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**RESHAPING EDUCATION IN GLOBALISING,  
TRIBALISING, HYBRIDISING TIMES**

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# RESHAPING EDUCATION IN GLOBALISING, TRIBALISING, HYBRIDISING TIMES

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## INTRODUCTION

At the World Conference on Higher Education (1998) and the later World Education Forum (2000), UNESCO formally reaffirmed the principle that education is a universal right and a public good. UNESCO is a partner, along with the World Bank, the OECD, the European Commission and others, in Education for All (EFA). EFA is a commitment to achieving free compulsory education for all children, especially girls, by 2015 and ending gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005. These goals are founded on the EFA partnership's belief 'that education is key to sustainable development and peace and stability within, and among, countries, and accordingly, that it is indispensable for people to participate fully in the societies and globalized economies of the 21st century' (World Bank Group 2002).

This statement contains two key elements. The first has to do with social inclusion, the second with economic participation under globalisation. Together, they raise questions for us about the compatibility between the social dimensions of education and education organised around current global economic trends and trajectories. Does education for participation in a global knowledge *economy* also support inclusion in a global knowledge *society*? After all, globalisation is not a single, coherent force: it is a force for economic integration and, at the same time, one of social fragmentation. A further and related issue has to do with the way in which education policy is now changing under globalisation, the way in which diverse international and supranational organisations are coming together to make the sort of educational statement which, not too long ago, would only have been made by a nation-state. Education and education policy, it seems, are not just responding to the demands of the age of globalisation; they are already being reshaped by it. How, therefore, are we to understand the implications of globalisation for, and its impact on, education systems? What concepts help us to make sense of it?

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In this paper we offer a reading of some of the ways in which education and education policy, mainly in the so-called developed countries, are changing under the pressures of globalisation. It seeks to identify broad patterns and emergent and intensifying trends and issues. This paper, then, is about the big picture; its focus is necessarily partial. We recognise the interplay of competing tendencies: the dominant, residual, oppositional and emergent (Williams 1982: 204–5). Some of the issues we raise here are educational perennials and others are not conventionally thought of as educational issues at all. In some ways, then, this is a disruptive paper.

This paper speaks to issues of education policy but not within the conventional terms and language of educational policy studies. Indeed, it is something of an interdisciplinary *bricolage*. It brings together ideas from sociology, cultural studies and educational policy studies in an attempt to understand the multi-dimensional ways in which education is being reshaped in current times. In pursuing our inquiries we join a number of education scholars who are not only working across the disciplines, but also considering the implications of globalisation for education (for example, Stromquist and Monkman 2000; Currie and Newson 1998). As such research suggests, education policy sociology is now moving beyond its ‘embedded statism’ (Tomlinson 1999) wherein the nation-state is naturalised as the ‘political power container’ and as a primary ‘source of cultural identity’ (1999: 104). Clearly, education policy is now open to examining new spatialities and mobilities. Thus, it now attends to the educational implications of global flows of trade, investment, wealth, labour, people, ideas and images. It takes more seriously the porousness of different borders and boundaries and the effects this has on policy. This paper complements such work, but comes to the issues from a somewhat different angle. It focuses on some subtle links between economic, political and cultural globalisation that have not figured much in educational discussion. In so doing, it brings into education policy studies a somewhat new, and we think necessary, vocabulary.

The paper is divided into four sections. The first identifies the manner in which we will use the concept ‘globalisation’. The second looks at the different integrating aspects of globalisation and the pressures that they are putting on national education policies. The third identifies some of globalisation’s fragmenting and tribalising aspects and the competing pressures that they are creating. The fourth section considers nation-states in the context of globalisation and looks at some of their responses to such pressures with a particular focus on hybridising responses. The overall purposes of the paper are, first, to identify the ways in which education is being reshaped by globalisation and, second, to identify some of the issues these put on the educational agenda. It attempts to bring and hold together in analysis a number of different lines of inquiry that are usually held apart.

## DEFINING GLOBALISATION

Our interest is in the implications of globalisation for education policies, particularly those that focus on knowledge. Beck's (2000) conceptual disruption of the globalisation discourse provides us with a useful starting point. He makes a distinction between globalism, globality and globalisation processes. He uses the term 'globalism' to refer to the manner in which globalisation has become an ideology tied to claims about the inevitability of neo-liberal economic logic. This logic is associated with de-territorialised transnational global corporate capitalism. The ideology of globalism has, Beck argues, somewhat overwhelmed the politics of the nation-state and of organised labour. It holds in its sway the economic, cultural, ecological and political, 'liquidating the difference between politics and economics'. With a characteristic rhetorical flourish, Beck captures the essence of this scenario, saying 'the magic formula here is capitalism *without work* plus capitalism *without taxes*' (2000: 4). Clearly capitalism still has workers, but these consist of a small labour elite (the highly skilled, highly privileged professions) and an increasing number of people in casual, poorly paid and insecure work. The term 'capitalism without work' refers to the fact that the economy can grow at the same time as it downsizes its labour force. Indeed, Bauman argues:

The present day streamlined, down sized capital- and knowledge-intensive industry casts labour as a constraint on the rise of productivity. 'Economic growth' and the rise of employment are, for all practical intents, at cross-purposes; technological progress is measured by the replacement and elimination of labour. (1998b: 65)

Beck's second concept, 'globality', refers to world society, a society that consists of those social relationships that are not 'integrated into or determined by' the nation-state. He includes here such things as global media, global labour markets and global activism, and global risks and crises. This is a transnational society consisting of difference—'multiplicity without unity'—and invokes an opening out sensibility. It includes a 'multiplicity of social circles, communication networks, market relations and lifestyles, none of them specific to any particular locality' (Beck 2000: 4). In contrast, Beck's third concept, 'globalisation processes', 'denotes the processes through which sovereign national states are crisscrossed and undermined by transnational actors with varying degrees of power, orientations, identities and networks' (Beck 2000: 11). These create 'transnational social links and spaces', alter and 'revalue' the local, and promote third or hybrid cultures. Arguing against the globalisation sceptics, Beck points to the things that are new about all of this. He identifies the number and power of transnational actors, institutions and agreements, the degree of economic concentration, and the massive circulation of the global culture industries. These new forces of globalisation are bringing pressure to bear on national education policy. The following section expands on these forces for change and their relationship to education.

## **GLOBALISING PRESSURES: FORCES OF INTEGRATION**

### **The global economy**

Debate abounds about what to name and how best to describe the contemporary global economy. It has been variously called post-industrial, deindustrialised, post-Fordist, the knowledge economy, the information economy, the weightless economy, late capitalism, advanced capitalism, fast capitalism, casino capitalism, informational capitalism, disorganised capitalism, footloose capitalism, and the list goes on. These names collectively point to what is considered a significant adjustment or a paradigmatic shift in the economy and, at the same time, indicate that the details, politics and human consequences are hotly contested.

The New Economy Index (Atkinson and Court 1998) produced by the Progressive Policy Institute in the US summarises this economic shift under the heading ‘The New Economy’:

This term is used to refer to a set of qualitative and quantitative changes that, in the last 15 years, have transformed the structure, functioning, and rules of the global economy. The New Economy is a knowledge and idea-based economy where the keys to job creation and higher standards of living are innovative ideas and technology embedded in services and manufactured products. It encompasses related concepts of the knowledge and knowledge-based economy, information economy and information society. It is an economy where risk, uncertainty, and constant change are the rule, rather than the exception. (Atkinson and Court 1998)

This somewhat standard statement typifies the current common sense and the hegemonic view in many discussions of the contemporary economy. The focus is on the dematerialisation of commodity production in the world’s most advanced economies where increasingly large portions of the labour force provide services and symbolic goods. Symbolic goods (information, knowledge, communication) are not as constrained by space and time as material goods and, thus, economies of symbolic exchange lead to the production of more mobile and tradeable products.

Of course, the economy always puts pressure on education systems. The global knowledge economy puts most pressure on education systems to serve the needs of the new economy; particularly with regard to the supply of ‘knowledge workers’ and ‘innovators’, or those who are capable of converting research and knowledge into a commodity. The global economy is putting pressure on education policy to re-configure the value of knowledge along economic lines; to see it as an economic commodity as opposed to a social good, and the global culture industries are a key force in this process.

### **The global culture industries**

The culture industries are a central feature of what Appadurai (2000) calls the 'global cultural economy'. They are instrumental in the global circulation of culture, information, images and desires and in the overall production of consumer society (Bauman 1998b: 24). An increasingly large proportion of contemporary market exchange activity involves

[c]ultural technologies (telephones, computers, VCRs), cultural goods (games, theatre, music videos, toys, sports equipment) and social services (restaurants, theatres, personal advice and welfare services, information processing and management services). (Kline 1993: 4–5)

The rise of cultural and service markets represents not only the increasing dematerialisation of the commodity form, but also the rise of what Lee calls 'experiential commodities' (1993: 135). These include cultural events, enterprise culture, the heritage industry, theme parks, commercialised sport and other public spectacles. The rapid growth of 'experiential commodities' reflects a general economic 'move to make more flexible and fluid the various opportunities and moments of consumption' (Lee 1993: 137). This move is fuelled by desire—the desire of capital for profit and of the consumer for pleasure and satisfaction—or what Lyotard (1993) calls the 'libidinal economy'.

The global culture industries target the young particularly. As a consequence, a number of cultural studies scholars talk of the corporate curriculum and corporate pedagogues (see, for example, Steinberg and Kincheloe 1997). The corporate curriculum seeks to teach the young that consumption can assuage dissatisfaction and that consumption, identity and pleasure are one. It seeks to produce them as 'desiring machines' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977). In Bauman's terms, it trains them for a world now ruled by the values of consumption rather than the values associated with the work ethic (1998b: 32). The global corporate curriculum is about sensation; it is textually rich, entertaining and engaging, and is thus consumed hungrily and repeatedly by the young. Further, it has become young people's yardstick against which they judge and find wanting formal school curricula (Kenway and Bullen 2001).

The global corporate curriculum puts enormous pressure on formal education to become more like the consumer culture industries: to entertain, stimulate and please on demand, to revel in constant change and the new, and to stimulate but never satisfy desire. National education systems are thus swept up in global knowledge and pleasure dynamics, some of which find articulation and support in international rule-making organisations.

### **Transnational and supranational organisations**

Many international and supranational organisations now concern themselves very directly with education. Examples of such organisations include trade and commerce-based supranationals such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, the International Finance Corporation and the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as the more socially oriented Education International, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF, European Commission, International Labour Office, Global Knowledge Partnership and the Commonwealth of Learning.

Clearly, some such organisations have more power and influence than others and each comes with somewhat different interests and purposes. Some have a more directly neo-liberal economic agenda while others are more obviously educational and express more social concerns. As the Education for All statement we noted at the beginning indicates, even those with very different agendas now agree that social cohesion matters. Even so, when supra- and international organisations talk about education, the conversations are almost inevitably intertwined with ‘new economy’ narratives and variants such as the knowledge (-based, -driven) economy.

Thus, for instance, in addition to its involvement in Education for All, the World Bank has commenced a three-year program to address the implications of the knowledge economy in developing countries. *Education for the knowledge economy* (2002) builds on the World Bank’s 1998–1999 World Development Report, *Knowledge for development* (1999). Likewise, the OECD continues to consolidate earlier policy work like *The knowledge-based economy* (1996). Equipping individuals for participation in the knowledge-based economy—or knowledge society and the new learning economy—is an explicit aim of recent OECD Education Directorate publications relating to lifelong learning (2001a), ICTs (2001b) and school management (2001c) and the European Commission’s *eLearning action plan: designing tomorrow’s education* (2001). Clearly the cluster of ideas associated with the ‘new economy’ is putting considerable pressure on national education systems.

There are further pressures on education from the WTO and these are associated with free trade. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is one of more than twenty trade agreements administered and enforced by the WTO. The GATS is one of the pressures on WTO members to liberalise ‘barriers’ to international competition in the education sector. Article I.3 of the GATS, however, exempts ‘services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority’, which may be interpreted as ‘public services’ such as education. Differences occur in the interpretation of this article. Some WTO members have scheduled commitments in basic education services under the GATS. GATS opponents see such commitments as offering proof that no public services carve-out exists in

practice, fanning speculation that the forces of unbridled competition and privatisation are about to be unleashed by the GATS on the education sector. On the other hand, none of the existing provisions of GATS or the commitments made by individual countries compel WTO member countries to liberalise any sector that they wish to protect or leave outside the trade policy framework. Many OECD countries, such as Canada and France, have systematically refused to make commitments relating to the education sector, a position their respective negotiators continue to hold in the current talks (Sauvé 2002). Nonetheless, at the present time, the GATS serves to legitimise governments' withdrawal from public education and from their commitments to UNESCO principles of education as a human right and a public service. Indeed, one of the significant pressures exerted on education by the GATS may be to uncouple the link between 'human rights' and 'public service'.

Pressure from international bodies exerts a contradictory pressure on nation-states and their education policies. On the one hand bodies such as UNESCO are pressuring member countries to support education as a public good that must be maintained and controlled by the state. On the other hand bodies such as the WTO are exerting pressure on states to privatise their education services and to open them up to international competition. The state becomes in effect a contested site of struggles between international bodies over the direction of education policy and over the question of whether education and knowledge is a commodity for economic goals, or a public good to facilitate social cohesion.

### **GLOBALISING PRESSURES: FRAGMENTING FORCES**

Paradoxically, the integrating and homogenising forces of economic globalisation are also creating new classes, tribes and subjectivities, with diverse and often competing interests and agendas. New forms of social fragmentation are being created by the widening gap between rich and poor, the postcolonial insistence on diversity, and the associated rise of local nationalisms, tribalisms and identities. Global economic, cultural and political forms and trends are mediated in localised ways. This puts further pressure on national education systems and, indeed, on international and supranational organisations and creates a different set of educational imperatives, often in conflict with the integrating pressures described above. The focus of this section is on some of the new forms of subjectivity globalisation is promoting or producing and the educational pressures they exert.

Social fragmentation has become one of the defining characteristics of these times. Notions of tribalism and neo-tribalism have been used to explain this phenomenon which, it is said, is a consequence of challenges to tradition and the sovereignty of the nation-state (Maffesoli 1996; Bauman 1992, 1993, 1995). Globalisation has eroded the nation-state 'as a focal point for loyalty, protest and resolution of collective grievances' (Rosamund and Booth 1995: 926). Gone is the ordered, secure world of the past with its 'socially supervised routine' and 'sanction-

supported norms' (Bauman 1992: xii, xiii). The new freedoms and choices we enjoy have come at the price of insecurity, of a vulnerability to the contingency from which the state previously offered protection and certainty. As the state has progressively relinquished its 'integrative function' to deregulating and privatising market forces and supranational imperatives, new classes, tribes and interest groups have emerged to offer new modalities of cohesion, community, identity and allegiance.

These social groupings may be global or local, territorialised or de-territorialised—or both. They may be tight-knit or loosely affiliated; they may form around shared interests, lifestyles or tastes, or around social commonalities or causes. They have arisen in association with, or as a function of, economic, political, social and/or cultural globalisation. Our particular focus here is on some of those groupings associated with the global 'new economy', transnational organisations and the global consumer culture industries: the globalising pressures described in the preceding section. We have selected for consideration the global elite, the neo-tribalised poor, youthful consumers and anti-globalisation activists. Each puts different, but related, pressures on education and each raises important and perplexing educational issues associated with the power-knowledge-pleasure dynamics of globalism and consumerism.

### **The global elite**

Globalisation's power elite, those Beck calls the 'new rich', include the 'gladiator' chief executives of the transnational corporations (TNCs) that control the global economy and culture. This group consists of globalisation's biggest and most powerful winners. Its members have no territorial loyalties, accept few political and tax responsibilities and have broken the social contract between labour and capital. These corporations invest and produce wherever they will be least regulated, pay the least tax and the lowest wages, and make the most profit. For them, the entire world is a potential source of labour, custom and profit. As Beck says, their 'Companies can produce in one country, pay taxes in another, and demand state infrastructure spending in another' (2000: 5). They undermine the nation-state while demanding and using its services. Further, they live and holiday in the most agreeable and expensive of places (see further Beck 2000: 6–7). Along with global celebrities, the global elite have become 'paragons of consumer virtues' (Bauman 1998b: 41), setting new standards of what is understood as the 'good life'.

The global elite also includes in its orbit the top leaders and administrators of some of the inter- and supranational organisations mentioned above, even if their political agendas differ somewhat. They form affiliative and affective communities with the new global rich. They, too, are hyper-mobile; time and space are tightly compressed for them. Their lifestyles consist of first class travel through the exclusive and culturally disembedded 'non places' of globalisation: executive

hotels, boardrooms and airport lounges. They see the world and make policy ‘at a distance’ (Giddens 1994: 95). One assumes that they also live and holiday in highly expensive and protected ‘gilded ghettos’. As Bauman (1998a) observes in his discussion of ‘global hierarchies of mobility’, such people float free from territorial loyalties and responsibilities and spatially segregate, insulate and fortify themselves when grounded. Beck (2000) argues that the global elite and their transnational corporations and associations subscribe to a form of ‘sub politics’. By this he means that they act in the ‘independent’ global realm of the economic, beyond ‘national and regional governments, public opinion, courts, and the labour/capital contract’ (Beck 2000: 4). Yet it is this elite that produce current conceptions of the knowledge economy that people are being encouraged to adopt. An obvious question to ask, then, is what is the impact of this ‘action at a distance’ lifestyle on their views about global knowledge and education needs?

The primary focus of the chief executives of TNCs is on free trade, the minimal state, global flexibility, lean production and knowledge workers—in short globalism. Clearly, not all of the global elite share these views, as policies such as Education for All indicate. Such policies suggest that the serious human fallout of globalism is now recognised amongst the elite. But questions remain. Are such policies simply designed to give globalism a human face? Do they have any impact or are they ultimately contradicted and undermined by globalism itself? For example, how is it possible to provide ‘free compulsory education for all children’ when the GATS principles threaten to undermine public education?

### **The neo-tribalised poor**

Among globalism’s most significant losers are the increasing numbers of ‘new poor’ (Bauman 1998b). In ‘first world’ nations, these include the unemployed and the working poor. The working poor ‘sell their labour for bare survival’ (Bauman 1998b: 34) and have no industrial bargaining capacity. The new poor can be described as a neo-tribe in the sense that they share a common lifestyle; they are not needed by capital either as a ‘reserve army of labour’ or as consumers. Indeed, being without money, they are understood as ‘flawed consumers’ (Bauman 1998b) in consumer-oriented society. They are therefore economically and socially ‘surplus’. They have good reason to resent a world that excludes them.

Worryingly, the new poor, particularly the unemployed and those on welfare support, are increasingly subject to the ‘politics of resentment’ from others (McCarthy and Dimitriadis 2000). They are marginalised economically and stigmatised culturally—often by those also made vulnerable by economic globalisation. The economic and existential uncertainties associated with globalism have caused deep divisions among those on the lower rungs of the global economy. Those hanging on by the skin of their teeth are ‘convulsed by anxieties’ (Bauman 1998a: 67). This group’s insecurities and fears about their own vulnerability are displaced onto others whose condition they fear and then converted into resentment

and contempt. The new poor are constructed as either lazy or criminal. What is left of the welfare state is blamed for their dependency. Some governments, such as ours in Australia, capitalise on this sentiment in order to justify their neglect of the poor and the further withdrawal of welfare services.

Both the plight of the neo-tribalised poor and the politics of resentment (McCarthy and Dimitriadis 2000) put considerable and contradictory pressure on education systems and international and transnational bodies. The increasing numbers of poor and their visibility in global media expose the inhumane face of globalism. As the poor around the world become more vocal and volatile, questions about social and global stability become pressing. Clearly, educational policies of inclusion are required under such circumstances. The difficulty is that national educational policies of inclusion are undermined by the pressure and values of globalism, by global consumer society, the minimal nation-state and by the politics of resentment. The poor are thus ‘banished from the universe of moral obligations’ (Bauman 1998b: 77). Further, the new rich have ‘externalised the costs of the unemployed’ (Beck 2000: 7) to the nation-state while, at the same time, they have withdrawn from it.

Given its declining tax base and the escalating demands upon it, the nation-state meets the educational and other needs of the unemployed and the poor with increasing difficulty. As a consequence, ‘The winners and losers of globalization cease to sit at the same table’ says Beck (2000: 7). A striking convergence emerges here. The new rich and the not-yet-poor tribes attack the welfare state, which thus comes under fire from above and below. This both further legitimises its contraction and permits the new rich to float free from responsibility for welfare and workers. Globalism is not usually blamed here; it is too vast, intangible and intractable. Rather, the them–us of neo-tribalism and the politics of resentment do its ideological work. Where, then, does the pressure come from for educational policies of inclusion to counter this situation? Certainly it is unlikely to come from today’s youthful consumer tribes as they are inducted into the libidinal economy via the global corporate curriculum.

### **Youthful consumer neo-tribes**

Global consumer culture reaches many via the globalised media, entertainment, travel and sport industries. These build an attitude towards lifestyle and also build networks and alliances—what Maffesoli calls neo-tribes and Hebdige (1988: 90, 91) calls ‘communities of affect’. They link globally like-minded people who share an interest in such particular cultural forms as popular music, TV, film, fashion, sport or travel and they are possibly nowhere more distinct than today’s young people. Child and youth consumers make up multiple niche markets with their own style, taste and customised consumer products and media forms. Permutations of what the press calls the Generation Y include ravers, rappers, hard-core skaters,

goths, hip hop, new Jack gypsy, iconics, twenty-first century soul, rockabilly and nerds.

For many young people, in the West particularly, the global consumer culture industries provide identity-building resources. Global consumer culture has become a surrogate for less attractive or unavailable sites of identity construction and community building—the church and school, for example. It plays such a strong role in the rapid growth and decline of various neo-tribes because of its appeal to emotions and desire. It is about longing and belonging, but also about separation and ‘distinction’ in Bourdieu’s (1984) sense of the term (see Kenway and Bullen 2001).

Through the global consumer culture industries the young are encouraged to build an individual identity through consumption rather than through paid employment. This pattern fits what Bauman sees as the general shift from a society of producers to a society of consumers—a society based on the values associated with aesthetics rather than the work ethic or, indeed, on ethical responsibility for others (1998b: 31). This society is, as Beck also argues, individualised and normalised around consumption. As educational consumers these youthful neo-tribes put pressure on national education systems to individualise and customise educational provision, for such provision to be as fluid as their identities, and to endlessly satisfy and gratify. For them the curriculum must be tribalised as well as ‘libidinised’.

### **Anti-globalisation activists**

The anti-globalisation movement is an extension of anti-corporate activism. According to Klein (2000), an increasing awareness of the many negative implications of the corporate world has led to a growing ‘reservoir of resentment’ and provided some of the impetus for the global growth of ‘anti-corporate activism’. Activist groups include ‘ethical shareholders, culture jammers, street reclaimers, McUnion organizers, human rights hacktivists, school logo fighters, and Internet corporate watch dogs’ (Klein 2000: 445). The anti-corporate globalisation movement exposes the negative human and environmental consequences of globalism (Yuen, Katciaficas and Rose 2001). It challenges global corporations and transnational organisations to change their practices, to take some responsibility for what Beck calls globality or transnational society, and to make public the manner in which they are doing so. Take an example of their cyberactivism.

McSpotlight is an information network run by volunteers from sixteen countries. Begun in 1996, the site originally covered the notorious McLibel trial. McDonalds sued two members of a small activist group for defamation over a pamphlet which, according to Klein (2000: 388), ‘used a single brand name to connect all the dots on the social agenda’. These included environmental issues, Third World poverty, nutrition, the exploitation of its child consumers and its youth employees, waste

and animal cruelty. Like many such sites, McSpotlight offers links to other activist sites as well as corporate homepages. For instance, the NikeWatch Campaign links to the Oxfam Community Aid Abroad Australia site, which contains reports, educational resources, lists of organisations campaigning for workers' rights and other campaign websites including United Students Against Sweatshops (USA), the Alberta Nike Campaign site and Adbusters (Canada).

What we are seeing here is 'life politics' (Giddens 1994), an awareness of global citizenship 'responsibilities' and the circulation of alternative knowledges and information. People in the anti-corporate globalisation movement refuse the ideologies of globalism, the politics of resentment and the neo-tribalism promoted by the global consumer culture industries. They understand they are part of a transnational society, with all the ethical and moral responsibilities that this involves. By and large, their activities point to potential for global citizenship in a de-territorialised and de-traditionalised world. They also put pressure on education systems to provide ethical leadership and to play a part in developing a new global ethical and moral community.

Together, the competing interests and needs of these new classes, tribes and subjectivities combine with the various agendas of international bodies, the global economy and consumer culture industries to exert contradictory pressures on nation-states and their education policies. On the one hand, global pressures exerted on the state concern themselves with the re-valuing of knowledge in terms of a marketable commodity; the re-configuration of the student/researcher as an entrepreneur in waiting; the re-working of curriculum towards 'infotainment', libidinal consumption and tribal identity; and the re-branding of education as an international service commodity. On the other hand, few international pressures, except for those of bodies such as UNESCO and anti-globalisation activists, are offering any counter discourse to this trend. Calls for equity, inclusion and commitment to a critical/ethical global subjectivity are struggling against global economic forces, and their articulation by the global elite. The state in globalising times, while acceding to the demands of 'corporate' international pressures, must additionally struggle to maintain its sovereignty, which leads to what is sometimes described as a schizophrenic condition.

### **THE SCHIZOPHRENIC STATE, SOVEREIGNTY AND KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY POLICIES**

In globalising circumstances, the nation-state leads a schizophrenic existence. The forces of globalisation and regionalisation compel it to address supraterritorial concerns and interests. Yet state and local politics also require it to address territorial concerns and interests. It must have an inward and outward orientation (Robertson 1992: 114). Sovereignty serves as an example of this dilemma.

States have been particularly responsive to supranational regulations that have required them to deregulate and become part of liberalised international or regional trade regimes. They have surrendered much sovereignty on matters of tariff reduction and protection to such regional political units as the EU, NAFTA and ASEAN, to such multilateral treaties as NATO and OPEC and such international organisations as the UN, the WTO and the IMF. ‘Post sovereign states’ (Scholte 2000: 139) have usually been readily responsive to the interests of global capital and have de- and re-regulated to allow corporate capital and corporate functionaries to readily operate across national borders. Beck (2000) argues that national politicians seem blissfully unaware that in so doing they are signing ‘their own death warrant’.

At the same time as signing away certain aspects of their sovereignty, nation-states have sought to maintain competitive *national* economies and the illusion of sovereignty, and to minimise public spending in line with the fluid taxation base associated with the global flow of capital. The move to post-Fordism in the global economy has been accompanied by a post-Keynesian/post-welfare mentality in the public sector. This has resulted in major changes in public policy and services and in public sector management. In the latter case, the state has drawn on organisational paradigms of business in the manner described in Beck’s notion of globalism, seriously blurring the distinctions between the public and private sector. Further, there have been dramatic shifts in the distribution of budgets from social security, public services and the public sector to ‘corporate welfare’, often for ‘footloose’ global corporations which are only too ready to take their business elsewhere if the state does not dispense such largesse.

It is estimated that the United States government spends \$150 billion a year on industry assistance, while in Australia the government spends around 14 billion taxpayer dollars a year propping up business. Some recent examples from Australia include:

- \$3.2 million grant to IBM for its e-Business Centre for Innovation in Sydney;
- \$70 million to US-based Syntroleum Corporation to develop gas to liquid technology in Australia;
- \$85 million for Mitsubishi’s car plant in South Australia.

Australian government officials refer to this process as ‘business investment’ rather than ‘business welfare’, but critics argue that such programs are not publicly transparent, making their actual effect on national economic development impossible to assess (Tooth 2002). Indeed, commercial-in-confidence arrangements prevent public scrutiny. Clearly the nation-state must attract investment in order to survive in the global economy but, paradoxically, the more it attracts global investment the more vulnerable it becomes.

The ‘new economy’ is strongly implicated here. All nation-states now recognise the global shift to information or knowledge-based/driven economies. Policies now emphasise ‘high skills’, knowledge assets, accumulation, workers and management, learning cultures and organisations, life-long learning and innovation and change. Indeed, such terms have become powerful drivers and levers of education and other policies in the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, among others. Typical responses are the UK White Paper *Our competitive future: building the knowledge-driven economy* (Department of Trade and Industry 1998) and Ireland’s *Implementing the information society in Ireland: an action plan* (Information Society Commission 1999). In January 2001, the Australian government released *Backing Australia’s ability: an innovation action plan for the future*. This policy subscribes to the view that new scientific and technical knowledge and a notion of innovation that stresses entrepreneurialism and commercialisation will help Australia to build a knowledge economy.

Education policy is caught both by the international pressures of globalisation and the need of the state to maintain its sovereignty. The result compounds the effects of globalisation on education. In order to maintain the illusion of sovereignty, the state adopts managerial, private sector discourses, thus forcing the re-valuation of education and knowledge. The discourse shift is away from education and knowledge as a public good and towards education and knowledge as commodities and the subjects of education as proto-entrepreneurs, ready to make deals in the global market. The irony is that, in its efforts to maintain sovereignty, the state is producing subjects whose loyalty is not towards it, or the community, but to the global market and the pleasures of symbolic consumption.

### **Hybridising educational formations and educational subjectivities**

As the state provides less money for education, it encourages other non-government agencies to become involved, partly through the discourse of partnerships. This, along with the global imperatives already noted, means that less conventional ‘players’ now offer various forms of educational provision. As a result we see a range of hybrid educational formations or educational ‘third spaces’ emerging. Some involve global–local, public–private partnerships, while others draw inspiration from the global consumer culture industries and blend culture and commerce.

National innovation strategies have been a catalyst for public–private education initiatives. It might seem that there is nothing particularly new about programs such as Canada’s SchoolNet Grassroots National Campaign. Corporations have long known of the advantages of educational sponsorship. What has changed is the way in which governments are now wooing corporate involvement in public education.

In March 1999, the Canadian Prime Minister challenged Canada's private sector to match the government's contribution towards a program designed to promote ICT skills development and e-learning in Canada's youth. By February 2002, this campaign had raised over \$4 million in sponsorship from the Canadian offices of Microsoft, AOL and Ericsson, which included not only cash donations, but also training resources and software. According to Industry Minister Allan Rock, 'Canada's SchoolNet and its innovative e-learning initiatives are tools that will help Canada build a critical mass of highly skilled knowledge workers' (Industry Canada 2002).

Likewise, corporations that have long had a peripheral relationship with education are playing a more central role in education provision. Classroom software is now produced by well-known entertainment providers including Disney, Virgin Interactive and the Discovery Channel. The Disney Edustation provides monthly cyberlesson plans for teachers at its website (Disney Online 2002). Children's popular culture icons no longer appear only on lunch boxes or stationery items; they are appearing in curriculum software, which increasingly combines educational and marketing imperatives with entertainment and advertising.

More innovative hybrids of entertainment and education are being developed by private non-profit organisations. Science and technology centres are typical of this trend. Significantly, they are no longer simply a school excursion destination, though they frequently serve this function. The Investigator Science and Technology Centre in Adelaide, South Australia, competes successfully with commercial entertainment venues and, significantly, this is a kid-driven phenomenon. Its appeal lies in its combination of multimedia, interactivity and spectacle. The Investigator has adopted many of the strategies we otherwise associate with commercial consumer culture, including facilities for children's birthday parties, New Year sleep-overs and member benefits. The popularity of the Investigator Science and Technology Centre suggests that the hybridisation of education and entertainment is unproblematic for most children.

Governments, it seems, are aware of this too. Planet Science (successor to the successful Science Year campaign) is managed by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) on behalf of the UK Department for Education and Skills. Its aim is 'to find sustainable ways to build partnerships, deliver innovative projects that work within the changing framework of science education, and challenge the stereotypical image of science' (Planet Science 2002). It does so, not only through its interactive website, but events and projects. It seeks to combine pleasure with education. In Australia, the National Science and Technology Centre, Questacon, is doing some of the government's ideological education work through its Smart Moves Program, a travelling outreach program 'promoting cutting edge research, new ideas and entrepreneurship in science, engineering and technology' to secondary school students (Questacon 2002). Smart

Moves is an initiative of *Backing Australia's ability: an innovation action plan for the future* (Commonwealth of Australia 2001).

Such initiatives are obviously well-intentioned, but they lead us to ask, what sort of human subjectivities and group identities are national systems trying to produce and appeal to through their knowledge economy and innovation policies? Australia's knowledge economy policies, for example, clearly seek to produce 'knowledge workers', those 'who apply established intellectual and scientific skills in work geared to the ends laid down by the owners or controllers of large scale industrial and administrative complexes' (Sharp and White 1968: 31). The difficulty for Australia, however, is that such knowledge workers have a global rather than nationalist sensibility. They are potentially among the footloose labour elite.

What Australia actually wants to produce is entrepreneurial, innovative, internationally connected and globally competitive subjects who will produce and commercialise knowledge in Australia's *national interest*. Australia's knowledge economy policies thus seek to produce and appeal to national sentiment. The policy *Backing Australia's ability*, for example, reframes features of innovation process like 'risk taking' in familiar terms linked with Australian cultural identity such as 'having a go' (Commonwealth of Australia 2001: 3). It invokes the stereotype of the Australian heroic 'battler' and 'digger' when it describes Australians as

a creative and determined people [who] when confronted with challenges and opportunities, rise to the occasion. ... Through the efforts of our scientists, researchers and entrepreneurial business leaders, all Australians will prosper. (Howard 2001: 3)

Rhetoric of this sort is not unique to Australia. One US institute claims that the purpose of its work on technology and the new economy is 'renewing the American Dream for a new economic era' and harnessing 'American ingenuity and entrepreneurial dynamism' (Progressive Policy Institute 2002).

Nixon (in press) has identified a similar discourse, with pronounced nostalgic cultural resonances, in Australian media coverage of young IT entrepreneurs and their educational trajectories. As her analysis indicates, the juxtaposition of nostalgic images of Australian identity—of mateship, larrikinism, the Aussie battler—with the image of a successful subject in the global information economy is something of a contradiction. Indeed, in the context of the new economy, there are a number of striking contradictions within such discourses.

The nation-state seeks to rally citizens to work towards a common national cause or benefit, but such rallying cries may well be at odds with many of the new classes, tribes and subjectivities globalisation has created. Certainly, they are somewhat irrelevant to the de-territorialised global elite. They ring hollow to the

new poor and the anti-globalisation activists, and they hold little appeal for the youthful neo-tribes of global consumer culture. Ironically, the collective good is being invoked at the same time as public support systems, and social institutions such as schools, are losing their ability to provide social cohesion. In the absence of institutional, ideological and ethical certainties, young people today have increasingly taken up the alternatives offered by the global culture industry, the corporate curriculum and the new youthful tribalism we have discussed. Not surprisingly, those hybrid educational forms that seek to produce knowledge workers through pleasure rather than patriotism tap into this.

Innovative hybrid educational formations that blend science, technology and/or the arts and entertainment with a hands-on approach seek to normalise and embody knowledge. Their appeal is futuristic rather than nostalgic. The aim is to produce engaged and innovative knowledge workers. However, global–local, public–private, culture–commerce educational hybrids such as those discussed above may not produce knowledge workers either. Instead of rendering knowledge a complex and reflexive pleasure, the danger is that they may well reduce it to mere sensation, a consumer item. What this does is assist the shift from a society of producers of knowledge and innovation to one of consumers. In a sense, such hybrids continue to operate within an economic rather than a social paradigm. They are connected with the ‘new economy’, not a new society. As Bauman (1998b) explains, this is because the values are associated with the aesthetics of consumer culture, rather than the work ethic or, indeed, ethical responsibilities for others. They reflect the hegemony of globalism over globality.

## CONCLUSION

As a function of globalisation, national education systems are under considerable pressure to change. We have shown that they are under pressure from all sides: from above and below, from the rich and the poor, from consumers and protestors. But, as we have implied throughout, the most pressure comes from the power–knowledge–pleasure dynamics associated with globalism and consumerism. A wide range of hybridised educational forms has arisen in nation-states as a result of such pressures. And, as we have also explained, these serve best the global and labour elite. To a large extent, such educational forms, and those global forces that drive them, help to ensure that globalism and consumerism are reproduced through education—with some exceptions and contradictions, of course. At the same time, there are opposing pressures on education systems and supra- and transnational bodies to address matters of social and global inclusion and justice. More broadly, global changes in political and socio-economic structures also create new ethical imperatives. The Education for All policy statement we noted at the start of this paper is an obvious response to such pressures. But do statements like this go far enough? Do they provide genuine ethical leadership? Do they seek to produce new global modalities of citizenship? We think not.

Absent in such policies is Beck's notion of globality or world society that we introduced at the start of this paper. The global knowledge economy and the global culture industries are not the same as the global knowledge society. A major question for us all as educators and researchers, then, is this: How can global civil society be theorised, nurtured, sustained and promoted? What new knowledge is necessary for the production of the global civil society, the stable and peaceful global community, which Education for All aspires to achieve?

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