



**Soft openings: The psycho-technological expertise of third sector curriculum reform**

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## Soft openings: The psycho-technological expertise of third sector curriculum reform

Since the late 1990s the “third sector” has become active in generating new curriculum programmes in England. Based on tracing third sector participation in public education during the New Labour years, the article explores a documentary archive of third sector curriculum texts and argues that the programmes, strategies and techniques of the third sector have sought to pursue a new form of governmentality. The type of governmentality pursued by the third sector takes form as a “soft” style of curriculum reform derived from assembling together cybernetic and psychological forms of expertise, interactionist and constructivist pedagogies, and an emerging “psycho-technology” of subjectivity. The third sector fabricates reform proposals for a curriculum of the future in which governance is done by cross-sectoral networking, epistemological categories are blurred, and student subjectivities are made up to be malleable, soft-skilled and psychologically self-shaping. The article examines how third sector texts have assembled this new psycho-technological expertise of curriculum reform through both cybernetic and psychological styles of thinking.

**Keywords:** curriculum reform, curriculum theory, third sector, governmentality, pedagogic identity

### Introduction

This article provides an initial tracing of third sector participation in public education and its proposals for curriculum reform during the New Labour years (1997-2010) in England. In using the term third sector I am referring to a particular New Labour policy construct which advocated the hybridisation of political power and other non-political forms of authority, and especially, as one Cabinet Office report (Maguire 2010) articulated it, the “role of third sector innovation” in “education and learning services.” Even within education alone, however, the third

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2  
3 sector is certainly not a homogeneous sector and it should be noted that the term  
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5 “third sector” was formally dropped by the incoming Coalition government in 2010  
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7  
8 to be replaced by newer policy constructs such as the “Big Society” and by an official  
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10 government Office for Civil Society, part of the Cabinet Office. Rather than merely a  
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12 narrow sector mediating between state and markets, however, the third sector, and  
13  
14 more latterly the Coalition's civil society, embody the invention of an experimental  
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16 form of post-bureaucratic politics in which social enterprises, philanthropies,  
17  
18 communities, and even individuals themselves (as active citizens) are increasingly  
19  
20 encouraged to take responsibility for innovation in public services. The article traces  
21  
22 the role of “third sector innovation” in proposing and promoting curriculum  
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24 reforms, and argues that the heterogeneous programmes, strategies and techniques  
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26 of the third sector constitute “the pursuit of a type of governmentality” pegged to a  
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28 rationality of self-regulating individuals (Foucault 2008, 313).  
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38 As Ball (2012, 15) has recently claimed, “the third sector can be seen as a new  
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40 governmentality,” encompassing subjectivity, institutional practices, economy and  
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42 government, which has been realised and embedded in “the 'enterprising-up' of  
43  
44 public organisations, and the work of charities and voluntary organisations,” and in  
45  
46 “the growth of 'social enterprise' solutions.” The new governmentality of the third  
47  
48 sector is constituted by small changes and incremental reforms which work together  
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50 on systems, organisations and individuals to produce new institutions, practices and  
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52 subjectivities. As a result, the organisation and the individual are “treated in exactly  
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3 the same way” and “enabled to think about themselves differently,” with the “self-  
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6 managing individual” aligned with “the autonomous organisation” (Ball 2012, 31).  
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8 The third sector curriculum projects on which I focus in this article are parts of this  
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10 new governmentality—they generate new institutional practices in terms of  
11  
12 decentred curriculum delivery and autonomous governance, and produce new  
13  
14 subjectivities in the form of soft and malleable self-managing pedagogic identities.  
15  
16 Taken together, these practices and subjectivities constitute the soft type of  
17  
18 governmentality pursued by the third sector, which is arguably now being further  
19  
20 rolled out in the Coalition's Big Society programme. All of this is constituted in a  
21  
22 discourse that Thrift (2005, pp. 33-34) describes as “soft capitalism,” characterized by  
23  
24 complexity, experiential learning, flexibility, networking, by its caring and sharing  
25  
26 ethos, its “niceness,” its responsibility and its values, and by its generation of a new  
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28 subjectivity defined as a self-realizing, self-fulfilling and self-regulating individual  
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30 actor.  
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#### 44 **Cybernetics and psychology**

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46 The soft governmentality pursued by the third sector works through a style of  
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48 thinking, or a rationality, that is both cybernetic and psychological. As a “cybernetic  
49  
50 style of thought” that saturates contemporary thinking, it mobilises a panoply of  
51  
52 technological metaphors, of networks, complexity, connectivity, flexibility,  
53  
54 multiplicity, and adaptability (Osborne & Rose 1999, 750; Thrift 2005). In a  
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3 cybernetics of the school, concepts and metaphors such as networks and flexibility  
4  
5 are designed into the institutions and practices of pedagogy, carrying with them  
6  
7 affordances which catalyse and foreclose particular actions, experiences and  
8  
9 conduct, and which shape particular student subject positions and pedagogic  
10  
11 identities (Monahan 2005). Correlatively, a psychological style of thinking deploys  
12  
13 new ways of conceiving student subjectivities in terms of their competence, well-  
14  
15 being, and soft skills. As Foucauldian studies have shown, the discourse and  
16  
17 techniques of “psy” in education have a long and complex genealogy, from early  
18  
19 modern disciplinary techniques which sought to “correct” children's minds and  
20  
21 bodies through “pedagogical machinery,” to a “moral orthopaedics” which  
22  
23 advocated more child-centred and participatory pedagogies and was largely  
24  
25 associated with educational psychology and the “gaze of the psychologist” in the  
26  
27 classroom (Deacon 2006; Rose 1999a). Psychological expertise works upon the  
28  
29 “calculable future potential of the young” and establishes socially desirable modes of  
30  
31 conduct and forms of knowledge by “proactively intervening in their future  
32  
33 behaviour” (Deacon 2006, 180) 184). This proactive intervention is especially  
34  
35 important since schools have been repositioned by the “new demands for active,  
36  
37 multi-skilled and self-regulated citizens” in a global economy (Deacon 2006, 184).  
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39 That is to say, as Rose (1996) argues, that new ideas of identity, which address,  
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41 represent and act upon individuals in terms of their own autonomous “projects of  
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43 identity,” psychological interiority, and self-actualisation, have been “assembled”  
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45 through psy knowledges and authorities working within schools. As such,  
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3 psychological expertise has become increasingly influential in curriculum reform, its  
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5 rise paralleled by the decline of more critically- and politically-oriented curriculum  
6  
7 theory, so that the content knowledge contained in the curriculum is “never just  
8  
9 that” but “embodies learning how to see, think, act and feel” according to standards  
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11 generated by “psychological 'eyes'” (Popkewitz 2012, 177).  
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17 The third sector acts as a relay between these cybernetic and psychological  
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19 ways of thinking, combining them as a psycho-technological expertise of curriculum  
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21 reform which has as its aim the invention of new pedagogic institutions, new  
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23 pedagogic practices, and the inculcation of pedagogic identities: subjects to be made  
24  
25 up in terms of their own autonomous and self-actualising projects of identity. I use  
26  
27 the term “psycho-technology” in two related senses. First, to refer to the connection  
28  
29 of psychological and technological metaphors deployed by the third sector. And  
30  
31 second, to refer to the ways in which third sector texts promote “innovative”  
32  
33 pedagogic practices, techniques, processes and environments which seek to act  
34  
35 technically upon the psychology and competence of students. As Rose (1999b, 52-54)  
36  
37 has argued, a “technology of schooling” is a hybrid and heterogeneous assemblage  
38  
39 of a diversity of objects and relations, including pedagogic knowledges and  
40  
41 vocabularies, books, texts and curricular guidance, moral aspirations, environments  
42  
43 of a certain design, and myriad techniques and exercises, all assembled together in  
44  
45 order to act upon the conduct and capacities of students in the hope of bringing  
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47 about certain desired effects. A psycho-technology of schooling, then, is likewise  
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3 assembled as a variety of means and techniques for acting upon the psychological  
4 capacities of the student. The new psycho-technology of schooling generated by the  
5 expertise of the third sector promotes student subjectivities characterized by their  
6 flexibility, adaptability, malleability, but most of all by their active and autonomous  
7 capacity to be self-shaping and self-managing. The psycho-technological subject  
8 assembled and promoted by the third sector is both psychologically and  
9 technologically competent, “augmented” within a new type of governmentality with  
10 the psychological well-being and self-enterprising qualities required to address the  
11 “problem of innovation,” as Foucault argued (2008, 231-32).  
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28 In order to show how the pursuit of this type of governmentality has been  
29 assembled by the third sector, I examine a documentary archive of third sector  
30 curriculum texts, including curriculum guides, websites, project reports, and articles  
31 by key third sector actors and advocates. These texts act as reform proposals  
32 embodying visions and objectives for the curriculum of the future. In these texts, the  
33 curriculum is reinscribed in terms of devolved soft governance and soft  
34 epistemology, within which students are to be remade as soft subjects. These are  
35 discursively continuous with the “soft capitalism” of complexity, experiential  
36 learning, flexibility, niceness and networking, in which subjects are made up as self-  
37 fulfilling and self-realizing (Thrift 2005, 34). To be clear, these forms of soft  
38 governance, soft epistemology and soft subjectivity, as proposed and promoted by  
39 the third sector, are interdependent pieces of a new way – or perhaps a third way –  
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3 of thinking about reforming the curriculum, rather than as a causal chain of actual  
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5 events. Drawing on a way of asking questions derived from studies of  
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8 governmentality (e.g. Rose 1999a; 1999b; Dean 2010), the research asks what the  
9  
10 participating third sector organisations wanted to happen to the curriculum, to  
11  
12 address what problems, in pursuit of what objectives, and through what strategies,  
13  
14 techniques and programmes of intervention. The third sector curriculum projects I  
15  
16 describe are by no means homogeneous, and nor are they simple realizations of a  
17  
18 dominant neoliberal agenda or other hegemonic attempts to enframe and enclose the  
19  
20 future of education. Rather, through shared and eclectic vocabularies, theories,  
21  
22 concepts, explanations and ways of thinking that traverse and bisect sectoral,  
23  
24 disciplinary and ideological boundaries, they build consensus and legitimacy  
25  
26 around the construction of particular problems to which they also offer solutions.  
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28  
29 The extent to which these discourses actually produce the practices they describe is a  
30  
31 matter for further empirical research. Here the focus is rather on the problems and  
32  
33 objectives they construct and the curricular solutions they propose and promote—  
34  
35 the pursuit of a type of governmentality pegged to a rationality of psychological  
36  
37 well-being and cybernetic connectivity, within which pedagogic institutions,  
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39 pedagogic practices, and pedagogic identities are treated as homologous: soft, open,  
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41 self-shaping and self-organising.  
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## 52 53 54 55 56 57 **The research** 58 59 60



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3 The article is based on tracing the participation of the third sector in public  
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5 education and reports on analysis of a documentary archive produced by third  
6  
7 sector organisations. The research treats third sector texts on the curriculum and  
8  
9 other educational reform matters as documentary constructions of reality. I adopt  
10  
11 tools and methods of a policy discourse and policy network approach to the  
12  
13 contemporary study of education reform which emphasises how new educational  
14  
15 ideas are created cumulatively from an eclectic selection of fragments, slogans, and  
16  
17 recitations of language and concepts that are reiterated and authorised by actors  
18  
19 speaking within public education, although they do not necessarily produce a clear  
20  
21 and coherent vision of the future but a complex, messy, and sometimes contradictory  
22  
23 set of alternatives and dilemmas (Ball 2007; 2012). The analysis is based on bringing  
24  
25 together a large number of third sector texts including reports, manifestos,  
26  
27 curriculum guidance, pamphlets, articles, and personal essays, alongside website  
28  
29 texts and resources such as specific project websites, infographics, diagrams, charts  
30  
31 and tables, interactive devices and other multimedia. It shows how these texts or  
32  
33 inscriptions cluster and juxtapose a heterogeneous array of ideas, concepts, theories,  
34  
35 and their historical and political networks of connections into a new conceptual  
36  
37 vocabulary and a set of practical possibilities for acting upon the curriculum  
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39 (Fenwick & Edwards 2010). As inscriptions they make the messy future of the  
40  
41 curriculum seemingly presentable and representable as “material techniques of  
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43 thought” which objectify, stabilise and preserve “otherwise ephemeral and subjective  
44  
45 visions” (Rose 1999b, 36-37).  
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3 Moreover, the third sector texts articulate at a very minor level the invention  
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5 of a new technology of schooling—an ensemble of theories, techniques, designs,  
6  
7 relations and mechanisms—generated through delicate affiliations and associations  
8  
9 between a diverse network of bit-part players, actors and agencies (Rose 1999b).  
10  
11 Such innovations are not part of the more elevated top-level curriculum reforms of  
12  
13 government departments but the outcome of a variety of non-political  
14  
15 organisations, experts and authorities from outside the formal organs of government  
16  
17 that are now involved in relaying and translating governmental educational  
18  
19 objectives “at a distance” into a diversity of local interventions. My purpose is not to  
20  
21 claim absolute coherence across a quite large and fuzzy-edged sample of texts (nor  
22  
23 to rush either to judgement or to its defence), but to identify and examine the key  
24  
25 concepts, problematisations and specifications for practical reforms it promotes, and  
26  
27 to understand the expertise and authority of the network of third sector  
28  
29 organisations mobilising it.  
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41 In order to place some limits on what data to present in the article, I  
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43 concentrate on three types of third sector text. The first type consists of specific  
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45 curriculum programme materials. I examine documents, website materials, guidance  
46  
47 and reports from the RSA's Opening Minds project, from the Paul Hamlyn  
48  
49 Foundation's Learning Futures programme, and from Futurelab's Enquiring Minds  
50  
51 initiative. The second type consists of synthetic reviews, and includes a report on  
52  
53 *Developing and accrediting personal skills and competence* produced by Futurelab and  
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3 commissioned by the QCA; a review of programmes promoting *Wider skills for*  
4  
5 *learning* produced by the Centre for Real-World Learning and NESTA; and a report  
6  
7 on programmes promoting wellbeing entitled *The state of happiness* produced by the  
8  
9 Young Foundation. The third type consists of reform advocacy—booklets and  
10  
11 articles setting forth new reformatory visions for the future of education. I make no  
12  
13 claims that these texts enframe and foreclose the huge variety of third sector  
14  
15 activities. But they do illustrate something of an emerging style of thinking  
16  
17 associated with the third sector, and allow us to explore how, as a loose network, it  
18  
19 has sought to rework the school curriculum through a psycho-technological  
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21 expertise of curriculum reform, and to pursue a new type of governmentality  
22  
23 constituted by new forms of soft governance, new soft curricular epistemologies, and  
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25 new soft student subjectivities.  
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### 39 **Assembling third sector participation in public education**

#### 40 *Local centres and crossover expertise*

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42 The participation of the third sector in the curriculum is no transhistorical accident.  
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44 The third sector has been assembled in contemporary political strategies as the work  
45  
46 of political centres of government has been devolved into a multitude of authorities  
47  
48 and “local centres of power-knowledge” (Foucault 1990, 98). Instead of  
49  
50 bureaucratically organised government acting alone, the powers of the state are now  
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52 increasingly devolved and refracted through a plurality of other formally  
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3 autonomous bodies and a heterogeneous array of non-political organisations and  
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5 authorities (Miller & Rose 2008). These changes are registered in the linguistic  
6  
7 movement from government to governance. As recently anatomised by Ball (2007;  
8  
9 2012), governance is understood to catalyse all sectors, public, private and voluntary,  
10  
11 as well as the expertise of new cross-sectoral organisations, into partnerships to solve  
12  
13 the problems of the polycentric state.  
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20 At the same time these developments have also involved the processes by  
21  
22 which individual actors have come to construe their own “responsibilised”  
23  
24 autonomy, interests, problems and aspirations for the future as intrinsically linked  
25  
26 with those of authorities (Rose 1999a; 1999b; Miller & Rose 2008). Here the job of  
27  
28 intermediary “experts” and a proliferation of independent authorities has been  
29  
30 particularly important. Experts act as relays between politics and person, forming  
31  
32 and managing linkages between “questions of government, authority and politics,  
33  
34 and questions of identity, self and person” (Dean 2010, 20). The ways in which  
35  
36 individuals think and act, rather than being imputed directly by government, draw  
37  
38 upon a multitude of authorities and different forms of expertise, each with its own  
39  
40 associations, vocabulary, theories, and ideas, narratives and performers. The delicate  
41  
42 affiliations forged between the aspirations and anxieties of individuals and the  
43  
44 objectives of government, as channelled through a heterogeneous “ensemble”  
45  
46 formed by a multitude of institutions, calculations and programmes, was what  
47  
48 Foucault named as governmentality (Foucault 2007, 108). It is into this complex of  
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3 relations between governance, expertise and identities—the field of  
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5 governmentality—that third sector organisations have been deployed.  
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9 In England specifically (less so in post-devolution Scotland, Wales and  
10 Northern Ireland) the third sector was assembled as part of New Labour's "third  
11 way" reconciliation of central governing bodies and commercial markets. Although  
12 it remains theoretically fuzzy and institutionally heterogeneous, it has since the late  
13 1990s moved considerably from the margins to the mainstream in economic, political  
14 and social life (Haugh & Kitson 2007, with many of the approaches it championed  
15 being continued in the Coalition's Big Society agenda. Propelled by the intellectually  
16 promiscuous and self-consciously iconoclastic "shock tactics" of New Labour think-  
17 tanks like Demos (Mulgan 2006, 151-52), and peopled by the expertise of  
18 "intellectual workers" who could catalyze, broker and propel its practical,  
19 marketable and "vehicular" ideas (McLennan 2004; Osborne 2004), the  
20 "decentralised system" of the third sector has been constructed as a "laboratory for  
21 new ideas" in a world of perpetual innovation and creativity (Mulgan 2007).  
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44 Yet beyond its formal political and organisational constitution, the third sector  
45 has also, in Rose's (1999b, 189) terms, been "made up" as a space of "thought and  
46 action." The "community of the third sector" is a "fertile ground for  
47 experimentation" and a "moral field" of *emotional relationships* through which  
48 *individual identities* are constructed through their bonds to *micro-cultures* of values  
49 and meanings" (171-172, *original emphases*). A sector has been brought into existence  
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3 that actively constructs certain kinds of problems to be acted upon. It intervenes in  
4  
5 such problematisations by deploying techniques and programmes which encourage  
6  
7 particular kinds of ways of thinking, seeing and acting; which promote relations and  
8  
9 allegiance to specific values, cultures and communities; and which shape and mould  
10  
11 particular “active practices of self-management and identity construction” (176).  
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15  
16 These techniques and practices seek to install norms and values of individual  
17  
18 behaviour and self-conduct via the expertise of more “outsiders” and varied  
19  
20 “professionals” in the processes of governing education at a distance (Pykett 2007).  
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#### 24 25 *Curriculum entrepreneurs* 26

27  
28 The involvement of third sector participants in public education has taken shape  
29  
30 against increasingly centralised political control, standardisation and performance  
31  
32 criteria in England. Yet at the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, under New  
33  
34 Labour the curriculum became the site for a resuscitated (though contested) culture  
35  
36 of experimentation characterised for Young (2008, 86) by a “softening” and an  
37  
38 “opening up” of the curriculum through: (i) the crossing of disciplinary boundaries;  
39  
40  
41 (ii) the incorporation of everyday knowledge into the curriculum; and (iii) the  
42  
43 involvement of non-specialists in curriculum design. Developments such as  
44  
45 Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, and the “futures” agenda of “personal,  
46  
47 learning and thinking skills” advocated by the Qualifications and Curriculum  
48  
49 Authority in England are examples of a reformatory agenda that appears to embody  
50  
51 a theoretically agnostic mix of both centralisation and devolution, as characterised  
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3 by top-down prescription of centrally defined standards and bottom-up flexibility in  
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6 practice (Harris & Burn 2011; Priestley 2011; Priestley & Humes 2010). Young (1998,  
7  
8 78) anticipated much of this political, historical and theoretical confusion about the  
9  
10 “curriculum of the future,” which he understood to be an “open system”  
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12  
13 characterised by connectivity, hybridity, genericism, and flexibility.  
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16  
17 The third sector has been highly active in these softening and opening up  
18  
19 processes. Various third sector organisations have actively sought to problematise  
20  
21 the school curriculum, and to intervene in its future development through the  
22  
23 propellant ideas of a new kind of expertise and authority. Rather than the “ivory  
24  
25 tower” expertise of curriculum scholars or the “bureaucratic” expertise of  
26  
27 curriculum developers and planners within the department of education or one of its  
28  
29 delivery agencies, the third sector has set about constructing a series of reform  
30  
31 prototypes for a curriculum of the future through the heterogeneous governance of a  
32  
33 loose and mobile network of curriculum entrepreneurs, brokers, fixers, catalysts,  
34  
35 and innovators from think-tanks, non-profit organisations, charities, and the  
36  
37 philanthropic outgrowths of corporations (Morgan 2011; Williamson 2012). The  
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39 Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA), the National Endowment  
40  
41 for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA), the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Demos,  
42  
43 the Institute of Public Policy Reform (IPPR), the Innovation Unit, Futurelab, and  
44  
45 myriad others, have all sought to position the curriculum as a problem to which they  
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47 each are able to offer their expert solutions and practical interventions. It is this loose  
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3 and mobile network of organisations I sketch and describe. Their interventions are  
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6 by no means all equivalent or homogeneous—even within education alone the third  
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9 sector is not a homogeneous sector—but they are all networked together through  
10  
11 interorganisational and cross-sectoral relationships, partnerships and strategic  
12  
13 alliances, and moreover, as I shall show, they inscribe their programmes through  
14  
15 shared vocabularies, theoretical synergies, and cross-referenced arguments and  
16  
17  
18 explanations.  
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21  
22 The third sector has participated in attempts to reshape the ways the school  
23  
24 curriculum may be understood and thus enacted, which it has done by seeking to  
25  
26 reposition its political centres of calculation, multiply and pluralise its centres of  
27  
28 authority and expertise, and diversify the local centres of its interpretation and  
29  
30 enactment. It has sought to reform pedagogic institutions through soft governance,  
31  
32 and to reform pedagogic practices through soft curricular epistemologies. At its most  
33  
34 visceral, the soft style of thinking articulated by the third sector may be materialising  
35  
36 in the ways learners see, think and act in schools, that is, by “fabricating” or “making  
37  
38 up” new pedagogic identities so as to achieve certain future aspirations and  
39  
40 objectives (Popkewitz 2008). The rest of this article attempts to grasp some of the  
41  
42 ways in which third sector curriculum texts work to generate and promote (if not  
43  
44 always quite to enact) a new soft style of governance, soft curricular epistemologies,  
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46 and the soft subjectivities which constitute this new governmentality.  
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### Soft governance

The third sector constitutes itself as a self-consciously experimental site wherein non-educationalist experts are encouraged to participate in the design and promotion of new curricula. The prototype curriculum programmes of the third sector are paradigmatic of soft governance which is achieved through complex negotiations and exchanges between public, private, intermediary and crossover actors, groups, and organisations. The third sector seeks to get things done through “networks” and other “open source” organisational models derived from the web (e.g. McCarthy, Miller & Skidmore 2004; Mulgan & Steinberg 2005), and is constituted by cross-sectoral and interorganisational policy networks which hybridise political power and other non-political forms of authority (Williamson 2012). Within the highly “network-conscious” third sector (Osborne 2004), networks “constitute a new form of governance” which brings new voices, sources of authority and discourses into policy thinking and blurs the “boundaries between state, economy and civil society” (Ball 2012, 9).

Opening Minds, Learning Futures and Enquiring Minds are constitutive of third sector network governance strategies. All three are structurally constituted by nongovernmental organisations with direct governmental, quasi-governmental and commercial links. Opening Minds, for example, is operated by the RSA, whose Chief Executive Matthew Taylor is a former advisor to Tony Blair. Learning Futures is cosponsored by the Innovation Unit, which itself originated within the New Labour

1  
2  
3 government department for education and has subsequently worked extensively  
4  
5 through partnership with commercial and voluntary organisations. And Enquiring  
6  
7 Minds was established by Futurelab, which again received core funding from the  
8  
9 department and carried out a number of key contracting services for its associated  
10  
11 quangos. In addition, Enquiring Minds received all of its direct funding from  
12  
13 Microsoft Partners in Learning, a “philanthropic” outreach of the computing  
14  
15 corporation, in a very clear cross-sectoral blend of public, private and third sector  
16  
17 networking. At the same time all three programmes are made up from overlapping  
18  
19 organisational and interorganisational connections and alliances. Staff advise one  
20  
21 another's projects, sit on committees and steering groups, present their projects at  
22  
23 one another's events, and intertextually cross-reference each other's publications.  
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33 The new edu-experts of these organisations bring new kinds of knowledges,  
34  
35 legitimised by new kinds of authority, into curriculum reform and the invention of  
36  
37 new types of pedagogic institution. Most significantly, the intellectual workers of the  
38  
39 third sector have been responsible for deploying a cybernetic expertise which  
40  
41 appears to legitimise not only the place of technology in education but the cybernetic  
42  
43 reshaping of entire educational institutions and systems. This takes different forms.  
44  
45  
46  
47 Opening Minds, for example, is directly influenced by the needs of industry, with its  
48  
49 main sponsor, the RSA, a dominant voice in the repositioning of education in terms  
50  
51 of enterprise in a post-industrial economy, an agenda it has led for several decades.  
52  
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55  
56 The Paul Hamlyn Foundation programme Learning Futures also emphasises the  
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3 skills required to “work and thrive as the world grows more interconnected, the  
4  
5 environment becomes less stable, and technology continues to alter relationships to  
6  
7 information” (Price 2011). Moreover, its project-based learning approach has been  
8  
9 developed directly from a partnership with High Tech High (Patton 2012), a  
10  
11 Californian network of charter schools assembled by the San Diego Economic  
12  
13 Development Corporation and the Business Roundtable to meet the challenges of  
14  
15 preparing individuals for the high-tech workforce. Taking a slightly different view  
16  
17 on technology, Futurelab endorses the positive value of children's technological and  
18  
19 media cultures, and Enquiring Minds is in part a response to the informal digital  
20  
21 cultures that are shaping youthful identities. It acknowledges the variety of  
22  
23 knowledges that young people access through their own local communities, and  
24  
25 through the dispersed communities and experiential expertise accessed through the  
26  
27 internet.  
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38 In the curriculum documents associated with these projects and organisations,  
39  
40 digital knowledge creation spaces, multimodality, smart tools and all manner of  
41  
42 digital devices, software and networked gadgets are called into use, most notably in  
43  
44 the Enquiring Minds Guide from Futurelab, with its directory of useful web 2.0  
45  
46 devices. Drawing on such examples, an article collaboratively authored by Futurelab  
47  
48 and Demos researchers suggests the possibility of a “post-school” digitally  
49  
50 networked curriculum. In the “curriculum 2.0” scenario, “schools wither away as  
51  
52 young people increasingly learn through networks, drawing on personal and  
53  
54  
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1  
2  
3 domestic digital technologies as sources of learning and ways of connecting with  
4  
5 others" (Facer & Green 2007, 52). The recommendations which follow suggest giving  
6  
7 learners control of a "creative portfolio," introducing "peer-to-peer technology  
8  
9 tuition," setting up "class wikis," and catalysing "curricular and pedagogic reform"  
10  
11 in order to ensure that "soft skills" such as "collaborative learning, personal  
12  
13 development, self-monitoring, 'creativity' and 'thinking' skills are developed as a  
14  
15 matter of course in schools" (56). These texts promote a cybernetics of school which  
16  
17 does not merely advocate for enhanced use of educational technologies but actually  
18  
19 seeks to reconstitute schooling itself as a decentred web of learning opportunities in  
20  
21 an open access economy within which learning has been delimited, de-  
22  
23 institutionalised and dispersed across the entire lifecycle. In these examples of a  
24  
25 cybernetics of schooling, an "actively responsible self" is summoned forth by third  
26  
27 sector curriculum texts, a self who is "becoming more active" with greater  
28  
29 "capacities to know and to question enhanced by transnational media [and] the  
30  
31 internet" (Miller & Rose 2008, 217).  
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43 What is striking is how new technologies and the cybernetic metaphors  
44  
45 inscribed to describe them—networks, open systems, DIY media, clouds—act  
46  
47 simultaneously as "e-learning" devices and governance devices. To take one  
48  
49 example of this hybridisation, Demos and Innovation Unit researchers suggest that  
50  
51 the entire education system be remodelled on an "R&D" process of "open or  
52  
53 democratised innovation" in which new ideas are developed through "digital  
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3 networks" and "smarter strategies" that will "search, connect and develop across  
4  
5 these much wider and more networked fields" (Bentley & Gillinson 2007, 16). These  
6  
7 smart strategies seek to involve users directly in the design of new services, based on  
8  
9 the assumption that as a result "they can be expected to become more active and  
10  
11 responsible participants" (17). Third sector interventions are inscribed over and  
12  
13 again through network discourses and other cybernetic metaphors which do not just  
14  
15 describe pedagogic practices but actively seek to reconstitute pedagogic institutions  
16  
17 in a "cloud culture" of "shared projects" and "combinatorial innovations" based on  
18  
19 ideals such as "self-managed, user-generated information" and "mashup data"  
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27 (Leadbeater 2010, 28-29).  
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### 34 **Soft epistemology**

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37 The prototypical curricula of Enquiring Minds, Opening Minds, and Learning  
38  
39 Futures are based on the idea that the curriculum of the future will consist of new  
40  
41 forms of soft knowledge and a view of knowledge as increasingly permeable and  
42  
43 hybrid. In such programmes, knowledge boundaries are supposed to have been  
44  
45 softened and made malleable, if not erased, and distinctions between academic,  
46  
47 vocational and everyday knowledge have been blurred. A few examples illustrate  
48  
49 this softening and opening up trend. The Opening Minds programme focuses on the  
50  
51 knowledge and skills required for students to be "capable, creative learners, citizens  
52  
53 and employees" twinned with the "needs of the economy"; it cultivates the  
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3 “necessary skills to be effective in the world of business and commerce,” such as self-  
4  
5 management, team working, problem-solving, and independent learning, and  
6  
7 encourages students to “plan their work, organise their own time and explore their  
8  
9 own ways of learning” (Candy 2011, 285-286).  
10  
11

12  
13  
14 Similarly, Learning Futures proposes an open-ended epistemology of inquiry.  
15  
16 Its inquiry pedagogies promote research, experimentation, learning through doing,  
17  
18 problem-solving, and evaluating information, and it strongly promotes a thematic  
19  
20 and “project-based” pedagogy which involves “designing, planning and carrying  
21  
22 out an extended project” using “digital technology” to “conduct serious research,  
23  
24 produce high-quality work,” and to “foster a wide range of skills (such as time  
25  
26 management, collaboration and problem-solving)” (Patton 2012). The Learning  
27  
28 Futures approach to curriculum is defined in terms of being “placed,” “purposeful,”  
29  
30 and “pervasive.” It reaches, has relevance to, and connects with students' own  
31  
32 communities and interests; fosters value and agency and encourages students to act  
33  
34 as “protoprofessionals”; and it extends into independent and interdependent  
35  
36 informal learning that “matters to students” (Price 2011).  
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46  
47 Futurelab's Enquiring Minds also emphasises inquiry as a way of knowing  
48  
49 which is necessary in a complex informational environment where it is more  
50  
51 important to know how to seek and how to analyse information than to acquire and  
52  
53 retain basic knowledge. Enquiring Minds assumes that students possess valuable  
54  
55 knowledge and ideas that they are able to bring into the classroom and it aims to  
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2  
3 build upon young people's experiences, ideas, interests and knowledge, particularly  
4  
5 their experiences and uses of new media and digital technologies outside school  
6  
7  
8 (Morgan, Williamson, Lee & Facer 2007). The task for teachers in an inquiry  
9  
10 classroom is to listen and respond to students, adapting flexibly and fluidly to their  
11  
12 interests and questions accordingly. These inquiry pedagogies have a long  
13  
14 genealogy, and programmes like Enquiring Minds can be understood as assembling  
15  
16 together and reanimating the progressivism of Dewey, the radical pedagogies of  
17  
18 Freire, and the de-schooled learning webs and nets of Illich, with the non-  
19  
20 institutionalised cybernetic fantasy of digitally-based learning as radical  
21  
22 individualism, self-regulation and freedom from governmental bureaucracy (Selwyn  
23  
24  
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26  
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28  
29 2010, 130-131).

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32  
33 These examples of student-led inquiry, personal projects and portfolios  
34  
35 constitute a new flexible, interactive and dynamic form of pedagogy. In this "flexible  
36  
37 interactive pedagogy" teachers are encouraged and expected to elicit and respond  
38  
39 flexibly to students' interests, words and actions, and this model of "interactionism  
40  
41 constructs both a response-able/-ready child and a response-able/-ready teacher"  
42  
43 (Fendler 2001, 132-33). Inquiry learning and interactionist pedagogies are mutually  
44  
45 interdependent. The textual inscription of these programmes constructs them as  
46  
47 flexible, malleable and boundary-free curricula that can travel anywhere,  
48  
49 interactively taking in encounters with knowledges from all areas of experience,  
50  
51 from any media, and across disciplines. The curriculum, in these documents, is a co-  
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1  
2  
3 constructed artefact which privileges the idea of students as knowledge builders  
4  
5 who are engaged in constructing new knowledge through a variety of collaborations  
6  
7  
8 with lay experts and experiential experts sourced through the web.  
9

10  
11  
12 The hyperlinked, cybernetic curricula of the third sector are epistemologically  
13  
14 fuzzy, promoting soft epistemologies crafted around the active “know-how” of  
15  
16 “competence” rather than the “know-what” of curricular knowledge. They are  
17  
18 informed by a “new language of learning” which is assembled from psychological  
19  
20 theories of constructivist, interactive, situated learning and active knowledge  
21  
22 construction (Biesta 2006). To this can now be added emerging cybernetic  
23  
24 understandings of learning as networked, connected, mobile, flexible, and dispersed  
25  
26 across a multiplicity of both formal and informal institutions and pedagogies.  
27  
28 Elements of the new psycho-technological language of learning can be found across  
29  
30 the textual archive of the third sector. Key promotional documents from the  
31  
32 Learning Futures programme, for example, make specific reference to the “nature of  
33  
34 learning,” “thinking skills,” the “psychology of optimal experience,” “learning  
35  
36 processes, settings and styles,” “peer tutors,” “learning communities,” “effective  
37  
38 lifelong learning,” “virtual learning” and “visible learning,” all of which are  
39  
40 proposed to constitute “learning which is deep, authentic and motivational”  
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51 (Learning Futures 2010; Price 2010).  
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55 Furthermore, as the review of competences curricula by Futurelab detailed,  
56  
57 many emerging curriculum and pedagogic frameworks (from across all sectors)  
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59  
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1  
2  
3 include an “extended project” or “personal challenge” component which is seen as a  
4  
5 means of ensuring that learning is meaningful and coherent, and enabling learners to  
6  
7 develop “responsibilities,” “skills” and “competencies” that could not be developed  
8  
9 through other pedagogic approaches. Such personal challenges are characterised in  
10  
11 the review documentation as “content-neutral,” “authentic,” as making a  
12  
13 “contribution,” and as enabling learners to “make connections across different  
14  
15 subject areas and across in-school and out of school learning,” as well as between  
16  
17 “specialist subjects” and “specialised areas of personal interest,” supported by  
18  
19 “specialists across and outside the school community” (Facer & Pykett, 2007, 21).  
20  
21 The hybridity of such pedagogies is understood not as originating from pedagogic  
22  
23 or epistemological grounds but from its “consistency with the increasingly  
24  
25 ‘boundary-less’ character of modern economies” allied to a “constructivist” view of  
26  
27 knowledge (Young 2008, 37).  
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38 Again, the appearance of such psycho-technological theories in third sector  
39  
40 curriculum thinking is no historical accident. In 1993, the quarterly magazine from  
41  
42 the think-tank Demos—one of the key conduits for New Labour thinking—  
43  
44 published an article on “the future of school” by Howard Gardner, then co-director  
45  
46 of Project Zero at Harvard Graduate School of Education. Gardner’s article  
47  
48 advocated a future of school which emphasises “multiple intelligences,” a “student-  
49  
50 curriculum” brokerage service which “helps match students’ profiles, goals and  
51  
52 interests to particular curricula and to particular styles of learning,” and a “school-  
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3 community broker” dedicated to matching opportunities in the community with  
4  
5 students’ “cognitive profiles,” all tasks that he saw then as being supported by ICT  
6  
7  
8 (Gardner 1993, 8-9). Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences has since been  
9  
10 popularised in British schools. But it is not coincidental that the title of his article for  
11  
12 Demos, “Opening Minds,” was later made the title of the flagship reform  
13  
14 programme from the RSA, which translates Gardner’s key ideas into its new  
15  
16 competencies curriculum framework. At the very least we need to acknowledge the  
17  
18 intermediary role of Demos and the RSA in relaying Gardner’s expertise of multiple  
19  
20 intelligences and cognitive profiling into British schools. The accompanying Demos  
21  
22 editorial suggests an even wider applicability for multiple intelligences in political  
23  
24 leadership and styles of governing, perhaps an interesting note in the genealogy of  
25  
26 New Labour itself. Profiling students’ learning styles through diagnostic surveys,  
27  
28 online personal skills tracking, and effective learning inventories are key elements in  
29  
30 the Learning Futures ensemble of techniques and reforms too.  
31  
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40 It is important to restate that these ideas have not been mandated into schools  
41  
42 but, largely through the intermediary work of the third sector, introduced through  
43  
44 cumulative clustering, juxtaposition and reiteration across a variety of texts,  
45  
46 programmes, and interventions. Opening Minds built upon ideas elaborated in the  
47  
48 Gardner essay, and aligned them with the RSA’s history of intervention in the future  
49  
50 of work, “enterprise education” and “education for capability” to meet the alleged  
51  
52 training needs of the knowledge-based economy. Opening Minds offers a  
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1  
2  
3 “competence” curriculum which, as its executive director explains:  
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5

6 refers to a complex combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes and  
7  
8 desire which lead to effective, embodied human action ... at work, in personal relationships  
9  
10 or in civil society.... Competence implies a sense of agency, action and value ... the  
11  
12 accomplishment of ‘real world tasks’ and on a multiplicity of ways of knowing—for example,  
13  
14 knowing how to do something; knowing oneself and one’s desires, or knowing why  
15  
16 something is important, as well as knowing about something. (Candy 2011, 286)  
17  
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19

20  
21 Competence is realized in the form of projects, themes and experiences, with  
22  
23 learning inscribed as an active and creative practice. The competence-based  
24  
25 curriculum emphasises active learning and creativity; self-regulating learners; a  
26  
27 pedagogic discourse of interactionism, inquiry-based learning, projects, themes and  
28  
29 experience; learner autonomy over the selection, sequencing and pacing of their  
30  
31 learning; and personalisation according to the intentions, dispositions, relations and  
32  
33 reflexivity of learners. The theoretical origins of the Opening Minds model of  
34  
35 competence lie in the 1960s and 70s, when social scientists and radical educators  
36  
37 alike began to celebrate the active, creative, meaning-making potential of  
38  
39 individuals. But in programmes like Opening Minds, competence is translated as  
40  
41 behavioural competences, constructivism, personal learning profiles, personalised  
42  
43 learning, learner reflexivity, “flexible transferable potential,” and it emphasises the  
44  
45 “ability to be taught” and continuously retrained in a “pedagogised future” of  
46  
47 “continuous pedagogic re-formations” (Bernstein 2000, 59). Its “psycho-pedagogy of  
48  
49 social competence” is therapeutic and introspective, empowering and emancipatory,  
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2  
3 and it promotes learning “behavioural techniques” of “self-regulation” (Rose 1999a,  
4  
5 243). While Opening Minds is very overtly presented as a competencies curriculum,  
6  
7 other programmes like Learning Futures and Enquiring Minds have also catalysed a  
8  
9 host of reformatory aspirations around psycho-pedagogic ideals of inquiry,  
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and it promotes learning “behavioural techniques” of “self-regulation” (Rose 1999a, 243). While Opening Minds is very overtly presented as a competencies curriculum, other programmes like Learning Futures and Enquiring Minds have also catalysed a host of reformatory aspirations around psycho-pedagogic ideals of inquiry, constructivism, project-based learning, and other forms of self-regulative competence.

### Soft subjectivity

Through the texts, guidance and interventions of the new edu-experts of the third sector, teachers have been encouraged to see students in different ways, through such theories as social constructivism, a curriculum of competencies, pedagogies such as interactionism, and techniques such as cognitive profiling, skills tracking and inventorying. These all constitute a new psycho-technology of schooling. In this section, I want to explore a little more the particular form of the pedagogic identity, made up as a certain kind of subject, that is sculpted, inculcated, and promoted by third sector actors “at a distance” from the classroom.

A particularly important set of examples of how learners are being assembled as new sorts of subjects is provided in a series of reviews of curriculum and pedagogic projects conducted by or on behalf of third sector organisations. These reports include a review of frameworks promoting “wider skills for learning” for

1  
2  
3 NESTA conducted by the Centre for Real World Learning and the Talent Foundation;  
4  
5 a review of “personal skills and competencies approaches” conducted by Futurelab  
6  
7  
8 for the QCA; and a review of wellbeing programmes by the Young Foundation  
9  
10 entitled *The State of Happiness*. The NESTA “wider skills” project synthesized a very  
11  
12 large number of different “skills frameworks” emerging from government  
13  
14 departments, research institutes, private companies, and third sector organisations.  
15  
16  
17 Its report on the wider skills required for twenty-first century economies emphasises  
18  
19 the importance of “new smarts,” “orientations,” “capabilities” and “capacities,”  
20  
21 “dispositions” to learning, and the “mental and emotional habits of mind” which are  
22  
23 required “if innovation is to be effectively developed in young people” (Lucas &  
24  
25 Claxton 2009, 4). The “wider skills” report proposes the application of psychological  
26  
27 expertise to the economic challenges of the twenty-first century, and identifies  
28  
29 methods for cultivating, tracking and measuring the new desirable qualities of  
30  
31 “innovation.” Young people are positioned by the report as the subjects of  
32  
33 psychological discourses of cognitive competence, emotional resilience and  
34  
35 therapeutic self-reflection, but recast rather more instrumentally in terms of the  
36  
37 composition, augmentation and “investment in human capital” required for  
38  
39 “technological innovations” (Foucault 2008, 231-32).  
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51 Likewise, the Young Foundation review of projects to promote well-being  
52  
53 stresses a strong connection between improving personal well-being and happiness  
54  
55 through education and the enhancement of national economic well-being. The report  
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3 proposes that the promotion of “mental capacity” and “mental wellbeing” will be  
4  
5 vital for meeting the challenges of a changing society and for ensuring the “mental  
6  
7 capital” of the population. The report specifically recommends dedicating school  
8  
9 curriculum time to “honing social and emotional competencies,” “thinking  
10  
11 creatively, collaboration, empathy and emotional resilience,” especially so since  
12  
13 “wellbeing and resilience matter to employment and to the economy” (Bacon,  
14  
15 Brophy, Mguni, Mulgan & Shandro 2010, 49-50). In the report's almost utopian ideal  
16  
17 of a “state of happiness,” strategies to ensure economic well-being work from a  
18  
19 distance through the therapeutic reflexivity and emotional intelligence of learners,  
20  
21 and “[e]motion and capital are now linked productively in a new configuration:  
22  
23 emotional capital” (Hartley 2006, 64-65). Foucault (2008, 230-231) showed that the  
24  
25 problem of innovation could be solved by making “educational investments” to  
26  
27 improve the psychological health of the individual and by such means to augment  
28  
29 human capital. *The State of Happiness* translates the concerns, calculations, strategies  
30  
31 and programmes of public policy into the far distant minutiae of individual  
32  
33 emotional life, in a process aligning the “objectives of authorities” with the “personal  
34  
35 projects” of the individuals and populations who are the subjects of those authorities  
36  
37 (Rose 1999b, 48).  
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49  
50 In the reports for NESTA and the Young Foundation economic values of  
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52 action, adaptability, entrepreneurship, excellence, flexibility, innovation, initiative  
53  
54 and so on can be released through pedagogic institutions and practices that promote  
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2  
3 psychological values of human autonomy, happiness, well-being, values, and  
4  
5 creativity. Schools are positioned in these reports to inculcate and promote  
6  
7 psychological habits of mind and emotional capital, to encourage learners to  
8  
9 “become a psychologist” in their own projects of identity, incorporating its  
10  
11 vocabularies into their own ways of speaking, its gaze into their ways of looking,  
12  
13 and its practices into their ways of acting (Rose 1996, 123)—in short, fabricating  
14  
15 subjects who see through “psychological eyes” (Popkewitz 2012, 177). In promoting  
16  
17 curricular alternatives like Opening Mind, Enquiring Minds and Learning Futures,  
18  
19 the third sector assembles an understanding of the learner who is to be  
20  
21 psychologically armed and pedagogically prepared with the social and emotional  
22  
23 competencies and skills required for innovation in a future characterised by constant  
24  
25 rapid technological and economic change. Their autonomous projects of identity  
26  
27 have been shaped both “instrumentally” as a response to economic and  
28  
29 technological currents and “therapeutically” in the “open narratives” and “personal  
30  
31 projects” of oneself and one’s desires, in order to inculcate “prospective pedagogic  
32  
33 identities” which can “*deal with cultural, economic and technological change*” (Bernstein  
34  
35 2000, 73 *original italics*). A homology has been constructed between young people’s  
36  
37 own projects of identity and the prospective pedagogic identities which are shaped  
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39 through the curriculum. This is, indeed, as the title of the Young Foundation report  
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41 suggests, a perfect “state of happiness.”  
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56 Additionally, in drawing extensively on metaphors such as networks, open  
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3 systems and clouds, these prospective pedagogic identities are made up in an  
4  
5 empowering cybernetic discourse of self-organisation, active participation, open  
6  
7 access and self-regulation. These cybernetic assumptions about the liberating,  
8  
9 democratising and emancipatory potential of new technologies and media are  
10  
11 juxtaposed with constructivist styles of psychological thinking into a messy and  
12  
13 heterogeneous theoretical “mashup” in which subjectivities are assembled as open  
14  
15 systems perpetually self-upgrading through interaction in dynamic networks. The  
16  
17 interactive, constructivist identity fabricated in the third sector psycho-technology of  
18  
19 the curriculum of the future is a contingent improvisation of self-centred  
20  
21 psychological discourse and cybernetic discourses, together with specific resources  
22  
23 and materials including tools for measuring and monitoring one's learning  
24  
25 dispositions and the digital devices required for learning online. In sum, the  
26  
27 “mashed up” identities (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010, 168) being constructed through  
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29 the psycho-technological curriculum of the future are simultaneously prospective,  
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31 projective and prosthetic:  
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43 — Prospective: being oriented to the future, able to deal with social and  
44  
45 technological change, able to constantly retrain.
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48 — Projective: being psychologically self-competent, constructivist, self-  
49  
50 upgrading, with one's own identity as a personal project.
- 51  
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53 — Prosthetic: being networked, flexible, interactive, interdependent, connected,  
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55 and extended into a hyperlinked universe of the web.  
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3 The new pedagogic identity shaped by third sector participation in public education  
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5 is articulated prospectively into anticipated futures which require new competences  
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7 for innovation; projected through a range of personal projects into the  
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9 psychotechnics of competency self-management; and reticulated prosthetically  
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11 through networked technologies into the hyperlinked knowledge practices of the  
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13 web.  
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## 23 Conclusion

24  
25 The third sector has been shown to be an experimental site for the invention of new  
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27 innovations in public services that harnesses the energies and ideas of a variety of  
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29 new non-political authorities within public education itself. In this article I set out to  
30  
31 trace the pursuit of a type of governmentality by third sector educational  
32  
33 organisations and actors constituted by a “cybernetic style of thinking” and a new  
34  
35 “soft capitalist” discourse of complexity, experiential learning, flexibility, and  
36  
37 networking. It has begun to outline how such a soft, cybernetic governmentality is  
38  
39 inscribed in third sector texts in terms of an assemblage of pedagogic institutions,  
40  
41 pedagogic practices and pedagogic identities discursively reworked and  
42  
43 reconstituted as soft governance, soft epistemology and soft subjectivity. Within  
44  
45 these discourses, diverse forms of expertise, practical knowledges, vocabularies,  
46  
47 forms of authority, objects and devices have been assembled, clustered and  
48  
49 hybridised. The third sector mobilises styles of thinking that are both cybernetic and  
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3 psychological. Assembled together as a psycho-technological style of thinking about  
4  
5 schooling, these elements promote a soft subject who is malleable, adaptable and  
6  
7 flexible, able to remould and resculpt his or herself, through continuous and  
8  
9 digitally dispersed pedagogic opportunities and experiences, according to a  
10  
11 continuous analysis of the fit between personal life trajectory and the technological,  
12  
13 economic and cultural contingencies of the future. The third sector style of thinking  
14  
15 assembles a prospective pedagogic identity which is continually self-sculpting  
16  
17 through personal projects, whether literally in the personal challenges set forth in the  
18  
19 curriculum or figuratively in their lifelong projects of personal identity.  
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28         The ideal autonomous, self-regulating learner inscribed by the third sector,  
29  
30 however, is no historical accident but specifically fabricated. The proposed  
31  
32 curriculum of the future envisioned and inscribed in third sector texts is to be the  
33  
34 product of an array of new authorities and forms of expertise which are brought into  
35  
36 schools through the network governance of cross-sectoral alliances, and which claim  
37  
38 a knowledge of the new innovative needs of the market, the valences of networked  
39  
40 ICT, and the psychological nature, capacities and competencies of the individual.  
41  
42 The alignment of new technological practices and new psycho-technical methods for  
43  
44 acting upon learner competence have been combined in its proposals for new types  
45  
46 of curriculum, new forms of school knowledge, and the making up of new kinds of  
47  
48 emotionally capable, interactive subjects. It is through assembling together,  
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50 juxtaposing and clustering its ideas about new forms of governance, new  
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3 epistemologies, and new subjectivities, that the third sector has sought to pursue a  
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5 new type of governmentality, a governmentality in which pedagogic institutions and  
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7 pedagogic practices and pedagogic identities are presupposed as homologous—as  
8  
9 networked, self-regulating, and self-organising. It is the fabrication of this set of  
10  
11 homologies of softness and malleability that this article has begun to trace, outline  
12  
13 and describe, though at this stage the examination has remained confined to text and  
14  
15 the inscription of proposals and objectives rather than reporting on empirical  
16  
17 observation. More needs to be done to get “inside” third sector innovation  
18  
19 ethnographically, in order to examine the extent to which inscription and discourse  
20  
21 has been translated in practice. With current shifts in political discourse from the  
22  
23 third sector to the Big Society much more in-depth research also needs to be done to  
24  
25 more fully understand the participation of non-political authorities, think-tanks,  
26  
27 social enterprises and other hybrid organisations in education change, and to grasp  
28  
29 the implications for changing pedagogic institutions, reforming pedagogic practices,  
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31 and reshaping pedagogic identities.  
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