

A Penny For Your Thoughts

How corporatization devalues teaching, research,
and public service in Canada's universities



Claire Polster and Janice Newson

A Penny For Your Thoughts

How corporatization devalues teaching, research,
and public service in Canada's universities

Claire Polster and Janice Newson

The ninth in the
Our Schools/Our Selves book series
2015





A Penny For Your Thoughts: How corporatization devalues teaching, research, and public service in Canada's universities
2015

Claire Polster and Janice Newson

The ninth in the *Our Schools/Our Selves* book series.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Erika Shaker

EDITORIAL OFFICE

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives @250ne Community
500-251 Bank St., Ottawa, ON, K2P 1X3

ISBN 978-1-77125-196-9

PRODUCTION

Typesetting and design: Nancy Reid (nrgrafx.com)

Cover artwork: Nancy Reid

Printed in Canada by RR Donnelley
1500 Saint-Patrick, Montréal QC H3K 0A3
Publications Mail Registration No. 8010

The opinions expressed in *Our Schools/Our Selves* are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CCPA.

*To all those who, in ways large and small,
help to preserve and strengthen public-serving universities.*

CONTENTS

Preface *i*

Introduction **1**

PART 1: BEGINNINGS **27**

**Chapter 1: The University Under Re-Construction:
How Budget-based Rationalization and Corporate
Linking are Transforming Canadian Universities** **33**

BY JANICE NEWSON

Written originally in 1992, this chapter shows how the shift from expansionist to fiscally restrained university funding led to significant changes in the university's institutional practices. These changes, in turn, set the stage for corporate "clients" to become more involved than they had been previously, not only in funding university research, but also in shaping the direction of that research.

**Chapter 2: From Public Resource to Industry's
Instrument: Reshaping the Production of Knowledge
in Canada's Universities** **53**

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

When this article was written in the mid 1990s, most critics of corporatization were attributing it to government underfunding of Canada's universities and calling for increased public investment in higher education in order to reverse the trend. This article challenges this understanding and approach to corporatization by showing how the process involves the dismantling and refashioning of longstanding boundaries between universities, industry, and government, and the progressive ceding of control over the benefits and uses of university resources to private interests — at the public's expense.

Chapter 3: The Decline of Faculty Influence: Confronting the Effects of the Corporate Agenda

71

BY JANICE NEWSON

This chapter was written in 1992 to respond to several articles circulated to faculty members that critiqued the increasingly corporate style of university administrators. It takes issue with an argument that runs through these critiques, that the problem with managerial expansion in universities can be reduced to “a corporate *style* of management,” and argues instead that universities are developing entire managerial systems that facilitate university-corporate linkages and are thereby transforming universities from collegially-governed, autonomous institutions of higher education into knowledge businesses.

PART 2: KEY SHIFTS IN THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF CANADA’S UNIVERSITIES

91

Chapter 4: Don’t Count Your Blessings: The Social Accomplishments of Performance Indicators

99

BY CLAIRE POLSTER AND JANICE NEWSON

By the time this chapter was first written in 1997, policy-makers and university administrators had embraced the idea that universities needed to be more accountable to the public by applying performance indicators to quantify the cost-efficiency and productivity of their activities. The article challenges this concept of accountability and argues that performance indicators may contribute to developing an international knowledge industry and in the process, endanger public higher education. It challenges faculty members to resist the performance-indicator direction and suggests how this might be done.

Chapter 5: The Turn to Technology in Higher Education 117

BY JANICE NEWSON

Most universities across Canada developed the capacity for online communication by the mid 1990s, opening the door to technology-mediated teaching and learning. This chapter critically explores how faculty members were responding to pressures to apply online technologies in their teaching, and offers a cautionary tale of how, through the intermingling of online technologies with corporatization, college and university educators may be facing a process of technical change that is parallel to changes that have taken place in other professions such as printing and telecommunications, and with similar implications for these occupations' futures.

Chapter 6: The Future of the Liberal University in the Era of the Global Knowledge Grab 137

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

Throughout the 1990s, university, government, and business leaders actively, even aggressively, promoted the privatization and commercialization of academic research, claiming that this would benefit Canada's universities, citizenry, and economy alike. Written in 2000, this article provides a different perspective on the privatization of university knowledge, arguing that this development threatens our universities' well-being (and, thereby, the well-being of our citizenry and economy) by undermining their ability to draw on and replenish the commons of knowledge and to fulfil their public service mission.

Chapter 7: A Break From the Past: Impacts and Implications of the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Canada Research Chairs Initiatives 163

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

With the slaying of the federal deficit in the late 1990s, the Canadian government substantially increased its involvement and investment in university research, providing over

\$4 billion in new funding through initiatives like the Canada Research Chairs program and the Canada Foundation for Innovation. Whereas most administrators and academics eagerly embraced new federal support for higher education, this 2002 article argues that some of the “strings attached” are more significant and transformative than they realize; hence, new federal initiatives should be approached with caution.

**PART 3: IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR UNIVERSITIES’
PUBLIC-SERVING MISSION**

191

**Chapter 8: Disrupting the “Student as Consumer”
Model: The New Emancipatory Project**

197

BY JANICE NEWSON

By the early 2000s, the cumulative effects of corporatization, intermingled with technological changes and the creation of the wired campus, had spawned a new discourse on teaching that conceived of students as consumers of educational products. This chapter critiques this discourse, disentangles it from the learner-centred focus of critical pedagogy, and proposes means for pedagogically disrupting the student as consumer model.

**Chapter 9: The Nature and Implications of the Growing
Importance of Research Grants to Canadian Universities
and Academics**

213

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

By the mid 2000s, corporate priorities and values had displaced academic priorities and values in many areas and aspects of university life, ranging from policy formulation, to resource allocation, to performance assessment. This article explores one specific manifestation of this development, namely the displacement of the longstanding academic imperative to “publish or perish” by the imperative to “provide grant money or perish”. It explains why

acquiring research grants is becoming more important to our universities, examines how the greater importance of grants changes relations between and among key players in Canadian higher education, and addresses some of the more troubling consequences of this transformation.

Chapter 10: Three Broken Promises: Some Consequences of Administrative Growth in Canadian Universities

237

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

As corporatization has proceeded apace, the size of university administrations and the share of institutional resources they consume have increased substantially. Whereas “administrative bloat” has been criticized on numerous grounds in recent years, this 2011 article focuses on ways that administrators are failing on their own terms by breaking three key promises that supported and justified their expanded presence in our universities: to increase institutional efficiency, improve academics’ performance, and enhance the quality of our universities’ “products”.

Chapter 11: Reclaiming Our Centre: Towards a Robust Defence of Academic Autonomy

253

BY JANICE NEWSON AND CLAIRE POLSTER

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, academics developed a series of individual and collective strategies to respond to infringements on their autonomy stemming from a range of local, national, and international developments, including new modes of institutional decision-making and new forms of government research support. This article was written to call attention to ways in which some of academics’ responses inadvertently were serving both to deepen these infringements on their autonomy and to impoverish the very notion of academic autonomy itself, and to urge faculty and others to develop a more robust conception and defense of academic autonomy that is rooted in, and actively serves to promote, the public interest.

Chapter 12: No Time to Think: Academics' Life in the Globally Wired University

279

BY HEATHER MENZIES AND JANICE NEWSON

Faculty members had been working in wired campus environments for almost a decade when the authors of this chapter conducted a 2001-2002 pilot study on faculty members' experiences with online technologies. This article reports on the findings of the study, showing how faculty members use online technologies in ways that are deeply shaped by the speed-up and production pressures associated with corporatization. It critically reflects on what these patterns imply for both sustaining and passing on practices associated with deep, intellectual reflection.

PART 4: WAYS FORWARD

297

Chapter 13: Rethinking and Remaking Academic Freedom

303

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

This paper was written for a 2002 colloquium on academic freedom and the special challenges for the sciences that was catalyzed by the growing number of concerns and controversies involving university/industry research collaborations that were emerging at the time, such as the Olivieri and Healy affairs. In addition to the problems inherent in these collaborations, this paper addresses how people were beginning to talk about them and how this discourse itself contributes to these problems by reframing, minimizing, and concealing some of the more fundamental and complex impacts and implications of these collaborations.

Chapter 14: To Not Intend, or To Intend Not...That is the Question

313

BY JANICE NEWSON

Although, by the end of the 1990s, many faculty members were becoming increasingly concerned about the negative effects of corporatizing policies on their own academic activities, no strong, collectively-based opposition or challenge to the corporatization project itself was emerging. This chapter is based on a presentation to a Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) conference that attempted in 1999 to raise awareness of, and concern about, the increasing corporatization of Canada's universities. The presentation attempted to mobilize a clearly intended, collective opposition to corporatization by examining some of the reasons for why such opposition has not emerged and pointing to specific openings where faculty members' opposition could be exerted.

Chapter 15: Shifting Gears: Rethinking Academics' Responses to the Corporatization of the University

327

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

In 1999, the Canadian Association of University Teachers held a national conference to address growing concerns among faculty and others about the corporatization of Canada's universities and to help develop collective responses to it. This paper, presented at the conference, advocates two main shifts in academics' thinking and practice in relation to corporatization, namely a shift from accommodation to resistance and a shift from reactivity to creativity.

Chapter 16: Academic Feminism's Entanglements with University Corporatization

335

BY JANICE NEWSON

This chapter is based on a presentation to a conference on gender paradoxes held in Sweden in 2011. It begins with a provocative observation, that over the same three-plus decades during which corporatization has been transforming higher education, academic feminists have also successfully intervened in universities to increase women's influence in academic life. It explores the interplay between these seemingly paradoxical projects and calls on feminist academics to renew their vision for an intervention that could bring together concerned faculty members, students, and members of the public in a struggle to recover the public-serving mission of universities and colleges.

Chapter 17: Reconfiguring the Academic Dance: A Critique of Faculty's Responses to Administrative Practices in Canadian Universities

359

BY CLAIRE POLSTER

This 2012 article was written during a period of heightening tensions on campus that culminated in attempts by faculty at several Canadian universities to oust or chasten high level administrators for failing to uphold fundamental academic principles and values. The article addresses and critiques faculty's responses to new administrative practices, arguing that academics are too focused on how these practices obstruct their work and not focused enough on how they fundamentally transform their work and their role within the university. It then offers a wide array of strategies that academics and others might employ to resist and reverse these transformations and thereby better serve the profession's and the public's interests.

Epilogue

389

Biographies

393

Preface

This book has been a long time coming. Births, deaths, other academic projects, and the vicissitudes of daily life conspired repeatedly to push this collection off our agenda. At times, we were tempted to give up on this book, partly because others were writing about developments in Canadian higher education. However, in recent years, as corporatization has become more virulent and as public concern about our universities has grown, we have come to believe that this volume is needed now perhaps more than ever.

Whereas many books about Canadian higher education describe, critique, and lament its current state, our book has two different goals. First, we aim to show readers *how* our universities have come to be as they are and thereby to demonstrate that this is neither inevitable nor need be permanent. Second, we wish to show Canadians that there are many places and ways we can intervene to change our universities so that they better meet our aspirations and needs and thereby to encourage citizens to get involved.

But why should members of the general public, especially those who are not (or whose children are not) university students, be concerned about, much less try to change, the present state of our universities? We provide a cryptic answer to this question in the title of our book. Although they are increasingly oriented to serving private interests, Canada's universities are a public resource. Canadian taxpayers pay the lion's share of our universities' costs, and our citizens are the true stewards of this important institution. Over the last 35 years, however, this national resource has been seriously damaged by corporatization, a process through which universities progressively work for, with, and as businesses. We invoke the image of the penny to call attention to three related aspects of the harm this process has caused.

First, we use the penny to underscore the commodification of higher education. Commodification transforms university education and research from public rights and public goods into products that are paid for through ever higher tuitions, copyright and licensing fees, and other service charges. Because of commodification, the numerous benefits that individuals, groups, small businesses, and others may derive from universities are increasingly eluding their grasp. In turn, the wider social benefits of higher education, including the reduction of

inequality, the expansion of opportunity, and the enrichment of public life, decline.

Second, we use the penny to highlight the displacement of teaching, research, and public service as the primary aims of our universities and the elevation of income generation as their first priority. Indeed, rather than using their money as a means of supporting their teaching, research, and service functions, universities are progressively seeing and using these functions as means of making more money. One consequence of this dramatic reversal whereby universities act as corporations rather than public institutions is that universities effectively place their private interests over and above the public interest, in contravention of their obligation and commitment to serve the common good. The de facto loss of an institution devoted to promoting and protecting our collective well-being is troubling if not tragic, particularly in these neoliberal times when so many other public institutions have been eliminated or corrupted.

Thirdly, we invoke the penny to emphasize the impoverishment of our universities and the services they offer. As income generation trumps all other academic priorities, the quality of university education deteriorates through increased class sizes, the greater use of inexpensive and overworked part-time and graduate student instructors, and the replacement of actual with virtual education. The push for money also erodes the quality of university research and the contributions it makes, as faculty pursue research questions that are fundable and/or quickly yield valuable products over questions that are more scientifically or socially important. Even as — or perhaps because — the quality of their services decline, universities are investing more and more money in advertising campaigns and other gimmicks to lure greater numbers of students to their campuses. This diverts even more funds from their core operations in a viciously circular way.

Although we came up with this book's title before the Conservative government did away with the penny, there is a fourth way in which it may be apt, even prescient. Just as this coin was deemed irrelevant and eliminated, so too may our universities be abandoned if they do not change the current trajectory they are on. Though one can understand why Canadians might eventually forsake their universities, it would be far wiser for us to intervene before we get to that point and to restore our universities to the public-serving institutions that they were intended to be. This collection not only shows that this goal is eminently

achievable: it also provides you with the tools and some ideas to help make it a reality.

In closing, we thank you for taking the time to read this book and for any actions you take to help preserve our public universities. We also express our gratitude to our teachers, colleagues, students, and friends who have informed and supported our work over the years. We heartily thank Nancy Reid, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and particularly Erika Shaker for her generous and skilful editorial work on this and other projects of ours and her significant contribution to Canadian higher education research. Most of all, we thank our own and each other's families for their abiding love and support over the years that this collection was produced. We especially acknowledge our beloved companions who passed away before this book was brought to completion. Their mark on this work and our hearts is indelible.

Introduction

Canadian universities have changed dramatically over the past few decades. Compared to the universities of 30 or 40 years ago, today's universities have become more commercial in orientation, more business-like in practice, and more corporate in self-presentation. Canadians who graduated 25 years ago might be startled by the physical appearance of their campuses today. They would notice, for example, the prominent display on buildings, and even parts of buildings, of corporate logos and the names of well-known business leaders who have donated significant funds to the university¹. They would notice changes in language – student advising offices now named customer service centres, for example. They would also be struck by the animated presence of private enterprise: popular fast food outlets in the place of cafeterias and college dining rooms, and well travelled hallways functioning as commercial showrooms for products that have little relationship to education itself. At York University, for example, the walkway through York Lanes – its main floor lined with food outlets that attract large numbers of students – has sometimes been used to display and promote sales of the latest model automobiles.

Some people might say that these physical changes are superficial and harmless updates. After all, ivory-tower institutions preparing young people for futures in a rapidly changing world need to match their styles to the high-tech consumerist culture of these times. However, as we will show in subsequent chapters of this book, the changes reflect much more than face-lifting. They are surface manifestations of fundamental transformations in universities' relationships with the economy, with private sector corporate actors, and with market-driven activity itself. To encompass this still unfolding political and economic re-alignment of Canada's university system, we use the term "corporatization²."

In an advanced democratic society such as Canada, it is reasonable to expect that a transformation as significant as corporatization in one of Canada's most important publicly-funded institutions would be widely discussed and debated by elected legislators and members of the academic community, and, most importantly, by the public. But no widespread and open public consultation process has taken place, even though the changes have been underway since at least the early

1980s. In fact, particularly in the early stages of the process, the policies that helped to bring about the complex and diverse changes associated with corporatization proceeded under the radar not only of the broader public but also of most academics.

Nevertheless, the rollout effects of these policies not only increasingly reverberate through campus life in 2015, they also reach into the everyday lives of average Canadians. For example, the CBC in November 2013 produced a special series claiming that serious mental health problems among university students are on the rise. Recent studies lend weight to this claim³. Alarmed by dramatic signs of stress among their student bodies – suicides, for example – university administrations and campus organizations have begun to establish special programs to help students cope with stress and to identify signs of mental ill-health⁴. Moreover, a recent survey undertaken by the Toronto District School Board, the largest school board in Canada, argues that young people in general are showing signs in early high school of a generalized, and in some cases, debilitating anxiety about the future. The report states, “a majority of students are telling us they are anxious or nervous all the time ... These are new items to us and quite shocking⁵.”

To be sure, these rising levels of stress cannot simply or directly be attributed to university corporatization; however, corporatization has created conditions that exacerbate and, to some degree, have given rise to them. As we will show in chapters that follow, driven by policies that focus on wealth creation, Canada’s contemporary universities have come to engender a highly individualized, privatized, competitive, and survival-oriented campus culture, heightening performance and productivity pressures and offering little relief from them. We will also show how policies and practices that have been essential to corporatization over the past three decades have spawned stressful educational environments for students: for example, high levels of tuition and related costs that require most students to take on financial burdens in order to obtain a university education and that lead many of them to a double-life as students and job-holders; and an online, web-based university-student interface which, providing less face to face and individual-serving contact, is inadequate for identifying, let alone responding to, students in distress. In fact, that students have no recourse other than this mode of communication to obtain vital information or resolve any number of difficulties has become a source of frustration and stress itself. Parents also experience stress, worrying

about the future prospects that their adult children are now confronting, having incurred huge levels of debt in an economy that offers only precarious employment opportunities to many university graduates.

The unsettling reverberations of university corporatization have also increasingly affected faculty members. However, their experiences of, as well as their responses to, corporatization have varied. While recent studies and anecdotal evidence suggest that faculty members, similar to students, have found the university worksite to be increasingly stressful over the past decade or so⁶, other studies suggest that, generally speaking, full-time faculty members at Canadian universities experience relatively high levels of job satisfaction⁷. On the surface, these findings appear contradictory but, as we show in subsequent chapters, they emerge from the particular ways that academic life has been reconfigured through corporatizing policies and practices.

For example, the corporatization of the university has opened new opportunities while closing down others, thus creating winners and losers and, as a consequence, new imbalances and sources of tension and instability within the university. On the one hand, many tenure-track faculty members have gained materially and professionally from policies that have advanced corporatization. Significant amounts of public research monies to promote corporatization have entered the university since the mid 1990s, enhancing opportunities for the scholarly development and reputations of those who are eligible to receive them. As well, new funding initiatives such as the Canada Research Chairs Program and the Canada Excellence Research Chairs Program have created comparatively well-resourced academic positions for select⁸ junior and senior tenure-track faculty members. Especially noteworthy is that some faculty members have gained access to rewarding career opportunities in the managerial sector of universities, which, as we discuss in chapters 3 and 10, expanded significantly as corporatization unfolded⁹.

On the other hand, the federal monies for research have not been matched by increased funds to support the teaching functions of universities. In fact, teaching functions at most universities have been subject to recurring budget cuts and chronic underfunding. Thus, the longstanding relationship between teaching and research as relatively equal components of faculty members' obligations and having equal claims on university resources has begun to come apart, as indicated among other things by a growing trend toward reconfiguring faculty positions as teaching-focused versus research-focused appointments.

Class sizes have grown; staff has been cut; and academic support services have shifted to web-based, user-pay systems. Moreover, faculty members holding part-time and sessional appointments have suffered from the casualization of their positions and from diminished opportunities to secure long-term and better resourced tenure track jobs. As a consequence, deep political divisions have emerged within the teaching faculty, and collegial relationships have been destabilized¹⁰.

But in spite of this fragmentation of academic labour and experience, faculty members of all stripes tend to be united in their criticisms of the effects of corporatization on collegial governance¹¹ – the academic decision-making structure through which they have previously been able to effectively influence the shape and content of curricula, academic programs, and the overall intellectual direction of their institutions. This governance structure has been displaced and narrowly circumscribed by greatly expanded and highly specialized university managements. As these managements have adopted private sector corporate methods to advance their institutions' competitive advantage and respond to changing economic conditions, collegial bodies such as departments and faculties have become less and less effective at mediating and buffering, much less resisting, managerial interventions into academic matters.

More recently, however, an increasing sense of uncertainty and precariousness¹² has begun to circulate even among faculty members who had become relatively inured to the effects of corporatizing policies. This sense of precariousness has been triggered at least in part by financial pressures that have overtaken all publicly-funded institutions in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. Provincial governments are managing huge deficits and many have made the political calculation that cutting the costs of public sector services and institutions will win credit with the public and/or that austerity is the path to restoring economic growth. In turn, university administrations across the country have initiated severe cost cutting exercises which, according to an article published in the *Globe and Mail* with the alarming title "No department is safe as universities employ U.S. cost-cutting strategy," are being fashioned after a budget prioritization methodology developed by financial consultant Robert C. Dickeson for universities in the U.S. Senior administrators employing them at Canadian universities are promoting Dickeson's approach, and others like it, as "smart growth" exercises¹³.

But perhaps with this latest episode of university retraction, a tipping point has been reached. In 2011, for example, students in Québec mounted a sustained and effective strike against tuition fee increases, mobilizing a large segment of Québec society and leading to the defeat of that province's Liberal government. Important to note is that the active core of this student movement did not focus its challenge narrowly on tuition fee increases but rather on university corporatization itself, arguing that corporatization was leading not only to financially inaccessible higher-level education but also to the perversion of the intellectual purpose and value of public-serving and publicly-funded universities.

Faculty members too are on the move. For example, as described in the *Globe and Mail* report noted above, faculty members at Wilfred Laurier University, the University of Guelph, and the University of Victoria, where administrations have been trying to implement "smart growth" approaches to budget cutting, have challenged their administration's actions, arguing that administrative interventions are moving too deeply into academic terrain and that the results of these top-down, measurement-based approaches seriously damage the intellectual integrity of academic programs. At the University of Manitoba in February 2013, the faculty association, joined by five other on-campus unions, held a one-day protest to express their frustration and dissatisfaction to university administrators. According to a report in the *CAUT/ACPPU Bulletin*, hundreds of supporters gathered outside the administration building and voiced their concerns, which ranged from corporatization, to privatization, to contracting out, to diminished collegial governance, and increased workloads, "all of which they say are not only negatively impacting academic staff, but also students¹⁴." Since the beginning of 2013, faculty strikes have taken place at St. Francis Xavier University in Cape Breton, the University of New Brunswick, and Mt. Alison University in New Brunswick, and two faculty associations that resisted unionization for many years, Queens University in Ontario and the University of Victoria in British Columbia, have certified as collective bargaining agents. Clearly, faculty members across the country are mobilizing for a struggle.

As hopeful as these signs may be to members of academic communities who, for diverse reasons, are deeply troubled about the extent to which Canadian universities follow the beacon of corporatization, these resistances are not enough in themselves to recover the university for the public good. One important reason is that the policies and practices

continue, unabated, to entwine the university even more deeply into the workings of the economy in ways that even the most astute critics of high education policy would never have contemplated 5 or 10 years ago. For example, in an impressive doctoral thesis on quality assessment in higher education, Eric Newstadt argues that the university is no longer in business exclusively to deliver educational and research products: it is also a source of lucrative financial products for investors, such as derivatives based on bank loans that fund student debt¹⁵. While for parents and students, going into debt to fund a university education is a scourge on their futures, for banks and investment firms a new money-making frontier opens up. With powerful financial actors gaining market share advantage from investing in government-based student loans, what chances are there for reduced tuition fees coming to Canadian households any time soon?

A second important reason that the resistances noted above are not enough to recover the university for the public good is that, notwithstanding the Québec student strike mentioned above, “the public” is not sufficiently involved in these mobilizations. Nor is it sufficiently aware of how the university of today has become a well-honed instrument of economy policy and wealth creation, to the detriment of its broader public-serving mission; and of how these profound changes in universities reach into their own lives and affect their possibilities for improved social well-being.

We have written this book primarily to engage the Canadian public in the struggle to recover the university for the public good. We want to fill in the gaps in awareness and hopefully incite an effective public debate that has never taken place about the best course for the university to pursue in these times. First, we want to offer answers to questions about how the university got to the place it now is. As sociologists who have been researching and writing for some time about this transformation of the university, we will show that travelling this path has not been inevitable nor has it resulted from random events or capricious decision-making: indeed the changes we have tracked have been leveraged by government policies, by selective funding, and by altering decision-making processes at many levels. Second, we want to show that, even if some gains from these changes have accrued to individual universities, individual scholars, and individual students and their families, the higher education system as a whole and the broader collective interests of the public have been and continue to

be jeopardized if not seriously damaged. Thirdly, we want to provide readers with some resources for cultivating their own ability to interpret and assess ongoing developments in Canadian universities.

Finally, we want to dispel perhaps the most serious obstacle of all to mounting effective resistance to these changes, namely, the all too common perception that these changes are a *fait accompli*. By this view, for better or worse, the corporatization of our universities has been accomplished and there is little realistic hope of stopping its continued advance, much less of reversing it. On the contrary, we believe much can be accomplished by intervening into the workings of local institutions and by mobilizing concerned citizens¹⁶ to reform the policy directions that governments have adopted to facilitate corporatization.

To accomplish these goals, we have brought together 17 of our articles that track the diverse changes in policy and practice associated with corporatization that have taken place over the past 35 years or more. Rather than being retrospective, these articles are real time accounts of these changes as they have unfolded: only in hindsight can they more clearly be seen as aspects of the process that we now refer to as corporatization. We do not claim that they provide a comprehensive or complete analysis of corporatization. Instead, they represent relatively discrete, though inter-connected studies of diverse aspects of corporatization. This “case study” approach is well suited to our goals for this book because corporatization continues to unfold, often in new and alarming ways¹⁷. Not only are further investigations into the implications of these new directions required but, most importantly, a strong public response to these developments is urgently needed.

To facilitate this strong public response, we want to introduce two important thinking tools that we have employed in our studies of corporatization. We elaborate on them here so you can trace their influence in the chapters that follow and discover for yourselves how, rather than leading us to conclude that our universities have been taken over once and for all by privatized interests and singularly economic purposes, they lead us instead to entry points for building a movement to resist corporatization and recover the university for serving wide and diverse public purposes.

Thinking tool one: corporatization as an ongoing process

The first thinking tool is to understand corporatization as an *evolving*

process rather than as the final outcome of a plan. In other words, we do not view corporatization as the result of some carefully laid out, unified program of action undertaken by certain social actors — such as corporate leaders, policy-makers, or the government — to systematically change the university. In our approach, corporatization is understood as arising through actions undertaken by numerous agents with diverse motivations and interests. Acting through a variety of institutions, these agents include academics, university administrators, faculty associations, research councils, policy advisory panels, government ministries, corporate leaders, advocacy groups, international trade bodies, and others. Over time, their many initially disparate and un-coordinated actions began to link together and coalesce into a more integrated whole. Some critical commentators have argued that the ultimate result, even the deliberate objective, of these coordinated actions, is “the neoliberal university.” In our studies, however, we are less concerned with whether these actions fulfill, or are explained by, an over-arching program such as neoliberalism, than we are with discovering how they have emerged as the actions and responses of specific agents at particular times and locations, and their implications for the public-serving mandate of the university.

One advantage of seeing corporatization in this way is that it avoids simple cause-and-effect explanations and focuses instead on its deeper and more complex origins and implications. For example, rather than attributing the increase in universities’ links with corporations to the single factor of government underfunding, as is frequently done, we see these links as emerging out of (and as further advancing) an array of factors that interact with, and feed back into, each other, such as changes in federal and provincial granting council programs, academic reward systems, governance structures, and national and international intellectual property regimes.

Put another way, our approach inquires into the “how” rather than the “why” of corporatization. By so doing, we shift our focus from the surface manifestations of corporatization towards a more fundamental, complex, and organic understanding of it. To illustrate this advantage, consider the difference between explaining a child’s illness as the effect of their catching a bug versus showing how a child’s illness arose out of (and contributes to) a variety of inter-related factors including their nutrition, the state of their immune system, the health of those in their community, and the various environmental conditions around them.

Another advantage of seeing corporatization as unfolding and thus incomplete is that it allows us to see that and where we, as actors and agents, can interrupt this process. Because multiple factors and agents are involved, and because they interact with each other and may even change each other, something new can emerge or intervene that will shift the action in a different direction. Consider the emergence of violent weather events. For these to occur, various factors must be present such as air masses meeting, winds changing direction, temperatures fluctuating, etc.; however, these factors don't inevitably produce a thunderstorm. An even more violent event like a tornado may occur instead or, at the other extreme, the heavy clouds and strong winds may suddenly dissipate and the sky turns blue. So too, while factors may be present that promote corporatization, other factors can enter into the picture and change the situation in important ways.

For example, concerned citizens working in harmony can pressure governments to prohibit universities from selling their publicly-funded knowledge to corporate clients as "intellectual property." Coalitions of faculty members, professional librarians, staff members, and students can join together to resuscitate neglected but empowered bodies such as academic councils or senates and, through coordinating their participation in these bodies, can defeat decisions that further advance corporatization and support decisions that lead their universities in alternative directions. Even small cadres of campus activists can ally themselves with off-campus advocacy groups to challenge specific corporatization projects and prevent them from being pursued.

In 1991-2, such an alliance successfully undermined a plan to locate the home campus of the International Space University (ISU) at York University and several satellite campuses at other institutions throughout the Ontario university system. The ISU was the brainchild of three space travel enthusiasts backed by corporate leaders who saw it as a tool for boosting sales of space technology throughout the world. The Ontario and federal governments of the time pledged millions of dollars of public funds to the project on the grounds that the ISU would contribute significantly to Ontario's and Canada's industrial development. Moreover, the York University administration aggressively promoted the York campus as the best site for locating the ISU. They devoted significant personnel time and financial resources to developing the bid¹⁸ and, as was revealed when the terms of the bid were brought to light, promised the ISU access to York's extensive publicly-funded

resources such as student registration and advising services, libraries, and technological equipment and infrastructure. Yet a handful of faculty members, graduate students, student-association staff members, and student journalists, working with off-campus labour and social justice groups, derailed this plan. They publicized the business interests of the corporate backers of the ISU, many of whom were located outside Canada and included not only manufacturers of space technology but also of military equipment. They wrote op-ed pieces and letters to editors that described the extent to which the proposed activities and mode of operation of the ISU threatened Canadian public interests. They created, over many months, a general climate of opposition to the ISU sufficiently vocal and persistent that, ultimately, the York site was made unattractive to the ISU board of governors and an alternative site in France was chosen¹⁹.

Understanding that corporatization is an ongoing process into which concerned citizens and members of the university community can intervene in these concrete ways helps to move beyond explanations that limit the public's understanding of what has taken place and dampen people's motivation and sense of power to make change.

Thinking tool two: social relations²⁰

The second thinking tool that has guided our studies of corporatization is to understand corporatization as a process that accomplishes changes in *social relations*. The term "social relations" refers to the ongoing courses or patterns of human activity that give social entities such as universities and systems of higher education their particular shape and form. The difference between an art gallery versus an art auction, or between a football game versus a basketball game, lies in the patterns of action or the "terms of engagement" – the social relations – that make them what they are.

All social relations have a two way dynamic. On the one hand, people produce and sustain these relations through their ongoing, daily activity. On the other hand, these relations shape and constrain what people may do. A helpful way to think about this dynamic is to consider a complex dance, such as a square dance. People's coordinated movements make the dance what it is, giving it its distinctive form. At the same time, however, the dance itself constrains how, when, where, and what people may do. It is not that the dance determines

what people may do; rather, the dance opens up certain possibilities for dancers' action while closing down others.

Applying this tool of social relations to the university leads us to look for the recurring patterns of interaction that give the university its current character. But we are looking for not just one pattern of interaction — not one dance — but many dances or sets of social relations. So, for example, we must explore typical patterns of interaction between professors and students, faculty members and administrators, university and government leaders, and universities and members of the surrounding community. Moreover, our task becomes even more complex when we are studying a social institution that is undergoing significant change. We must not only map established and stable relations, but also grasp how these relations are being reorganized internally and in relation to others so that certain kinds of action within the university become more possible whereas others become less so.

It should be clear by now that focusing on social relations differs significantly from traditional cause-and-effect thinking. We are tracking what, where, and how changes are taking place and how they are altering the context and ground of subsequent actions. So, for example, University A makes a contract with Corporation B in which it agrees to restrict the publication of Professor C's research findings so that the corporate funder can gain exclusive access to their applications. Rather than looking at the individual contract and its specific consequences for the particular researcher or university involved, we look at how the arrangement created by the contract between the researcher and the corporate funder affects, both now and in the future, the context within which all university researchers must work, as well as others, including students and staff. In other words, we explore how a seemingly isolated change in the relation between one researcher and one corporate funder helps to reorganize a broader series of social relations, with a variety of potential implications. And we explore how the resulting transformations in one set of social relations generate, in turn, transformations in other sets of social relations, producing an ever more complex process of reorganization.

The organization of the book

We have employed the thinking tools just described in the 17 articles

that follow. Written at different times during the 35 year period over which corporatization has advanced, we have tried to show that and how corporatization has arisen in and through changes in the social relations of Canadian higher education. Showing this is easier said than done, however, given that corporatization is multi-dimensional and constantly shape shifting. Unlike an historical narrative, it does not have a clear starting point, end point, or linear sequence of events that connects them. Rather, it is comprised of many interconnecting and interacting developments that are continually unfolding. Consequently, anyone seeking to generate and convey an understanding of corporatization can and must “dive in” to the process at any place or at many places and work from those entry points to consider how ongoing developments in each support, contradict, transform, or otherwise affect developments in the others. As the understandings and insights generated by our various “probes” are combined, we bring more and more of the whole process into view. The mode of inquiry is much like putting together a jigsaw puzzle without having access to a completed picture as a guide. It is also reminiscent of the story about the blind person who tries to discover what an elephant looks like by feeling the shape of the tail, or the trunk, or the side of the elephant. No single part creates the definitive feeling of the elephant’s shape but as each one is explored, the investigator takes another step towards a more complete understanding.

Our studies are presented as parts of the puzzle of how our universities have come to be as they are. Sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, a single study and the perspective taken in it incorporate and build on understandings of developments explored in another. It should be noted that these studies represent only a portion of our collected work²¹ and, in any event, all of our articles taken together necessarily provide only partial accounts or pieces of the corporatization process. However, as a whole, they offer readers a solid starting point for understanding how corporatization has manifested at particular moments and particular places, and also of what this means for Canadian citizens, now and in the future²². Our aim is not simply or primarily to display our own understandings of corporatization, but to empower readers to develop their own understanding of the process which they can use to evaluate and weigh in on a continually changing situation. For this to happen, readers should not approach this book passively, as a source of information to consume. Rather they should read actively and seek to go beyond

the given – continually drawing their own connections, critically assessing developments, and considering if and how things should and can be changed.

Because there is neither a necessary nor best order in which to present our material, we had many choices about how to organize the articles in this collection. We opted for four sections as follows. Part One, on beginnings, addresses early and more general institutional transformations, taking a view from three different angles or levels of analysis. Part Two analyzes four specific developments that were particularly salient in terms of reorganizing the social relations of Canadian higher education. In Part Three, we explore a variety of additional changes, but with a more explicitly critical lens and elaborating on the implications of these changes for the university's public-serving mission. The final section takes up strategic considerations, exploring the ways in which people think about corporatization and respond to it and proposing more effective approaches.

Whereas these sections could be respectively characterized as historical, analytical, critical, and strategic, in truth, each article contains most or all of these elements to a greater or lesser degree. We encourage readers to think through all four aspects as they read each article, and then to further deepen and enrich their reading by bringing these understandings to bear on subsequent articles. As well, because our book is not constructed as a linear narrative, it need not be read in chronological order. Indeed, the book might be more engaging or useful to certain readers if they begin in different places. For instance, members of the public who are not sure what corporatization means for them might find Part Three to be a more interesting and motivating starting place, whereas university workers who are interested in resisting corporatization might want to begin in Part Four.

Conclusion

We have stated repeatedly that our intention in writing this book is to provide Canadians with information about, perspectives on, as well as tools for understanding, corporatization so that they, as significant funders and stewards of our universities, can become more engaged in deciding their future.

Both to illustrate what we hope to achieve and to help bring it into being, we conclude this introduction with an article addressing some

questions about corporatization that are frequently raised in public fora, which, intentionally or not, serve to limit precisely the kinds of critical thinking that we wish to cultivate. Having worked through this book, readers should not only have a deeper appreciation of the answers we provide, but also be able to supplement and/or improve them in relation to their own understandings, values, and aspirations. They should also be able to speak confidently in response to other questions on the topic, and, hopefully, become more inspired and motivated to act²³.

~

***What's Wrong With Corporatizing Canada's Universities? Plenty!* by Claire Polster and Janice Newson (originally published in the *CCPA Monitor* 15(8), Feb. 2009, pp. 32-35).**

A serious problem for progressive people nowadays is that neoliberal discourse has become so established, so commonsensical, that it is difficult to publicly question, much less challenge it. How can one argue with claims that public institutions such as our universities should be more accountable, or provide more value for money, or enhance our nation's competitiveness? In this piece, we take on some seemingly unchallengeable aspects of the neoliberal corporatization of our universities, i.e., the process through which they are made to work more for, with, and as businesses. For we believe that there is plenty wrong with this process that needs to be understood, named, and resisted for the sake of our universities and for those who work and learn within them, our citizenry, and our society.

Below we provide brief responses to 10 "what's wrong with this" questions that are frequently raised in university hallways, on public airways, and in everyday conversation. While much more could be said in response to each question, these answers are a starting place to initiate some much needed debate.

1. What's wrong with using Canadian universities to make Canada and its businesses more competitive in the global economy?

One of the university's many purposes is and should be to contribute to economic growth through research, educating the next generation of workers, and various forms of interaction with groups and organizations

relevant to the economy. The problem arises when this becomes its *primary* purpose. The narrow focus on economic competitiveness can and has undermined the university's ability and/or commitment to achieve its many other purposes. Paradoxically, this focus may also impair the university's ability to enhance competitiveness, such as when easy access to university professors discourages corporations from developing the in-house expertise that is crucial to their success, or when universities develop their own publicly subsidized businesses that unfairly compete with other Canadian enterprises. Ultimately, its appropriation for the competitiveness project may destroy the very things about the university, such as its traditions of openness and collaboration and its cultivation of creative and unconventional inquiry, that made it attractive and valuable to industry in the first place.

On another level, unquestioningly promoting Canada's participation in the global economy, as it is currently taking shape, is not a good thing to do. Serious questions need to be raised about advancing a global economic order that may, for example, impoverish whole segments of the world's population and confine them to work that serves the economic interests of a few powerful multinational corporations. Rather than being a handmaiden to it, the university should be one important place where critical analyses of the relative benefits and harms of economic globalization take place.

As well, that the university should be solely committed to the well-being of its own citizens is a narrow and regressive conception of it when considered in historical perspective. Traditionally, universities have held a more universalistic sense of their place in the world and of their obligations. Whether following a narrow, nation-focused path would be fruitful for a small country like Canada to pursue is worth serious consideration, both from a moral and purely self-interested perspective.

2. What's wrong with tightening university management structures?

Perhaps the most serious consequence of the tightening of universities' management structures is that it shifts control over the institution to groups of administrators, and thus excludes faculty members, students, staff, and community members from setting priorities and participating in important decision-making. It also reduces transparency in university operations, encourages secrecy, and moves us further away from democratizing our public institutions.

Additionally, greater managerialism has led to a dramatic expansion in the size of academic administrations, with more and more new positions being created such as assistant and associate vice-presidents and deans, and intellectual property and public relations managers. This growth has significantly raised university operating costs. It has also increased the administrative burden on staff and faculty, diminishing resources and energies for core academic activities like teaching and research, and reducing the flexibility and responsiveness of individual academic units. At the same time, administrators are becoming more involved in activities traditionally carried out by departments and faculties, such as the hiring of new professors and the awarding of tenure and promotion. This produces additional inefficiencies and erodes academic motivation and morale, when, for example, administrators unilaterally override hiring and other decisions that were the product of difficult, time-consuming, and costly collegial deliberation.

Finally, the tightened university management structure has been key to linking up universities and corporations. It would be hard to imagine the process of corporatization in Canada unfolding to the extent that it has without tightening up and centralizing control over universities' resources and activities, as the corporate sector would have had no university partner capable of negotiating the technical and legal complexities inherent in new partnership agreements involving the exploitation of intellectual property, the construction of new buildings, etc.

3. What's wrong with making universities and academics more "accountable"?

Universities and academics should certainly be accountable. The questions are "accountable in what sense?" and "accountable to whom?" Ironically, corporatization has increased the need for accountability to the public by enabling new kinds of, and more opportunities for, conflicts of interest to arise. The experience of Dr. Nancy Olivieri, a researcher who was penalized by her university for putting patients' interests over those of a corporate partner, is one of many cases that illustrate the point. At the same time, however, universities' adoption of corporate practices actually prevents the public from holding universities accountable. For example, the public is prevented from seeing university contracts with corporations because they are protected by proprietary rights. As well, university administrations and

Boards of Governors increasingly make important decisions about their institutions' futures behind closed doors in order to keep their competitors – other universities – from finding out about their strategies for attracting students or corporate clients.

Additionally, the “performance-based measures” being increasingly adopted by universities, research councils, and government ministries allow for only a limited kind of accountability and frequently cause more problems than they solve. They enable certain groups, generally powerful and well-resourced groups who dominate the process of producing these measures, to impose their priorities on academics and prevent others from having their needs taken into account. For instance, these measures tend to focus on economic priorities, such as the number of patents universities produce or the numbers of graduates who find employment, rather than on other priorities, such as universities' or students' contributions to equality or social justice. They also encourage academics to act instrumentally by shaping their activities to maximize performance scores, and they make it more difficult and/or risky for academics to follow their own rhythms and inclinations in their research and other work. The production, analysis, and follow-up of performance measures are also costly and time-consuming. They increase the bureaucratic rigidity of universities and thereby limit innovation and creativity. At the same time, these performance measures cannot grasp the complexity of academic activity, and therefore often distort it and/or render key aspects – such as providing support and mentorship to students – invisible and thus undervalued. In so doing, they mask the need, and limit the calls, for more robust forms of accountability to the public.

4. What's wrong with government more directly shaping university activities?

Government should be expected to ensure that universities are functioning according to certain standards. For example, it should ensure that universities are academically sound, that they do not discriminate against any segment of the population, that they meet health, safety, and labour standards, etc. But government should not shape the content and/or process of research and teaching in ways that limit the independent judgement of academics and students in their search for knowledge and understanding. Governments should also not intervene in ways that either prevent academics and their students

from focusing on the things that they consider to be most important and valuable, or that compel them to focus on needs and issues that government considers to be important and valuable.

Historically, governments have not been successful in predicting future research or training needs. Moreover, governments do not possess the ability to control either intellectual insight or where knowledge breakthroughs will occur, given that they are notoriously unpredictable. Trying to do this only frustrates and impedes the process of knowledge development. The best that governments can and should do is to provide the conditions under which knowledge production can flourish. Finally, if universities are to truly serve the public interest, they should have the free space, and must also be strongly encouraged, to pursue research and teaching programs that may be critical of, or not in line with, the will of specific governments.

5. What's wrong with ensuring that the public gets "value for money"?

Citizens should be confident that the university spends public monies responsibly, wisely, and carefully, and achieves as much social benefit as it can with the funds it has available. The idea of "value for money," however, is not about ensuring that all members of the public will benefit equally.

"Value for money" forces universities to streamline their activities – often eliminating services which benefit segments of the population who are economically, socially, and/or physically disadvantaged – and to off-load their costs so that only those people and groups that are well-resourced can afford universities' increasingly high fees. More generally, "value for money" encourages universities to initiate activities that generate money, thus engaging them in commercial endeavours which in various ways may compromise the university's publicly oriented mission and values.

Additionally, "value" can be deceptive because what appears to be valuable from one perspective may in fact prove to be quite costly. For example, an improved method of oil extraction which may be highly profitable and valuable in terms of increasing supplies can also be harmful to certain individuals, communities, and/or the environment. Moreover, in addition to the actual costs of creating "valuable products," opportunity costs may be incurred which are invisible but substantial nonetheless. Such is the case, for instance, when investing funds in the

production of lifestyle and “me-too” drugs (such as the many drugs for erectile dysfunction) leads to the neglect of more broadly valuable disease prevention research.

Finally, “value for money” may lead people to focus on easy-to-measure and immediate expressions of value, rather than on expressions that are harder to measure but bring longer term and/or intangible benefits such as solving a longstanding scientific paradox or creating a beautiful sonata.

6. What's wrong with making universities and their research “relevant”?

The public should expect universities to promote knowledge production and transmission that are relevant to their needs and aspirations. However, the version of “relevance” that has been advanced through the corporatization of the university is not relevance to the public as a whole or to a broad spectrum of groups and communities. Rather, it is relevance to the objectives of major economic actors such as private corporations. In this context, “relevance” is a code word for serving the interests of business and making the university itself more like a business. Not only does this narrow universities’ actual relevance in the present, but it also limits their potential relevance in the future. For as universities respond more and more to the economic needs of corporations, service to business becomes institutionalized, and the flexibility that allows universities to be relevant to new, more diverse needs as they arise is reduced.

Moreover, when a knowledge quest is being designed, to whom or what it will be relevant is often not knowable. The requirement or expectation that researchers should know ahead of time the specific relevance of their research blocks knowledge quests whose value may only be known after they are completed and are either elaborated by, or add a missing piece to, subsequent academic investigations. Many knowledge quests that have become extremely relevant to a specific societal need or advance were originally pursued solely because a researcher was motivated to pursue an interesting question.

7. What's wrong with encouraging competition between universities and inside universities?

Generally speaking, the increased competition within and between universities, which has been exacerbated by new “performance-based”

forms of federal support for Canadian university research, encourages administrators and academics to become increasingly concerned with their own self-interest or their institution's interests, and, in so doing, to become diverted from the public interest. In turn, administrators and academics in the present context are made even more vulnerable to demands from government and industry.

More specifically, competition has led to a range of behaviours that are harmful to universities, faculty members, the scientific enterprise, and the general public. These include universities raiding one another for "star" academics; promoting secrecy and reduced collaboration in research; diminishing the influence of collective bargaining as a way to establish institutional fairness and collaboration; and engaging in costly legal battles (such as those around intellectual property rights) either to protect or advance their positions relative to other universities. Competition is also leading universities to waste valuable public resources on branding exercises and advertising campaigns in various media to attract students, a wide array of expensive initiatives to help academics better compete for external research funds, and bidding wars over new faculty appointments that drive higher the costs of qualified personnel and create greater pressure to increase tuition and other university fees.

8. What's wrong with rewarding the "best and brightest" academics and universities?

It is not obvious who the "best and brightest" actually are. Too often, such assessment are political in nature, but even in the cases when apparently objective measures are used, these measures may be problematic. For example, using research grant earnings as a primary indicator of "excellence," as is now being done in the advanced stages of corporatization, is not only ineffective but may also harm Canada's research enterprise in several ways. On the one hand, some people are more skilled than others at writing grant proposals, or simply need more money to do their kinds of research, or are more able to meet the requirements of granting programs such as finding a well-resourced research partner to provide matched funds. Similarly, some universities are historically more endowed with resources that allow them to better compete for the increasingly large grants now being awarded by research councils.

On the other hand, concentrating funds in the hands of an elite group of academics and universities deprives others of the financial support for work that may be equally or even more valuable and relevant to societal needs. It is also harmful to academic institutions because it creates divisions between high money earners and their other colleagues and often affords the former higher status and greater influence in departmental and faculty decision-making. In turn, morale and motivation among the rest of the faculty suffer.

Further, the principle of “best and brightest” is damaging to science more generally. Perversely, it actually reduces Canada’s research capacity and limits its diversity (given that more funds flow to fewer researchers and research areas) and thus impairs the ability both to train the next generation of scientists and to open up new lines of inquiry. In fact, it tends to ossify research inquiry by reinforcing scientific orthodoxies and directing support only to research whose value has been recognized in an established field of inquiry.

9. What’s wrong with letting professors and universities make money off their research and other activities?

Although it is not necessarily the case, there have been ample instances, both in Canada and elsewhere, particularly in the U.S., that show that the public interest may be seriously compromised when the university and/or its faculty members reap financial benefits from their research. From the mistreatment (and even wrongful death) of research subjects, to the fudging of research results, to the patenting – and re-patenting – of life-saving drugs, greater numbers of researchers and administrators are acting unethically in order to enhance their personal and institutional fortunes. They are also suppressing researchers, research projects, or research results that threaten their own or their universities’ financial interests. The public interest may be harmed in more subtle ways as well, such as when fruitful collaborations and open debates of ideas and their applications among colleagues are either delayed or do not take place altogether for fear that they will jeopardize profit-making potential.

As well, professors who invest time in commercializing or marketing their research findings often withdraw from the day-to-day activities of maintaining their departments, faculties, and teaching programs, leaving the responsibility of this work to their colleagues.

These imbalances in workload frequently generate resentments among colleagues, not least because money-making professors often also have the ear and favour of university administrators and are thereby able to secure more privileges or exercise greater influence on decisions. At another level, all universities do not have the same ability nor opportunity to generate and profit from money-making ventures. Thus, their engaging in these activities may harm the Canadian academic enterprise as a whole by exacerbating the historical and regional imbalances among our nation's universities.

It is worth further noting that the university's involvement in entrepreneurial activities – be they setting up spin-off companies, licensing valuable intellectual property, or marketing knowledge-based products – is very expensive. It adds significantly to the costs of universities, and these costs fall primarily on taxpayers and on students who pay increasing tuition and other fees. At the same time that the public subsidizes these profit making activities, it is universities and academics themselves who are personally reaping the financial benefits. Given that universities are public institutions and that academics are public servants (they are paid a salary with public funds), surely the fruits of their labour rightfully belong to the public.

10. Is there nothing at all to be gained from the corporatization process? Does it not benefit the public in any way whatsoever?

The corporatization process has certainly produced some isolated and specific benefits for some professors, students, parts of the university, and corporations. But these benefits are far outweighed by the cumulative and long term harms of corporatization, such as impoverishing many parts of the university, creating divisions and weaknesses within and between academic units, and reducing the university's ability and willingness to respond to a diversity of needs in society as a whole.

Ultimately, however, we think that it is less important to focus on the benefits and harms of corporatization than it is to focus on what it leads the university to become, and what this transformation means for the well-being and future of citizens. Corporatization converts universities from public-serving institutions into knowledge businesses; that is, it changes the university from a publicly accessible resource for social development that benefits a diversity of groups in a wide variety of

ways into an institution that produces products and services for specific markets and paying clients.

Whether or not the Canadian public supports this transformation has not been asked. Instead, the decision to pursue this transformation has been taken by default, and, in some respects, by stealth. Citizens need not – indeed, must not – uncritically accept this development. We can and should examine and question what has been done to our nation’s universities, and from there take steps to ensure that they clearly reflect our collective will and fulfil our aspirations.

NOTES

1. Examples of donor named buildings at Canadian universities are cited in Tedesco 2012.
2. This political and economic realignment of the university is alternately referred to as marketization, commercialization, and academic capitalism. However, in using these terms, commentators often adopt different approaches to conceptualizing and analyzing the changes taking place.
3. See, for example, Lunau 2012.
4. Bradshaw and Wingrove 2012.
5. Maria Yau, Research Coordinator, as quoted in “Toronto Students Worry About Family, School, and Future, Survey Finds.” *The Toronto Star*, February 12, 2013. (<http://www.thestar.com/yourtoronto/education/2013/02/12/toronto-students-worry-about-family-school-and-future-survey-finds.html>).
6. See for example, Catano *et al.* August 2010.
7. This report compares faculty satisfaction levels internationally and assigns higher levels of satisfaction to Canadian faculty members than to faculty in other countries. See Weinrib *et al.* 2013.
8. In the language of the Canada Research Chairs Program, these faculty members are referred to as rising stars and stars.
9. A recent article on the corporatization of universities in the United States states that “... administrators who occupy the highest ranks in our college and university bureaucracies are those who have professionally benefited the most from corporatization.” See Mills Fall 2012.
10. For a powerful description of the relative fortunes of full-time faculty versus short-term contract academic staff under corporatization, see Hearn 2010.
11. All faculty members would not necessarily attribute the weakening of collegial governance to corporatization as we do. Many see it as the consequence of an expanded and over-reaching central administration. In chapters three and ten, we link this expansion to corporatization.
12. As already noted, part-time and short-term contract faculty have lived with this precariousness for some time. (See Rajagopal 2002.) Our claim that this precariousness is leaking into the work experiences of full-time, supposedly secure, tenure stream faculty members is based largely on informal reports we hear from colleagues at various universities, letters to the editor, and unpublished papers on academic life presented at conferences.
13. Dickeson’s approach “promises a data-driven model that puts heavy emphasis on a program’s cost, demand for enrolment and student outcomes – all measures of keen interest to governments.” See Bradshaw 2012.
14. March 2013. “Mass Protest on University of Manitoba Campus.” *CAUT/ACPPU Bulletin* 60 (3). (https://www.cautbulletin.ca/en_article.asp?ArticleID=3607)
15. See Newstadt 2013. Newstadt cites an article that focuses on the financialization of student debt: Kramer 2012.
16. While our primary audience is the Canadian public in general, this book may be especially useful for those who have multiple relationships to the university, i.e., as citizens and also as

students, parents of students, university workers, and/or public policy-makers, among others.

17. For example, Stefan Collini presents an alarming analysis of how the conservative-liberal democratic coalition government in the UK has created a “treasure trove” of private sector investment opportunities by making student loan monies accessible to private for-profit and not-for-profit colleges. See Collini 2013. A short article in *The Toronto Star* suggests that the Ontario Liberal government may be on the way to pursuing a similar path. See Rushoway 2014.

18. The search for the ISU home campus assumed the form of a commercial bidding process, in which interested parties around the world submitted formal bids that were considered proprietary commercial property and thus not available for public review.

19. For a detailed account of the ISU episode, see Saunders 1999.

20. Our use of this tool draws heavily on the work of renowned sociologist Dorothy Smith. For more on this approach, see Smith 1987 and Campbell and Gregor 2002.

21. Many of our other publications are contained in the Reference lists at the end of each chapter. We welcome you to contact us directly if you are interested in obtaining complete lists. You will find contact information in our bios on page 393.

22. Because these pieces were written over several decades, readers will also encounter some repetition as they move from article to article. Attending to subtle differences in the ways that old topics are brought up again may alert you to the ways in which things were gradually changing, encourage you to make additional connections between developments, and/or help you anticipate where things are likely to go in the future.

23. Before we turn to these questions, we need to clarify our use of the term “the public” and “the public interest” as they are repeatedly used throughout the book. We recognize that the public is not homogenous and that there is no single public interest. Equally important, we do not believe that serving the public interest means that the university should be at the public’s behest. Sometimes, the university serves the public interest best by going against the flow of prevailing trends in public opinion. We cannot take time here to untangle the complex issues that would need to be addressed in formulating a coherent and democracy-enhancing approach to bringing diverse public needs and interests more fully into the university’s activities. However, we believe that a central piece of the approach must be that citizens who are able to become well informed about, and to critically reflect on, the university’s public-serving mission can become *meaningfully* involved in the decision-making processes in local universities as well as in setting higher education policy more generally. A serious commitment to developing these conditions would go a long way, as well, toward generating a truly revitalized and strengthened democratic culture.

REFERENCES

- Beardsworth, Adam. 2011. “How Much Is Too Much?: Obligation, Ambition, and Coercion in the Sessional Contract.” *English Studies in Canada*, 37 (1): 9-12.
- Bradshaw, James and Josh Wingrove. 2012. “As Student Stress Hits Crisis Levels, Universities Look to Ease Pressure.” *The Globe and Mail*, December 2. (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/as-student-stress-hits-crisis-levels-universities-look-to-ease-pressure/article5902668/>).
- Campbell, Marie and Frances Gregor. 2002. *Mapping Social Relations: A Primer in Institutional Ethnography*. Toronto: Garamond.
- Catano, Vic, Lori Francis, Ted Haines, Hareesh Kirpalani, Harry Shannon, Bernadette Stringer, and Laura Lozanski. 2010. “Occupational Stress in Canadian Universities.” *International Journal of Stress Management* 17 (3): 232-258.
- Collini, Stefan. 2013. “Sold Out.” *The London Review of Books* 35(20): 3-12.
- CAUT/ACCPU. 2013. “Mass Protest on University of Manitoba Campus.” *CAUT/ACPPU Bulletin* 60 (3). (https://www.cautbulletin.ca/en_article.asp?ArticleID=3607)
- Hearn, Alison. 2010. “Exploits in the Undercommons.” Pp. 205-211 in *Academic Callings: The University We Have Had, Now Have, and Could Have*, edited by Janice Newson and Claire Polster. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.

- Kramer, Leslie. 2012. "The Road Ahead for Student Loan ABS." *Securitization Intelligence*, October 22. (http://www.securitizationintelligence.com/Article/3106685/The-Road-Ahead-For-Student-Loan-ABS.html#.Ul6u_hDRiHM).
- Lunau, Kate. 2012. "The Mental Health Crisis on Campus," *MacLean's Magazine*, Sept 5th. (<http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education>)
- Mills, Nicolaus. 2012. "The Corporatization of Higher Education." *Dissent. A Quarterly of Politics and Culture*. (<http://www.dissentmagazine.org/issues/fall-2012>)
- Newstadt, Eric. 2013. "The Value of Quality: Capital, Class, and Quality Assessment in the Re-making of Higher Education in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Ontario." Doctoral dissertation, Toronto: York University.
- Rajagopal, Indhu. 2002. *Hidden Academics: Contract Faculty in Canadian Universities*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Rushowy, Kristin. 2014. "Duguid Defends Extended Funding." *The Toronto Star*, January 22, 2014, p. A6.
- Saunders, Doug. 1992. "Space Academy Inc.: Bidding for Canada's University on the Final Frontier." *Our Schools/Our Selves* 4(1): 26-40.
- Smith, Dorothy. 1987. *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Tedesco, Theresa. 2012. "The Uneasy Ties Between Canada's Universities and Wealthy Business Magnates." Retrieved January 8, 2013. (<http://business.financialpost.com/2012/03/09/influence-u-the-uneasy-ties-between-canadas-universities-and-wealthy-business-magnates/>).
- Toronto Star. 2013. "Toronto Students Worry About Family, School, and Future, Survey Finds." *The Toronto Star*, Feb. 12. (<http://www.thestar.com/yourtoronto/education/2013/02/12/torontostudents-worry-about-family-school-and-future-survey-finds.html>).
- Weinrib, Julian, Glen A. Jones, Amy Scott Metcalfe, Donald Fisher, Yves Gingras, Kjell Rubenson, and Iain Snee. 2013. "Canada: Canadian University Academics' Perceptions of Job Satisfaction — '...The Future Is Not What It Used To Be.'" Pp. 83-102 in *Job Satisfaction Around the Academic World*, edited by Peter James Bentley, Hamish Coates, Ian R. Dobson, Leo Goedegebuure, and V. Lynn Meek. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.