

Out of the Frying Pan into the Fire: Education, counselling and target-driven culture

Cemil Egeli

SUMMARY: I write my review as a conversation between three aspects of my working self – a teacher, lecturer (in counselling skills) and a counsellor, I shall abbreviate these to TLC – I think the world needs more of it.

KEY WORDS: education, counselling, standardisation

T – I'm glad a chapter on primary education has been included. If we are going to be critical in our pedagogy in Higher Education (HE), it's helpful to have a sense of what is going on earlier on in the system – it's all linked. Piper (chapter 5) writes an engaging piece which captures the tensions felt in the system.

C – How so?

T– Drawing on the ideas of Freire (1970/1993), Piper explores the pathological medicalisation of children's behaviour.

C – Sounds oppressive.

T – Very, and if children can't behave as we want them to, they can get diagnosed. Teachers play a part in that process. Piper exposes the challenges teachers face between behaviour management expectations, diagnosis and the job they are supposedly meant to do. I got a real sense of a human trying to do a human job within a complex environment.

C – Complex?

T – Yes, there are many competing and conflicting factors working in schools.

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