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Renewing and Revitalising the Social Mission of Higher Education

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'Universities, like other sectors that perform public tasks are transforming into something similar to social enterprises, linking their production of goods and services to a social mission' (Benneworth & Jongbloed 2010, p. 669)

Introduction

Following on from the opening chapter, the present chapter continues our review of trends and developments shaping the social future of academic libraries with a particular focus on the evolving social roles of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the 21st century. The key trend over the past 50 years is the evolution of higher education (HE) from an elite system serving a small minority of young people to a mass system open in principle to a majority of the population at a time when the world has also experienced major demographic changes and unprecedented technological advances. The social purpose of HE has thus become a matter of wider public concern that has come under renewed scrutiny as a result of the economic downturn, political challenges and social inequalities that have defined the last two decades. Governments in many countries expect universities to contribute to both economic recovery and social inclusion, to support their local communities and to compete in global markets by producing world-leading research and recruiting international students.

Expansion of the HE sector is a worldwide trend manifested in larger and more diverse student and faculty populations across the globe increasingly recruited from other countries and resulting in the development and diversification of campus infrastructure and professional services. At the same time HEIs have expanded their portfolios of activities beyond the campus and academy in response to economic and political challenges by engaging more actively with the commercial world of business and industry on the one hand and non-profit community organisations and the general public on the other. Research and teaching activities have both been affected by both business and public agenda, with undergraduate curricula expected to incorporate both business acumen and civic education to prepare students for global citizenship, while research funding schemes push academics towards work with demonstrable social and economic benefits, such as the design of new

products or services to improve health and wellbeing with commercial potential. Academic activities and responsibilities have become more complex making conflicts of interests, commitments and values more common in the HE workplace.

The chapter is organised thematically and concentrates on areas where the social transformation of HE is having significant impact. We begin with a short overview of the key drivers of change in the sector, followed by an elaboration of the 'third mission' concept in universities, which is often seen as the HE equivalent of corporate social responsibility and is associated with the emergence of 'third space professionals' whose work spans both the academic-professional and commercial-public arenas. We next look at the evolution of thinking and practice around student support – another area of significant expansion – and curriculum content, before considering the hot topic of decolonisation in HE, which illustrates the power of the emergent 'students as partners' model as an alternative to traditional hierarchical or consumerist relationships . Our final section provides a selective review of the growing body of work using social capital and related concepts to study the changing HE environment, with a particular focus on graduate employability and student use of support networks and social technologies.

Change drivers in higher education

Over the past several decades HE has expanded and diversified in response to political, economic, social and technological changes and challenges, with many institutions now operating at regional and global levels, as well as serving national and local purposes. HEIs today differ significantly from those of 50 years ago in both social composition and social interactions. The student (and faculty) population contains many more members drawn from groups previously under-represented in HE and is much more diverse in respect of race, ethnicity and national origin; age, ability and health status; sexual and gender identity; and educational and socioeconomic background (Morgan 2013). Institutions have accordingly reviewed, renewed and reformed their roles, responsibilities and relationships with stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations) to fit the changing social conditions and demands of HE in the 21st century.

The key trends driving the transformation of HE can be summatively captured in the concepts of massification, widening participation, privatisation/commercialisation and internationalisation (de Wit & Altbach 2021; Guri-Rosenblit, Šebková & Teichler 2007; Shah, Bennett & Southgate 2016; Tight 2019b), representing four critical moves:

- Expansion of the sector, intended to increase the proportion of young people entering tertiary education and progressing to highly skilled employment;
- Democratisation of educational opportunity, recognising the need to make university more accessible, inclusive and representative of the diversity of the population;
- Marketisation of the system, with reduced public funding forcing institutions to generate additional income from other sources, such as student fees;
- Globalisation of the economy, driven by digitalisation, empowering institutions to grow and recruit internationally and to prepare students for global careers.

These trends are well documented in the education literature as worldwide phenomena, although they are playing out at different speeds in different parts of the world (Osborne 2003). Moreover, the intersection of different environmental forces has generated complexity and tensions: HE has evolved from an elite – essentially *national* – system, to a mass market operating on a *global* level, but continuing to reflect national policies and practices that are in turn pushing institutions to reconnect with *local* communities and concerns at the same time as they are being pulled towards *international* markets to maintain competitive positioning and mitigate funding shortfalls. Scholars have devised the *glonacal* paradigm to point up the 'three intersecting planes of existence, emphasizing the simultaneous significance of global, national, and local dimensions and forces' (Marginson & Rhoades 2002, p. 282).

Development of the third mission

The function of HE in society and the economy came under particular scrutiny during the run-up to the 21st century, with institutions in many countries challenged by the state and the public to articulate the social relevance of their activities and programs. Universities have traditionally claimed a third responsibility of service to society alongside their education and research missions, but often only presented this role in general terms. This changed around the turn of the century when commentators began to use the term 'third mission' to describe university contributions to economic development through commercialisation of academic research via technology transfer, patenting, incubators, spin-off firms and similar (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff 2000). Over the past two decades scholars have been revisiting, rethinking and even reinventing the third mission concept to embody both economic/business and societal/community contributions and interactions, and also to encompass education/teaching alongside research (Berghaeuser & Hoelscher 2020; Laredo 2007; Lebeau & Cochrane 2015).

Development of the socio-economic mission of universities reflects two distinct streams of thinking around roles in the knowledge society: first, ideas related to innovation and entrepreneurship, encapsulated as the *entrepreneurial university* (Clark 1998; Etzkowitz 1983) and the related concepts of the *triple helix* of university-industry-government relations (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff 2000) and *academic capitalism*, which repositions public/nonprofit institutions as commercial, profit-making organisations in a global market (Rhoades & Slaughter 1997); second, ideas related to participation and citizenship, variously expressed as civic engagement (O'Connor 2006), community engagement (Fitzgerald & Peterman 2003), public engagement (Furco 2010), engaged scholarship/scholarship of engagement (Boyer 1996), the engaged campus (Furco 2010) and engaged university (Hollander & Saltmarsh 2000). Other terms used include third constituent, third stream, third task, third leg, third revolution, university engagement, social and business engagement, and social responsibility (Ćulum, Rončević & Ledić 2013; Frondizi et al. 2019).

University social responsibility (USR) is a related concept stressing an ethical commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development (Vasilescu et al. 2010), a key theme in recent literature that has been promoted as an emergent alternative (or fourth) mission of 'co-creation for sustainability', combining the triple-helix and community-engagement

models to mobilise academia, government, industry and civil society in 'cross-sector partnerships for sustainability transformations' (Trencher et al. 2014, p. 152). While this alternative model looks like a natural evolution of the university socio-economic mission (in line with the triple bottom line and sustainable capitalism models of the corporate sector) and Trencher et al. (2014, pp. 157, 159) cite 39 exemplar institutions in Europe, Asia and North America, they also acknowledge it requires 'a fundamental difference in focus' and will 'encounter tensions with the incumbent values and practices of the third mission regime', which they broadly equate with the entrepreneurial, technocratic model.

Others point to similar tensions *within* the civic engagement movement, which has 'struggled to find conceptual and operational coherence', with the 'expert model' of knowledge application/transfer largely continuing to prevail over democratic values of task-sharing and knowledge co-creation (Saltmarsh & Hartley 2011, p. 14). Table 3.1 adapts and synthesises the tabulations of Trencher et al. (2014, p. 158) and Saltmarsh and Hartley (2011, p. 22) with elaboration from other sources (Dzur 2018; Frondizi et al. 2019) to compare and contrast established and emergent thinking around the third (or fourth) mission, community/civic engagement and the social responsibilities of university actors as expert professionals. The table format brings out the serious extent of the tensions between the competitive, technocratic and co-operative, democratic models.

Irrespective of these tensions, the breadth and volume of activities now forming the societal mission is generating more pervasive institutional engagement, with growing reference to mainstreaming, integrating and embedding third mission activities as central responsibilities rather than peripheral projects (Ćulum, Rončević & Ledić 2013; Nelles & Vorley 2010; Wedgwood 2006), so that 'community involvement is not viewed as a public service project or a supplement to core academic work ... [but] as an important, legitimate and valued strategy for conducting high quality education and scholarly research' (Furco 2010, p. 387).

Figure 3.1 provides a visual summary of the range of activities now associated with the socio-economic (third) mission of HE, drawing on several sources (e.g., Glass & Fitzgerald 2010; Duncan & Manners 2012). As third-stream work becomes institutionalised, business and community interactions are becoming integrated into academic and administrative/professional work on and off campus, with the boundaries between different areas increasingly blurred.

Whitchurch (2010, pp. 627, 628) reports 'a new cadre of "blended professionals" has emerged', whose work occupies 'a "Third Space" ... between academic and professional domains' and together spans both publicly-oriented activity (e.g., widening participation, schools liaison and bridging activity) and privately-oriented (e.g., enterprise, technology transfer and patenting), pointing to recent convergence of these strands of activity enabling public and private elements to reinforce and enrich each other. As government agenda link widening access to skills development, graduate employability and economic recovery, universities are developing partnerships with 'a range of regional, national and international agencies' that 'bring together the extension of educational opportunity with the regeneration of local communities', in which 'specialist [blended, third-space] professionals ... work alongside academic colleagues to perform translational functions between academic agendas and the interests of external agencies' (Whitchurch, 2010, pp. 629, 630).

	Established third mission (technocratic, expert-based)	Emergent alternative/fourth mission (social, democratic-centred)	
Model	Entrepreneurial university: centre of scientific expertise (scholarly work done <i>for</i> the client as consumer; deficit-based view of the community/region)	Transformative university: part of knowledge ecosystem (scholarly work done <i>with</i> the public as co- producer; asset-based view of the community)	
Objective	Economic development	Social transformation	
Function	Technology transfer for industry (unidirectional flow, applied research and technical training)	Knowledge co-creation for sustainability (multidirectional flow, participatory action research and community learning)	
Timeframe	Short- to mid-term	Mid- to long-term	
Logic	Competitive market	Co-operative commons	
Disciplines	Specific fields (particularly natural sciences and engineering)	Full spectrum (including humanities and social sciences)	
Assumptions	Primacy of academic knowledgeIntellectual property rightsTask monopoly	Parity of community knowledgeCommunal ownership rulesTask sharing	
Approach	In-house R&D Selective ad-hoc response to isolated problems	Open innovation Comprehensive systematic response to interwoven problems	
Relationships	Project-based collaboration Triple helix (university, industry and government specialists)	Large-scale coalition Quintuple helix (university, business, government, civil society and natural environment specialists and non- specialists)	
Setting	Laboratory/controlled environments	Community/real-world locations	
Catalyst	Scientific, technical or industrial problem	Societal challenge, issue or need	
Channels	 Patents/licences Science/technology parks Spin-off firms/start-up companies Conferences, publications Consultation, graduates 	 Cultural venues Community centres Social enterprises Meetings, public events Participation, students 	
Politics	Leverage government policy, incentives and funding	Facilitate inclusive, collaborative, and deliberative democracy	
Values	Academic capitalism (privatisation, income generation, profit taking)	Social capital (public good, community building, non profit)	

Table 3.1. Salient characteristics of university socio-economic missions



Figure 3.1. Third mission activities in higher education

Foregrounding student employability

As we move through the current century, we find both the populations and transactions of HEIs have expanded and diversified as universities and colleges reach out to business and the community to conform with national policies, sectoral guidelines and local aspirations, The current focus on *graduate employability* encapsulates the tensions arising from the convergence of the economic and social missions of HE, with continuing debate around the scope of the concept and its place in the academy. Fifty years ago careers advice was a peripheral service and few universities systematically tracked graduate destinations; the latter is now a key performance indicator with many HEIs delivering enterprise education, *employability learning* and career management skills as part of the 21st-century curriculum. Indeed, graduate employability 'has become a core element of universities' educative, social, and economic missions' and the need for more careers and employability support has generated new specialist roles related to campus employment, entrepreneurship hubs, industry liaison, student development and work-integrated learning as additional examples of emergent boundary-crossing third-space professionals (Healy, Brown & Ho 2022).

The sector has developed frameworks such as graduate attributes and skills awards to help students acquire and document accomplishments and competencies relevant to employment, though embedding employability into the core curriculum for all students obviously ensures more penetration than elective methods and can be done in several ways (Yorke & Knight 2006). Employability is a broad, complex construct that experts stress is 'not just about preparing students for employment', but rather about 'supporting students to

develop a range of knowledge, skills, behaviours, attributes and attitudes which will enable them to be successful not just in employment but in life' (Cole & Tibby 2013, pp. 5, 6). Cole and Tibby's (2013, p. 9) review of seven definitions/models illustrates a shift since the 1990s

'from demand-led skills sets towards a more holistic view of "graduate attributes" that include 'softer' transferable skills and person-centred qualities, developed in conjunction with subject specific knowledge, skills and competencies'.

Bennett et al. (2017, p. 52) agree 'employability has shifted from a focus on "job-getting" towards the metacognitive capacity to adapt, lead and learn' as a result of 'enormous pressure to develop graduates who can negotiate a crowded, volatile and globally competitive labour market'.

Yet employability continues to be a controversial topic beset by contested assumptions and intersecting tensions with scholars disparaging the knowledge-skills-attributes models promoted by governments and adopted by universities as instrumentalist, simplistic and insensitive to contextual realities (Walker & Fongwa 2017, pp. 36-39). Critics argue the human capital thinking reflected in prevailing neoliberal policy discourse represents only the baseline requirement and fails to understand other factors critical for graduate success. Higdon (2016, p. 189) uses evidence from current students and recent graduates to show that students need cultural, social and financial capital ('confidence, contacts and money') to develop personal networks in their profession and access the gatekeepers of work opportunities. Students and graduates want connections with practitioners through a curriculum linking theory and practice, and bringing academics and professionals together, with courses and projects aligned to industry work; they want work experience, placements and internships organised by the university (not by students) and specialist, discipline-based careers advice, in preference to generic, centralised services (Higdon 2016).

Diversification of student support activities

The boundaries between formerly separate functions of HEIs are blurring as so-called thirdmission activities become assimilated into research and education activities that have also evolved to reflect the complex-pluralist context of the contemporary learning economy, notably by rethinking the links between teaching and research with elite research-intensive institutions committing to research-led teaching and inclusive teaching-oriented universities promoting research-based learning (Healey 2005; Scott 2005). Similarly, the boundaries between academic activities and student services are blurring as institutions move beyond reforming the undergraduate curriculum to improving 'the total life experience of students', realising students require support 'through every stage of their academic and personal journey at university' and that support needs to provide 'a holistic student experience' and be 'integrated with ... academic support' (Sandeen 2004, p. 33; Morgan 2012, pp. 79, 81, 82).

The student services/student affairs function 'has become more complex as ... students have become more diverse' (Sandeen 2004, p. 30). Services have expanded and diversified beyond traditional 'safety net' functions (such as finance, housing and health) to general

wellbeing services (including careers, counselling and recreation), in addition to special support for disabled, international, mature and part-time students, as well as social, cultural and educational programs (Morgan 2012; Sandeen 2004). Student affairs professionals 'reject any suggestion that they are just "service providers", seeing themselves 'as an integral part of the academic programs of their campuses and as active contributors to student learning' with involvement in education outside the classroom via service learning, learning communities and peer-related education (Sandeen 2004, p. 30) and teaching study skills, employability skills and other key skills as part of the curriculum (Morgan 2012).

Student support is now more co-operative, proactive, student-centred and stage-based, with many institutions (both teaching-intensive and research-intensive) adopting the concept of the student lifecycle as a tool for designing targeted academic, personal and social interventions both to facilitate progress and success, and to mitigate the risk of drop-out, which increased substantially with massification and diversification, particularly among low-socioeconomic, disabled and mature students, especially during or around the end of the first year (Matheson 2018). Lifecycle models typically have four to six phases or stages, representing a series of 'pivotal transition points' in the student journey (Morgan 2013, p. 1447). Lifecycle thinking has advanced prior work foregrounding the first-year experience by including key upstream and downstream phases of higher learning to present the learner journey as a continuum with critical staging points, while also promoting 'a holistic view of the university experience' by involving student peers, professionals, academics and administrators in supporting new student transitions (Krause 2006, p. 2).

Ultimately, as Krause (2006, p. 8) concludes, 'The goal is to build student independence and support networks as part of an integrated academic and social transition' that extends beyond the first year through the middle and final years to life after university. Table 3.2 shows the transitions defined in four frequently referenced models, replacing the cycle format with a table for comparative purposes.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE 2001, p. 35) defines six 'mutually dependent' elements that determine successful recruitment, retention and progression. Morgan's (2013) Student Experience Practitioner Model also has six stages, but specifically identifies returning to study (after a vacation, work placement or study abroad) and leaving the university as difficult transitions that may need as much thought and support as first-year induction, hence the term 'outduction'. While the literature on transitions largely concentrates on the undergraduate experience, there is a growing body of research showing that students returning for postgraduate study 'often re-enter the student lifecycle from the beginning, bringing with them new academic and social concerns' (Matheson 2018, p. 8) and consequently need support in adjusting to and developing their changing academic and social, professional and personal identities. Burnett (2007, p. 24) notes some phases of the University of Queensland Student Experience Model 'occur outside the immediate university environment and ... require, and depend upon, the fostering of strong and authentic community links'.

Table 3.2. Modelling student lifecycles in higher education

HEFCE (2001)	Burnett (2007)	Lizzio (2011)	Morgan (2013)
	Pre-transition	Transition towards	
Aspiration raising	Beginning to think about university	FUTURE STUDENTS	First contact and admissions
Pre-entry	Transition	1. Applying and exploring	Pre-arrival
	Preparing for university	2. Clarifying and choosing	
		Transition in COMMENCING STUDENTS	
Admission First term/semester	Orientation week First year student induction programs	 Committing and preparing Joining and engaging 	Arrival and orientation Introduction to study
		Transition through CONTINUING STUDENTS	Re-orientation and reinduction
Moving through the course	The middle years The capstone or final year experience	 Working for early success Building on success 	
Employment		Transitions up, out & back GRADUATES & ALUMNI	Outduction
	Engagement with lifelong learning Post-graduate student experience	 Focusing future success Partnering and continuing 	Time-out/career/future study

Lizzio's (2011) four-part model was developed in Australia, but is cited in studies from other countries. Lizzio (2011, p. 1) defines the student lifecycle as 'the *constellation of evolving identities, needs and purposes* as students enter into, move through and graduate from universities'. His seminal paper argues for the lifecycle-informed design of coherent academic programs, based on a *partnership culture* in which academic teachers, professionals, students and other stakeholders (disciplines, professions, employers) actively explore different ways to collaborate in 'a suite of *next generation partnerships or working relationships'*, asserting that 'the stage-responsive organisation of relationships and learning task activities will encourage better engagement and learning, stronger social and academic links between students and students and staff [professionals and academics], and produce more satisfied and effective graduates and loyal alumni' (Lizzio 2011, p. 4). Significantly, lifecycle-informed academic programs here involve 'coordinated integration of both curricular and co-curricular activities' (Lizzio 2011, p. 7), confirming the holistic model of university education that is now being promoted in many countries.

Reform of the academic curriculum

Barnett (2000) recounts the many diverse influences (disciplines, professions, students, employers, governments, markets, pedagogies, strategies, etc.) shaping institutional curricula in a mass HE system and concludes that in the contemporary *supercomplex* world, a curriculum must somehow combine the domains of knowledge (understanding), action (performativity) and being (self-identity). There is an emerging consensus that HE curricula must reform to counter the complex mega-problems of contemporary economic and social life, with growing support for cross-disciplinary teamwork, multi-literacy development, creative capacity-building, person-centred education and holistic frameworks that integrate cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions to 'emphasize personal integration, as well as sociocultural, and ecological awareness' (Baxter Magolda & Taylor 2017; Brown 2006; Hutchison & Bosacki 2000, p 182; McWilliam 2010; UNESCO 1996).

McWilliam (2010, p. 293) argues for 'cultural and epistemological agility' represented by 'the ability to move seamlessly across multiple disciplinary, social and cultural terrains'. Such thinking takes down disciplinary silos, cuts across organisational boundaries and calls for closer connection of academic, professional and personal development in ways that signal the growing *academic* importance of student *service* provision in 'educating the whole student' and promoting student well-being (Sandeen 2004; Jayawickreme & Dahill-Brown 2016; Weaver 2008). Hutchison and Bosacki (2000, pp. 181, 182) argue for a 'balanced curriculum [that] alternates between action and reflection, communal and personal, social and solitary' and gives parity to 'the "state of being" alongside "acts of doing" ... treating both as complementary processes of meaning-making', concluding that 'experiential education can enrich its pedagogy to include guided fantasy, narrative, and contemplative practices among its teaching and learning strategies'. Synthesising ideas from Barnett, Baxter Magolda and others, Jackson (2011) makes the case for a 'lifewide curriculum' based on the knowing-acting-being paradigm, which integrates experiences and learning from different contexts, such as academic study, work placements and extracurricular activities.

A common theme across the student services, service learning and learning development literature of the past two decades is the focus on partnerships, variously manifest as learning partnerships, community partnerships and most recently 'students as partners' and 'partnership learning communities' (Baxter Magolda & King 2004; Healey, Flint & Harrington 2016; Jacoby 2003; Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017). Proponents conceive students as partners (SaP) as a more active, more authentic and more collaborative form of student engagement involving students in multiple roles, including institutional governance, quality assurance, research strategies, community engagement, and extra-curricular activities, as well as curriculum design, pedagogic consultancy, peer mentoring, subject-based research and change agents (Healey, Flint & Harrington 2016). Academic librarians have defined additional domains for partnering with students as co-designers, including space transformation, service excellence, resource design and collection renewal (Salisbury, Dollinger & Vanderlelie 2020). SaP has also been characterised as 'a process of renegotiating traditional positions, power arrangements, and ways of working' and an alternative to both traditional hierarchical approaches and neoliberal/consumerist models in HE (Healey, Flint & Harrington 2016; p. 8; Matthews et al. 2018, pp. 958, 968).

Decolonisation of higher education institutions

The current global movement to decolonise the curriculum (Abu Moghli & Kadiwal 2021: Bullen & Flavell 2021; Harvey & Russell-Mundine 2019) provides a large-scale example of students working as partners at an institutional and national level, with contemporary institutional initiatives largely inspired by numerous student-led protests and campaigns over the past decade, notably Rhodes Must Fall, Leopold Must Fall, Galton Must Fall, and Gladstone Must Fall; Liberate My Degree, Why Isn't My Professor Black? and Why Is My Curriculum White? The decolonisation debate has a much longer history and wider remit, with surges in the 1960s, 1980s and 2000s, but has been reignited by recent student action, generating renewed calls to decolonise not just the curriculum, but the university, higher education, the academy, open science, established (Western/Eurocentric) knowledge and even *the academic sel*f 'in a process of forever becoming' (Bhambra, Gebrial & Nişancıoğlu 2018; Dutta et al. 2021; Heleta 2016; Nagdee & Shafi 2021; Naude 2019; Wimpenny et al. 2021, p. 13).

The conceptualisation and terminology of the field are contested, particularly the respective uses of decolonisation, indigenisation and Africanisation and related terms such as internationalisation, globalisation and cosmopolitanism (Bhambra, Gebrial & Nişancıoğlu 2018; Bullen & Flavell 2021; Crilly & Everitt 2022; le Grange 2018). Much of the literature has a conceptual or theoretical focus, but there is an emerging body of empirical work that offers insight into practical steps being taken towards diversity, equity and inclusion in academic curricula, including case studies of academic librarians collaborating with students and faculty to *Decolonise, Liberate* and *Indigenise* their libraries, using *critical race theory, historical trauma theory* and other frameworks to audit, review and reconstitute course collections, reading lists, classification systems, library education and information literacy in work that aligns with the *critical, progressive* and *radical* librarianship movements (Crilly & Everitt 2022; Nicholson & Seale 2018). Reading lists have emerged as a popular focus for

initial work enabling students, faculty and librarians to work through issues together as a community of practice.

Two recent UK studies explore the diversity of reading lists as a key step towards decolonisation by analysing the gender, ethnicity and location of authors represented and comparing the distribution with the diversity of their student body and scholarly community. Schucan Bird and Pitman (2020) audited authorship in two examples from social science and science, while Taylor et al. (2021) used the same methodology for a much larger sample across nine life science disciplines. While the percentages varied across disciplines, both studies found their lists were dominated by White, male authors from countries in the Global North, and resolved to diversify their lists (through co-creation with students) and to educate students and colleagues about racism and colonialism in science, but noted several unresolved problems in moving forward, such as defining representativeness, determining ethnicities and selecting terminology.

Several scholars use the articulation provide by Andreotti et al. (2015, p. 31) to position decolonising efforts on a spectrum from 'soft-reform' through 'radical-reform' to 'beyond-reform'. Abu Moghli and Kadiwal (2021, pp. 12, 13) found most of the UK curriculum initiatives analysed were in the soft-reform space and 'although supported and pushed by many students and academics of colour and their allies, the DtC movement and the available initiatives remain piecemeal and short-lived, and have limited impact on the colonial education approach embodied in HEIs'. They concluded that decolonising the curriculum cannot be accomplished effectively without more fundamental restructuring of the institution and specifically 'a deconstruction of asymmetrical power relationships within academic spaces to allow for meaningful decolonisation in practice, and a recognition of plurality of histories, knowledge and epistemic traditions and experiences'.

Two case studies from Australia reinforce this argument. The first example shows an institution moving from soft-reform to radical-reform, progressing from selective embedding of indigenous perspectives in curricula of particular subjects to a whole-of-university approach to cultural competence development for students, academics and professional staff by making 'cultural competence' one of six interconnected qualities in their set of graduate attributes (Harvey & Russell-Mundine 2019). Using Martin Nakata's (2002; 2007) concept of the 'cultural interface' the authors explain the reciprocal relationships that enable other qualities (critical thinking, problem-solving, interdisciplinarity, reflection, ethics) to facilitate development of cultural competence: although 'firmly grounded in Western epistemologies ... they can nonetheless be used to challenge the dominance of Western ways of knowing, being and doing in our curricula', while 'engagement with Indigenous knowledges ... can allow all students to more fully engage with those graduate qualities not primarily concerned with disciplinary content' (Harvey & Russell-Mundine (2019, pp. 793, 794).

In contrast, Bullen and Flavell (2021) exemplify a 'beyond-reform' stance (Andreotti et al. 2015), criticising the whole notion of graduate attributes and particularly the ubiquitous concept of 'global citizenship' for reinforcing homogeneity, whiteness and a Western worldview of employability. Although they agree that the cultural interface is 'a highly productive learning context for students to engage in', they argue that wholehearted

engagement requires more fundamental 'place-based decolonising processes', led by Aboriginal peoples, and needs to expose graduates to indigenous knowledge and 'learning processes ... grounded in relationships, obligation and connection to country' (Bullen & Flavell 2021, pp. 10-11).

Capital perspectives on higher education

While there has been a substantial increase in the participation of underrepresented groups in HE in the past two decades, despite efforts to support their transition and progression, there is a well-documented persistent 'achievement gap' (also known as an 'attainment' or 'awarding' gap) between students from high and low economic backgrounds, giving rise to numerous studies investigating the causes of disparities and the effects of targeted interventions, such as financial aid, pre-college outreach and social support (Brown 2018; Herbaut & Geven 2019; Marginson 2016; Mishra 2020). Theories and concepts of social capital are increasingly being used to explore student experiences at various stages of the HE lifecycle, with a focus on their social networks and relationships, often with the intent of improving support and access to resources for disadvantaged groups. Mishra (2020) and Tight (2019a) point to significant growth in social capital-based studies in HE over the past decade, following the dramatic surge of interest in social capital across the social sciences from the early 2000s.

Although social capital has long been a contested concept in social science, subject to multiple definitions and interpretations, it has become one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks in social research and has been adopted in diverse contexts, notably economic development, public health, organisation behaviour, democratic governance, civic participation and family studies, as well as primary, secondary and later tertiary education. Tight (2019a, pp. 209-210) estimates around one-tenth of published articles on social capital focus on HE, currently 200-300 per year, supplementing similar quantities using human capital theory in HE, which he describes as 'the most influential theory relating to higher education policy (and educational policy in general) – nationally and internationally – over the last 50 years or more', on the basis that public investment in education, training and learning leads to increased productivity and economic growth and benefits both individuals and society. The move towards social capital theory reflects policy concerns around participation and social integration, while the ongoing focus on human capital acknowledges that HE participation is motivated by both economic and social agenda of individuals, communities and society.

Despite ongoing debate on its meaning and significance, the massive growth of social capital as a paradigm for studying social problems has resulted in it acquiring a taken-for-granted status among scholars (in education and other fields) to the extent that the concept is often invoked without formally defining it and the term has become routinised into mainstream discourse and everyday conversation (Fine 2010; Fulkerson & Thompson 2008; Woolcock 2010). Setting aside the debate over whether social capital is primarily an individual or collective attribute and variations among different areas of social research, Fulkerson and Thompson's (2008) comprehensive analysis of two decades of journal articles reveals

remarkable consistency in the concepts most frequently used across all areas, with Networks, Resources, Relationships, Trust, Norms and Reciprocity emerging as key terms.

The main social capital theorists cited in HE research are Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), Nan Lin (1999) and Robert Putnam (1995; 2000); other scholars referenced include Granovetter (1973), Burt (1992), Borgatti and Foster (2003), Nahapiet and Ghosal (1998) and Portes (1998; 2000). Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the relationship between economic, cultural and social capital is the dominant framework used, though often in tandem with Colemanesque theories linking the social capital in social relationships to human capital represented by educational attainment, or with Lin's network theory of social capital. However, recent scholarship argues overreliance on Bourdieusian theories of social and cultural reproduction perpetuates deficit thinking by concentrating on a narrow range of cultural and social resources and ignoring other abundant and significant assets that minority groups can deploy and develop to succeed in education and elsewhere. Early examples of social capital research favoured quantitative methods, but the use of qualitative and mixed methods has grown significantly in the past decade (Mishra 2020).

Exploring student networks

The bulk of the literature concentrates on the experiences of students after enrolment. Mishra (2020) synthesises findings from more than 100 studies from the USA and beyond to provide a model showing how bonding and bridging social capital represented by close and weak ties in their personal and institutional networks provide social support and information resources for students from underrepresented groups that can help them to succeed academically; their 'bonding ties' include family members, ethnic/religious communities and same-race peers, while 'bridging ties' include same-race faculty, successful community members and institutional learning communities. However, a significant strand of research explores formation of social capital at the pre-entry stage, often in the context of college preparation programs. Early studies used US education survey data to analyse the impact of parental involvement and school structures on college enrolment (Perna & Titus 2005; Sandefur, Meier & Campbell 2006). Later research from Ireland synthesises Bourdieusian theories with the capability (human development) approach of Amartya Sen (1985) and Martha Nussbaum (2011) as a broader, alternative lens on activities building social capital in an aspiration-raising program for second-year secondary-school students (Hannon, Faas & O'Sullivan 2017). Others have used Tara Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) framework to analyse resources used by minority students to assist their transition to university.

CCW shifts the focus from the assumed deficits of non-traditional students to their distinctive strengths by recognising the 'array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized' as alternative forms of overlapping capital (aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital) that build on one another as accumulated (but underutilised) assets they bring from their homes and communities to the classroom (Yosso 2005, p. 77). O'Shea (2016) found 'experiential capital' (derived from life and professional experiences) was another factor in the academic success of mature first-infamily students in Australia, alongside their aspirational, familial, social and other assets. Macqueen (2018, p. 47) similarly found non-traditional cultural and social capital helped low-socioeconomic students succeed, including 'in the moment' emotional and practical

support from families, supplemented by social networks based on student friends and peers in similar situations. White (2019) also challenges the assumption that such students have low social capital, finding they are more active help-seekers than their higher-status peers, using networks of support based on family, peers, administrative staff and teachers/tutors, selected as available, familiar, credible and trustworthy connections, with student services used as secondary sources referred to by their primary networks.

Several scholars have conducted cross-national and/or cross-institutional studies to compare minority student experiences in different settings. Friend's (2021) comparison of experiences at elite universities in the UK and USA describes how institutional practices that promote bridging and bonding networks help and hinder social integration. Rienties, Johan & Jindal-Snape (2015) used social network analysis to compare the friendship, work and learning networks of third-year international and UK students in terms of their co-national, multi-national and host-national relationships before and after being put into mixed work groups by teachers, and found the group work resulted in some broadening of networks for Chinese students, who tended to have fewer intercultural interactions. A longitudinal comparison at two contrasting UK universities in the same city shows how middle-class students use the economic and social capital of their parents by exploiting family networks to access top professions, gain competitive internships and improve their employability, while their working-class peers often took low-level jobs to fund their studies and participated less in structured work experience or other extra-curricular activities, which affected their career prospects and positioned university as 'another site for the middle classes to compound and exploit their advantages', rather than the source of social levelling assumed (Bathmaker, Ingram & Waller 2013, p. 739).

A small stream of research explores the role of community-based learning, service learning and community education in generating social capital for individuals and communities. Dilworth (2006) includes two case studies showing the 'social multiplier effect' created by community education that bridges connections by extending university social networks into disadvantaged communities and widening the social networks of low-income youth. Coleman and Danks (2016) refer to a 'positive spillover effect' from a multi-agency servicelearning partnership where 'the establishment of norms and ... expectations of reciprocity ... led to an increase in trust and networks' facilitating collaborative action in a communitybased forestry initiative. Other studies have investigated the impact of community-based learning on the social capital of individual students by measuring participation in networks and levels of trust (D'Agostino 2010) and perceptions of connectedness and reductions in ethnocentrism (Hoffman 2011).

Elaborating graduate employability

Capital perspectives have generated a rich body of work unpacking and repackaging the contentious concept of graduate employability. Williams et al. (2016, pp. 887-892) present capital as a unifying theme and 'superordinate dimension' of literature on employability from the past three decades, showing how elements of social, cultural and psychological capital have been evident in elaborations of the concept from the outset, though often not made explicit, with human capital theory dominating the early agenda, followed by social capital as the focus shifted from individuals to their relationships with others. Different capital theories of employability have gained prominence in HE globally in the form of both

capital subcomponents and overarching concepts, including *academic* capital (Hu & Cairns 2017; Lavender 2020), *personal* capital (Brown, Hesketh & Williams 2003; Lehmann 2019), *ethnic* capital (Abrahamsen & Drange 2015; Shah, Dwyer & Modood 2010; Sin 2016), *identity capital* (Côté 2005; Naseem 2019), *mobility* capital (Hu & Cairns 2017; Wiers-Jenssen 2011), *career* capital (D'Amico et al. 2019; Reichenberger & Raymond 2021), *graduate* capital (Tomlinson 2017; Wijayanama, Ranjani & Mohan, 2021) and *employability* capital (Caballero, Álvarez-González & López-Miguens 2020; Nghia, Giang & Quyen 2019).

Employability researchers have turned to the Bourdieusian multi-faceted conceptualisation of embodied, objectified and institutionalised *cultural capital* and related concepts (not only social capital, but also *symbolic capital, linguistic capital* and *educational capital* or *academic capital*) to gain a more nuanced understanding of both employer expectations and graduate aspirations, particularly among minority groups, such as mature students and international graduates. Scholarship covers students at a further education college and the Open University in the UK (Lavender 2020; Pegg & Carr 2010), students from China and Malaysia recently graduated from Australia and the UK (Blackmore, Gribble & Rahimi 2017; Sin 2016) and employer practices of 'cultural matching' in advanced manufacturing companies in the US and financial services firms in Australia (Hora 2020; Parry & Jackling 2015). Bourdieusian theory clarifies relationships between different forms of capital, but offers limited insight into contemporary sociocultural influences on employment outcomes, notably for different ethnic groups, but also for similar groups experiencing different issues, hence the use of ethnic capital and personal capital to explain counterintuitive outcomes.

Another emerging stream of work uses the four-dimensional *psychological capital* framework developed by Fred Luthans (Luthans, Luthans & Luthans 2004) to explore the influence of positive personal qualities on employability (namely confidence/Efficacy, goal-setting/Hope, Optimism and Resilience, also known as PsyCap and later in a reordered form as 'the HERO within'). PsyCap ('who you are' and 'what you can become') draws on the positive organisational behaviour movement in psychology and was developed to expand conceptions of intangible assets in organisations beyond human capital ('what you know') and social capital ('who you know'). The concept has been used recently with students in Asia (Bakari & Khoso 2017; Xu & Yu 2019), Africa (Baluku et al. 2021; Ngoma & Ntale 2016) and Europe (Ayala Calvo & Manzano García 2021; Fabbris & Fornea 2019). Based on interview data, Xu and Yu (2019) replaced self-efficacy with self-acceptance in their survey of disabled college students in China and confirmed the latter as the best predictor of employability for students with disabilities.

A significant trend here is the use and development of holistic multi-capital frameworks to inform employability research and careers education. A growing body of scholarship uses the *career capital* model of Michael Arthur (DeFillippi & Arthur 1994; Inkson & Arthur 2001) that presents career management as three interdependent *ways of knowing* (know-why, know-how and know-whom; broadly equivalent to identity human and social capital). Researchers have used the model to explore connections between academic experiences and career trajectories of MBA graduates in Canada and Italy (Sturges, Simpson & Altman 2003; Felker & Gianecchini 2015), higher education graduates enrolled in vocational institutions in Australia and Singapore (Harris & Ramos 2013) and community college students across the USA (D'Amico et al. 2019; Xing & Gordon 2021). D'Amico et al. have refined their College and Career Capital Survey over seven years and constructed an index to measure alignment between college and careers. In contrast, Reichenberger and Raymond (2021) chose a *Bourdieusian* career capital framework to examine how tourism students in New Zealand were adapting their career strategies to a 'career shock' context.

Examples of UK frameworks include the 2013 Solent Capital Compass from Southampton Solent University, which comprises 16 elements categorised as Capabilities/Human Capital, Confidence/Psychological Capital and Connections/Social Capital (Whistance & Campbell 2018) and the widely-cited Graduate Capital Model from the nearby University of Southampton, which conceptualises employability as 'constituting a range of dynamic, interactive forms of capital which are acquired through graduates' lived experiences', namely Human Capital, Social Capital, Cultural Capital, Identity Capital and Psychological Capital (Tomlinson 2017, p. 340). Tomlinson's model has been used with a range of student and graduate populations in the UK, US, Australia and China, including socioeconomically diverse undergraduates, minority doctoral students, industry internship candidates and international graduate migrants and returnees (Parutis & Howson 2020; Thomas et al. 2021; Benati & Fischer 2021; Pham, Tomlinson & Thompson 2019; Singh & Fan 2021).

Other tools include a four-capital/seven-factor measurement scale developed in Spain, covering human, social, cultural and psychological capital (Caballero, Álvarez-González & López-Miguens 2020). Capital perspectives have thus enabled scholars to develop more nuanced understandings and reliable assessments of the factors opening up or holding back graduate careers; for example, which forms of capital are most relevant in a competitive job market (Brown, Hesketh & Williams 2003; Caballero, Álvarez-González & López-Miguens 2020; Hora 2020) or how capital shortfalls may force graduates to downshift or modify their occupational goals (Blackmore, Gribble & Rahimi 2017; Lehmann, 2019; Reichenberger & Raymond 2021; Sin 2016). Capital models of graduate employability promote a resource-based view of career management that extends the rationale of students (and their families) investing in a university education to graduates investing in their career success, viewing their careers as 'repositories of knowledge' and playing their part as a 'career capitalist' (Inkson & Arthur 2001).

Exploiting social media

A large body of work explores the role of social media in developing the social networks and social capital of students. Benson, Morgan and Tennakoon (2015) identify six types of social technologies (collective projects, (micro)blogging, content communities, networking sites, role-playing games and virtual worlds) and provide a model showing nine places in the student journey as sites for developing networking skills and building social capital (from student admission and transitional support via learning activities, leadership development, employability skills, entrepreneurship education and industry links to alumni relations and lifelong learning). However, institutions have been slow to deploy such tools effectively across the lifecycle and 'need to develop appropriate curriculum to foster proactive networking investment for and by students' (Benson, Morgan & Tennakoon 2015, p. 348). Related research suggests undergraduate and Master's students need education on using sites such as LinkedIn to build and exploit social capital for social career management and enhanced employability (Benson, Morgan & Filippaios 2014).

Most scholars focus on undergraduate use of Facebook to form and keep relationships, including multiple studies by Ellison et al. (2011), who add the concept of 'maintained social capital' to bonding and bridging capital, and Kim et al. (2020), who examine the influence of network heterogeneity on social capital and social self-efficacy. Some studies explore the impact of social media on civic (and political) participation in different settings (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009; Zhong, 2014). A few studies focus on first-generation students and suggest social media can have a significant role in widening access to HE as such students rely more on social network contacts to support their aspirations and applications than continuing-generation students with college-going friends and parents (Wohn et al. 2013) and they also rely more on close (bonding) ties and new (bridging) ties for emotional and academic support during college (Deng, Fernández & Zhao 2022).

Holtell, Martinez-Alemán and Rowan-Kenyon (2014) use the concept of college/campus capital (access to social and cultural capital on campus) to discuss how summer bridge programs can deploy social media to broaden the social and academic networks of students whose lifestyles may make traditional engagement activities problematic and to maintain vital connections with home that help them persist at the institution. Rowan-Kenyon, Martinez Alemán and Savitz-Romer (2018, p. 27) define campus capital as 'the various forms of social capital that enhance students' on-campus experiences that ... affect their persistence to graduation ... through relational networks', specific to a particular campus. They introduce the term *transitional capital* to describe how first-generation students create new (weak) ties with people of similar background (student peers, peer mentors, faculty and staff) that develop strong-tie characteristics as sources of bonding capital, thus becoming 'a synthesis of bridging and bonding capital' and forming 'an essential and critical type of capital' enabled by social media technology (Rowan-Kenyon, Martinez Alemán & Savitz-Romer 2018, pp. 154-155). Social networking tools are thus critical to improving the social integration, persistence rates and academic outcomes of first-generation students and should be a central element of institutional strategies for non-traditional students (Deng, Fernández & Zhao 2021; Rowan-Kenyon, Martinez Alemán & Savitz-Romer 2018).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how many of the ideas, concepts and theories identified in the opening chapter are playing out in contemporary HE, notably in the drive to widen access and participation, the adoption of working practices based on collaboration and partnership, and the focus on community and engagement. In addition, the blurring of boundaries and cross-boundary collaborations that were a pervasive feature in chapter 1 are a recurring theme here too, evident in the blurred boundaries between different areas and roles in HE (between third-stream and mainstream functions, private and public-sector elements, education and research, academic activities and student services, professors and professionals) along with an interest in holism (including the provision of holistic student support, educating the whole student through holistic curriculum models and adopting a whole-of-university approach). Our review also confirmed the vital role of personal and institutional networks and relationships in providing the social support and information resources that are critical factors for student success in HE and professional employment.

Notably It highlighted the importance of social networks for students from minority groups, pointing to a need for strategic deployment of social technologies across the whole student lifecycle, a concept that emerged as an important framework for developing interventions to facilitate the personal, academic and professional success of students. We also confirmed the value of capital perspectives as asset-based or resource-based views of communities and individuals that can help us gain deeper understanding of problems and their contexts. In particular, just as our opening chapter pointed to a broadening of the intellectual capital frameworks used in the corporate sector to reflect a renewed commitment to social responsibility and sustainable development, our review of social capital research in HE identified a similar need to broaden the conceptual frameworks used in our field to reflect the move from elitist to pluralist systems. Concepts such as aspirational, campus, career, ethnic, experiential, familial, identity, linguistic, maintained, mobility, navigational, personal, psychological, resistant and transitional capital may be useful additions to our lexicon, particularly as our research and practice increasingly place social justice and fair access at the centre of our agenda. Chapters 4 and 5 continue the narrative by exploring how the concepts, trends and developments described here are playing out in academic library practice and research.

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