

***Political possibilities and limits of alternative education projects in England today:***

This presentation rests on interviews I have conducted and am conducting with educationalists creating alternative education projects/processes in England from winter 2013-2014 to the present. These projects/processes emerged in reaction to the 2010 ConDem government introducing severe 'austerity' cuts to the public sector, including the privatisation, corporatisation and financialisation of university and trade union education that had begun in the 1980s

This government claimed that such cuts were necessary to ensure that the crisis of government funding (caused by the financial sector facing huge losses due to prior government policies that allowed them to make short term highly speculative investments) could be overcome using these strategies. The presentation considers what can be learnt from pedagogical experiments now being created in England that resist these strategies, with a focus on informal education projects, outside the formal education system. Data from trade union, independent working class education, and academic activist projects are considered, exploring at how effectively they link theory and practice, academic and activist agendas and provide an alternative education project to that of marketisation.