

Centre for Research on the English-speaking World (CREW) EA 4399:

Axe 1, Démocratie, politique et société,

Axe 2, Information, médias et représentations dans la mondialisation,

CREC - Centre de recherche en civilisation britannique,

Institut du Monde Anglophone,

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3, 5 rue de l'École de Médecine, 75006 Paris



International conference, Friday, 23 March 2012

Maison de la recherche de la Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3, 4, rue des Irlandais, 75005 Paris, France

Call for Papers

Higher Education in the UK and the USA since Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan: Converging Models?

This conference will address the similarities and differences in higher education between the United Kingdom and the United States over the last thirty years. It will attempt to ascertain to what extent the British and American systems of higher education have been converging since the 1980s, and whether they may now be referred to as a particular social, economic, institutional, and ideological “model”.

A generation ago, the higher education systems in the United Kingdom and the United States were dissimilar in a number of ways. From funding and fees to participation and dropout rates, there was a cleavage between the two countries. However, the landscape of higher education and the student experience have changed considerably on both sides of the Atlantic over the past three decades; much has altered since Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1979 and Ronald Reagan President of the United States in 1981. On the one hand, the financial cost for students to go to university has increased considerably, whilst an ever greater emphasis has been laid on individual responsibility, quality, league tables and market forces. On the other hand, there have been social policy changes regarding inclusivity, diversity and affirmative action. More fundamentally, the essential role and purpose of higher education have been increasingly debated in relation to its economic benefit to the individual and the country, rather than the part it plays in personal self-fulfilment and self-betterment. Do the higher education systems in the United Kingdom and the United States now mirror each other and constitute a specific model?

Papers will deal with issues linked to the recent evolution of higher education, for example, the role fulfilled by higher education and its purpose for the individual and society as a whole, or any of the topics mentioned in this non-exhaustive list:

- **The economics of higher education:** the funding of higher education, public funding, competition for funds, sponsorship, private sector participation, links to business & industry, market principles, marketing practices, budgets, budget cuts, department closures, international and national rankings, league tables, dependency on international students, assessment of teaching staff, the funding of research and development;
- **The issues of access and inequalities:** the socio-economic make up of students, social mix, students from minorities or disadvantaged backgrounds, race issues, gender issues, disability issues, attempts to diversify student profiles and social engineering, affirmative action, widening access, social justice, social mobility, contextual data, outreach work, reproduction of inequalities, residential segregation, elitism, exclusionary practices, the Russell Group and the Ivy League, the degree gap, participation rates, regional variations;
- **The student experience:** stratification of the student experience, types of degrees on offer, quantity and quality of teaching received, student/staff ratio, place of residence and accommodation, dependency on parents, grants and scholarships, student debt, studies/paid-work balance, tuition fees, student protests, student unions, socialising, on/off campus life, the role of alumni and networks, post-graduate employment, dropout rates, gap years.

Papers will deal with higher education in the UK or in the USA, although comparative papers would be particularly welcome.

Papers may deal with a particular period, or the entire three decades under analysis (1979-2012).

Papers should last approximately 20 minutes and be given in English, with a view to a selection of full papers being published in a book.

Please send proposals of around 200 words with a short bio-bibliography before 15 July 2011.

Contact: Sarah Pickard - sarah.pickard@univ-paris3.fr

Conference webpage: <http://www.univ-paris3.fr/conf-higher-ed>