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Carpe the Academy: Dismantling higher education and prefiguring critical utopias through Action Research

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Highlights

- The neoliberal realist position on ‘the future’ perpetuated by contemporary higher education is deeply problematic
- Constrained visions of *the future* serve to constrain present educational offerings; a self-reinforcing dynamic admitting little disruption
- Action Research offers radical methodologies for prizing open democratic spaces—within, alongside, and beyond the academy—in which it becomes possible to think more expansively and critically about both presents and futures
- Through its critical utopian and prefigurative impulses, action research functions as a present- and future-expanding form of knowledge creation, and becomes a means for resisting and challenging the capture of the university by neoliberal logics

Abstract

This paper engages with the challenge of re-imagining higher education. We start from the position that the ascent of the increasingly corporatized university is deeply problematic precisely because of the neoliberal realist position on ‘the future’ that it assumes and perpetuates: the view that there is no alternative to neoliberal capitalist market principles, that present and future realities can diverge only to the extent permitted by existing market forces

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