



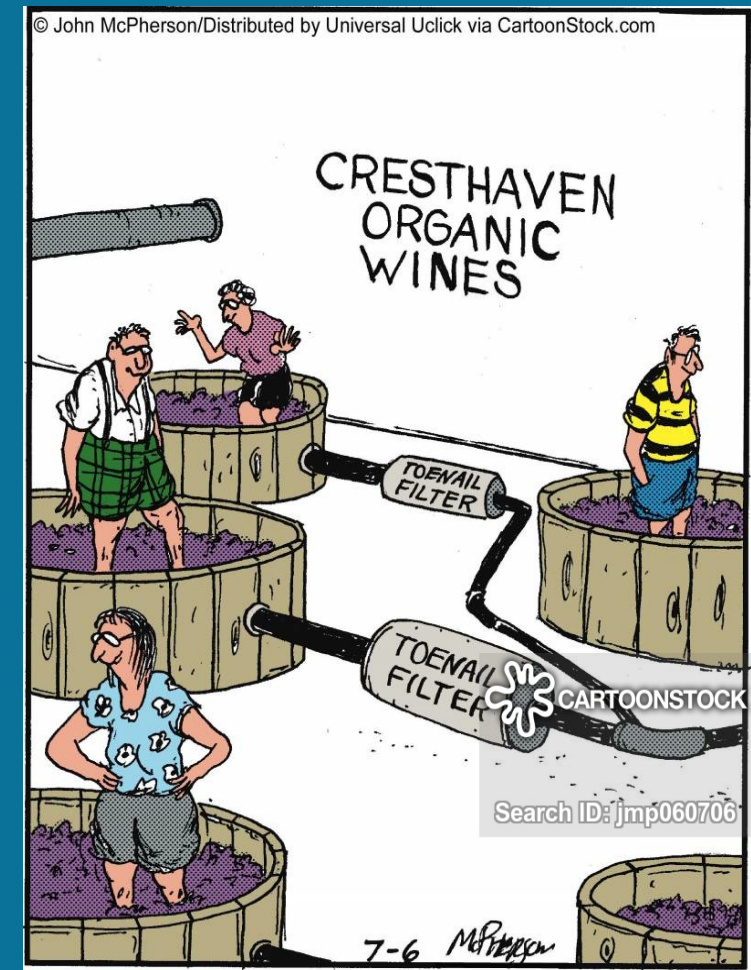
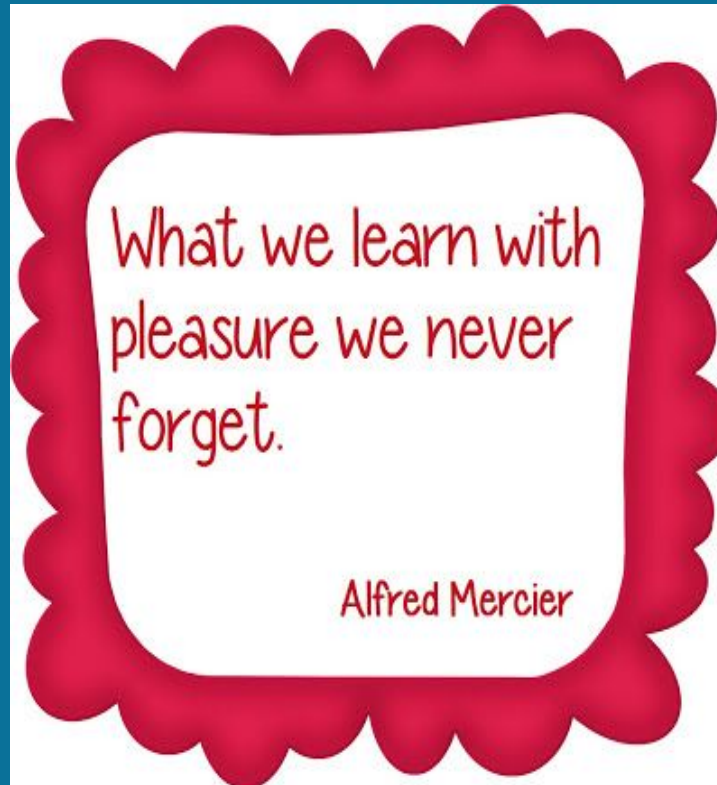
**Bournemouth  
University**

# The convergence of the isomorphs: Poetic inquiry as resistance and heterodoxy in contemporary higher education

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# What we will discuss...

- Converging trends in contemporary higher education
- Standardisation and homogenisation – isomorphic convergence
- Resistance in higher education
- Poetic inquiry in assessment
- Pedagogical pleasure



- In today's over pressured, over-surveilled environments, play is typically relegated to the margins of life, to the early years, to times not designated as 'work' and to spaces that are less watched... In reducing work to 'not-play' (and play to 'not-work'), we have however created a split that restricts what each can be; we have denuded lay (and work) of much of its potential meaning. (Bibby, 2018, 62)

# Changes in UK higher education

- Dearing Report 1997 – introduction of student fees
- Marketisation and commodification of learning

**Isomorphic convergence**



- Excellence frameworks:
  - Research Excellence Framework REF
  - Teaching Excellence Framework TEF
  - Knowledge Exchange Framework KEF

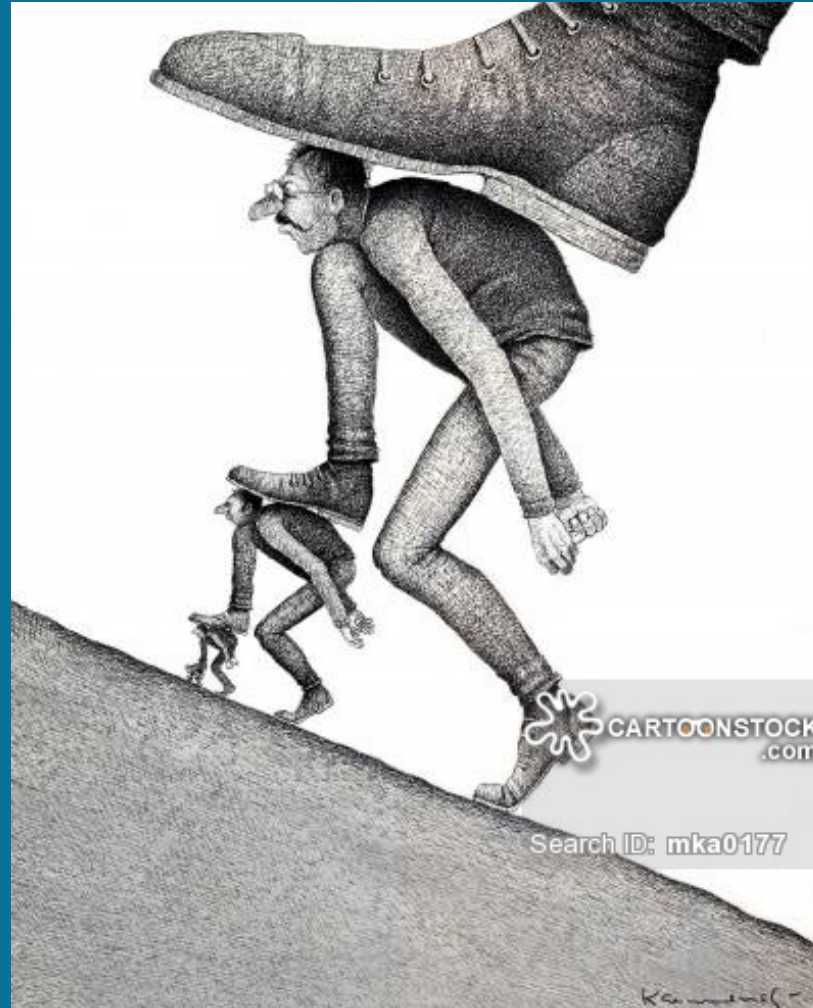


- League Tables

## All this leads to...

- Increasingly standardised curricula and delivery of individual teaching sessions;
- A significant expansion in reporting and monitoring on teaching and learning activities;
- The mandated use of digital learning technologies and virtual learning platforms to reduce physical resource, maximise reach and regularise what students as consumers will receive;
- Standardisation in assessment and marking criteria through the rigid application of intended learning outcomes to assessment rubrics
- A focus on ‘presenteeism’, at least in terms of constant faculty availability, often underpinned by charters and schedules of expectations.
- A redefinition of the purposes of university education towards economic gain.

# The (re) (op) pressed individual...





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**Creativity as Resistance!**





**FREEDOM  
TO CREATE**

*Playful resistance*



CHARLES DICKENS TAKES A STANDARDIZED TEST.

**Towards creative assessment...**



**Poetic inquiry**

# Integrating the cognitive and the affective

# Slightly higher grade percentages...



Poetry assignments					Narrative assignments			
First grade	Second grade	Third grade	Fourth grade		First grade	Second grade	Third grade	Fourth grade
13	74	13	0		2	54	18	1

**In Our Hearts forever, Saffie-Rose (used with permission)**

*I have opened my eyes*

*But I cannot see*

*The screams and the cries*

*Still haunting me...*

*No honour*

*No injustice can explain*

*Why the suicide bomber*

*Strikes, again*

**Contradiction** (used with permission)  
*Disappointed for once trusting the world  
I am*

*The commander, a saviour, a hero  
It would be ridiculous to think that he was  
Innocent before death*

*Injustices, the real pain that we face  
I utterly believe in  
Protecting our country, time and time again*

*It was deserved, what was needed  
You'll never hear me speak the words  
This act was cowardly, malicious and unfair*

*For the world  
The sacrifices were essential  
It's a lie that  
This was revenge  
For all the awful things that happened*

*The world needs to be redesigned  
There's no need to convince me that  
There are monsters walking amongst us*

*Politics, ideologies, this is the truth  
The real causes  
But  
To think otherwise  
I would be insane*

*Having multi-culturalism and immigration  
We become ignorant without  
Purist and patriotic means*

*In a camp for the young, alone and isolated  
Not knowing what would occur  
I am fearful  
This series of events would not be as glorious as once thought*

*Eternity  
It seemed longer than those three hours  
Waiting for the inevitable  
What was once a dream, now so bittersweet*

*Be walking free. This is my dream  
No 'criminal' should be able to  
Feel guilt  
For the 77 that were massacred*

*The world is blissful, it is full of hope  
This could not be further from the truth  
It is evident that  
The young need to learn*

*For the greater good  
You were the ones who were saved  
You were the lucky ones  
You were protected in the end*

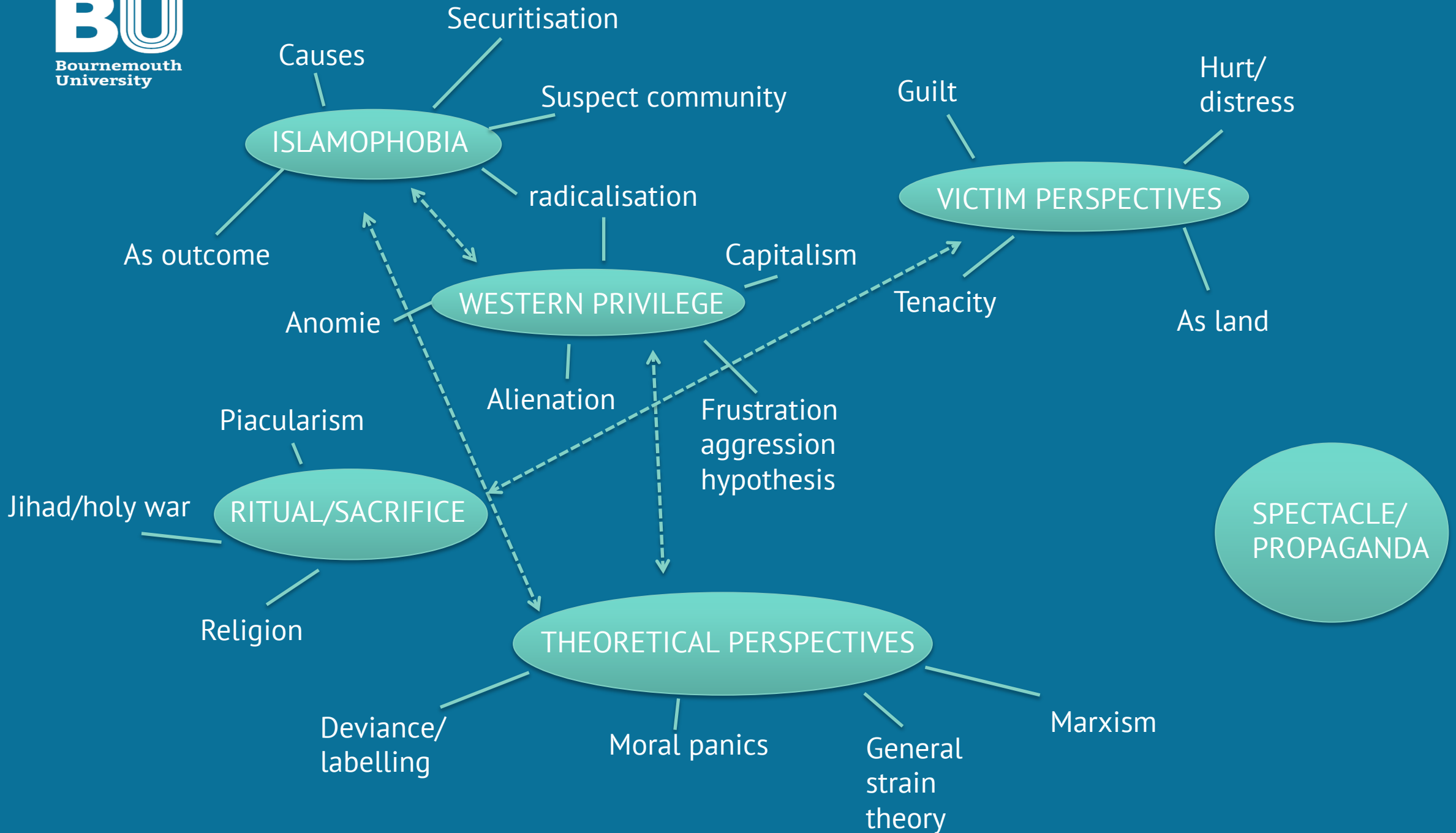
# Different poetic types

- Rhyming couplets,
- Full rhyme, half rhyme,
- Free verse
- Acrostic
- Rhythm, time and space

*Run, run as fast as you can you can't  
catch me  
I'm the man who stabbed your husband  
and ran down 53  
The mass atrocities on that day? No one  
could!  
And now my life's damaged forever;  
cheers, Khalid Massood.*



- Salman Abedi's bombing of the Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, UK, 2017
- The London Bridge and Westminster attacks in London, UK, 2017
- Attacks in Paris and the Bataclan shootings, Paris, France, 2016
- Würzburg train attack, Germany, 2016
- Tunisian beach attack, 2015
- Anders Breivik's attacks on the Workers Youth League, Norway, 2011
- Chemical attacks on the Iraqi Kurd city of Halabja, 1988
- The New Jewel movement and USA invasion of Grenada, 1974-1983
- The Iranian Embassy siege, London, UK, 1980
- Nelson Mandela's actions as part of the ANC, 1950s-1961



*And here I stand  
At the funeral of my friend  
Another hate crime  
Another Muslim life taken for no good reason  
Will this ever end?  
Frustration is pouring out of me how  
Can they do this AGAIN?  
I swear  
Revenge*

*Propaganda of the deed  
Remember, 'if it bleeds it leads'  
Ignored when they speak  
So, in blood shed, they plead.*

*A reward of privilege  
And paradise  
An act of communion...  
The terrorists that night  
No different to you and I  
Believed in their rite  
'Ah, dis-moi pourquoi'  
someone had to die.*

- Resistance and power
- Balancing the cognitive and the affective
- Being able to evoke, emote and provoke

What we  
**learn**  
with pleasure  
we never  
**forget.**  
- Alfred Mercier