

# EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS: TO BE SOCIAL JUSTICE OR NOT TO BE.

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WHO LET THE DOGS OUT?



## INTENTION

- To get feedback on our current thinking
- To exchange ideas
- To hit a performance measure.



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# LET'S START WITH A QUESTION

Or could it be about sharing learning, collaborating on projects, and supporting the education of our future social justice warriors?

## WHAT GETS YOU OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING?

(Or why do you choose to teach?)

Is it making sure your business division is financially viable?

Is it money?

Is it fame?



**Ka tomo te vaka i te 'atu 'anga ngaru. Kare ra te  
Rangatira tiratiratu e maremo**



The canoe might sink in the breaking wave but the wise  
navigator will not drown  
(Movono, 2021)



# MAPPING OUR INTELLECTUAL TERRAIN

Neoliberalism has created a new social ontology, a discourse which has established seemingly self-evident truths and, as such, “neoliberalism has become the water in which we swim” (Wilson, 2017, p. 50).

As a hegemonic discourse it positions itself as common sense and simultaneously excludes alternative ways of seeing and being in the world.



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almost the third part of the  
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then diserve either Land  
peoplē, or Comodities

# MAPPING OUR INTELLECTUAL TERRAIN

"It's easier to imagine the end of the world  
than the end of capitalism"  
*Capitalist Realism*, Mark Fisher

WEEK 28

JULY

2018

MONDAY

9

FRIDAY

13

TUESDAY

10

SATURDAY

14

WEDNESDAY

11

SUNDAY

15

THURSDAY

12

NOTES

JULY

M T W T F S S

21 22 23 24 25 26 1

2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12 13 14 15

16 17 18 19 20 21 22

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

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# CROSS ROADS

**EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS:  
TO BE SOCIAL JUSTICE OR NOT TO BE.**

*Social Justice*

*Neoliberalism*



# THE CHOICE WE MAKE AT THE CROSSROADS

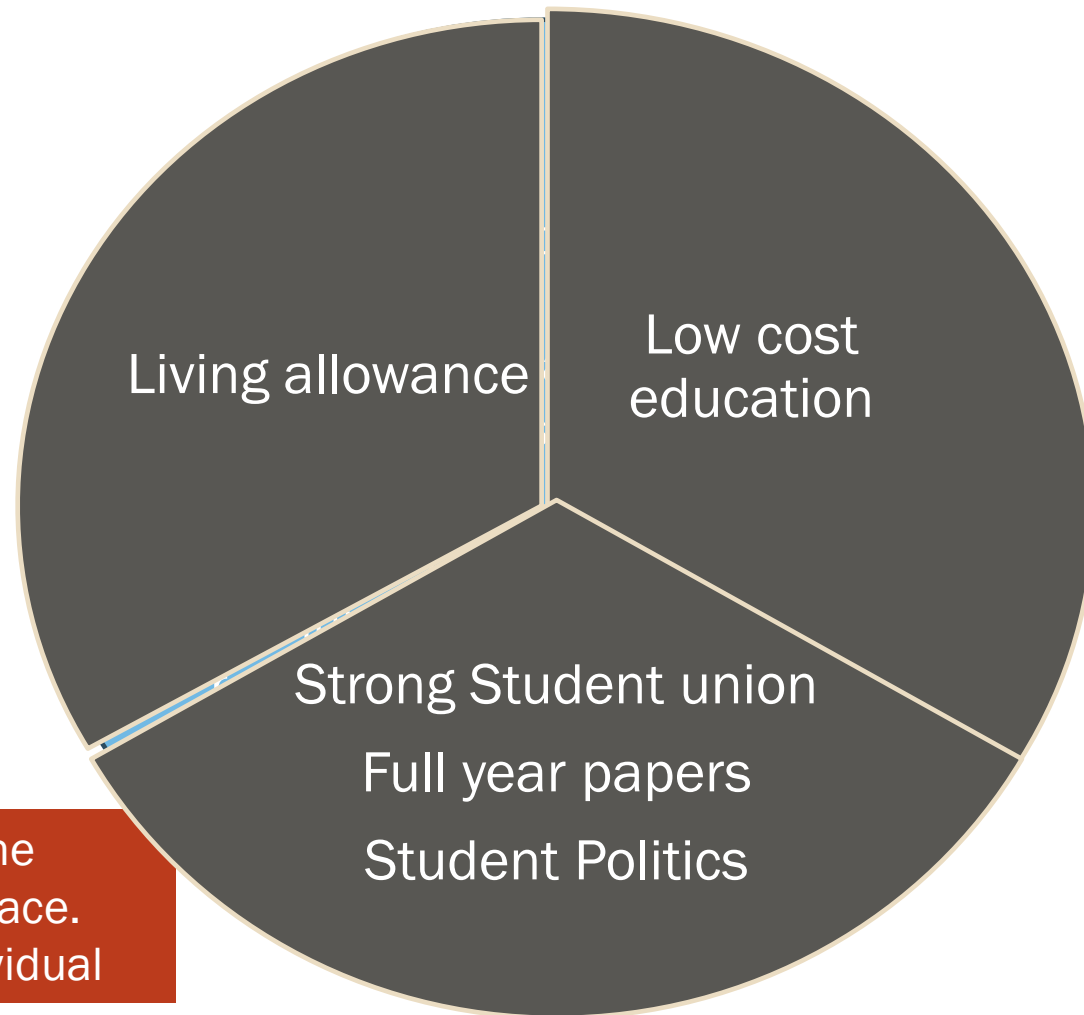
- The dominance of the market model remains largely unquestioned. We regularly hear about 'efficiency', 'business divisions' (rather than schools), 'financial viability' and sustainability (economic not environmental). Within neoliberalism, education is just another commodity, to be bought and sold in the market.
- Yet as Ruth (2018) has powerfully argued, there is *a core element in education which is destroyed when education is commodified*. That core element has to do with relationality and contextualized understanding which is at odds with education construed as an industry or market in instrumental and economic terms.
- Our contention is this is not known by policy makers (or if it is they don't seem to care), nor by the leaders that action policy directives.
- We (as people who stand for social justice) have a duty of care to our learners, to stand against an ideology that reduces them to the economic value of 'bums on seats'.

# NEOLIBERALISM



- Neoliberalism has been the dominant political and economic ideology since the mid 1980s
- "New Zealand's political history from 1984 to the present is best understood as centrally involving the rise, modification and entrenchment of a neoliberal policy regime" (Roper, 2024).
- The neoliberal regime is the perspective which supports ,
  - *"the complete reorganization of social existence in pursuit of narrow economic interests ... [it] normalizes ideas and behaviour that would appear obscene outside of an economistic frame of reference" (Berdayes & Murphy, 2016, p.1, cited in Ruth 2018). #jobcutsatchristmas*
- By the late 1990s the notion of "education serving as a form of public good" had all but disappeared from official policy discourse (Roberts & Peters, 2008, p.3 cited in Ruth, 2018).
- The language (discourse) within education has shifted over this time. Students seen as consumers, colleagues as competitors, Productivity measures, Standardization and Uniformity are common themes.
- Education is about individual marketability, success being that of economic gain (Matapo and Baice, 2019).
- Student initiatives are undermined by the pursuit of economic and financial goals often encouraged by the tertiary institution (Savage, 2013). This results in cutting support services to learners that need them and non-profitable courses not being offered (often these courses for many have been pathways into education).

# CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE: IN MEMORIAL OF THINGS LOST



A rational actor in the educational market place.  
A self maximising individual

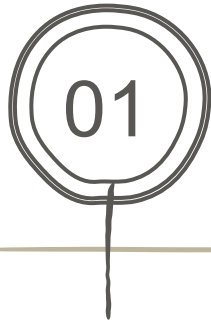
# SOCIAL JUSTICE AS COUNTER NARRATIVE



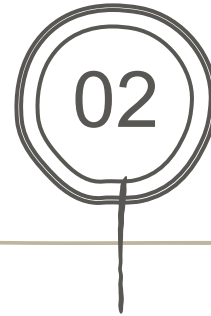
- Social justice is the pursuit of a just society, one where economic, political, and social inequalities are addressed and where the rights of individuals and groups are respected and protected. This includes equitable access to resources (such as education, healthcare, and employment), and protection against discrimination based on race, gender, class, sexuality, ability, and other identities. It also advocates for systemic changes to ensure that historically marginalized or oppressed groups are given equal opportunities and support (Sen, 2009).
- In the context of higher education, we are concerned with those resources that revolve around knowledges which are translated into various forms of capital.
- Despite working in a neoliberal context, social workers can engage in ethical practice through empowerment practice and social advocacy, guided by social justice principles (Renau, Stanley-Clarke, & Mafile'o, 2023).
- Resistance is not futile.

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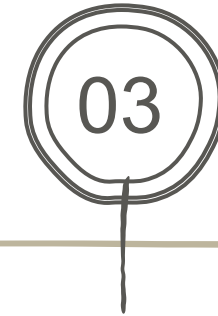
# Counter Hegemony in and around the Classroom



Teaching  
pedagogy  
important.

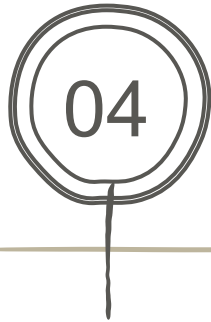


Redefine notions of  
success

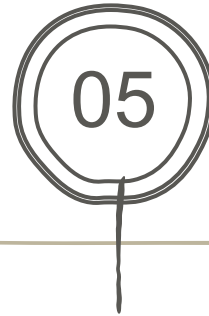


Understand the personal  
and collective values of  
your learner

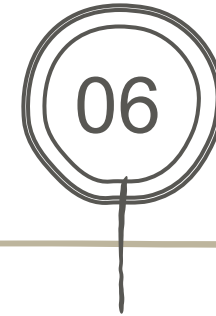
# Counter Hegemony in and around the Classroom



Assist akonga to develop authentic notions of themselves

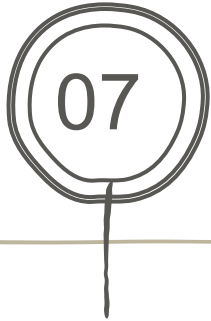


Connect the personal to the political.  
Name the ideologies that frame student's lives.



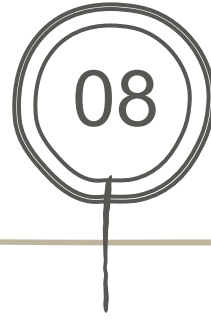
Narrative approaches

# Counter Hegemony in and around the Classroom



Indigenous  
involvement

Benseman et al (2006)



Involve whanau where  
appropriate



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Aiga Night 2024

Counter Hegemony in action

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## Counter Hegemonic Practices

Emphasis on continuous use  
of whanaungatanga

Inclusion of  
Indigenous stories and  
methodologies

Expand learning and benefits  
to wider communities

Demonstrate living Te Noho  
Kotahitanga

Tuakana-Teina

Humour

Patterson (2012)



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“WHERE THERE IS  
**POWER**, THERE IS  
RESISTANCE.”

- MICHAEL FOUCAULT

APPLIED WORLDWIDE

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