

RESPONSE

The university, Prevent and cultures of compliance

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Introduction: cultures of compliance

As Ben Martin argues, recent years have witnessed a decisive move toward centralised, hierarchical, managerialist decision-making structures in UK universities. Likewise, he identifies a central paradox at the heart of these changes. Centralisation, bureaucratisation and the ever greater top-down managerial control of academic life have been paralleled, and legitimated, by the language of decentralisation and freedom. This reflects the ‘fundamental paradox of neoliberalism [where the] use of government intervention to establish and regulate markets’ is masked by the rhetoric of the free hand of the market (Letizia, 2015, p.33; see also Harvey, 2005; Klein, 2007). Likewise, the privatisation of universities, resulting from the wholesale reduction of government funding, is paralleled by an increase of government regulation of what universities do (Docherty, 2015, p.42).

Such paradoxes are echoed in the specific focus of this article. As part of the 2015 Counterterrorism and Security Act, passed in April 2015, the current UK government has placed a statutory duty, now enforceable by criminal law, upon a broad range of institutional authorities, including departments of social work, hospitals, schools and of course colleges and universities, that in their policies and practices they have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. This is the latest in the tranche of ‘anti-terror’ legislation introduced since 2000 and of the Prevent stream of Contest, the government’s overall counter-terrorism strategy. This paper seeks to explore the likely impact of the ‘Prevent duty’ on the life of the contemporary neoliberal university and the manner in which it enmeshes and deepens further a culture of compliance, restricting inquiry and speech in the name of academic freedom and promoting distrust, inequality and alienation in the name of protection and duty of care. To do so, the paper will therefore examine the two distinct but potentially complimentary threats posed by encroaching cultures of compliance within universities evident in and relevant to the Prevent duty.

In the first place, I want to argue against the stated purpose of the Prevent policy, that in fact the statutory duty and much of the broader field of government measures of which it forms part, has little or nothing to do with preventing people being ‘drawn into terrorism’. Rather, they are means to institute a bureaucratised technology of surveillance and compliance directed primarily at a ‘suspect community’ of British Muslims, predicated on a rejection of multiculturalism and the promotion of an integrationist agenda.

Doing so, I want to suggest, adopts a specific ideological model to explain the roots of political dissent, social alienation and critical inquiry, exemplified in the flawed conception of ‘radicalisation’, drawn from the fusion of a dominant strand of academic ‘terrorism studies’ and arguments derived largely from neoconservative perspectives. This political project and form of thought underpins the logic of the Prevent duty, brought to bear in an assault on the university.

Second, I want to explain my concern about the likely effects and outworking of this statutory duty in the context of the market-orientated, risk-averse managerialism of the neoliberal university. I want to argue that the greatest problem we are likely to face is that the very nature of the bureaucratic order of the contemporary university will likewise promote a culture of control and compliance, for students and staff, in what is able to be said, taught and researched. In that context, too, I want to point to the considerable and politically oppressive work the deployment of apparently anodyne concepts such as ‘risk’, ‘safeguarding’, ‘protection’ and ‘reputation’ does in these circumstances (see also Coppock and McGovern, 2014).

Britishness and ‘extremism’

I start with what, given its ostensible purpose, might be looked on as quite a strange, but perhaps revealing feature of the Counterterrorism and Security Act and the statutory duty it contains. It is of more than passing interest that the 2015 Act and the statutory duty do not apply to, or in, Northern Ireland. Given the duty’s stated aim, this might lead one to think that the British government views the North as a haven of sanity, security and social cohesion where there is little fear or no prospect of anyone being ‘drawn into terrorism’ because of anything someone might say or do in a school, university or prison.

Indeed, this goes further. In October 2015, framing the logic of the Counterterrorism and Security Act, the British government introduced a new counter-extremism strategy with the stated purpose, as the Home Secretary put it, of forging a ‘partnership between government and all those individuals, groups and communities who want to see extremism defeated’ (Teresa May in HM Government, 2015a, p.7). This counter-extremism strategy will not take force in Northern Ireland. Now, in part, it should be said, this is a matter of practicalities because introducing these measures into the North would require approval by the Northern Ireland Assembly and so the support of a party and a wider constituency of people who know only too well what it is to be treated as a ‘suspect community’. That is not likely to happen.

But what is also striking about the government’s new counter-extremism initiative is the clear (and politically significant) identification of the values the strategy is taken to defend, with Britishness. The ‘liberty we cherish, the rights we enjoy, the democratic institutions that protect them’ are, according to David Cameron in his foreword to the document, ‘our distinct, British values’ (HM Government, 2015a, p.5). This echoes the 2011 Prevent strategy (HM Government, 2011, p.107) definition of ‘extremism’ as the ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs’. In the government’s eyes, ‘extremism’ is understood as the antithesis of values that are not so much universal

as intrinsically, inherently and distinctly, if not uniquely, British. A valorised vision of Britishness leads the then Prime Minister to insist it is important for everyone, whether ‘Sikh, Jew, Muslim, Hindu or Christian’, to also see themselves, as he put it, as a ‘proud Brit’ (HM Government, 2015a, p.5). The political significance of such an idea is cast into stark relief in post-Good Friday Agreement Northern Ireland, where the principle of the ‘parity of esteem’, the right of any citizen to be recognised as ‘Irish’ rather than ‘British’, perhaps problematises the identification of such ‘values’ as essentially ‘British’. I think I could also make a good case that an avowed sense of British identity and loyalty to the revered institution of the Crown, even when not advocating violence itself, has been a form of extremism, acting as a driver of loyalist violence in Northern Ireland. So, too, the formally enshrined intolerance of popery of the Orange Order; whose annual marching day is a public holiday (Holder, 2015).

Yet, even stepping away from the particular political divisions of the North, its exclusion from the Prevent duty might still seem surprising. Northern Ireland has seen little in the way of Islamist militancy, but central to the official discourse is that radicalisation is not solely concerned with the threat from Islamism, but also very much with far-right extremism and racist hatred, something from which Northern Ireland is very far from immune. Once dubbed the ‘race hate capital of Europe’, Belfast is still home to orchestrated attacks against ethnic minority communities; throughout the North one of the most obnoxious dividends of the peace process has been a substantial rise of racism and racist violence. As Daniel Holder (2015) of the Belfast-based Committee on the Administration of Justice recently noted, given the extent of far-right activity and racial attacks in the North, ‘Whitehall seems strangely relaxed about not applying its flagship strategy here’.

Why does this matter? Well, beyond the bounds of Northern Ireland, it reveals something significant about the political project that is implicit in and underpins the logic of the Prevent duty and its likely effects in universities. That, as with the broader Prevent agenda of which it is an expression, is founded on an integrationist model of Britishness designed to shape and discipline, to generate and enforce compliance in the everyday lives of a targeted population. I will return to this theme later, but first I address something a little more basic.

‘Non-violent extremism’ and ‘ungoverned spaces’

What is it that the Prevent duty is asking universities to prevent? Let us be clear that it is not terrorism. Or rather, at the very least we might say that the Prevent duty is entirely unnecessary if its aim is stopping terrorists or the advocacy of violence. How so? Well, first because preventing people being ‘drawn into terrorism’ refers to two possibilities: that people may become involved in terrorism, or that they may come to support terrorism through (loosely defined) ‘terrorism-related activity’. Both these dimensions of being ‘drawn into terrorism’ we should note are circumstances that lie in the future. The Prevent duty is not, then, concerned with people who are involved in either, but with a form of ‘pre-crime’ (McCulloch and Pickering, 2009), with people who might be, in some, as yet, unrealised, unspecified possible future.

In any case, and even more to the point perhaps, there is already a plethora of laws and wide ranging powers to deal with people who are involved in terrorism, realised or threatened, in promoting political violence, or in other ‘terrorist-related activity’. This is, in fact, implicit in the government’s Prevent duty guidance for higher education institutions (HM

Government, 2015b). The ‘encouragement of terrorism and the inviting of support for a proscribed organisation are both criminal offences’, it notes, so universities ‘should not provide a platform for these offences to be committed’ (HM Government, 2015b, p.4). Well, nor, in already existing law, should anyone else, and you do not need a statutory duty to enforce what is already criminalised. There is also already a range of laws and international human rights standards in place to deal with some of the things taken to fall under the rubric of that problematic term, ‘extremism’, that do not in themselves constitute ‘terrorism’. You do not need a statutory duty, for example, to challenge or stop people disseminating ideas in universities based on racial hatred or incitement to racial discrimination or violence. These laws, these offences, already exist, to say nothing of the various codes of practice that universities themselves have in place to counter discrimination and inequality.

The second point is that ‘extremism’ does not necessarily include supporting or advocating violence. This was the most important shift in the 2011 version of Prevent that otherwise largely aped earlier New Labour policies and perspectives. However, the 2011 update of Prevent identified something that it called ‘non-violent extremism’ as crucial in the process of radicalisation. This was new, at least in legislative and policy terms.

The uncoupling of the concept of ‘extremism’ from the advocacy, never mind the practice, of violence was a vital stage in broadening the scope of ideas and actions that could be criminalised and a necessary precondition for the logic of the Prevent duty. ‘Non-violent extremism’ was now conceived as a loose, open and potentially shifting amalgam of views on a wide range of issues with little or nothing to do with violence or terrorism; a vaguely defined ideological well of illiberalism which, in the view of the Prevent duty guidance, ‘can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists can exploit’ (HM Government, 2015b, p.3).

Therefore, the logical policy outcome was to engage in what was termed ‘counter-ideology’ work. To demand, as the then ‘independent reviewer of terrorism legislation’, Lord Carlisle (HM Government, 2011, p.2) did, that ‘interested organisations’, including those in the ‘student arena’, be called upon to ‘declare unequivocally that they oppose extremism’. Or, as the Prevent (HM Government, 2011, p.9) document itself declared, in Orwellian terms, that there should be ‘no ungoverned spaces in which extremism is allowed to flourish’.

What the denial of ‘ungoverned spaces’ meant in practice was soon trialled by the then education minister, author of *Celsius 7/7* (Gove, 2006) and self-declared arch neoconservative, Michael Gove, who quickly established a task force of ‘specialists’ on ‘how terror networks infiltrate Britain’. This taskforce, as the *Sunday Express* (2011) enthused at the time, was designed to ‘target schools that indoctrinate children with the ideology that prepares them to commit acts of terror’. The result, of course, was the Trojan horse scandal, and the high-profile public allegations, originating from an anonymous letter uncritically accepted as truth (Miah, 2014), of an Islamist conspiracy to take over a number of Muslim majority schools in Birmingham. This provided Gove with the opportunity, as he put it, to ‘drain the swamp’ and ‘not wait for the crocodiles to reach the boat’ (BBC, 2014).

As some reports have found, the Trojan horse affair has had a profound, chilling effect in schools and Muslim communities, disrupting lives and careers. If it prevented anything, it has ‘prevent-ed education’ (Miah, 2014). And this despite the fact that a series of Ofsted reports on the targeted schools found, directly contrary to what had been alleged, there was ‘no systematic and coordinated plot to take over these schools [or] of any concerted

and deliberate plot to promote radicalisation and violent extremism of Muslim children in these schools or elsewhere' (Mogra, 2016, p.19). The result was also the introduction of measures whereby – paradoxically, given 'liberalising' government rhetoric, but tellingly – the 'state has entered more fully into the lives of children and families through limitless government regulations' (Arthur, 2015, p.311). Not least where the supposed failure on the part of schools to comply with an arbitrarily administered new edict to promote British values is, again tellingly, equated with a failure to identify extremism (Arthur, 2015, p.324); perhaps the sign of things to come for universities.

The way in which 'ideology' is conceived in the Prevent document, and the over-determining role of ideas as an explanation for social action, is also important, not least for universities as places ostensibly dedicated to the generation and dissemination of, and critical reflection on, ideas. So, too, is the notion that there is such a thing as an 'ideology of extremism', as David Cameron (2011) has argued, that is the 'foundation, the driver of terrorism'.

Here I think there is a replication of the categorical and conceptual error that Brecher and Devenney (2010, p.1) identify in the idea of terrorism itself. As they note, 'terrorism' names no political ideology so that "terrorism" would be a matter of creating, inducing or spreading terror as an end in itself, rather than as a means to some other end'. So, we might say that a supposed ideology of extremism constructs extremism not as a radical version of a particular ideology, but as the pursuit of extremity in and of itself. Indeed, this is precisely the conceptual space that is, I think, intended to be opened up. The idea that people, groups, individuals and social networks pursue the extreme for its own sake also lends itself to de-politicised and psycho-social models of explanation and causation, echoing pseudo-scientific 'storm and stress' psychologised visions of the young that constitute them as being more prone to the attraction of extremity in all things.

The problem with 'radicalisation'

This is fertile ground for the dominant ways in which the process of radicalisation is understood. As Kundnani (2012, pp.3–5) has argued, the very concept of radicalisation emerged as the master signifier of the late war on terror as a vehicle for policy makers once again to talk about what made political violence happen when the rhetoric of evil proved insufficient as a means of conceptualising, justifying and implementing policy. But radicalisation was conceived in such a way as to move any focus and analysis of causation away from the macro-structural level (of politics, of economics, of policy and foreign interventions) to micro-process-based explanations (Coppock and McGovern, 2014, p.248); from the realm of inequality and grievance, to that of networks, identity, alienation and individual psychological vulnerability. The explanatory vacuum, created by the politically-driven unwillingness to recognise the effects of wars abroad and injustice at home, fuelled this psychologisation of social problems, or the 're-casting of social and cultural problems as psychological ones' (Furedi, 2003, p.27).

Thus, ideology and the realm of ideas also become an overwhelming focus of concern, as does the alleged vulnerability of those at risk of radicalisation. Powerful, disciplining concepts, already familiar in many realms of social life, are thus securitised in the name of counter-radicalisation; not least in terms of the supposed antidote to vulnerability; safeguarding and a duty of care. As we have seen most starkly played out in the racialised gendering

of the Muslim woman in the war on terror as, alternatively (sometimes simultaneously), monstrous threat and helpless victim; vulnerability ideologically legitimises intervention. Domestically, this is built into the model of radicalisation, and particularly applied to the young. The vulnerable, construed in psychological terms, are thus viewed as prone to the potentially malign influence of social networks and subverted social bonds – usually referred to as the ‘bunch of guys’ theory (Sageman, 2008). Indeed, conjuring dangerously with metaphors of sexual abuse and exploitation, the vulnerable become victims of grooming by the disseminators of extremist ideology. The regular deployment of the language of paedophilia is not, I think, co-incidental. In the Prevent duty, as applied to university students, we are seeing extended to young adulthood an infantilising model of securitised child protection.

And so, in the contrived absence of being able to talk about people coming to see the world differently, radically, on the basis of the social, economic and political order that shapes their lives, two approaches to understanding and identifying radicalisation emerge: cognitive radicalisation and behavioural radicalisation (Neumann, 2013). What an individual might say and how they might act in the everyday, other than in ways that evidence support for violence or violent acts themselves, become indicators of radicalisation. Given the instrumental *a priori* assumptions at work, the focus falls firmly on the body and voice of the individual as the site not only for understanding how radicalisation happens, but also for how it will manifest itself. The body and the voice of the individual become the object of concern for generating compliance.

And it is from this that we end up with the rationale of the Prevent duty and the two distinct ways, as outlined in the government’s guidance (HM Government, 2015b), in which universities are called upon to enforce compliance with the duty. The first concerns the vetting of external speakers and events to decide, prior to the speech or event taking place, whether the views that *might* be expressed run the *risk* of being extremist, therefore ‘drawing people into terrorism’, or that they are ‘views that are shared by terrorist groups’ (HM Government, 2015b).

University authorities are told that if they do invite extremist speakers, they must ensure they are ‘challenged by opposing views at the same event’ (Sian, 2015; HM Government, 2015b). Universities are also exhorted to exercise extreme caution and be fully convinced that any risks of people being drawn into terrorism by such an event can be fully mitigated. Dire warnings indeed when falling on the ears of risk-averse organisations. Again, all this is predicated on the model of young adult protection, ostensibly protecting the now psychologised, infantilised and vulnerable student subject from extremist grooming.

The second element of the Prevent duty concerns the vetting and surveillance of students themselves; similarly played out on the unstable axis of vulnerability and threat, of future victim and potential terrorist. And this is where the problematic models of supposed cognitive or behavioural radicalisation come fully into play. Staff are to surveil their students in order to report changes in behaviour and outlook. Some staff are apparently to be trained to recognise the designated signs in order to respond appropriately, which in essence means reporting people to the police or the Channel programme (HM Government, 2015b). In the wake of the introduction of the Prevent duty, there has been a considerable spike in the number of referrals to Channel.¹

Such signs of extremist deviance may therefore take behavioural form (people’s actions) or cognitive form (the ideas or views they express). To the first will then be applied what we might call the ‘government of the body’; to the second (borrowing from Seamus Heaney

via Thomas Docherty) the ‘government of the tongue’ (Docherty, 2015). If the advice given elsewhere is to be applied in universities, behavioural signs to be subject to scrutiny and governance might include the sudden or unexpected adoption of religious forms of dress or the ‘unexpected growing of a beard’ (Wandsworth Family Information Service, 2015). I assume this means unexpected to the observer rather than the observed. The views expressed, now subject to the government of the tongue, could include outpourings ‘about governmental policies, especially foreign policy’ or belief in government conspiracies (Wandsworth Family Information Service, 2015), which, I think, covers almost all of my students. Although of course, it does not because almost all my students are white and, despite the protestations of proponents of Prevent that they deal with all the children of radicalisation equally, this issue is profoundly racialised.

Duly trained university staff will also be expected to be able to recognise vulnerability to radicalisation in their students (HM Government, 2015b, p.4). Again, if the sort of advice given to schools is extended to universities, this classifies innocuous, sometimes personally-difficult circumstances, thoughts, feelings and behaviours as deviant and potentially dangerous (Coppock and McGovern, 2014). It targets young people showing a desire for excitement and adventure, those who are isolated, those with low self-esteem, those introspectively ruminating about faith, identity and belonging, those who want to fit in with a group, or distance themselves from a group, those who adhere to strict religious practices, and those who reveal rebellious, transgressive behaviour.

Indeed, one might also assume that the advice given to schools in this search for signs – that children may ‘display different signs or seek to hide their views’ (Department for Education, 2015, p.6) – is even more applicable to older students, more practised in the art of deception, making this search for radical signification all the more fraught and Kafkaesque. Maybe it is the student who is displaying none of these signs and saying none of these things who is really the hidden extremist – the unheard, unseen, unknown radical threat, as Donald Rumsfeld might have put it.

Neoconservatives, the assault on multiculturalism and universities as ungoverned spaces

So, where did this conception of non-violent extremism and its imagined relationship to radicalisation come from? Why is it associated with an attack on intrinsically ‘British’ values, and what has this got to do with universities anyway? The answer is the evocation of British values evident in the Prevent guidance and in the promotion of what David Cameron, the UK Prime Minister, terms ‘muscular liberalism’. This he contrasts with the supposedly limp and impotent arguments of what is interestingly now called not the ‘hard left’, but the ‘soft left’. Cameron trailed this focus on non-violent extremism in his 2011 Munich speech, where the link with an integrationist agenda was all too evident (Cameron, 2011). The problem of radicalisation was laid firmly at the door of self-segregating communities. Muslim youth alienation was rooted in a lost sense of belonging and, ultimately, the failure of what was termed ‘state multiculturalism’.

Cameron’s attack on state multiculturalism, from which the logic of the Prevent duty emerged, had a much longer lineage. It was, as one commentator (Hassan, 2011) notes, the result of the ‘pernicious influence of a neoconservative faction within the Conservative party

seeking to reconfigure the rationale and focus of counter-terror policy. Michael Gove had won'. As the leading neoconservative at the heart of government policy-making in recent years, Gove has indeed been influential in framing the logic that underpins the current Prevent duty. A stout advocate of using force to intervene abroad, Gove has cast the domestic world similarly as a Manichean struggle between extremism and totalitarianism on the one hand, and British values, muscular liberalism and the open society on the other. It is not by chance that at the height of the storm around the Trojan horse scandal it was to Karl Popper's tolerance paradox that Gove turned to defend his call to drain the swamp and deny the public square to views inimical to liberal values (BBC, 2014, p.7).

Hardly surprising either – and certainly not unconnected – that Gove was at the forefront of the campaign to leave Europe, which, for the right at least, has long been a barely-sublimated euphemism for its antagonism toward migration. The management of migration, migrants and migrant communities is embedded in discussions of Britishness and, as Arun Kundnani (2007) has argued, the movement of an integrationist model of Britishness from the fringes of the extreme right in the Thatcherite era through to the centre ground of British politics in the shadow of the war on terror, and current models of radicalisation.

In this pronounced identification of a certain conception of liberal values as quintessentially British, there is, I think, an exemplar of what Paul Gilroy (2006, p.27) refers to as 'postcolonial melancholia', a 'social, cultural and psychological blockage' that is the 'after effect of imperial domination', the same sunset-hued light of imperial nostalgia in which sections of the far right tend to bathe, and that today prevents the development of a durable and habitable multiculturalism. As Gilroy further argues, the sustained onslaught on multiculturalism in the wake of 9/11 has always been based on the erroneous assumption that 'solidarity and diversity cannot co-exist' and it is this that has given the impetus toward a 'wholesale re-evaluation of the tarnished notion of Britishness' (Gilroy, 2006, p.29). The result, he insists, is the 'militarisation of everyday life' as a defining feature of our time that relies in large part on the insistence that we 'must now become fundamentally and decisively the same' (Gilroy, 2006, p.30). It is a process which also sees the securitisation of civil institutions so that citizens increasingly become not only the object of surveillance but its means.

It is perhaps telling of the times in which we live that Gilroy's remarks were made during his inaugural lecture at the London School of Economics, one of those campuses identified in 2010 as a breeding ground of extremism by Douglas Murray, then head of the now defunct neoconservative think tank, the Centre for Social Cohesion (2010, p.v). Since 2011, however, Murray has been Associate Director of another prominent neoconservative think tank, the Henry Jackson Society, which, along with its close affiliate organisation, Student Rights, has been at the forefront of the campaign targeting universities as supposed sites of radicalisation (see Sutton and Stuart, 2012; Sutton, 2015). Michael Gove is a signatory to the Henry Jackson Society's statement of principles.

The idea that universities have been sites of radicalisation has long exercised the minds (not to say the spleen) of Conservative and neoconservative think tanks. Certainly this neo-conservative clique has been central in the targeting of universities as ungoverned spaces, breeding extremism and so in need of regulation, control and surveillance. When the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee (2012) examined the roots of extremism in 2012, the Henry Jackson Society provided much of the evidence purporting to demonstrate

that universities were particularly prone to Islamist efforts to radicalise and recruit. The Committee (2012, p.18), however, found that there was seldom evidence that people were radicalised in universities, and that emphasis on the role of universities by government departments as sites of radicalisation was disproportionate. Even so, the same committee then went on to complain that some universities may have been complacent in challenging extremists and to provide further guidance. This was gleefully picked up in *Preventing Prevent*, a Students Rights/Henry Jackson Society report which neglected to point out that the committee's conclusions contested their own findings (see Sutton, 2015, pp.11–12).

In a similar vein, and in a splendidly circular argument, *Preventing Prevent* contends that student complaints about the nature of the Prevent duty – that it is racist, targets Muslims as a suspect community, prevents free speech, stigmatises vulnerable people and calls on lecturers to spy on students – themselves become evidence of the insidious influence of extremist narratives and extremist groups on students (Sutton, 2015, p.8). In other words, and again demonstrating a perverse logic Orwell would have recognised, voicing such criticisms is itself construed as evidence of extremism, or of people being influenced by extremism and therefore, perhaps, of being drawn into terrorism.

The neoliberal university

But surely the robust cultures of universities, havens of critical inquiry and stout defenders of the principles of free speech, will be more than a match for this assault on unfettered learning in the name of clamping down on ungoverned spaces? We have witnessed, happily, many voices raised from within university hierarchies expressing just such a position. The new vice-chancellor of Oxford University, Louise Richardson, no less, has called on universities to allow the airing of objectionable ideas so that students can develop the capacity to frame a response (Espinoza, 2016).

And she should know. As well as being a long time expert on what terrorists want (or so, at any rate, the title of her book on the subject declares), as an undergraduate many years ago in Trinity College, Dublin, along with a friend she was, she claims, recruited by the student branch of the IRA – the surely infamous and much feared Trinity College wing of the republican movement! Unlike her friend, she managed to resist actually joining, and the fledgling VC ‘remained in the background ... making sandwiches in the kitchen’ (Richardson, 2006, p.5).

More seriously, also implicated in this debate are the changing place, role and ethos of the university and whether these are likely to enhance or undermine its capacity to resist the challenge presented by the Prevent duty. There is plenty here about which to be concerned.

For those of us working and learning in higher education, the paradox noted earlier, where schools, reformed in the name of liberalisation, witness an ever-greater encroachment of state regulation in the everyday lives of the young, has parallels closer to home. So, too, the apparent paradox, of the shape and purpose of higher education being driven by the deregulation of markets even as, simultaneously, the university is targeted as a prime ungoverned space requiring governance and control, is resolved if we understand that the transformation of universities as civic spaces into privatised financial concerns is one in which thought is to be compelled, policed and governed by the logic of neoliberalism and the market itself.

As Ben Martin amply demonstrates, in so many aspects of academic life, from the rise of performance targets to the governance of research and research ethics, the baleful emphasis on accountability that is a hallmark of new public management acts less as a means of encouraging critical, academic thought and practice than as a managerial technology of oversight, surveillance and discipline. In so many spheres, we see, all too clearly, evidence of the growing domination of managerialism over aspects of university life and the de-professionalisation of our profession in the name of professionalism. Management in the neoliberal university is characterised by the combination of free market rhetoric alongside intensive managerial control practices (Lorenz, 2012, p.600). Establishing the purpose of the contemporary university, as one colleague once told me (without even a hint of critique, concern or irony) as the pursuit of ‘market-led academic freedom’; an echo of the market democracy to be found beyond the bounds of the academy.

More immediately, the very form of the Prevent duty, its institutional and bureaucratic ordering; the generation of patterns of rules, procedures, screening and assessment tools, techniques and regulatory benchmarks performs an important ideological function, giving a sheen of scientific rationality to a set of practices that is anything but, and a claim to predictive power based on little empirical grounding (Coppock and McGovern, 2014). Such bureaucratic and regulatory forms chime all too well with the audit culture and the measurability-obsessed new managerialism of the contemporary neoliberal university. As a political project and system of values reflecting the radical shifts in contemporary capitalism, neoliberalism finds its organisational arm in this new managerialism as a mode of governance now extended into the public service realm and the provision of health and education (Lynch, 2014). Its key features encourage monitoring (including self-monitoring) regimes ‘through the widespread use of performance indicators, rankings, league tables and performance management’ (Lynch, 2014).

It is just such a culture of monitoring and self-disciplining that is mirrored in the Prevent duty provisions, where the performance indicators in question are now the indices of expressive non-radicalisation, and staff and (even more so) students, particularly Muslim students, are compelled, in this sense, to perform non-extremism. For the neoliberal university, any allied social, political and moral dilemmas are similarly reduced to managerialist issues of governance and regulation (Lynch, 2014). I think there is a link here too, if more diffuse, with that integrationist vision of Britishness. In the alienating, atomising state of flux that is the world of *homo economicus*, a nostalgia-hued sense of Britishness provides a soothing balm, a mirage of fixity in time and space. The insecurities that give rise to the cultural backlash of homogeneity are the product of those very forces of neoliberalism that forge just such a need.

More specifically, we might also point to the manner in which the logic of the market is manifest in regimes of target-setting and the attraction of research income as an end in itself. A logic that coalesces happily with the generation of service research, where *a priori* assumptions and built-in conclusions align with, and underwrite, government policies – not least in theorising and developing models of radicalisation – stupefying the capacity of universities to be sites of resistance. Nor should anyone be particularly surprised that universities have become sites of the surveillance and disciplining of ideas in the name of countering terror and extremism, given the central role that academics have played in inventing those very terms as a way of constraining thought.

It is worth remembering that while the focus of the Prevent duty is on events featuring external speakers and the surveillance of students, it extends to off-campus events which are

in any way affiliated with, funded or branded by the university. For the university as business, managing the brand and risk to reputational capital is a central concern (Cronin, 2016). As a model of risk management, the Prevent duty mirrors trends evident in managerial strategies adopted in today's university, not least in the increasingly bureaucratised ethical scrutiny of social research, where such risk management also has a colonising tendency. Martyn Hammersley (2010) argues that the ethical regulation and governance of research has witnessed considerable mission creep in recent years, and in a very particular direction. Predicated on an expanding conception of minimising risks and claiming predictive powers unsuited to the nature of social research, the drift from ethical judgement to monitoring regimes again evidences a process of de-professionalisation. Risk involves manufacturing uncertainties; it is the product of institutionalised expectations of control, and calculations based quite as much on fantasy as fact, and nowhere more so than in terms of one of the great phantoms of our age – terrorism (Yates, 2001, pp.97–99; Beck, 2008).

The concept of 'reputation' has become a powerful and corrosive organising principle. One recent study in *Sociology* examined evidence that the research ethics committees of UK universities can be used to restrict research that can be embarrassing for the institution. University managers may use them for internal discipline, including instances of research on terrorism and extremism (Hedgecoe, 2015, p.1). Central here, it is argued, has been the mutation of risk management to reputation management and embedding ethics procedures within the increasingly managerial structures of the university, leaving them open to the pursuit of market-defined institutional interest (Hedgecoe, 2015, p.11).

In this, we may be following the experience of US universities, accustomed to the vagaries of marketisation, where there has been a pattern of deploying research ethics processes and oversight as a 'device[s] to frustrate and deter potential threats to an institution's reputation' (Librett and Perrone, 2010). In such ways, the managers of the neoliberal university can silence by deploying a subverted discourse of protection. The language of reputation can become the mask of compliance and censorship.

There are certainly important ethical issues here for academics and other professionals being called upon to comply with the Prevent duty. But they are unlikely to be those most widely heard. One dissenting voice is that of Derek Summerfield, the critical psychiatrist who recently called upon the General Medical Council, deafening in its silence on the matter, to condemn the mandatory attendance of NHS staff, including mental health practitioners, at Prevent awareness workshops. For Summerfield (2016) the Prevent duty represents a modern day McCarthyite regime of spying and scapegoating, and is wrong because it is a corrosion of the ethics of the doctor–patient relationship, designed to prime doctors and others 'for an activity which is a duplicitous deviation from their medical' responsibilities (Summerfield, 2016).

These medical ethical issues, Summerfield continues, are particularly acute for psychiatrists, who have particular access to a person's intimate thoughts and perceptions. Likewise for academics, who invite students to discuss their views and perspectives on, say, the politics of Palestine, or the ethics of violence, or the nature of terrorism. How are academics – or students – to function honestly in this over-governed space? Looked at another way, if in a debate on the state's use of torture, someone makes an argument for the validity of the ticking bomb scenario, should this be adjudged contrary to values of freedom and democracy, and the international human rights-based prohibition of torture? If an argument is presented in support of the illegal war in Iraq, to whom should this evidence of extremism be reported?

In a sort of pale imitation of the calculated offsetting of political risk that characterises new western forms of remote control warfare (Shaw, 2005), the nexus of risk-averse managerialism and the deployment of research ethics procedures in reputation management will confound the capacity for critical research and inquiry into issues of political violence, terrorism and extremism. This is precisely the sort of research that the university, as a site of civility rather than a culture of compliance, should be embracing.

Note

1. The Channel programme is that part of the Prevent strategy focused on state agency interventions, with young people identified as 'being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism' (HM Government, 2015c, p.5).

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