What is Enrichment for (?)

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Abstract

Does participation and interest in enrichment

'*...presuppose not only dispositions associated with long establishment in the world of art and culture but also economic means…and spare time'*?

Bourdieu

It has long been held that schooling, the curriculum (hidden or otherwise), and the pedagogical practices pertaining to them are the perpetrators of social and economic inequalities in Western society. My interest surrounds the role of 'enrichment', as an auxiliary of education, in perpetuating or restricting social justice. As the enrichment coordinator within an inner city Sixth Form college, it became part of my remit to research the dispositions held by our largely underprivileged student base towards enrichment; and to investigate which aspects of enrichment represented the knowledge, norms, and values which students found to be either alien or habitual.

Attempts to proffer a viable definition for the term 'enrichment' seem wrought with difficulties. Maybe as a starting point we could say that 'enrichment' has replaced the expression 'extra-curricular' activities - a change in educational nomenclature perhaps for euphony, as well as to heighten the basis for schools and colleges to offer more than just a diet of qualifications. Greater significance has been afforded to 'enrichment' - perhaps as 'performativity' - since it claims to allow an individual to further oneself both intrinsically and instrumentally, whilst also

benefiting wider society. This paradox, as propagated and elevated by neo-liberalism, along with its speedy transformation to a form of credentialism, has blunted the term's comprehension. In the past, the aims of extra-curricular activities were less ambiguous; their purpose perhaps was for ingratiating learners into the schooling domain in a fun and inclusive way.

However, since the start-up of 'Education PLC'[1], there has been an axiomatic shift between students, parents, and educational institutions towards behaving as interchangeable producers and consumers - a phenomenon which is leading the return of neo-Marxist lineaments, such as 'social' and 'cultural' capital, to the forefront of debates concerning social justice – since *capital* is a prerequisite for successful decision making and navigating in a market economy. In our current epoch, enrichment plays an increasingly prominent role as a form of middle class parental strategy for class reproduction, yet the state sector faces a sublating 73%[2] slash in funding for enrichment entitlement. This begs a seemingly ephemeral question…what is enrichment for?

1 See Ball, S.J. (2007) 'Education plc: private sector participation in public sector education'. London: Routledge.
2 YPLA funding for 'entitlement' has been reduced from 114 hours to 30 hours per student

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Rationale

The customary moral and ethical challenges that I face as teacher are extended to my involvement in the coordination of enrichment activities at the Sixth Form College; and have further perplexed my understanding of the tautology of enrichment. Thinking about my responsibilities towards the provision of enrichment often requires me to engage with what I would call *the phenomenological and structural divide*. In other words, I often question whether the main focus of enrichment should seek to incorporate the student lived experience/preference, or to introduce the '*practice'* and '*Capitals'* (Bourdieu) esteemed by the predominance of our socio-economic system. My gambit for thinking about this problematisation is to ask whether enrichment, as a structuralist agenda, should encourage the attainment of 'cultural capital' for marginalised learners, even at the expense of their phenomenological preferences. This also raises further questions about the *form* and *content* of enrichment. In terms of *form*, we might consider how enrichment *functions* within a school or college, whilst *content* concerns the criteria for any given activity to be accepted and categorised as enrichment. Both form and content impact what enrichment is for, as both contribute to how enrichment can play a significant role in analysing class reproduction and advancing social justice.

The work of Pierre Bourdieu was selected as the primary theoretical framework with which to address this investigation centred upon the provision of enrichment for 'disadvantaged' learners; and where I argue that in today's world, more so than ever, enrichment as an auxiliary to mainstream education greatly explicates Bourdieu's powerful notions (habitus/capital/field) in conveying both the

overt and nuanced mechanisms of the reproduction of socio-economic inequities in society. I draw upon the empirical research to provide some insight on how the internalisation of the contingents relating to 'disadvantage' impacts students' dispositions towards enrichment.

Enrichment within the SFC[3] exists as fourteen clubs and societies under the auspices of disciplines such as Performing Arts and Dance, to Sports, Science, and Humanities, as well as university/careers activities. This broad mix, academic and non-academic, 'high' and 'low' status, can obscure one's attempts to ascertain what enrichment is for. Students will come across enrichment activities such as 'Talking Politics', 'Medic-link' and Capoeira sat alongside University trips and Black History Month, most of which take place on Wednesday afternoons and are optional - which also raises complex questions regarding intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The frequency of activities and student participation varies throughout the academic year, and as a fairly optimistic estimate, approximately 15-20%[4] of students have been involved in the college's enrichment offering at some point throughout 2010-11. This introduces the central problem to this report: the majority of students (bearing in mind that two thirds of the student base belong to lower socio-economic groups) have not taken part in any enrichment (as framed by the college) at all. This study aims to develop an understanding of students' (dis)engagement with enrichment, if and how it benefits participants, and to ascertain *what enrichment is for* when serving a largely disadvantaged student base.

3 For the academic year 2010-11

4 This figure would be higher if we were to include activities belonging to university/careers such as university trips and time spent in careers centre

Introduction

'...invite people round — as diverse a selection as you can — and, from an early age, develop the expectation that your children will join in with the conversation'.[5]

This advice for zealous parents captures a contemporary notion of social and cultural capital. It also exposes (intrinsically as a publication devoted to the subject of child nurturing), the systematisation of home advantage as a somewhat cottage industry of mainstream education; where educational consultancy, seminars, books and resources are purveyed to parents keen to maximise the life opportunities available to their child. Vincent and Ball have investigated 'enrichment' as a 'response to the anxiety and sense of responsibility experienced by middle-class parents as they attempt to 'make up' a middle-class child in a social context where reproduction appears uncertain' (2007:1061). They also note that '*involvement in 'enrichment activities' is class specific: an indicator of 'good' parenting', and contrarily, 'working-class parents are much less likely to see their children as a project for development. Instead, the children just are, with characteristics, skills and talent being understood as more fixed and static'* (1068). However, this structurally-centred project is not just for the preparation for seamless transitions with schooling, '…but to formulate the beginnings of a CV for the child. A proven track record in music, drama, art or sport can increase a child's attractiveness in a competitive school market' (1072).

In light of the increasingly competitive *field* of education (in terms of the in/formal provision and consumption of education within its marketplace), a

5 Times review of C.J Simister's book 'The Bright Stuff', where the excerpt was used to showcase an example of the author's ideas on child development
http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/article7055822.ece last accessed 18 Nov 2010

discursive approach will be taken to analyse how post-compulsory educational policy and strategy in the UK has sought to contribute to the instillment- and thus formalisation- of *'enrichment capital'* among students in the state sector; with a particular emphasis on the needs of the under-represented groups least likely to share education's inexorable social/cultural capital backdrop. Hence the importance of this report is magnified by the severe spending cuts to 'entitlement' provision (umbrella term for enrichment, pastoral care, university/careers guidance – in other words, those activities representing the social and cultural capital normally found in the home) due to the coalition government's 2010 budget[6]. These austerity measures are made in spite of the sheer abundance of research on social class and education converging towards a salient and resonant truth: that parental background remains the most consistent predictor of a child's social mobility. Recent research and analysis from the 'Millenium Cohort Study' (MCS) reveals the magnitude of this problem, especially if exacerbated by the ongoing spending cuts in education: 'I*nequalities are socially structured not just by income poverty, but also by related dimensions of social stratification such as parental education and social class. These dimensions of stratification are in turn related to human, cultural and social capital resources, and to related behaviours'*[7]. Is it fair to say that enrichment is for compensating for the existence of 'dimensions of stratifications'? The stringent relationships between social class and educational advantage, and the extent that equality of opportunity rests upon social and cultural capital (intensified in context of education as a positional good), evokes how Bourdieu's analyses are applicable to

6 Indication of 'entitlement' (key skills, tutorials, careers, sports and enrichment) for 2011-12 suggest a severe reduction in hours from 114 to 30 hours

7 Alice Sullivan, Heather Joshi, Sosthenes Ketende, and Polina Obolenskaya, 2010, 'The consequences at age 7 of early childhood disadvantage in Northern Ireland and Great Britain', Institute of Education, London http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/text.asp?section=00010001000500150021 last accessed 15 Jan 2011

enrichment as a contrivance belonging to his broader notion of education as a 'reproductive' process.

If this is indeed the case, then why do schools and colleges with a largely underprivileged student base not invest a greater proportion of their overall resources towards developing social and cultural *capital* as a precursor to raising aspirations and academic success?

Either way, whether enrichment is for the development of *capital* as a status signifier, as a motivator for the joy of learning, or as an enabler of academic ability, one might ask why it continues to play a cameo role in the everyday educational transactions of disadvantaged learners.

Bourdieu's 'Thinking Tools'

Bourdieu's work is vastly popular across many disciplines searching for concrete analytical frameworks with which to explore systems of social self-organisation. The confrontational nature of his methods of inquiry propound the researcher to delayer the specificities of any given social context, both sociologically and philosophically. For example, his analyses can be used to uncover how ever changing familial strategies and *capital*s can gain and maintain a competitive advantage for a child's life opportunities: '*Academic capital is in fact the guaranteed product of the combined effects of cultural transmission by the family and cultural transmission by the school (the efficiency of which depends on the amount of cultural capital directly inherited from the family)*' (Bourdieu, 1986: 23).

It is his notion *capitals* - such as 'social' and 'cultural' capital - which probably enjoys the most widespread usage due to its expedience in allowing one's acquaintance with the concept of monetary value to be translated into non-monetary modes of exchange; Bourdieu considers these to be "transubstantiated" forms of economic capital. In this sense, the accumulation of 'enrichment capital' (interspersed with other *capital* such as 'cultural', 'social' and 'symbolic') can be considered to be an increasingly key determinant for successfully playing the *field* (such as the marketplace for higher education and job prospects).

Bourdieu also purports that 'cultural capital' takes time to acquire, and that 'the length of time for which a given individual can prolong his [*sic*]acquisition process depends on the length of time for which his family can provide him with the free time, i.e., time free from economic necessity' (in Mills & Gale, 2010:44-45). The

empirical research undertaken at an inner city Sixth Form college undoubtedly reveals cases of impoverished free time, and concurs with Bourdieu's view that limited time to acquire cultural capital is a marker for disadvantage.

His work also reveals him to be the master of 'relationalism', where the habitus is only one part of the sum: 'The habitus is thus both structured by conditions of existence and generates practices, beliefs, perceptions, feelings and so forth in accordance with its own structure' - which *act* together with *field* and in a relationship which leads to *practice* as formulated:

[(habitus)(capital)] + field = practice

'This equation can be unpacked as stating: practice results from relations between one's dispositions (habitus) and one's position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field)' (Maton in Grenfell 2008:51).

Hence, the empirical research was designed to go beyond habitus alone, and to gather the students' formations of their subjective dispositions towards enrichment as an objectified form of 'capital' when 'playing the game'. When considering this wider context, does 'enrichment', both in theory and in practice, support or dissuade social justice?

I liken the exclusivity (both form and content) of enrichment to Bourdieu's analysis of the 'symbolic violence' (conveys a sense of disadvantage -albeit tacitly- by the way in which it undermines students whom self-exclude from 'official' enrichment) that he uncovered during his research on the expansion of the French educational system, and the consequent marginalisation of the working classes: *'Not only did pupils suffer as a consequence of their marginalization, they were taught*

that their failure to perform well academically and to reap the benefits of academic success were a result of their own lack of natural talent' (Schubert in Grenfell 2008:185).

Thinking Relationally in Practice

This section applies Bourdieu's three pronged approach to *thinking relationally*[8]*,* and outlines further details about the empirical research methodology which was undertaken as part of my role as the enrichment coordinator in a Sixth Form College.

The research sample[9] was selected on the basis of pre-established indicators for the measure of disadvantage, such as whether the learner is an EMA recipient and or a First Generation Applicant to Higher Education. (It is acknowledged that poverty may not be the most accurate descriptor for disadvantage, but remains nonetheless by proxy the best available at this time). The process of establishing 'disadvantage' was augmented by further research into GCSE attainment, the decision making process surrounding A-Level subject choices, attitudes towards higher education, and discussions about existing approaches to studying - an area which was afforded much insight by the learners completion of weekly Planners.

8 Bourdieu advocated a research methodology which sought to uncover the playing 'field', the 'objective structures' within it, and the 'dispositions' active in the 'game'.
9 The respondents were selected from a sample of A2 Level (2nd year) students. This simply allows the investigation to access those students that have attended college for more than one academic year.

Several research techniques geared towards *thinking relationally* were implemented:

- A record of participation levels for enrichment activities,
- Learning survey (based on Carol Dweck's 'mindsets', and Guy Claxton's 'learning power'[10])
- Learner weekly planners,
- Student focus groups, and
- Semi-structured interviews.

This broad and comparative methodological approach identifies consistencies and patterns with regards to the respondents' dispositions towards education, learning, and concomitantly, enrichment. The Learning Survey was administered for the purposes of researching three key areas: attitudes and beliefs towards academic potential, home life and background support for learning, and approaches to self-organisation and independent learning. As well as easing discussion during the Semi-structured interviews, the Learning Survey coincided and cross-referenced with the weekly Planners. For example, divulged responses concerning the level of parental input in homework juxtapose with the many responsibilities included in the students' weekly remit (such as babysitting and looking after younger siblings, being carers for parents, house hold chores, and part-time work), as revealed by the Planners. By illustrating such responsibilities (unduly or otherwise), the research uncovers the students' freedoms, choices, and decision making processes towards utilising their

10 Guy Claxton 'Building Learning Power' see http://www.buildinglearningpower.co.uk/ and Carol Dweck (2006) 'Mindset', Random House

impoverished spare time thus painting a rich 'mental picture' of the practical implications of their learning. The Focus Groups and Semi-structured interviews also reinforced the existence of such organisational obstacles by revealing some of generative and psychological issues affecting self-belief, efficacy and the *universal unease* with schooling and education which normally hinders non-traditional learners.

Disadvantaged Dispositions: the 'inheritors' and the 'newcomers'

Bourdieu argues that one's ability to benefit from the education system is dependent upon 'the greater or lesser affinity between class cultural habits and the demands of the educational system or the criteria which define success within it' (in Mill & Gale 2010:14). The 'inheritors' (the bourgeois) are of course those in close proximity by virtue of their learned cultural traits and tastes; distinctions which set them apart from the 'newcomers' (the populace). Thus 'affinity', which effectively comprises Bourdieu's habitus/capital/field, is essentially education's most pressing problem: 'with their reduced access to the cultural capital of the dominant, marginalised students are at a disadvantage in the classroom, suffering educational repercussions for having a cultural capital that is in the wrong currency' (Mills & Gale, 2010:2).

Therefore marginalised learners fail to benefit on two accounts – firstly, the idea of enrichment as demonstrating greater learner engagement beyond their compulsory education, which transubstantiates as capital when weighing up and applying for future prospects; and secondly, 'enrichment' as a marque which designates a range of activities to a taxonomy of 'worthy' pursuits (again devaluing activities outside of this classification). In this case, marginalised learners face the consequences of how '...the education system confers legitimacy, prestige and value (symbolic capital) upon the culture of the middle class, constituting it as cultural capital' (Cossley in Grenfall 2008:96).

The empirical research revealed responses which certainly contend the view that structural circumstances play a major role in the decision-making processes regarding enrichment; hence outdated instrumental rationality is replaced by

bounded rationality as a more pertinent model for accepting the framing and limitations to agency freedom - *'students see themselves and the way they are seen by their peers, teachers and fellow community members, fall largely into two categories: those with a reproductive habitus, who recognise the constraint of social conditions and conditionings and tend to read the future that fits them; and those with a transformative habitus, who recognise the capacity for improvisation and tend to look for opportunities for action in the social field'* (Mills & Gale, 2010:90).

Since the *value of capital* depends on social recognition (tantamount to various other cases of social constructions of reality, such as how a 'currency' needs both a buyer and seller in order to function), we must also question how certain contingents and positions within the field are objectified. Especially when we consider that 'Every individual, on Bourdieu's account, has a portfolio of capital. They have a particular amount or volume of capital, and their capital has particular composition' (Cossley in Grenfell 2008:89). There are of course great doubts about the legitimacy and objectivity of social and cultural capital: 'hierarchies of value are in reality purely arbitrary rather than being grounded in intrinsically worthwhile and superior principles'.

It has also appeared to be the case throughout the empirical research that students' processes of prioritisation and lack of freedom often overrides their interest and ability to partake in enrichment. Some learners struggling to meet the demands of their main programme of study felt that they could not afford the time luxury to attend enrichment, others had to collect younger siblings from nursery and school, or merely failed to identify with staying behind at the end of the school day for an "extra lesson".

It is also useful to consider the phenomenological dimension of learner engagement towards enrichment by considering the dialectic between *structure* and *agency*. As an entree to this discursive analysis, we might ask if the opportunity cost of choosing (agency) to attend enrichment is greater for a disadvantaged learner if their environment is less harmonious with schooling's decree (structure) for education. Perhaps Bourdieu's use of *Conatus* is useful for thinking about the subjective formulations adopted by students and the extent of the opportunity cost. Fuller offers a definition *of Conatus* as 'a particular psychological concept: those impulses that develop and express themselves (more or less) in response to particular aspects of the social conditions' (in Grenfell 2008: 174). Furthermore, it is strikingly evident, as will appear, from a great deal of my empirical research that *'...the subjects tend to rationalize both personal failure and personal success so as to uphold the overall logic of the social order from which they emerged, or what Bourdieu called amor fati. The mark of conatus is that people adjust their subjective expectations to match their objective chances*' (2008:175). Indeed, one respondent exclaimed, "some people are alright with failing", in a somewhat extreme example of 'adaptive preference' – a notion often explained with the allegory 'the fox and the grapes', where a wandering fox attempts to reduce the dissonance of not been able to reach the higher grapes by his concluding that they would probably taste sour.

The 'latecomers' - Enrichment as Reproduction.

The research raises questions about the existing framework for enrichment. Whilst the great efforts of teachers have resulted in well-established and distinguished enrichment, it remains the case that a disproportionately large segment of disadvantaged students fail to access any enrichment at all. Undeniably, the main undercurrent revealed by the research suggests that in terms of enrichment and utility, students seldom engaged with the idea of enrichment as something holding intrinsic value, and to be considered as a part of their wider learning schemata. - 'The inequalities associated with cultural capital reflect inequalities in capacities to acquire capital which themselves reflect prior inequalities in the possession of cultural capital' (Moore in Grenfell 2008:109). This, by proxy, denotes some evidence of disadvantage in a socio-educational context; a finding made more potent by the follow up response to a question on how enrichment, instead, could be utilised extrinsically:

> One respondent (student #2) attended 'Life Drawing' but gave it up (even though they "really enjoyed it") after switching their degree option from Art Foundation courses to Journalism, suggesting, "life drawing is not useful for applying for a journalism course". They believe that enrichment "should consist of something relevant for what I want to do at uni", or "something relevant for my subjects".

> Similarly, student #12 felt discouraged from pursuing their passion, “I thought about doing Art enrichment because I love Art but it might not take me anywhere”.

When prompted, these respondents did not feel that they knew how such enrichment activities can be interwoven in personal statements, and be useful for discussion in job interviews, let alone contribute to forging character and a sense of self. Hence ‘disadvantage’ is illustrated on two fronts, that which fails to accord sufficient intrinsic value to enrichment, and that which does not recognise how to utilise the possible extrinsic position. Are these stances indicative of students lacking *social capital*?

Attempts to define ‘enrichment’ were frequently met by the view that enrichment is as an extension of a taught subject, and therefore as a supplementary session for the ‘highly motivated’. Conflating enrichment (albeit inaccurately) with another college offering known as the ‘Extended Project Qualification’ (EPQ) was also very common. Some interpretations by the respondents of what enrichment is for are outlined below:

> Student #11 was adamant that enrichment exists for gaining subject specific support - “I used to go English workshop” (falsely considers this to be enrichment. ‘Workshops’ are a separate offering), and, “enrichment is better when its sticks to the subject because it will help with A-Levels”, where perhaps, “if a student does well in their subject then they can do other enrichment to experience new horizons”.

In a much less assured response, student #10 grappled with their explanation, “Enrichment is like a personal project where you kinda do your own enrichment... it is something hard”. Though admitted thereafter, “I don’t really know much about enrichment...is it something to do with UCAS points?”

Incorrectly conflating enrichment with UCAS points was also quite common, as enrichment does not confer UCAS points. Student #3 says that with enrichment “you get UCAS points and you get to choose what you want to do”, whilst another interviewee (student #6) “heard of enrichment from a couple of friends”, but felt that there was no need to partake in enrichment because “(they) already have enough UCAS points”.

“Enrichment either fits into one’s future plans or not, for me it should be about letting loose and being happy” says student #7. They considered their involvement in basketball to be enrichment, and thus a “break from the norm”. They had on rare occasions attended the ‘Talking Politics’ club, and emphasised, “but only to get help with homework”.

Student #1 felt that they speak on behalf of their peers: “enrichment is for different subjects”, “people don’t take it as seriously, it’s like you got this choice, and there’s not enough information on it”, and, “there’s no point if I don’t do that subject”, besides, “I’m not that motivated to go, to stay behind

until 3.15”… and, “the one time I did go it was not as much fun as I would hope it to be… we just sat down and listened to people”…“it’s another lesson”.

“If it (enrichment) was related to my subjects then I would want to go, to have more of an understanding of the subject”. Therefore, student #9 did not attend any enrichment because none was available for her subjects.

Student #14 had a good handle on the theme being explored and shared their insight on the lack of interest in enrichment amongst less advantaged learners. He felt frustrated by his friends’ attitudes towards education, and believes that enrichment fails to capture their imaginations because “the last thing students want after a hard day in classes is to do more of the same. It should be something that takes you away from it”.

Another example links school experiences with enrichment and interest in post-compulsory enrichment. Student #4 was quite lucid - “I never took part in any enrichment at school which is probably one of the reasons why I don’t do any now!” For him, enrichment is “extra classes which help you develop your skills I think”, and “doesn’t want to be suffocated with education”, preferring instead to “do things to get your mind away from things”. His hobbies and interests include playing Snooker and attending the Gym, but these would not be considered enrichment if offered within the college because “it (enrichment) should be to help with studies”. This student was

> keen to elaborate, “Enrichment don’t really motivate me... motivation is something enrichment is trying to do but isn’t really doing it”, it is, “for people focused on studying to gain the extra grade”. When queried about some of the non-subject related enrichment available, they responded, “my friends inside and outside college are very different”, preferring to spend their spare time with friends from outside of college as he can relate to them more.

The latter comment fundamentally bears comparisons with students from lower socio-economic groups and their impenetrability when ‘moving’ between home life and schooling. It has also become apparent from the research that developing interest in enrichment may depend on encouraging peer influence. Student #10 did not feel that enrichment was something for them because, “I don’t have any friends that do enrichment”, whereas another respondent #14 recognised the power of peer/friendship groups and behaviour - “If you are surrounded by motivated people then you are more likely to be motivated yourself!”

In returning to some of the earlier responses, it is clear that the interviewees wanted a break from lessons (and perhaps education) which enrichment did not offer, and continued to underline enrichment as a form of subject-specific-support for motivated students wishing to improve their grades. My concerns are that this view alone can lead to self-exclusion if less traditional learners have, as they often do, downgraded their academic aspirations as a means to justify their apathy towards to enrichment. However, self-exclusion also goes beyond this perception. In one quite reifying example, an ambitious Economics student #17 decided at the very

last minute against attending enrichment which involved a guest speaker's talk on the current coalition government, even though it was made explicitly clear that it would help improve her understanding (as desired by the student) on the government's policies for tackling the budget deficit. She exclaimed that she was "too embarrassed" to attend the event. This incident strongly hints at Bourdieu's 'feel for the game', where one may find themselves in a context that is out of sync, without knowing why…

> 'Imagine, for example, a social situation in which you feel or anticipate feeling awkward, out of your element, like a "fish out of water". You may decide not to go, to declare it as "not for the likes of me"...in this case the structuring of your habitus does not match that of the social field' (Maton in Grenfell 2008:57).

Other common framings of enrichment are provided by students whom regard enrichment to be a trade-off with their main programme of study, social life and family responsibilities:

> Student #10 discussed their responsibilities towards caring for three younger siblings in their UCAS personal statement because they had not participated in any enrichment. Their family errands took priority over their education overall, hence denying them the luxury of being able to afford the time to attend enrichment.

"I need the extra time for revision, those other students who do loads of stuff don't need the time to revise like I do" was another respondent's (student #5) rationalisation for not attending enrichment. They add, in a small step away from articulating middle class advantage, that those students would not take part in enrichment "unless their mum and dad tell them to do it". Furthermore, the accustomed inclusion of enrichment within a personal statement was frustratingly for them a missed opportunity - "to be honest I only thought about uni a month before UCAS" – and speaks volume about their access to social capital since university was considered at such a late stage. This failure to capitalise on enrichment for the future expectation of writing a personal statement is a common occurrence for disadvantaged students yet to formulate their life trajectories.

Student #6 ponders the substitution to be made between enrichment and their social life: "(socialising) is better for confidence", since enrichment, "is just more studying". Perhaps this is a failure on part of the college to convey enrichment as anything other than an academic pursuit. Furthermore, this retort that social skills outweigh academic skills is widespread among less traditional learners.

For student #12, being interviewed on enrichment led them to think that they were in trouble! "I didn't know I had to go enrichment, I thought it was like a thing where you could go or couldn't go". They continued to defend their position, "it (enrichment) is like a club where you go there and do that

> particular thing and that's it"…"I'm like into lessons and revision and that's it, especially cos I don't wanna lax in A-levels and flop this year". They were also quite concerned…"wouldn't that (enrichment) affect study and homework? That's the reason I didn't go because I didn't want that to be affected."

The latter comment is similar to the next response provided by student# 9 whom cites their family as the reason for their lack of interest in enrichment. Both reactions represent interesting examples that bring to bear one of Bourdieu's more exotic concepts - 'hysteresis':

> "they don't really feel that I have to do extra-curricular activities, they say just learn, do your studies; they don't even want me to get a job (part-time), just learn, go university do your degree, *then* you start working".

Bourdieu explains *hysteresis* by suggesting that those from lower socio-economic groups move 'in the direction of the dominant positions at a time when the profits they provide tend to be diminishing, due to the very attraction they exercise' (in Grenfell 2008:135). - A contemporary example might be the unpaid internships fast becoming stringent prerequisites when attempting to access the most desirable and competitive careers. Awareness of the dramatic fluctuations in our education system and labour market has proved to be a challenge even for the sharpest elbowed middle class parents. This can be argued,

> 'highlights the gap between the new opportunities that occur as a result of any field change, and field participants with attitudes and practices that are needed to recognize, grasp and occupy these new field positions. Since an individual's early experiences contribute disproportionately to the construction of the dispositions and practices that constitute *habitus*, it is likely that only those "players" who are from secure and probably relatively privileged family backgrounds will be equipped to recognise (or assert) the desirability of new field positions' (Hardy in Grenfell 2008:135).

Our previous respondent also stated that her sole focus on studying would help her to realise her dream to pursue a career in Law. However, in a climate where savvy middle class parents trade internships for their sons and daughters[11] to gain a competitive advantage in the field, it seems that this learner's (albeit good intentioned) advice is misrecognised on the basis that the *field,* and its learned rules, beliefs, and values (doxa) have changed. It is this time lag that impinges upon the variances between *habitus*, *capital,* and the corresponding *field,* and which allows us to witness *hysteresis* in action. Of course this student may well go on to fulfil their ambitions in the field of Law, but it is difficult not to deny that their ambitions for this vocation will be limited in scope (relatively speaking to those players demonstrating superior social and cultural capital).

11 See Clegg's spats with Cameron on internship hypocrisy and rife nepotism in prestigious occupations.

A New Paradigm for Enrichment

'Don't hate the playa, hate the game'

Ice-T

Amid all the chaos, violence and profanities contained in the lyrics depicting life as a Los Angeles gangster by veteran rapper 'Ice-T', there appears an ostensibly Bourdieuian semblance when he concludes his rap "…I didn't choose the game, the game chose me". The profundity of this statement addresses a new paradigm for enrichment, that which places the learner in a position to understand the field, develop the implements in order to play the game effectively, and to experience a 'mental revolution' which scrutinizes the 'giveness' of one's circumstances. It is a paradigm calling for 'Logotherapy'[12], an aim to uncover a sense of purpose hitherto shrouded by social disadvantage, now awakened to the structural and phenomenological implications upon one's life; a kind of *well informed existentialism*.

From my experiences in working in education and throughout this current inquiry, it has become clearer that developing character, confidence, and phronesis (practical wisdom) occupies an unfortunately near absent role in education. Every year prospective and newly enrolled students ask "what will it get me?" when faced with the subject choices and college offerings; and every year I attempt to debate this fundamental and pervasive question with my students sooner rather than later.

[12] See Victor Frankl's 'Man's Search for Meaning'

At the heart of the new paradigm is an approach that militates against such excessive instrumentalism, and focuses on enrichment should be for.

Bourdieu's analysis on how behaviour is based on the 'subjective expectations of objective probabilities' (Maton in Grenfell 2008:58) is a reverberating strand to this new paradigm for enrichment. A new gaze can help to counter a disadvantaged disposition and readjust one's subjective expectations of their objective probabilities. It explores how freedoms are understood and formed within the mindsets of disadvantaged students, and, seeks to establish Bourdieu's 'metanoia' (mental revolution). It represents an aim for enrichment to instigate an individual change towards 'if not a new person, then at least a new gaze, a sociological eye. And this cannot be done without genuine conversion, a *metanoia*, a mental revolution, a transformation of one's whole vision of the social world' (Bourdieu in Grenfell 2008:60). Finally, the design of enrichment should prompt educators to develop a set of capabilities specifically geared towards answering the following question: *what is each learner (within their educational setting) able to do and be as a student?*

A greater level of objectivity when designing enrichment provision can be realised by focusing on enriching learners' *capabilities* - capabilities which a school and college should research and formulate specifically for their own cohorts. As discussed earlier, researching, learning about, and absorbing the narratives of students should result in a relevant set of capabilities from which to design enrichment, permanently prompted by how an individual learner can flourish as a student. Understanding students regular transactions with education can help to create possibilities for *accessing* knowledge, as opposed to, for example, adapting

(often cited as ‘dumbing down’) knowledge and the curriculum for the virtue of fairness. Equal access to knowledge, and all that is worth knowing, is the objective standpoint and premise for enrichment as the ‘capabilities approach’.

Martha Nussbaum, following on from Amartya Sen’s ‘Capabilty Approach’ developed the notion: *‘The Capabilities Approach can be provisionally defined as an approach to comparative quality-of-life assessment and to theorizing about basic social justice. It holds that the key question to ask, when comparing societies and assessing them for their basic decency or justice, is, “What is each person able to do and be?”* ‘(2011: 18). In revering Nussbaum’s ‘Capabilities Approach’, and adapting it for enrichment in education, we might begin by asking what each student is *actually capable of doing and being as a student.* ‘I have localised the concept to fit a context which investigates and stimulates an individual’s ability to live a flourishing ‘student life’, focusing on choice and freedom at the level of the learner and frequently asking what it means to be a ‘student’; whilst maintaining a particular focus on changes to habitus, capital and field. The ‘capabilities approach’ also advocates the need to overcome ‘capability failure’ - such as illiteracy in the developing world - or a more relevant example from the research, a student overburdened with family responsibilities which impoverishes their study time.

I will add some meat to the bones of Nussbaum’s founding principle by recognising a distinct set of capabilities similar to her ‘central human capabilities’, which she holds as compelling principles to be embodied and enshrined within a universal constitution. She regards these capabilities as

> ‘states of the person (not fixed, but fluid and dynamic) *internal capabilities.* They are to be distinguished from innate equipment: they are trained or developed traits and abilities, developed, in most cases, in interaction with the social, economic, familial, and political environment’ (2011:21).

Focusing enrichment towards developing *internal capabilities* respects plurality and circumvents the problems regarding the arbitrariness of enrichment content. Similarly to Nussbaum, educators on an institutional level could reach a consensus on those capabilities most important for achieving success for various student cohorts. Perhaps a universal goal for enrichment as ‘capabilities approach’ is to enable learners to become autodidacts. From consulting my research, it is not difficult to propose several capabilities that, in my view, can be convincingly argued as fundamental prerequisites for substantially improving the academic performance of the students whom took part in the study. These capabilities require that a student should be able to:

- develop the character and capacity for critical thought needed to scrutinize and critically evaluate the ‘giveness’ of their circumstances

- be free from unduly home responsibility severely limiting independent study time. A response to this would be to establish a stronger dialogue with the parent/guardian/carer to facilitate a solution to this ‘capability failure’

- uphold the self-belief that academic achievement is linked to hard work far more than innate ability (academic determinism was often cited as reasons for failing in school – another 'capability failure' perhaps)

- organise and plan their schedules towards undertaking the requisite commitment to independent A-Level study (normally advocated as 5 hours per subject per week – respondents were unaware of this guidance, another 'capability failure' perhaps)

- continuously re-formulate their life trajectories by having access to greater information on education as a field earlier on in their lives - *learning to read the script* prior to commencing GCSEs

Conclusion

It seems that enrichment was designed to be a positive force for enriching students' educational experiences beyond the classroom; but in practice, I argue, its evolution and implementation, when projected upon education as a positional good, has failed as a mechanism for social justice. For many disadvantaged students, particularly in the post-compulsory sector where enrichment is often voluntary, there is minimal interaction with it. On the other hand, due to its voluntary nature, the need to establish attendances may have led to the dilution of what may have been a more

'powerful' use of enrichment time. This represents a catch-22, and an area of which there has been very little in terms of research, policy, support and guidance towards this dilemma. I hope this study offers a platform for debate on what enrichment is for, whatever remains of it, or whatever becomes of it.

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