Is a Foundation Year Programme to an A-Level as a 7-UP is to a Sprite: Exploring an Attempt to Widen Class Participation at an English University

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Abstract:

What contribution might social anthropology make to our understanding of the consequences of successive British governments' attempts over the last two decades to widen participation in England's universities? In this article I answer this question by examining a foundation year programme at a university in the nation's former industrial heartland. Drawing on anthropological literature on rites of passage I analyse working-class participants' experiences of this admission process. Its creators envisaged it as a rite that would seamlessly assimilate 'diverse students' into the university body, but I argue that it does not do so. Instead, as is to be expected from a rite, it marks participants. It thus prevents them from ever just being students in the eyes of themselves and their fellows.

Keywords: England; Universities; Ritual; Diversity; Education.

Introduction:

When many people in England think about admission to the country's universities, they perhaps have in mind results day.[i] This is a well-established ritual where one journeys to school, meets one's compatriots, and collects one's public examination results. For many 'home' students, exam results are regarded as particularly important in determining whether they will become university students or instead hold another post-school role.[ii] Indeed, as Jennifer, one of my interviewees, observed upon underperforming in her exams, she was advised not to bother applying for university because "I was kind of told 'People like you don't go'".[iii]

In this paper I argue that the emergence of foundation year programmes complicates this simple narrative of transition through examination and admission revealing its inherent privileging of the middle-class. Within England's tertiary education sector, the foundation year programme refers to a year-long preparatory course designed to provide a means for 'home' students from what are deemed 'diverse', 'unrepresented' or 'non-traditional' backgrounds to enter university.[iv] In contrast to the relative uniformity of examinations as a national, civic rite of passage, the foundation year programme's implementation has varied tremendously throughout England. I focus on a university in England's former industrial heartland at which the foundation year programme was limited to one of the schools which offered two four-year degree courses. The school admitted twenty odd students a year and when I conducted fieldwork was teaching its third cohort of students. Fieldwork consisted of ten semi-structured interviews, each lasting an hour or so, with members of all three cohorts and informal conversations with staff involved in the foundation year.

The impetus for the implementation of foundation year programmes at universities can be traced back to the Thatcher government's 1987 white paper 'Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge', which established that universities were to help birth new innovations, nurture entrepreneurs, and train knowledge workers (British Government, 1987). What remained of England's secondary industries was abandoned in favour of a focus on services with the presumption that this would produce greater employment opportunities for all classes (Brown et al., 2008). In the 1990s and early 2000s these developments continued apace under the Major and Blair governments. Major's first ministry passed the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 which reconstituted the nation's technical colleges as universities (Bastin, 1992). Approximately eight years later the second Blair government set a target of 50% of those between eighteen and thirty attending universities by 2010 (Mizen, 2003). Furthermore, under the same Blair ministry, universities' ability to charge increased fees was linked to

efforts to make the sector's student bodies reflective of England's demographic makeup rather than a middle-class bastion.

The anthropological study of the shift wrought by the trio of aforementioned governments has largely examined the various ways that New Public Management and audit cultures have been consequential for academics and the creation of knowledge (Bear, 2017; Gledhill, 2002; Shore & Wright, 1999).[v] There has been little anthropological study of widening participation. Indeed, one has to look to the 1950s when Sheila Kitzinger (née Webster) studied 'coloured' Commonwealth students experiences at the University of Oxford and Philip Garigue and Alex Carey examined the lives of colonial students in London to find anthropological studies of difference in the academy (Carey, 1956; Garigue, 1953; Kitzinger, 1960). These studies were part of a broader attempt by the University of Edinburgh's anthropologists "to gain theoretical understanding of the more obvious 'problems'; of race relations, including the integration of immigrant groups, racial prejudice and discrimination" (Little, 1960, p. 259). However, this focus had little lasting impact on British social anthropology (Mills, 2010; Shilliam, 2019).

In lieu of an existing body of anthropological literature on widening participation in England, my analysis of the foundation year programme's incorporation of students from working-class backgrounds into the university largely relies on theories developed to explain the processes by which status transitions and social differentiation occur (Babcock, 2001; Belmont, 1974; Hockey, 2002). My use of these theories to examine an attempt to diversify university admissions has been inspired by *Teaching Rites and Wrongs: Universities and the Making of Anthropologists* - an anthology in which anthropologists attempted to describe their lives as teachers at UK universities using the work of Arnold van Gennep and others (Mills & Harris, 2004). As is well-known van Gennep argued for the universality of a triadic schema for explicating shifts in social status. The schema consisted of a preliminal rite like pregnancy, a liminal rite like delivery, and a postliminal rite like birth (van Gennep, 1960). In the 1960s Victor Turner rediscovered and elaborated on Van Gennep's thinking on transition rites (V. Turner, 1986). A decade later Turner would apply his ideas to the west and argue that "Universities, institutes, colleges, etc., are 'liminoid' settings for all kinds of freewheeling, experimental cognitive behavior as well as forms of symbolic action, resembling some found in tribal society" (V. Turner, 1974, p. 65). Barbara Myerhoff further developed this aspect of the study of rites of passage by interviewing her students in order to analyse 1970s American counterculture (Myerhoff, 1975).

Anglophone anthropologists, like Turner and Myerhoff, were not alone in observing the relevance of transition rites for higher education and in 1982 Pierre Bourdieu published 'Rites of Institution' arguing that rites of passage serve to naturalise and legitimise perceived social differences (Bourdieu, 2009). Bourdieu contended, with respect to education, that its arbitrary cut-off point meant "the competitive examination creates differences of all or nothing that can last a lifetime" for the last person to pass and the first person to fail (Bourdieu, 2009, p. 120). While not interested in rites of passage per se Mary Douglas significantly preceded Bourdieu when in 1966 in 'Purity and Danger' she explored the processes by which people are socialised to perceive certain differences as legitimate. She argued that "Culture . . . provides in advance some basic categories, a positive pattern in which ideas and values are tidily ordered" (Douglas, 2003, pp. 39–40).

In this article I consider the foundation year programme's status as a transition rite for 'home' students from diverse backgrounds. Initially I draw on van Gennep and Turner's ideas to frame my discussion of how the programme acts to isolate, alter, and incorporate initiates so that by its conclusion they are transformed into university students. Having explored the operation of this transition rite designed to make the university more diverse, I then consider the rite's credibility. Inspired by Douglas' and Bourdieu's works I inquire into whether initiates feel that it has legitimated them and examine what their fellow students make of the programme. Underlying this engagement with van Gennep, Turner, Douglas, and Bourdieu is my concern that 'home' students from 'underrepresented' backgrounds can never truly be transformed through the social magic of the foundation year programme into students, but instead must become 'diverse' students eternally distinct from those who have not gone through the programme.

The Foundation Year Programme as a Transition Rite

"Ideally they will be just like me when I got my maintenance grant and went to Aberystwyth and assimilated" said Llewellyn in a lilting accent that indicated his Welsh origins. We were sitting in the school's crowded, modern, and minimalist canteen surrounded by undergraduates and master's students chatting largely in French and Chinese while academics were mainly conversing in English. It was here that the elderly, white, male academic was describing why he had co-organised the university's foundation year programme. Llewellyn and the

university's Widening Participation Coordinator had created a comprehensive programme to achieve this goal of similitude. It began with a candidate applying via the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), being informally interviewed, and if accepted spending a year on the University's campus.[vi] During the year's first two terms an initiate took five introductory modules including: Mathematics and Statistics, Academic Practice, and Creativity and Innovation. Next students spent the Easter vacation's four weeks on placement schemes and completed a project report. Finally, they returned to university to sit exams. If they passed these, they were then admitted onto their degree course. In the rest of this section I discuss the functioning of this programme as a rite attending to the various ways that it sought to integrate and assimilate these diverse students.

Modern English educational rites have often involved separating students from their families.[vii] Indeed William Watson coined the term spiralism to describe the growing trend in 1960s Britain of class mobility being entwined with going away to be educated at university (Watson, 1964).[viii] In the 1970s Lewellyn, the programme's founder, had been part of this trend- he had left his family in Cardiff to study at Aberystwyth. However, for the foundation year programme cohorts and indeed all contemporary 'home' students, this separation begins not with their physical movement but the movement of data. The very act of applying to university separates them from those who would never dream of doing so. To apply, candidates enter the required information into UCAS's website, upload essays, and choose their programmes. At this point foundation year applicants underwent another separation this time from other candidates to their degrees at university. Firstly, because the degree was assigned another application code and a title including the phrase foundation year. Secondly because it was four years versus the normal three. Lastly because the entry tariffs were different, ordinarily applicants were as Declan, a white working-class nineteen-year-old Englishman from Brighton and member of the third cohort, pointed out "A star, A students, like straight A star students at A-Level", but foundation year applicants were required to have completed three A-Level courses and to meet specific criteria relating to their social circumstances. Some examples of the latter included having attended a school with lower-than-average A-level scores, going to a school where there were more students qualifying for more free school meals than the national average, or being the first in their family to attend university. These broad criteria were regarded by the Widening Participation team as indexing disadvantage and thus signifying social distance from most applicants to the university.

Successful separation in the form of admittance and attendance led applicants to the liminal phase - a socially dangerous, sacred time in which they are isolated from profane, mundane existence, undergo a series of trials, and are transformed by the social knowledge they acquire (Babcock, 2001; Thomassen, 2014). In Victor Turner's early studies of the Ndembu's initiatory rites this isolation was not just metaphorical but tangible in the form of distance. He noted that "The subject of passage ritual is, in the liminal period, structurally, if not physically, 'invisible'" (V. Turner, 1986, p. 95). For Declan the isolation of the foundation year created affective danger. Specifically, he observed that he did not feel he belonged and that he was marginalised:

> Well, as we're on a foundation year I feel like not yet because I feel like on our course, we're sort of treated as a little bit silly. Teachers don't turn up; we don't turn up. I tried to join the football team, but my knees and hips are so bad that I couldn't play. So that would have been my sense of belonging if I'd belonged on the football team. . .. So, I don't really think I'd say I belong to the university yet until I get on the course and in teams and stuff. I was going to buy myself a jumper from … the shop here . . . just to make myself have that more sense of belonging, but I didn't want to spend the money just because I thought I was going to leave.

Although foundation year students lived in the same digs as other students their isolation came, as Declan identified, in their instruction. While their fellows attended large lectures, foundation year students were isolated and taught with each other in a classroom that resembled those at a high school. One interviewee stated that "We just sort of we had a class of 20 of us . . . every day for three hours and that's it. It wasn't really like we had a university experience". Thus just as the Ndembu did not allow for the existence of a person who was neither a boy nor a man due to being in a circumcision rite's liminal phase so too did student concern about teaching point to the difficulty of being a university student who was not yet a university student.

Usually, a group would rely on one another to cope with this interstitial status. Indeed, as Edith Turner has written, liminality tends to promote a sense of communitas or fellow feeling (E. Turner, 2012). This stems from people involving "their most private selves totally with one another and without the slightest suggestion of purpose or instrumentality" (Myerhoff, 1975, p. 35). Certain members of certain cohorts seemed to achieve this. Jennifer was a twenty-one-year-old white working-class British woman from Coventry and part of the second cohort. She described how she and five members of her cohort bonded and maintained this bond after the year concluded

> I'm quite close to five of them and we always sat together, and we still do, we still chat now, like we have our own little group chat, and … I'm moving into a house next year, or this year, with another girl on the foundation year and two boys from the foundation year . . .

However, communitas is fragile and for one member of Jennifer's cohort it was damaged by an awareness of the differences in financial circumstances. Sinead was a twenty-one-year-old white working-class woman from Liverpool who had left the programme after her second term. Sinead believed that everyone in her cohort was middle-class and as a result felt isolated. She commented that

> even the people from the ethnic minority backgrounds, they were still what I would class as middle class. You know, their parents owned a business … they were accountants themselves or that sort of thing. So, I think that was difficult to like get your head around because I obviously thought the foundation year was an opportunity for people like myself to get onto the course, whereas … there was a lot of people there who had had greater opportunities than me already.

Sinead also felt different because her economic circumstances meant that she had to take a full-time job as barista. She believed that none of her fellow students were employed in this manner, but in fact Jennifer held a full-time job at a supermarket as a checkout assistant. Irrespective of the accuracy of Sinead's observations they clearly demonstrate how a perception of social difference could scupper the development of fellow-feeling.

While van Gennep argued that all rites of passage consisted of a trio of stages he also felt that "in specific instances these three types are not always equally important or equally elaborated" (van Gennep, 1960, p. 11). In the case of the foundation year programme the rite of reincorporation that is meant to mark participants completion of the programme and integration into the student population seemed to fit this description. Beyond an end of term dinner, that one interview characterised as unmemorable, ending the foundation year did not result in a formal celebration of any sort. Instead upon completing the programme one was merely notified of having passed. Passing the programme required sitting exams and completion of coursework but none of my interviewees had been particularly worried as to the results of these. Indeed, Jennifer declared "I don't think anybody… Like literally I don't think anybody actually failed". She went on to say that "you only need 40% and on the foundation year I think everybody did get 40%".

The Foundation Year Programme as a Rite of Institution

> You need to put the effort in otherwise you're going to get to this year and you're going to have a massive scare of what you've got to do because the jump is crazy

Jennifer's statement was the corollary of her observation about the likelihood of failure in the foundation year. Her remark highlights what she perceives as the indeterminate nature of the foundation year programme's denouement. In Jennifer's estimation you could only measure its success as a rite by events that occurred long after it had formally concluded. This is in direct contrast to Llewellyn's hope that on completion participants would simply assimilate. These opposed positions lead me to consider the results of this new rite of passage.

If, as Bourdieu has argued, the purpose of a rite such as this is that is it acts to "increase in a durable way the value of their bearer by increasing the extent and the intensity of the belief in their value" then it is right to examine whether the foundation year programme as a rite possesses efficacy (Bourdieu, 2009, p. 119). Indeed, it is crucially important because not all credentials intended for the same purpose are perceived in the same light. Didier Fassin and Sarah Mazouz provide a wonderful example of this in their study of the rites of passage associated with citizenship naturalization in France - a process that they argue acts to further distinguish between those born citizens and those who become citizens (Fassin & Mazouz, 2009). Declan relayed a story to me that I feel effectively illustrates how such distinctions might be made in relation to educational qualifications in England. I had questioned him about his choice of A-Levels and he had mentioned the BTEC.[ix] As all I knew of the qualification was that it could be used to gain entry to the foundation year programme, I asked him about it which prompted the following response:

> People tend to take the mick out of BTECs a bit, so there's that kind of stigma . . . I'd prefer to have an A-Level or a GCSE than a BTEC because . . . it's more valuable . . . as a qualification. . .. people used to say . . . if you've got a really rubbish version of something else… So, say like you like Sprite and there's a 7UP, they'll say the 7UP is the BTEC version of Sprite

Declan's awareness of the lack of legitimacy that some qualifications possessed, such as the BTEC, was consequential for his attitude towards the foundation year programme. When his housemates doubted its efficacy because of how little work he had to do, he could only accept, he claimed, that this was karmically justified banter since he himself had rubbished the BTEC in this way. That his housemates took his seemingly lackadaisical manner as an indicator that he was not on a "proper course" further indicates some of the issues with the foundation year programme's legitimacy. For powerful categorical judgements like efficacious qualifications, ascription is autonomous from achievement (Bourdieu, 2009, p. 124). This can be well exemplified with reference to the BTEC. Possessing a BTEC suggested that one was heading for a life of manual labour, which in England, irrespective of one's income, is frequently stigmatised by members of the middle-class because of its association with toil, perspiration, and pollutants. As a result, the holder of a BTEC, whatever of their achievements, would be regarded by some, to use Mary Douglas' famous phrase, as "matter out of place" at a university until they possessed some other qualifications which legitimated them as possessing mental skills rather physical ones (Douglas, 2003, p. 36).

If qualifications gained through a rite of passage or institution, such as an A-Level, create a feedback loop of sorts acting to legitimise the person, the rite, and the institution, it is worth considering what happens when an alternative emerges. Declan's case might suggest that a new, rival qualification for university attendance-the foundation year programme- may be regarded as illegitimate or in his own words possess a stigma. Douglas illustrates the potential consequences of this in 'Natural Symbols' when she discusses the conflict between the 'bog Irish' and the Catholic hierarchy over the former's upholding of the Friday Fast – the abstention from the consumption of all animals save fish on Fridays (Douglas, 2004, p. 4). The latter regarded the former's persistence and their attitude as almost heretical.

However, conflict and stigmatisation are not the only plausible developments when one introduces a new rite. Geof Bowker and Susan Leigh Star's work on standardisation and classification suggests that when one creates a new qualification, one can also create the possibility of the advancement of new perspectives that challenge established views (Bowker & Star, 1999, p. 5). In the case of the foundation year programme some participants celebrated its valorisation of skills unacknowledged by the A-Level. Graham, a twenty-two-year-old white European male from Hertfordshire who had been part of the second cohort, was overwhelmingly positive. He described the programme as "incredible" and expressed thanks that the university had allowed him and his fellow participants a means to demonstrate their abilities; specifically, interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence. He felt that high-achieving students with several A stars grades often lacked such abilities. Following this line of reasoning he argued that the skills celebrated by the foundation year were vital to success in university and on the job market. Despite leaving the programme, Sinead expressed similar views. She observed that initially, during the liminal period, she had not been able to see the value in the foundation year programme but now having left she realised that it had allowed her to identify skills from her background not assessed by A-Levels. Furthermore, it had also helped her realise that A-Levels were not necessarily the best predictor of the ability to succeed at university. Therefore, for students like these, the emergence of the foundation year programme served to delegitimise the A-Level on some level while providing an explanation for why they were not matter out of place, but a legitimate part of an orderly system. This delegitimation is a product of the knowledge, acquired during the liminal phase of the foundation year, that A-Levels were not necessarily doing what they were said to do. Don Handelman noted in his discussion of Turner's work on rites of passage, that knowledge gained during a rite can irrevocably alter a society by challenging its most sacred cows (Handelman, 1993). I would suggest that while no such transformation of society occurs here the delegitimation of A-Levels as a rite of passage is of profound importance for my informants. It leads to some of them embracing their identity as 'diverse' students which in turn prevents the assimilation that Llewellyn spoke of.

However, the possibility of a smooth assimilation into the university's student body was not just stymied by the fact that some students, like Graham and Sinead, proudly acclaimed the foundation year programme as an alternative rite for underrepresented peoples, while observing that the A-Levels were not as efficacious as they were made out to be. Foundation year participants also had encountered some students, who had not participated in it, yet stigmatised the programme. Liz, a twenty-one-year-old working-class Black British woman from Islington and member of the first cohort who was proud of having gone through the foundation year, recounted movingly how early in her university career there was "one silly incident" where another student had characterised the programme as making life easy for her. The student contrasted this perceived ease with a characterisation of themselves as having "had to work for this". Liz rebutted this claim observing that the accuser did not "know her story". However, one of the functions of qualifications is that they serve to legitimate

"strategies of condescension" - that is they can transgress the boundaries of credibility as this accuser did by making an illogical argument in order to protect the legitimacy of their position (Bourdieu, 2009, p. 124). Expressed differently the accuser did not need to know Liz's story to accuse her all he needed to know was what he thought of her credentials. If we attend to the accuser's language we can see that the reasoning put forth in the attack centres on a particular ethical framing akin to that described by Max Weber in his characterisation of early Protestant cultures belief in work as a calling (Weber, 2002). Specifically, what is intimated here is that A-Levels index the work that a person has done. The results attained are ascribed directly to one's labour. While A-Levels have been an important rite of passage for those intending to attend university since they replaced the Higher School Certificate in 1951 this connection to personal worth emerged in the 1960s. It occurred at a time when England's economy was beginning to change due in part to increasing global competition, the ongoing demise of the British Empire, and a lack of innovation. As a consequence of these shifts where previously the middle-classes had had scant regard for scholastic achievements because they were able to personally intervene in the local economy and place their children in positions that allowed for their social reproduction now as the economy entered a period of stagnation and decline they came to regard grammar schools and the qualifications they offered as "passports to a new world of employment" (Lacey, 1982, p. 171). The grammar schools and their qualifications legitimated themselves through

> The familiar slogans about 'equality of opportunity', education according to 'age, ability and aptitude', or the catchy notion that merit =IQ+effort, all encapsulate the idea that the education system rewards those individuals who (a) have ability and (b) work hard to develop it. (Lacey, 1982, p. 174)

This was the history of the discourse that Liz's critic employed. Liz's position that people who denigrated the foundation year programme in such a way were ignorant of how poverty affected teaching standards and that the significance of impoverished instruction was that hard work did not always result in success mirrored many of Colin Lacey's - a pioneering anthropologist of education in England - criticisms of the grammar schools and their qualifications. However, the contemporary situation is worse than even Lacey might have imagined for, as Gillian Evans observes, "by the age of 2 children whose mothers are well educated are likely to be doing better in pre-school learning tasks than their peers whose mothers are relatively uneducated" (Evans, 2007, p. 4). It is thus not just that schools are a middle-class space, but that the very forms of formalised learning that they encourage and that are assessed by A-Levels overwhelmingly favour the ways that the middle-classes educate their infants. Hence, any claims that A-Levels sans context are an objective, merit-based assessment of a person's worthiness for attending a university do not warrant consideration.

While I have explained why critics like the one Liz faced would employ a discourse of merit in seeking to delegitimize their achievements and the foundation year this does not explain their concerns about the foundation year as an inappropriate rite of passage. In understanding what provoked this attack I have found Douglas' ideas about purity most helpful. Specifically, her observation that purity discourses stem from the necessity of making sense of anomalies (Douglas, 2003, p. 39). Firstly, though, an admission; throughout this article I have acted as if the A-Levels and the foundation year programme were the only rites of passage that allow 'home' students to attend university when this is far from the case. In England alone there is the International Baccalaureate (IB), which some independent school heads often tout as superior to the A-Levels. However, the holders of these credentials do not seem to attract the same level of opprobrium that Liz faced. I believe that at its root the issue with the foundation year was that in order to participate in this rite one already had to have taken the A-Levels and achieved results that would not allow one to attend the university. It was failure at this supposedly meritocratic rite that tainted you in the eyes of people like Liz's critic. The foundation year was therefore not only a rite to allow one access to the university but to satisfy such critics it would have to purify people perceived as tainted by failure. However, on that score, it was not entirely successful at legitimating participants. Instead, its critics ordered their universe and buttressed the legitimacy of their qualifications by marking the rite as inferior and its participants as 'diverse'. To do otherwise would be to acknowledge that the A-Levels, the IB, and other such forms of assessment were not meritocratic, but had an inherent middle-class bias and by extension call their own ontological assumptions into question.

Conclusion

Several years ago, while discussing whether anthropology was in danger of being consigned to irrelevance, Ulf Hannerz argued that the discipline should attend to questions of diversity. Doing so, he contended, meant rejecting the fairly strong contemporary consensus that diversity did not require scrutinising because it was "self-evidently good and valuable" (Hannerz, 2010). Hannerz is not alone in making this observation; other scholars

have also called for an attentiveness to how difference is both produced and categorised (Baez, 2004; Subramaniam, 2014). In this article I have sought to answer this call by describing how diversity is being enacted at an English university within the nation's former industrial heartland.

I have examined the foundation year programme - a transition rite implemented with the goal of recruiting students from 'under-represented' or 'diverse' backgrounds. My focus has been on this rite's efficacy and what it reveals about what is considered as meritorious by English university students. It seems clear that despite its founder's intentions the programme does not necessarily operate as planned. This occurs because, as all rites do, it marks its participants. It sets them apart not just from those who have yet to undergo the rite or from those in their communities who have never attended or never will attend university, but from those at their university who were not admitted through the programme. In effect it ensures that they can never just be students but will always be 'diverse' students. This distinction is perceived not just by the programme's participants some of whom champion the rite as recognizing qualities that are undervalued by the A-Levels, but by critics who regard the rite as worthless because in taking social context into account it does not assess people in the same purportedly objective fashion as A-Levels do.

That the programme transforms its participants into university students, albeit 'diverse' ones, is perceived by some to threaten the credibility of a dominant civic rite of passage in England - the A-Levels. This should cause anthropologists to enquire into the various reasons that this dominant rite persists. The lack of attentiveness by anthropologists of England to this rite and university education more broadly is perhaps unsurprising given what Patrick Alexander refers to as anthropologists "historical lack of attention" to the broader field of the English education system (Alexander, 2020, p. 22). However, given the increasingly pivotal role played by universities in English life, I would argue this cannot be allowed to continue. If anthropologists are to understand the perpetuation of socio-economic inequality in England, they must no longer avert their gaze, but instead turn their well-honed senses on their own institutions.

Notes

[i] As education is a devolved competence any consideration of matters in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland is beyond the scope of this paper.

[ii] 'Home' is a term of art that refers to those students qualifying for the right to pay university tuition fees at a lower rate than those categorised as 'international'. In this bureaucratic subculture 'homes' synonyms are 'domestic', and 'fee regulated' while 'international' is 'foreign'. One's status as a 'home' student is determined not by nationality or citizenship but is instead based upon where one was 'ordinarily resident' for a period of three years prior to attending the university. 'Ordinary residency' as a term came to take on increasing significance in the United Kingdom in the 19th century, but its modern origins are to be found in case law surrounding taxation *(Shah, R (on the application of) v Barnet London Borough Council* [1982] UKHL 14, 1982). The legal definition employed is akin to Mary Douglas' description of the home as "a pattern of regular doings" (Douglas, 1991, p. 287). At the time of this research the UK's membership of the EEA meant that all citizens of EEA signatories could also qualify for 'home' student status provided they were ordinarily resident in any EEA state. My use of scare-quotes in relation to the terms 'home' and 'international' thus serves to indicate how these bureaucratic terms depart from mundane usages of them.

[iii] To protect participants' privacy, pseudonyms are used throughout the paper and the university is unnamed.

[iv] The initiative is aimed at 'home' students and it is their 'diversity' that is monitored by the various education sector watchdogs not that of 'international' students.

[v] New Public Management refers to the practice, which began in the 1980s, of employing private sector management techniques and values in the administration of the public sector.

[vi] UCAS is the NGO responsible for processing all application materials for all English universities.

[vii] As evidence of this practice in English universities one has only to consider the long-standing usage by Oxford, England's oldest university, of the terms rustication, sent down, and come up. Rustication originating from the Latin, for countryside, *rus* is synonymous with leaving in the form of banishment, or being sent down, and implies distance between the university and student's place of origin. At one point, as the author Vera Chapman describes, being sent down was ritualised with "mock funeral processions" accompanied by hansom cabs (Chapman, 1996). Conversely coming up entails departing the *rus* to matriculate at these institutions. This pattern is, however, far from limited to universities as Judith Okely observes in 'Privileged, Schooled and Finished: Boarding Education for Girls', her auto-ethnography of a public school in the 1950s, separation was considered central to the production of certain forms of Englishness at boarding schools (Okely, 1996).

[viii] Victor Turner briefly explores the connection between Watson's spiralism and the conclusion of a rite of passage in the essay '"Liminal" to "Liminoid", in Play, Flow and Ritual' where he argues that the former might be likened to the practice of virilocal residency amongst the Nayakusa or Ndembu (V. Turner, 1974).

[ix] The Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualifications originates from the second Wilson ministry (1974-1976) when the Labour government felt that there was a need to provide vocational qualifications below the level of a degree at FE colleges, HE colleges and Polytechnics, and created the Business Education Council in response.

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