

Radical geography

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Radical geography is an approach to geographic research that seeks to understand social and spatial problems, and to advocate solutions. Radical geography is not a coherent or unifying concept or methodology. There is great diversity in the research that would be considered “radical.” Radical geography is an approach developed in the 1970s and a contemporary ethos that is fundamental to many geographers’ work. It should be considered as a multiple, dynamic, and contested approach, for which there is no one definition. Instead there are radical *geographies*.

Radical geographers are interested in everyday lives: the lived experiences of members of society. They are interested in issues of relevance to everyday social life, such as access to safe and affordable food and housing, fair pay, educational opportunities, and basic health care, to name just a few. This emphasis reflects a desire for geographers to do research that is relevant to, and useful for, society.

There has been a specific focus on understanding spatialities of power, inequality, and oppression, which has required an understanding of the causes of such inequality and has led to research on power relations, neoliberalism, political structures, and corporate hegemony. It has been necessary to understand how neoliberalism and corporate power operate in order to relate the everyday experiences of people to the broader structures that shape their lives.

There is an implicit left-wing progressive political agenda to much radical geography work, which prioritizes the oppressed, powerless, or marginalized in society. Such work often aims to transform the world through an emancipatory politics. The political agenda of this work has often been to advocate for a fairer and more equal society where everyone’s basic needs are met and everyone has an equal opportunity to participate and thrive.

Once the causes of social problems have been identified, radical geographers take a normative approach. This means that they seek to offer solutions, alternatives, and possibilities for how the problem can be solved. A quest for social justice permeates much of radical geography. Radical geographers, who are often active participants in social justice campaigns, are also committed to building, supporting, and intellectualizing alternatives. In other words, radical geography is as much about offering alternatives as it is about understanding causes. Contemporary examples include Jane Wills’s work in supporting the campaign for a living wage in London and beyond, Gibson-Graham’s work on diverse economies, and Marc Purcell’s work on direct democracy.

A brief history and ideological foundations

Radical geography emerged in the late 1960s both in response to a changing social context and as a critique of the positivism of the earlier quantitative revolution in geography. The social context was a growing unease about social and economic inequality, poverty, racism,

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crime, sexism, and environmental issues, typified in dissent against the Vietnam War and support for antiracist and anticolonial movements. At the time, the quantitative approaches and positivist epistemology of the 1950s and 1960s began to be considered as irrelevant to these social problems and as being inadequate in offering solutions or alternatives. Geographers wanted not only to identify social problems, but also to understand their cause and thus identify different possibilities. It was increasingly understood that merely identifying problems was not enough, and that geographers needed to be proactive in advocating change and to do so on the basis of clear ethical and political foundations.

The shift to radical geography also represented a greater use of philosophical approaches other than spatial determinism to understand the world. Both Marxism and anarchism were employed as ideological underpinnings for the new radical geography. Crucially, these ideologies provide diverging and contested understandings of society, a debate that is ongoing and not limited to academia, least of all academic geography. The huge philosophical differences between Marxism and anarchism represent just one example of the proliferation of approaches that fall under the remit of radical geography, which, as a result, can differ widely and contradict each other. The study of these ideologies does not constitute radical geography; rather, it was the way in which these philosophies enabled geographers to identify action and alternatives to the current order that shaped radical geographical practices.

Such ideological underpinnings existed long before the 1970s, and these quite different ideological approaches have existed side by side within the discipline since the nineteenth century. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, although not formally geographers, provided a framework

through which class relations and capitalism could be understood, and this became the basis of Marxist geography. Engels's *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) was a treatise on the poor urban conditions experienced by the working class. Geographers later took up this project, notably Karl Wittfogel (in Germany), who linked Marxism with geopolitics and materialism in a 1929 paper, "Geopolitics, Geographical Materialism and Marxism." In France, post-World War II geographers such as Pierre George and Jean Tricart developed Marxist spatial analysis.

The Marxist tradition was reignited by the work of David Harvey, whose *Social Justice and the City* (1973) advocated a Marxist approach to understanding the world. For Harvey this involved geographers engaging in both practical and theoretical work, which was reflected in his own engagement with political campaigns for social justice in Baltimore. Around the same time, Richard Peet was using political economy and Marxist geography to explore social justices, and the journal *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* was established. These developments also built on the Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute (f. 1968) created by William Bunge. Bunge wanted to expand the processes and use of geographic knowledge, so he enrolled minority communities in the whole research process, beginning a radical geography approach that would later be developed into a participatory geography methodology.

This Marxist approach influenced radical geographers by offering an analysis of the world based on modes of production and by advocating normative practices. Marxist geography was interested in the dialectical relationships between humans and the modes of production that shape society: capital, labor, capitalism, the state, class, and the market. These various

modes of production were determined by Marxists to create the superstructure of society. As Derek Gregory (1978) pointed out, these ideas shaped the structure–agency debate; the idea that these structures determined society was challenged by Gregory’s assertion that humans had agency in the creation of structures. Agency varied across place, but led to the possibility that humans could challenge and change societies’ structures, thereby leading to social change.

Marxist geography focused on an analysis of modes of production as an explanation of social and environmental problems. It was interested in the inherent contradictions of capitalism. For example, early radical geographers linked environmentally destructive practices, such as old-growth forest logging, as originating in the structures of capitalism. For Marxist radical geographers, most social problems and injustices emanated from the workings of modes of production. Therefore, if the mechanics of production were changed, alternative outcomes would be possible for society and the environment.

The normative approach offered by Marxism encouraged geographers to be bolder in advocating solutions and alternatives. Normative work identifies actions to be taken and is assertive in its support for particular activities. Radical geographers use their research to justify and make interventions to shape certain futures. This radical approach was also mirrored in other social science disciplines, such as the emergence of radical sociology in the 1970s which also advocated human emancipation as its goal.

While Marxist geography became the dominant radical geography approach, anarchist geography proposed an alternative vision. Anarchist geography was established by Peter Kropotkin and Élisée Reclus, who were both formally trained as geographers but were also anarchist philosophers. Reclus’s 32-volume

work, *The Earth and Its Inhabitants: The Universal Geography* (1876–1894) sought to abolish domination, including that of humans over the environment, by a merger between humanity and the Earth, creating equality between humans and nonhumans. Kropotkin published numerous articles in geography journals, pamphlets on anarchism, *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (2018/1898), *The Conquest of Bread* (2015/1892), and the hugely influential *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution* (2014/1902), in which he argued that cooperation rather than competition was the natural order of things. He advocated a life based on decentralization, localism, and self-provision. In 1855 he wrote “What Geography Ought to Be,” a radical anarchist agenda for the discipline.

Anarchism is a shifting set of beliefs adopted by a variety of groups which, at its core, rejects the need for rulers, domination, hierarchy, and any form of government. It provides a critique of power and hegemony and an alternative vision of liberation and autonomy. It was not until the 1970s, however, that geographers re-engaged with the work of anarchist theorists such as Proudhon, Kropotkin, Bakunin, and Goldman, to name just a few, to explore the potential for anarchism, find examples of anarchist practices in places, and advocate the adoption of anarchist principles. They also sought to understand the limitations of the state and how state and capital operate together as forms of control and containment. In particular, anarchist geographers such as Paul Chatterton have explored how the state seeks to limit autonomy and equality *and* the possibilities to carve out freedom by facilitating the privatization of once-public city spaces and limiting public participation in the future of the city (Chatterton 2010).

While anarchist geographers practice normative approaches to their work, much of their

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worldview contrasts sharply with that of Marxist geographers. Anarchist geographers have sought to illustrate the power and possibility of grassroots radical politics and action. Anarchist scholars argue that each individual, rather than being passive in a hegemonic superstructure, has the power to change society, albeit most effectively as part of a mass mobilization. The social change advocated by anarchist geographers is one without leaders, government, or hierarchy and, crucially, is not reliant on a revolution (as in the Marxist lexicon). As a result, research by anarchist geographers has focused on analyzing the potential of many currently small-scale anarchist initiatives such as workers' cooperatives, eco-villages, anarchist communities, alternative food networks, and online open-publishing models. In each case, not all examples are overtly anarchist, but many are imbued with anarchist principles.

Among other anarchists, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon offered a critique of property, Mikhail Bakunin critiqued the need for a state, Emma Goldman extended our understanding of domination beyond the state and advocated equal gender relations, and Colin Ward argued against planning restrictions and for more affordable and self-build housing. These anarchist principles include an emphasis on cooperation (mutual aid), direct democracy, prefigurative action, nonhierarchical decision-making, free movement, self-organization, and communalism (sharing). Mutual aid is the practice of helping one another and sharing skills, time, and resources freely. It is the belief that individualism and competitiveness are ultimately destructive in a society and that we could achieve much more if we worked together. Direct democracy and nonhierarchical decision-making mean that everyone should have an equal voice in the decisions made in society and that there are no leaders. Prefigurative action is the embodiment of acting now to make the world as we want it

to be. Some of these activities overlap with the approaches of Marxists, who also seek to live their lives differently, evoking a "working-class consciousness" that enables them to offer critical perspectives and actions to advance change.

In the 1970s, geographers such as Richard Peet (1978), Myrna Brietbart, and Bob Galois began to use these ideas to call for a more anarchist radical geography. However, after a special issue of *Antipode*, there was little geographical engagement with anarchism until the 2000s. In the late 1990s, interest in anarchist and autonomous anti-capitalist protests led to work by Paul Chatterton, Pierpaolo Mudu, Jill Fenton, and Jon Anderson. Central to all this work was an understanding that social transformation is a spatial project.

There were several challenges to anarchist and Marxist approaches to radical geography. Marxist geography was criticized for its overly deterministic view of the world, where individuals were assigned a passive role within a dominant and hegemonic superstructure. This metatheory was preoccupied with the relations between capital and class, while it subsumed other dimensions that shape people's lives, such as patriarchy and racism, portraying them as the outcome of capitalist relations.

The absence of attention to gender was countered by the emergence of feminist geography in the 1980s. At first, feminist work in geography identified and explored the absence of women in geographical scholarship and their institutional absence within universities. Such a critique exposed a masculinist tendency within academic geography that devalued women's role in society and ignored their difference and oppression. At the same time, other scholars were becoming critical of the Marxist approach as a result of the changes in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which for many undermined the possibilities of a Marxist future.

By the turn of the century, radical geography was more diverse and inclusive of a greater range of both philosophical approaches and research topics. It began to focus less on a Marxist critique of capitalism or an anarchist approach, and more on the diverse factors that shaped people's lives, such as gender, sexuality, disability, and race. Marxism could not accommodate this diversity of identity politics. The postmodern critique of metanarratives led to a poststructuralist approach within human geography that persists. In the 1990s, the terminology of radical geography fell out of favor and was replaced by scholars self-identifying as "critical human geographers." The establishment of the Critical Geography email forum and the International Conference of Critical Geographers was motivated in part by a rejection of these metanarratives (particularly Marxism).

Radical geography did not entirely reshape the discipline in the same way that the quantification revolution had: its impact was far more partial and fractured. There is now concern that a lack of a clear framework of analysis, or worldview, and the shift toward poststructuralist geographies and the cultural turn have limited the ability of radical geography to be normative and to advocate clear alternatives. At the same time, there is an ongoing threat from the neoliberal political project, reducing the possibilities and options for alternatives.

Inequality, capitalism, and marginalization

Radical geography is grounded in a basic concern for everyday lives and in identifying and making visible the geographical processes that shape and produce inequality, oppression, and marginalization. There are many radical geographers, but here three examples have been picked out to

illustrate some of their intellectual and normative contributions to the founding dimension of the field – research on inequality. This work has tended to highlight the inequity of neoliberalism and its unjust consequences, and thus that capitalism is the structural cause of inequality.

The late Neil Smith's work is exemplary of (Marxist) radical geographers' engagement with issues of inequality, particularly in cities. His early work, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (1984), argued that capitalism produced uneven spatial development. He went on to critically identify gentrification as a process of capitalism that benefited from low urban land prices and capitalist speculation in *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (1996). Smith developed the term "rent gap," a concept used by anti-gentrification activists to help explain and fight against gentrifying processes. Indeed, much of his work was used politically and by activists, and Smith worked with many activists over his lifetime, especially the Harlem Tenants Association. He was always concerned with the importance of class to these processes of inequality. Later in his career he drew inspiration from the anti-globalization protests of the late 1990s and the revolutionary potential of the Occupy movement and the so-called Arab Spring. Smith became increasingly critical of the topical focus of contemporary geography, particularly the middle-class obsessions of anglophone geography, such as the concern with the community gardens in New York, rather than recognition of how social processes produced such a geographically uneven world (Smith 2005).

The late Doreen Massey (1984), another Marxist geographer, was also interested in uneven development and developed the theory of "spatial divisions of labor." This approach posited that uneven development was a result of the different ways in which the capitalist

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economy engaged with space and spatial relationships. Therefore there is a functional division between how regions or countries are used within particular industries, with some regions benefiting from hosting the development activities of an industry (like research and strategic management) and other regions providing the actual production. As these activities are differently remunerated, such division reinforces social inequalities. Massey argued that companies deliberately developed this spatial division of labor to benefit from the lower labor costs of the actual production in periphery regions. The outcomes were social inequalities that varied across space, creating a divide between rich and poor regions, between genders, and between classes. For Massey, understanding space was crucial to understanding inequality and poverty, and once this was grasped it was then possible to identify solutions.

The final example is the work of Jane Wills, an expert on work and labor politics, who in 2005 worked with the campaign group London Citizens to develop the case for the living wage. Wills argued that, although Britain has a basic minimum wage, many people are in in-work poverty: despite being in full-time employment, they do not have enough money to cover their basic living costs (Wills and Linneker 2014). Wills worked with community organizers to build a business case for a living wage, starting with the example of cleaners at Queen Mary University of London. Their aim was to reverse the trend for global outsourcing, which saw a reduction in the wages and benefits of staff but increasing profits for companies. This social justice work was expanded to a UK-wide campaign in 2011 through the Living Wage Foundation. Wills's achievements not only illustrate the possibilities of change as a result of radical work, but also the importance of academics working

with community organizers in a collaborative bottom-up process.

Activism and social change

Radical geographers' links with political activists have extended beyond concerns with class and inequality into diverse geographical research of resistance and social change. Many radical scholars work with those who are campaigning, protesting, and instigating social change across a broad range of interests, including poverty, health, food, migration, environment, land rights, gender equality, queer activism, racism, and other social justice issues.

There are several dimensions and approaches to this work. Some scholars, like Paul Routledge, Kye Askins, Jenna Lloyd, Kelvin Mason, and Paul Chatterton (to name just a few), have sought to bring geographical concepts to the aid of activists, and to directly participate in activist struggles. For example, Paul Routledge (2003) has worked extensively with activist communities in India and Bangladesh (among other places) on environmental issues and anti-capitalist resistances, developing the concept of "spaces of convergence" to understand the global processes of anti-globalization protest. His work has sought to illustrate how localized grassroots activism connects into global networks to shift power relations and trigger social change. Jenna Lloyd (2014) has explored health activism, the quest for health care as a basic social right, and in other work critiqued the criminalization and militarization of migration.

As part of the Autonomous Geographies Collective, Paul Chatterton worked alongside Jenny Pickerill and Stuart Hodkinson to explore autonomous activists' daily lives. This work involved active participation in British anti-capitalist activism to understand

and advocate for those spaces where there is a questioning of laws/social norms, and a desire to create non-/alter-capitalist, collective forms of politics, identity, and citizenship. The collective's work was able to identify the value of these contested, fractured, interstitial spaces of autonomy. In many ways this work built on the anarchist foundations of radical geography by exploring practices of mutual aid, solidarity, self-management, decentralized and voluntary organizing, and direct action. Crucially it validated the everyday practices of activists as being as valuable for social change, empowerment, and resisting capitalism as the temporary moments of visible political public protest. Chatterton went on to found and research the first affordable urban ecological cohousing community in Britain.

This type of research often involves difficult issues around ethics: protecting research participants, illegal activities, and power relations (between resourced privileged academics and underresourced marginalized activists) (Autonomous Geographies Collective 2010). There remains a tension in much of geographers' work between supporting and advocating diverse forms of activism and the intellectual need to critique and interrogate activist practices. There are numerous problems inherent in all forms of activism, most commonly around gender relations, the often limited scalar impact of protest, measures of "success" (the global capitalist economy often prevails), the temporality of activism, the ghettoization of activist communities, and the time required for alternatives to be created; however, intellectual critique can be viewed as undermining the intentions of collective action and as politically unhelpful. Many radical geographers negotiate such tension by only offering constructive critique and limiting their intellectualization to academic journal publications.

This constructive critique is increasingly shared in nonacademic formats. Radical geographers have long been conscious of the limited utility and readability of an academic journal article beyond academia. Instead, radical geographers have sought to share their ideas with nonacademics in different ways, such as through comic books, exhibitions, photography, short pamphlets and zines, blogs and social media, posters and art. For example, Sarah Marie Hall created an exhibition, along with artist Stef Bradley, to document and share the everyday impact of austerity in Britain. This included artifacts from the families she worked with, cartoon sketches, and photographs and was explicitly designed to appeal and be understandable to nonacademic audiences.

Participatory approaches

In the past decade there has been a resurgence of interest in radical methodologies. Recently, radical geographers have advocated wider use of participatory methods. Participatory research methods start by asking groups outside the academy what research they think is required, how it should be conducted, and what outcomes they would like to see. Academics then work with these participants to help them conduct the research. It is a bottom-up approach to research and is based on the premise that research should benefit all, particularly those who have participated in it. This approach attempts to stretch the normative element of radical geography to thinking about who shapes and benefits from geographers' work.

Participatory geography is concerned with empowering people to change their own lives (with the aid of researchers). This requires being proactively inclusive, with researchers seeking out those who might be excluded and taking

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a detailed approach, rather than categorizing people into groups. There tends to be a focus on disadvantaged groups and on challenging existing power relations. It is also a very reflective process that requires the researcher to self-critically reflect on his or her actions, learning, positionality, and privilege, and to value the expert knowledge of nonacademics. Key advocates of participatory geographies have included Rachel Pain, Sara Kindon, Mike Kesby, Kye Askins, Duncan Fuller, and Caitlin Cahill. In Britain, radical geographers' support for participatory methods led to the establishment of a new Royal Geographical Society group, the Participatory Geographies Research Group (known as PyGyRG), in 2005 (though it formally became a research group only in 2009).

Participatory geography is simple in its premise – geographers should work with those they are researching and include them in every aspect of that work – but the approach simultaneously critiques contemporary academic practices and knowledge production. In valuing the contributions of nonacademics, participatory geography challenges the presumption that knowledge is best constructed by the academy, and raises questions about the purpose of university research. In the radical tradition, it also privileges work that is more likely to result in action, political change, and demonstrable improvements in society, rather than the highly theoretical esoteric work which speaks only to other academics.

Grassroots solutions and alternatives

Since the early years of radical geography, scholars have sought to suggest solutions and alternatives. These alternatives have tended to counter neoliberal logic with different value systems, based on, for example, environmentally sustainable, ethical, participatory, and/or

communal processes. Three examples illustrate the ways in which radical geographers have engaged with, and advocated for, grassroots alternatives.

Gibson-Graham (Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham) (1996) developed the concept of diverse economies, which challenged conventional notions that the economy was made up only of formal commodity markets, waged and salaried labor, and capitalist enterprises focused on creating profit for owners or shareholders. Instead, Gibson-Graham proposed that the economy was made up of market, alternative market, and nonmarket transactions and that many of the most important goods and services are taken or exchanged outside the formal economy. This expansion of the economy celebrated its diversity *and* valued these different forms of transactions, labor remuneration (such as unpaid work), and forms of enterprise. In this approach the neoliberal market was problematized as not being the main or dominant form of trade, and the potential of alternatives to support society was more visible.

In a similar way, Nik Heynen's work on civil disobedience and protest in the United States celebrates the potential of activist practices. Using "Food Not Bombs" as one of his examples, Heynen (2010) not only identifies the contradictions of neoliberalism, but critically explores the alternative survival strategies proposed by collective action.

Finally, Reece Jones (2016) has intervened in political debates on borders and migration. Taking a geopolitical approach, he has detailed the ways in which borders are financed, enforced, and selective. Highlighting the huge human costs of what he calls these "violent borders," from the numerous deaths of those trying to cross the Mediterranean into Europe to those crossing the Mexican-US border, Jones has fought against the imposition of state borders and the limitations

on refugees trying to claim asylum. He has highlighted the inequity of the prevention of free movement to those deemed poor while the wealthy travel freely and benefit from the exploitations that neoliberalism offers. His work has consequently been used to support calls for open borders and better protection for refugees.

Beyond Anglo-American perspectives and sources of knowledge

Radical geographies have been most noticeable (though rarely dominant) in anglophonic geography. Although they have spread beyond North American and European geography, they have tended to be limited to the settler countries of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa, in great part due to the dominance of the English language in radical geographies (and human geography *per se*). At the same time there has been a lack of attention to the radical geographies of non-Anglo spaces of knowledge.

Manuel Aalbers (2004) identifies this dominance of English as resulting in the “creative destruction” of many non-English speakers’ work. In essence, the peer review process excludes work from beyond anglophone geography by requiring a certain written style and the referencing of key anglophone texts. This process excludes alternative knowledges. Geographers such as Sarah Radcliffe (2017) and Sam Halvorsen (2018), among others, have been working to counter this imbalance by explicitly working with Latin American theorists and scholars to challenge some of the embedded presumptions in Anglo-American geography. Sam Halvorsen has particularly drawn upon Latin American concepts of territoriality in his work on understanding the protest movement of Occupy.

Radical geographers have recognized the problems of such exclusions and the irony of radical geographers being complicit in these processes, given their apparent interest in alternative sources of radical ideas. Lawrence Berg, who established the open source radical journal *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, attended to these problems by encouraging the submission and publication of articles to *ACME* in English, Spanish, Italian, French, or German, and by having a multilingual website. However, other geography journals have been slow to follow this example.

More fundamentally, an increasing number of Indigenous geographers have challenged the discipline’s resistance to valuing and respecting Indigenous knowledges. Although geography has actively engaged in critiques of colonialism since the 1990s, the ontological and epistemological distinctiveness of Indigenous knowledge has until recently largely been denied. Sarah Hunt (2014) articulated her experience of this denial in her reflections on attending the Association of American Geographers annual conference and finding it hostile to Kwakwaka’wakw ways of knowing and communicating. She argued that Indigenous knowledge was not deemed legitimate in its own right within geography and instead was only understood in relation to, and through the white lens of, existing anglophonic approaches. Consequently, the heterogeneity, diversity, and strengths of Indigenous knowledge are subsumed by a partial re-rendering of its meaning. Indigenous geographer Michelle Daigle (2015) has argued that Indigenous ontology requires a radical rethinking of how place is understood in order to reflect the political agency of place. Bawaka Country *et al.* (2016) articulated this by placing country (place as understood by Indigenous Australians) as first author in their academic journal publications. A radical geography therefore attempts not only

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to respect different ontologies of knowledge but also to reflect this in citation practices.

The call to respect Indigenous knowledges is part of a broader shift toward decolonizing the discipline of geography and to actively decenter existing non-Indigenous, settler, and white privilege. In moving beyond a debate between Marxism and anarchism, radical geographers are making clear that colonialism is ongoing within the discipline, not a distant historical process, and that it requires critical self-reflection and radical shifts in whose voices are heard, whose knowledge is valued, and whose research is promoted. Decolonization requires dismantling current hierarchies of privilege and moving the discipline far beyond the Anglo-American sphere.

Practicing what is preached

There remains a disjuncture for many geographers between the radical geographical scholarship they conduct, and their own elite positions within privileged educational institutions. For anarchist geographers who support the concept of taking prefigurative action, this can be particularly problematic.

Academic geographers, particularly those in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, are experiencing the consequences of universities' adoption of neoliberal approaches to higher education. This is not a new dilemma; there have long been pressures on universities to commercialize and to serve the needs of industry and the political class rather than those of society. However, there are increasing pressures on academic practice, including national accounting measures of performance (such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in the United Kingdom and Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)); profit-driven journal production; the casualization of staff;

and reductions in grant funding. Such processes have tended to undervalue radical scholarship and participatory empirical work, and instead to valorize individual theoretical work that can be produced and published more quickly. Despite the measurement of the "impact" of academic research being developed as a key element of the UK REF system, there is little room in these metrics for valuing outcomes of social change; rather, a very economic approach has been taken to determine the value of economic work. Yet radical geographers have complied with the research assessment processes, and many have excelled in it. Indeed, there has been relatively little resistance or outcry from radical geographers against the increased casualization of university staff. While Purcell (2007) argues that radical geographers have a responsibility to object to the proliferation of short-term, casual, nontenure, teaching-only or research-only jobs, many radical geographers have relied upon these types of contracts to replace their teaching while on grant buyouts or hired such staff to conduct research for their grant-funded projects. Indeed, geography remains a discipline rarefied by class, racial, and gendered privileges.

Some radical scholars have identified such pressures and fought to counter them. Neil Smith sought to challenge the "sausage factory" processes of academia. Katharyne Mitchell (2008) celebrated geographers' scholar activism. Noel Castree, Don Mitchell, and Marc Purcell wrote about, and attempted to resist, the neoliberal assault on universities. In attempting to subvert profit-driven journal production, open access journals like *ACME* and *Human Geography: A New Radical Journal* have been established, and *Antipode* renegotiated its contractual relationship with publishers Wiley-Blackwell, using the additional income to set up a charitable foundation that funds radical geography research.

Recognition of radical geographers' conflicted positions within neoliberal institutions has raised questions for academics about their power and compliance with such processes. Academics such as Marc Purcell have argued that we need to better challenge the political and social relations that shape academic practice. In other words, radical geographers have to resist neoliberalism within universities if they are to be taken seriously as researchers and activists when working against neoliberalism in society. Practicing what radical geographers preach is becoming increasingly difficult.

This contradiction between radical geographers' complicity and success within neoliberal university structures and their research which calls for the dismantling of neoliberalism was starkly highlighted during the staff university strikes in Britain in spring 2018. Although strictly about the future of staff pension schemes, many geographers articulated the strikes as a broader resistance against worsening working conditions, falling pay, casualization of employment contracts, and the marketization of higher education. It was a crucial time for radical geographers to put into practice their calls to improve the everyday lives of members of society, in this case their colleagues. As Felicity Callard (2018) reflected, however, not only were there tensions between those who stood on the picket lines and those geographers who chose not to strike, but the project of radical geography was called into question when Adam Tickell, who had spent much of his academic career critiquing neoliberalism and who had called for geographers to "slay the neoliberal beast" (1995, 237), supported the neoliberal pension reforms and stood in opposition to staff on strike. The strike revealed not just a disjuncture between the writings and actions of certain (especially senior) geographers, but that being a certain type of radical geographer had actually resulted

in particular academic success within the very systems they were critiquing and which they had ultimately helped remake into more neoliberal forms. Felicity Callard argued that rather than this being a contradiction of radical geography, it signaled the power of being a radical geographer within the academy, an uneasy and unsettling realization that the radical geography of the future needs to interrogate and challenge.

Future directions

It is doubtful whether radical geography has achieved its aims. Many social and environmental problems persist and are actually getting worse. Postpositivist theoretical achievements, unfortunately, pale into insignificance in an era of unconstrained inequality and a neoliberal privilege that remains unchecked. The political ramifications of the election of Donald Trump as US President, the UK Brexit vote to leave the European Union, and the rise of far-right fascism across Europe all pose many challenges for radical geographers. These right-wing times make radical scholarship harder. Some future possible directions include more diverse radical geographies that can challenge the rise of white supremacy, and move toward a decolonization of the discipline, a feminist ethics, and radical positivism.

Radical geography has tended to focus on the dispossessed and marginalized in society. Yet the rise of far-right fascism and white supremacy reignites calls for radical geographers to pay greater attention to those with power, be that elites, the privileged, or just those who consider themselves to constitute the "mainstream." The blatant racism of Donald Trump's agenda and actions and the anti-immigration rhetoric of far-right political parties require response from radical geographers. In contrast, the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and Idle No More

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constitute positive opportunities for geographers to actively intervene in discussions of race and identity. These debates would further aid the move toward decolonizing geography and opening the discipline to greater critical reflection on the ways that different knowledges and bodies are marginalized within the discipline.

Radical geography has, nevertheless, retained a certain masculinist edge, indicative perhaps of its Marxist heritage. Linda McDowell (1992, 56) originally identified this as being both “inside and outside ‘the project.’” Despite decades of feminist geography, Victoria Lawson (2009) argues that radical geography still ignores the feminist care ethics, an ethics that is central to human wellbeing and society. This marginalization of care, and gender and bodies, limits radical geographers in understanding inequalities, society, and the possibilities of alternatives to create new caring relations. Many academics still feel outside “the project,” and continued effort is needed to ensure that radical geographies are plural, dynamic, and open.

Finally, Wyly (2011) argues that this failure of radical geography to achieve social change can be countered by a form of radical strategic positivism. While it would be helpful to return to a notion of a universal truth, there is a need for radical geography at times to be able to generalize, to employ methods that others can replicate, and to have the appearance of impartiality and measurement. In part this is necessary because of an increasing lack of trust in the scientific process, as illustrated by climate change deniers, the rise of creationism teaching, and the belief that the free market provides equal opportunity of wealth for all. This new form of radical geography includes Sheppard’s (2001) notion of “insurgent quantitative practices,” using statistics to counter official use where they are all too often used to justify a neoliberal conservative agenda. This approach

challenges how statistics are calculated, their levels of accuracy, conflicts of interest, and interpretations. Danny Dorling’s expansive work using statistics to critically interrogate inequalities, race, and class is also illustrative of a necessary quantitative radical geography. There is also the use of constructive cartography, counter-mapping, and critical mapping, such as Sidaway’s (2010) maps of “black sites” and renditions used by the United States after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, which employ positivist approaches but for radical ends. With these approaches it is possible to use radical methodological positivism to translate radical geographic ideas into progressive political agendas.

SEE ALSO: Anarchist geography; Critical geography; Feminist geography; Marxist geography

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