

Gender and the Restructured University

Changing Management and
Culture in Higher Education

Edited by
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Alison Mackinnon

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Foreword

Ann Oakley

One way to define the subject of this book is as a series of all-encompassing concepts: gender; patriarchy; knowledge; power. But some would argue that these concepts come tarnished with the ideological baggage of 1970s pre-postmodern politics; they thus lack a passport that convincingly admits them to the discourses of many contemporary commentators on what is wrong with modern culture, both inside and outside universities. This suggests that we need to find another, more politically acceptable way of saying what the book is about: what it is that worries (some of) us about the impact on human beings of developments in education today.

However, this tension between political and depoliticized ways of seeing and understanding is absolutely central to the book's problematic. It has never been possible to speak about women or gender in ways that are *non-political*; some social constructs are indissolubly *about* power. Here women really are in a class of their own; linking the public and the private through their reproductive and sexual labour, women and all discourses about them always pose a threat of boundary breaking that strikes at the heart of culture itself.

What *is* happening in higher education today? Why does it matter, and to whom? Again, the subject of much of the discussion in this book can be summarized as a set of associated concepts: globalization; commodification; privatization; corporatization; managerialism; credentialism; bureaucratization. On the level of personal experience, these characterizations reduce to the perception among many people working in universities that their places of work are becoming more and more like factories; staff 'man' assembly lines in a tightly timetabled and controlled culture, supervised by managers and bosses whose prime concern is with discrete and easily quantifiable deliverables that roll off the assembly line: students are taught – whatever 'teaching' means; research is carried out – but valued for its financial, rather than intellectual contribution against 'overheads'; work is published – with the contribution of the publications noted to schema of assessment and 'performativity' rather than to knowledge. The value of

what happens in universities can then be represented neatly as a formulaic sum of all these activities rather than its benefit to science, scholarship or understanding.

It is hard to say what exactly is driving these developments, or when they first began to take a hold. 'Campus' fiction, the locus of much revealing criticism about academia, suggests that the conflict between the alternate images of universities as businesses and as repositories of disinterested scholarship is a long-standing one (Proctor 1957). Similarly, the interrogation of power as 'academic' or otherwise has been around for a long time (Rossen 1993). The state of academia must reflect broader social processes; since globalization ultimately affects everything, it stands to reason that the 'knowledge economy' will also be altered. The reduction of state funding to universities and the general move to a corporate profit culture are other relevant forces. Surprisingly, there has been little attempt to document systematically either the extent or the shape of these changes in the way universities work, or to consider what kinds of impact they might be having on staff, students or knowledge – one of the things that universities supposedly exist for.

But do they? What *is* knowledge, apart, of course, from being, like women, inseparable from power? One of the problems here concerns the relationship between women and universities both before and after restructuring. In the old ideal of universities as ivory towers, women were excluded from the working practices of disembodied academic brilliance. This led Virginia Woolf, among others, to question the nature of the knowledge-train making its way 'like a caravanserie' across the desert with a few women bringing up the tail: 'Above all, where is it leading us, the procession of educated men?' Woolf inquired.

Let us never cease from thinking – what is this 'civilisation' in which we find ourselves? What are these ceremonies and why should we take part in them? What are these professions and why should we make money out of them? Where in short is it leading us, the procession of the sons of educated men?

(Woolf 1992: 244)

We know that whatever is represented as gender-neutral is likely to obscure the power relations of gender; the 'people position' hides masculinity as the dominant agenda (Hanmer and Hearn 1999). It is simply fiction that tests of excellence are neutral and that merit is an objective assessment. Women 'fail' to gain inclusion because they are judged in systems set up by men reflecting male standards and criteria. This applies, for example, to bureaucracy as one of the currently maligned aspects of university life. The modern western bureaucracy is essentially hierarchical (Weber 1947) and is based on sets of values that depend on a particular configuration of gender relations (Ferguson 1984). Ease of communication in bureaucratic organizations, for instance, is promoted by limiting managerial jobs

to those who are socially homogenous. Male homosociability is therefore fundamental to the system. Novels about universities (e.g. Bradbury 1975; Lodge 1985) contain vivid illustrations of how this operates – though a kind of masonic association between male virility and ‘success’ at all strata within the university.

The forms of restructuring discussed in this book are shifting the epistemological framework of universities away from traditional western humanism. It could be argued that this is almost a precondition of women’s inclusion; the difficulty lies, rather, with timing and context. Had restructuring happened at the same time as 1970s feminism and sex equality legislation, when discussions about gender and patriarchy were almost obligatory, the outcome may well have been very different. After all, there has to be something very attractive to the marginalized about a culture that stresses the need for open, codifiable procedures, and that takes apart such potentially inefficient and unfair concepts as tenure. But when the culture of bureaucracy and commodification is combined with a disregard – flagrant in its implicitness – for the way power operates, the result is bound to be discriminatory. We know enough about the world we live in to understand that it is predicated on a whole range of ‘isms’: sexism, racism, classism, ageism, and so forth. The very *institutionalization* of these practices means that they will *always* happen unless there are conscious and concerted efforts to prevent them.

This is a brave, critically engaging and challenging book. It tangles with difficult and unpopular questions, and tries to draw our attention back to these basics – of what happens in an unfair world where there is no overarching commitment to justice and equity as primary goals. Its conclusions will resonate with many academics who are experiencing an increasing sense of alienation in their everyday working lives from the central goals that led many of us into universities in the first place: the idea that we might be able to make some contribution, however small, to the forms of knowledge and understanding that make living on this planet a more comfortable and intelligible destiny. As one of the characters in a David Lodge novel puts it, ‘It’s not a management issue, it’s a moral issue’ (cited in Rossen 1993: 88). This book pushes us through hard-hitting analysis and theorizing about gender and the institutionalization of knowledge to see some of the ways in which the malign process and effects of restructuring can be resisted from within. There *are* different ways of doing things; we simply lack sufficient publicly acknowledged experience and evidence of alternative visions. Ironically, of course, it is precisely the kind of engagement with knowledge production represented in the chapters of this book that demonstrates how the marginalized are much more likely than their masters to have such visions. The marginalized live in more than one world; developing a capacity to understand multiple worlds is a condition of their survival. Intrinsic to this capacity is the art of making connections. And making connections is surely one critical definition of knowledge, whatever world we inhabit.

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Introduction: Globalization, Academia and Change

Alison Mackinnon and Ann Brooks

The global knowledge economy: mapping a context

Channeling knowledge flows into new sources of technological innovation has become an academic task, changing the structures and functions of the university.

(Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff 1997: 1)

Knowledge, the new resource for economic performance is not in itself economic. It cannot be bought or sold. The *fruits* of knowledge, such as the income or patent, can be bought or sold.

(Drucker 1995: 267, original emphasis)

The notion of the global knowledge economy has come to dominate universities in Anglophone countries at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Where did that notion come from, and how did it come to be such a potent force in shaping universities? And, as we specifically ask in this volume, what implications follow for the gendered nature of higher education? The answer is complex and, as the chapters of this book indicate, requires an analysis of the implications of the global knowledge economy, of new technologies and the new managerial styles and cultures that accompany dominant economic theories. The notion of a global economy inevitably privileges economic explanations and is the subject of increasing contestation from a number of perspectives. Sociologist Saskia Sassen, for instance, asks what are the strategic sites where processes of globalization can be studied (Sassen 1998: 85). The university is one such site, one where issues concerning the global information economy, the notion of knowledge work and the role of women intersect, revealing new and disturbing possibilities for gender regimes. The book addresses both aspects of the globalization process, focusing on economic change and its impacts, and on the university as a strategic site of global processes. We focus at times on the impact of the

global economy on the university, at others on the university as a site where processes of globalization are being played out.

It is claimed that the Fordist era of high wages, mass production and mass consumption, which characterized the established industrial countries from 1940 to 1970, is over (Slaughter and Leslie 1997: 33). Further, the rise of Japan and other Asian countries 'destabilized the bipolar world trading patterns' and contributed to the perception of 'disturbing decline among the established industrial countries' (p. 33). In addition their incisive impact in terms of redefining the nature of 'the new economy' set the agenda for the rapid emergence of the global knowledge economy driven by the new technologies and the 'new entrepreneurialism'.

Responses to those changing conditions tended to crystallize around neo-liberal explanations and prescriptions for action. This particular perspective, emanating from the Chicago school of economics, emphasizes the role of the market in economic success, seeing the state as less important, indeed as a drag on the tendency of capital and corporations to operate unfettered. In Australia, Canada, the USA and the UK, neo-liberal explanations have been widely accepted, albeit in varying degrees; the role of the state is in the process of being wound back. The same might have been said of New Zealand until very recently. Global social democratic patterns of government, captured in the Blair model in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, set the standard for a strong commitment to the global knowledge economy. Socially conservative political economic policies, while vigorously contested, seem nevertheless to have prevailed as the official response to increased global competition.

Slaughter and Leslie point to 'at least four far-reaching implications [of neo-liberalism] for higher education' in their study of Australia, Canada, the USA and the UK. The first implication is the 'constricting of moneys available for discretionary activities such as post-secondary education' (1997: 36). The second is 'the growing centrality of technoscience and fields closely involved with markets, particularly international markets' (p. 37). The third implication is 'the tightening relationships between multinational corporations and state agencies concerned with product development and innovation', while the fourth sees an 'increased focus of multinationals and established industrial countries on global intellectual property strategies' (p. 37). As a result these authors, citing a recent British White Paper, see post-secondary education in all four countries as 'directed towards national "wealth creation" rather than a traditional concern with the liberal education of undergraduates' (p. 37). Hence we see the redefinition of many professionals as 'knowledge workers' (Jones 2000; Brooks, this volume, Ch. 1); those who see knowledge as a commodity, a resource to help create wealth and competitive advantage. This focus on wealth creation, we will argue, has implications for issues of gender equity in universities and threatens the fragile commitment to equity goals adopted over the past decade.

A further stark implication, not canvassed in Slaughter and Leslie's work, is the threat to the continued existence of state-funded public universities

in Anglophone countries in the form we currently understand. The increasing tendency of universities to form commercial spin-off companies opens them to the charge of being part of the private sector, or 'hybrid creatures' (Leydesdorff and Etzkowitz 1997, cited in Marceau 2000). This weakens their case for special protection and public funding. Thus they are subject to the provisions of international treaties and agreements, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Services (GATS), which require all private institutions to create a 'level playing field' for each other. In this process publicly funded universities may well lose some of their autonomy while private providers gain access to scarce public funding (Griffin Cohen 2000).

A note of caution is useful at this point. There are considerable historical continuities in links between universities and commercial interests. The university-economy nexus is not new. What is leading to the anxieties and concerns expressed in this book is the speed of change and its all-embracing nature, seeming, as it does, to leave no room for the questions that are not able to be easily commodified.

Central to international competitiveness are the variously named components of the technology revolution: information technology (IT), artificial intelligence (AI), advanced telecommunications and biotechnology. As various authors point out, 'technology is at once science and product. It collapses the distinction between knowledge and commodity; knowledge becomes technology' (Kevles and Hood 1992, cited in Slaughter and Leslie 1997: 38). Not only does the increased focus on technoscience have gendered implications in that women are less likely to be involved in those areas, but the concomitant time-space compression that IT fosters (Harvey 1993) has a different impact on the lives of men and women. The need to 'mastermind the volatility', in Harvey's terms to be 'highly adaptable and fast-moving in response to market shifts' (1993: 287), has differing resonances for those whose predominant location is in the more reflective areas and those who can heed the market's call. The race to compete with new technologies, and new biotechnologies, leads to an increasingly competitive environment in universities as researchers and administrators jostle for scarce funding.

Increasingly innovation is seen as a driver for economic growth in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries wishing to guarantee highly paid jobs (Marceau 2000). 'Innovation and high levels of technology are more important as competitive weapons in knowledge-intensive industries but are increasingly important to the success of all industries', claims Marceau (p. 217). The urgent need for innovation and the knowledge underpinning innovation is at the base of the idea of a learning economy, she argues. And what is the basis of support for a learning economy? Marceau claims it is one 'where organizations collaborate at least as much as they compete' (p. 219). She points out that in Australia business research and development are dropping, and innovation is also demonstrated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to have dropped from

the early 1990s. So too is investment in training. Hence it is to the universities that we must look for innovation. But although lip service is paid to collaboration, in practice the chase for funds and the systems of promotion and reward rest on a highly competitive system, and one becoming increasingly so. In this intensely competitive world, attempts to collaborate to gain competitive advantage are fraught with tension.

Where do women stand within this contradictory space? They are reputed to be more collaborative in style, yet new programmes of executive staff development for women often position them to become simultaneously collaborative yet competitive and entrepreneurial in response to changing university cultures. For example, the Women's Executive Development program (WEXDEV), developed at several Australian Technology Network¹ (ATN) universities, runs courses for senior women in universities on how to be more 'intrapreneurial' and entrepreneurial, and how to attract industry partners (see also King 1993; David and Woodward 1998). This programme, highly regarded as a model both within Australia and beyond, contains some curiously contradictory aspects. Based on the notion of women as a group, and built on a sense of collegiality strengthened through mentoring, which is a key element of the programme, it prepares women for the fierce competition they will face as they progress through the university career structure. Revealingly, a debate on the programme's electronic discussion site on forms of dress and self-presentation elicited the most vigorous debate so far: for many women, a sense of academic identity and appropriate form of self-presentation were still troubling. Do women feel increasingly insecure, we wonder, as particular forms of technological and commercial innovation and knowledge are valorized at the expense of others? Perhaps they are more attuned to Harvey's dictum that 'image becomes all important in competition', that 'image serves to establish an identity in the marketplace' (Harvey 1993: 288). A key aim of the programme, however, is to create support networks for women in universities. These may prove to be crucial at times of major change, providing a retreat from, and a means of mobilization against, the increasingly managed arenas of university life.

An interesting question in relation to innovation is the inevitability of the technological 'lock-in' (Etzkowitz 1997: 151) in twenty-first century universities. Perhaps we are being too pessimistic. As neo-liberal international trade agendas have been vociferously contested in places such as Seattle, Davos, Washington and Melbourne, so too social movements and concerned social actors who represent civil society (and increasingly operate through networks), contest the dominance of technologically based agendas in research. As Etzkowitz argues, social and political movements such as environmental movements, AIDS pressure groups and anti-nuclear campaigners claim the right to have public research funds expended to find social solutions (1997: 151). Such claims, if successful, 'can provide the impetus to break out of technological "lock-ins"' (p. 151). There is more at stake than technology in these contestations around research agendas: the social

issues and the social policy research areas where they are debated are more likely to be those where women academic staff are disproportionately located.

In the face of increasing corporatization of universities and of the growing emphasis on technology and innovation described above, the organizational cultures of universities are experiencing massive change. The direct effects of scarcer public funding – restructuring and downsizing – continue to reverberate through the higher education systems of Anglophone countries. This alone leads to considerable insecurity, and indeed a climate of anxiety in some institutions, as academic staff ask themselves who will be next (Kenway and Langmead 1998: 28). What are the gendered consequences of that restructuring? Research in this area suggests that hard-won gender equity goals may be at risk (see Bacchi, this volume, Ch. 5). Women located in the humanities and social sciences, sometimes seen as distant from technological and corporate goals, are seen to be dispensable by ‘senior management’ more attentive to bottom lines than to equity goals. Can women in senior positions, who are frequently centrally involved in developing equity goals, mitigate the damage of corporate restructuring? Many of the chapters in this volume engage with these debates within the contexts of specific university cultures or in terms of national agendas.

Changing management cultures

The rules of the game that used to apply outside academia have become the standard in university faculties too . . .

. . . the dialogue between equal partners [the academic and the entrepreneurial world] takes place because one of the actors has agreed to speak the other’s language.

(Sutz 1997: 11–12)

Sutz’s comments lead us to consider whose rules and whose language have prevailed within the reshaping of university cultures. Who has agreed to speak the other’s language and with what results? Hand in hand with corporate restructuring of universities comes the language of quality management and its effects on the individual subjectivities of university academics. Chapters by Brooks (Ch. 1) and by Blackmore and Sachs (Ch. 2) in this volume address this issue. The literature of organizational theory is useful here. A recent debate underlines the way in which total quality management programmes in organizations ‘increase productivity, but the autonomy they offer actually increases dependence’ (Willmott 1993, cited in Feldman 1999: 230). This is a point taken up by Marginson in relation to the ‘management of research’ in corporatizing universities. The crucial issue for researchers, says Marginson, is not autonomy but independence (2000: 211). He claims that ‘the privileging of competition legitimates research scarcity, and managerial control via scarcity’ (p. 190). Hence research is increasingly ‘managed’, priorities are set and performance is

measured, often in relation to short-term ends rather than open-ended inquiry. This inevitably leads to 'homogenization of research activity within and across disciplines'. Marginson cites a university research administrator struggling with the challenge 'to make the butterflies fly in formation' (p. 192). For many women researchers in the humanities and social sciences, particularly those involved in feminist critiques of existing knowledge, that image is ominous: they wish to disrupt those formations, indeed to fly in quite contrary ways.²

Organizations, including universities, are urged to reinvent themselves as 'learning' organizations. Critics of this perspective point out that 'organizational knowledge is seen as a carrier of power relations that subjugate individuals for organizational purposes' (Feldman 1999: 228). Hence as power/knowledge 'discourses structure the world, they at the same time structure the person's subjectivity, providing him/her with a particular social identity and way of being in the world' (Alvesson and Deetz 1996, cited in Feldman 1999: 230). For many, the increasing power/knowledge regimes lead to greater individualization encouraged by organizations' focus on competition, motivation and leadership. Further, Knights and Willmott argue, the situation becomes 'exploitative when we consider that as the individual attempts to meet organizational demands, this leads to competition between individuals as they all try to achieve scarce recognition' (Knights and Willmott 1989, cited in Feldman 1999: 231). Kenway and Langmead ponder the future of feminist knowledge, and feminist knowledge workers, who 'have always been oppositional knowledge workers within universities, challenging the tenets of established and "critical" disciplines and practices' (Kenway and Langmead 1998: 32), in this climate of greater individualization and scarce recognition.

The issue of restructuring raises significant issues for gendered patterns of management. There has long been a concern that women play a very small part in the higher levels of university management. Some are optimistic that the new climate offers potential for change. Yeatman, for instance, sees possibilities for those 'literate in the new technologies of governmental management' to capitalize on its supposed transparency and accountability and to open up 'the policy process of universities to issues of equity and participation' (Yeatman 1995: 104). Others are not so optimistic. In spite of the management strategies aimed at facilitating women's leadership, some point to the fact that women are 'more likely to be in part time or casual positions at the bottom of the hierarchy and not as likely to be in areas where they get market loadings or can negotiate salary packages' (Currie 1995: 50). Furthermore, others question to what extent women and leadership strategies represent a move away from a focus on equity issues, towards 'an examination of organizational barriers and cultures' as significant in the development of women's careers (Payne 1998: 40). Does a focus on leadership and culture lead to an acceptance of 'the corporate university with its obsessions with speed and utility' (Kenway and Langmead 1998: 32) at the expense of a more detailed critique of those 'obsessions'?

In 1993 Bradley warned that rapid industrial change threatened women's education and work and that women's bargaining power was likely to be eroded, with 'an apparent lack of strong and influential advocacy for women in the places where change is being negotiated' (1993: 23). Where, we might ask, is the most potent site for negotiating that change? Globalization theorists look beyond the university, indeed beyond the nation state, to the emerging transnational regimes and institutions. Sassen, for instance, argues that there is an expansion of international civil society, a 'contested space' where 'women can gain visibility as individuals and as collective actors' (Sassen 1998: 99). 'The needs and agendas of women are not necessarily defined exclusively by state borders', she claims. Sassen is speaking of international law and human rights but her suggestions strike a chord with women academics, as they did, over a century ago, with those concerned with women's suffrage, women's rights and educational opportunity. Is a new era of international collaboration in feminist work required in order to 'deconstruct those informational canons which will predominate in the future', as Kenway and Langmead suggest, to 'rework notions of the market, the global, national, regional and local' (1998: 31)?

Academic identities: resisting or colonized?

Paradoxically, as Feldman points out, power/knowledge relations are contingent, precarious: individuals can take advantage of contradictions in power/knowledge regimes and instigate 'a conscious strategy of resistance' (1999: 233). There are areas of indeterminacy that can be opened up. Townley (1993), for example, argues 'that permanent questioning is required to establish equality for women in patriarchal organizational cultures' (cited in Feldman 1999: 233). Permanent questioning is required, too, if 'feminist analysis of flow and speed in networks of power, of the disembeddings and re-embeddings brought about by the collapsing of space and time' (Kenway and Langmead 1998: 32) is to occur. The possibility of the resisting academic staff member exists. But what of the resisting researcher? Where research is being managed as an economic system, Marginson claims, academic identities (the self-as-researcher) are undergoing restructuring: research management 'colonizes the identities of researchers themselves' (2000: 193). Academics with an eye to the changing environment self-censor their research, turning away from inquiry chosen by preference to 'more institutionally strategic directions'; that is, those where 'performance' in attracting funding outweighs possibly more beneficial (but longer term) 'pure' research (p. 208). Who, we might ask, are turning away from their chosen research interests and becoming more strategic in their research goals? What are the gendered implications of such insights? Many women are likely to be trapped in the intensifying work climate, which leaves little room for research, and few incentives for new researchers.

'Building a knowledge-driven economy'

If knowledge is the electricity of the new informational-international economy, then the institutions of higher education are the power sources on which the new development process must rely.

(Castells 1994: 6)

Universities have been identified by a range of governmental, public and private institutions and corporate organizations as centrally positioned for the effective delivery of the knowledge economy. While tertiary sector institutions have always understood their *raison d'être* to be knowledge production and learning, their 'repositioning' as essential to the well-being of corporate success and the driving force of economic change has been something of a 'rude awakening'. As Prichard (2000: 188) observes, 'Universities, for example, become the incubators of the digital age (Aley 1997) as students and educators become knowledge workers or knowledge capitalists while the interests of corporations and universities converge . . . to produce a mutually supporting "knowledge infrastructure" (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff 1997)'.

However, the newly established significance of tertiary-sector institutions in the minds of corporations and governments alike (see OECD 1996; Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 1998) has been accompanied by a 'reconstruction of knowledge' to suit the specific needs of the knowledge economy. As a result tertiary education has become a highly corporatized and commercial experience for both 'knowledge workers' and consumers. While knowledge has always been seen as a means to an end for some, many recognized and enjoyed the intrinsic satisfaction of learning. In the context of the increasingly commercial focus of learning, knowledge has become a fully marketable commodity, marketed and advertised as such (see Marginson 1996, 1997). The emphasis is as much on consumption as it is on commodification. As Prichard notes:

The 'knowledge economy' demands lifelong knowledge users and producers. Tertiary education is regarded as a significant site on both counts. The effect is to accentuate the university not as a generator of knowledge goods, but as a site of consumption, much like a shopping mall, where knowledge is consumed (Thompson 1998; Ritzer 1996).

(Prichard 2000: 190)

Within this new culture of knowledge consumption, everyone is encouraged to become a knowledge consumer, an 'innovator' or an 'entrepreneur'. In *Competitive Futures: Building the Knowledge Driven Economy*, the British government encourages this drive: 'success in the knowledge driven economy requires entrepreneurship from everybody in a position to innovate' (DTI 1998: sect 41.4).³ Knowledge is being redefined from a position of intellectual engagement, and personal and professional growth and development, to an economic value. In addition knowledge and its 'economic value' can

be seen as a central point of intersection of corporate and academic life. A KPMG Knowledge Management report (1999) shows how individual knowledge is not valued in terms of the creativity or worth of the knowledge expert but merely in terms of its economic value to the organization.

The impact of the knowledge economy is not only having an impact on how knowledge is 'valued' but also on what kind of knowledge is seen as valuable. Within the framing of the 'new economy', science and technologies are seen as more relevant and valued areas of knowledge than the humanities and social sciences. As Jones notes: 'New forms of commodifying knowledge objects marginalise academics who are not identified with new discourses of knowledge work' (2000: 161).

Centrally positioned as 'drivers' of the knowledge economy are 'knowledge managers' within tertiary sector institutions. Prichard claims that it is

on bodies of the senior post-holders, in the management teams and in the micro-spaces of managerial offices where the bodies of 'managers' are oriented to these new 'realities' of 'knowing' . . . it is among the newly suited managerial elite of tertiary education that the body is most radically being worked on.

(2000: 192)

Who constitutes this 'newly suited managerial elite'? Can women and men fill those positions equally? And does it matter if that elite is gendered in particular ways?

This volume attempt to interrogate, critically engage with, and reflexively comment on many of the issues outlined, and more. Together and individually the chapters represent powerful contributions to issues that impact on a daily basis on their 'lived realities'. Academics from Australia, the UK and New Zealand have all experienced the global knowledge economy in significant ways with different degrees of resistance, but with a shared concern about the nature of knowledge and learning.

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Notes

1. The ATN represents a group of five universities whose origins were, at least partially, in former institutes of technology.
2. Nor are the humanities immune from attacks by neo-liberals (termed ‘economic rationalists’ in Australia). A recent report by Andrew Norton from the Victorian Centre for Independent Studies (Australia), entitled ‘Degrees of difficulty’, argues that there is an ‘overproduction’ of arts graduates, who are at risk of unemployment on graduation. This report sparked vigorous debate and a strong defence of the value of the liberal arts, and of education for its own sake, in contrast to purely vocational degrees. (See Norton 2000.)
3. As this volume goes to press, the Australian government has just released a much-awaited \$2.9 billion research package, entitled ‘Backing Australia’s Ability’ in order to ‘foster innovation’. ‘At the very heart of our plan’ said Prime Minister Howard, ‘is to turn Australian ideas into incomes and jobs for Australians’ (Howard 2001: 13).