



**TASA** The Australian  
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**Working with Young Neoliberals in a Sociology of Education Focused  
Classroom: A Reflexive Account.**

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Neoliberal theory offers teacher educators an explanatory framework that assists in understanding how education policy and practice has arrived at the place it assumes in 2015. The question I ask is ‘can it do the same for my initial teacher education (ITE) students?’

My own experience of teacher education was led by Marxist inspired educators. As a graduate student I did not have a real experiential understanding of what underpinned a Marxist perspective within the state of the world at that time. I now wonder if perhaps my ITE students are feeling similarly about post-structuralist critiques surrounding neoliberalism’s impact on the contemporary state of education.

Drawing from my own understanding of neoliberalism and its implications, grounded in part by the work of Harvey (2005), Hursh (2005), and Davies & Bansel (2007), I provide a reflexive account of trying to understand my students’ views of neoliberalism and how this relates to issues of social justice in education. I question what the advantage may be for these students to draw from a neoliberal framework to assist them in negotiating current education policy and practice. Is neoliberal theory (circa 2005) still of relevance for current students of education?

**Refs:**

Davies, B., & Bansel, P. (2007). Neoliberalism and education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* [online version], 20(3), 247-259.

Harvey, D. (2005). A brief history of neoliberalism. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press.

Hursh, D (2005) Neo-liberalism, Markets and Accountability: transforming education and undermining democracy in the United States and England, *Policy Futures in Education*, 3(1), 3-15.