

► [Home](#) ► [Contributions](#) ► **GOVERNMENTALITY & COMMODIFICATION—THE KEYS TO YANQUI ACADEMIC HIERARCHY**

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HOME PROJECT CALENDAR CONTRIBUTIONS MULTIMEDIA CONTACTS LINKS

roundmenu

[First Round of Discussion](#)

[Second Round of Discussion](#)

GOVERNMENTALITY & COMMODIFICATION—THE KEYS TO YANQUI ACADEMIC HIERARCHY

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Eighteenth-century European Enlightenment knowledge invented social collectives and liberal individuals. Over time, populations have been understood through surveillance and policy interventions—the social body assayed and treated for its insufficiencies. Governing people has always meant, most critically, combining science and government to maximize civic management and economic productivity. Such developments coincided with and cross-pollinated the economic transformations that forged industrial capitalism. In this brief piece, I aim to explain how the history of US universities is characterized by an emphasis on governmentality, in the sense of research under the banner of public weal and teaching that reaches into the lives of the populace to train it in self-regulation; and an emphasis on commodification, as research becomes animated more by corporate needs, students are increasingly addressed as consumers of education, and paymasters and administrators accrete authority over academics. As these tendencies increase hierarchization. Many who write within the governmentality tradition do so in a way that assumes an incommensurability with Marxist critique. I have no logical reason for this. I acknowledge that th

neoliberal governing-at-a-distance has its own materialities; they fit the agenda and methods of corporatization as much as governmentality. In both tendencies have been at play since the emergence of higher education as part of public culture in the years ago, but that neoliberalism has maximized its influence in recent times. The classic US model of higher education aims to equip students with a liberal education that respects knowledge of a topic and for a purpose rather than simply knowledge by a particular person. It places its faith in a discourse of professionalism and expertise rather than charisma. It urges people to believe in and exchange knowledge, not secret magic. In other words, it says that if someone truly wants to know how television works, they should have permitted access to this intelligence. But she must not be allowed to subscribe to digital cable simply based on her credit rating. The system of governmental and university research, industrial training, and accreditation that impels the culture industry regulates this fraction of a culture industry. She is not so based on the idea of audiovisual communication as from a deity to an elect whose knowledge and power can be attained by others. Of course, liberalism also includes the concept of human capital—that there should be an investment of time, money, and training by both employer and subject to create a corps of able-minded technical employees and willing patriots who are taught to respect the professoriate—the idea of higher education as a public good and students as investors. Hence Bruce Johnston, Chancellor of the State University of New York, introduced the concept of 'learning productivity' as part of student evaluation beginning to 'assume greater personal responsibility for learning.' How did this state of affairs come to pass? In the 1830s, when the first waves of white-settler immigration across classes began, US higher education generated practices and knowledges for use by business and to integrate the population. By the time the country rapidly industrializing, new chiefs of industry envisaged partnerships with tertiary education to create a skilled workforce. Abraham Lincoln's Republican Party enabled this alliance via the land-grant system. From the first, it flowered at the turn of the century when corporations were placing more and more faith in science via electromagnetism, geology, chemistry,

electricity. By the twenties, Harvard had its business school, New York University its Macy's-endorsed retail school, and Cornell its hotel school. No wonder, then, that Thorstein Veblen referred to US universities as 'competitors in merchantable instruction.' His words remain a prescient diagnosis (even if their style looks old-fashioned). After two World Wars provided additional pump-prime capital and premia on practicality from the Federal Government, big research schools actually expanded their capital during the Depression. Today, a financial dependence on external sources is twinned with what we might call the managerial fallacy, a process whereby both government and university administrators construct corporate forms of their desired other. This not only makes for untimely decisions in the direction of research and teaching, but on the administration of universities, which are increasingly subject to puerile managerial warlockcraft superstitions of 'excellence' and 'quality control.' Academic institutions have come to resemble the entities they now serve—they have been transformed into big businesses. Major research schools, particularly private ones, are also land-grant universities, and research-and-development surrogate universities. Administrators and fundraisers lauding it over Federal Decanal apparatchiks have essentially replaced academic governance. College bureaucrats are making a full chief-executive-officer stature. The mimetic fallacy also leads to more and more forms of surveillance from outside. Regional accrediting institutions vouch for the quality of US degrees have been in place for a century. But since the 1970s, we have seen even more performance-based evaluations of teaching conducted at the departmental and Decanal level, rather than in the standard of an overall school. Today, such methods are used by 95% of departments. These systems directly tie funding to outcomes, in keeping with the prevailing belief of policy mandarins—their restless quest to conduct universities like corporate elves *manqués*. As successive surveys came along—the 1990s variety was Total Quality Management—administrators fell in line with the *doxa*. Along the way, Faculty-student ratios worsened, reporting, surveillance, and administration grew in power. Many of us who have actually worked for universities and government know what laughably inefficient

they can be—but then, those who watch academic research and teaching from the perch of administrators frequently have resentment in their eyes and underachievement on their résumés. In the research domain, the notion of mutual interest licenses partnerships between state, college, and industry, dating back to 19th-century museums, observatories, and agricultural experimentation outposts. The shop was really in vogue in the late 1950s. The Cold War stimulated growth, including federal and state subsidies. Considerable effort has gone into clarifying the significance of tailor-made priorities to governments and corporations. Consider linguistics (the scandal of language-spread policy science (Project Camelot in the 1960s); economic development (Triffin acting as plenipotentiary for the US to the European Economic Community and then as a European commissioner at the International Monetary Fund, just a few months later in the 1980s); sociobiology (defenses of male sexuality); and psychology (participating in torture during the Vietnam War on Islam). The very existence of communication research raises questions of ideological distortion. The discipline's formation under the sign of war and state activity and later corporate and foundation support. The same could be said of the policy sciences. Conceived as points of connection between democratic executive action, they have degenerated into exclusion. They lack articulation with everyday people, connoting pro-corporate/pro-Christian positions that turn contestable positions into absolutes, with consumer professors simultaneously performing objectivity and applicability. This history predates contemporary concerns about how to finance US research universities as the system lost relatively disinterested Cold-War style science in the early '90s. Today, it appears as though governmentalization and commodification have taken over their concerns and methods. Congress provides about a billion dollars in direct grants to universities, and peer-reviewed funds available through the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, whereas corporations gave US schools about US\$4.25 billion in 1985, the figure was US\$4.25 billion a decade later. NSF established dozens of engineering research centers in the 1980s with the expectation of "partnerships

between corporations and higher education. Such universities have effectively functioned as ongoing public works projects of "entrepreneurs." Industrial research parks now do the work of such schools as Texas, Massachusetts, and North Carolina, and Stanford. And MIT's media laboratory is a play-pen provided by corporations for well-meaning and apolitical graduate students working with implicit theories of possessive individualism—an ethos in which the latter may privately claim to be subversive of corporate paymasters, but where they do so in ways that are reminiscent of the dot-com boom's empty cyber utopianism. The extraordinary Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 permitted universities and educational institutions to own and commercialize their inventions, provided that the state can use them if it fits. Prior to the Act, research schools collectively filed for about 250 patents a year. Now the figure is over 5000. Perhaps 3000 new companies have emerged as a consequence of the legislation. It should come as no surprise that US universities are increasingly business-like, and are sometimes taking legal action against their own researchers who do not make as much money as possible. The idea of university in the public interest has been erased through amendments to state laws throughout the country that have quietly exempted publicly-funded scientists from conflict-of-interest responsibilities that apply to refuse workers and police officers. Medical drugs are a case in point. US drug companies have propelled marketing into the forefront of drug development, and pharmaceutical corporations (pharmacorps) deem old-school academic research and education too slow for their financial rhythms. For example, evidence suggests that marketing as much as research determines how to develop a new chemical compound, and it has been uncovered: whether it will be announced as a counter to depression or ejaculation; whether it will be promoted in journal x or y; and which scholars will be chosen to front it and produce consensus about its benefits. Leading figures in medical schools and professions routinely accept monetary and travel gifts from pharmaceuticals as a quiet quid pro quo for favorable publicity of their work. Pharmacorps budgets for marketing to clinicians have skyrocketed, and they pressure medical journals to publish favorable research findings in return for lucrative advertising copy. Major advertising agencies that work with

pharmaceutical companies, such as Interpublic, \ Omnicom, have subsidiaries like Scirex that even clinical trials. Known as medical education and communications companies, they brag about 'going to the test tube.' The desire for sales and speed need to observe protocol meet, ironically, in scholarly journals, which the giant pharmaceutical multinational describes—rather alarmingly—as a means 'to succeed directly or indirectly, the marketing of our products.' wonder, then, that medical education and communications companies provide ghostwriting services, paid for by corporations, that deliver copy to academics and clinicians—and pay them for signing it. One in ten of the leading US medical outlets are today estimated to be work of ghosts, and 90% of articles about pharmaceuticals published in the Journal of the American Medical Association derive from people paid by pharmaceuticals. Faculty for corporations by allowing their names to go on articles that they have neither researched nor written—world like footballers or swimmers who have never read, let alone penned, their 'autobiographies.' In fact, these corporate subsidiaries write the papers for academics. The prevalence of ghostwriting has led the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors to establish criteria that require authorship attribution to who undertakes the research and writing that generates manuscripts. It's good to see that editors of the medical journals are speaking out against these practices. But next time you are perusing a CV filled with endless four-page articles signed by 27 people who are working together on pharmaceuticals in a laboratory field, or clinical trials, you might want to ask whether the real 'author' was even listed. And you might begin with the assumption that the sciences and medicine are at the heart of scholarly rigor. When Barthes wrote of 'the author,' and Foucault described writers as 'a function,' their ideas were belittled by many. But with these insights, perhaps it is time to name and shame the figures who produce so much 'scholarly' literature and to expose the farcical faculty who function as the purveyors of this deceit—perched atop research schools. Turning away from research, we can see a tendency across the higher degree-granting sector of transferring the cost of

schools away from governments and towards students are regarded more and more as consumers who manage their own lives, and invest in their own capital. In 1980-81, the three levels of government accounted for 48.3% of funding, whereas the private sector accounted for 38% in 1995-96. This trend towards reliance on private sources has doubled student debt between 1992 and 2000. This is a common trend across US higher education—the crisis of student debt in an era when tertiary studies are financed more at personal cost. For a decade and a half, student debt increases have outstripped inflation, rocketing to levels that are stagnant levels of Federal aid to students. As a result, corporate lenders have become central to financing undergraduate degrees. Private debt has more than doubled in the last five years, to US\$17.3 billion in 2005 while Federal loans are capped at a 6.8% interest rate while private ones can soar as high as credit-card levels. New legislation makes defaulting on such loans a bankruptcy virtually impossible. So even as students are increasingly being told—rightly—that only a college education can deliver a middle-class lifestyle, they are accumulating debts of US\$100,000. And that's before they enter professional schools to become lawyers or doctors when they will need much bigger loans. Shifting the burden onto students to be financially responsible for their education supposedly makes them keener learners, while the increased additional scrutiny of the classroom is said to allow a space of traditionally unequal relations of power. A Foucaultian analysis will not do. First, as more funding in fact comes from private sources, it is as if universities are acting governmentally to ensure returns on investments, both ideologically and monetarily. The treatment of students as liberal agents both distorts their actual subject-positions, and under-prepares them for the obedience and absence of free speech required in many workplaces, in addition to adding to the central contradiction of has-been and never-were academic administrators and working scholars. And what of those working scholars? The world of hiring varies enormously, based on the structures that divide academia. My department is currently searching for two jobs. They are not in the scientific or professional categories that carry salary loading. Candidates won't be expecting, say, US\$200,000

funds with which to build their research in the e
large grants that will help pay for university adr
Nor will they expect to be remunerated as thou
suffering the slings and arrows of opportunity c
working in corporate America. I am speaking at
privileged few who have tenure or tenure-track
Research-One schools. Most people teaching in
are freeway professors who travel feverishly bet
teaching jobs, cobbling together a living, or folk
time in second-tier schools with gigantic course
the top universities, there is also great variety.
full professor of cinema studies, American studi
American studies at NYU, I was paid four-fifths
of the average starting untenured assistant prof
law school, and one tenth of the salary of a par
advanced assistant professor in the medical sch
worked on fertility drugs, so this figure was not
cohort). How did I know this? In the case of the
through senior people who told me. In the case
medical school, even private institutions are obl
Internal Revenue to disclose their top three sale
view. In general, divide-and-conquer is the leitr
schools. However, the notion that one's income
privacy is a technique for preventing employees
sharing information and hence being able to lob
collectively. This is aided by the Supreme Court
decision, which holds that full-time faculty at pr
universities are managerial employees, and hen
right to engage in collective bargaining, i.e. via
wager that such schools make is that you won't
what you don't know you can have. One thing's
negotiations for our current positions on offer w
complex as those involving a guy I knew who r
Ivy League school a few years ago and told me
department had to work overtime to guarantee
US\$500,000 a year personal travel budget. Nor
equate to the person I used to work with whose
promised her time and money for weekly visits
city to ensure continuity with her preferred ther
these discussions will differ from those entered
thousands of adjuncts each year as they await l
phone calls and messages asking them to teach
hundreds of students, because full-time faculty

their 'own' work. The discussions won't reference the experience of students looking for the 'professor' they had last quarter, who didn't have an office, who was gone back this year—and is forgotten by all concerned. The personnel office, which has closed her file, and she goes out again for the reserve army of the professoriate to emerge from freeway hell in time of need. And so on. Apart from the large number of undergraduate students and cultural-studies professors watching reality-TV shows, the idea of the makeover resonates monumentally in elite colleges. Several high-profile schools have undergone dramatic transformations in recent times. The first instance was probably Duke University. Set up and supported by vast money and plantation history, the North-Carolina school spent vast sums of money from the 1980s in order to elevate itself into the top echelon of Research-1 universities, hiring people from all across the world to improve its standing. In the early 1990s, NYU decided to do something. It embarked on a massive fundraising campaign amongst its trustees and others who were keen to be on scene as major benefactors in the Manhattan place. Following Duke's model, NYU decided that it needed to improve its standing in the basics of a university: law and sciences. It already had highly-ranked law and medical schools, but they are professional entities as much as research centres and do not generate scholarly work in the same way that mathematics and history can. They carry the power they exercise in the university and the wider society. Studies indicated that a massive influx of new faculty into the arts and sciences could have an immediate and significant impact on the quality of graduate applications, and then on to undergraduates. In the next decade, NYU went from a second-rate commuter college to having top-notch students from all 50 states and all over the world. How were professors attracted to move? High salaries, New York City, buying whole department chairs, stars company, light or non-existent teaching loads, generous travel money, spousal hires, and a series of other things that made a difference. What was this like for those who were already in place? The Law School didn't care—it had always been independent financially and managerially, other than the naming of a Dean. The Medical School was also independent on its own version of a pressing national issue: what to

elephants (AKA teaching hospitals). The low-rer professional schools, like Education and the Arts out, because they didn't fit the paradigm, and e or no power on campus other than as public syr who had toiled away in lowly-ranked arts and sc departments were variously flattered and anger sudden appearance of superstars and their bag psyches, somas, libidos, and lofts. The latest sc this model is the University of Southern Califorr in south-central Los Angeles, where the rebellio after the Rodney King trial of 1992, USC has lor bastion of wealthy, not-very-smart white studer faculty skirting an area of multicultural poverty. excellent professional schools, and also boasted athletics department; but in the basic research much. 'USC' was widely regarded as standing fc of Spoilt Children.' No longer. Nowadays, school raided for top talent refer to USC as the 'Univer Colleagues.' All the money that comes each tim team wins is now being cycled into buying the t across the basic disciplines. In New York, the ch to look good alongside other private schools, nc nearest Ivy League representatives, Columbia a In California, the point of comparison is public s notably the University of California system's lea UCLA and Berkeley. It will be a while before US(compete seriously with those testaments to the public-cultural investment. But it will get there. lesson here, it is that the coarseness of commu and homely professors can be made beautiful. I remaketh the university. Neoliberal 'reformers' i countries are fond of referring to the decentraliz market model of US colleges as a beacon. The t this model's success relies on long-established, ruling-class wealth, in the case of the Ivy Leagu competitive boosterism by individual States, in the public sector. When the actual costs of runn universities are passed on to students, the resu devastating. And the crisis contributes to a wide problem of gigantic personal indebtedness. It d context of governmentality and commodification recipes for academic hierarchy, Yanqui-style.

[< Prev](#)

[\[Back \]](#)

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