The University and its Students:  
Innovation and the Innovative Subject

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Abstract
While innovation in the university can be thought of as taking place across a number of ambits that involve an array of identities – executive, management, teaching staff, external stakeholders etc., – the least acknowledged of these identities is that of the student. Any concern for the future of the university must bring into sharp relief the situation of students and their status as actors in the institution. Of course, there exist strategies for the inclusion of students through engaging them as economically valued consumers, through the application of innovative teaching pedagogies, and in collaboration with teaching staff but to what extent are these students able to transform these premeditated initiatives in function of what they want to learn? This application of innovation systems, while including the student in number, as a consumer and as a trainee worker, does not acknowledge their capacity to transform the provision of their learning. The student is assumed to have already been coerced on account of how information and communication technologies supposedly make them participants. However, student innovative subjectivities might also be of a social, political and religious nature and, as such, suppose ways of thinking, learning, participating and contributing to the way the world’s problems are understood that might go otherwise unacknowledged.

This paper involves a theorization of the situation of the innovative student, and explores how collaborative co-construction of new ideas might redefine how we consider the university produces knowledge as a public good. This will be done through allegorical use of works by Drucker (1959), Godin (2015), Johnson (2012), Leadbeater (2008), Levy (1997), Mulgan (2015), Peters (2015) among others, with respect to how innovation might be thought of when considering the experience of the already innovative student from the perspective of their own situation.

Key words
Innovation, static, dynamic, open, closed, black box, innovative subjects

Bibliography


