



# **The University in Dissent: Scholarship in the corporate university (Research into Higher Education)**

*Gary Rolfe*

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The rise of corporatism in the North American University was charted by Bill Readings in the mid nineteen-nineties in his book *The University in Ruins*. The intervening years have seen the corporate university grow and extend to the point where its evolution into a large business corporation is seemingly complete. Rolfe's book examines the factors contributing to the transformation of the university from a site of culture and knowledge to what might be termed an 'information factory', and explores strategies for how, in Readings' words, members of the academic community might continue to 'dwell in the ruins of the university' in a productive and authentic way.

Drawing on the work of critics and philosophers such as Barthes, Derrida, Lyotard and Deleuze, *The University in Dissent* suggests that this can only be achieved subversively through the development of a 'community of philosophers' who are prepared to challenge, critique and subvert the mission statement of the 'university of excellence' from within, focusing on how scholarly and academic thought and writing might develop in this new post-Enlightenment era.

Summarising, contextualising and extending previous understandings of the rise of corporatism and the subsequent demise of the traditional aims and values of the university, Rolfe assesses the situation in contemporary UK and international settings. He recognises that changes to the traditional idea of the university are inevitable and explores some of the challenges and consequences of this shift in the academic world, suggesting how academics can work with change, whilst at the same time seeking to undermine its worst excesses.

This timely and thought provoking book is a must-read for all academics at University level, as well as education policy makers.

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