

The university as ideological state apparatus: Educating to defend the corporate status quo?

Ken Udas

University of Massachusetts Boston, US ken.udas@gmail.com

Adrian Stagg

University of South Queensland, Australia: Adrian.Stagg@usq.edu.au

The function of the university in serving the state is the reproduction and legitimization of state functions and behaviours. Theorized in this manner, the university is observed as an internal auxiliary agent of the state that is made subordinate to dominant class interests and not as an independent agent able to critically and selectively respond to state policy and industrial incentives. The paper argues for the application of an instrumental theory of the state to frame the relationships between the contemporary university and the state in corporate liberal and neoliberal democracies. By offering a critical application of state theory, the authors provide a conceptual framework from which to build methodological approaches that explain why universities in advanced, capitalist societies have so thoroughly adopted neoliberal structures and behaviours. While previous research has offered critical approaches that tend to document how phenomena such as managerialism have become commonplace, this paper reviews an instrumental theory based on the power structure in which the university is cast within the state as part of the ideological state apparatus. Current critical research documenting the corporatization of the university is first considered then aligned with a theory of the state that not only accommodates academic capitalism but also points to the reasons for universities' inability to engage in a serious critique of corporate liberal democracy.

Keywords: university; theory of the state; instrumentalism; corporate liberal democracy; advanced capitalism; corporate ideal; common good; private good; academic capitalism; ideological state apparatus; academic freedom; corporatization

INTRODUCTION

It is recognized that contemporary universities in advanced capitalist societies have adopted structural and behavioural qualities typical of neoliberalist organizations. This landscape has been well documented and analysed from a variety of perspectives by critical scholars on higher education (Aronowitz, 2004; Ginsberg, 2013; Giroux, 2014). By revisiting instrumental state theory and the ideological state apparatus (ISA), the authors wish to extend the significant contributions that critical research on higher education has made during the past four decades. The authors contend that revisionist instrumental state theory offered by Clyde Barrow (1990), Louis Althusser (2014), William Domhoff (1979), Ralph Miliband (2009), Jürgen Habermas (1988), and others

provides insights into why universities have changed and continue to do so—to first accommodate corporate liberalism and later neoliberalism.

A coherent body of critical literature has formed around the theory of academic capitalism (Cantwell & Kauppinen, 2014; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004;). The authors see theory of the state complementing and extending constructs such as academic capitalism, namely “mechanisms that [connect] academics to the market possibilities opening up and focused on organisational processes . . . expanded managerial capacity . . . and resources, rewards, and incentives that moved actors within the university from the public good knowledge/learning regime to the academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime” (Slaughter, 2014, loc. 45). We argue that the theory of the state extends critical analysis beyond the mechanisms that describe how the university has changed to the essential relationships the university shares with the capitalist state that explains why the university corporatized under corporate liberalism and commercialized during neoliberalism. We contend that the university's role as an auxiliary agent of the state restricts the university's ability to engage in critical dialogue about state-sponsored capitalist forms of democracy and the state's role in privatizing the common good.

Much of the critical scholarship cited in this paper addresses how neoliberal values are insinuated into university structure, focusing on university behaviour rather than the broader socio-structural context in which universities serve. This scholarship widely cites policies and incentives that are frequently inconsistent with stated values and essential sources of legitimization on which the university and professional professoriate have relied, such as: academic freedom; intellectual autonomy; and independence from elite as well as populist political, cultural, and social norms (Gerber, 2014). Adopting a critical theory of the state based on the tradition of Marxist power structure scholarship not only provides a broader context for the findings flowing from theories such as academic capitalism but also provides openings for more radical and systemic corrective action that challenges norms that reproduce and legitimize the ideology of corporate liberal and neoliberal democracy.

Failure to adopt a theory that recognizes the relationship of the university to advanced capitalist interests within the state apparatus increases the likelihood that critical scholarship will generate recommendations for solutions that perpetuate, reproduce, and legitimize the values, structures, and behaviours that the scholarship is rightly and thoughtfully criticizing. It is the authors' intent to propose a conceptual approach based on instrumental theories of the state to frame the problem in ways that point to a number of questions meriting additional consideration.

CONTEXTUAL SCOPE

The bounded scope within which these theories operate (and are applied) merits explicit attention to ensure clarity of language, shared understanding of purpose (without which the application of instrumental theories becomes both unfocused and uncritical in the geographical scope), and conceptual rigour. Therefore, articulation of the rationale for selecting the lenses of Australia and the US, and precision of language for neoliberalism, in particular, are required to demonstrate a purposeful approach and ideological consistency.

While recognizing the important contributions that the English university tradition has made to both Australian and US higher education, the authors have decided to follow the foundational research by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) that resulted in the theory of academic capitalism and relied heavily on data collected at universities in US and Australia. In addition, although England left its fingerprints on the two nations' histories of higher education, both Australia and the US were influenced by other national legacies. While Australian university life was influenced by Scottish intellectual and organizational tradition, the German research university influenced the development of US higher learning (Davis, 2017; Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955; Storr, 1969). Using Australia and the US as subject nations provides a comparison of like nations as siblings, rather than turning to the parent nations of England, Scotland, or Germany. In effect, Australian and US higher education share a common legacy of British and Continental rule, making them first-generation 'new world' universities, separated from their colonial progenitors by geography, need, and cultural attenuation from Europe. Although there may well be benefit to including Canadian, New Zealand, and universities from other outposts of the former British Empire, the purpose of this paper is not principally comparative. We do recognize the substantive differences and similarities between Australian and US higher education and believe that an in-depth comparative essay of the role of universities as ISAs in Australia and the US could be a valuable contribution to higher education literature and a natural extension of this essay.

Contemporary media and academic critique often places a negative value association to the term neoliberalism; a trend that has made the term increasingly difficult (and thus increasingly important) to contextually define with precision, resulting in Peck's (2013) observation that it "has always been an unloved, rascal concept, mainly deployed with pejorative intent, yet at the same time apparently promiscuous in application" (p. 133). Often misconstrued as arising from a single-cause influence, neoliberalism arises from a melting pot of nuanced reactions and evolutionary processes, each with a distinct ideological stance. This paper draws on the work of the second Chicago School (most influenced by Milton Friedman), and the Virginia School (shaped in part by the work of Gordon Tullock). It has been asserted (Birch, 2017, p. 30) that these schools are the ones usually inferred by modern writers when referencing neoliberal thought; however, exacting attribution rarely arises from such inferences. Broadly, both schools favour a pro-corporate, 'anti-state' approach that positions the free market as a natural organizing mechanism for society (Birch, 2017).

The deliberate selection of these schools to inform the neoliberal aspects of instrumentalism leading to the corporatization of the university (and by extension knowledge commercialization) arises from their international policy and political influences that converged from the 1980's onward to shape societal views of education. Neoliberal politicians were ascendant during this decade (Thatcher, Reagan, and Hawke in the UK, US, and Australia respectively), all of whom favoured deregulation, efficiency metrics, and managerialism—all of which have continued impact on higher education in those countries. Furthermore, this decade reflected policy change in international organizations (such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund) to favour privatization, marketization of public services, and market deregulation (Birch, 2017). For Australia, it also ushered in a fundamental change to educational funding, shifting the onus of financial burden from the state to the student (with the implementation of state-administered student loans known as HECS) that effectively yet subtly repositioned education from a public good to a private one.

The temporal convergence of neoliberal ideological ascendancy within the same decade across both the nation of colonial rule (the UK), and the ‘sibling states’ (Australia and the US) sympathetically resonates across political leadership, and educational policy—thus creating a case for the type of comparison and alignment within instrumentalist theory that forms the basis of this paper.

POWER STRUCTURES AND THE STATE

The purpose of this article is not to review theories of state but, instead, to analyse the university’s relationship with the state. We contend that in mature capitalist democracies (including Australia and US) the state functions principally to mediate capitalist interests within the context of neoliberal and corporate liberal democratic forms and that universities function as part of the state apparatus. We limit our thinking to universities in mature capitalist states and adopt an analytical theory of the state that posits:

- The state serves as an instrument of the dominant class, which, for the purposes of this paper, is assumed to be the capitalist class.
- The state functions through a state apparatus composed of numerous institutions that coalesce into groups identified as the governmental, administrative, coercive, and ideological (ISA).
- State power is separate from the state apparatus through which the state elite channel power.
- Within this context universities serve as part of the ISA.
- The stability of the state depends on its ability to serve the interests of capital accumulation and on its ability to maintain the popular perception that its values, as articulated through policies and activities, are indicative of a popular democracy.

These five salient qualities of the state are principally instrumentalist in nature and have roots in the major movements of revisionist socialism reaching back to Eduard Bernstein's (1967) argument for evolutionary socialism in the late 19th Century. The benefits of instrumentalist state theory for our purposes is that it provides an important role for understanding the university in the state apparatus as institutions that reproduce the values of the dominant class, conceptual structures that promote corporatization, generalizable methods for assessing the influence of the dominant class, and the possibility for recommendations leading to change. Furthermore, these five qualities represent ‘lenses’ through which each aspect of the university, as part of the state apparatus, can be critically examined in terms of a discrete phenomena and as part of an interlocking, sequential explanation of causation.

The commonly held assumption that the US and Australia are currently functioning as advanced capitalist societies is almost beyond dispute. The combined features of an economy characterized by advanced industrialization and a concentration of private ownership and control over economic activity among an identifiable class provides the texture of mature capitalist societies (Miliband 2009). Furthermore, as Louis Althusser (2014) asserts, capitalism’s principal characteristic is the exploitation of labour by the dominant capitalist class—the class of individuals with whom private ownership and control has accrued. It was through processes of colonization and industrialization that the US and Australia transitioned—post-conquest of indigenous peoples under the logic of manifest destiny or *terra nullius*—from traditional agrarian and mercantile societies to

industrial and now finance capitalist regimes. These regimes are characterized by monopoly capital, globalization, aggressive use of legal instruments to assert private ownership of intellectual and cultural assets as intellectual property, and use of the same legal instruments to protect and commercialize these assets. It is in these advanced capitalist societies that the doctrines of capitalism have not only become unquestioned but also gained the status of being fundamentally unquestionable. The doctrines of advanced capitalism are simply assumed in public debate, policy development, and legislation with active support of the state (Habermas 1988; Miliband 2009).

The doctrine of capitalism—especially during the Industrial Revolution—grew from the subversion of the English courts to condone a system of enclosure wherein public land—a common wealth—was appropriated by the few who sought to leverage maximum private economic yield masked by false economies of returning this yield to citizens through taxation and contractual regimes. The use of public land for private good through government contracts has been well documented (Bollier, 2002), yet the privatization and commercialization of intellectual property within universities continues unabated and is actively encouraged by governments of advanced capitalist societies. The private ownership of tax-payer-funded research becomes a conceptual enclosure that has been normalized by researchers at the expense of societal benefit. This represents another milestone in the formation of the modern capitalist state.

In the US, it was during the decades spanning the turn of the 20th Century that the modern capitalist state took shape in the form of corporate liberal democracy. Furthermore, according to James Weinstein (1968), the rise of corporate liberalism introduced ambiguity into the meaning of liberalism as the “nature of liberalism [changed] from the individualism of laissez-faire in the nineteenth century to the social control of corporate liberalism in the twentieth” (p. xi). It was during this conceptual shift in the meaning of liberalism that the corporate liberal democracies became characterized by capitalist states that operate through a state apparatus organized in patterns through which the dominant capitalist class exercises power, authority, and influence. Although the state apparatus is the organizational channel through which the dominant class exercises control, it is not by necessity capitalist in nature (Barrow, 1993; Miliband, 2009). Examples of other classes that could potentially assume a dominant position in the state apparatus include labour, intellectual, hereditary aristocratic, and populist classes.

From a topological perspective, Althusser (2014) points to Marx’s interpretation of state structure, noting that the state apparatus in mature capitalist societies has an infrastructure referred to as the economic base and a superstructure that includes legal-political apparatuses and ISA. The economic base maintains a capitalist mode of production grounded on exploitation of labour and the accumulation and concentration of wealth. It is exploitation of labour that results in surplus value (profit) that is the defining principle of capitalist production; and it is the economic base that provides the necessary capacity to support capitalist modes of production through legal and political processes and infrastructure, such as capital markets, banking systems, and regulatory agencies organized within a legal regime. Coercion through the police, military, and court systems serves the economic base by ensuring that there are consequences associated with illegally undermining the conditions that support the economic base. Furthermore, Althusser (2014) reminds us that the legal system in liberal corporate democracies is the law of the dominant class of capitalists who design, develop, and interpret law in ways that primarily benefit the dominant class.

While the economic base of the state apparatus directly supports capitalist modes of production, the principal purpose of the ISA is to ensure that the conditions of production under the rule of the dominant classes are maintained. The ISA ensures that the system normally operates without repressive intervention of coercive apparatus. The objective of the ISA is simply and seamlessly to ‘make things go’ naturally, by simultaneously making capitalism appear to be the only reasonable way of organizing society and creating the perception that state behaviour is legitimate (Althusser, 2014). The prevailing and unquestioned adherence to perpetuating the illusion of capitalist ideology as a natural and harmonious organizing force for human society becomes entrenched by rewarding—with resources, status, and prestige—those apparatus that align with, and legitimize dominant capitalist narratives, activities, and behaviours (Barrow, 1990).

Before moving onto a discussion about the university as an ISA, we want to briefly reiterate that we subscribe to a theory of state that is based on the belief that monopoly capitalists form a dominant class, exercise class-consciousness and act through the state apparatus in ways that not only benefit capitalists but also reproduce the conditions of production. We recognize that there are alternative schools of thought that challenge this position and that our treatment of the state does not give proper attention to the role of civil society or the public and private spheres; however, the purpose of this paper is not to describe and analyse competing theories of state.

UNIVERSITIES AS IDEOLOGICAL STATE APPARATUS

Universities function as part of the scholastic or educational ISA. As such, the university serves the state apparatus and the dominant capitalist class by reproducing the conditions of production. The university performs the reproduction function by providing capacity to support the economic base. For example, the university provides professional training to supply industry with labour, replenishes the intellectual class, reinforces the elite capitalist class that serves as the industrial and state elite, and provides research to support economic development and national defence (Barrow, 1990).

The university also performs the reproduction function of legitimizing the corporate liberal state by creating the perception that the state is functioning as a democratic organ for the common good. The corporate liberal state requires popular legitimacy and it must balance its service to the dominant class of capitalists while also maintaining its perceived legitimacy as an agent for the common good (Domhoff, 1978); that is, the economic base of the state apparatus functions to serve the interests of capitalist accumulation and concentration of wealth directly while the ISA does so indirectly. Therefore, the state is meant to serve the private interests of the dominant class while the university, as an ISA, must reproduce conditions in which the population is willing to acquiesce to the capitalist class interests and accept exploitation (Althusser, 2014). These objectives tend to be accepted but not without ongoing resistance and the potential for radical defiance and conflict. The various ISAs (including the university) are most successful in this regard when they are able to increase the scope of indifference the population has towards state and industry sponsored exploitation and coercion, creating conditions of passive acceptance with the perception of individual choice and meaningful public debate. In this way, state and industry sponsored exploitation and coercion are viewed as legitimate. This logic is the functional correlate of Habermas’ (1988) treatment of legitimation and motivation crises that are endemic to advanced capitalist systems. Habermas argues that

it is through the legitimization provided by ISAs that crises and disruption of the advanced capitalist system are mitigated or avoided and do not result in active class conflict.

The extent to which the ISA can influence the legitimacy of state action dictates the extent to which the common good may be exploited for private wealth accumulation without unacceptable disruption to the system as judged by the dominant class. Therefore, we can study the legitimization function of the university by assessing the amount of authentic dialogue and behaviour that is exercised through the university research agenda, curriculum, and service commitments that directly support the common good when it is in conflict with university behaviours that serve to concentrate wealth in the dominant capitalist class. The relative commitment to the common good vis-a-vis the private good is a measure of a university's resistance to its role as an ISA charged with building an impression of legitimacy and supporting the values of advanced capitalism. Determining the university's commitment to the common good is, of course, easier said than done because, frequently, different actors see the same behaviour differently.

Although there is some critique of exploitation of the common good for private gain, we might expect a more fundamental critique of the university's role in supporting doctrines that dominate advanced capitalism; however, there is little evidence of mounting critique that seriously challenges corporate liberal democracy or the roles that universities take in reproducing the conditions necessary for production in advanced capitalist societies. It was Miliband (2009) who not only identified the general lack of critique among intellectuals and universities but also pointed to the factors that make universities conservative institutions. Miliband points to the conservative influence of the state and business, the financial dependence of universities on wealthy individuals and businesses, how conservative boards of trustees often dominated by business people dictate university governance, and the growth of corporate enterprise and its ability to influence the purpose of the university as reasons why universities tend to protect and extend the capitalist status quo and ensure that democracy is discussed in rather narrow terms. Furthermore, Miliband (2009) correctly asserts that the study of business, the field of university study often with greatest enrolments, not only provides technical training but also ideologically reinforces advanced capitalism and the values of corporate liberal democracy. Although there may be more dialogue within the university than other parts of the state apparatus, of the more than 5,000 colleges and universities in the US and 40 Australian universities, to the knowledge of the authors, not one openly advocates in its mission or strategy, economic and social relationships that are not fundamentally capitalist in nature or academic programming through their professional schools based on collectivist social, political, and economic principles. The university's role within the ISA militates against behaviour potentially disruptive to the capitalist order.

The argument follows that as an ISA, the university serves as a critical auxiliary agent to the capitalist class. Its self-imposed limitations and accepted sources of prestige have encroached on what we think of as the traditional values of the university and those of the professional scholar as an autonomous and self-determinate intellectual (Barrow 1990). The auxiliary agency role of universities seems like outsourcing but it is actually a form of in-sourcing because the ISA is part of the state apparatus. This form of in-sourcing is couched in terms of contract research and other forms of competitive funding, creating a loosely coupled and contested space between the university, individual academics, the state, industry, and foundations. Nevertheless, the appearance of separation of the university from direct intellectual control of the state and its ability to

support safe criticism of advanced capitalism and the state is essential to the role that universities must play in legitimization. It is this tension, which is the source of conflict between the capitalist class and the intellectual class, that plays out as members of the academic intellectual class try to retain some authority within the university and perhaps even society more generally (Barrow, 1990).

By way of example, the Australian university is the object of operational targets set by federal governments that reinforce capitalist agendas and intertwine capitalist rhetoric within educational policy that throw capitalist and academic ideals into conflict. Through the capitalist lens, federal initiatives to increase student numbers in discrete demographic strata, such as rural and remote students, students of lower socio-economic status background, Indigenous students, and students from non-English speaking backgrounds, are mechanisms designed in response to a perceived non-participation (or marginal participation) with the dominant economic model (Hyden, 1980). Under the aegis of 'widening participation,' specific cohorts are the targets of incentivized assimilation (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008). By 'capturing' targeted social strata within the university system, it could be argued that the promised social mobility manifests as direct opportunities for individual wealth generation that in turn perpetuates the capitalist state. Likewise, student loans shift the responsibility for education away from the state, instead becoming an individual 'investment' that normalizes debt as a necessary pre-existing condition for financial success in this environment. For their role in this process, universities are awarded a share of federal funding, without which most Australian universities would cease to exist. The implication, therefore, is that the university as ISA legitimizes the status quo by inducting and acculturating students into capitalist norms that reinforce rather than directly critique dominant ideologies. Manifesting in this manner, it does so at the behest of a compromised government that normalizes commercialization of publicly-funded research outputs, largely funds higher education for meeting targets that promote engagement with the capitalist class, and describes higher education in rhetoric that positions education within an internationally competitive marketplace.

Why is it that the tensions that result from discontinuity between traditional academic values and those embraced as part of the corporate ideal, while recognized, go largely unaddressed? The authors believe that a potential answer may be found by considering the university's role as an auxiliary agent of the state apparatus.

Corporatization is easily observed in the university when it takes the form of managerialism and archetypical capitalist behaviours. However, concentrating exclusively on corporatization phenomena may obscure the fundamental relationship between the university and the state and, through the state, its relationship with the dominant capitalist class, frequently taking the form of industrialists, monopoly, and finance capitalists, and the bureaucrats that develop state policy.

MANAGERIALISM AND THE CORPORATE IDEAL

The managerialism affiliated with corporatization of the contemporary university is tied closely to the changing roles of universities and the introduction of the 'corporate ideal' dating more than a century ago when we see the parallel transition of the US from a modern and mature liberal industrial state to an advanced capitalist state, and the concurrent formation of the modern research university and its new role as ISA. It is the

introduction of the corporate ideal as a dominant organizing principle that fundamentally creates different roles for university trustees and executive managers who represent the proprietary interests of the university from the university faculty who serve as intellectual labour (Cattell, 1913; Veblen, 2015). Although it is acceptable within bounds for university academics to, for example, criticize the commercialization of educational offerings and the privatization of knowledge, resist incentives to conform to externally imposed publication standards limited to Q1 journals, or question the cost of and authority vested in non-academic managerial staff, it is not acceptable for the university to function as an enterprise in ways that fundamentally challenge the state, its class interests, and its efforts to corporatize the university. To do so would be to repudiate the university's role as ISA and the benefits accrued through functioning as an auxiliary agent of the state.

Clyde Barrow (1990) develops a convincing account of the transformation of the US college into the research university serving within the state apparatus as part of the scholastic ISA. In his essay, Barrow studies the changing composition of university governing boards and their growing relationships with industrial and financial capital through interlocking directorships. It was during the first quarter of the 20th Century that boards of trustees established and asserted their proprietary rights and responsibilities to govern the means of intellectual production at the US university. It was during this same period that the official representative of the professional professorship, the American Association of University professors (AAUP), conceded faculty rights to governance and management in exchange for job security and procedural transparency (Barrow, 1990; Schrecker, 1986). The compromise represents a shift for the AAUP away from the academic ideal to the corporate ideal proffered by trustees and incentivized by a number of corporate sponsored foundations (Tiede, 2015).

During the first quarter of the 20th Century, 'the businessman' was established as the expert type most qualified to address the problems of higher education (Veysey, 1970). This position was entirely consistent with trustees who frequently had industrial and finance backgrounds (Thelin, 2011). With the rise of the professional school, the university degree became part of the calculus for material improvement of both the individual and society more generally (Geiger, 2015). In the spirit of social efficiency, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT) was interested in making US higher education more efficient in order to better accommodate the financial pressures associated with increasing demand for educational services. The demand was generated through the needs of industry, which did not really want to pay for training and scientific advancements; and the democratic motivation to create access for social mobility, which many in the aspiring class could not afford. CFAT used its funding and promise of a pension fund for faculty to influence university boards, administrators, and professionals to adopt the corporate ideal of industrial efficiency and apply it to intellectual labour in universities functioning as knowledge factories. These socially desirable ideals would be operationalized through the principles of scientific management, including specialization, division of labour, standardization, and other methods leading to efficient operations that had to be measurable to support management decision-making and improvement. CFAT managed to provide a tool to quantify educational efficiency through the introduction of the Carnegie Unit, which was assigned a standard unit of annual teaching contact hours that could be translated into teaching load and average cost per student per course. The standard allowed efficiency comparisons across institutions, state systems, disciplines, and individual instructors. (Silva, White, & Toch, 2015)

The CFAT was able to align social need for efficient and useful education with the interests of industry, represented on university boards of trustees, and the desires of academic administrators and the developing professional schools. The foundations then catalyzed reform by selectively providing financial resources to compliant universities. Working with the US Bureau of Education (USBE), CFAT, along with its network was able to outline general principles that appealed to the popular notion of social efficiency as advancement, and then offered methods of scientific management to operationalize those values. Those universities that met the standards valued by CFAT, Rockefeller's General Education Board (GEB), and other foundations, were rewarded through financial support and access to the Carnegie Teachers Pension Fund, presidents were rewarded with access to industrial resources and appointments on boards, while high producing scholars were rewarded with grants, lectureships, and consultations. It was through building an archetype of prestige and status that elite universities were formed, and it was through rewarding that archetype that the model of a prestigious university was reproduced. Elite universities were rewarded by the foundations for adopting the corporate ideal, which was a necessary step to effectively serve as part of the ISA in the corporate liberal state. The financial involvement of the foundations and their support of the USBE was essential to creating a de-facto standard of excellence among universities aligned with the corporate ideal because the federal government in the US has no policy or funding control over higher education. (Axtell, 2016; Barrow, 1990)

The CFAT, GEB, and USBE worked alongside scientific management scholars such as Frederick Taylor's prodigy, Morris Cooke (1910), to not only conduct research on university efficiency and administer measurement surveys for benchmarking but to also provide training and consulting services from efficiency experts to university administrators. So, it was during the first quarter of the 20th Century that the major foundations along with the USBE created a method to standardize university management, acculturate administrators in the principles of efficiency, and reproduce the idea and methods for achieving status and prestige (Barrow, 1990).

The methods of scientific management are predicated on control in order to reinforce predictability, certainty, and repeatability (Boyd, 1978). Originally applied to measure university efficiency along the lines of industrial organisations, these methods have impacted the core activities of curriculum design, course development, teaching practice, and research. "As such, any educational system under this technical rationality credo asks only how the facts can be maintained; rather than any investigation of the rationale for these facts" (Boyd, 1978, p. 176). The focus of performative measures in the educational institution, therefore, have little concern for social change and civic engagement but, instead, privilege predictability and repeatability while normalizing "league table" approaches that encourage compliance and conformity rather than critical thought. Within this system, students are positioned as "passive consumers" (p. 179) who are expected to support and maintain the dominant problematic. This aligns with Marcuse's (1969) argument concerning "if education is to be more than simply training for the status quo, it means not only enabling [citizens] to know and understand the facts which make up reality, but also to know and understand the factors that establish the facts so that [they] can change their inhuman reality" (p. 82).

Technical rationality, furthermore, divorces decision-making in education from values; instead of requiring of students that they "learn how values are embedded in the very texture of human life, how they are transmitted, and what interests they support regarding

the quality of human existence” (Giroux, 1983, p. 204). However, in considering the relationship between universities and ISA, universities have accepted—for the most part—government-enforced targets of retention, progression, attrition, inclusion, and graduate employability as the proxies of educational quality; while success is determined by industry partnerships, commercialization of research, and the acquisition of external funders for research. The dominant problematic caused by over-subscription to these ‘measures of success’ is a dilution of the educational role for democratic engagement, which diminishes the broader societal agency of students and faculty.

CONCLUSION

The instrumentalist theory of the state that we have adopted in this paper relies on power structure methodologies. We accept, based on the research of class dominance referenced throughout this essay, that a state compromised by capitalist elites serving the interests of advanced capitalism through the state apparatus. We posit that the state is structured in such a manner that universities, along with other cultural organizations, serve as part of the ISA in which the university’s principal functions are to reproduce the conditions of production and to legitimize the state and those who control it. That is, the university becomes an auxiliary agent that serves the state from within the state apparatus. In this way, we assert that, although it may be that the corporatization of the university or the university’s engagement in capitalist-like behaviour is how the critical role of the university within democratic society has been diminished, these are not the reasons why the university is non-critical. We assert that it is because of its ideological role within the state apparatus that it is only able to seriously promote the reproduction and legitimization of advanced capitalist needs within corporate liberal democracy. It is only able to offer alternatives to the status quo within a rather narrow spectrum of political, social, and economic alternatives that fall well within the orbit of free market enterprise and private ownership. In effect, the university is bound by the role that it serves to legitimize the privatization of the common good through its curriculum, research, service, and outreach.

It is our argument that developing and adopting methodologies based on power structure analysis within the theoretical construct of instrumentalist state theory will provide opportunities for researchers to rethink the development of the university alongside the periodization of capitalism and the advancement of the liberal state, offer the potential for predictive models of the university under different circumstances, and point to the constraints and opportunities for influence that the university could exercise within its role as an ISA. Although conceptual frameworks and theories such as academic capitalism are powerful intellectual tools that have been used to describe and analyse how the university has changed with impressive thoroughness, they have principally constructed the university as an independent actor with ties to the state. The state itself, having been largely limited to the government, places the university outside of the state while simultaneously neglecting the legitimization role the university has with the state. This has itself resulted in creative and insightful critical analysis of the condition of the university in societies dominated by neoliberal values and the direct causes for change and implications of change which should not be undervalued; but it has also resulted in solutions and recommendations for change that seem captured by current dominant values.

To illustrate this point, we refer to a recent essay by Gary Rhoades in *Academic Capitalism in the Age of Globalization* (2014) in which he provides four examples for

potential university reform through organization and negotiation. Although each of the examples are clearly valuable and will perhaps improve academic life, they do not fundamentally challenge the context in which the university serves. None of the examples address the fundamental issue of who the university serves, how the university serves it, and in what context. More importantly, none of the examples offered challenge capitalist assumptions and, therefore, reinforce the values of the advanced capitalist state, in effect fulfilling the university role as an ISA that legitimizes the capitalist state through ‘safe critique’ providing the perception that the state is allowing democratic action as a legitimate organ of democracy. Although addressing immediate concerns, the examples offered by Rhoades essentially serve to refine, entrench, legitimize, and reproduce the most fundamental assumptions of capitalism. If our objective is to broaden the possibilities for discussion about democracy, the real question here must not be how to improve the conditions of academic life under assumptions of academic capitalism but, instead, how to provide room to fundamentally challenge advanced capitalism—and, for this, we need to adopt and develop theory that accurately places the university in its service to capitalism. We can then start asking serious questions about how a university would behave as an ISA in collectivist or social democratic societies rather than within the context of corporate liberal democracy.

If we accept the examples as positive incrementalist approaches to change, they still place us primarily in the realm of economism, which many left-social democrats see as a safe form of revisionism that will not disrupt the capitalist order because it is based on the principles of more equitable wealth distribution, while not necessarily questioning the overall arrangements of exploitation. Returning to the core principles of social democracy allows us to question the fundamental relationships between the common good and the private good within liberal corporate democracies, the state, and the role of the university. Looking at what resides underneath the undeniable corporatization of the university provides opportunities to critically assess strategies for change. The fundamental questions that we currently face parallel those debated historically by revolutionaries and evolutionists. Can the university form its own agenda in support of authentic democracy and, if so, how will that agenda be nurtured and implemented and, even if it can, will it be able to influence broader society? Regardless, without the ability to engage in authentic democratic processes, it seems unlikely that the university will do much other than serve the capitalist state. Without a guiding theory of the state that frames the problem as one of capitalist rule, the dialogue stays very narrow and safe—just as power structure analysis suggests it is supposed to be.

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