

Rationalization of Higher Education

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Abstract

Since roughly 1980, the rationalization of higher education has been escalating. That is, *means-end schema and bureaucratic organization* have become ever more dominant as the authority over academic matters has been shifting from the professoriate to managers who in the mid-twentieth century had been mainly responsible for economic affairs and “making things run.” At many research universities today, the administrative sector has grown so large that the budget devoted to administrative salaries and benefits exceeds the monies reserved for faculty.

The transference of authority from educators to bureaucratic offices and roles has been driven by a larger market morality where the legitimacy of organizational functions resides in their reproduction of profit exchanges. We conceive of the institutional field of higher education—the universe of diverse institutions existing within a prestige hierarchy—as existing along a spectrum of rationalization with the for-profit college organization at the extreme right. While there is much debate about the rightness of a college sector that reverses over 200 years of not-for-profit organization professing that education is for the public good, traditional colleges have adopted organizational arrangements that resemble those that characterize for-profit colleges. Indeed, some like Bousquet (2008) argue that rather than the fully rationalized for-profit model exerting pressure on traditional higher education to adopt rationalized regimes, traditional not-for-profit colleges have been steadily refining those regimes for at least 40 years. As we will discuss later, this presents a fundamental puzzle for classic neoinstitutional theories that do much of the intellectual work of interrogating organizations and rationalization. This *mutual mimetic isomorphism*, in which two competing organizational forms adapt to resemble each other rather than the dominant form, is most evident in rationalized arrangements in academic labor, curricular focus on “objective” outcomes, and neoliberal reframing of what constitutes education. We discuss the theoretical and empirical conditions that have increased the rationalization of higher education. We then explicate on the ideal form of rationalization in higher education and put forth an agenda that builds on emerging research in organizations, education, and rationalization.

FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH

The American system of higher education has three divisions: not-for-profit private education, not-for-profit public education, and for-profit education.

(Many people refer to the nonprofit rather than not-for-profit sectors, but nonprofit may be a misnomer, because some divisions of universities, such as foundations, do generate a profit.) The percentage of students involved in each of these divisions has shifted historically. Although colleges and universities today declare that they were established as schools of a certain type, it was initially difficult to distinguish among the *mélange* of higher education institutions. Historians generally say that the first colleges were not-for-profit private institutions. Although the Dutch had established evening schools for “the teaching of mathematics, reading, and writing” as early as 1660, most colleges founded in the United States through the beginning of the civil war were small private colleges associated with religious denominations and designed for the sons of local elites.

From the outset of the founding of tertiary education in the United States, citizens and educators debated the nature of a proper education. The primary challenge to the legitimacy of the early college sector in the new United States of America was rooted in an organizational form not entirely compatible with American cultural ideals of individualism and practical work ethic: residential colleges, dry classical curriculums, and rigid authoritative administrative structures. For-profit colleges existed contemporaneously with some of the oldest and most prestigious colleges in the New World. As Harvard University was being founded in the 1636, other early proprietary schools offered training in the practical business arts of “real” men (Kinser, 2006). [To quote historian of education Frederick Rudolph, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony “a peculiarly self-demanding band of alienated Englishmen got themselves a college almost before they had built themselves a privy” (1977, p. 3).]

National and state policies have had a decided impact on not-for-profit public education. Three universities (the University of North Carolina, the University of Georgia, and the College William and Mary) established around 1800 claim the title of the oldest American public university; however, public higher education became important to the economic and social structure only after Congress passed the Morrill Act in 1862 to establish land-grant colleges. In 1890, it expanded it to increase agricultural training, especially for African-Americans living in Southern states. However, public higher education began to dominate at the beginning of what some historians call the Short American Century (1945–2007; see Bacevich, 2012), when both the United States and the individual states recognized that the expansion of the college-educated population was a key to world power. They increasingly invested in higher education. In 1947, almost 50% of some 2,340,000 students attended public institutions (Kinzie *et al.*, 2004). Fifty years later, 78% of roughly 14,500,000 students did so. However, many of these undergraduates were part-time; full-time enrollment stalled in the

1970s. "Entering full-time freshmen did not surpass the 1975 level until 1998" (*ibid.*).

Although participation in some form of higher education increased, governments began to encourage academic capitalism and to withdraw block grants in the 1980s. The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980, also known as the Patent and Trademark Law Amendments Act, encouraged higher education institutions to earn funds by patenting faculty inventions. Simultaneously, higher education institutions bifurcated into two sectors "selective" and "nonselective." (The nonselective schools included colleges from all three tax sectors, the private not-for-profit, the public not-for-profit, and the for-profit.) As Roger Geiger (2010) points out, "In the non-selective sector, the large majority of students attend underfunded institutions that graduate fewer than half their students. In the selective sector, institutions have conformed to serve a relatively affluent clientele through restrictive pricing, comforting ideologies, and abundant resources."

The nonselective sector is much larger than the selective one, and since 1996 has included an expanding for-profit sector. That year, the Department of Education redefined eligibility for Title IV funding to include students attending for-profit 2-year and 4-year colleges and the number of schools and students involved in this educational industry soared. By 2010, for-profit colleges granted 11% of all college degrees. This represents a growth of almost 200% in the for-profit sector in 2010 over 2000. During the same period, traditional college enrollment grew by 22% (Deming *et al.*, 2011). Some of this growth is explained by the elasticity of the for-profit sector: they simply have more room to grow than do traditional colleges. But, as we will explore in further detail ahead, this also represents a fundamental distinction in organizational logics between the two sectors. While for-profits are honor-bound to their profit motive to increase earnings quarter over quarter, traditional higher education trades in prestige, which is protected through keeping students out (low yield of applications to admits is a criteria in most notable college ranking schemes) rather than expanding to let more students in.

We have stressed how governmental policies meant to expand access to higher education did indeed have an impact on the size and composition of the student body. Although there was significant variation in institutions' curricula, the course content encouraged class formation. By 1900, Jencks (1968), Jencks and Riesman (1968) suggest public and private universities were helping to forge a middle class by providing fairly comparable educational experiences. During this period, as Thorstein Veblen famously bemoaned, captains of industry expanded their claim of political and economic authority to include academic authority; they helped to drive both the associated processes of bureaucratization and rationalization represented by such practices as the establishment of uniform credits and

a class-scheduling grid (Barrow, 1990). Although individual mavericks protested the capitalists' imposition of authority, the professionalization of academia—at least the foundation of professional societies specializing in specific academic fare—encouraged increasing curricular uniformity with some variation by characteristics of an institution. After all, the professional societies were interested in defining the knowledge disseminated through higher education. They also encouraged the formation of an elite within the professoriate.

The “high modernism” that followed World War II had emphasized professionalism. By the late 1960s, the incumbents of so many jobs were identifying themselves as professionals (see Jencks & Riesman, 1968 on the professoriate; Hallin, 1996 on journalists, also see Collins, 1979); Harold Wilensky (1964) wrote about the professionalism of everyone. However, it is clear that in the 1960s, the professoriate enjoyed more power within universities and institutions associated with higher education, such as granting agencies, than ever before. Not only did the federal government expand support for both research and higher education but also it recognized the right of professors to establish research priorities, to judge the quality of research, and (after McCarthyism) to maintain academic freedom.

In the 1980s, the advent of neoliberalism, including the anti-tax movement, resulted in the disinvestment of public funds in higher education. The federal and state governments were all implicated in this movement. However, the ever-increasing disinvestment highlights how important the cults of individualism, competition, and individual accountability had become and how much they were to exert influence across all educational sectors.

CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH

The tenor and tone of public debate about the value of college has not been lost on researchers. The earliest in this wave of educational scholarship was probably Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie's *Academic Capitalism* (1999), a study of educational transformation in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Gary Rhoades's work on the deprofessionalization of academics analyzed changing conditions of work (1998), and Slaughter's work with Rhoades (2009) on academic capitalism and neoliberalism stressed the interdependence of academic capitalism and neoliberalism. Stanley Aronowitz (2001) compared colleges and universities to factories. David Kirp (2003) emphasized how marketing permeates all facets of colleges and universities from encouraging undergraduate applications to establishing systems of information technology and of budgets. [Were he writing today, he would add massive open online courses (MOOCs).] Christopher Newfield (2008) argued that conservative educational policies were “unmaking the middle

class.” Henry Giroux (2002) has described the corporatization of higher education as corrosive to the ideal of a democratic public sphere. Frank Donoghue (2008) added that the corporatization of universities was destroying the study of the humanities—and the professoriate, to boot. Inevitably, this professionalization and rationalization spawns a debate over who owns the knowledge capital in a knowledge economy. Increasingly, scholars are pulled or pushed toward public scholarship and making their courses and syllabi free through university partnerships with online providers such as Coursera. If we are to accept Siva Vaidhyanathan’s (2012) argument that the Googlization of everything is a fundamental challenge for intellectual property, individual rights, and corporate control, then academics, whose primary value to the corporate university is rooted in their ability to produce intellectual capital, should worry.

In a series of articles, such sociologists of education Walter Powell and Jason Owen-Smith (2003) analyzed the emerging view of research as intellectual property and Patricia Gumpert argued that the “basis of the legitimacy of American public research universities has been in transition” (2002, p. 73) from an emphasis on education as a public good to a view of higher education as an individual or private benefit. Examining the increase in professional programs and degrees, Steven Brint (2002a, 2002b) also worried about how the structure and ideology of higher education is changing. Richard Chait (2002) argued that professors maintain influence only at selective institutions. Although less likely to use such controversial terms as academic capitalism and neoliberalism, these authors were acutely aware of the corporatization and privatization of higher education and asked how these transformations had occurred. Sociologists such as Elizabeth Popp Berman (2012) traced the processes through which economic rationalization and privatization became institutionalized at elite research universities.

Surprisingly, given the characterization of liberal arts as disengaged from the “real world,” some of the most intriguing analysis of the rationalization of higher education has come from the humanities. Bousquet (2008) argues that rationalized, profit driven models came first for the heart of college’s public good: tenure and academic freedom. The rationalization of academic labor has transformed the professional character of higher education in just three decades. In 1975, 43% of all professors were adjuncts. In 2012, that number has increased to 70%. This move toward contingent labor circumvents costly employment arrangements (health insurance, benefits, salaries). It also reflects similar changes in the overall structure of the economy in the 1980s and 1990s, when the expansion of financialization sought to reduce human capital expenses by moving toward more contingent (or casualized) labor arrangements. This shift in temporary academic labor that can be ramped up or let go as administrative needs dictate (some might argue also as they

are manufactured) signals another important cultural change. The professoriate had a long history of being buffered from the fluctuations so common to the private sector. As Barry (2005) argues, the “casualization of the faculty workforce” is a bellwether for deeper changes in the form and function of higher education in the United States. Once the language of the markets is adopted—professors become human capital, students become consumers, and education becomes a deliverable—a fundamental restructuring of the bureaucratic arrangement cannot be far behind. Bousquet (2008) and Barry (2005) are at the forefront of academics who have stepped beyond their disciplinary boundaries to turn the critical lens developed in the course of their professional training onto the profession for which they have trained.

Another emerging trend echoes Barry’s assertion that traditional higher education has “internally mimicked their successful for-profit competitors by becoming more profit than service oriented (2005, p. 4).” As previously noted, the for-profit college sector has existed for almost as long as the traditional college sector. For a couple hundred years, the two have been happy to coexist on parallel planes. In the 1990s, venture capitalists discovered the sleepy for-profit sector and the detente was called off.

The for-profit sector had been a loose collection of schools run by sole proprietors or small family or corporate holdings. They included workplace training institutes and trade schools, such as cosmetology and collision repair programs. A few ventured into associate’s degree granting programs but all were primarily focused on serving local and regional markets through short-term training geared toward immediate labor market outcomes. Kinser (2006) details how the infusion of large amounts of capital changed the overall landscape of for-profit higher education. Beginning in the 1990s, the sector experienced rapid consolidation and expansion. That expansion was both horizontal—more degree programs—and vertical—more levels of degree programs. Today, the for-profit college sector enrolls 9% of all enrolled undergraduates in the United States.

Tierney and Hentschke called the growth of the for-profit education sector the “most significant organizational innovation in postsecondary education since the growth of American higher education in the early 20th century” (2007, p. 185). We believe this organizational innovation is rooted in the sector’s full embrace of centralized curricula control, an academic labor force with negligible faculty governance, or autonomy, an exclusive focus on market-centric education programs, and a quarter-over-quarter profit ethos. In short, the for-profit college’s organizational innovation lies not in its growth but in its fully rationalized educational structure, the likes of which being touted in some form as efficiency solutions to traditional colleges who have only adopted these rationalized processes piecemeal.

Breneman, Pusser, and Turner (2006) conceptualized the for-profit sector as a rational response to an underserved market. Bennett *et al.* (2010, p. 10) ascribed the success of the for-profit sector to its success in “providing educational opportunities for students historically underserved by traditional institutions of higher learning.” A report from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (2012) assessed research on the for-profit sector and found it wanting for clarity of operationalization and multi-dimensional conceptualization that accurately reflects the diversity of a sector that confers everything from workforce certificates to PhDs. McMillan-Cottom and Goldrick-Rab (2012) have argued for a fundamental restructuring of how the federal system of student loans and grants arranges its relationship with for-profit colleges, most of which rely on tax-supported federal subsidies for up to 90% of their total operating budgets. Further, they argue that there is a perverse irrationality to the reduction of state and government subsidies to public state-supported schools, which facilitates the receptiveness to rationalization schemes while the federal and state governments simultaneously make possible the profit margins of the for-profit college sector.

For their part, the traditional college sector continues to eschew for-profit colleges as somehow not “real” college, while simultaneously embracing the organizational processes that distinguish for-profits from traditional colleges. Indeed, higher education is increasingly embracing the desirability and rightness of privatization. Unlike previous movements toward “efficiency”—the hallmark of private bureaucratic prescriptions to fix inefficient “mass” education systems—that were primarily relegated to a minority of college functions at the periphery of the tertiary system, today every tier or sector of higher education is touched by the private market ethos. Technology intersected with the cultural ascendance of neoliberal social policy to usher in the latest age of higher education privatization. The current era of higher education corporatization movements can be marked by the growth of Internet technologies and access. When online delivery methods initially proliferated in the early 1990s, the schools that offered online programs served students most likely to attend a community college or open access school. Traditional, prestige driven higher education—“real” colleges—ignored this insurgent organizational development in corporatized education. Fast forward 20 years and elite institutions such as Stanford University and MIT champion MOOCs while organizational practices once the domain of the lowest tier of higher education are gaining widespread adoption across the higher education landscape. They include the aforementioned move toward contingent faculty in the name of “flexibility,” jettisoning liberal arts programs for corporate-approved degree programs, and increasingly requiring grants and public-private financial arrangements of researchers across all disciplines.

Much to the shock of older members of the professoriate, who had enjoyed the emphasis on professional authority characteristic of the 1960s, the corporate ethos also imposed an accountability regime on all faculty. By an “accountability regime,” we mean a politics of surveillance, control, and market management disguising itself as the value-neutral and scientific administration of individuals and organizations (Tuchman, 2009). Related to strategic planning, this accountability regime supposedly minimizes risks for an organization (or corporation) by imposing rules about how work will be done and evaluated. Increasingly, universities have departments or divisions associated with “risk management.” These supposedly minimize both legal liability and the danger of “losing money” (or not breaking even), while encouraging transparency. As much of the scholarly literature has concentrated on the corporatization of academic scholarship, it has highlighted practices associated with research, such as developing patents and incubating new companies emerging from university-based research and the growth of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), which regulate whether an academic can undertake a particular project and whether the research methods are appropriate (see Schrag, 2010). Initially designed to prevent medical and biological research from harming research subjects, federal guidelines have increasingly applied these regulations to scholarship in the social sciences and even the humanities, prompting continuing criticism from social scientists and historians.

However, the accountability regime increasingly regulates all activities in higher education, including how and what faculty teach and measuring what students learn. Most not-for-profit institutions include an Institute of Teaching and Learning, which instructs faculty on such matters as how to handle large classes, encourage discussion in small classes, use technology in the classroom, and establish grading rubrics. Too frequently, administrators transform their “recommendations” into coercive norms. In Great Britain, the quality of teaching is a factor in setting budgets and even maintaining programs. Administrators and government bodies generate the metrics that assess quality. The accountability regime has also introduced a variety of posttenure evaluations of professors, quantitative determinations of the quality of academic departments (including the number of full-time equivalent students processed or instructed per full-time-equivalent faculty member), and economic comparisons of the costs and benefits of investing in different academic fields. (These measures include the cost for the educational institution and the payoff for the student in terms of eventual wages.) Increasingly, administrators use such metrics to evaluate the success of academic plans (also known as strategic or business plans), including the quality of faculty research. In addition, for-profit organizations, such as textbook publishers and software developers that peddle their wares

to colleges and universities, have intensified both educational conformity and accountability. Ritzer (2013) and Hays and Wynyard (2006) terms this hyperrationality *the McDonaldization of Higher Education*.

KEY ISSUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Times of great change should invite scholars to sharpen, reimagine, and refashion their tools of the trade to better conceptualize, theorize, and empirically evaluate emerging orders. The rationalization that is reshaping higher education is just such a time. We put forth an agenda for future research in this area.

First, there exists a sizable vacuum in organizational level analysis of higher education and the changes wrought by rationalization. This is especially peculiar given the contestation for legitimacy and associated capital and resources being waged between two fairly distinct organizational forms—not-for-profit traditional college forms and for-profit college forms. As Levy (2006) argued, the new institutionalism that is primarily occupied with taking up such organizational theorizing and empirical study “does not prepare us for the organizational distinctiveness brought on by the sharp growth of private higher education (p. 144).” He argues that this is mostly a failure on the empirical side. We believe that institutional theories would benefit from a critical analysis of the robustness of both its theoretical *and* empirical sides. While neoinstitutional theories might provide frameworks that explain similarities between organizational forms in higher education, they do not go far enough in theorizing the role of competing stakeholders that characterizes the environmental landscape in which higher education is embedded. Questions about the legitimacy of for-profit college forms remain mostly unexamined although often put forth implicitly as rationales for polemic arguments about “nimble critters and agile predators” (Deming *et al.*, 2011). Organizational studies have many models for the empirical examination of taken-for-grantedness (Johnson *et al.*, 2006) of social objects. How are emerging organizational forms in higher education challenging the authority and rightness of college, credentials, and education in the social imaginary? Further inquiry at the organizational level would benefit from an empirical and theoretical lens that has not yet been turned on the expansion and contested legitimacy of rationalized higher education forms, particularly for-profit colleges.

Second, a robust research agenda in this area would critique not just the ends of rationalization but the bureaucratic processes that make it possible (Tuchman, 2009). There is a classic line from stratification theorists Baron and Bielby, in which they exhort scholars to bring the firm back into studies of inequality. We would go further to say that we not only need to bring

back the firm—a fully conceptualized understanding of how organizational forms and processes are embedded in broader social processes—but also should interrogate the firm. Why the firm? To what ultimate ends the firm? In a modern Weberian society where a recent nominee for President of the United States remarked that “corporations are people,” it seems reasonable that scholars of organizations, education, and work take seriously how rationalization has coupled with the greater market morality to shape almost every engagement between individuals and the social structure. A study by McMillan-Cottom takes up the importance of organizational arrangements within for-profit and not-for-profit college programs by comparing the enrollment and authority behaviors of each that influenced students’ educational decision-making. Similar studies should interrogate the role of class, gender, race, and ability in the rationalization of educational processes.

Third, we challenge researchers of rationalization to take up the specter of inequality. The expansion of higher education is a function of social inequality and social movements challenging group positions in the social structure (Collins; Karabel, 2006). If Collins’ historical analysis of education expansion and stratification as a response to cultural conflict holds true, it is likely that we are experiencing a rationalization not just of higher education but of cultural conflict over access to higher education. It is projected that the average college student in the year 2020 will be nonwhite (Van Der Werf & Sabatier, 2009). Already, the typical college student (often called by the misnomer “not-traditional”) is not at all the ideal college type that reigns supreme in the social imaginary. Instead, she is likely black or Latina and attending college after a multi-year break after high school. She may be a parent or responsible for a family. She often works and is juggling competing social roles. Many of those roles, like being a mother, can carry severe social consequences for failing to perform them in normative, socially acceptable ways. Are for-profit higher education and online-only programs such as MOOCs being championed by cultural and economic elites because they offer an access “solution” by providing a college stratum that serves the student that is the numerically typical student and the projected likely student? Rubinson (1986) makes the case that groups form along multiple shared interests to agitate politically for educational access. These political processes are critical to the development of institutional and organizational educational arrangements. An examination of the rationalization of inequality should then be multi-dimensional and comparative.

There are challenges to such a research agenda. First, there is the issue of data. A 2012 conference on for-profit higher education convened at Duke University brought together scholars, practitioners, and private sector leaders to discuss the future of higher education. Although there were

many points of disagreement, there was one point of almost unanimous agreement: data collection by federal, state, and regulatory bodies has not kept pace with the rapid change affecting higher education. Many empirical questions cannot be answered because, for example, categories on survey instruments have not always included for-profit colleges or for-profit students are under-sampled. There is also no current large-scale, accessible data on public-private partnerships like those that are spawning MOOCs, online delivery platforms, and similar programs. As a consequence of the proprietary nature of the financial agreements in most of these programs, we face a reality where higher education is funded by public money for the extraction of private sector profit but data is considered private and off-limits to independent scholarly examination. This is a serious challenge to empirical inquiry.

Another challenge is political. The primary vehicle for producing the kind of research we propose is also the sector most maligned by political and economic demands to “disrupt” higher education. Research universities have long contributed empirical research of this kind, usually as a benefit of professors and researchers who because of tenure and academic freedom could expect minimal consequence for unpopular results. With all of those constituent parts of a successful research agenda being called into question by the very forces we propose to study, these proposals could be more wishful thinking than scholarly objectives.

Responding to these challenges will take sustained, disciplined, and courageous inquiry across disciplinary and institutional boundaries. While individual universities may continue to engage the institutional landscape alone, researchers cannot afford to follow suit. Collaborations not only consolidate resources but also bring new tools and methods to bear on a multi-dimensional phenomenon. One current example is the work being produced in digital humanities programs. (At the intersection of the humanities and computing, digital humanities in an interdisciplinary field that asks what it means to be human in the “networked computing age” and also to participate in “fluid communities of practice” Burdick *et al*, 2012, p. vii.) It emerged in response to similar challenges to the relevancy of humanities in a rationalized, market-driven university environment. Although not perfect (digital humanities finds itself at a crossroads with many arguing they seek to reestablish a new elite rather than upend the necessity for an elite), digital humanities have embraced critical discourse of itself, embraced collaboration, and invited public scrutiny of the often messy process of producing new knowledge.

Researchers who embark on a scholarly mission to critique rationalization in higher education might benefit from a similar ethos as that in digital humanities: openness, risk-taking, collaboration, and sustained critical

self-reflection. The latter is particularly important as we are all embedded in the system we are analyzing and, presumably, stand to benefit from the conclusions we might draw.

Finally, we have concentrated on trends in the United States, but the key issues are international in scope. *Processes associated with rationalization of American higher education are occurring throughout the world, although the specifics of these processes vary from country to country.* Some countries, such as Chile, exemplify the use of for-profit colleges and universities to broaden the groups participating in higher education. The laws and regulations that Chile has adapted have transformed some of its public universities into private ones and decimated tax support for the remaining public institutions; its version of for-profit higher has grievously escalated student debt (see Cabalin, 2012). Others nations, including some of the (mainly) European countries involved in the Bologna process, attempt to make curricula sufficiently compatible for students to put together academic programs by taking courses at several universities, even ones located in different countries. (The process is named after an international meeting in Bologna in 1999 where 26 countries decided to launch a European Higher Education Area by 2010 and to provide tools to harmonize and even connect their national systems, as discussed in the EHEA website <http://www.ehea.info> (downloaded February 13, 2014); cf. Amaral *et al.*, 2009.) In the United States, textbook publishers and informational technology services, such as blackboard, are so ubiquitous that have already achieved course compatibility in much of American higher education. In addition, European nations have increasingly faced the so-called challenge of the immigration of peoples of color. These include discrepant demographic patterns of the immigrants and the indigenous populations. As a result, they are facing issues that educators in the United States have associated with both affirmative action and class-stratification. Asian countries, such as India and China, are also instituting what could be called “affirmative action” policies. For instance, India reserves 30% of the seats at university for impoverished students and members of specified castes. China adds points to the application-scores that a first-generation college student receives. International trends extend to methods used to hire professors. Thus, even as France and Germany have participated in the Bologna process, they are reorganizing their faculties to limit the federal and state governments’ authority over such matters as hiring (Musselin, 2010). In Great Britain, the intensity of that accountability regime exceeds current American practice.

In sum, the rationalization of higher education is affecting all facets of tertiary educational systems throughout the world. Aspects of conformity are emerging as educational systems model themselves on one another.

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Tressie McMillan Cottom is a PhD candidate in Sociology at Emory University. With Duke University's Research Network for Racial and Ethnic Inequality, she has conducted research on social inequality and for-profit colleges. She organized a 2012 conference, the first to bring scholars, researchers, and

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Gaye Tuchman, Professor Emerita of Sociology at the University of Connecticut, is the author of *Wannabe U: Inside the Corporate University*. Her other books include *News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*; *Edging Women Out: Victorian Novelists, Publishers and Social Change* (now considered an early work in the digital humanities) and the coedited *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media*, the first academic analysis of women and media published in the United States. She was one of the 17 founders of *Sociologists for Women in Society*, served as president of the Eastern Sociological Society, and was on the boards of the American Sociological Association and the Society for the Study of Social Problems.

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