

**The knowledgeable polity:
governing and knowledge production.**

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Abstract

I intend reporting on a new way of thinking about the interplay between state actors within government institutions, and wider networks that are increasingly embraced through conceptualisations of networked governance. I frame this new approach as the knowledgeable polity (with opportunities to identify and examine knowledge polities) in regard to the relationship between the state, public policy and knowledge. What I am going to focus on is public policy by examining knowledge production: the types and legitimising of what is known and is used to scope and frame policy, and to communicate and authorise it. In doing so I intend examining policy actors in regard to the knowledgeable state, knowledgeable politics, knowledgeable networks and knowledgeable theorising. I will go through each of these dimensions and draw on examples from public policy using primary research from critical education policy.

Introduction

The project I am working on is the inter-relationship between the state, public policy and knowledge production. Specifically I am interested in how the scoping, framing and enacting of education policy by and through public institutions of the state draw on and engage in the construction of particular knowledges, ways of knowing and displays of knowledgeability. Of particular interest is the location and contribution of policy actors, or those who engage in exchange relationships regarding what is known, and worth knowing about in regard to knowledges, knowings and knowledgeabilities. By knowledges I mean ideas, experiences, data and arguments, and knowings as the methodologies and methods that generate knowledges; where *knowledge actors* are *knowers* who deem something *knowable* through creating, sustaining, and challenging knowledges and knowings. Knowledgeabilities is about the accessing, owning, deploying and exhibiting of knowledges and knowings by knowers in ways that illustrate insight, expertise and 'in the know'. In this paper I intend confronting knowledge production as in need of a socio-political analysis, by reporting on some experimental thinking about what I call *Knowledgeable Polities* as arenas of on going policy processes, and in doing so I examine the role of the state, politics, networks, and theorising (see Gunter 2016). Importantly I identify here that even though there is strong evidence of *knowledgeable plurality* within the wider field and wider research field, much policy is based on forms of *knowledgeable ignorance*.

Education policy predicaments

The current predicaments for education policy in England are located not only in relation to how best to enable teaching and learning to 'improve' and to be 'effective', but whether the state should be involved in provision at all. Courtney (2015) has identified that there are now between 70 and 90 different types of schools in England, and central to understanding this radical trend is the range of different types of knowledge actors involved. My work on changes to the workforce through the adoption of leaders, leading and leadership (Gunter 2012, 2014, 2016), on restructuring through changes to the system such as academy schools (Gunter 2011), and on changes to the support and advisory systems for the profession and policymakers (Gunter 2016, Gunter and Mills 2016) demonstrates potential *knowledgeable plurality* in regard to knowledge production. Such plurality exists in terms of the 'knowledges', 'knowings' and 'knowledgeabilities', as well as the range of 'knowledge actors' available. However, research is demonstrating that while those with a mandate to govern (ministers, civil servants) remain core to the policy process, the growth in policy actors outside but connected to government and governing has been rapid. Furthermore, this potential plurality of actors is actually singular in regard to the ideological positioning regarding policy strategy, content and planned outcomes. What seems to be a dynamic field is actually focused on the privatisation of public service education within a range of nation states, where the private is regarded as the solution to all predicaments in regard to provision, the workforce, and the purposes of schooling (see Gunter et al. 2016).

For example, here are some examples of work that is examining knowledge actors:

Businesses e.g. Pearson (see Ball and Youdell, 2007)

Consultancy firms and individuals e.g. McKinsey & Company (see Coffield, 2012).

Philanthropists e.g. Broad Education Foundation (see Saltman, 2010)

Professors e.g. Educational Effectiveness and Improvement Research (see Gunter, 2016)

Supra-national organizations e.g. World Bank (see Klees et al., 2012)

Supra-governmental organizations e.g. Europe Union (see Souto-Otero, 2015)

Think Tanks e.g. Thomas B Ford Foundation (see Spring, 2014)

In addition there is a focus on the interplay, associations and alliances between different knowledge actors in regard to reform processes (e.g. Ball 2007), and reform strategies/sites (e.g. Beckett 2007). What is emerging are understandings about and for knowledge production that is illuminating a form of *knowledgeable ignorance*, or how policy is seemingly underpinned by robust knowledge and ways of knowing, but in reality policy texts such as white and green papers, speeches, and debate are recycled and recombined forms of narrow and ideologically informed knowledgeabilities. My own work on school leadership (see Gunter 2012, 2014, 2016) illuminates how claims are made based on experiential assumptions, ideological belief systems, with selected ideas and data. Hence ministers will give a speech on a reform imperative with a solution, and while there is evidence of expert advice in reality such advice may be selectively interpreted and can even be discounted when it challenges what politicians say what needs to be done and what they want to do.

Getting underneath this issue is a major issue for the field of critical education policy studies, and therefore I present some thinking in regard to *Knowledgeable Polities*.

Knowledgeable Polities

The following is an extract from my book: Gunter, H.M. (2016) *An Intellectual History of School Leadership Practice and Research*. London: Bloomsbury Press. pp20-30.

Beginning of extract

The Knowledgeable Polity

My task is to develop a way through the complexity of *Knowledges*, *Knowings*, *Knowers*, and *Knowledgeabilities* by generating perspectives that can enable description, meaning and explanation of knowledge exchanges and claims. The interplay between agency and structure within and for the self, the family, the community and formal organizations such as schools

requires thinking about, not least the inter-relationships between the state, public policy, politics, networks and knowledge production. I therefore intend drawing on political science and sociology in order to use selected conceptual tools within an overarching framework that I call the *Knowledgeable Polity*.

I am using *Polity* as a way of framing knowledge production through giving due attention to people organisations and spaces they inherit, inhabit, and create. There are questions to be addressed regarding the relationship between public institutions, politics, and the state both nationally and globally, where *Knowledges*, *Knowings*, *Knowers* and *Knowledgeabilities* are located within the wider publics who constitute the polity, and is usually visible through elections to public office and appointments to specific public services based on approved and transparent expertise and accreditation. By *Knowledgeable Polity* I mean how knowledge production is defined and engaged with, not as an objectified or unit of analysis, but in a place and as a dynamic space where boundaries may be fixed but also challenged and stretched (or demolished, rebuilt, decayed). I now present this through four inter-connected sites for examining and understanding knowledge production, where I draw on selected research and thinking from the political sciences and sociology: first, the *Knowledgeable State*: the focus is on the relationship between public institutions, policy and knowledge; second, *Knowledgeable Politics*: the focus is on the relationship between publics and organisations, including but not exclusively the state; third, *Knowledgeable Networks*: the focus is on the formal and informal interconnections that generate groups and organisations with claims for expertise and delivery; and fourth, *Knowledgeable Theorising*: the focus is on the use of Bourdieu's thinking tools to provide explanations of power processes.

Knowledgeable State

I intend deploying *Knowledgeable State* as a site for knowledge production exchange and claims that gives prime attention to government institutions within the nation state, and interlinks to supranational organisations. In framing public policy the government, as institutions of the state,

presents itself as knowledgeable through the legitimacy of the mandate to govern. In doing so it draws on knowledges, knowings and knowers, and through such investment contributes to and structures knowledges, knowings and knowers. The state does more than set the legal requirements and tone through bureaucracy and hierarchical relationships, but can determine the ontology and epistemology required in the knowledge it needs to use to support and validate policymaking within such relationships. Certainly, while the state as an assumed unitary 'it' suggests objectivity and rationality, the engagement with knowledge production has complex features, where as Grundmann and Stehr (2012) note it is more than functional utility and legitimacy, where "...knowledge can also operate at the level of influencing the construction and framing of policy problems... without leading to specific policies" (p19).

Consequently, and following Pearton (1982), I would identify the *Knowledgeable State* as "Researcher", "Producer" and "User" (p. 254), where his analysis of warfare speaks to centralization. I would want to make a contribution by following Clarke and Newman (1997) who identify the state as "Manager", and Neave (1988) who focuses on the state as "Evaluator".

Deploying this framework I would characterize the state as: first, *Researcher*: confirming and develop theories and evidence to support and legitimize strategy and policies; second, *User*: knowledgeability through identifying and commissioning knowledges and knowings that can be handled, processed and represented within policies; third, *Producer*: constructing strategies within policies that can be defended and acted upon through knowledge and knowings; fourth, *Manager*: controlling and regulating external knowledge sources and production through contractual exchange relationships; and, fifth, *Evaluator*: controlling outputs and knowers through performance audits of standards with judgements and feedback, particularly in regard to investment and disinvestment.

Giving such attention to the state, public institutions and the endurance of government as a feature of the *Knowledgeable Polity* can be illuminated through the empirical and conceptual work

of Scott (1998) who through his analysis of large scale reform and planning talks about “seeing like a state”. Indeed, many gains in regard to civil rights, housing, transport, health, welfare and education, have been a product of such ‘seeing’ and ‘doing’ by the state. Scott (1998) identifies how reform happens through what he calls “state simplifications” (p80) as a means of making reality legible. Such simplifications are based on particular approaches to knowledge production, where knowledge is about facts, where patterns matter, and where distinctions and particularities can be ignored. The adoption by governments in a range of countries of *Transformational Leadership* as a form of legitimised knowledge and knowing based on approved of knowers, is a good example of state simplification and how knowledgeability about its ‘fit’ with problem solving is demonstrated. It enables performance, and privatisation to be pursued through communicating logical and common sense beliefs about what is wrong with schools and what needs to be done to put things right. For example, Barber’s (2007) construction and enthusiasm for “deliverology” in the UK government, and more recently through globalised consultancy (Barber et al. 2011) regarding the transfer of policy requirements from the Minister to the child in a school. This illuminates what Scott (1998) calls “simplification, abstraction, and standardization” (p81), whereby the causal importance and requirements of school leadership are codified and normalised as delivery. In addition Scott (1998) argues that this seeks “to create a terrain and a population with precisely those standardized characteristics that will be easiest to monitor, count, assess, and manage” (p81-82), and if governments and other agencies (see OECD 2013) colonise professional practice and pedagogy then this remodels the composition and identities of the workforce and students in ways that generate the very effectiveness activity that is subjected to simplification. An important way in which this is taking place is how schools, and other agencies, determine their approach as ‘little states’ whereby they are legally contracted to improve and audit data gathering with measures of effectiveness and improvement.

The relationship between the *Knowledgeable State* and supra states is important, not least in the school leadership field, where Pont et al. (2008a) claim the following:

“School leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas internationally. It

plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment. Effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling” (p2).

Such claims are lifted out of the national context but are consistent with national policies, and so appropriate attention needs to be given to globalizing knowledge flows and carrier knowledge workers, and super-national sites of activity (e.g. European Union, OECD, see Moos 2009). For example, Lawn and Grek (2012) and Grek (2013) stake claims for an emerging European policy space through downplaying the place of the nation state and public institutions. However, research within Europe shows that the nation state remains the prime place, not least because much seemingly global knowledge has its origins and legitimacy in a national education system, and as knowledge actors carry ideas on and off planes they can be received and read in different places (see Gunter et al. 2016). Nevertheless, such challenges do put the spotlight on other sources of knowledge production, where my adoption and development of Pearton’s analysis (1982) could be criticised as hegemonic in regard to education, because it is a conceptualisation located in the state as defender and war machine, and so it is questionable whether “its role as planner, banker and sole or dominant customer” (p250) is appropriate and accurate for educational services. For example, unitary states such as the UK and federal states such as the USA have never had a monopoly on the provision and funding of education in the way that it has in regard to defence and the military, not least the continued existence of private education but not private armies.

Other challenges to normalised state hegemony are located in Scott’s (1998) presentation of examples of large scale modernising plans, and shows how they can fail the people they were meant to benefit: “If I were asked to condense the reasons behind these failures into a single sentence, I would say that the progenitors of such plans regarded themselves as far smarter and farseeing than they really were and, at the same time, regarded their subjects as far more stupid and incompetent than *they* really were” (p343, original emphasis). When tensions and

contradictions emerge within the simplification process, the state can and does exclude – sometimes in highly visible and dramatic ways (see Gunter 2014). There is considerable work on how and why children (Smyth 2006a), and teachers (Ball 2003a) are positioned as ignorant and in need of the simplifications, along with work on how children and teachers (Fielding 2006, Wrigley et al. 2012) work in ways that challenge, reject and replace those simplifications. These are networks that are involved in exchange relationships that can also ‘see like a state’ such as research councils, university bureaucracies, and institutions in civil society such as pressure groups, political parties and unions. At the same time there is a need to examine activity that aims to work differently and develop education policy through individuals and networks that does not use the state (and its reform simplifications) to script their agenda against. So there is a need to undertake an analysis of *Knowledges*, *Knowings*, *Knowers* and *Knowledgeabilities* in ways that recognise alternative sites of exchange and claims. Whether, how and when this interacts with state policy processes is crucial to developing analysis about activity that is independent of and potentially resistant to official external policy.

Knowledgeable Politics

I intend deploying *Knowledgeable Politics* as a site for knowledge production exchange and claims regarding choices and conflicts that gives prime attention to people in relation to each other in the public domain. People in their everyday lives present themselves as knowledgeable through comment (in letters to the editor, on social media, in a queue at the supermarket) and in doing so draw on and contribute to knowledges, knowings and knowers, knowledgeabilities. People may also claim to represent or be responsible for others and so know on their behalf e.g. parents and carers. Various contested terms such as ‘civil society’ and ‘public(s)’ are used to frame this, where both are regarded as fruitful regarding how they enable interdisciplinary perspectives to generate new insights about human activities (see Anheirer 2005, Newman and Clarke 2009). In returning to Scott (1998) he argues that what ‘seeing like a state’ misses and often destroys are the knowledges (skills, know how, having the knack) that are identified and learned politically and sociological within families and communities, not least how people know

when and how to invoke and engage in knowledge production in relation to their locality. While there is plurality of positions and ways of rationalizing it, I would like to draw on Newman's (2007) notion of "settlements" whereby there is an acceptance about what is and is not negotiable, and there are times when such settlements are disrupted, and indeed as researchers we need to be disruptors through how we give recognition to what is never settled.

One settlement is through the idea of what Marquand (2004) terms "the public domain" where "central to it are the values of citizenship, equity and service" (p27). Distinctive from, but connected to this, is the creation of public services variously known as the 'public sector' or 'welfare state' whereby concerns and issues held in common are politicised through public funding and public political design and regulation. Where the boundary is drawn between what is public and private, is a strong feature of political and social exchanges and claims, and has intensified in western style democracies over the past fifty years. Politicization through the *Knowledgeable State* has been critiqued, whereby there are demands for the state to shrink: for neoliberals this is about freedom within the economy and to take responsibility for the self and family, and for neoconservatives this is about how values and morality is a private matter through the self and family, but also through the development and sustaining of homogeneity. For the former, education is a private good to be traded through business, and for the latter education is about essential truths to be communicated to the next generation through the home (e.g. sex education, behaviour) and through sites of learning that represent and educate approved of social norms (e.g. segregation based on fees, biological sex, faith). *Transformational Leadership* is located in this contradiction: principals are meant to be both entrepreneurial risk taking and conservative risk averse.

Forms of depoliticisation and repoliticisation continue to be a feature of *Knowledgeable Politics* whereby what is seemingly settled continues to be open for challenge (see Flinders and Wood 2014). The state as knowledgeable continues to be tested through political processes that demand that the state enters or withdraws from economic, cultural and social matters, not least

through the privatization of services and the entry into public services by private companies. The emerging 'settlement' from within this dynamic is one that is neoliberal in alliance with neoconservative angst about the state, where current analysis claims that ideas do not exist outside of the practice of those who speak, think and talk about them, and so depoliticisation through neoliberalism is less a set of coherent ideas and is more about what people say and do (Jessop 2014). Such practices are not homogenous, but there are struggles and debates within neoliberalism, whereby we should not be fooled into thinking that the ideas and activity are agreed and of one form. Indeed, Wood and Flinders (2014) present "discursive depoliticisation" (p153) regarding how what is normal and the norm can be typed and spoken into the truth: "the promotion of an issue, *but* alongside a single interpretation and the *denial* of choice would, therefore create a form of *depoliticisation* from this discursive perspective" (p161). This is evident in the principal as *Transformational Leader* of the autonomous school as a business, where 'transformation' is about controlling or removing professional groups who are characterized as acting in their own interests.

While there is much conceptual work underway regarding the inter-relationship between politicization, repoliticisation and depoliticisation, there are legitimate concerns regarding the characterization of "friend/enemy distinction" (Hay 2014 p296). Hay (2014) argues that while political analysis needs to take note of divisions, he makes the case that politics is more than one interest winning and hence subjugating another. Connected with such arguments is recognition of how forms of resistance operate, in ways that challenge traditional forms of politicization (e.g. feminist critiques of paternalism of welfare state services) and relocating politicization to localized alliances within "little polities" (Vincent et al. 2000). Those who work within and support public services may seek out new sites for and forms of politics which could be framed as subversive (Barnes and Prior 2009). Such complexities lead me to consider how *Knowledgeable Politics* is not only interconnected to the *Knowledgeable State* but requires recognition of how politics works through the establishment and challenges to boundaries, not least how social and political cleavages simultaneously divide and associate people through networked relationships.

Knowledgeable Networks

I intend deploying *Knowledgeable Networks* as a site for knowledge production exchange and claims that gives prime attention to the interactions and relationships between people as self promoted and/or recognised 'experts'. The development of governance as an approach within political science has given recognition to those who are organizationally located as 'experts' in public services (e.g. education, medical, legal professionals with accreditation, titles, and recognition), in private business (e.g. consultants, philanthropists, business owners), and in civil society (e.g. parents and children). The importance of networks in explaining exchange relationships within political conduct, and the interconnections between governmental hierarchy and civil society has grown rapidly (e.g. Ball 2008b, Davies 2011, Goodwin 2009, Grek 2013, Olmedo 2014, Ozga 2009, Spring 2012).

Ball (2008b) presents his forensic work on "new policy communities" in education, where people bring ideas and influence, and "through social relationships trust is established and views and discourses are legitimated" (p753). Hence when principals are being presented with Transformational Leadership as legitimated professional practice, there is a need to examine not only how people are in contact with each other to produce such a model but also how power works to give status and acclaim to particular knowledge actors (Ball 2009, Goodwin 2009).

Data and projects demonstrate that there is a need to give more attention to the role of hierarchy in simultaneously generating and anchoring networks, particularly since as Davies (2011) argues "there is a pronounced tendency for governance networks to re-enact the practices they are meant to complement or displace" (p55). Researchers continue to show the importance of the public institution (Béland 2005, Radaelli 1995), not least through how networks are constrained by history as well as stabilised through the necessary rule following required for public accountability. In my own work I have developed and deployed *institutionalised governance* as a conceptualised means to describe and explain how political, social and economic interests are

crucial to understanding how knowledge exchanges and claims take place within government *regimes* that are institutionally located (Gunter 2012a). Networks in relation to policymaking do not exist outside of or independent from the *Knowledgeable State*, where those who inhabit public institutions (ministers, civil servants, advisors) call in and contract outsiders who are networked. Indeed, as Scott (1998) argues: “state simplifications can be considered part of an ongoing ‘project of legibility’, a project that is never fully realised” (p80). So networks of people with organisational locations (think tanks, businesses, universities) can operate as *little states* that embrace simplification as a means of generating new business with the state, and recognise how conducive it is to non-state business. When governments leave office, simplification as a process continues, and can include some of the same plans and actors who present themselves as neutral simplifiers.

Knowledgeable Theorising

The development and explication of a position in relation to, for, within and about knowledge production has generated at least two important contributions: first, that conceptualisations of knowledge production need to give due recognition of knowledges, knowers, knowings and knowlegeabilities; and, second, that knowledge production as a power process means there is a need to engage through developing and using vantage points that generate perspectives on, about and within complex inter-relationships between the state, politics, and networks within and external to the polity. There is a third important contribution to be made through how theory and theorizing is accessed and deployed, and in doing so I intend drawing on Bourdieu’s thinking tools because they provide a language and conceptualization of, within and for knowledge production, and in ways that relate what might be regarded as every day, and perhaps even unremarkable encounters, to wider social and political processes.

I intend beginning with *doxa* as a self-evident truth, whereby the *doxa* of school leadership is about providing certainty and prediction: the role incumbent must demonstrate confidence that what they do delivers outcomes, and they can base this on cause and effect calculations

(Bourdieu 2000). This *doxa* underpins but is often masked by the vivacity surrounding *Transformational Leadership*, and the rebranding processes around hybrids such as ‘distributed’ and ‘instructional’. The interplay between agency and structure is the location where the generative *codification* of *Transformational Leadership* is revealed, where the language is vision and mission is explicated, where the embodiment of charisma is displayed, and where followership through listening, talking, emoting and obedience is created and enacted. Bourdieu (2000) provides a series of inter-related thinking tools that enable the researcher to focus on the normality of day-to-day practice, and how knowledge production within and for *Transformational Leadership* is itself regarded as normal.

In Bourdieu’s (1990) terms, the game in play in western style democracies is that of privatization through the entry of private markets into the provision of educational services based on financial and cultural exchange relationships, and through the managerialisation of residual ‘public’ services regarding basic skill provision and behaviour control. This game is being played through a range of sub-games, such as school leadership, whereby the field of education has been breached by the fields of politics and the economy that shape and develop that game through knowledge production that meets their objective interests (Thomson 2005). The codification of the *Transformational Leadership doxa* enables educational professionals to engage in economic and economizing practices such as data management, performativity, and bidding in order to access funding streams, in ways that are modernizing and generate equivalence ‘with’ and ‘as’ entrepreneurs, with an espoused value system that is orientated on producing children as a work ready human resource.

Having a language and a set of tools that can describe, understand and explain such knowledge production requires a focus on practice. Through *habitus* Bourdieu (1990) presents a thinking tool that enables the regularities of practice to be recognised as *codification* without the determinism of rule bound and abstracted codes. Within a *field* as an arena of struggles, knowers take up positions and so reveal the structured and structuring dispositions that make such positioning

around knowledges, knowings, and knowledgeabilities attractive. Hence the *doxa* underpinning *Transformational Leadership* is created, developed and strategized through position taking, and how the breaching of education by the fields of the economy and politics, have made the game where this form of leadership can be played attractive. Teachers, headteachers, parents, children, ministers, officials, researchers who locate within the *doxa* “have a feel for the necessity and the logic of the game” (p64), and so they stake their interests, ideas and careers in the school leadership *game* through the regularities of a harmonized disposition. Hence playing is about how “a set of people take part in rule-bound activity, an activity which, without necessarily being the product of obedience to rules, *obeys certain regularities*” (Bourdieu 1990, p64, emphasis in original).

Capitals (economic, social, cultural, symbolic) can be staked and increased through playing (those deemed to be successful *Transformational Leaders* receive acclaim and rewards). Such practice attracts and generates the revealing of shared dispositions, and while players may assume they are dominating the game, they *misrecognise* how the dominant fields of power and the economy dominate practices. Not playing is unthinkable. All principals in public services education are positioned as *Transformational Leaders*, and resistance to the logic leads to punitive exclusion, sometimes quietly through early retirement but mainly through show events such as sacking following a declaration failure through data, league tables and inspections.

Thinking about *hysteresis* enables recognition to be given to the relationship between *habitus* and *field*. *Habitus* is “the system of dispositions to a certain practice” where “the effect of the habitus is that agents who are equipped with it will behave in a certain way in certain circumstances”, but this is not a predictive rule because “*habitus goes hand in glove with vagueness and indeterminacy* (emphasis in original)” (Bourdieu 1990 p77). What Bourdieu (1990) is saying is that there is a “generative spontaneity which asserts itself in an improved confrontation with ever-renewed situations, it obeys a practical logic, that of vagueness, of the more-or-less, which defines one’s ordinary relation to the world” (pp77-78). Hence the thinking about this as *Illusio* is

important, where playing the game through *Transformational Leadership* is related to “a fundamental belief in the interest of the game and the value of the stakes which is inherent in that membership” (Bourdieu 2000 p11).

Shifts and changes in the logic of the field creates generative practices, where *capital* investment is focused on the relationship between previous “structuring structures” that have become “structured structures”, and the new emerging structuring interplays with agency (Bourdieu 1989). In other words, educational professionals who experience reworkings of the doxa (e.g. transformational, instructional, distributed, entrepreneurial, etc) and how it relates to changes to the job (e.g. from using data to inform assessment to removing teachers) have to read and interpret and see how they are located. *Hysteresis* enables productive thinking about how the revealing of habitus within practice is related to context and time, and how positioning and repositioning does and does not take place. In Bourdieu’s (2000) terms it seems that “habitus has its ‘blips’” or “critical moments when it misfires or is out of phase” and where there is no rule following but instead there is interpretation as a form of “*practical reflection*” (p162, emphasis in original). Hence the educational professional can examine the relationship between their own positions and how they are positioned, and can make adjustments to their practice. For some, this is a ‘blip’ whereas for others it is a rupture with possible resistance, and/or with relocation within or outside of the field. This is where critical researchers make a contribution, through not only providing accounts of those who engage in *Transformative Leadership*, but also help to provide a counter doxa that lives within practice. **End of extract**

Summary

What I have presented here is an extract from my book about intellectual histories of a field, and hence I have sought to examine knowledge production within and for a field. My argument is that this thinking has potential beyond this example of knowledge production, and if we want to seriously engage with changes within and for public service education then we need to embrace and deploy thinking about the state, politics, networks and conceptualisations in ways that enable

us to give recognition to policy as well as non-policy changes. My argument here, and following Arendt, is that political studies is not a “sub-system of the social system” where “political activities are explained in terms of the social functions they fulfil, and political allegiances and opinions are traced to membership of a social class or social role” (Canovan 1974 p2). The restoration of political thinking and action within and for public education services is a vital project, not only intellectually but also politically: “politics is the realm of freedom, and the defence of politics against sociologism is a defence of human freedom and dignity against determinism and abject submission to fate” (Canovan 1974 p2).

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