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TOP COVER:
ON ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVISM IN THE NEOLIBERAL ACADEMY

If you are fortunate enough to work for an institution of higher education that sees itself as having an educationally-driven mission rather than an economically-driven one, then you are at a university that is “out of time.” Most U.S. institutions of higher education are operated today by some form of economically-driven mission. As such, the mission of the university is concerned more with the pursuit of status and prestige than knowledge and democratic values. Moreover, the subjects that maximally serve economically driven university missions are docile ones, that is, ones that provide the greatest chance for the continuance and success of the economically-driven mission.¹

The best way to describe the most extreme versions of this economically-driven mission is neoliberalism, a discourse whose proponents want us to believe that the academic world—and the social and economic world—is structured by equations.² As Pierre Bourdieu has warned, the discourse of neoliberalism is not like most other discourses because like psychiatric discourse it is bolstered by a world of power relations. These power relations direct and dominate economic choices, making neoliberalism a “strong discourse,” that is, a discourse that is very difficult and hard to fight.³ Hard to fight, but not impossible to fight. How then?

There must be acts of resistance to neoliberalism in academe. We must use our capacities for critical dialogue as a force of disruption, resistance, and revival. Instead of docile academic subjectivities, ones that play into neoliberal managerialism, we need to adopt a more paralogical approach to academic dialogue. Namely, we must use dialogue as a disruptive force rather than an affirmative one.⁴ Critical exchange is at the heart of academic freedom, and academic freedom—the freedom to teach as we choose without interference—is predicated on keeping the “critical” in critical exchange (or inquiry) activated. Neoliberal academic culture strives to stifle critical thought and thinking. We can be a force of resistance to neoliberal academe by awakening and privileging our critical capacities—and tough criticism may be the only way to awaken academe from its neoliberal slumbers. Without a strong auto-critique discourse to counter-act the strong discourse of neoliberalism, resistance becomes difficult, if not impossible.⁵

While the fight against the repressive discourse of neoliberalism is often fashioned as one *without* the support of university administration, this is not the best approach. Rather, a better approach is one wherein administrators and faculty through solidarity work together on strategies to pull academe out of the neoliberal abyss. In order to achieve this solidarity the notion that administration is always already the “dark side of academe” must be qualified with the

understanding that administration is only a world of darkness and managerial myopia if one allows it to be so. There is another vision of university administration, namely, one that encourages progressive, activist faculty to join its ranks—rather than merely to rail against it. And it is this progressive vision of administration that must be embraced if the university is to have any chance of moving beyond neoliberal academe. Faculty activism alone will not be enough to turn the tide of economic Darwinism.

The central argument of this essay is that without the enlistment and support of progressive and activist administrators, there is little hope that the university can be redirected toward educational goals rather than merely economic ones. While faculty can and will voice their displeasure with neoliberal academe, doing so within a system that is built through the construction of docile subjectivities aimed toward eliminating dissent of this type places the livelihood of these faculty at risk. Though the same can be said of administration that do not play by the rules of neoliberalism, that is, they too stand to be eliminated from the system, it is still vital that there be an engaged administrative core within academe that recognizes the challenges raised by economically-driven university missions and works with faculty in a deliberate and diplomatic manner to both mitigate the harm done by them and to redirect the world of education back to its true mission, namely, education.

The problem though, for administration in the age of neoliberalism, is that it is far too often viewed as merely the home of economic hatchet men and myopic managers who only act in the best interests of job survival and careerism. Furthermore, the easiest way to protect ones managerial position in neoliberal academe is to simply internalize the ground-rules of economic expediency and to consistently act upon them. To do so is in effect to close ones eyes to the ways in which such decision-making can often be destructive to the educational and democratic ends of academe. Enter the dark side: a world where administration is expected to blind itself to the negative effects of neoliberalism in academe in order to maintain its administrative status.

Consequently, if administration continues to be perceived as always already co-opted by neoliberal concerns, then it will be increasingly difficult to recruit progressive and activist individuals to administrative positions, that is, individuals who will administrate with their eyes wide open to the negative effects of managerialism and are committed to pulling academe out of the neoliberal abyss. Without the support and solidarity of activist administrators who work in consort with faculty to overcome neoliberalism's destructive academic legacies, there is little hope that education's future will be any different than its recent past.

The Dark Side of Academe

Administration is the dark side of academe.⁶ Few sayings in higher education are more commonly known, if not also believed and beloved, than this one. As soon as one mentions to others that they are considering taking on an administrative position such as a directorship or chairmanship, some version of the saying is tossed their way in the same manner that “bless you” and “gesundheit” is the response to a sneeze.

“So, you're entering the dark side,” a colleague will say to your announcement of a pending administrative role. And just as the secular person does not usually take umbrage at being “blessed” in response to their sneeze and says “thank you,” most nascent administrators do not challenge a “dark side” response. It is widely understood that to enter administration is to enter the dark side— even if one has no intention of committing any acts of darkness. But why is a

“dark side” comment such a common reaction to the announcement of a pending or existing administrative role? And when did we start reacting this way to administrative roles in academe?⁷

To answer the latter question is probably akin to answering the question when did “bless you” or “gesundheit” begin to be a response to sneezing—and probably just as productive. No one knows for certain the origins of either sneezing response though some speculate that a sneeze is “letting the demons in” and that “bless you” is meant to guard the sneezer and the responder from these demons. Similar with “gesundheit” as the sneeze was viewed as a prelude to an illness and the German roughly translates in English to a wish for “health” or “good health” for the sneezer. The analogy among common responses to sneezing to those regarding administrative roles in academe is instructive.

Just as “gesundheit” in response to a sneeze implies a wish for good health in light of the possible onset of illness, “dark side” comments in response to administrative roles imply the onset of a form of illness. This illness is brought upon one in the transition from the “healthy” side of academe (non-administrative roles) to the “unhealthy” side of academe (administrative roles). “Dark side” administrative responses thus reveal a basic distinction between faculty and administration, namely, that faculty are by function the healthy side of academe, and that administration are its unhealthy side. Furthermore, the analogy with “bless you” decidedly carries this distinction well beyond that of mere health concerns, and into the realm of morality. Namely, to be on the dark side of administration is to be on the side of demons, evil, and immorality, whereas to be on the side of faculty is to be on the side of saints, good, and morality.⁸

In short, our conditioned and customary response to administrative roles in academe is highly negative. It is a response that few have come to challenge and that most everyone finds at least more or less reasonable. To enter administration is to enter the dark side; to be in administration is to be on the dark side; and the greater the administrative role, the greater the level of darkness. It is interesting though that the “dark side” vision of academic administration far precedes its more recent economically-driven mission.

I can clearly recall as an undergraduate in the 1980s and as a graduate student in the 1990s faculty complaining about administration and frequently describing it as the “dark side.” All in all, there was little respect for administrators—and a whole lot of complaining about them. Chairs were more often than not defined by their “bad” decisions and deans were viewed as detached from the interests of faculty and students. Provosts and presidents were the exemplars of the “dark side” and never to be trusted. Few of my colleagues had anything good to say about administration and most faculty avoided administrative roles with a vengeance. The general opinion was that faculty should avoid administration lest one risk descent into the “dark side.”

But this, of course, is not to say that faculty had “healthy” feelings toward each other or that they regarded their colleagues as essentially “good.” It is also not to say that I have not known or worked with good administrators, that is to say, those who managed to avoid the administrative sickness. Quite the contrary. Looking back on my experiences as a student and a faculty member reveals a consistent pattern of faculty members falling into packs with regard to their feelings about other faculty members. Animosity, distrust, and lack of respect often divide one faculty member against another, and groups of faculty members against other faculty members. Frequently, a small disagreement leads to a large reversal of feeling among colleagues.

As for administrators, I can run down a list of chairs and deans that have positively impacted my life and career as well as that of others. From Dean John Yolton at Rutgers University, who patiently nurtured my entry into the world of philosophy, and Peter Klein, chair of the philosophy department, who wisely mentored me regarding a future in philosophy to the various chairs of the philosophy and comparative literature departments at Indiana University who encouraged my unusual desire to pursue doctoral work in both areas (even if each department saw the other as *my* dark side).⁹

The examples and stories here could be multiplied many times with the help of our colleagues across academe. The dark side quickly becomes nothing more than an expectation for administration that is often (and fortunately) not fulfilled just as the “sweetness and light” of faculty life can be challenged without much effort. So, it is not true that on one side of the academic role fault line lies “goodness” and “health” and on the other “sickness” and “evil.” Rather it is true that the general perception in academe is that faculty is on the side of “goodness” and “health”—and administration on the side of “sickness” and “evil.” Nevertheless, this is a perception that it is time to move beyond.

If one goes with a more robust definition of neoliberalism, namely, one that marks its start at the beginning of the Reagan era, then all of my experiences in higher education have come within the age of neoliberalism. Consequently, the level of distrust of administration by faculty should be no surprise, nor should the dysfunction and distrust among the ranks of faculty. The competitiveness and individualism encouraged by neoliberalism brings about this type of behavior among those who participate in its institutions and organizations. Still, after the economic crisis of 2008, neoliberalism has brought about new heights of fear and terror within academe. If administration before this period at least held out the hope of respecting the interests of students, faculty, and society, then post-2008, if not post-9/11, these hopes were to be completely dashed.¹⁰

In the increasingly economically-driven world of higher education, administration rules with a calculator and a red pen. Good educational decisions are distinguished from bad ones based on financial dollars not educational sense. In the twentieth-century there was still at least a chance for administration to steer clear of the dark side—the side where academic decisions are made on the basis of economics not education. However, the twenty-first century seems to have all but closed off that opportunity.

Administrators in neoliberal academe are expected to view all considerations of self-knowledge, social import, and political advocacy as sub-species of economic impact. If what one is doing as an administrator is not maintaining or improving the economic welfare of the university, then within the world of neoliberalism one is doing the wrong thing.

Blow Up the Dark Side

Administration is perceived by some to be a haven for myopic managers, hatchet men, and spineless careerists. The rise of neoliberal academe has only deepened this belief by multiplying the number of administrative roles and responsibilities. The situation though is not a new one.

Over two decades ago, the AAUP produced an entire issue of *Academe* on “Administrative Bloat.” An article in the issue, penned by the then president of the AAUP, economist, Barbara R. Bergmann, described the situation as follows:

Undetected, unprotected, and unchecked, the excessive growth of administrative expenditures has done a lot of damage to life and learning on our campuses. On each campus that suffers from this disease, and most apparently do, millions of dollars have been swallowed up. Huge amounts have been devoted to funding positions that a few years ago would have been thought unnecessary.¹¹

The situation described by Bergmann decades ago continues today. The recent AAUP annual report on the economic status of the profession reports that from 1976 to 2011, the number of graduate students employees has increased 123%, full-time executive 141%, full-time non-tenure track faculty 259%, and part-time faculty have risen by 286%. However, the greatest increases have been in the area of full-time non-faculty positions that have grown by a whopping 369% since 1975. This area includes lawyers, loan counselors, management analysts, human resources specialists, training personnel, purchasing agents, and other nonacademic workers. By comparison, during the same period, full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty have risen only 23% and full-time nonprofessional positions (e.g., service and maintenance) has only grown by 19%.¹²

The AAUP speculates that the slow rise in nonprofessional positions is the result of the outsourcing these tasks. However, there does not need to be any speculation as to why the number of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty have grown so slowly: the 286% growth in part-time faculty and 259% growth in full-time non-tenure-track faculty clearly reveal the cause. These, coupled with the disproportionate growth in full-time executive positions (a category formerly called “executive, administrative, and managerial”) and full-time non-faculty professional positions, are the numbers that underwrite the perpetuation of the “dark side” imagery. More specifically, while tenure-track and tenured faculty lines have flattened, the administration has more than doubled its numbers.

Faculty often wonder at the wisdom of more executives, managers, and administration when their own ranks are plagued by contingency. They also blame administration for the explosion of non-faculty professional appointments and positions. To be sure, there are now more administrative and nonprofessional titles and subtitles than at any other time in the history of higher education. There is also a higher ratio of administrators to faculty than ever before. But as Bergmann pointed out decades ago, the issue is not just the increase in non-faculty university staffing expenditure, it is also that the multiplication of positions of this type do not seem to improve university performance:

If it were just a matter of the money wasted, that would be bad enough. But the bloating of college administrations over the past decades has made administrative performance worse rather than better. It has bogged us down in reels of time-consuming and despair-creating red tape. It has fostered delusions of grandeur among some of the administrative higher-ups, whose egos have grown along with the size of the staffs under their supervision.¹³

If the red-tape was bad in the early 1990s, it was only a prequel to the intensification of despair the new millennium has wrought in this area.

Neoliberal academe validates itself through increasing levels of assessment and accountability, which ironically are called for in the name of continuous academic program improvement. For most faculty today, the only thing that the culture of assessment and accountability increase are the

time and number of people devoted to these tasks. Making matters worse is that as the red-tape continues to grow, so too do the egos of those who call for it—especially for those whose titles are prefaced with the words “assistant,” “associate,” and “vice.” The common belief among these second-tier administrators seems to be that the amount of red-tape generated is directly proportional to their chances of being promoted to even higher heights of managerial status—status that is indicated by a change in, if not the complete loss of, their subtitle.

All of these conditions understandingly have brought about a higher degree of skepticism toward administration and its ends. The recent AAUP reports include a section entitled “Do We Need More Administrators?” with the following observation:

There is no question that higher education enrollments continue to rise, institutions are faced with increased reporting and regulatory burdens, and students come to college from more diverse academic and cultural backgrounds than ever before. But the massively disproportionate growth in the number of administrative employees, coupled with the continuing shift to an increasingly precarious corps of mostly temporary, underpaid, and insufficiently supported instructors, represents a real threat to the quality of our academic programs.¹⁴

The problem then for administration today is a simple one: increasing numbers of administrators cannot be reconciled with the problems facing higher education today. In fact, for many, administration *is* the major problem or threat to higher education today. So, if there were any doubt regarding the prevalence of negative perceptions of higher-ed administration, there should be none now. Not only do we not need more administrators, the ones we have now are widely viewed as causing more problems than they solve. For most, an academic world with fewer administrators would be a better one—and academic utopia may be viewed as one without administration.

Thus, perhaps the solution to the problem of the “dark side” is simply to blow it up?

Progressive Administration

While it is healthy to complain about the increase of administrative roles in neoliberal academe and to even believe that it is multiplication beyond necessity, it is unhealthy for the future of higher education in America to simply write off university administration as unnecessary and evil.

Just as a ship needs a captain, academe needs administration. With a destination in sight, the ship captain assures to the best of their ability that the crew, passengers and cargo reach port as comfortably, quickly and safely as possible. The quality of a ship captain is gauged less by their ability to navigate through calm seas than turbulent ones; by their ability to bring crew and passengers to port when the unexpected, not the expected, occurs; when external and internal conditions make the journey difficult, not when the conditions for travel are optimal. Why shouldn't we then draw an analogy between navigational and academic administration excellence?

There is little disagreement between faculty and administration about the fact that higher education is undergoing heavy weather with limited supplies. Rising student debt, decreasing state support, increasing use of contingent labor, and attacks on tenure and academic freedom top a long list of challenges that have placed higher education in a precarious and unprecedented

situation. Pressures to reduce costs while increasing productivity are filtered through a relentless matrix of assessment and accountability that makes faculty discouraged and administration the enemy. The question though is what is the best type of administration to guide higher education through the turbulent and dangerous seas of neoliberalism? The captain who abandons their crew and passengers mid-storm or the one who tirelessly fights to bring them safely to port? The administrator who bails on students and faculty contending there is nothing they can do or the one who in spite of the bad economic weather continually advocates for a better education for students and fairer work conditions for faculty?

Regarding administration as de facto oppositional to the educational interests of students and the professional life of faculty is counter-productive to the aim of moving beyond the neoliberal academy. To assume that just because someone is in administration that they do not passionately believe in the educational mission of the university is a mistake. Just as a ship's captain has little control over the weather, administration has little control over the economy or forces external to the university that can alter its educational course. What is within the control of administration is the choice of whether to disregard the opinions and values of faculty and students regarding their educational aims or to take them seriously and find ways to honor them in spite of the bad economic weather. But by the same token, the mirror should be turned back on faculty as well. Regarding faculty as always knowing what is best for the university and its students is just as big a mistake as dubbing all administration evil. Just as there are self-interested administrators who will do anything and everything to their advance their careers and pocketbooks *in spite of its effect* on student education and the academy, there are faculty who will do the same. Commitment to the ends of higher education is determined less by our role and position in the academy than by our actions and values.

The problem with placing all administration on the “dark side” is that one assumes what they are going to do when the heavy weather hits rather than actually working—or struggling—with administration to make the better decision. Moreover, and more importantly, just as we ask our students to avoid stereotypes of others, we should do the same with administration. Not only will this encourage good faculty with good intentions to serve their universities as administrators, it will give the university the best chance of navigating through the rough waters of neoliberalism to a better place for higher education. One must realize that all administrators are not alike. The difference between one administrator and another in the age of neoliberal academe is their ability to mitigate the harm done to faculty and students by neoliberalism. It is the difference between the administrator who “blindly” and continuously calls for cost reductions and the one who considers them only in light of their effect on faculty excellence and student achievement. An algorithm written for a computer program can continuously reduce costs without consideration of their impact on education. However, only a person with the ability to calculate the educational intangibles of this cost reduction can do it properly. Perhaps then we need to apply the Turing Test to administration? If we cannot tell the difference between administrative actions and those of a computer, then perhaps those administrators have failed the test—and us.¹⁵ The question of what makes one administrator better than another should be as important to us as the question of what makes one faculty member better than another or one student more successful than another. While there is no set formula here, nor should there be, there is still a way to pursue this question. It involves calibrating the educational interests of faculty and students with the external conditions that prohibit their achievement. Once this is determined, the role of the

administrator needs to be one of maximizing conditions for achievement—for both students *and* faculty.

Administrating with a cookie-cutter may work in good economic times, but it surely does not work in bad ones. Rather, bad economic times require higher levels of flexibility, diplomacy, and courage from administration than good times. One should administrate differently with a blank check before them than with massive debt. Just as one should not blame bad weather on the captain, so too should one not assume that all administrators are in favor of high student debt, contingent labor, and salary compression. However, administration should be judged on the way in which they deal with these unfortunate conditions and the ways in which they work in consort with faculty and students to alleviate them. Progressive administration works to mitigate the pain of others and to increase the attainment of those whom they serve; neoliberal administration does not care about the pain of other or their attainment, and works only to increase their individual attainment. Or, to put it more directly, neoliberal administration furthers the ends of neoliberalism; progressive administration works to overcome neoliberalism. To be sure, if administration has a dark side, it is its evil neoliberal variation. Few should disagree that progressive administration is better than neoliberal administration. The only question though is how to achieve it.

Conclusion

While there is reason to believe that there is no going back to the future in higher education, this need not be regarded as the “end” or “fall” of higher education. Rather, it needs to be regarded as an opportunity to forge a new beginning. This is only going to happen though through individual efforts—efforts that begin with the way we teach our classes, converse with our colleagues, and present our scholarship to the world.¹⁶ It is also only going to happen through the support and solidarity of progressive, visionary university administrators who understand the damaging force of neoliberalism in academe—and are willing to work in consort with students and faculty to overcome them.

My perspective on neoliberalism in academe is based on the experiences of someone who advanced from the position of graduate student and contingent faculty member to full professor and dean during the first decade of this century; and who everyday faces the challenges of academic administration in dark times in solidarity with the faculty of our school. These and other characteristics provide a unique angle on the workings of the university and academic activism. From this angle, there are reasons to be excited about the future of the academy, and to be hopeful that we can effect change in higher education. Nevertheless, I am well aware of the devastating effects of neoliberalism in education, and the ways in which it has negatively impacted many lives. My aim in this essay is to provide a pathway out of the dark woods of academic neoliberalism—and hope for the return of education-based university missions.

My belief is that faculty must be in solidarity with administration if we are to have any chance of defeating the neoliberal beast. The conditioned belief that administration is the dark side of academe discourages progressive faculty from becoming progressive administrators. It also belittles the efforts of administrators who fight every day to end the tyranny of neoliberal academe. Academe needs students, faculty, and administrators to be in solidarity in dark times. An open dialogue of hope and resistance against the stormy waters of economic Darwinism gives us perhaps our best chance of opening a new chapter for higher education in the twenty-first century.

Over the years, I have seen and learned from many examples of positive and negative alliances among students, faculty and administration. Negative alliances many times stem from differences of vision as to the direction of the department or university. One of the more memorable negative ones was a dean who in response to a department that did not like this dean's choice for their next chair, yelled at them and told them they did not know what they needed— and went forward with the hire in spite of a lack of faculty support. This administrator's style was not to dialogue with faculty about their interests and vision for their university, but rather to ram his own peculiar and particular vision down their throats. This resulted in low faculty morale and much anger about the lack of respect and hope afforded to faculty. Fortunately for all concerned, the dean only served one term, left the university, and has since then not been a university administrator. Academic behavior like this only further weakens faculty faith in administration and makes the road to solidarity more arduous.

However, I've also witnessed the opposite. Namely, when many students and some faculty approached a dean about the suitability of a chair that was appointed during a break when few faculty were present to weigh in. When students and faculty questioned the decision, the dean listened to them, and replaced the chair with a more suitable person. The openness to dialogue with students and faculty regarding their education and needs rewarded the dean with a long and successful tenure.

But all negative and positive alliances begin with relationships— individual and collective— between faculty and administration. The more open both parties are to nurturing these relationships the better the chances of more positive alliances than negative ones. I have been fortunate as a faculty member to work for many chairs that listened to my needs as a faculty member and worked with me to meet them.

One of the positive results of these alliances is the journal *symplokē*, which I founded as a graduate student and maintained as a faculty member at several institutions under several different chairs. That it has continuously served the profession by publishing critical theory for nearly twenty-five years is a testament to numerous positive faculty/administration alliances. Conversely, I was surprised when a fellow journal editor told me some years back that his top25 university cut back support that was promised to him for his prestigious journal. While this may not be everyone's prime example of a negative conflict between faculty and administration, for me it is, especially when this colleague stepped down as editor and found a new home for the journal.¹⁷ Great journal editors are in short supply. When one is lost because of a negative conflict, we all lose, namely, everyone who looks to journals as an outlet for their research and a source of information for work in their area of concern. The shape of higher education to come is yet to be determined. Perhaps seeing closer solidarity among faculty and administration, in areas such as leadership decisions and journal support in good *and* bad economic times, is a preview of the shape of higher education to come. Though these are just a small sample of the different ways faculty and administration can benefit from stronger alliances, it is important to have at least a few success stories to keep hope alive. Moreover, the strength of alliances need not only be gauged by their positive outcomes: just forging the alliances, successful outcome or not, is half the battle.

When progressive administration take up arms in the fight against the beast of neoliberal academe, they provide “top cover” for progressive faculty also involved in the fight. For as we know, to fight against neoliberal academe puts its faculty combatants at risk of elimination from the system.

“Top cover” should be regarded as a form of administrative activism that will help bring about the end of neoliberal academe, but it will only be possible if we relegate to the dark side only those whose actions earn them entry. To continue the commonplace response that to enter administration is necessarily to enter the dark side only discourages progressive faculty from joining the administrative ranks. It also plays into the hand of neoliberal academe, which expects administration to be the dark side. Let’s now think of the dark side academic characterization as an unfortunate designation fitting for both administration *and* faculty who work in consort with the ends of neoliberal academe—and not use it to discourage progressive faculty from entering the ranks of administration.

Notes

¹ The phrase “docile neoliberal subject” comes from Bronwyn Davies, Michael Gottsche, and Peter Bansel, “The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal University,” *European Journal of Education* 41.2 (2006), 307. See Jeffrey R. Di Leo, *Corporate Humanities in Higher Education: Moving Beyond the Neoliberal Academy* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), xvii-xix, for a defense of their presence in the neoliberal academy and its harmful effect.

² The best general account of neoliberalism is still David Harvey’s *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). For recent accounts of the neoliberal university, see Henry A. Giroux, *Neoliberalism’s War on Higher Education* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2014) and Jeffrey R. Di Leo, *Corporate Humanities in Higher Education: Moving Beyond the Neoliberal Academy* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013).

³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998; reprint, 2000), 95.

⁴ See Jeffrey R. Di Leo, *Corporate Humanities in Higher Education: Moving Beyond the Neoliberal Academy* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 2743, for an account of a paralogy as an approach to academic dialogue in the neoliberal academy. See also, Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 63-66, for a more general account of paralogy.

⁵ See Jeffrey R. Di Leo, “In Praise of Tough Criticism,” *The Chronicle Review, Chronicle of Higher Education*, section B (18 June 2010): B4-B5.

⁶ “Administration” here includes all full-time university employees classified as managers, executives, and administrators. While many of these individuals come from the ranks of faculty, some do not.

⁷ If higher education is indeed increasingly modeling itself on corporate life, then it is interesting to note that management is not considered the “dark side” within the world of corporate life. Rather, corporate management and administration is widely sought after by lower level corporate employees and is usually regarded as their career aspiration.

⁸ While “demonizing” administration in general is not a very controversial characterization, ascribing “sainthood” to all faculty may be. To be sure, saintly faculty are about as common as non-demonic administration. However, what would the parallel construction be to the “demonizing” of administration? To call faculty angels? Gods? These seem even less fitting. Perhaps attempts at drawing a parallel reveal more about the shortcomings of “demonizing” administration than about finding an appropriate noun for their faculty “other.”

⁹For an account of the professional aporia and affiliational difficulties of choosing to pursue graduate work in both philosophy and literature, see Jeffrey R. Di Leo, *Academe Degree Zero: Reconsidering the Politics of Higher Education* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2012), 43-54.

¹⁰See, Jeffrey R. Di Leo, Henry Giroux, Sophia McClennen, and Ken Saltman, *Neoliberalism, Education, and Terrorism: Contemporary Dialogues* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2014).

¹¹Barbara R. Bergmann, “Bloated Administration, Blighted Campuses,” *Academe* 77 (November-December 1991), cited in John W. Curtis and Saranna Thornton, “Losing Focus: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2013-14,” *Academe* 100 (March-April 2014), 7.

¹²“Figure 1, Percentage Change in Number of Employees in Higher Education Institutions, by Category of Employee, 1975 and 1976 to 2011” in John W. Curtis and Saranna Thornton, “Losing Focus: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2013-14,” *Academe* 100 (March-April 2014), 7.

¹³John W. Curtis and Saranna Thornton, “Losing Focus: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2013-14,” *Academe* 100 (March-April 2014), 7.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁵The Turing test is one where a person and a machine (computer) respond to questions from an interrogator. If after a certain period of time, the interrogator cannot tell which is the person and which is the machine, the machine will have passed the Turing test. In my example here, the computer only considers cost reduction and does not consider impact on education. If, under these circumstances, which are really quite constrained, one cannot determine the difference between a computer response to an administrative question and the response of a person, then indeed this is a bad omen for administration—and decidedly a good one for computers as potential replacements for administration. This is why I say that the administrator failed the Turing test rather than the computer passed it. The Turing test was suggested by Alan Turing in his paper, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence” in 1950 and is also called “the imitation game.”

¹⁶I present my case for this in *Corporate Humanities in Higher Education*. ¹⁷See, Jeffrey J. Williams, “My Life as Editor,” in *How to be an Intellectual: Essays on Criticism, Culture, & the University* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 205.

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