

Note, undated, circa 2014-2015?

Let's ask some really hard questions, scary questions. What is going on if Adam Smith and all believers in the magic of the market are fundamentally wrong? What happens if market externalities, all those matters no one takes into account in setting supply and demand, are sufficiently significant to guarantee that the market allocation of resources is substantially irrational? Let's go one further. What happens if John Stuart Mill was in error in his judgment about the intellectual consequences of the free exchange of opinion? What happens if human gullibility outweighs and over powers sound intelligence in making judgments about truth, beauty, and goodness? Will more research answer these questions? Should we ignore them as questions too difficult to answer?

But, you may ask, why should we at Teachers College, take on these questions? Do they pertain to our field of education and related professions? Perhaps not. But are we sure? Why *is* sophistry becoming the norm of discourse in the public sphere?