

Why leadership, why now?

Professor Helen Gunter
Educational Leadership in Latin
Europe Conference,
December 2013

The England experience

Some key points:

- ☐ **Successive governments have made very radical interventions into the system, school organisations, the composition of the workforce, professional work and identities.**
- ☐ **Headteachers are required to be entrepreneurial and to deliver reforms.**
- ☐ **The approach to leadership is more organisational than educational.**
- ☐ **There is a strong audit and performance culture and practice.**
- ☐ **Alternative voices and debates are often ridiculed and there is a trend towards denouncing research and researchers.**

What?



- The focus on the headteacher as the originator and causal link for improved student outcomes.
- The development of transformational leadership as the preferred model of good practice with hybrids such as distributed leadership.
- The introduction of performance management regimes (e.g. performance related pay) to measure and reward local delivery of national reforms.
- The separation out of an elite and highly paid leadership cadre of senior staff who may not be qualified teachers (potentially this includes the headteacher who increasingly has been labelled the principal).
- The establishment of a centralised and regulated National College for leadership training and accreditation for aspiring and serving leaders at middle, senior and headteacher level.
- The establishment of national standards for the training and performance management of headteachers and other categories of staff e.g. subject leaders.

How?



- ❑ Who is this?
- ❑ Transnational Leadership Package
- ❑ Edubusinesses
- ❑ Consultants, consultancy, and concerns about consultocracy.

Why now?

- ☐ Publicly funded education has been too successful.
- ☐ There are interest groups who have been displaced and are seeking to restore their role/influence:

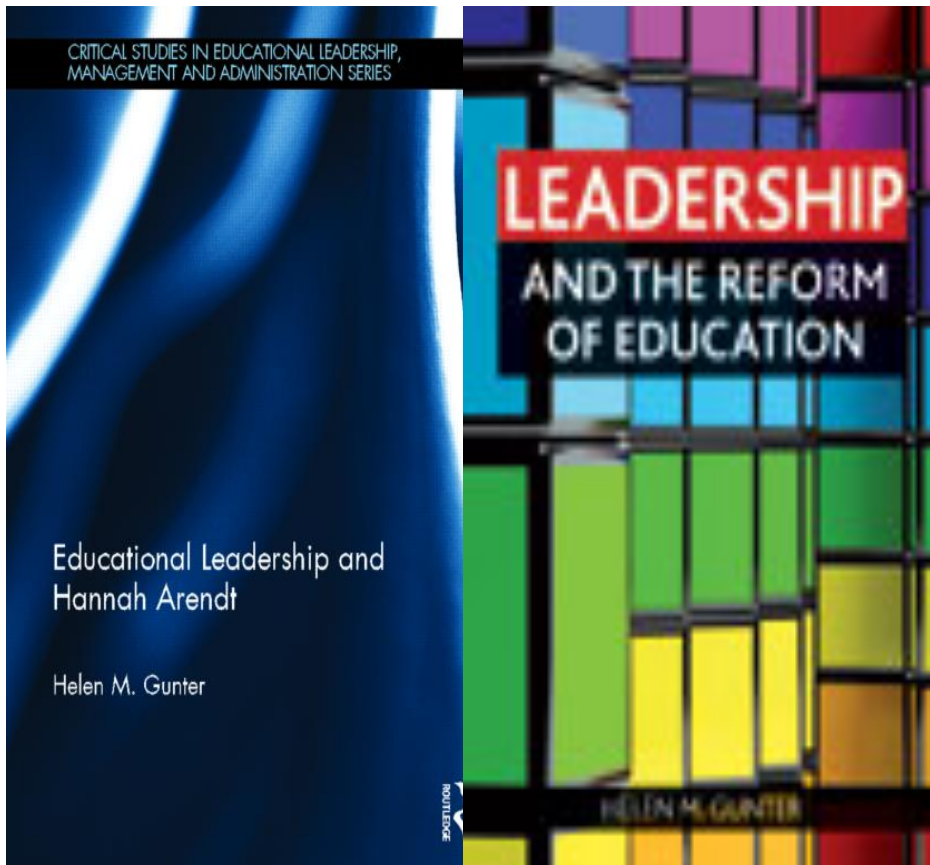
Neoliberalism

Neoconservatism

Managerialists

- ☐ Knowledge production is functional and normative.
- ☐ Knowledge production is business.

Criticality?



- ☐ Criticality is not the same as opposition.
- ☐ Where is the focus on teaching and learning?
- ☐ Where are the children and parents?
- ☐ What other forms of knowledge are there?

Critical and Socially Critical

- ☐ Who controls knowledge, knowing?
- ☐ Who are the knowers and what is the role of researchers?

Contact details

**Professor Helen Gunter
School of Education
University of Manchester
Manchester**

M13 9PL

UK

Helen.gunter@manchester.ac.uk

