

# BATTLING THE NEOLIBERAL BEAST:

## A PEDAGOGY OF PIRACY AND A PLACE OF RESISTANCE

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### *Abstract*

This paper takes up Tim Ingold's theory of place, which he likens to knots, and the threads from which they are tied are lines of wayfaring ... caught up in multiple entanglements. In our 'wayfaring' as academics, we have been led serendipitously to knots on the landscape; the tying together of history, philosophy and metaphor to establish a secret place; a temporary place, inhabited by pirates, teachers and storytellers. This is place of resistance against damaging and powerful controlling forces. Resonating with the pirates 'autonomous zone', this place can be understood not as an enclosure, but an opening, where boundaries are not borders but horizons, where there is potential for growth and movement.

*Keywords:* autonomous zone; neoliberal; pirates; pedagogy; resistance

“And in every place, as a gathering of things, is a knot of stories.”  
(Tim Ingold, 2011, p. 154)

This paper takes up Tim Ingold’s (2009) theory of place, which he likens to knots, the threads from which are tied to lines of wayfaring. In our ‘wayfaring’ as academics, we have been led serendipitously to knots on the landscape; the tying together of colonial history and neoliberalism, curriculum and pedagogy, philosophy and metaphor to establish a secret place; a temporary place, inhabited by pirates and teachers—where a *pedagogy of piracy* is understood as a place of resistance against powerful controlling forces, such as neoliberalism. Resonating with the pirates ‘temporary autonomous zone’, this place can be understood not as an enclosure, but an opening, where boundaries are not borders but horizons, where there is potential for growth and movement.

To imagine *place* as a temporary autonomous zone is to first disrupt the notion of an essentialist ‘place’ where place-ness is about “creating ties to a fixed and stable environment” (Lems, 2016, p. 170). Second, is to question the political strategy of creating laws that fix people and places within imagined boundaries and, instead, to consider a dynamic approach to place (Reeves, 2011) where we enter into a ‘productive relationship’ through the *process* of being-in-place (Heidegger cited in Lems, 2016, p. 327); as people move through places they shape places and in turn the place shapes them (Lems, 2016). Where “the place-ness of particular places emerges from the intersection of overlapping human and non-human trajectories” (Reeves, 2011, p. 309), place is then understood as dynamic, in process, where daily routines and habits are practiced, and where identities are performed and reformed. Further, place is understood in relation to movement, where an “ontology of place [is where] movement is not merely *in* or across or through place but is precisely *constitutive* of place” (Reeves, 2011, p. 316). As Ingold (2009) encourages us, we visualise places as knots where

... lives are led not inside places but through, around, to and from them ... as wayfarers, then ... human beings inhabit the earth ... [w]here inhabitants meet, trails are entwined, as the life of each becomes bound with the other. Every entwining is a

knot. And the more that life-lines are entwined, the greater the density of the knot. (Ingold, 2009, p. 33)

## FRAMING THE METAPHORICAL NEOLIBERAL BEAST AND A PEDAGOGY OF PIRACY

This is a pirate story, although different from classical depictions of heroes and anti-heroes. Here we call on piracy as a metaphor of resistance against the dominant, increasingly neoliberal education system: the pirates are battling a beast that is infecting our education system with a global education reform movement (GERM, for short) (O'Connor, 2016). Like all metaphors it is not perfect, however the metaphor of piracy “places things before us in new ways ... tells us something new about reality, although [we acknowledge] it cannot encapsulate all the symbolic meaning” (Farquhar & Fitzsimons, 2010, p. 656). We also acknowledge that one society’s terrorist is often another community’s freedom fighter, and so we draw on particular characteristics of piracy to examine our critical role as educators. Schön (1979) and others have highlighted the way metaphor can be recruited to frame a social issue, assisting understanding of how the key characters and structures interact. Melding metaphor and historical analysis, we aim to better understand a *pedagogy of piracy* by drawing on two examples from the history of education where pirates have battled a similar version of the same beast: Hedge Schools of Ireland and Kaupapa Māori schools of New Zealand. Our hope is these stories will not only provoke our readers but will also provide a pedagogical strategy to counter current educational concerns: a ‘*pedagogy of piracy*’.

### THE CHARACTERS IN OUR NARRATIVE

From herein we use the metaphor of the ‘beast’ (Ball, 2016) to represent broad neoliberal systems of control and ‘piracy’ as the cultural phenomenon that rises to resist such systems (Sarkar, 2016). History is full of stories of people rising to resist and challenge systems of governance that privileged the few and dominated the many. So, let us first introduce you to the beast and its GERM.

## THE BEAST

Although central to the current climate of a variety of fields (politics, economics, cultural studies and education, to name a few), neoliberalism appears difficult to define. It is often used without definition, or only loosely defined, to refer to a range of political, social and individual systems or relationships (Ball, 2016). For the purpose of this paper, we define neoliberalism as a political and economic philosophy that values choice, competition and individual agency and responsibility. In this philosophy, there is a decline of shared narratives (Beck & Gersheim-Beck, 2002) and a focus on the action of individuals to solve problems (such as obtaining skills to be employed), rather than a focus on changing systems to solve problems (such as addressing poverty).

As a pervasive powerful ideology, neoliberalism is always on the move, continually and eclectically reworking, reconfiguring itself in context-specific ways (Springer, 2012, 2016). Although Springer (2012) states there are no precise discernible beginnings, Brenner, Peck and Theodore (2010) describe how “[t]he ideological and doctrinal roots of neo-liberalization can be traced to the classical liberal project of constructing ‘self-regulating’ markets during the *belle époque* of late nineteenth and early twentieth century British imperialism” (p. 330). What remains consistent, as it grows and changes over time, are market-based competition and commodification processes (Brenner et. al, 2010), which Springer describes as an “elite project concerned with the (re)constitution of class power” (2012, p. 134). Springer’s point about the reconstitution of class power is central to understanding the socio-cultural and economic effects of a philosophy such as this. Although reconfigured, class structures have become accepted and normalised as individual people’s problems.

Similar to its slippery definitions, neoliberalism has been allocated a variety of metaphoric states. It has metaphorically been described as a ‘beast’ (Ball, 2016), which according to Peck (2010), is a messy hybrid, a shape shifter with a pulse that sometimes stutters. It has also been described as a ‘syndrome’ birthed out of imperialism into a worldwide capitalist restructuring (Brenner, Peck & Theodore,

2010) by “market-worshipping, nihilistic sociopaths’ and a ‘mutating liberal rule” (Peck, 2010, p. 2). Although each of these metaphors are useful to make sense of neoliberal ideology, we chose to use Ball’s (2016) metaphor of a beast for three reasons. Firstly, Ball adopts this description in his writings on education—it was ‘birthed’ in discussions about the education system, and therefore has resonance here. Secondly, the beast represents something ugly, usually big and almost always scary. Ironically in colonial history beasts were understood as something to be tamed and controlled. Finally, we use the term beast because it gives us something tangible to fight against—a beast that has infected our education systems with a GERM that will require tactics, subversion, and action to defeat. Ball (2016) identifies three technologies of this GERM that have changed the language and culture of education: marketization and competition, management leadership, and measurement and standardization of performance.

The effect of neoliberalism in schools relates to the economising of education that reforms education’s relationship to market forces (through privatisation and the positioning of children and parents as ‘clients’ for example), and also through changes to curriculum, testing and pedagogy, that focus on the role of schools as vehicles for individual achievement (Ball, 2016). Recent writings in education (O’Connor, 2016) have called on educators to resist and retaliate against the neoliberal global education reform movement (GERM) and rather to refocus education in the service of children and communities. We posit the *pedagogy of piracy* as a form of resistance to the GERM.

## THE PIRATE

Pirates, and actions of piracy, have been around for centuries. In this paper we focus our attention on the social phenomenon of the pirates in the 16-17<sup>th</sup> Century, cognizant that much iconography, mythology, and popular commentary regarding pirates emerged from this particular movement (Huang, 2010; Malott, 2006; Sakar, 2016). We are not referring to modern piracy. Although sharing some characteristics with their historical counterparts, modern piracy movements have arisen for a range of reasons, in a variety of places,

and work in diverse ways (see Huang, 2010), some of which are not relevant to our discussion here. However, we also acknowledge that the “appearance of piracy, almost without exceptions, is related to social structural factors, such as economic underdevelopment, civil war, and/or institutionalized corruption” (Huang, 2010, p. 279). Piracy is presented here as a metaphor representing an approach to working at the margins of an establishment.

The movement that emerged in the Caribbean in the 16th Century, and grew to flourish in the 17th Century, is typically seen as a response to certain conditions of the time where, dominated by colonial powers, a vast majority of the population were poor and powerless (Malott, 2006). Many sailors had returned from serving in a Navy or on merchant ships seeking a better monetary future, escaping hierarchical systems of control, and/or looking for a place where they could practice their preferred lifestyle (Malott, 2006). The colonial enterprise resulted in a constant flow of ship traffic along trade routes between Europe, colonialised nations and trade partners, including slave traders. The flow of ship traffic provided opportunity for pirate plundering. Cognisant of Huang’s (2010) typology, many pirates were participants in dissident revolutionary movements and can be described as ‘freedom fighters’ who identified with certain political ideals.

Unlike the myth of buried treasure chests, pirate ‘treasure’ tended to consist of anything of value—often food, grain, alcohol, cloth and wood. This treasure would be then used, sold or traded by the pirates. We speculate here that the treasure the pirates sought surpassed just the monetary value of tangible goods (although these were necessary for their survival). When considering the revolutionary pirate, the ultimate treasure was/is the value of things like freedom of certain beliefs, culture, language, and hope for the future (Huang, 2010, pp. 283-284) and specifically for this paper, a place where they could inhabit and experience these things. Hence, when considering the idea of piracy as a useful metaphor for teaching and education, it develops more resonance.

Piracy is understood here as a cultural phenomenon that occurs in response to systems that control and limit the potential of certain populations. We are interested in education systems that historically,

and increasingly in recent times, reshape themselves to ensure schools work as a mechanism for producing the sorts of citizens that maintain the status quo. An example of such control can be seen in the ways education has historically (and continues to be) used by colonisers to maintain power. Here we take entangled threads and ‘tie knots’ between these historic practices, the current GERM, piracy, and pedagogy to form a landscape. Using the examples of Hedge schools in Ireland, and the more recent Kaupapa Māori movements in New Zealand, we further explore the *pedagogy of piracy* in action during the process of colonisation. The process of colonisation is understood as a strategic move by European capitalist powers to dominate and control resources for their own gain; key strategies used were systems of education, and access to language and place (Simon & Smith, 2001). There is a resonance then with neoliberalism (Strakosch, 2016). Hence, we use these examples as historical movements that provided grass roots resistance of a colonising system, recognising and using the powerful role education plays in the socialisation of communities.

We are not the first to have made connections between piracy and activist pedagogy. Malott (2006) draws on the philosophy of piracy to explore the notion of “democratic pirate pedagogy” (p. 164). He draws heavily on anarchist, Marxist and post-colonial perspectives to understand the history of piracy as a rise in the proletariat—those working in state-sanctioned, dismal, oppressive conditions coming together to create “undetected spaces where there are temporary opportunities for the creation of non-alienated labor and free culture”, a society where they could be the “sole governor of one’s mind and body” (Malott, 2006, p. 160) responsible for their own working lives. Malott’s ideas allowed us to conceptualise the relationship between the Caribbean piracy movement of the 16-17th century (historical and mythologized), and the work of activist educators. Here we detangle and rebuild this knot moving beyond Malott’s ideas and building connecting threads into two historical educational ‘moments’. To achieve this, we identify three characteristics of pirates that align with philosophies of critical pedagogy to illustrate the *pedagogy of piracy*: libertarian, the temporary autonomous zone, and risky and adventurous.

## THE LIBERTARIAN PIRATE

Can pirates be considered socially libertarian? They challenge the laws of a ruling class and open a chasm between what is “considered legal and what is considered legitimate” (Sarkar, 2016, p. 2). They challenge systems designed to control the masses (Mallot, 2006) and therefore may battle against the “inherent injustices imbedded within the system” (p. 163). Their actions are often perceived as “desperate political performances”; enacted to “challenge hegemonic sovereignties and binding legalities” (Sarkar, 2016, p. 3). As suggested by Lawrence Kohlberg, the final stage of moral reasoning is often abstract and determined by general principles that transcend societal rules. Paradoxically those rules are framed by traditional Western philosophy. So too Sarka argues the pirate has a code, “founded in democracy, internally constructed ... [with] a strong ethos of sharing and living attuned to the forging of an equitable future than legal structures serving primarily corporate interest” (Sarkar, 2016, p. 12).

## TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS ZONES

Pirates created floating communities where hierarchical systems imbedded on shore were not observed at sea (Mallot, 2006). Understandings of gender, physicality, ethnicity, language and culture that existed in the ‘littoral’ space of the shore, were shifting, negotiated, and experimental in the offshore pirate community. As proposed by Higgins (2006), “pirates in some ways transcended the boundaries of the dominant white, Protestant, heterosexual hierarchy at the foundation of ‘whiteness’” (p. 53). They nearly crippled the colonialist super-power empires of the 17th century (Mallot, 2006). These floating communities were a temporary place of home, temporary autonomous zones that emerged through resistance and insurrection. As wayfarers, these temporary places were “produced through particular relational configurations; as well as the dynamics and politics through which certain people and practices [came] to be seen as ‘out of place’” (Reeves, 2011, p. 308). Mallot (2006) suggests that “the possibility of changing the basic structures of power sensibilities are awakened during moments of insurrection where a

glimpse of an unrealized future can be seen” (p. 160). He further calls for insurrection as a praxis of radical teachers.

## RISK AND ADVENTURE

A key cultural idea surrounding piracy, particularly under the Jolly Roger, was risk. Pirates were risky and adventurous.

Tricky and risky negotiations and adventures ... constituted crucial elements of piracy narratives ... Pirates [had] to engage in risky encounters with the aim to acquire riches. ... To engage in the business of piracy represented an act worthy of the risks taken... (Meléndez, Stoppino & Garcia, 2010)

There is significant romanticism around these two ideas: risk and adventure. The pirate resides in a space that is evocative, where they participate in risky undertakings, are creative and experimental, inspire radical questions, are involved in an analysis of political and economic machinations (Sakar, 2016). Connecting this to classrooms, critical pedagogy, the building of critical consciousness, and the commandeering of ‘valuable goods’ for the community, rather than the system, allows an idea of a risky adventurous teacher to emerge. Like Giroux (1981), Friend (1999) also argues that teachers need to prepare students to deal critically with the arguments they encounter in the dominant culture and empower them to resist, be sensitive to injustice and debate divisive issues. We argue that, for teachers working under the scrutiny of the beast, this is best achievable with a *pedagogy of piracy* that embraces the risk and adventure of critical classrooms in difficult times.

## THE HEDGE SCHOOLS OF IRELAND AS AN ACT OF PIRACY

On a visit to Ireland in 2016, Esther was introduced to the history of Hedge Schools. Visiting with her husband’s relatives on the Mounts of Mourne, they were taken to an old homestead, a simple stone cottage next to a stream that served as both water supply and bath, and told stories about family being educated in Hedge Schools. Esther was immediately curious about Hedge Schools and started to ask questions.

These secret, community-run, schools were created in opposition to British rule in order to maintain the education of Irish children from 1695–1831 (McManus, 2002). Although some Hedge schools, which Esther suspected was the case for the Mounts of Mourne family, remained operating until the 1890s in impoverished areas. They were established in temporary locations such as a hedgerow—a raised bank by a ditch where lookouts were often employed if discovery was imminent. Eventually the name ‘Hedge’ was adopted to represent those many schools native Irish children attended in secret (Fernández-Suárez, 2006).

Schoolhouses are in general wretched huts, built of sods in the highway ditches, from which circumstances they are designated hedge schools. They have neither door, window, nor chimney; a large hole in the roof serving to admit light and let out smoke... (As described by William Shaw Mason in 1814, cited in Fernández-Suárez, 2006, p. 54)

In many ways the philosophy and the practice of Hedge schools resonates with the pedagogy of piracy. First, as a socially liberal construction, Hedge Schools were a cultural phenomenon that arose in response to the suppression of all legitimate means of education for the native Irish after 1366 and the abolishment of Bardic schools in 1641 (Dowling, 1935). Hedge schools have a clandestine history, hidden from view in ‘top-secret’ abodes, shifting in response to threat of discovery (Fernandes-Suarez, 2006; He, 2010; Mbatia, 2016). Much like the pirates ‘temporary autonomous zones’, Hedge Schools provided a place where the Irish communities could be not only free from, but resistant to, the rule of the dominant British colonial and provide an “educational buffer to combat the Anglicization and ethnocide being waged continually, especially against the children of Gaelic Irish civilization” (Hurley, 2007, p. 259). These schools, much like Reeves (2011) nomadic tents, were a temporary place, a knot in the landscape where pupils and teacher inhabited a place momentarily, where place “is always there, where we are” (Lems, 2016, p. 320). The colonizers strategies and processes of assimilation were seriously thwarted by these secret schools. Dowling (1935) described Hedge Schools as a vital tradition in Ireland until nearly the end of the 19th

Century, testifying to the tenacious presence of all the native traditions in the face of foreign invasion and replacement (He, 2010).

The second pirate characteristic of the Hedge schools were their *libertarian* constructions. They represented a challenge to the dominant ruling English who had “destroyed the means by which [the Irish] could ... hope to ascend a step in life” (Fernández-Suárez, 2006, p. 48). Hedge schools as a system of education flourished after Bardic schools, the ancient professional schools of Ireland, were forcibly closed in 1641 following the Irish Rebellion (Dowling, 1935). Although Hedge schools differed in content and method from Bardic schools, the focus on speaking Irish Gaelic, traditional learning and culture, and fostering a love of Irish literature, prevailed (Clarke, 2010; Dowling, 1935).

The Hedge schools were totally independent of any kind of external authority (Clarke, 2010). Cloaked in secrecy, the local community was an important part of the Hedge School survival, these tight knit communities working together to ensure the possibility of an education for their children. In this way, these schools lived and worked according to a local ‘code’ rather than serving an established authority. Teachers in Hedge schools were also an integral part of these communities, their lives being interconnected with the lives of these communities, “and who often believed that teaching was their mission in life” (Dowling, 1935, p. 20). Hence, classes followed a flexible timetable. As an integral part of impoverished communities, the schools were responsive to the seasonal needs of the families, where often evening classes were established to ensure students, including adults, could attend.

Hedge schools also required a flexible learning environment. The curriculum varied according to the needs and concerns of the community and the skills of the teacher. Due to the restrictions put on the Irish from entering into many professions, the curriculum was occupation oriented with a focus on providing children with skills to enter into a trade such as mercantile arithmetic, book-keeping and French (Clarke, 2010). These characteristics reflect John Dewey’s (1897) ‘progressive education’ aims where students were encouraged to develop knowledge to partake in society that reflected

the community's needs and share in social consciousness. One key 'unchanging' curriculum was the teaching of Irish language and culture, which served the participants with an unspoken security of holding on to Irish language and culture (Mbatia, 2016).

In 1831, the English made systematic moves to regain control of the Irish. Two key strategies were the introduction of a National Education system and a re-mapping project to replace Irish place names with English (He, 2010). The political mapping and *naming* of place served to exclude the Irish from land and resources (Olwig, DalGLISH, Fairclough & Herring, 2016). As stated by Ingold (2011) "[these] place names bear witness ... to the history of humanity's colonization ..." (p. 166). The Education system was a strategy to regain control of the Irish working class through first offering an education for free and then deliberately lowering standards with a limited curriculum. Irish language and culture were prohibited. In response, the Hedge schools retreated further into isolated places, but did not disappear. Mbatia argues that this assimilation strategy of national schools and replacing the Irish with English names served to "dissociate the Irish from their past and to control their future, a control deliberately linked ... to the future educational processes, especially the use of language" (Rollins, 2014, cited in Mbatia, 2016, para. 3).

Hedge schools continued to exist alongside national schools for many more years until the Great Famine (1845-52), where increased poverty meant communities could no longer afford to support their survival. We argue the cultural phenomenon of Hedge schools, created in secret temporary places, enabled Irish traditions to continue under English domination, and demonstrate a *pedagogy of piracy*.

## **KAUPAPA MĀORI EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND AS A PEDAGOGY OF PIRACY**

Kaupapa Māori education in New Zealand provides a second example, where knots of resistance and education have battled controlling forces. An important distinction from Hedge schools was the use of place. In New Zealand, temporary autonomous zones were created through capturing and adapting places that were established

by the colonial government for educational purposes. Like Ireland, New Zealand experienced the powerful role education played in colonisation processes.

Numerous accounts across nations now attest to the critical role played by schools in assimilating colonized people, and in the systematic, frequently brutal, forms of denial of indigenous languages, knowledges and cultures. (Smith, 1999, p. 64)

The long reach of colonialism reached New Zealand in the early 1800s, and a key place colonialism has played out is in the schoolroom. An important point of distinction between this New Zealand example and that of the Hedge Schools in Ireland is British scholars were *invited* by Māori (indigenous New Zealanders) to teach the skills of writing and reading. Before British settlement in New Zealand, Māori traders had observed the importance of these skills in their travels to England and other British colonies, such as New South Wales, Australia. Jones and Jenkins (2011) tell the important story of Māori seeking to be educated. Another distinction is the invitation coincided with a brief humanitarian movement in Britain where it was believed *all* people through Christianity could become civilised (Simon & Smith, 2001). However, ideas of race were still haunted by the European impulse of racialized superiority, the significance of this lurks in our education system today (Fitzpatrick, 2016).

There are two significant consequences of these early relationships between Māori and Pākehā (non-Māori inhabitants) that linger today. First, the signing of a treaty between the Indigenous people and the British Crown, which recognised an official partnership between Māori and Pākehā and, second, the early missionaries had a significant involvement, although with a paternalistic attitude, with the education of Māori through translations of the *Bible* into Te Reo (Māori language) (Simon & Smith, 2001). Through their research in historical archives, Jones and Jenkins (2011) show how Māori quickly became educated in Pākehā ways (such as reading and writing), and utilised these new skills to develop further trade networks in New Zealand and abroad.

However, the early humanitarian attitude changed as demands for more land, an influx of new settlers into urban areas, and demands for infrastructure followed. Between 1831 and 1881 the Pākehā population increased by 50,000 per cent (King, 2003, p. 178). Michael King describes how...

The early missionary schools and later the Native Schools (initiated in 1867) encouraged the use of Māori language to facilitate English instruction. The Native Schools were initiated by the Government to replace the missionary schools in the education of Māori and, as in Ireland, to increase the assimilation process. (King, 2003, p. 178)

Many of these schools were in rural areas, places isolated from the colonial town, and managed by the local Iwi (tribe). Consequently the schools became a significant part of the Māori community and were shaped by Māori views on what counted as schooling (Stephenson, 2013). Changes in the curriculum after 1877 resulted in Māori education being directed towards manual labour pathways. Te Reo (Māori language) was disallowed; Native Schools hardened their attitude towards Te Reo, and Māori were politically shafted towards a lower position in the hierarchical stratification of society (Simon & Smith, 2001). Assimilation was a clear priority in the Native Schools Act of 1877 (Donn & Schick, 1995).

Māori communities however had an invested interest in the education of their children. Native schools that existed in Māori communities continued to often be isolated from city managerial processes, and therefore Māori retained an influence on how and what their children were taught. Belich states that

The separate institutions were less agencies of assimilation than subversions of it. They were a set of storm sails under which Māori culture and identity could survive the prevailing winds of socio-economic disadvantage and assimilationist rhetoric ... [where Māori] involvement expanded very quickly into teaching and many aspects of administration. (cited in Timutimu, Simon & Matthews, 1998, p. 56)

We suggest many of these Native schools reflected the *pedagogy of piracy* as temporary autonomous zones, adapting the prescribed curriculum to suit their communities needs and beliefs. They were risky and adventurous in their rebellion against assimilationist practices imposed upon them. Although teachers were sent out into these schools to enact a rigid British curriculum and process of assimilation, “over the years teachers were drawn increasingly towards meeting the educational, cultural and social needs of the Māori community” (Timutimu, Simon & Matthews, 1998, p. 11). This resonates with the concept of place as dynamic, where simultaneously those who pass through are shaped by place and place is shaped by their presence (Lems, 2016; Reeves, 2011). A personal example are Esther’s ancestors (Pākehā) who were educated at the Waioeka Native School (1885-1915) and all learnt to speak fluent Te Reo. Built by the Māori chief of Ngāti Ira, Hira Te Popo, it was a significant part of the Ngāti Ira community and the lives of her ancestors (see Fitzpatrick, 2017).

Throughout New Zealand’s history Māori and the crown struggled to retain control over the education of Māori children. The New Zealand government abolished the Native schools in 1960 and instead required all children to attend mainstream schooling. This also corresponded with many Māori whānau (family) shifting into urban areas for work, thus isolating Māori from their communities, culture and language. As a result, and encouraged by the civil rights movement in the USA, several Kaupapa Māori educational centres rose up in challenge to the Eurocentric model that was being enforced.

Contemporary Kaupapa Māori education initiatives originate from and are driven by Māori. They are underpinned by Māori philosophy and principles that challenge the political context of unequal power relations and associated structural impediments. Importantly they presuppose that:

- the validity and legitimacy of Māori is taken for granted
- the survival and revival of Māori language and culture is imperative
- the struggle for autonomy over [Māori] cultural well-being, and over [Māori] lives is vital to Māori survival. (Pihama, Smith, Taki & Lee, 2004, p. 9)

The first education initiatives were Kōhunga reo (preschool language ‘nests’) followed quickly by Kura kaupapa Māori (Māori-language immersion primary schools) in the early 1980s. These schools operate within a whānau-based Māori philosophy and deliver the curriculum in te reo Māori (as articulated above).

As a *pedagogy of piracy*, the Kura kaupapa Māori school movement can be described as *socially liberal* through their desire to create an education system that worked to “unhinge themselves from the ‘gate-keeping’ reproductive elements of the dominant controlled system” (Smith, 2003, p. 5). The characteristic of a temporary autonomous zone is reflected in the schools’ vision to create a Māori place. The idea of a Māori place existed on several levels; through the physical marae structure, through the social practice of cultural traditions, such as greetings, ceremonies and protocol; and through access and ownership being controlled by Māori (Spolsky, 1989, p. 99). The Kura kaupapa Māori school enabled students to “imagine freedom or a utopian vision free of the oppressor ... to imagine [their] future” (Smith, 2003, p. 2). In these Māori educational places pedagogues developed a curriculum that was based on Māori philosophy and their own methods of inquiry (Spolsky, 1989, p. 95).

The Kura kaupapa Māori movement was *libertarian* through its direct challenge to systems of control. Much like the Hedge Schools the organisation and implementation of the schools relied on a commitment and focus from local communities (Smith, 2003; Spolsky, 1989). Hence the schools represented a culturally collective practice with total whānau support.

## A PEDAGOGY OF PIRACY TODAY

These two historical narratives, Irish Hedge schools and Kaupapa Māori education movement in New Zealand, give a glimpse of how contexts in the past have aligned with a *pedagogy of piracy* to combat their particular ‘beast’, in both cases controlled through colonisation and the use of education (or enforced lack thereof) as a strategy of assimilation. Practically, we can see how both of these movements grew out of a failing of the established authorities to serve the needs of specific groups of people, much like the piracy movement of

the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Century, and, we would argue, much like now. Also, similar between these stories is the tendency for the authorities to critique, condemn and actively seek to dismantle these movements as recognised threats to their rule. Beyond the practicalities of the contexts, the socially progressive, and liberal nature of these movements can give guidance to how communities can organise themselves to create a place that works on the boundaries of the establishment to meet the needs of those involved.

In her book *Radical Possibilities*, critical educator Jean Anyon (2005) advocated the building of new social movements with school-community relationships at the centre, to improve communities, allow schools and communities to become advocates for each other, and together work towards more inclusive educational opportunities for young people. Within these social movements, education needs to move beyond bureaucracy and “join the world of communities, families, and students; it must advocate for them and emerge from their urgent realities” (Anyon, 2005, p. 199). This advocacy carries with it a responsibility to reveal and challenge practices and policies that can intensify disadvantage and exclusion. These social movements too could be considered under our metaphor of piracy—a form of local, community driven resistance that has the potential for a ripple effect ‘out there’—causing the beast to stutter in his expansive, dynamic self-reproduction (Springer, 2010).

In telling these stories of historic places of resistance

[we] learn to connect the events and experiences of [our] own lives to the lives of predecessors. ... To tell a story is to relate, in narrative, the occurrences of the past, bringing them to life ... And in the story, as in life, it is in the movement from place to place ... that knowledge is integrated. (Ingold, 2011, p. 161)

Considering our investigation of Hedge Schools and the Kaupapa Māori schools we suggest the following practices: *A pedagogy of piracy* involves creating a place, a temporary autonomous zone that values the child as a ‘whole’. The place is created through valuing the culture of the child, their beliefs and language, their emerging identity/ies. Rules and expectations are negotiated inside this place to protect

and enhance the potential of each child. Learning takes place in the context of the child's culture and language, where they can be free to learn, encouraged to ask critical questions, learn to consider other perspectives, and imagine a future.

Where to next? We have drawn here on two historical case studies to highlight characteristics of a *pedagogy of piracy*. However, we also recognize that many individual teacher educators, historical and contemporary, demonstrate critical pedagogy in their own practice. We believe there are several educators today who practice a *pedagogy of piracy* in their own temporary places; risky adventurous teachers who resist the neoliberal beast through enacting critical, local, socially progressive practice. These are often educators who later become celebrated in their innovative practice, for example in New Zealand Elwyn Richardson's (1925-2012) pedagogy of science and art (see Heyward & Fitzpatrick, 2016) and Sylvia Ashton Warner's (1908-1984) pedagogy of 'sex and fear' (see Jones, 2006). We have also not even begun to praise the countless, relatively anonymous, teachers working behind their classroom doors in the service of their students.

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