, and from short-term tactics to long-term transformative strategic goals. We need to consider all aspects to make sense of the objective sedimentation and tendencies in social stratification and to understand how subjective orientations relate to them. In summary, class remains a central sociological concept in the analysis of how difference poses particular challenges to outcomes-equality in the classroom, and is salient for the classification and understanding of the dynamics of social class in the 21st century. Class continues to provide the analytical tools to observe social change in established solidarities and new identities (Savage et al., 2013; Wright, 2014).

There can be important and politically significant disjunctions between the objective and subjective dimensions of class relations. At the level of subjective sense-and-meaning-making, class and cognate terms provide shape to individual subjectivities and identities. On the one hand, a working-class identity is not always adopted and valorised in terms of earnings and assets; on the other, some actors may be unaware of class relations or, at least, disconnected from a concrete class identity for themselves. Others have proposed new forms of 'precariat' class and new forms of class struggle or 'digital rebellion' (Standing, 2011; Wolfson, 2014). This provides the opportunity for social organisation of disparate identities into a political force for action against social conditions in the university environment. If occupational classification exemplifies social class and this is the basis for thinking about inequalities, then we exclude all those who do not fit into work type classifications and exclude those that may be outside the limitations of the employment relationship, e.g., the elite, a precariat underclass. New forms of classification of social class (e.g., Savage et al., 2013) go further in describing and quantifying the characteristics of a particular social class, for instance, income and cultural capital. However, both occupational class and income-based classifications do not clarify the social conditions associated with each of the classes. Approximate distinctions made on the basis of income, jobs, education, location, cultural

capital and proportion of the population in the categorisation of social class need to be contextualised with further contributions to each classification in alternative scalar horizons, e.g., global-glocal. There is not enough space here to enter deeply into the sociospatial nuances of inequality, except to note that the use of income and wealth as the primary indicators for progress is a myopic approach (Therborn, 2017). The North Atlantic and Eurozone crises have impacted on social class structure through the structural shifts in occupations (cf., The UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2014) that have precipitated income uncertainty for graduates.

In classical class analysis (e.g., Marx, Weber) the focus is on the capital-labour relation and, for Weber, on status differences too. The lens is that of employment as (in)security and the basis of bargaining power or resistant-self-organisation. Their analysis documents social change in the social structure and class division as the industrial age in Britain was unravelling through its colonial interactions and the modernisation of society in general. For Marx, there was a sense that the world was getting smaller as transportation, communication and other technologies of capitalist economic practices became essential for trade and work. Today, we have learning and communication technology to enable the transfer of knowledge, economic, social and cultural goods across distances, and establish networked solidarities. In Britain, class analysis requires an analysis of the influence and power of the British elite, exploring differences in political involvement across the UK and subjective understandings of political efficacy and, subjective feelings of influence (Snee and Devine, 2015, p. 255). In a university environment such issues can be explored through the practices of a social and solidarity economy.

2. Class and pedagogical practice

Recent social, economic and political trends globally, nationally, regionally and locally make inequality between social groups a grave concern in Britain today. A fortiori, this makes class an important analytical in education and highlights the importance of pedagogical practices concerned with the spatial, geographic and social class differences (e.g., Giroux, 2002, 2010, 2014). In the British context, Clemitshaw (2013) and Stevenson (2010), have collectively captured the 21st century moment in the development where the 'civic discourse has given way to the language of commercialization, privatization, and deregulation and that,

within the language and images of corporate culture, citizenship is portrayed as an utterly privatized affair that produces self-interested individuals' (Giroux, 2002, p. 425).

In order to provide security through higher education, practitioners and students collectively must vocabularise and enact a Freireian language of possibility, and direct it towards agential potential, using cultural practices for the transformation of theory and practice. It is evident that neoliberalism and the effects of consumerisation of fundamental relations, e.g., higher education as a lifelong pursuit, are deeply rooted in a debt-based higher education system. In places like Blackburn, a former industrial working-class community, significant proportions of the population would not identify themselves by class in the traditional sense; of belonging to particular occupations, work-types, family histories and social traditions. *Race* and *Class* are inseparable due to conflictual goals of improvement pursued through the widening participation policy in England. Blackburn and many of the surrounding former industrial towns have been subject to decades of governmental action in educational achievement and school improvement at all stages of learning. At the same time the indices of deprivation continue to show that the Blackburn with Darwen borough is one of 20 local authority districts with the highest proportion of their neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10 per cent of neighbourhoods (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2015).

In a locality like Blackburn access to higher education depends heavily on student finance loans and maintenance loans that provide an additional substantial income for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to supplement any earnings for other work to support a livelihood. At present more than £14 billion is loaned to around one million students in England annually. The value of outstanding loans at the end of March 2018 reached £105 billion. The Government expects the value of outstanding loans to be around £330 billion (2014-15 prices) by the middle of this century. The average debt among the first major cohort of post-2012 students to become liable for repayment was £32,000 (Allen, Audickas and Tyler, 2018). This will affect the graduate population in Blackburn significantly with a heavily reliant employment share in low paid work and service sector jobs. In 1922-23, 9,200 students were awarded first degrees and 1,600 were awarded higher degrees. In 2010/11, 331,000 full-time students were awarded first degrees at UK universities and 182,600 (all modes) were awarded higher degrees (Bolton, 2012). Clearly the social class divide has in some part been bridged, if

entry into degree education by those from disadvantaged backgrounds is used as a measure or indicator. But, does a higher education still provide social mobility that delivers improvement in security and well-being across generations? According to the Department for Education (2017) 24 per cent of students in receipt of free school meals at age 15 make it to higher education by the age of 19, and in the South West and East Midlands regions of England the figure is just 15 per cent (Higher Education Policy Institute, 2018). Those graduates without pre-existing "security blankets" such as inheritance are vulnerable even when residing in close proximity to particular economic scalar activity (e.g., The Northern Strategy). To be uprooted from stable support networks is compounded by the risks of precarity, temporary or prolonged, without supportive networks in regional and foreign economies.

The true measure of a higher education is in its benefits as a wider public good. I argue that this fundamental role of higher education production can be realised by developing a glocal potential, the ability to direct knowledge capital in social production activity that meets local basic needs. The ability to plan and cope with diverse economic crises is a prerequisite for graduates today. Rapid adaptations in technology, jobs and employment practices necessitate a regular enhancement of skills in response to shifting needs, or at least the stability to refine and hone existing skills. Another prerequisite for protection from precarity is an engagement with financial investment in lifelong learning over the life-course. Learning that is directed at strengthening networks of security through access to social production assets not sought in a critical education directed towards widening participation. Many graduates are working in jobs that do not require degree qualifications. Furthermore, other factors affect the ability to maintain a prolonged security over the life-course.

Class action in higher education needs to be understood in the context of a deepening and widening retreat of state funded social protection systems, combined with employment insecurity and an abandonment of the standard employment contract model by employers in welfare capitalist states. With the erosion of supportive welfare policies that promote well-being over the life-course, larger shares of risks from the crises from economic instability in a globalised economy are (re)shifting to individuals. High skilled labour is not exempt from existential threats from events and interactions at structural scales (global, international, national, regional, county). Neither are they immunised from the ontological insecurity, if uncertainty is experienced at the level of the individual, household and community, on a more

regular basis. Human labour is being displaced by automation, robotics and artificial intelligence combined with the major challenges of reviving growth, reforming market capitalism and managing technological change (The World Economic Forum, 2017).

Traditionally, class analysis is rooted in the industrial contracts of corporatism, in the production and employment relations and the ownership and control of the means of production. In a post-industrial, welfare-averse capitalist society, class-complexity cannot be reduced to occupational and work identities, or some abstract ascent from one class to the other. Class-complexity needs to be understood as the intersectionality of the concentration of precarity in particular student biographies.

The expansion of the UK higher education sector (1970-2013) has been greater than in most of the rest of Europe. However, occupational filtering down means that graduates are entering jobs that were once carried out by their non-graduate mothers and fathers. A degree has become a requirement for an ever-larger proportion of jobs and skills mismatches are leading to 4.3 million workers possessing skills and qualifications beyond the requirements of their employment (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2015). The number of non-employing businesses have increased by 112,000 with the growth being around +3% (Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016; New Policy Institute, 2015), which is an indication of contemporary production practices that will in future perpetuate precarious labour market experiences. The era of downward mobility is now a reality, the role of education in social promotion valorised in discourses of meritocracy have been exposed as cloaks for the naked inequality of human conditions and prospects (Bauman, 2012; Giroux, 2014; Giroux, 2015).

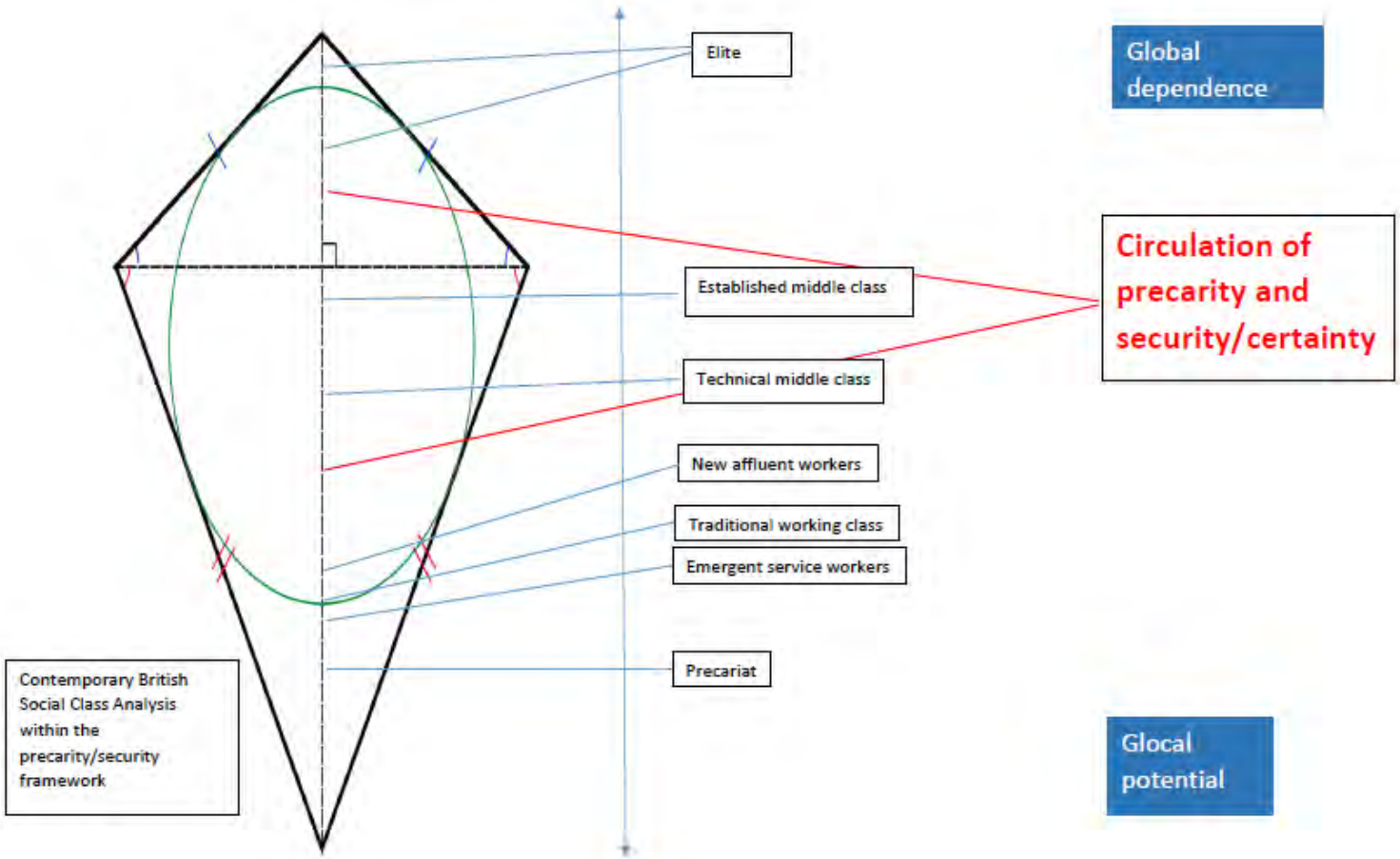
In Britain the increase in students from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds entering higher education; the increase in black and minority ethnic (BAME) students and white boys entering higher education; improving degree attainment and graduate outcomes for BME students; reducing barriers for disabled students (Universities UK, 2016) provide policy agendas that avoid the social relational basis of disadvantage that some students face. Recent concern about suicides amongst the student community is evidenced by levels of mental illness. Mental distress and low wellbeing among students in higher education in the UK are increasing and are high relative to other sections of the population (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2017). The links between debt and mental health for university students are well documented (e.g., Macaskill, 2018). A critical education

for precarity necessitates a curriculum that develops students' ability to understand the effects of debt and the potential strategies to limit the effects of debt over the life-course. Such strategies include a self-sufficiency that insulates against economic insecurity.

3. Recent classifications of class: global dependence and glocal potential

The BBC Great British Class Survey (Savage et al., 2013) identifies that Britain's social stratification has undergone change. It emphasises a class position based on income, types of work, education, geographic location and cultural preferences. This stratification will now be considered under the logic of two interrelated variables (global dependence-glocal potential) and will provide an integrated analysis of class for the purposes of a critical pedagogy of precarity. A critical pedagogy that develops a conscientisation of 'with the world' rather than 'in the world'. To be 'with the world' is to understand how the transactions, interactions and transfers of knowledge capital translate to the ecological, social, economic, political and cultural environments. The nature of multiple interdependencies at multiscalar points of action and economic transactions and its effects can be studied in the locality.

There is inherent tension but potential complementarity between two scalar logics: those of global dependence and glocal potential. The first highlights the multiple interdependencies across territories, scales, networks and places in a still emerging and changing world market, world of states, and global society, ranging from the local through to the global. Conversely, glocal potential indicates the differential scope to create conditions locally that facilitate integration into (or, indeed, exclusion from) the wider economic, political, and social environment on favourable terms. The aim is to provide security from precarity by investing in (enhanced) localised social infrastructures rather than engaging in a race-to-the-bottom. And this depends, in turn, on the development of an informed view of how the global environment affects the glocal potential of a locality, and to respond accordingly.


Elite
Established middle class
Technical middle class
New affluent workers
Traditional working class
Emergent service workers
Precariat
Contemporary British Social Class Analysis within the precarity/security framework
Global dependence
Circulation of precarity and security/certainty
Glocal potential

Using the above schema to explore the circulation of precarity-security across the new classifications of class, I assume that each class has a direct or indirect relationship with the elite position within a circle (representing those within and outside of changes in the circulation of precarity-security) that is squeezed into an oval due to the upward pressure concentrating security in the elite and established middle class positions.

The elite position possesses and controls the most capital and creates crises by accumulating surplus to increase security. The ever-increasing returns (of rent, commodities, residential and commercial property, intellectual property rights and profit) and through the transfer of this capital into the globalised economy aligns the elite more or less towards a global-dependence. Their economic behaviour may not correspond to their nationalism or glocal outlook, but their security relies on making sense-and-meaning of the world through the finance and property markets that hosts their capital. They have a tendency towards a cosmopolitan and open view of the world and possess networks of security that can span large geographical distances. In this position, security from precarity is experienced over a prolonged and multi-inter-generational horizon. Existential threats and ontological insecurity are mitigated through a security acquired from multiple sources. The utility of glocal potential is only relevant when generational land ownership concerns are in play.

The established middle class possess skills, capital and inheritance that can be transferred across generations, in order to defer, displace or delay precarity to a later date through supplementary capital acquired through minor rents (additional property and savings) and networked social relations, reliance on financial values or investment potentials from markets, along with the elite position. In this position security is more or less experienced over a prolonged and intergenerational horizon in a stable society. Existential threats and ontological insecurity are mitigated over several generations acquired through inheritance and savings, particularly intra-generational savings and capital, and close proximity to the elite position. The utility of glocal potential is relevant as they live in secure neighbourhoods with established social networks, possibly forged over a generation, charitable giving and involvement in local issues and a global-dependence through national issues.

The technical middle-class exchange skills that are more or less required over time (but rely on factors like mobility, motility, regular upskilling and training). Their knowledge capital

must follow the circulation of security from significant development opportunities within the constraints of a global finance economy. The opportunity to acquire capital through housing is also available to this position relative to the availability of debt. Their direct economic interactions are mainly with the established middle class rather than the elite position. This risk of precarity will depend on geographical location conditions, the cost of housing-earnings differentials. Economic crisis may lead to temporary precarity and, if located where global finance may be in retreat to other locations, can lead to prolonged precarity. A balance between global-dependence and glocal potential is relevant as glocal potential can off-set the volatility of the global economy through localised and networked solidarities. Existential threats and ontological insecurity are deferred through proximity to the established middle security position.

The affluent worker, traditional working class and precariat share a more interactive class position and interact with the global dependence as a goal but rely heavily on glocal potential for social infrastructure and non-ownership resources. Working in declining industries, service sector jobs in a 24/7 economy, mobile knowledge workers with newly acquired skills or those without skills working in emerging local industries. The risk of precarity in these class positions are most subject to precarity (temporary, prolonged and generational). The affluent worker can rely on a high income over the short-term but is still some distance away from an enduring security. The traditional working class are at risk of absolute precarity periodically. They also rely the most on glocal potential as the mechanisms of precarity can be mitigated at the local level through networked social relations. Precariat, without support networks, experience absolute and prolonged precarity more regularly, due to infrequent income. Existential threats and ontological insecurity for these three class positions emanate from low income work; household debt; political de-individuation, isolation and dealignment; income-based poverty; lack of skills, over-qualification and a skills mismatch; declining social mobility and; time poverty.

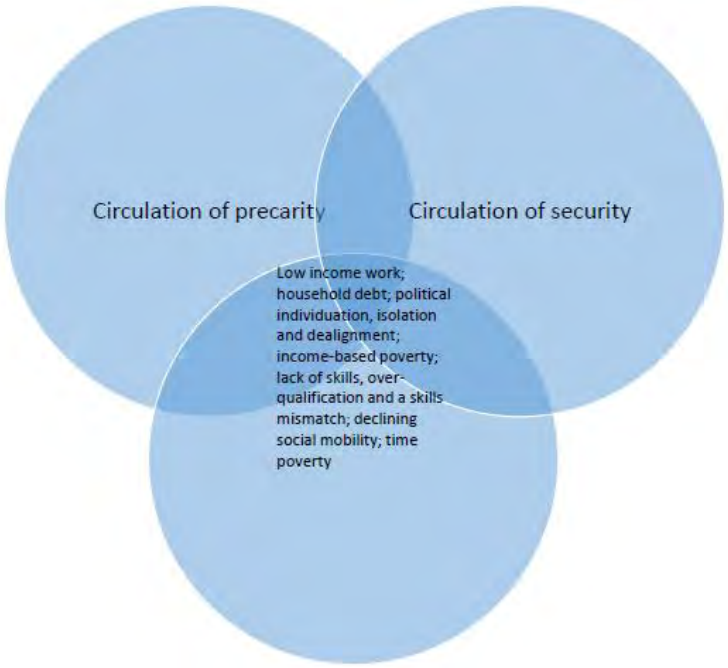
Britain is deeply divided: social and ethnic friction, fragmentation and disunity has reared its head in recent developments that brings a return of a marginalised white working class in opposition with the rest of society. Class in the classical sense is once again a point of discussion and analysis in British politics and policy. Politics and policy, however, are not only realisable in some abstract space of policy analysis or the institutions of governance but are

also achieved through relational practices between social beings outside the parameters of policy objectives. Class action in education has been a feature of politics in higher education for many decades now (e.g., Readings, 1997). UK widening participation policy includes distinct, interdependent and divergent policies across the four nations of the United Kingdom, broadly under a set of assumptions about the nature of educational inequalities, how they arise and how they should be addressed, which are grounded in notions of equality of *opportunity* and *outcome.* However, the higher education system operates in a global-dependent environment characterised by increasing national and international competition (Donnelly and Evans, 2018) and a pressing need for evidence on widening participation interventions in the UK context, and nuanced interpretation and development is required to ensure that HEIs develop interventions appropriate to their own context (Younger et al, 2018, p. 29).

The implications of recent classifications of social class to the learning environment must recognise that educational backgrounds influence outcomes for graduates. This is replicated in the different classes of universities that reproduce the differences in outcomes for graduates from particular backgrounds through the destinations of those graduates. The class structure when linked to occupational outcomes demonstrates a differentiation between graduates who are able or unable to achieve a prolonged security through immunisation from the cycles of persistent economic crises.

4. A radical pedagogy for precarity

Protection from precarity comes with security and a stability to make long term choices. A radical pedagogy for precarity requires the conscientisation of alternative futures and a deeper investigation of present crises in the particular locality of the university. Social action, political strategy and tactics are required to imagine new modes of social production, non-ownership social infrastructures that may provide sustainable approaches to development and progress at a local level.



The Venn diagram above condenses the conditions that result from the social, ecological, economic, cultural or political conditions that prefigure the experience of precarity (these are detailed in Appendix I).

The following seven factors (a detailed explanation is provided in Appendix II) are relevant and significant to understanding the experience of precarity in contemporary Britain:

- Low income work
- Household debt
- Political individuation, isolation and dealignment
- Income-based poverty
- Lack of skills, over-qualification and a skills mismatch
- Declining social mobility
- Time poverty

In order to explore these factors in an assessment of class, education and pedagogical practice both student and educator must engage in critical learning about these conditions and the social infrastructures required to mitigate them. The heuristic offers a device to observe and analyse precarity and the associated uncertainty, at the level of individuals,

households, communities and geographical locations. I am particularly interested in how precarity is affected through global-dependent investments and the sources of local vulnerability and how this affects the lived experience and life-chances of undergraduates, and the wider community.

The disadvantage of access and outcomes in the UK widening participation agenda does not address the lack of particular resources and support that may have preceded and may follow some undergraduates' educational journeys. Class disadvantage in higher education equates to the absence of particular resources and support that provide pre-existing ontological security and this provides further advantages to defer the aforementioned factors that create precarity. Blackburn and the surrounding areas feature disadvantages from all if not most of the indices for deprivation. This locality of the university provides a classroom for inter/multi-disciplinary investigations to explore the experience of uncertain and insecure social conditions that emanate from the generative mechanisms of precarity and how such conditions in undergraduates can be mitigated through social infrastructures that provide security from crisis-induced precarity.

As briefly discussed, the interplay among generative mechanisms is complex. Nonetheless each provides a basis for observation through fieldwork and a taxonomy for assessing levels of precarity and how they interact. Strategies to bring about social change require particular tactics due to the complexity of social relations. Social production of basic needs that is collaboratively and co-operatively organised through formal and informal structures or through anarchic, spontaneous, disorganised and informal *depoliticised* and *destatised* activism. It is necessary to elaborate on the relevance of the terms *depoliticisation and destatisation* to a discussion about class, pedagogy and education.

Depolitisation connotes a conscientisation of political activity that makes a conscious effort to identify and respond to the partisanship, ideological agendas, political motivations that feature in class action in education, or in the macropolitics in our social relations. Destatisation is to establish social interactions that are exchanged between social beings outside of formal political and organisational processes. The accountability is in the founding principles of prosociality, solidarity, reciprocity and sustainability and democratic practices in education that are directed towards meeting local welfare needs. Clearly, education is a

signifier of the prevailing cultural truth of a society. Higher education, in particular, is a rich source of understanding about how a society values education as a lifelong endeavour. Depoliticisation and destatisation assume that it is the prosociality between social beings that facilitate further co-operative planning and action rather than established oppositional partisan politics in the shadow of a hierarchy of vested corporate interests.

It has been proposed that graduates in developed capitalist welfare economies face uncertainty and crisis-induced precarity. Therefore, the social production of social infrastructure and shared resources becomes an imperative for generic education beyond university, an education that equips students with knowledge of the risks of skills-wage-debt precarity. A critical pedagogy for precarity should be centred on pedagogical praxis that provides a language for exploring the effects and generative mechanisms of precarity. The focus of this needs to be on the global-local interactions through the territorial, place, scale and network potentialities and vulnerabilities. The shared precarity, albeit experienced differentially by the educator and the student provides the scope for dialogical co-intentional action (Read and Leathwood, 2014).

In order to transform mental habits and bodily practices, firstly, local solidarity-based associational spaces have to be created and utilised as the classroom for a radical critical pedagogy for precarity, in which being 'in the world' consciousness (vulnerable to precarity and insecurity) can be transformed into being 'with the world' consciousness (food security, shared housing, access to common resources). Objective distance from reality can only be created when approaches to develop social value production utilise post-disciplinarity, inter-disciplinarity, multi-disciplinarity practices in order to produce social provisioning of housing, food, energy and welfare in general, in exchange for time resources from graduates across disciplines towards social provisioning.

In learning a common language that articulates relations of oppression and domination, we learn to define and to distinguish between the 'human' and 'de-human' practices and encounter the problem posing or imagining of alternatives, once we think about reality in these terms. This is the starting point of imagining an individual biography that is a unique history, which is socially universal, common and shared, this being the need to sustain ourselves in the evolutionary sense and through productive work.

The widening participation agenda in the UK has merely instituted social relations that constitute peculiar pedagogical subjectivities and identities that presuppose the servility to the neoliberal logic and the centrality of this as the purpose of higher education (Readings, 1997; Canaan and Shumar, 2008; Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon, 2011; McGettigan, 2013; Rapper and Olsen, 2016). The neo-liberalisation of higher education in the UK legitimises a higher education for employability rather than for a prolonged security over the life-course.

In opposition to the competitive behaviour based on the logic of a neoliberal economy, prosociality provides the basis for learning new ways of thinking about our lives. Value creation through knowledge that is directed to benefit others and sustain us. Prosociality is a foundational construct in the imaginary of alternative economic regimes and modes of production. Prosociality refers to behaviours that are intended to benefit others and, are associated behaviours such as, empathy, co-operation, and reciprocity. Prosociality connotes modes of thinking, behaviours, actions, and the social and educational practices that are motivated to create value for others, but without the intention of manipulation, exploitation or domination.

In Blackburn the escalation of food poverty is being responded to by self-organised foodbanks, contributed to by local residents and activists. The food bank is an exemplar of how self-organised forms of social activism respond to crises in a way that partisan politics or policy analysis cannot achieve within the time of need for more and more families. A critical pedagogy for precarity engages with such social conditions to understand the vulnerabilities we all share, albeit differentially. This conscientisation of how the global-local interacts provides ample research problems for engineers, sociologists and health and social care professionals alike.

Conscientisation is the basic dimension of reflective action for educator and student. Freire's (1973) call to action for a pedagogy of the oppressed holds utility for resistance by the precarious in advanced economies. Educational practices inside and outside the classroom that engage in a praxis of neoliberal de-socialisation, and encourage social production for security against future precarity. This refers to the transformation of a consciousness which has been historically and culturally conditioned through insecurity. The common language that is available to a critical pedagogy of precarity starts with an encounter

with personal 'uncertainty' and towards building a 'universal basic security'. Local conditions provide opportunities to study class as a shared disadvantage and imagine the prosocial practices of solidarity to produce shared resources.

5. Concluding remarks

I have attempted to apply the precarity-security heuristic to the analysis of emerging social class classifications, their relevance to widening participation in UK higher education and critical pedagogical practice. The precarity-security heuristic has utility in giving shape to class experience and conditions beyond myopic classifications, particularly in a former industrial working-class community in NW England. The heuristic has been integrated with the new classes of the Great British Class Survey 2013 and provides further depth to the classifications in relation to the conditions and generative mechanisms of precarity-security in the shadow of global-dependence and glocal potential. The main contribution to critical pedagogical practice is in highlighting the opportunity to engage in dialogic encounters between practitioners and undergraduates centred on a Freireian radical pedagogical language of possibility of social value production, non-ownership resources and social infrastructures through prosocial pedagogical practices, rather than rooted in a neoliberal logic of competition. In conclusion, widening participation efforts need to recognise recent developments in the market for skills and understand local conditions in a global context to address issues of difference in outcomes for particular graduates. Higher education practitioners can contribute to addressing the issue of declining social mobility by facilitating a universal basic security and life-course horizons for graduates by adopting the principles of the social and solidarity economy in critical education. By understanding the circulation of precarity-security we can imagine alternative futures, social and political organisation that is directed to understanding local conditions, personal biographies of precarity and the protective factors that can insulate against the multi-dimensional forms of precarity facing graduates from low participation neighbourhoods.

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Appendix I. The social conditions of precarity

1. the limits on prolonged stability of economic security that in normal conditions create the opportunity to weather short-term crisis and shocks and provide the ability to plan for the future, e.g., savings or the lack thereof or the ability to source loans from friends and family, the lack of access to legal and social rights. Such limits are hypothesized to produce existential threats if they exist at the structural dimension and as an ontological insecurity if experienced at the level of the individual, household and community.

2. the gradual deterioration of social mobility (intra-generational and inter-generational) that creates regressive discrepancies between parental and offspring well-being, caused by the absence of prolonged security. It is assumed that security from precarity is transmitted inter-generationally through capital assets/inheritance and intra-generationally by prevailing social relations. Precarity is deferred, displaced, or transmitted between social groups intra-generationally (from spouse to spouse, parent to offspring, offspring to parent). In policy terms, one group is precarised at the expense of the other. Policy as a structural constraint becomes a zero-sum game. In general terms, the functioning of society relies on the functioning of households with its component individuals. The measure of progress is social value created for some future need.

3. the limits on the ability to exchange skills and labour in particular economic regimes for wages and income above the required sum to sustain a livelihood, corresponding to the ability to make long-term choices, e.g., marriage, family planning, housing. The heuristic assumes that a knowledge-based economy is subject to rapid and disruptive technological change affecting the speed of the production process, transfers the ownership of intellectual property, reductions in the use of human labour and creates a greater demand, and therefore a competition, for particular skills in the short-term.

4. an increase in political isolation (defined as disengagement from formal and informal forms of government and governance) and limits on the capacity to engage in political resistance (defined as engagement in direct and indirect forms of formal and informal social action due to existential anxiety and ontological insecurity).

5. the limits on one's ability to direct one's time toward pursuits that support human capital development, social infrastructures and human flourishing, e.g., education and training, leisure, food and energy security, furthermore, creating a scarcity of time due to the proportion of one's time utilised to meet basic needs. In sum, a lack of discretionary time and associated economic resources to capitalise on the discretionary time for welfare needs.

The above conditions are the outcomes of precarity that are affected by a range of generative mechanisms that surround the circulation of precarity-security. These include multiple sources for precarity, interacting and counter-acting with each other and the social being/spatial collectivity, and resulting in differential experiences of precarity-security.

Appendix II. The generative mechanisms of precarity

1. Wage/Salary – the quantity and stability of wages over time and/or the security of a predictable salary provides some protection from precarity, however, it is significantly dependent on other generative mechanisms (levels of debt, wage-cost of living differentials, prices for basic necessities, the availability of social infrastructures, non-ownership shared resources). The absence of stable wages over time or a secure salary inhibits the ability to plan for the future through the weakening of opportunity to accumulate capital at the level of the individual or household in order to defer precarity in the short-run.

2. Inheritance – the availability of inherited assets/resources that sustain a prolonged stable security over time that supports risk-taking and expands choices through economic, cultural, and social capital. Inheritance can delay and defer precarity to a later date or provide rental income to supplement any resources through wages/salary.

3. Technology – Recent developments in automation, augmented reality and other disruptive technologies that reduce the need for human labour have the potential to devalue skills acquired for particular types of work. On the other hand, digital technology enables the functioning of networks that create opportunity and social infrastructure.

4. Skills – provide the ability to participate in exchange relations with other social beings and spatial collectivities and enhance the support networks made available in the exchange relationship between capital-labour, thereby increase geographical mobility to exploit opportunities based on a global-dependent logic, or the deprivation of mobilities available to high-skilled labour.

5. Land access/Commons – the absence/availability of land, accessible common assets, or social infrastructures that can insulate against precarity through the opportunity to sustain biological and financial needs beyond the wage-cost of living differentials. For instance, crowd funding, urban farming, co-operative housing or community energy.

6. Migration – the advantage experienced by the indigenous population or the mobility experienced by the high-skilled and the disadvantage experienced by new and recent arrivals into foreign societies. This includes conditions associated with those who seek refuge from forced displacement and/or high-skilled mobile or foreign labour.

7. Availability of discretionary time – the advantage that privileges some with more opportunity to dedicate time to pursuits that provide protection against precarity or at least defer precarity to a later date, in order to sustain the continuity of security over time.

8. Social capital – the opportunity to develop the necessary cultural capital that allows for the development of non-ownership resources and shared social infrastructures. This consequently enhances the ability to make sense and meaning of the world as we find it, and therefore exercise informed political control over local issues.

9. Territory, Place, Scale, Network - the degree to which the spatial and non-spatial dimensions of social space (territory, place, scale and network) create stability/crisis and (in)security (temporary, prolonged or generational). Highly skilled labour or labour in demand are advantaged and therefore become mobile through the scalar advantages available to particular skills, in particular times and, in particular geographies, afforded through networks, or the opportunities available through glocal potential through place-based solidarities and social and political action (Jessop, 2016).

10. Age, Frailty and Disability – The risks and advantages of precarity-security that increase over the life course requiring protection through adequate pension cover, housing equity, social care costs, or the importance of social support networks, including the precarity-security that is associated with frailty and disability.

11. Social relations – the precarity-insecurity that is unevenly distributed as a result of prejudice, exploitation and domination. The impact of the social relation mechanism can be observed on the basis of differentiated employment security and occupational privileges. This also includes social life in competitive economic cultures that operate on the founding principle of scarcity versus co-operaton and prosociality founded upon the abundance or sufficient principle.

12. Debt – the ability to inhibit ontological security at the level of the individual/household and existential anxiety at the level of a collectivity through limited security or through the social relation that facilitates the displacement of one's labour towards value creation for others (financial institutions, investors, asset grabbers).