

Activism on the Corporate Campus

It just doesn't have that you know what anymore

Rebecca Dolhinow

California State University, Fullerton

Student activists, like all activists, need space to organise, take part in actions, and educate their peers. On many campuses, these spaces can be a refuge for progressive students who may not find support for their activism in other spaces on campus. This article examines the development, function, and demise of one such space. In particular, this course of events is embedded in the concurrent processes of corporatisation and neoliberal enclosure taking place on universities across the United States. Student and faculty stories of increased supervision and 'Big Brother' inspired computer programs for tracking student "involvement" demonstrate unprecedented administrative reach into activism, its planning, and its implementation. The article is based on a decade long ethnographic study on a large public university campus in the US and smaller projects at similar institutions in California. The research is situated in the more general trends in the US over the same period through interviews with faculty at other institutions.

Keywords: activism, commons, corporatisation, neoliberalism, students

In the clear, critical light of day, illusory administrators whisper of our need for institutions, and all institutions are political, and all politics is correctional, so it seems we need correctional institutions in the common, settling it, correcting it. (Moten & Harney, 2011, p. 987)

When the budgets, curriculums, directives, and goals of universities across the world change so do the experiences of students. This is especially true for students who want to use their universities as sites for social change through activism. I saw multiple examples of this in my ethnographic research and my personal experiences working alongside student activists. My research points to Neoliberalism, as an agent of enclosure in public universities when they use administrative growth (or bloat) and restructuring to control and correct student activism through spatial appropriation on campus (Ginsberg, 2011). What the corporate university cannot control through enclosure it exerts control over through cooptation, sanitisation, and bureaucratisation

(Gould, 2003; Giroux 2014). Together, these processes of enclosure and depoliticisation move the university closer to the image and function of a private corporation. In this paper, I will use theories of the common and enclosure to examine tactics used by the neoliberal university to control student activism through the control of campus spaces. While this paper focuses on student activism in higher education in the United States, the processes by which university administrations react to student activism are converging globally as neoliberalism takes over higher education.

The recent appointment of Betsy DeVos, a conservative philanthropist with a strong and demonstrated desire to redesign public education in the US on a privatised model, as Secretary of Education in the US signals an unmistakable move at the highest levels of government toward corporate models of education. While neoliberal corporatisation has been a bipartisan process, many of the anti-corporate Obama era programs and benefits created for higher

education have been, or plan to be, cut or modified by DeVos and the Trump administration (Douglas-Gabriel 2017a; 2017b; Harris 2017a). The programs targeted are primarily those that create consumer protections for students who continue their education and need to postpone payment on existing loans while in school and for students in for-profit universities where student debt can be extreme (Carey, 2017). The very fact that students require 'consumer protections' while negotiating loans for university much as homebuyers do when signing mortgage notes speaks to the corporate mentality in higher education financing. The goal of student loans (as grants or work study) is shifting from making higher education more accessible for all as a moral imperative and national goal to just another financial relationship that should be left to the market to regulate. In this process it is, of course, the low-income and first-generation students who will be disproportionately affected (Harris, 2017b). It is more important than ever to understand the effects of the corporatisation of higher education. This research examines the ways in which university administrations' corporate actions disable student activism in very material and spatial ways.

This is not to say that student activism is over in the US, we certainly have seen the opposite of late (Ellin, 2016; Wong, 2015; Wong, 2016). Yet the recent well-documented and very productive student uprisings on campuses across the US and globally (Fairbanks, 2015) were not rooted on campus. While these actions are well executed and fruitful, it is less and less common for them to come from campus-based organisations. Influenced by successful groups like Black Lives Matter, Cop Watch and other community and student partnerships, students (even those in campus sanctioned groups) are organising themselves off campus outside of the increasingly disabling campus environment for activism. My research finds long-term, spatially-grounded, and student-led activism on campus has been one of the first activities challenged by corporate university administrations.

In the corporate model, universities work almost as hard to maintain their image as they do to educate their students. This focus on image, as you will see from my fieldwork, pushes universities to control as much as they possibly can on campus. Historically, activist work on universities has drawn wanted and unwanted attention to campuses.

Universities have quelled the activities as best they could to avoid the attention. My research shows the corporate university does more than its predecessors to avoid this attention through the control of activist work on campus. Yet there are topics on which the university must tread lightly. When students protest the actions of the university, the university must reply in some manner or risk worse attention. Recently, the majority of activism generated on campuses has focused on the student experience while actions on other topics is much less apparent. Students are protesting racism on campus and in the classroom, they are demanding trigger warnings, safety from sexual violence, and fighting tuition raises. Much of this work is done by specific identity-based groups of students. I argue, that the university encloses semi-autonomous activist spaces where varied coalitions can be formed and students have time

and space to work together. Without these spaces, identity based activism is the easiest alternative as many students are already active in identity-based groups. Activist work on topics which foster long-term social justice commitments to social change in general is changing in nature so dramatically

due to corporate controls on campuses, that this work is disappearing as identity-focussed and off-campus activism becomes more evident.

A word on terminology

The editors have done an excellent job situating this issue within the literature on neoliberalism and I am thankful not to have that task upon my shoulders. But I will take a moment to explain how and why I chose the terms I employ here. The term neoliberalism has been actively used to discuss and analyse economics, politics, and culture for decades now. In this time, the term has gained and lost much meaning. Neoliberalism is applied to many more things today than when the term was first used and has become very vague in its expansiveness. For this reason, I will situate my specific use of the term here. In my discussions of neoliberalism and activism in the past I focused on neoliberalism as a means to move power and wealth to an economic elite through governmentality and among others the control of non-governmental organisations (Dolhinow, 2010; Harvey, 2005). I believe this to still be the case. This can be seen in the current

Activist work on topics which foster long-term social justice commitments to social change in general is changing in nature so dramatically due to corporate controls on campuses, that this work is disappearing as identity-focussed and off-campus activism becomes more evident.

university through the stress on marketing the results of the education and not the education itself. The goal of higher education today appears to be producing students that make more money, while universities make more money through research sales and even making profits. From the US to the UK scholars are fighting against the growth of the for-profit university and mentality (Helm, 2016; Naussbaum, 2016).

Equally, if not more important for the study of activism, is the goal of neoliberalism to destroy all collectives. In a 1998 article in *Le Monde*, Pierre Bourdieu writes of neoliberalism as a 'political project' that calls 'into question any and all collective structures that could serve as an obstacle to the logic of the pure market' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2). This political project has not changed and the collective nature of activism is increasingly viewed as a serious threat by the neoliberal university. But since Bourdieu wrote these lines I see a change in the nature of neoliberalism, especially as manifested in universities. The all-important 'actually existing neoliberalism' is changing in nature and as it does these changes require new more accurate nomenclature (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Higher education is experiencing neoliberalism today through corporatisation. And while the effects of corporatisation are similar to those we would traditionally describe as neoliberal, there are important differences. Wendy Brown (2015) paints a picture of neoliberalism as both deeply entrenched and ever changing. It is this changing nature of neoliberalism that dictates the necessity of an examination of the corporate influence on the style of recent neoliberal reforms. According to Brown in neoliberalism's latest manifestation,

Both persons and states are constructed on the model of the contemporary firm, both persons and states are expected to comport themselves in ways that maximise their capital value in the present and enhance their future value, and both persons and states do so through practices of entrepreneurialism, self-investment, and/or attracting investors (Brown, 2015 p. 22).

The focus on individual responsibility is not new to neoliberalism yet the move to the entrepreneurial individual shifts the conversation toward a corporate ethos. This is especially clear in higher education when a degree becomes a consumer product rather than the result of an educational process.

Methods

More than 10 years ago I began an ethnographic study of student activist associations at two Regional

Comprehensive Universities in California. In this paper, I will focus on one of these universities (RCUA) and the trajectory of student activism in one space in particular in the era of neoliberal higher education on this campus. This group of like-minded progressive and social justice focused young adults found each other through a little known centre on campus that did social justice work. As the years went by I met and worked alongside many students from the 'Centre' in their activist endeavours (the 'Centre' is not the name of this space and should not be taken as standing in for 'the Centre' as is common when referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) centres). In my roles as an ethnographer and supporter of the Centre I developed an insight over time into both the lives and the work of the student activists, and the Centre's changing relationship to the University. As this institution and many others across the state of California moved toward a corporate model, the Centre became an example of what increasing corporate-style control of activism meant for student activists and their spaces. While my project began as an examination of the spaces activists create to foster their work (Sziarto & Leitner, 2010), it became clear over time that it was the movement of neoliberal-corporate higher education to destruct and reconstruct student spaces that was the real story here.

This realisation caused the project to widen to include universities across the nation and faculty perspectives as well. All of the data used here come from in-depth interviews and field notes. All names have been changed for anonymity.

A story of what was (possible)

The nostalgia for 'the university that was' is not new and comes from academics themselves (Collini, 2012, p.40; Donoghue, 2008; Ginsberg, 2011). Students usually pass through too quickly to see the change we lament. Yet recently change has been so rapid and disruptive that even students are aware of its vicissitudes. The students drawn to the Centre were students who felt acutely the encroachment of neoliberalism on their activist space even in their relatively short time on campus.

The Centre was first and foremost a space for progressive students to create community. Like many of these progressive student spaces I visited and heard about on other campuses, the Centre, was small and hard to find. These spaces tend to be tucked away. In this way, these spaces create what I call hidden commons of resistance. As long as the space and the students stay hidden, they

remain safe. It is when they draw attention to themselves (the point of activism) that they risk the attention that leads to the enclosure of their commons. These hidden spaces can be compared to the socially produced 'counter spaces' that Lefebvre theorises challenge the abstract space of capitalism (Lefebvre, 1991). Counter spaces are produced from 'differential space,' which Lefebvre argues comes from a seed of resistance present in abstract space itself. The stress of counter spaces on difference and potential alternative realities describes very well what students seek and produce in spaces like the Centre.

The 'common' according to Hardt and Negri (2004) is the new version of the commons, which as a pre-capitalist term for spaces destroyed by private property, they prefer not to use. 'The common we share, in fact, is not so much discovered as it is produced' (p. xv). For Hardt and Negri, what we do in the common is not simply based on the fact that we are part of the common but rather, what we do produces the common (p. xv). In their book *Commonwealth* (2009), they point to the intellectual aspects of the common as being as significant as the social production or labour that constitutes the material aspects of the common (p. viii). While I agree with Hardt and Negri that what we have today is not the commons of pre-capitalist times, it is still very much capitalism in the form of neoliberalism that continues to attack common spaces, therefore I prefer the term 'commons' plural. I do not want to erase the history carried in the term. My work speaks to Harney and Moten's (2013) term 'the undercommons,' a space where those who are 'fugitives' in the 'university-as-such' (Undercommoning Collective, 2016, p.3) find refuge and create their own commons from which they can act as they see fit (Harney & Moten, 2013, p.35). For Harney and Moten these fugitives include among others, the criminal, the queer, the black, the woman, and the native. These fugitives are often the students that find each other in places like the Centre.

Just as the pre-capitalist commons was enclosed by private property, the material and ideological commons used in theory today can be enclosed as a form of control and dissolution. In his collection of essays on the past and current uses of the commons and enclosure in resistance movements, Peter Linebaugh (2014) discusses enclosure in very physical ways. 'Enclosure, like, capital, is a term that is physically precise, even technical (hedge, fence, wall), and expressive of concepts of unfreedom (incarceration, imprisonment, immurement)' (p. 142). Enclosure is 'inseparable from terror and the destruction of independence and community' for Linebaugh (2014, p. 142). This explanation of enclosure fits best with the

examples of enclosure I will describe in relation to student activism, in which universities take away, correct, and or control physical spaces in order to quell independent and oppositional thought and activist communities.

The Centre and spaces like it across the country function not only as a place to study social injustices, organise, and create an accepting community, but also as spaces of resistance for students who often do not fit into traditional university culture. When allowed to grow and function autonomously, these spaces can become commons in which progressive and activist minded students create community and support networks for both school and their social justice work. The Centre was a space for students to learn about their identities as well as those of their colleagues. The most basic intention and understanding of the space was that it accepted all who entered as they were. This often meant a bit of a learning curve for students not exposed to diverse identities while growing up. But the students in the space made it their mission to help each other understand their individual and common oppressions and how they intersected in order to better learn how to work together to create the necessary social change to improve all of their lives. All students described the Centre as a 'home' like space in which they could be at ease with who they were and express their opinions without fear of correction or censure.

I really think that it's your second home like it's somewhere where you get to vent. It's not just somewhere that you go plan events. Like I really think that people there find their friends – they find themselves – a lot of people find like their sexual orientation or find what they're passionate about through the Centre because it's like a really different office in there. It's like a different dynamic like it's not so professional it's more or less like you could be yourself...

Unlike many of their homes, the Centre offered a non-judgmental space in which to experiment with identity and power. 'Finding myself' was a common phrase in interviews.

But I think they're all in the same – well, kind of the same stage in their life where – I know we've had a lot of students that have come because they've like been through a hard – So it might be different reasons of why they're there but I think it's always because you're there seeking for something. So I know for me it was that I knew things were going on so I was like I need to find a place where I could feel like I'm making change or I'm doing something positive. But it's always about wanting to help or wanting to like find yourself or something like that. But I think it's always in that stage where you're missing something or you're wanting to go beyond.

The Centre was socially produced as a space in which students could enact the theory they learned in the classroom. .

The learning experience – I think the Centre is kind of like the pinnacle of it and the friendships I've made, the connections I've made. Because a lot of the classes that I've taken – I mean they're great classes but once you get to see all that theory in practice then that's when I think you reap the most benefits from it.

The Centre was a space produced by students to counter the growing professionalisation of student engagement on campus, a commons and counter space in which to work together as a family. One of the key facilitators of this process was the long-term campus employed administrator of the space. Diana embodied the perfect mix of support and inspiration with a hands-off manner that allowed the space to thrive as a student led hidden commons of resistance. In our conversations, we discussed the fine line she had to walk between supervising the students the way she believed best and the demands of the university. To truly support their activist commitments, at times she had to ignore or remove herself from student conversations about off campus events and recruitment for community organisations. The university did not allow the promotion of off campus events or groups but Diana knew moving their activism into the community was an important step in their development as activists and the only way to ensure their participation after graduation. It is telling that the Centre was enclosed shortly after she moved to a new position. The new administrator was one of several steps toward the final enclosure.

The primary space-claiming and commons-expanding activist program of the Centre was a yearly student developed campus and community social justice event. This event was created and run by the students as a venue for their messages and voices. It was in many ways outside of, yet in, the university. It was through this event that students showed their colleagues, professors, and the university at large who they were and what they believed was true. Students collaborated with community activists and professors to create programs and workshops covering topics from non-hierarchical organising and non-violent action to squatting and community gardening. When the event was successful they created an undercommons for the day, right in the heart of the university. At least they did for a while.

After a handful of very successful events and the garnering of great respect in local activist communities, the visibility the event brought to the Centre was more than the university could ignore in its growing corporate

culture. This political and activist commons space could not be left to its own devices. The university simply could not pass up the opportunity to control the message of a 'social justice' event when social justice was increasingly important and popular on campuses around the country. The enclosure of the Centre was neither rushed nor haphazard but rather clearly justified every step of the way. Long before the space was physically closed the students realised their 'home' and their 'family' was in danger and they moved on to other spaces on campus if they could find them, or found a home in an activist community off campus.

The process by which the Centre was enclosed was very like those described to me in stories of similar spaces across the country. First, the university went after the space through assessment. Was the Centre serving its purpose and could this be measured? Given that the primary goals of such spaces include helping students enact social change while becoming invested in community work, the demand to quantify qualitative effects is challenging at best. One of the key solutions implemented by the administration for quantifying the effects of the Centre, counting logins at the door, did not paint a complete or very generous picture. How could the logging in of a student identification card possibly measure what happens in a space produced through actions? This solution provides numbers of users and nothing more; it failed to measure the influence Centre actions had on the campus community as a whole. Since the time the login system was tried out at the Centre, it has become common practice of many universities. These login data are no longer simply used to justify funding for student resources but now also track student extra-curricular activities such as community service to record in the student's file. The corporate University does a terrific job marketing 'extra' or 'co'-curricular activities as significantly valuable to employers looking for 'real world skills and experience.' Many of the faculty I spoke to believed their universities were doing more work to sell co-curricular activities than the academic work done in the classroom.

As earlier noted, the University administration was a crucial element to the student experience of the Centre, in no small part, through their representative Diana. When Diana was offered a new position, with more room for growth, the administration held a search for a new administrator to run the Centre. The new hire was in keeping with major changes in the administrative direction of the university as a whole and in student services administration in particular. Under the new

administrative organisation and personnel, the role of the administrator at the Centre changed dramatically over the course of a few years, from a supportive yet background presence to the main decision maker and message creator. It is interesting to note that the person hired to replace Diana had similar goals for the Centre but they were clearly under greater scrutiny and control by the administration than Diana had been. The student's voice was marginalised and, at times, reported to me as absent entirely. Before the physical space of the Centre was enclosed the activist commons space of the social justice event was taken over. This could be seen in the change of opening remarks formerly given by a student from the Centre to an invited administrator (students chose not to invite the administration in the past). Ideas for keynote speakers came from the administration when in the past

they were solely generated by the students involved. At this point the student created activist community and commons was effectively enclosed. Shortly after, the space was gone completely when the Centre was packed up and moved into a shared space elsewhere on campus. Once the social justice event and the direction of the Centre were both under control it made sense to fold

the Centre into a more central space where supervision was easier and it was clear the Centre was simply one more aspect of the greater student resources and not a special or challenging space.

A snapshot of what is

The recent slew of student led activist events on campuses across the United States can be seen as both promising and threatening to the future of student activism. The campus presence of national movements representing the continuing desire of young adults in the US to express their anger and frustration. This desire is the foundation of any movement toward social change. It is a loss, as I mentioned earlier, that much of this work is organised off campus thus moving social justice work away from the university. The injustices these actions address, racism, sexual violence, and police brutality on campus among others, in fact come out of institutions of enclosure such as the university. When the bulk of the activism addressing

these issues moves outside of the institutions producing the issues, the production can go unchecked.

As noted, image and reputation have always been important in higher education but as the corporate/private funding model of higher education prevails, image maintenance is more important. Just as the corporations they model themselves after, universities assess, audit and manage more than ever, in order to control all aspects of their image and product (Newfield, 2016). In the past year, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published more than ten articles addressing methods for administrations, Presidents in particular, to control student activism before it harms the university's image (Brown & Mangan, 2016; Gardner, 2016). The unpredictable nature of student activism derails these efforts for control. For this reason, we must examine closely the responses of universities

to the demands of student protestors and the changes put in place to 'support and promote' student engagement (administrative speak for anything that looks like organising).

In the words of a faculty member who worked closely with the students at the Centre, 'That's where I'm most scared because I love the fact that there's so much autonomy, and yet it's

only a matter of time before something controversial happens. You know... if you allow speech that means you endorse it somehow.' Several years before the Centre was closed he predicted the potential actions the administration might take if it felt threatened by the Centre. The elimination of the Centre space is a very physical example of the enclosure methods universities take up in response to student activism when the activism is viewed as threatening to the institutions. This research finds bureaucratic solutions for greater control through surveillance are on the rise. New technologies may also provide an additional method of surveillance.

Many of the surveillance systems encountered in this research centred on online tracking platforms for student organisations and events. Most systems described to me, and that used at RCUA as well, involve a collection of biographical information on student groups as well as copious data for any event to be planned, removing the possibility of impromptu actions. Universities promote these systems as easier to use, paperless, more efficient,

The elimination of the Centre space is a very physical example of the enclosure methods universities take up in response to student activism when the activism is viewed as threatening to the institutions. This research finds bureaucratic solutions for greater control through surveillance are on the rise. New technologies may also provide an additional method of surveillance.

and good for creating records of student's co-curricular work but the 'Big Brother' aspects of these systems are undeniable. In an interview with a Women's Studies professor at a medium sized private school on the East Coast of the US the system at her school came up early in the conversation. 'Another example of what I consider corporatisation...there is this new platform. Everybody - you know, all events should be registered on it...You can get students to say beforehand if they are coming. They can get credit.'

A student in a successful and very vocal non-registered student group describes their rejection of their university's online system and inherently controlling nature:

[W]e haven't registered through the school because... we think that students should have access to spaces without having to register so we think as students we should be able to ask for a space like hey, "I need this classroom this night it's going to be on Friday can I have permission to use it." But they want you to be registered organisations and then you have to follow their rules and then you have to - draft a constitution, there's all these steps that go into being a registered organisation so we haven't done that...We think that it kind of goes hand in hand with the bureaucracy entailed by this university. [W]e're really not for this whole idea that you have to follow a certain standard, you have to follow these rules in order to be accepted into this campus and well, also the activism that we engage in and how [we] raise a lot of noise, um, we feel like they'd restrict us even more in the events we try to plan and things such as that. The work we do is valid and important, um, regardless if you find it to be so.

A Women's Studies professor of thirty-eight years at a small Eastern private school described their new more bureaucratised system as 'depressing student involvement - you're making them jump through all of these hoops...' She goes on to say that 'form-filled-out, room-reserved, university-sanctioned, student activism doesn't always quite have the same, you know.' The 'you know' that ends up missing, spontaneity and passion, are two of the most important aspects of meaningful social change. Her final words on the results of tracking systems on activism were:

The spirit to transgress even in the mildest mode - just doesn't feel to me like it's there. And so there's this kind of, you know, you can do these things within these boundaries if you fill out the forms and pretty much I think our students kind of acquiesce to that and a part of them wants to be good institutional citizens and respected and have the administration like them and, you know, the just kind of 'screw this we're mad' I don't see very much of it anymore.

The 'good institutional citizen' (a deeply neoliberal role) described here demonstrates the corporate

university correcting students' interest in social change by guiding them through the university-deemed appropriate channels and processes. 'Corporatisation involves the politics of social activists internalising a belief in the value of corporate responsibility... privatisation...it includes coming to accept the status quo as normal and seeing markets and corporations as natural' (Dauvergne & Lebaron, 2014, p.9). Although describing global activism, the authors could just as easily be speaking to the new university-based 'activism' in this quote. Giroux (2014) points to how the corporate university takes away the ability of students to imagine alternative political realities (p.14). My research points to the control of student-led spaces of activism and actions through enclosure as one of the central ways in which the corporate university disables the imaginations of activists. I ask, how is activism possible without the idea of alternative possible spaces let alone worlds?

What now?

As universities enclose spaces of activism they also enclose opportunities for the organic growth of student social change work on campuses. Spaces like the Centre provided the autonomous commons space necessary for passionate democratic understanding of social change to begin and foster spontaneous action when necessary. Without the creation of a student-led commons counter space for students to develop a commitment to social justice activism through community and intellectual growth, student-led campus activism will falter.

My research points to some clear and troubling trends for the future of student activism on university campuses. Just as spaces are socially produced (Levefbre, 1991) so too are activist movements and the two often happen hand-in-hand. Activist spaces function best when given a measure of autonomy and left to their own devices. But organic, holistic, uncertain processes do not fit well into the corporate university and its total control culture. As I saw at RCUA and the faculty I interviewed saw at their institutions, the work of universities to control, enclose, and sanitise the work of commons counter spaces disables, if not destroys, the production of activist spaces on campus.

Universities are not against social justice, just the opposite, they are increasingly excited about the concept. Administrations work tirelessly to package social justice experiences for students that can be quantified, recorded, and marketed to employers and prospective students. The pre-packaged and sanitised social justice experiences

administrations offer cannot replace the work of an activist commons. All of the faculty and students I interviewed agree that programmatic and co-curricular excursions into social justice work do not make activists but rather 'social justice tourists.' Here is where the students and faculty I interviewed see the 'insurmountable problem,' a public education for a democratic society must necessarily be an organic process, just like a democracy (Brown, 2015). Both must be allowed to produce their own commons and undercommons when necessary. When watered down versions of social justice and activism become the purview of the administration, collective student commons of resistance find no support.

Lack of support and outright suppression of student activism encloses spaces and opportunities on campus for students to organise for social change and create a commons counter space. The neoliberal university's increasing corporatisation affects everyone on campus. From students and staff to the highest levels of the administration, the corporate university challenges existing systems, organisations, and ideals in its efforts to manage and control (Gould, 2003; Newfield, 2008). Control is not a popular word on campuses where academic freedom, or the ideal of it, has defined modern higher education in much of the world (Ginsberg, 2011). At RCUA, as well as my own institution and those of every faculty member I interviewed, corporate control models are met with shock, anger, and finally organisation for resistance. Faculty organising against corporatisation are met with different responses at each institution and have varied levels of success. Yet faculty organising always represents hope for change and the possibility of pushing back on the enclosure of the activists spaces produced on campus in classrooms and offices.

At RCUA the best chances for any new commons of resistance lie in alliances between students and faculty seeking to defend such spaces or recreate them after their enclosure. When students and faculty understand the actions the corporate university takes as mutually disabling and destructive they can work together to resist the system or create new systems outside of the corporate university in the form of an undercommons. The educational undercommons is envisioned by the Undercommoning Collective as a space in which to organise to abolish the 'university-as-such' (Undercommoning Collective, 2016). By reclaiming the knowledge and labour of the university-as-such, the Undercommoning Collective seeks to work 'within, against, and beyond' the current university. While all three aspects are necessary, working within the university would be the best first step to

unite faculty and students to produce an undercommons. This would be a space in which learners of all kinds could create the commons counter spaces they require to make the change they seek on campus and in the world. In their commons counter spaces student activists would not create groups, projects, and actions that fit the questionnaires and tracking systems of the university but rather they could develop their goals organically. In the words of one student activist, 'We exist because we exist. Not because you say it's OK we are here.'

Rebecca Dolhinow is an Associate Professor in Women and Gender Studies at California State University, Fullerton where she teaches about and researches global activism.

Contact: rdolhinow@fullerton.edu

References

- Bourdieu, P. (1998). The Essence of Neoliberalism. *Le Monde Diplomatique*. December.
- Brenner, N. & Theodore, N. (2002). Cities and Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism'. *Antipode* 34, 349-379.
- Brown, S. & Mangan, K. (2016). Faced With Extreme Demands From Protesters, What's a President to Do? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.chronicle.com/lib-proxy.fullerton.edu/article/Faced-With-Extreme-Demands/235038?cid=rclink>
- Brown, W. (2015) *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Carey, K. (2017). DeVos Is Discarding Policies That New Evidence Shows Are Effective. *New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/30/upshot/new-evidence-shows-devos-is-discarding-college-policies-that-are-effective.html?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=well-region&_r=0
- Collini, S. (2012). *What Are Universities For?* New York: Penguin Books.
- Dauvergne, P. & Lebaron, G. (2014). *Protest INC. The Corporatization of Activism*. Malden: Polity Press.
- Dolhinow, R. (2010). *A Jumble of Needs: Women's Activism and Neoliberalism in the Colonias of the Southwest*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Donoghue, F. (2008). *The Last Professors: The Corporate University And the Fate Of The Humanities*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Douglas-Gabriel, D. (2017a). How will DeVos influence higher education? *Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2017/02/08/how-will-devos-influence-higher-education/?utm_term=.f65a9c941364
- Douglas-Gabriel, D. (2017b). Trump and DeVos plan to reshape higher education finance. Here's what it might mean for you. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2017/05/17/trump-and-devos-plan-to-reshape-higher-education-finance-heres-what-it-might-mean-for-you/?utm_term=.f557aa803515
- Ellin, A. (2016). Meet the New Student Activists. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/07/education/edlife/the-new-student-activists.html>.
- Fairbanks, E. (2015). Why South African Students have Turned on their Parents. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2015/nov/18/why-south-african-students-have-turned-on-their-parents-generation>.

- Gardner, L. (2016). How Presidents Try to Stay Ahead of the Social-Media Outrage Machine. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.chronicle.com/lib-proxy/fullerton.edu/article/How-Presidents-Try-to-Stay/238019>
- Ginsberg, B. (2011). *The Fall of the Faculty: The Rise of the All-Administrative University and Why it Matters*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Giroux, H. (2014). *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education*. New York: Haymarket Books.
- Gould, E. (2003). *The University In A Corporate Culture*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Harney, S. & Moten, F. (2013). *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*. New York: Minor Compositions.
- Hardt, M. & Negri, A. (2004). *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Hardt, M. & Negri, A. (2009). *Commonwealth*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Harris, A. (2017a). What DeVos's 'Reset' on 2 Major Consumer Rules Means for Colleges. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.chronicle.com/article/What-DeVos-s-Reset-on/240348>
- Harris, A. (2017b). What Trump's Proposed 2018 Budget Would Mean for Higher Ed. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.chronicle.com/blogs/ticker/what-trumps-proposed-2018-budget-would-mean-for-higher-ed/118577>
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History Of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Helm, T. (2016). Lords revolt over plans for 'free market' universities. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/dec/31/lords-revolt-tory-plans-free-market-universities>
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Linebaugh, P. (2014). *Stop, Thief! The Commons, Enclosures, and Resistance*. Oakland: PM Press.
- Moten, F. & Harney, S. (2011). Politics Surrounded. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 110:4, 985-988.
- Newfield, C. (2008). *Unmaking The Public University: The Forty-Year Assault On The Middle Class*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Newfield, C. (2016). *The Great Mistake: How We Wrecked Public Universities and How We Can Fix Them*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Nausbaum, M. (2016). *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs The Humanities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Sziarto, K. & Leitner, H. (2010). Immigrants riding for justice: Space-time and emotions in the construction of a counterspace. *Political Geography* 29, 381-391.
- Undercommoning Collective. (2016). Undercommoning within, against and beyond the university-as-such. *ROAR Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://roarmag.org/essays/undercommoning-collective-university-education/>.
- Wong, A. (2015). The Renaissance of Student Activism. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/05/the-renaissance-of-student-activism/393749/>.
- Wong, A. (2016). Campus Politics: A Cheat Sheet. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/04/campus-protest-roundup/417570/>.