

Review Of Lynch, K, Grummell, B & Devine, D, *New Managerialism In Education, Commercialization, Carelessness And Gender. Palgrave MacMillan, 2012*^{*}

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The long-awaited initial Irish text on New Managerialism in Irish education has as its two central pillars; gender and care. It builds upon work undertaken by authors such as Deem and ties centrally to the theories of Sen and Nussbaum. The work of Lynch, Devine and Grummell whilst presented previously at conferences and in differing journals is now drawn together in one central volume for the first time.

Its feminist analysis of gender inequality and injustice, reflective of the authors' backgrounds, brings key attention to the devaluing of care in its many dimensions. The extensive well-constructed research apparent throughout many of the chapters is compelling and should be compulsory for those responsible for the identification, selection, mentoring and development of management staff. The text as an information aide for those involved in policy making in the education management domain is insightful and challenges us to reassess how new managerialism has become 'de rigueur' both before, during and now after the Celtic Tiger era.

* URL: <http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/130>

The book examines the impact of neo-liberal discourses and practices on the traditional caring and development ethos of public services in particular those in education. However, the broad spread of the text across the spectrum of Irish education from primary to higher education sectors does not enable an in-depth analysis of issues particular to the different sectors. In parallel, the effort to map to a world-view of new managerialism, aligning to several British perspectives, without overly comparing, means that the work has an overtly Irish focus not fully acknowledged in text or chapter titles.

The streaming of the book and its underlying structure, four key parts with constituent chapters, develops a narrative from the macro socio-econo-political to the individual selection and development that support the authors' rationale of an absence of care, the imposition of a 'care ceiling' and an inequality in gender in education management in Ireland. The initial chapters on governance are informative and summarize clearly the historical development of new managerialism in this country. The very necessary inclusion of a highly informative chapter on the culture of governance sets out clearly the authors' perspectives.

The second part, on the appointment of senior managers, is enlightening. While the fourth chapter has previously been presented by the authors, its inclusion serves only to add to the narrative underpinning the text. It clearly demonstrates how the culture of appointments and the systems in place to 'enable' appointments only serve to maintain an implicit homo-sociability and local logic around manager-academic assessment and appointment.

The third part of the book and its focus on being a manager in the education system highlights the pressures of a performance-driven environment. It names specifically the

expectations particularly on female academic managers. By trying to a broad spectrum of education, it provides a platform from which other researchers and authors will dive in.

The final element of the book on the treatment of education as a product in a market and the media-driven focus on its commercialization is revealing. This focus in recessionary, austerity driven and value-for-money time needs to be addressed through quality education and leadership at all levels. The need for reinvigorating the systems and caring for the learner is apparent.

As the benchmark text, it now challenges all who are currently employed as manager-academics to recognize the limitations and expectations of the current systems and to work to address these. I would regard this text as compulsory for those researching and working in Irish higher education management.