

This article was downloaded by: [110.77.221.153]

On: 25 March 2014, At: 11:20

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,
UK



Journal of Vocational Education & Training

Publication details, including instructions for authors
and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjve20>

Managerialism and professionalism in the 'cinderella service'

Keith Randle ^a & Norman Brady ^b

^a University of Hertfordshire Business School ,
Hertford, United Kingdom

^b Oaklands College , St Albans, United Kingdom

Published online: 19 Dec 2006.

To cite this article: Keith Randle & Norman Brady (1997) Managerialism and professionalism in the 'cinderella service', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 49:1, 121-139, DOI: [10.1080/13636829700200007](https://doi.org/10.1080/13636829700200007)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13636829700200007>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-

licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Managerialism and Professionalism in the ‘Cinderella Service’

KEITH RANDLE

University of Hertfordshire Business School, Hertford, United Kingdom

NORMAN BRADY

Oaklands College, St Albans, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT As a result of the process of incorporation following the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992, Cityshire College, a large further education college left the jurisdiction of the local authority and gained greater responsibility for managing its own affairs. Arising from a case study based on interviews and questionnaires the paper considers the impact of changes within the College which took place between 1991 and 1994. Of particular interest is the development of a “new managerialism”, a management style which spread throughout public sector organisations during the 1980s. The evidence from the lecturer questionnaire suggests that staff reject the values represented by this development and are opposed to the threat they perceive to the professional culture of further education. In considering new modes of learning, notions of quality in education and the intrusion of the market into the college, the deprofessionalisation and, indeed, “proletarianisation” of the FE lecturer is suggested as a possible outcome.

Introduction^[1]

Whilst there has been considerable academic interest in the impact of recent, government-imposed changes in the primary and secondary sectors of state education in the UK, the UK further education (FE) sector has been largely ignored. There has been virtually no independent work published based on research in the area (though see Elliott, 1996), but it has been noted in the press that whilst the sector appears all but invisible:

It costs the taxpayer more than £2.5 billion a year, provides work for more than 100,000 people and has two and a half million clients. The workers are revolting, the customers are complaining, the police are investigating and 100 of its chief executive have suffered votes of no confidence. It is a big business in big trouble, but no-one seems to care. Last week it was rocked by strikes and hardly anyone noticed. We are

talking about further education – the Cinderella service that caters for more of the over 16 population than all the schools and universities put together. (The Guardian, 12 March, 1995, p. 11)

The FE sector has traditionally provided the bulk of technical education and vocational preparation within the UK system, and it has been suggested that the academic value system has accorded this type of education little attention and low priority (McGinty & Fish, 1993). This may go some way towards accounting for the ‘invisibility’ of the sector. Now, however, certain government objectives are seen as achievable through the current strategy in Further Education. By boosting student numbers in FE the government can deflect opposition criticism of the poor UK record in post-16 education compared to other European states. Indeed, there are those who go so far as to see, in increased student numbers, a newly-found government commitment to FE as the source of a future highly-skilled and flexible work-force, the key to effective industrial and commercial competition (McGinty & Fish, 1993).

Themes of common interest can be identified running through all sectors of UK state education and this paper will identify issues in FE common to much of the public sector as a whole. However, it is also important to recognise that change in the public sector has not been even in pace, depth nor in the response of employees and that caution must be exercised in making generalisations (Kirkpatrick et al, 1996). The purpose of the paper is to situate recent changes in the structure, funding and management of the FE sector within debates around what has been called the ‘New Public Service Management’ (Walsh, 1995), the ‘New Public Management’ (Kirkpatrick et al, 1996), or simply the ‘New Managerialism’ (Pollitt, 1990; Farnham & Horton, 1993; Flynn, 1993).

The paper arises from case study research carried out at Cityshire College,[2] and involved a programme of interviews with senior management and a staff attitude questionnaire. During the period September to December 1994, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a cross-section of College managers. An attitude survey of lecturers was conducted during the spring of 1995. Questionnaires were distributed to 360 lecturers and 172 responses were received.

The Background to Change

In 1988 the Education Reform Act began the process of removing further education from the control of the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and major responsibilities for finance, management and college development were delegated to Governing Bodies (McGinty & Fish, 1993). Cityshire College was formed from a merger of four separate Further Education colleges in 1991 and by 1993, had approximately 42,000 enrolments, the equivalent of 7000 full-time students. The College staff numbered about

2000 in total, including 400 full-time lecturers and for 1993/4 Cityshire had a budget income of over £31 million. The merger of former specialist colleges offering regional provision with local colleges produced a new institution encompassing a relatively wide spread of vocational and non-vocational education. Cityshire contains a mixture of non-advanced further education (NAFE) and advanced further education (AFE) provision.

The second Act to have a major effect on the management of colleges was the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act which provided for the setting up of non-elected Boards to manage incorporated colleges. Whilst incorporation has meant increased autonomy for Cityshire from the Local Education Authority, since 1993 the responsibility for the availability and quality of further education has rested with the Further Education Funding Council for England (FEFCE) which provides approximately 60% of Cityshire's income. In reality, therefore, further education is largely controlled by central government through this agency. Funding for educational provision is dependent on the college fulfilling certain performance targets. Failure to retain students or failure of students to complete courses successfully will result in 'claw back' of funds. In addition to these performance criteria, the FEFCE stipulate that Cityshire must satisfy certain quality assurance measures such as the regular testing of college services through student surveys and a formal monitoring of course provision. The FEFCE, therefore, is a crucial agency in influencing the management of the college at both the strategic and operational levels, and it could be argued that it has driven the scale, shape and pace of change in the FE system in England since incorporation.

Incorporation and Independence: the experience at Cityshire

In the initial post-incorporation period, senior management at Cityshire at first appeared to take action with little regard as to how it might be perceived by college staff. For example, in 1992 a number of planning teams were set up at the college, under the guidance of a hired consultant, to produce reports on the possible organisation of college functions such as marketing, internal communication, and staff training and development. However, little feedback on how these recommendations were received by senior management was given, either to the team members or to other members of the lecturing staff. A further example was that of the Senior Management Team (SMT) ordering lease cars for senior managers and the conduct of a high profile official post-incorporation College launch against a background of deep staff anxiety, and uncertainty about the future, particularly the college's financial future. For the academic staff these initiatives represented potent symbols of a 'new order' which did not sit well with ominous statements from the Principal about the seriousness of the budget position. The perception of the authors was one of increasing

cynicism amongst lecturers about the style of management being adopted in the college.

Interviews with representatives of senior management suggested that central to their thinking was the belief that lecturers had simply not grasped the political and economic realities of the situation in which the college found itself. The management's position was that the college must expand its provision over the coming years in order to receive adequate funding and therefore remain financially viable. There appeared to be an unstated assumption that the conditions of service of academic staff (the 'silver book' agreement) were over-generous and untenable. Senior Management, however, acknowledged that the changes had not been communicated effectively to the staff and that internal communications were generally weak within the college.

Throughout the 1992-94 period, the Principal appeared to have gradually recognised the need to convince the academic staff of the need for change, particularly as industrial relations deteriorated. The Principal took to visiting the constituent Schools within the college to meet academic staff and explain impending changes. A college bulletin was produced more regularly. College-wide rituals were instituted such as regular end of term social events attended by senior managers. A staff appraisal system was established which in its embryonic state represented a 'soft' developmental approach (Legge, 1989) aimed at identifying training needs associated with the achievement of agreed objectives and was not linked to promotion or reward.

The Senior Management Team's (SMT's) analysis of the organisational dysfunction experienced within the college was based largely on the assumption that it was the inevitable consequence of wide-ranging and deep organisational change implemented at too fast a pace. Operational management failures were, therefore, a natural result of teething problems. The SMT also acknowledged that a gap in management expertise existed as former academics, now occupying management positions, grappled with problems which required a range of new management skills. A senior manager commented:

... what we have in FE is a set of people who were never trained as managers, who are running scared at the moment because of the way I am making them accountable for their actions, for the way in which I have them on performance pay and very, very tight accountabilities. They feel vulnerable, they feel frightened

In an effort to overcome these problems the SMT instituted training programmes for managers, aimed mainly at improving systems management. In some respects the 'too deep, too fast' analysis is correct, and helps account for operational dysfunction. However, it pays little attention to the fundamental causes of lecturer resistance. We later argue that the cause of this dysfunction is concerned with the impact upon

professional autonomy of the new management style practised at Cityshire following incorporation. First, however, we continue with an account of what we have earlier referred to as ‘the new managerialism’.

The New Managerialism

The new managerialism can be characterised as a style of management which emerged in the UK in the early 1980s and gradually spread throughout the Public Sector. It began with the Civil Service in the wake of the Rayner Scrutinies and the Financial Management Initiative (Metcalf & Richards, 1987) and has since been established in local authorities, the BBC, the NHS and the Education sector.

Pollitt (1990) argues that new managerialism can be understood as a generic package of management techniques which include:

- x strict financial management and devolved budgetary controls;
- x the efficient use of resources and the emphasis on productivity;
- x the extensive use of quantitative performance indicators;
- x the development of consumerism and the discipline of the market;
- x the manifestation of consumer charters as mechanisms for accountability;
- x the creation of a disciplined, flexible workforce, using flexible/individualised contracts, staff appraisal systems and performance related pay;
- x the assertion of managerial control and the managers’ right to manage.

Underpinning the new managerialism are the assumptions first that ‘good management’ will deliver the ‘three “Es” of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in public services and therefore can ensure value for taxpayers’ money and eliminate waste (Metcalf & Richards, 1987). Secondly, ‘good management’ did not exist in the public sector prior to 1979. John Major, as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, speaking to the Audit Commission in 1989, said of the public sector prior to the election of the Conservative government:

The effects of this system were pernicious. It made the public sector a preferential creditor on the economy as a whole...it undermined the value for money and deprived the public sector and its management of the main and most natural incentive to improve its efficiency and control its costs. (Major, 1989, 3)

‘Good management’ was to be found in the private sector where management was superior to the tradition of ‘administration’ in the public sector (Kirkpatrick & Martinez Lucio, 1995). Its essence could be distilled as a generic package of skills and techniques which could then be applied as a template for public sector institutions. Privatisation and the

marketisation of public sector institutions therefore would improve the three 'Es'.

This brief analysis of new managerialism and its political and ideological origins is relevant to the situation at Cityshire college in a number of respects. It partly explains the context in which the organisational changes have come about and particularly the motives behind FEFCE's directives to the management of Colleges. More specifically, it locates the management style adopted by SMT at Cityshire in the context of a public sector policy designed simultaneously to expand Further Education and to shift the burden of funding down to the college itself, through pressure to develop its own plans for income generation. This also helps to explain why the conflict with lecturers at Cityshire is, in fact, being replicated in a variety of forms in management/professional relationships throughout the public sector (Gunn, 1988; Pollitt, 1990; Stewart & Walsh, 1992; Hoggett, 1994).

If efficiency gains are to be achieved in further education then it is to the new breed of academic managers that the responsibility for their delivery falls. In order to achieve such gains, we argue, control over the conception and design of academic work is increasingly being taken away, by management, from practitioners responsible for its delivery in the classroom, and placed in the hands of specialist managers or external agencies. This reflects the process of deskilling that Braverman (1975) asserts craft labour has undergone during the twentieth century. The process has also been identified as taking place in higher education (Miller, 1991), with some authors (Parker & Jary, 1995) going so far as to adopt a 'neo-Fordist' label to describe what they argue represents a move away from "elite specialisation with strong professional control", towards a Fordist mass production arrangement which, borrowing from Ritzer (1993), they term the 'McUniversity'. In the sections which follow we explore the conflict a comparable process has prompted at Cityshire.

Conflicting Paradigms

The changes which were implemented at Cityshire met lecturer resistance in the form of both covert and overt action. An example of covert action was the common practice, by lecturers, of non-cooperation with official surveys and a regular failure to return questionnaires. In terms of overt resistance, national negotiations over new flexible contracts between the largest of the lecturers' unions, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) and the national employers' organisation, the College Employers' Forum (CEF), [3] began in November 1993 and have since remained in impasse. Local negotiations between the Principal and the Cityshire branch of NATFHE also reached impasse, and between December 1994 and August 1995 the two sides were in official dispute.

We have characterised the clash in values that we identify at Cityshire as one between 'managerialism' and 'professionalism'. Elliott (1996, p. 8) uses a similar dichotomy to describe the "pervasive market ideology, implemented by senior managers who seemed to embrace a managerialist culture" in his case study of an FE college, which contrasted with "the competing democratic ideology underpinned by a commitment to a student-centred pedagogic culture" held by lecturers. In Table I we summarise what we regard as the main areas for potential conflict between managers and FE professionals. However, 'professionals' and 'the professions' are terms which have generated a lengthy and largely unresolved debate in the sociological literature; indeed, sociological analysis of the professions has been described as 'in turmoil' (Rueschemeyer, 1983, p. 38). However, it is important to situate our choice of the term within a literature which has sought to contain two apparently conflicting perspectives; "on the one hand, professions are seen as uniquely ethical occupations; on the other as powerful groups who have masked their pursuit of self-interest behind essentially spurious ethical codes" (Crompton, 1990, p. 147).

In the case of further education lecturers we do not consider the second of these perspectives to be helpful. It would require a considerable stretch of the imagination to characterise lecturers as a 'powerful group' in the way that perhaps those occupations based upon medicine, accountancy or the law may be characterised. There is no powerful representative professional association and no ability to ensure market closure and the group has relatively little opportunity to limit entry into the profession. However, that perspective which emphasises the 'uniquely ethical occupations' displaying the 'institutionalised altruism' necessary when expert labour is harnessed for the benefit of a client (Crompton, 1990), whilst not necessarily peculiar to professional occupations, may be of more value in situating college lecturers. Burrage & Torstendahl (1990) identify a number of key features of post-war public service 'professional' work which could be applied to pre-incorporation further education and which include: the presence of expert, tacit knowledge and skills; professional autonomy over work in terms of decision-making and implementation; work perceived as socially useful and implicitly anti-commercial; the relationship with the client being one of loyalty whilst the locus of power rests with the professional; the attainment of high standards in the execution of work-related tasks; and the organisation of the work on the basis of collegiality. This can be characterised as a 'public service ethic' where the prime concern is to provide "quality educational opportunities for students", and where the emphasis on business systems and efficiency is alien to many (Dearing, 1994, p. 3). That there are contrasting sets of values is underlined by the fact that 84.6% of respondents to the attitude survey believed that the college management did not share the same educational values as the lecturers.

Professional paradigm	Managerialist paradigm
Goals and values	
Pprimacy of student learning and the teaching process	Pprimacy of student through-put and income generation
Ployalty to students and colleagues	Ployalty to the organisation
Pconcern for academic standards	Pconcern to achieve an acceptable balance between efficiency and effectiveness
Key assumptions	
Plecturers as funds of expertise	Plecturers as flexible facilitators and assessors
Presources deployed on the basis of educational need	Presources deployed on the basis of market-demand and value for taxpayers' money
Pquality of provision assessed on the basis of input	Pquality assessed on the basis of output/outcomes
Management ethos	
Pcollegiality/'community of practice'	Pcontrol by managers and the market
Pprofessional autonomy/the trust principle/accountability to peers/tacit knowledge	Pmanagement by performance indicators and surveillance
Ppluralism	Punitarism

Table I. Conflicting paradigms.

Under the pre-incorporation public service model the professional's position and relative autonomy were underwritten by a well-established set of external institutional relationships with, for example, examination boards and professional bodies, which ensured considerable control over course content and teaching methods. Despite the intervention in issues of pay and funding by central and local government, and the regular industrial disputes which resulted, the lecturers and the colleges as a whole nevertheless operated in a climate of relative stability. However, government education policy over the last decade, and in particular over the last two years, has radically undermined the lecturers' sense of security in a number of different ways.

Most significant has been the radical intervention in the management of FE colleges by the FEFCs. In the case of Cityshire it is the dynamic created by the FEFC's funding strategy which has done most to disempower the lecturers at college level. The erstwhile administrative manager, from Head of Department upward has been replaced by a new

type of manager operating on a different agenda. Traditionally, there was the perception that staff and managers aspired to a common set of educational values, encompassing the notion of a degree of professional expertise and some discretion in the design, delivery and assessment of provision. This commonality rested on the fact that funding was not dependent on satisfying detailed, externally imposed, requirements concerning the size and nature of the student body. However, it is worth noting that Gorrington (Gorrington & Togood, 1994) takes a less positive view of pre-incorporation funding mechanisms, arguing that the shift from an 'allocation' to an 'earning' model represents a shift "from an unequal struggle with a capricious allocator of funds, to the need to attract, retain and delight paying customers, whether they be a quango, a private company or an individual citizen" (Gorrington & Togood, 1994, p. 186).

The new managers are primarily concerned with resource management, particularly financial resources (Warner & Crosthwaite, 1995). Many lecturers at Cityshire saw management as being obsessed with budgets and business plans as against their own concerns for the client. However, one Cityshire senior manager justified this, with an argument that new managerialism offers potential productivity gains which will ultimately benefit the client:

The thing that the old public sector approach did was to spend large volumes of money quite wastefully, and what we can do with a better focused use of resources is actually get more people involved in education

'Quality' in Further Education

The drive to increase student numbers was perceived by lecturers in this study to have caused a serious dilution in the quality of educational provision in some areas of the college. There was concern expressed by lecturers that students were being recruited for courses for which they were not academically equipped. The lecturers also expressed concern that many students were being retained on courses regardless of their performance and, in some cases, despite near certainty of failure. This would represent a short-term strategy as, under the funding methodology, the college would be subject to financial penalties where there was evidence of student failure, or a lack of 'impartial guidance'. However, 61.8% of lecturers in the attitude survey felt that public examination standards had declined between 1992 and 1994. Reluctance by the Heads of Schools to lose students could, however, be attributed to the fact that the student (or 'unit of activity') was worth approximately £2000. A proportion of this money, related to length of stay in the college, would be 'clawed back' if the student dropped out (Nash, 1994). This process has

now been divided into a tri-annual exercise with funding applied in three post-review tranches.

The question of quality provides a good illustration of the clash between managerial and professional values. Lecturers felt that their professional judgement and control over the educational process was being displaced by that of managers, and that the quality of the provision, as they understood it, was being undermined as a result. Eighty per cent of respondents to the attitude survey thought that organisational changes had not improved the quality of service to students, and 95% of respondents thought that the changes as a whole had not enhanced student learning. On the other hand, a senior manager, described how 'quality' could be seen in the opportunities the changes had given to young people previously excluded from the system;

One aspect of the quality (of education) and the measurement of the quality of the institution is how much of the potential student population is being served Putting it very fundamentally, you can have fewer students and give them a Rolls Royce experience or you can have millions of students, each of them getting a Mini, and provided the Mini works, then that is better quality in terms of the fact that you are empowering, enabling and providing for many more people than you would otherwise have done

'Quality', viewed from this perspective, does not conform with the commonly held assumption of an association with goods or services of a superior or exceptionally high standard. However, it does accord closely with the definitions provided by the experts and quality gurus who describe quality as 'conformance to requirements'. Thus, however 'inferior' a product may be in absolute terms, as long as it consistently meets the standards that beat the competition within its market niche, a good or service can be regarded as having quality (Wilkinson & Willmott, 1995). Lecturers at Cityshire, however, perceived this as a *post hoc* rationalisation of the central government policy of stimulating rapid expansion in the further education system, without commensurate levels of investment.

Wilkinson & Willmott (1995, p. 3) go on to argue that the logic of 'conformance to requirements' can also be applied to the organisation of work and that quality, in this case, means "the development of 'uniform and dependable' work practices that are congruent with delivering products at low cost with a quality suited to the market". In order to develop such work practices within further education, we argue, it has been necessary to further reduce professional control and introduce a form of 'Neo-Taylorism'. It is to this that we now turn.

The Decline of Professional Control

The government-inspired movement to shift to competence-based assessment of vocational courses validated by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications has begun to reposition the lecturer as an assessor, concerned with measuring student performance; rather than a teacher, facilitating student learning. The content and assessment of these courses are so highly prescribed that lecturers feel a loss of control over the teaching process. Hence, respondents to the questionnaire typically included comments to the effect that the degree of assessment required by GNVQ forced lecturers to divert their efforts away from the teaching process. Assessment has thus become an onerous and time consuming activity. Sixty-four per cent of attitude survey respondents felt that new assessment methods had reduced their level of job satisfaction as a result.

Concerns about control over course content and modes of delivery are reflected in feelings about the implications of 'flexible-learning'. What concerned a number of lecturers was the particular vision of flexi-learning outlined by SMT at Cityshire, and which is still in its embryonic stages. The picture painted by the Principal was one of students spending a sizeable proportion of their time in independent study using banks of pre-packaged materials and computer technology in a model of 'independent learning' based on the American Community School. The Principal is attracted by the potential productivity gains of this learning mode where lecturer-student contact hours could be cut by the application of multi-media technology which employs such techniques as video-conferencing. Lecturers could therefore be asked to teach more, and shorter, classes, and pressure on teaching accommodation would be reduced as distance learning increased. Lecturer resistance to information technology is explained by senior managers as being based on a stubborn retention of outmoded attitudes to teaching:

The problem we have got is the lack of acceptance on the part of the average teacher that there is a different or better way of doing it, and part of the problem is the very human problem of not wanting to believe that technology can actually do a big chunk of their work better than they can. (Senior Manager)

For lecturers, the implications of this are enormous with the emphasis in the learning process shifting from classroom interaction to the teaching materials themselves. There has been an increasing reliance on pre-packaged materials bought in by the College and which has led to a further decline in lecturer control over the content and use of teaching materials. However, at Cityshire, the Principal's belief that teaching is to a large extent the imparting of factual knowledge which can be effectively achieved through multi-media packages is disputed by the staff. While this

theme was not addressed by the questionnaire and cannot be quantified, it is the perception of the authors, based on informal discussions with staff that transference of factual knowledge is seen, by the latter, as minor compared to the teaching of skills required, for example, in the analysis and synthesis of information or data.

The strategic shift to flexi-learning represents one of the most serious threats to autonomy, we contend, posed by new managerialism in the FE sector. It is seen to strike at the heart of the professional's paradigm because it degrades the expertise underpinning the degree of autonomy within the labour process and which includes choices about pace, extent of digression and the other elements which characterise different teaching styles. If teaching is mainly about the 'imparting of knowledge', as the Principal appears to believe, then a computer can fulfil the teacher's role. While it could be argued that this represents a very narrow perception of flexi-learning, it remains the case that the Principal's view is that, at Cityshire, this mode of learning will be IT based.

Consequently, Derber's words of over a decade earlier, and originally used in the context of the US public service may be applied to teaching in the UK further education sector:

While professionals are currently distinguished by unique technical autonomy, new information technologies, especially sophisticated generations of computers and microprocessors, have been discussed as a basis for the mechanisation or routinisation of professional work and the undermining of professional monopolies of knowledge. (Derber, 1983, p. 335)

The Intrusion of the Market

The concept of the student as 'customer' (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Willmott, 1994; Parker & Jary, 1995) has further implications for lecturer control over the labour process. The lecturer/student relationship has traditionally rested on notions of common enterprise, cooperation and mutual responsibilities. The assumption was that the student would participate in a process of learning that was characterised by dialogue and a discourse between student and teacher which demanded student cooperation, engagement in group-related tasks, face-to-face teacher-student interaction and fulfilment of general course requirements by, for instance, attending classes and completing assignments.

A customer/supplier relationship is now beginning to displace the relationship outlined above. It has been suggested that in the case of the 'New Higher Education' the consumer/student has been used as a surrogate surveillance device (Parker & Jary, 1995, p. 326). Under the FEFCE's Charter for Further Education, colleges are now obliged to set up formal complaints procedures. Walsh (1995) argues that such procedures

have been central to the new public management and represent one aspect of the move to 'marketisation', the individually based concept of citizenship and the assault on the power of professional bureaucracies. However, there is a paradox in the fact that the adoption of market relations by organisations has often been the result of "formal, centralised and bureaucratic compulsion" (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992, p. 620) and, in the case of FE, we witness the effective imposition of market relations by the bureaucracy of the FEFCE.

Taken at face value a formal complaints procedure may seem like a reasonable and democratic mechanism, designed to protect the student (customer) from unsatisfactory treatment at the hands of the college and its employees. However, the complaints procedure as constituted represents a potentially destructive instrument that could undermine the authority of lecturers in the perception of the student. Under the procedure, students are actively encouraged to complain, with the results that students have questioned lecturer competence on the basis of their perceptions of 'correct classroom activity', i.e. the lecturer's teaching methods, rather than the skill used for their execution.

Perhaps the most striking example of the new managerialism is the surveillance implicit in the attempt by management to measure performance in terms of quantifiable outcomes. This has found its expression in the proliferation of business plans and various quality assurance measures. Lecturers have been inundated with requests to complete records or provide lesson plans, complete questionnaires or to get students to complete questionnaires. The areas monitored by these measures range from student enrolment processes to the quality of the canteen service. Most of these activities are regarded by the lecturers as merely fruitless and irksome; 54.4% of lecturers responding to the survey regarded quality assurance research as 'not beneficial' and another 28% didn't know whether it was or not.

In conducting this performance measurement, management stress its importance in ensuring the quality of the service and responsiveness to the customer. The other side of this, however, is its negative effects on lecturer morale and Hoggett (1994) has argued that performance surveillance destroys trust and leads to those aspects of work which are not visible or not measurable becoming undervalued. This may, in turn, affect the quality of the service to the users. Therefore, in the context of the health of the long-term relationship between lecturer and student such a loss of self-esteem by the lecturer could have serious consequences. In the attitude survey, 93.1% of respondents reported a loss of morale between 1992 and 1994 with 70% of the sample falling into the category which we regard as constituting a 'serious' loss of morale. A recent study of further education lecturers by psychologists (Stead et al, 1995) found that full-time staff reported working an average of 43 hours per week, against their contract expectancy of 30 hours per week on duty at college

[4] and that high levels of anxiety and depression existed in their sample. The inability of these staff to provide quality teaching was a major factor in producing stress levels where 43% scored high enough to be considered at borderline and clinical levels of anxiety. These authors conclude that organisations which disregard the relationship between perceptions of work overload and the decline in decision-making ability may have a dramatic affect on the future profitability and efficiency of their businesses.

The Proletarianisation of Academic Labour?

Within the growing body of literature on changes in the public service sector, some analysts (Wilson, 1991; Trow, 1993), have developed a 'proletarianisation', 'de-skilling' or 'de-professionalisation' thesis to describe the undermining of the professional paradigm by the new managerialism. Writing in the context of Higher Education, and in particular the new universities, Wilson argues that academic proletarianisation has resulted from the 'degradation of work'. This involves the dilution of the quality of the teaching provision, the lowering of academic standards, the deterioration of lecturer pay and conditions and the erosion of professional status. Wilson, however, stops short of endorsing the deskilling thesis arguing that jobs which have become deskilled within the academic structure have subsequently been displaced to administrative and clerical staff (Wilson, 1991, p. 258).

The comparison with the process occurring in He is illuminating because it underlines the depth of the process currently taking place within FE. Casualisation is being institutionalised in the form of the ELS (Education Lecturing Services) a private agency set up to circumvent the financial problems college managements would otherwise experience as a result of the improved employment rights and redundancy payments of part-time lecturers (*The Guardian*, 7 March, 1995, p. 8). At Cityshire a number of former part-time staff have been given fractional appointments as a result of changed employment rights, but the College now employs all of its remaining part-time lecturers through ELS. Casualisation can be seen as a method of increasing the flexibility of the workforce in the FE sector in order to achieve efficiency gains.

The process of deprofessionalisation in FE not only contains recognisable elements of the degradation of work, but also represents a systematic deskilling of the lecturer. The displacement of teacher contact time by the beginnings of IT-driven flexible learning; the loss of control over student management; the lowering of academic standards; the assessment of performance by external agencies; the prescriptive nature of, for example, GNVQ (General National Vocational Qualification) courses, and the loss of control over intellectual property support the argument that the FE lecturer is being systematically and comprehensively deskilled.

Derber, writing in the context of the human service sector in the USA in 1983, identified the trend towards what he termed the 'ideological proletarianisation' of the professional. By this he meant:

... the appropriation of control by management over the goals and social purposes to which the work is put. Elements of ideological proletarianisation include powerlessness to define the final product of one's work, its disposition in the market and its uses in the larger society. (Derber, 1983, p. 313)

This is regarded as less serious than 'technical proletarianisation', as control over core tasks is retained even as autonomy over overall organisational goals is lost (Kirkpatrick et al, 1996). Derber suggests that whereas 'technical proletarianisation', the loss of professional control over the labour process itself, had not taken place in this sector, there was none the less the possibility that this could happen. Proletarianisation theorists have proposed that the process could be facilitated by the introduction of new technologies and by the imposition of a management stratum which did not share the professional training of staff, was unsympathetic to aspirations towards professional autonomy, and would accept management systems which rationalise the deskilling of professional labour. Another important factor is change in the market situation of certain professional groups which may weaken their bargaining power and render them less capable of resisting the process. Of these he argues,

The most ominous market considerations apply to public sector professionals, such as teachers, social workers and many categories of local state and federal employees, who are extraordinarily vulnerable to the fiscal crises affecting all levels of government. The ensuing demand for new austerities and efficiencies in public service imply...new managerial rationalisations, already apparent in new forms of quantified productivity controls imposed on social workers and teachers. (Derber, 1983, p. 341)

The parallels of this analysis with the current position of FE lecturers is striking. First, we can see the emergence of a new type of manager in FE operating with an apparently different value system from that of the academic staff. Secondly, the potential of the new information technologies to undermine the lecturers' labour process has been emphasised in this paper. Thirdly, we have argued that government education policy is designed to increase student numbers while lowering the level of unit funding. In our study 83.7% of respondents to the attitude survey reported a loss of job satisfaction during the period of the research and 53.4% reported a serious loss of job satisfaction. Of the respondents, 68.8% reported that they had experienced a loss of control over their teaching process during 1992-94. In essence, lecturers felt that they were

being deprofessionalised through both the devaluation of their professional status and the loss of control over their labour process. The attitudes of staff at Cityshire would seem to support the idea that this particular body of professional employees are experiencing both 'ideological' proletarianisation and 'technological' proletarianisation through de-skilling. In other words, not only are they suffering degradation of work in terms of lower pay and fewer resources, but they are experiencing real attacks on their professional autonomy.

Conclusions

The deprofessionalisation of the lecturer is a direct outcome of government strategy within the FE sector. In order to prompt a significant expansion of Further Education, while simultaneously reducing unit costs, it has been necessary to intensify work in the colleges and this has been reflected in the dispute over new contracts. Pressure has been applied on the staff of colleges to comply with the demands of central government via a continued pay freeze on staff who elect not to sign the new contracts and on managers through the FEFCE's withholding or clawing back of funding. Intensification of work can be seen in the increased teaching hours required of staff, although at Cityshire members of senior management see a future with greater emphasis on independent learning and increased dependence on educational technology which will undermine the professional autonomy of lecturers.

Whereas managers have defined increased quality in education in terms of providing a cost-effective product to a wider section of the community, staff regard this as a rationalisation for increasing throughput whilst cutting costs. The goals and values embraced by the 'new managers' are not shared by lecturing staff who continue to uphold the values of public service professionalism. This clash of paradigms has led to both organisational dysfunction in the day-to-day delivery of the service at Cityshire, and to a bitter, if uneven, national dispute which is reflected at Cityshire in a continued refusal of the majority of staff to accept new contracts.

Marketisation has reconstituted the student as 'customer' and encouraged monitoring of lecturers through quality systems and complaints procedures. The customer has in turn taken on the role of manager, being in the unique position of being able to monitor and evaluate the hitherto hidden, expert and indeterminate aspects of the lecturer's role. What is new here is the shift from an informal evaluation of the lecturer to one which is formal, documented and public. At the same time lecturers are squeezed from the top by new managers; those whole role is to balance the budget, increase student numbers, generate income and satisfy the quality specifications of the FEFCE.

It has been argued (Kirkpatrick et al, 1996) that the imposition of new managerialism in the public sector has resulted in greater conflict where a separate management cadre was developed (as in the NHS) than where it was introduced through the professions (as in the case of university librarians). It would be difficult to argue that new managerialism in FE represents a case of the profession having accommodated to change in order to keep professional control. Rather, those who have become managers appear to have adopted a value system that reflects the new managerialism and have 'benefited' from the increased status that comes with the title 'manager'. Viewed from the perspective of the lecturer this group are seen as having set aside professional values, thus professional control has been lost.

It would nevertheless be a mistake to think that the only power that exists amongst 'professional' occupations is that which derives from the indeterminacy of work tasks. Power can also be articulated through collective action and it may be that this kind of power has been gained as a result of the immediacy of the market in the sector. Lecturers continue to fight to maintain control over their labour process, to counter both deskilling and the degradation of work and a radical deterioration in their conditions of employment. Together these can be seen to represent the deprofessionalisation and the consequent 'proletarianisation' of this occupational group. That the traditional weapon of proletarians, the strike, has been employed with increasing regularity serves to both underline the degree to which lecturers are coming to terms with their changing status and the limitations of traditional forms of professional control within the sector.

Correspondence

Keith Randle, University of Hertfordshire Business School, Mangrove Road, Hertford SG13 8QF, United Kingdom (k.r.randle@herts.ac.uk).

Notes

- [1] The authors are grateful to participants at the 1996 Labour Process conference, Aston University, where an earlier version of this paper was presented and to the anonymous referees whose diligence has contributed considerably to the coherence of this final version. However, the views expressed are those of the authors and any errors or omissions must be similarly attributed.
- [2] Cityshire College is a pseudonym.
- [3] The College Employers Forum (CEF) has since merged with the Association for Colleges (AFC) to produce the Association of Colleges (ACO).
- [4] This should not be taken as suggesting that FE teachers have a contract expectancy of only 30 hours per week. No upper limit is placed on the hours

that staff work on, for example, marking and preparation. However, a member of staff may be required to be available on college premises for 30 hours each week.

References

- Braverman, H. (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Burrage, M. & Torstendahl, R. (1990) *Professions in Theory and History*. London: Sage.
- Crompton, R. (1990) Professions in the current context, *Work Employment and Society*, Special issue, May, pp. 147-166.
- Dearing, R. (1994) Strategic Planning in FE: the impact of incorporation, *Mendip Papers* (MP 061), The Staff College, Bristol.
- Derber, C. (1983) Managing professionals: ideological proletarianisation and post industrial labour, *Theory and Society*, 12, pp. 309-341.
- Du Gay, P. & Salaman, G. (1992) The cult(ure) of the customer, *Journal of Management Studies*, 29, pp. 615-633.
- Elliot, G. (1996) Educational management and the crisis of reform in further education, *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 48, pp. 5-23.
- Farnham, D. & Horton, S. (Eds) (1993) *Managing the New Public Services*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Flynn, N. (1993) *Public Sector Management*. Brighton: Harvester & Wheatsheaf.
- Gorringer, R. & Togood, P. (Eds) (1994) *Changing the Culture of a College*, Coombe Lodge Report Vol. 24, No. 3. Blagdon, Bristol: The Staff College.
- Gunn, L. (1988) Public management: a third approach? *Public Money and Management*, Spring/Summer, pp. 21-25.
- Hoggett, P. (1994) New modes of control in the public services, *Management Research News*, 17 (7/8/9), pp. 17-19.
- Kirkpatrick, I. & Martinez Lucio, M. (Eds) (1995) *The Politics of Quality: management of change in the UK public sector*. London: Routledge.
- Kirkpatrick, I., Whipp, R. & Davies, A. (1996) New public management and the professions, in I. Glover & M. Hughes (Eds) *The Professional Managerial Class: contemporary British management in the pursuer mode*. Aldershot: Avebury.
- Legge, K. (1989) Human resource management: a critical review, in S. Storey (Ed.) *New Perspectives on Human Resource Management*. London: Routledge.
- Major, J. (1989) *Public Service Management: the revolution in progress*. London: The London Audit Commission.
- Metcalf, L. & Richards, S. (1987) *Improving Public Management*. London: Sage.
- McGinty, J. & Fish, J. (1993) *Further Education in the Market Place*. London: Routledge.
- Miller, H. (1991) Academics and their labour process, in C. Smith, D. Knights & H. Willmott (Eds) *White-Collar Work*, pp. 109-137. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

- Nash, I. (1994) Funding formula punishes the cautious, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 10 June.
- Parker, M. & Jary, D. (1995) The McUniversity: organisation, management and academic subjectivity, *Organization*, 2, pp. 319-338.
- Pollitt, C. (1990) *Managerialism and the Public Services: the Anglo-American experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ritzer, G. (1993) *The McDonaldisation of Society*. Newbury Park: Pine Forge.
- Rueschemeyer, D. (1983) Professional autonomy and the social control of expertise, in R. Dingwall & P. Lewis (Eds) *The Sociology of the Professions*. London: Macmillan.
- Stead, B., Fletcher, B. & Jones, F. (1995) Relationships between workload, cognitive decision making and psychological well being, in *Proceedings of the British Psychological Society Occupation Psychology Conference*, Eastbourne, January 1996.
- Stewart, J. & Walsh, K. (1992) Change in the management of public services, *Public Administration*, 70, pp. 519-532.
- Trow, M. (1993) Managerialism and the academic profession, paper to The Quality Debate Conference, Open University.
- Walsh, K. (1995) Quality through markets, in A. Wilkinson & H. Willmott (Eds) *Making Quality Critical*. London: Routledge.
- Warner, D. & Crosthwaite, E. (1995) *Human Resource Management in Higher and Further Education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Wilkinson, A. & Willmott, H. (1995) *Making Quality Critical*. London: Routledge.
- Willmott, H. (1994) Managing the academics: commodification and control in the development of university education in the UK, paper to the 12th Annual Labour Process Conference, Aston University.
- Wilson, T. (1991) The proletarianisation of academic labour, *Industrial Relations Journal*, 22, pp. 250-262.