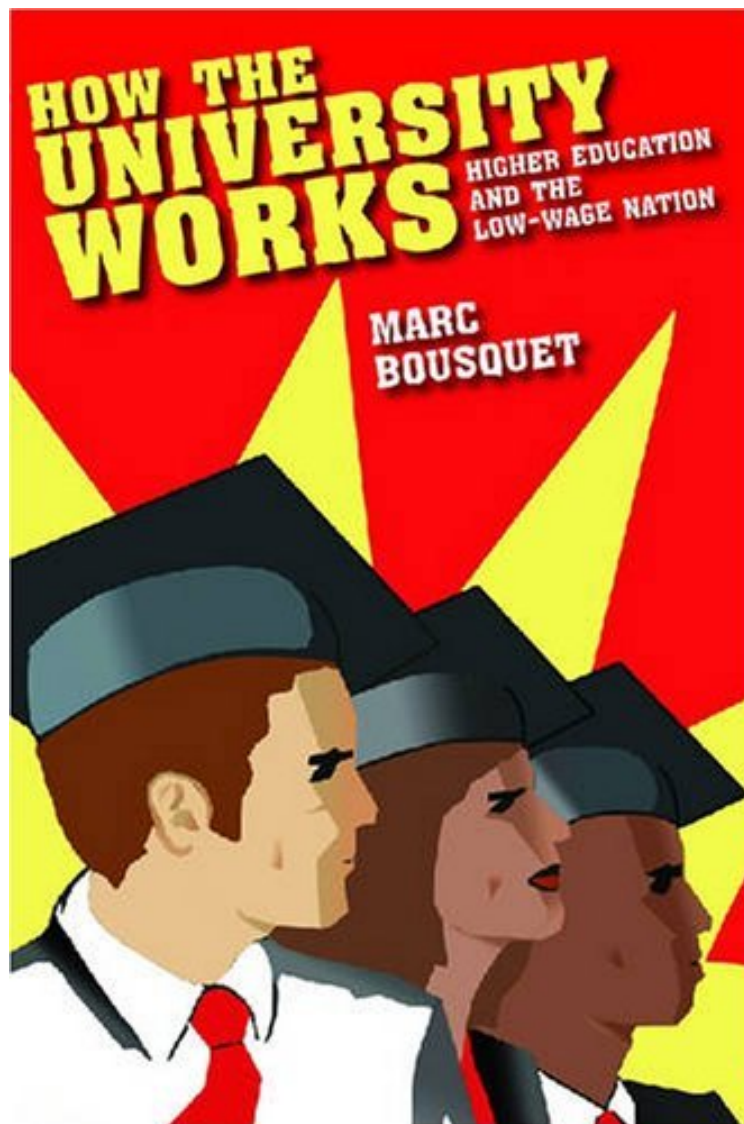


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How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation (Cultural Front)

Cary Nelson, Marc Bousquet
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Cary Nelson, Marc Bousquet : How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation (Cultural Front) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation (Cultural Front):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. As in agriculture, so in education: waste, abuse, and monoculture. By Jamey Hecht, PhD I've lived this story, from my student days through a decade and a half of university teaching. I've

been full time, part time, and in between. This account of the destruction of American higher education--especially in the Humanities, where people develop the critical thinking and knowledge base necessary for participation in public life as members of a democratic citizenry--seems to me accurate and timely. It explains how we got here, the story of our current debacle. I recommend it in conjunction with *Unmaking the Public University: The Forty-Year Assault on the Middle Class* by Christopher Newfield. Thanks to Marc Bousquet for a great contribution. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. When will this catastrophe be addressed? By Readin' and Rockin' Why are we talking about "science fairs" when college educations are increasingly impossible to complete? Students face massive overcrowding, overworked and underpaid professors - to the point of meltdown among faculty, a lack decent parking (that faculty and staff often pay for!) lousy housing in comparison to what their parents recall (condos to share are a booming biz in college towns, which is fine for kids with rich parents but what of everyone else?), junk food courts as if their university were a mall ...I really could go on. The treatment of our best and brightest young scholars has led to burning out, unemployment, failed attempts at educational intervention that do NOT get the expected community support despite all the lip service. Bard College's wonderful Early College initiative has inspired high tech firms to further rip apart universities, colleges, and high schools with bloodless distance learning. Not using technology to aid real interaction, but to simply replace it. Who suffers most? Thrown away scholars or conned and cheated students? It's a tossup. And an ignored catastrophe for the U.S. as a well-educated nation. The world literally laughs at us. I know people in European higher ed and we are a pitied JOKE. Oh, and that is no joke. Mr. President, get this book. Now. All the best. 9 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Good content, too much jargon. By Phelps Gates Bousquet does a good job exposing the exploitative practices of the corporate university. He's at his best when he discusses specific cases (the UPS "earn while you learn" ripoff, for example), and he gives a very perceptive analysis of why the perennial optimistic reports about the PhD job "market" (like the Bowen report) got things so wrong. But I have to agree with a previous reviewer that the book is pretty tough going for a general audience. Bousquet is (alas) a "theoretician", and the neo-Marxist jargon makes one's eyes glaze over for entire paragraphs (and sometimes whole pages). Alas, the effect of this is that the book is really readable only for someone who is already comfortable with this jargon, which means that he's basically preaching to the choir, since anybody who can read the book is already appalled at the abuses! Too bad.

As much as we think we know about the modern university, very little has been said about what it's like to work there. Instead of the high-wage, high-profit world of knowledge work, most campus employees--including the vast majority of faculty--really work in the low-wage, low-profit sphere of the service economy. Tenure-track positions are at an all-time low, with adjuncts and graduate students teaching the majority of courses. This super-exploited corps of disposable workers commonly earn fewer than \$16,000 annually, without benefits, teaching as many as eight classes per year. Even undergraduates are being exploited as a low-cost, disposable workforce. Marc Bousquet, a major figure in the academic labor movement, exposes the seamy underbelly of higher education--a world where faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates work long hours for fast-food wages. Assessing the costs of higher education's corporatization on faculty and students at every level, *How the University Works* is urgent reading for anyone interested in the fate of the university.

Not only the most persuasive political argument, but also the most sophisticated theoretical analysis of the university's labor system. The Minnesota Bousquet takes an uncompromising look at the way colleges employ those who teach--and how many professors have done nothing as tenured positions have been replaced with adjunct slots. Inside Higher Ed "Bousquet serves up a stinging indictment of those universities that exploit their students from the moment they set foot on campus. . . . [He] reveals the dystopia that the contemporary university has become." The Minnesota How the University Works primarily focuses on the current issues faced by humanities and other departments in higher education. Still, this text is an invaluable source for anyone involved in postsecondary studies. Labor Studies Journal Marc Bousquet's How the University Works should be required reading for anyone with an interest in the future of higher education, including administrators, faculty members, graduate students, and--even more significantly--undergraduates and their parents. Thomas Hart Benton, The Chronicle of Higher Education "How the University Works is a serious wake-up call for the entire profession, and, based on what I overheard at the [2007 MLA] book fair, Bousquet is about to emerge as the Al Gore of higher education." Thomas Hart Benton, The Chronicle of Higher Education About the Author Marc Bousquet is Associate Professor of English at Santa Clara University and the founding editor of *Workplace: A Journal for Academic Labor*. His previous books include *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers* and *The Politics of Information: The Electronic Mediation of Social Change*. Cary Nelson is Jubilee Professor of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is also the national president of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Among his twenty-five books are *Manifesto of a Tenured Radical* (also published by NYU) and the landmark coedited collection *Cultural Studies*.