

Are neo-liberal reforms friendly to academic freedom and creativity?

Some theoretical and practical reflections on the constituents of academic self-determination in research universities

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The paper focuses on what happens to academic freedom in contemporary higher education institutions and systems, particularly those of the Westminster type (UK, Australia, New Zealand). The paper begins by identifying the constituents of academic freedom, here designated as *academic self-determination*, operating at the level of individual practices in academic units. The paper then considers the implications of the neo-liberal project, in higher education government, policy and management, for those constituents of academic freedom. By the 'neo-liberal project' I mean an amalgam of techniques including the installation of funding-based economic incentives in place of professional, vocational and scholarly ends, user-driven production, the pricing and sale of outputs, output monitoring and measurement, performance management and pay; contracts with and incentives to partner with industry and commercialize research motivations and research products; and systems of accountability and audit, including contracts with government, that bed down external control of the work.

Constituents of self-determination

The starting position of the paper is that academic self-determination takes in three constituents or elements which will be discussed in turn:

- Agency freedom
- Effective freedom ('freedom as power')
- Freedom as the capacity for the radical-critical break

The first two elements are from Amartya Sen (1985; 1992), the third is my own. Academic self-determination requires an independent agent with an identity and a will to act on her/his own behalf (*agency freedom*). The agent must have the capacity and power to act (*effective freedom*). More specifically, the processes of academic research and scholarship involve criticism, the re-imagining of the field of knowledge and the creation of new work which may break radically with existing knowledge and perspectives. Hence *freedom as capacity for the radical-critical break*. This rests on particular forms of agency freedom and effective freedom.

Agency freedom: First, agency freedom. In his 'Well-being, agency and freedom: the Dewey lectures 1984', Amartya Sen (1985) remarks that the perspectives of 'well-being' and 'agency' each yield distinct notions of freedom (p. 169). The notion of well-being suggests a choice-making individual but does not necessarily imply an active or interactive individual. In

contrast the agency notion suggests an intrinsically active and proactive human will and identity. Although both the agency aspect and the well-being aspect are important, they are important for different reasons. In the well-being perspective the person is seen as a beneficiary whose interests and advantages have to be considered. In the agency perspective, a person is seen as a doer and a judge. These two different notions of freedom also have different implications for our goals and valuations. As Sen puts it, ‘the well-being aspect of a person is important in assessing a person’s *advantage*, whereas the agency aspect is important in assessing what a person can do in line with his or her conception of *the good*. The ability to do more good need not be to the person’s advantage’. Sen’s example is that of the person who chooses to save the life of another despite an inconvenience to herself/himself. Academic work may also take this form. It may go beyond necessity.

In the last 150 years the perspective of well-being has occupied more attention than that of agency, signifying the impact of utilitarianism and of neo-classical economics. But well-being alone is insufficient to serve as the foundation of identity. Agency is at the core of concepts of self. Notions of ‘autonomy’ and ‘personal liberty’ relate to this special role of agency in personal life, going well beyond considerations of well-being. Many academics choose poorly paid temporary jobs rather than more secure and better paid employment elsewhere in order to pursue their vocation. Agency freedom takes priority over well-being. Practices of research and scholarship within scholarly communities are not necessarily driven by the private accumulation of wealth or status (though we can note in passing that status is more important than wealth). Accumulation is one of the motives at play but not the sole or essential motive. Research and scholarship are also ends in themselves that align with academic conceptions of the good, and constitute for academics a sense of self that is another end in itself. Academics do what they do not solely to obtain an ‘advantage’ in an absolute or relative sense but also because the exercise of agency freedom within the field of knowledge in which they work is attractive and satisfying to them.

The notions of agency freedom and the pursuit of the ‘good’ can be grounded sociologically. For example Mary Henkel (2005) emphasizes both ‘the primacy of the discipline’ in academic autonomy (p. 155) and also the centrality of agency freedom. The meanings given to ‘academic freedom’ include being individually free to choose and pursue one’s own research agenda, and being trusted to manage one’s own working life and priorities. ‘For some’, says Henkel, it is ‘a matter of quality of life and the main reward of an academic career’. In a parallel argument about agency freedom, Basil Bernstein (2000) notes that traditional academic identities are centred on what he calls ‘inwardness’ and ‘inner dedication’ (p. 184); particularly in the domains of knowledge he describes as ‘singulars’, the bounded disciplines in the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities such as philosophy.

Effective freedom: The second aspect of self-determination is effective freedom, or in Sen’s earlier formulation, freedom as power. Henkel’s (2005) study notes that academics understand freedom as control over one’s own work, and as power ‘to pursue one’s own research agenda’. But there is a plurality here, power *and* control. Much turns on how these are configured in relation to each other. Sen carefully distinguishes power from control, ‘a distinction of special relevance to particular issues of freedom, such as liberty and autonomy’.

A person's freedom may well be assessed in terms of the *power to achieve* chosen results: whether the person is free to achieve one outcome or another; whether her or his choices will be respected and the corresponding things will happen. This element of freedom... is not really concerned with the mechanisms and procedures of control. It does not matter for effective power precisely *how* the choices are 'executed'... In contrast, a person's freedom may be assessed in terms of whether the person is herself or himself exercising *control* over the process of choice. Is she or he actively doing the choosing in the procedure of decision or execution? (Sen, 1985, pp. 208-209).

In the literature on liberty and freedom in political philosophy, the control element has received the majority of attention. But while control, particularly in the form of freedom from constraint, is often important for academic freedom, the effective freedom or 'power' element cannot be neglected in any adequate formulation of liberty. Agency freedom requires conditions that permit and support its exercise. Freedom as effective freedom brings us to the larger relational setting in which agency freedom is practised, including the social, political and economic opportunities available to us. Here there is a deep complementarity between individual agency and social setting. In universities that social setting includes the time, money and other personal 'capabilities' needed to practice agency freedom.

The distinction between freedom as effective freedom, or 'power', and freedom as control, is often aligned with the question of whether freedom should be seen in positive or negative terms. Freedom conceived solely as freedom as control, freedom from coercion by the will of another, negative freedom, tends to produce a relatively narrow conceptualisation of freedom (Sen, 1985, p. 209). Sen argues that the power to use specific controls is one aspect of the power to achieve specific states of affairs. In other words, agency freedom coupled with effective freedom incorporates the control view of freedom. Crudely, one condition of effective freedom, if it is to be effective, is that the agent must have freedom from coercion. But the converse does not apply. When agency freedom is coupled with freedom from coercion, as in the neo-liberal imaginary, freedom as power is not necessarily included.

Freedom as capacity for the radical-critical break: The third aspect of academic self-determination is the capacity to make the radical-critical break. Fields of knowledge undergo continuous critical reflexivities driven from both inside and outside the specific disciplinary communities. From time to time these fields experience tensions, ruptures and instances of imagined radical 'newness' (Foucault, 1972). Cornelius Castoriadis (1987) talks about 'radical otherness or creation', in which 'something other than what exists is bringing itself into being, and bringing itself into being as new or as other and not simply as a consequence or as a different exemplar of the same' (Castoriadis, 1987, pp. 184-185). He conceives of the individual as self-determining, self-conscious and self-producing. The imaginary is not a reflection of reality, it is the unceasing and undetermined creation of forms/ figures/ images on the basis of which we can make 'reality' (p. 3).

What are the conditions of possibility of the radical-critical break in academic work? First, the radical-critical break rests on agency freedom, of a particular kind. As we have seen one core objective of agency freedom is the enhancement of autonomous identity as an end in itself. This project of self-construction is never finished and is constantly remade. Castoriadis emphasises that however so much we might claim a fixed identity as one of our strategies of

survival, the individual ‘can exist only by altering itself, and alters itself through doing, and social representing/ saying’ (p. 371), which includes the work of the imagination. The particular kind of agency freedom specific to academic work is comprised by disciplinary communities that are self-aware in explicit and systematic ways. Within and between these communities but always in reference to them; drawing on, enhancing or negating what we know; we can produce new, undetermined and unpredictable thoughts for ourselves. As Castoriadis puts it ‘the *positing* of a new type of behaviour, the *institution* of a new social rule, the *invention* of a new object or a new art form’ (p. 44). Nikolas Rose is suggestive here. ‘We do not know what we are capable of’, he says. But we do know that ‘our history has produced a creature with the capacity to act upon its limits’ (1999, p. 96).

Second, the radical-critical break rests on effective freedom as power constituted in particular ways. Though it requires an autonomous agent, the capacity for the radical-critical break is also socially defined and never entirely independent of the situation in which it occurs (p. 27). Here imaginative creation rests on effective freedom in two respects. One: access to the means of production of new ideas and forms. Two: a relational setting that supports communicative association and secular intellectual practice. By communicative association is meant the norms of civil and liberal conduct: the right to speak; the conduct of dialogue on the basis of honesty and of mutual respect; relationships grounded in justice, solidarity, compassion, cosmopolitan tolerance and empathy for the other. By secular intellectual practice is meant support for, and freedom for and of, the practices integral to productive intellectual activity, including curiosity, inquiry, observation, reasoning, explanation, criticising and imagining. Here communicative association provides essential conditions for secular intellectual practices, which are the heart of the matter. These conditions are by no means guaranteed in universities.

The neo-liberal project in universities

The paper now turns to the neo-liberal construction of freedom and the implications for academic freedom in universities. Consider the foundational neo-liberal view of freedom outlined by F.A. Hayek in *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960. See also the critique of Hayek in Rudd, 2006). Hayek’s conception of liberty rests on two unequally ranked elements. The first, subordinate, element is agency freedom. Hayek states that ‘freedom ... presupposes that the individual has some assured private sphere, that there is some set of circumstances in his environment with which others cannot interfere (Hayek, 1960, p. 13). Hayek defines this as ‘inner freedom’. The second, primary element is freedom as control, freedom from coercion, negative freedom. Hayek argues that ‘the only infringement’ of freedom is coercion by one person against another (p. 12). ‘Inner freedom’ plus freedom as the absence of coercion (together determine how much use a person can make of his knowledge of opportunities (Hayek, 1960, p. 15). At the same time Hayek explicitly rejects notions of positive freedom or effective freedom or indeed, freedom as self-determination, which would call up the need for state intervention to provide for more equal conditions of life. ‘The ranges of physical possibilities from which a person can choose at a given moment have no direct relevance to freedom’ (Hayek, 1960, p. 12). The question of how many choices are open to a person ‘is a different question from that of how far in acting he can follow his own plans and intentions, to what extent the pattern of his conduct is his own design’ (p. 13). A person is unfree *not* when she or he lacks the means or conditions to express agency, but *only when* ‘somebody else has the power to so manipulate the conditions as to make him act according to that person’s will

rather than his own' (p. 13). As noted earlier, when agency freedom is coupled with effective freedom this incorporates the control view of freedom, freedom from coercion. But the converse does not apply. When agency freedom is coupled with freedom as *control*, effective freedom can be excluded, as in the neo-liberal world. In turn this places limits on the potential of agency freedom in a neo-liberal regime.

What do we get, then, when we have relatively weak agency, a strong prohibition against external interference (which usually means external interference by governments), together with a prohibition against equalising the conditions of life or empowering agency in other ways? We have a choice making individual who does not necessarily have the power to make strong choices, let alone create new choices via the imagination. We have an unrecognised and of course unregulated variation in effective freedom. We have a liberal order in which life is imagined in terms of economic markets and the rules of economic competition are extended through every sphere as far as possible (Friedman, 1962); while at the same time the whole is regulated so as to protect the market order itself (Hayek, 1960). That is precisely the neo-liberal project in universities and research. It may seem ironic that liberal economic markets, and even more broadly quasi-markets and market-like behaviours are extended into sectors such as higher education via forms of government, given the coercive potential of government. But provided that the objective of such reforms is to install the choice making liberal market individual who is free from direct coercion - the consumer, the entrepreneur – the contradiction is avoided.

The meta-strategy in the universities, then, is economisation via the creation of selected competitive markets and state-controlled market simulacra that are nested in a framework of external controls. There are two principal forms of neo-liberal transformations of higher education. The first draws on techniques of *accounting* so as to economise the university site and change the academic subject within. The second draws on techniques of *accountability and audit* so as to nest that subject as responsive to an external environment in which the market order and its meta-indicators (e.g. GDP growth) are ends in themselves.

Through accounting, organizations are transformed into aggregations of cost centres and 'rendered calculable in financial terms' (Rose, 1999, p. 152), puncturing the old insulation of academics from managerial control in the name of professional autonomy. Sen's 'conception of the good' is taken out of academic self-determination, measured in dollar terms and incorporated into the rationales of managers driven by economic bottom-lines. 'Financial vocabularies, grammars and judgments have infiltrated the very terms in which experts calculate and enact their expertise' (Rose, 1999, p. 153). In contrast accountability and audit establishes mechanisms for governing at a distance. Audit is the control of control. 'Its power derives from its capacity to act upon systems of control themselves' (p. 154). Of the two kinds of technique, auditing and externalised accountability are more restrictive of self-determination.

Consequences of neo-liberal techniques

Agency freedom: Henkel (2005, p. 159) finds that with higher education and science becoming important instruments of national policy, changes in the environment of academic work constitute 'a major threat to academic identity' understood in the traditional terms of

disciplinary identity and agency freedom. 'Higher education institutions and their members' have been subjected to 'unprecedented government steering and scrutiny', and have 'had to locate themselves and compete in various forms of market'. Holders of academic power are increasingly required 'to adopt managerial structures, mechanisms and values'. Research funding is more dependent on defining the research as 'strategic'; research carried out 'in the context of application' is the norm, the pathway to innovation often begins in industry (p. 160). These trends are associated with the weakening of Bernstein's 'singulars' amid interdisciplinary projects driven by external funding or top-down management; the growth of academic 'regions' such as business studies which draw on clusters of disciplines, and modularisation (Beck & Young 2005). Striking examples of neo-liberal policy as normative propositions for remaking research are provided in Gibbons et al. (1994) and Nowotny et al. (2001). For some of Henkel's interviewees, 'the ideal mode of research is still to create a niche or bounded space, in which, free of external interference, it is possible to sustain an individual epistemic identity and a distinctive agenda'. For them the combination of agency freedom with academic freedom as power, resting also on freedom as control, is still within reach. But most academics now see this as 'a thing of the past' (p. 170).

'Increasingly, choice and control of academic agendas are not so much a matter of freedom from external interference as of the power to manage multiple relationships' (Henkel, 2005, p. 170). 'Scientists must negotiate between social and institutional pressures and preservation of identity' (p. 171). In other words there is some scope for continued agency freedom but it is more fraught than it was, and there are new restrictions. As Table 1 suggests, most neo-liberal techniques reduce academic authority over the definition of the 'good'. In part this authority is transferred upward within the institution to managers via performance management, budget-determined prioritisation, output measurement, competitive bidding systems, output measures and some forms of quality assurance. In part it is transferred to external authorities whether 'stakeholders', commercial clients or government agencies, via contractual relations, output measures, competitive bidding systems, user pays arrangements in teaching or service provision and external audit. Continued academic judgments about the work are channelled into a narrower set of pathways. Certain forms of neo-liberal government, external auditing and commercially-driven funding, set in train tendencies for the elimination of agency freedom altogether. University rankings, in which the purposes of universities are defined by external publishing companies such as the *US News and World Report* or the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, also displace academic identity in dramatic fashion. Agency freedom for scholars and researchers is definitely enhanced only for entrepreneurs in research centres and other units - although freedom is maintained only for those that enjoy competitive market success.

Effective freedom ('freedom as power'): The implications for neo-liberal reform for effective freedom are also more negative than positive, though the overall trend is less clear-cut than in relation to agency freedom. One characteristic of neo-liberal systems is to differentiate effective freedom between different agents within a common set. Competition, markets, commercialisation and performance-driven funding create a win/lose distribution in which the winners end up with more freedom as power than do the losers. The effects vary by individual and to an extent also by field of study and by institution. Entrepreneurial academics gain effective freedom though only if they succeed. Academics in elite universities experience greater continuity within academic cultures, so enhancing their agency freedom; and may gain

more and wider strategic and resource-based options in commercial markets and academic quasi-markets, so enhancing their freedom as power. ‘The degrees of choice and control available to researchers differ widely, particularly in a stratified university system like that of Britain (Henkel, 2005, p. 171). This is true also of the USA and Australia.

As Table 2 shows reductions in effective freedom are more clear-cut in the techniques that externalise the determination of activity: external audit and output and contract-determined funding from governments, and also user-driven production and enhanced competition between institutions. All of these reduce the capacity of academics both to control the desired ends and to pursue the ends of their choice – unless, as Hayek would have it, their desires are centred on competitive success as an end in itself. Nevertheless this exception is the point of purchase for neo-liberal reform. Prestige is an important motivator in universities. One can further one’s prestige even while losing control over the *oeuvre*. This is the Faustian bargain struck by many managers who rise from the academic ranks. Neo-liberal systems offer a measure of effective freedom at the price of the agency freedom constituted by academic identity and work.

Freedom as control: Neo-liberal reform shifts academic work into a more incessantly active and also more externalised environment. In this busier space with its mix of internal and external drivers, academic autonomy in the form of freedom as control is relativised but is not necessarily diminished (though the potential is there). In neo-liberal systems freedom as control becomes more central even while the other forms of freedom are rendered more problematic and the wider compass of freedom as control might be more restricted than before. In neo-liberal techniques such as performance management and remuneration, output measures and internal competition for funds and prestige, the self-managing self-realising choice-making academic individual is a crucial part of the organisational system. Here motivation and productivity are shaped from above but driven from within. In some cases freedom as control is clearly enhanced within its space, to the extent that older constraints exercised by professional academic authority or bureaucratic control are diminished. It must be said that the transition to market-like incentives is not always complete. Some ostensibly neo-liberal managers and governments seem to behave not very differently from their bureaucratic predecessors, especially when control objectives are made primary.

On the other hand, as Table 3 shows, techniques that externalise the locus of choice-making, such as government audit, government-determined or client-determined outputs and user-driven production, tend to reduce freedom as control. The use of university rankings to order funding and differentiation may also undermine academic choice-making, though here the implications are more ambiguous. Choice-making aligned to competitive strategy is empowered while other choice-making is not. Production determined by contractual relations is also ambiguous. It valorises university agents as choice-making subjects but also opens up the possibility that those same agents might be eliminated.

Freedom as the capacity for the radical-critical break: Any control regime that involves agents external to academic agency freedom is bound to have negative implications for the capacity for the radical-critical break. On the whole, neo-liberal systems have more negative implications for this form of freedom than the others (see Table 4). It is difficult to see how any of the established neo-liberal techniques and mechanisms could tend to enhance freedom

as the capacity for the radical-critical break, unless external agents invest in radical innovation. An interesting exception is audit, where the exercise of control post hoc rather than prospectively may permit a broader range of creative options to come onto the agenda. However mechanisms such as competitive bidding, budget-led strategies and priorities, performance management, output measures, contract based funding and commercialised research all point academic agents towards decisions on the basis of known categories and predictable products rather than creating space for the novel and unknown. In the case of performance management and budget-based priorities it is possible to factor in the capacity for the radical-critical break, but the further away from the disciplines the decisions are made, the less likely it is that potential breaks will be supported. Likewise university rankings favour extrapolations and imitations of existing success, not counter-intuitive strategy. While markets and quasi-markets can encourage economic innovation they are more conservative in epistemological terms. Though entrepreneurs, high achievers in research and competitively successful academic units tend to enhance their freedom as power, this does not necessarily bring with it a greater intellectual license to take risks by ranging beyond the established tracks. There is the dilemma of the independent film director who makes a hit. If their next movie bombs they will lose their market edge, and they know it. Only non prescriptive public or philanthropic funding can consistently enhance the freedom to be iconoclastic.

Academic self-determination: In sum, in the neo-liberal university, academic self-determination is transformed by two principal elements. First, the heteronomies installed by neo-liberal reform often shift the locus of decision to university managers, external funding bodies or commercial clients. Second, at nearly every turn the reliance on external agents or managed predictability inhibits the capacity to make the radical-critical break (in Table 5 the shorthand descriptor is ‘iconoclasm’). However the neo-liberal instruments are not identical to each other and play out somewhat differently according to each aspect of freedom and each site of application. A fuller grasp of these variations requires situated case studies in a range of different university sites, conducted on a comparative basis (Deem, 2001; Marginson & Sawir 2005). The present paper is restricted to the general and conceptual plane.

Of the neo-liberal techniques, those most restrictive of academic self-determination are university rankings, output-based and contract-based funding, and external audit. In these areas external authority is imposed directly on the universities. In contrast, those techniques where the issue is distributional, with freedom enhanced for some and reduced for others, are the techniques that remodel universities as sites for economic markets or quasi-markets. On the whole the effects of performance pay and budget-driven activity are more benign than the effects of the other neo-liberal techniques. However, in the case of budget drivers, output measures, performance management and output-driven funding, much depends on the detail. These techniques may be applied in arbitrary fashion, or open to negotiation and some continued academic control. No generalisation holds for every case. But the overall picture is clear.

Conclusions

Freedom as control is a recognisable element in the managed, quasi-market performance systems that shape the internal life of universities. But neo-liberal reforms have less happy consequences for agency freedom, they stratify freedom as power, and for the most part they

inhibit or block the radical-critical element. Taken overall neo-liberalism offers little to academics in extra freedoms, except those for whom choice-making is more effectively expressed in markets or quasi-markets, in particular the successful academic entrepreneur. This is academic autonomy without full-blown academic independence and self-determination. While most projects of research and scholarship remain under academic control, in a growing proportion of cases the nature of the projects and modes of pursuit are decided somewhere else.

In conventional critiques of neo-liberalism, it is understood as a project for the *suppression* of university autonomy, academic criticism and free creativity. But these critiques (which perhaps confuse the neo-liberal project with the political conservatism often joined to it) do not go to the root. Neo-liberal practices constitute more than the suppression of persons or opportunities. The neo-liberal positioning of human subjects not only offers benefits to those subjects privileged by it; successful entrepreneurs, senior managers in universities and so on; it provides all human subjects with forms of positive action. Much of the popular appeal of neo-liberalism lies in its potent message about freedom. The argument in this paper is not that neo-liberalism suppresses academic freedoms, but that it channels and limits academic freedoms. We are not robbed of agency per se, but we are robbed of certain forms of agency that arguably are vital to creators of academic knowledge in universities.

Neo-liberal university systems constitute more than commodification, and less than full commodification despite the market simulacra and their attendant rhetoric. The more fundamental objective is to join the universities to a larger system of power while remaking the forms of freedom of those within. In this process forms of academic autonomy survive but the independence of academic expertise is partly broken.

Academic life is not eliminated by neo-liberalism. It is tamed and more closely harnessed to economic interest and state control and hence to a particular kind of social order. Its larger imaginative horizons are folded into limited reflexivities. In social disciplines the capacity for critically-inspired invention is weakened. In understanding the neo-liberal project and its consequences, we might begin to work our way out of the trap.

Table 1. Implications of neo-liberal techniques of government and management in higher education for agency freedom

Neo-liberal technique	Implications for agency freedom: person acts willingly in terms of <i>her/ his notion of the good</i>
<i>economisation/ accounting:</i>	
competition for funding	freedom reduced as hostage to funding/competition
university rankings	reduced, unless 'good' lies in competition itself
user-driven production	reduced, becomes hostage to external user
performance pay	slight reduction; vocational incentives diminished
favour university entrepreneurs	freedom enhanced for entrepreneurs only
subsidise commercial research	much reduced, 'good' is more externally-determined
output measures of research	reduced, 'good' is manager- or externally-determined
performance management	reduced, 'good' is more manager-determined
budget-driven priorities	reduced, 'good' is more manager-determined
<i>economisation/ audit:</i>	
contracts with government	reduced, 'good' is more externally-determined
output driven funding	reduced, 'good' is more externally-determined
self-managed quality assurance	reduced only if 'good' is manager-determined
external audit	freedom is over-determined, tending to elimination

Table 2. Implications of neo-liberal techniques of government and management in higher education for effective freedom ('freedom as power')

Neo-liberal technique	Implications for effective freedom: <i>person has the potential to achieve own outcomes</i>
<i>economisation/ accounting:</i>	
competition for funding	freedom reduced: hostage to funding/competition
university rankings	eliminated unless competitive success is end in itself
user-driven production	sharply reduced, outcomes become hostage to user
performance pay	freedom is enhanced for some, reduced for others
favour university entrepreneurs	enhanced only for successful entrepreneurs
subsidise commercial research	entrepreneurial researchers gain but others lose
output measures of research	reduced except for some high achievers
performance management	reduced except for some high achievers
budget-driven priorities	enhanced for some reduced for others
<i>economisation/ audit:</i>	
contracts with government	reduced by external determination
output driven funding	reduced by external determination
self-managed quality assurance	can be positive, reduced if manager-determined
external audit	eliminated

Table 3. Implications of neo-liberal techniques of government and management in higher education for freedom as control

Neo-liberal technique	Implications for freedom as control: person located in safe zone with <i>autonomy in choice-making</i>
<i>economisation/ accounting:</i>	
competition for funding	freedom can be enhanced within quasi markets
university rankings	ambiguous, externalises grounds of choice making
user-driven production	reduced: tends to impose new constraints
performance pay	minor effects, cuts both ways
favour university entrepreneurs	enhanced for successful academic entrepreneurs
subsidise commercial research	can enhance freedom of quasi-market subjects
output measures of research	can enhance freedom of quasi-market subjects
performance management	can enhance freedom of quasi-market subjects
budget-driven priorities	cuts both ways, determined by other elements
<i>economisation/ audit:</i>	
contracts with government	ambiguous, externalisation can reduce freedom
output driven funding	ambiguous, externalisation can reduce freedom
self-managed quality assurance	possible enhancement of freedom
external audit	freedom reduced

Table 4. Implications of neo-liberal techniques of government and management in higher education for freedom as the capacity for the radical-critical break

Neo-liberal technique	Implications for freedom as the capacity for the radical-critical break: person has potential for creating <i>non path-dependent innovations in knowledge</i>
<i>economisation/ accounting:</i>	
competition for funding	freedom reduced, markets value what they know
university rankings	reduced: hierarchies value low risk behaviours
user-driven production	eliminated, unless the user is making the break
performance pay	minor effects, cuts both ways
favour university entrepreneurs	reduced: entrepreneurship is hostage to markets
subsidise commercial research	reduced: commercial research is hostage to markets
output measures of research	reduced: 'break' is unimagined, convention rewarded
performance management	reduced: 'break' is unimagined, convention rewarded
budget-driven priorities	reduced: 'break' is unimagined, convention rewarded
<i>economisation/ audit:</i>	
contracts with government	reduced: 'break' is unimagined, convention rewarded
output driven funding	eliminated: only the imaginable is fundable
self-managed quality assurance	reduced: professional isomorphism values convention
external audit	ambiguous: post hoc valuation may enable free space

Table 5. Implications of neo-liberal techniques of government and management in higher education for academic self-determination

Neo-liberal technique	Implications for academic self-determination: combines agency freedom (Table 1), effective freedom (Table 2) and freedom as the capacity for the radical-critical break (Table 4, 'iconoclasm' is shorthand descriptor)
<i>economisation/ accounting:</i>	
competition for funding	reduced: managed funding- or market-determined
university rankings	tendency to eliminate, externalised, iconoclasm blocked
user-driven production	most eliminated, some externalised, iconoclasm blocked
performance pay	minor effects, cuts both ways
favour university entrepreneurs	freedom significantly enhanced for the successful
subsidise commercial research	mostly reduced, externalised, iconoclasm reduced
output measures of research	mostly reduced, iconoclasm blocked
performance management	mostly reduced, iconoclasm reduced
budget-driven priorities	more reduced than not, iconoclasm reduced
<i>economisation/ audit:</i>	
contracts with government	reduced, externalised, iconoclasm blocked
output driven funding	reduced, externalised, iconoclasm blocked
self-managed quality assurance	cuts both ways but iconoclasm reduced
external audit	largely eliminated but may create space for iconoclasm

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