

Engaging Austerity – discussions of research and practice

University of Manchester, July 5th, 2019
11-4pm, 5.206 University Place ([building 37](#))



Academics in the critical political economy tradition recognise that austerity is creating a zombie economy and that we are living in a period of interregnum - growing instability makes ripe the possibilities for systemic change. Austerity is more than public policy platform, it has become entrenched economic malaise that produces a toxic mood - a zombie aesthetic. If the 1930s was the Great Depression, then post-2010 has been an acute period of macroeconomic financial melancholia produced by an economy dependent on debt to fuel financialised growth.

Beyond the proclaimed end to austerity by the Tories, seriously ending austerity requires new paradigms, new concepts, methods, frameworks and theories that innovate our understanding of how intellectual agendas inform public policy to legitimise systemic logics. For example, if austerity is a choice, we need different choices; and, if austerity is about the household metaphor then we need to foreground collective provisioning not just frugality. Understanding austerity requires integrating the previous generation of critical research on the macroeconomic framings that legitimise the boom, bust, bailout, austerity regime in the Global South using liberal colonial tropes to weaponise debt.

Join us on July 5th for an extended summer discussion, with a lovely catered lunch, at the University of Manchester, Building/Room from 11-4pm. This meeting is about facilitating debate about research and practices seeking to engage with debt, financialisation, austerity, neoliberalism from across the pluralist and critical traditions of broadly understood political economy.

- How can we reproduce a specific historical method, political economic concepts, critical ethics, to understand the possibilities for systemic transformation?
- In what ways does the research and teaching practices of contemporary academia shape the ways in which austerity is understood at the national and global-levels?
- In what ways are academics acting as public intellectuals providing common-sense narratives that legitimise and contest austerity/post-austerity period?
- What is the role of the public intellectual in the protracted afterlife of the 2008 global financial crisis?

We are foregrounding the reproductive and mutually supportive dynamics of academic life; therefore, sessions are organised as common themes for extended discussion and debate (not research paper presentations). To register your email Johnna.montgomerie@kcl.ac.uk with your name, affiliation, brief statement of interest, and keywords. Some travel funding is available for those without funding.