

THE STUDY IN UK (ENGLAND)

SIMON MARGINSON
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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FROM PUBLICLY FINANCED PRIVATE GOODS IN 1963 TO PRIVATELY (STUDENT) FINANCED PUBLIC GOODS 2010



Robbins 1963



Dearing 1997



Browne 2010



Augar 2019

'TRANSCENDS INDIVIDUAL UTILITY'

'The public good is something that ... transcends individual utility, individual perspective, and provides some benefit for society as a whole. ... that means all of us, independently of whether we individually get benefit'.

- middle academic manager, computing

INDIVIDUALS GAIN MORE THAN PECUNIARY BENEFITS

‘You can turn [a student] from someone who feels like they have no agency in their life, or they have very few choices, into someone with lots of agency and lots of choices. I think that is very powerful.

- senior leader, national organisation

‘ It is good for us as a community to have people who ask questions, who understand responsibility, who understand complexity and ambiguity ... it’s good to have a civil society in which people understand their own biases and can reach out and be empathetic to others.

- senior university leader

NO SINGLE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING PUBLIC GOODS

‘Unfortunately there isn’t a simple metric or even set of metrics. We did some work about a year ago where we created a value framework, which deliberately looked at where we could put metrics against non-economic factors. You can track things like the health of an individual or a cohort, you can track demographic participation, you can track how many are going into professions seen as vital to the public good. Some of those are measurable through metrics. An awful lot of them aren’t’.

- senior leader, national organisation

BUT 'IT IS CREATING SOCIAL DIVISION'

'We can celebrate positive social mobility impacts of higher education on an individual level, while also acknowledging that on a collective level it is creating social division in a way that is quite problematic.'

- senior leader, national organisation

'PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BENEFITS ARE NOT NECESSARILY ANTAGONISTIC'

'Public and private benefit are not necessarily antagonistic, or choices, they can both be advanced. ... in some cases the overlap is very clear.

- middle level academic leader, literature

'There's no doubt that on average that university education provides a significant private return to students, but it's hugely heterogeneous. ... higher education provides private returns but also provides huge social returns. I don't think it's a zero-sum game'.

- academic expert, economics and education