

World 2: Loyalty Points



The relationship between individuals and corporate entities has evolved, over the past few decades, into something more codified and managed than at the beginning of the century. As the ability of individuals to prevent their personal data becoming the property of organisations withered, it became clear that an external mechanism was needed to manage this exchange. People who attempted to keep their data from external organisations found their access and participation in society constrained: however, the organisations that benefitted most from this data proved themselves incapable of regulating this exchange fairly or effectively. It was left to the state to intervene with a personalised contract for individuals and the organisations they interacted with, ensuring that companies could run efficiently and offer appropriate services while individuals' rights were protected. This approach towards managing people's relationships with institutions and organisations grew in scope until the present day, when individuals find themselves at the heart of a lattice of affiliations and associations encompassing their work, interests, healthcare, family, leisure and consumption, all of which are articulated through contracts that manage and curtail the behaviour of groups and individuals.

Hand-in-hand with this movement towards the management of people's lives through personalised contractual agreements is a change in the role of the state. The political support for the devolution of power to local groups, coupled with the tendency for political debate to centre around single issues rather than ideological positions, has led to a shrinking of the state as people form and join associations and groups to address local needs rather than looking to government, which consequently has much less influence. Global mobility has increased and the need for people to tie their identity to their geographic location has lessened: instead, national affiliation is part of the contract individuals choose to make with the state, and attracting and retaining educated, talented, fertile and resourceful citizens is one of the challenges facing governments. This contractual citizenship, in which benefits and responsibilities are made explicit, is in tension with a legacy ideal of belonging to the UK as a geographically and culturally integrated territory¹.



The state's role has been reconfigured as an enabling organisation, creating the conditions for individuals to affiliate themselves to particular sets of associations. It still provides basic security and physical welfare for its citizens, in particular attempting to police collectives that might threaten the body politic and ensuring that commitments to associations do not infringe on the distinctive role of the state. However, the traditional role of the police has in many cases been devolved to local associations, particularly in rural areas, and responsibility for the welfare of citizens is often claimed by spiritual and

¹ By creating personalised social contracts and supporting multiple contractual arrangements within the state framework, the UK's unique selling point is that it allows individuals to operate successfully as global citizens. The idea of global citizens versus national identity is discussed in the paper "National Identities: are they declining?" by Denis Sindic. www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/national-identities-are-they-declining

Managing one's personal record and how this is manifested in various forms of public reputation is essential for survival.

This local differentiation is reflected most vividly in the varying contributions communities make through taxation. Taxes are tightly linked to the areas for which they have been collected - taxpayers can expect their road tax contributions to fund only the maintenance of roads, for example. This, coupled with the devolution of public services to local associations, allows individuals and communities to opt in or out of particular aspects of state provision, and enables non-governmental associations to offer contributions-based deals. This capacity to opt out has weakened the basic provision, and those without means struggle to get by on this alone. The positive side of these arrangements is that the state is forced to make more personalised service contracts with individuals, and local/specialised providers flourish on the basis that they are better able to meet individual needs.



These services might be provided directly by the work associations with which people may be affiliated. The groups offering access to these kinds of benefits are similar to traditional firms, employing people directly and providing access to healthcare or development opportunities focussing on learning or personal wellbeing. However, many people spend more time working in *ad hoc* groups of individuals who come together to offer complementary skills to meet the requirements of a particular project: this sort of work is often contracted out on a piecemeal, per-project basis, with a premium on delivering high quality in a short time-scale³.

Many local economies flourish, and value can be kept within local communities through exchange clubs that provide a (digital) currency for exchange of goods and skills. Sometimes this is a positive choice taken by a highly resourced community: however, some communities lack the capacity to mobilise the goods and skills their members need. Domestic work and care work are valued, whether carried out in the home or in the wider community, because contributions to the health of individuals are translated into benefits by the state. These benefits are of limited transferability, and so this work remains relatively low in status.

Managing different work contracts, deciding how to deploy personal time and talent on different kinds of work or juggling work inside and outside the home all require considerable personal organisation. Relationships with colleagues are often short-term and handled at a distance. Some communities invest in local work centres with dedicated wireless networks, where individuals can participate in online work while still enjoying

³ If you are interested in the meaning of work more generally, for example, why it is necessary, the paper "The meaning of work" by Stephen Overell will be relevant.
www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/the-meaning-of-work

real-world contact with others⁴. Online reputation and identity trumps qualification, so individuals also have to invest in updating their skills and their capacity to present those skills to potential employers and co-workers. Some choose instead to work at a very local level to sustain their communities. There are conflicts over work-life balance and the value of domestic and care work.

These conflicts play out differently in different domestic contexts, and there are a variety of ways in which these contexts are configured. While families remain a key locus for sharing and accruing resources, caring and learning, and for defining the values and affiliations of members, definitions of 'family' are in flux. In some contexts the family acts as a unit, capable of receiving services and benefits and entering into contractual relations on behalf of its members. In other contexts families behave more like affiliations, with extended membership and loosely contractual elements. Such extended families may be global or local, kinship-based or (increasingly) friendship-based. Children are encouraged to build supportive peer networks, leading to conflict in some families about the extent to which these affiliations challenge kinship. 'Absent presence' is common as family members increasingly use the home as a physical base from which to manage virtual relationships.



Regardless of the variety of ways in which families might be shaped, the home is regarded as the focus of state provision of entitlement. There is a basic entitlement to network access from the home and connectivity within the home, and the vast majority of homes incorporate 'smart' technologies which enable devices to interoperate efficiently, save energy, and monitor occupants and environments. This offers the potential to diagnose health and care needs, to automate care within the home and even to support learning. The state sponsors smart infrastructure in poor households as part of its commitment to ensuring basic welfare provision: monitoring allows the state and other service providers to deliver appropriate care but also to ensure that individuals are meeting their contractual responsibilities to their own health and happiness. Families therefore place a premium on keeping members healthy. In general, the onus is on all individuals to keep healthy, as taking action to enhance one's health status also gives access to services and benefits, and/or citizenship points that can be 'spent' outside of service provision, as well as reducing insurance premiums⁵.

⁴ For a discussion around the likelihood that teleworking will be a more usual employment method see the paper by Alan Felstead: "Detaching work from place: charting the progress of change and its implications for learning". www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/detaching-work-from-place-charting-the-progress-of-change-and-its-implications-for-learning

⁵ For a discussion around life expectancy in general see the paper "Review of longevity trends to 2025 and beyond" by Kenneth Howse, this discusses the possibility of increased mortality, for example the "obesity epidemic" as well as the likelihood of a healthier old age. www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/review-of-longevity-trends-to-2025-and-beyond

The age of compulsory education has been lowered (the exact age varies from locale to locale but is around the early teens), and the age of full adulthood has been raised, in part due to the length of time required to establish the network of affiliations that support people through life (again, different service providers recognise different thresholds, but adulthood is generally reckoned to be reached by the mid-twenties). As a result, there is a long period in which young people have capital within the family and power relations are contested. This stage is culturally designated as a safe playground or extended adolescence, with an expectation that young people will continue to be supported to some degree by their families while they embark on the affiliations, work and care contributions that mark full adulthood. However, a system of state and community-funded mentors and a growing network of peer affiliations mean that young people can find their niche without relying exclusively on the support of their family. Because of the pressure to build a portfolio of capabilities and a strong public reputation, children have their leisure time organised by their parents around 'valued' activities such as sport, music, youth groups, volunteering and challenges in the outdoors. Once they are able to organise their own time, young people often react to this by engaging in consciously playful, trivial or individualistic pursuits. Risky and 'anti-social' behaviours are also common in this age range. In general, these behaviours - for example, extreme sports, or abuse of drugs and alcohol - are less a feature of full adulthood, as they are excluded from healthcare and health insurance, except for emergency care, and the costs of engaging in them both socially and financially are high.

Less risky use of leisure time focuses on shopping, on non-economic forms of exchange, and on self-enhancement. Consumer power is mobilised - or perceived to be mobilised - through membership of clubs which give discounted access to goods and services, and other membership privileges. Shopping figures strongly as a source of pleasure and interaction with other consumers. There is a particular interest in leisure products that contribute to health, fitness and physical display, which help individuals to demonstrate their 'fitness' and capacity to contribute. Some hobbies and activities generate 'citizenship points' which can be exchanged for shopping club benefits: these include volunteer care work, conservation, gardening, healthful activity, leading community groups and similar activities.

Rules for sharing and managing knowledge continue to be in flux, with some organisations and individuals keeping valuable information private in order to leverage value. However, all communities and individuals make knowledge public in order to promote their reputation, and many find creative and original ways of doing so. There is therefore a plethora of entertaining, original and informative communication: the model is generally one of leveraging value (via reputation) from content rather than charging for content.

Education

Goals and outcomes

The broad primary goal for education is to promote social sustainability, ensuring that the many different perspectives and priorities within society do not pull so



strongly in different directions that the interrelated networks they constitute fall apart. Hand-in-hand with this, because the agents of this sustainability are individual people, is a second aim: to support the success of the individual in this lattice of associations and affiliations. There are many different definitions of success, varying from association to association: the generally-agreed-upon formulation is that education helps people to 'find their niche', to establish for themselves roles in which they feel valued and capable and to answer the question "what can I contribute?"

The focus of educators is directed towards fostering the skills and dispositions needed by individuals in such a context. Educated people are generally expected to be self-aware, skilled at managing their reputation and capable of juggling multiple roles, tasks and identities. Having an idea of how to be effective within a group is valuable: forming allegiances, managing conflicts, being noticed and valued and building social benefits are all essential skills. For themselves, learners need to become skilled at finding, managing and sharing information, comfortable moving between different contexts and situations, and to aspire to move beyond the thinking of a particular group.

These features and goals of education are shaped by the nature of the society described above. Below, we present two different possibilities for education in this world. In one, the values of the world and the characteristics outlined above have led to an education system that is capable of sustaining itself and wider society in that form. In the other, these values and features have given rise to an education system that is unsustainable and must eventually lead to change.

Scenario 3: Discovery

Reflecting learners' need to navigate between diverse groups and steer between various domains and contexts, a pedagogy of discovery and exploration underpins their learning experiences. Learners are encouraged to recognise that there are many communities in which they might participate, each with its own values, priorities, demands and focus, and to draw on a variety of these in constructing their course through education. They are supported in this by mentors, whose role is to guide learners around knowledge situated within a particular community and to help them access related communities. Mentors do not simply relay established practices or patterns of thought - learners are encouraged to challenge and debate the knowledge they encounter, developing new approaches and contributing to the community in which they're participating.



Education helps you to understand and develop your capacity to make distinctive and useful contributions

The role of mentor is valued highly, in part because of its resonance with the sense of collective responsibility for young people's advancement that is current in society, but perhaps more through the experience people have of being mentors themselves, and of

understanding the learning opportunities it offers and the value attached to the role by communities. Not only are they vital to the health of a particular domain or sector, building new membership for specific communities, but they also allow members of communities to be shown respect for the contributions they have made. The role can



Learning will help you to develop your reputation and your networks, provide access to multiple communities, and enable you to move between them

also act as a form of exchange between communities, with learners in one context often acting as mentors in a different context, making mentorship one way in which individuals can move between communities.

This mentoring takes place in a range of different settings. There are core educational goals addressed in early life: physical and mental wellbeing, group dynamics, symbolic manipulation and media production are all included in the curriculum encountered in state education.

Families might choose, if able, to supplement or enhance this state provision with more personalised learning services focussing on specific parts of their network, or on areas that will help

them to access specific associations later in life.

Local and regional colleges provide courses focused on local needs. Where a pressing requirement for local skills is felt - for example, in urban planning or energy solutions - courses are funded from taxation. Associations and employers provide lifelong learning opportunities, either directly or using local colleges as brokers. Colleges are strong centres for social learning, leisure learning and community cohesion. Open content and open virtual learning groups are widely available: associations make it their business to recommend, develop and evaluate particular learning experiences as a service to members. Elite universities provide research, innovation and knowledge resources. They are funded through innovation contracts for specific clients (state, commercial or third sector), through leveraging intellectual property, including mentoring materials, and through mentoring. Subject to



Different curricula operate in different settings, you are encouraged to participate in multiple curricula and to reflect upon how knowledge, skills and values differ from place to place enable you to move between them

global competition for intellectual assets, they must attract and retain international talent. Entry is on the basis of capacity to contribute to intellectual production, and the costs of teaching are borne by sponsoring associations, wealthy families and a small number of state or regional bursaries. Face-to-face contact helps to define university as an elite experience, and alumni



Learning environments, organisations and individuals are networked in ways that allow easy movement of information and people across different communities and settings

associations are among the more powerful interest groups in society.

As learners move between these different settings and groups, their interactions with and contributions to the various knowledge communities they encounter build a portfolio of capabilities and contributions that is recorded, authenticated and shared digitally. Underpinning this are software systems supporting a large degree of interoperability, and there are a range of tools for managing and presenting, modelling and making sense of this data. In part through the use of these tools, learners acquire many skills around management of the portfolio itself, including self-review and analysis, planning, reflection, self-presentation and management of reputation⁶.



You are defined by the different distinctive contributions you can make to different activities, communities and organizations

This aggregation of data around learners' activities, habits, dispositions and behaviours is useful to the state and to families as a mechanism for ensuring accountability for the quality of learning. More immediately, they offer a fixed and continuous object of assessment, remaining associated with individual learners as they engage with different communities in different settings, and offering a narrative of their learning experiences that includes the contributions made to different communities, feedback and reviews from peers, mentors and community members and an authentic record of an individual's attributes, interests and talents.

Scenario 4: Diagnosis

As the mark of a strong and thriving association or community becomes increasingly seen to be not the degree to which it supports and encourages exchange with other groups, but the services and opportunities it is able to provide for members within the group, so people have become accustomed to looking within their existing networks for support and development, rather than towards new communities. A shift has occurred as a result, from individuals using community membership to address their needs to communities being in a position to shape the contours of their members' lives. People make less



You are defined by the skills and abilities you have been identified as having at a young age

⁶ For a discussion around generic skills such as planning, and their increasing importance, see the paper: "The growing importance of generic skills" by Francis Green. www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/the-growing-importance-of-generic-skills

effort maintaining their wider networks and affiliations, and focus more on ensuring that they succeed within a limited set of associations: consequently, they have fewer alternatives and the need to invest their energy in supporting their chosen associations is greater. Making sure that they are equipped with the skills and dispositions that would most benefit the community is one way of providing this support.



Learning will help you to take on your role in the organization, meet your responsibilities and fulfil your contract

Individuals increasingly link their learning requirements to the requirements of particular organisations, which have consequently taken on more and more responsibility for providing educational opportunities that are likely to fulfil these requirements: as demand for education provided through specific commercial or third-sector organisations increases, state provision is weakened, and these organisations find themselves in a position to base their learning offerings on a pedagogy of diagnosis, identifying learners’ talents and strengths that are of most benefit to the organisation and concentrating on developing these to their full extent. Learners are given, rather than discover, their niche⁷.

Diagnosis of an individual’s likely skills or competencies occurs at an early stage in life, through their first educational institutions: affiliated private schools for those who can afford them or digital content and distance tuition for those who are not in such a position. There has been a rise in specialist and faith-based education as families take the opportunity to ensure that their values and interests are reproduced. State provision is seen as a last resort. People who demonstrate exceptional ability in areas that are desirable to a particular organisation might find themselves actively recruited. Strengths and potential are used by teachers to match learners to needed roles within the organisation.



The curriculum is personalised from an early age to exploit and develop your existing strengths

These are then enhanced through personalised learning experiences, which continue throughout an individual’s relationship with that organisation, into their working life and beyond, with in-house universities and research departments. If the specific skills being fostered are no longer thought of as



For a discussion around one method in ensuring that young people find education meaningful, rather than merely being given their “niche” read Kyoko Murakami’s paper: “Re-imagining the future: Young people’s digital storytelling” www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/re-imagining-the-of-identities-through-digital-storytelling

Education is about organizations diagnosing learners’ pre-existing strengths and determining where they will fit in future

particularly relevant to an organisation, a learner might be offered the opportunity to change track, though this is not always possible, and not every learner reaches adulthood as fitted for their niche as they had been led to expect.

Those being supported to learn leadership and communication skills are least likely to be troubled by this, as these are seen as more general skills that are widely applicable: organisations offering these courses are able to choose from a wide pool of applicants due to the high level of competition. The rhetoric of personalisation and learning 'styles' masks a strong stratification from an early age, with little opportunity for learners to explore other avenues of development. Individualised assessment allows organisations to track the progress of learners towards their objective, and to see how closely aligned with the current goals of the organisation their progress is⁸.

The means used to evaluate and measure this progress differ from organisation to organisation: this diversity of assessment means that there is no common currency of accreditation, and a new 'old boy' network has arisen in which learners and their learning are valued through association with particular institutions. For those without such connections, personal self-presentation skills are the key to advancement.



Technologies are used intensively to identify individual strengths and weaknesses

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⁸ In the paper "Developing expertise - moving beyond a focus on workplace competence, assessment and qualifications" by Alan Brown there is a discussion around assessment in the workplace and how that may impact individual performance and company structure. www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/developing-expertise-moving-beyond-a-focus-on-workplace-competence-assessment-and-qualifications