


The Neoliberal Academy of the Anthropocene and the Retaliation of the Lazy Academic

Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies
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DOI: 10.1177/1532708616669522
csc.sagepub.com


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Abstract

Focusing on production and dissemination of academic knowledge, this article discusses the role of higher education as it serves the neoliberal imperative. Emphasis is given to two fundamental realities that are influencing higher education today: neoliberalism and the Anthropocene. These two realities shape the crisis of the Professoriate: differentiating faculty into the romantic individual while simultaneously forcing the production of human capital in the name of neoliberalism. The production and performance of the neoliberal knowledge imperative is illustrated through the faculty performance review system. To reclaim the knowledge imperative the article argues that the refusal of work must occur. The refusal of work generates a posthuman subject, the “lazy academic” that is able to reconceptualize how the faculty can confront the neoliberal university.

Keywords

anthropocene, faculty review, neoliberalism, laziness

There is no longer a public sphere. There is no longer a private sphere. There is only and everywhere a neoliberal sphere. Neoliberalism is not only the dominant model of economic and political relations across social institutions and practices, it is the ubiquitous *modus operandus* of the Anthropocene in which postsecondary education finds, constitutes, and embattles itself today. That is to say, in this “Age of Humankind,” American higher education now serves the neoliberal imperative wholesale and unquestioningly. Academe need only look at its own experience and daily practices to see such truths produced. And the production of these truths constitutes a *crisis*.

Much has been written about neoliberalism’s stranglehold on American higher education. Within the most prominent studies, attention has largely focused on the changing nature of faculty work and livelihoods (Neumann, 2009; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This article departs from these significant, yet more pragmatic approaches to the study of neoliberalism in academia. I take the *knowledge imperative* of higher education itself as my central concern. The knowledge imperative is that social contract between colleges and universities and society that promised to safeguard knowledge—as an organizing system of social life—from partisanship, political whim, and undue influence from powerful factions (Kezar, 2004). The knowledge imperative is the emancipatory role that Academe assumed when it fought for and secured academic freedom in the United States (American Association of University Professors [AAUP],

1940). Put simply, I take higher education’s role as the arbiter, producer, and disseminator of academic knowledge to be my central concern in this article.

This article characterizes two fundamental realities shaping higher education today: neoliberalism and the Anthropocene. Neoliberalism, in brief, can be understood as a particularized governmentality of things focused on rendering reality using technologies of hyper-individualism, hyper-surveillance, economic determinations of productivity, and competitive entrepreneurialism (Foucault, 2008). The Anthropocene, in brief, is a recognition of the social consequences for our current geologic period—one in which humans are the primary agents of affect and effect on the planet (Braidotti, 2006; DeLanda, 1991). Such science forces us to socially grapple with the consequences of human agency not as separate from nature, but constituent *and simultaneously* constituting of nature. I argue that these two conditions reconfigure the knowledge imperative of higher education along exclusively global economic interests, thus generating a crisis for the Professoriate.

The crisis of the Professoriate today is marked by an absconded right to privacy, inducing great threats to higher

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education's cornerstones of academic freedom and shared governance. This crisis is marked with engagements that seek to differentiate the Faculty into romantic individuals while assimilating it into the necessary forces of human capital that neoliberalism demands. This crisis is marked by a human-built environment that largely ignores nonhuman actants and their profound affect on our humanness, including the literal constitution of knowledge. Today's faculty crisis is the radical process of transformation of the knowledge imperative of higher education.

Neoliberalism

To understand neoliberalism as a governmentality is to recognize that its myriad techniques and effects work collectively to sustain the prominence of the market as the regulative principle of society. Pauline Lipman (2011) provides a helpful definition that captures many of the instantiations of neoliberal action: "Neoliberalism is an ensemble of economic and social policies, forms of governance, and discourses and ideologies that promote individual self-interest, unrestricted flows of capital, deep reductions in the cost of labor, and sharp retrenchment of the public sphere" (p. 6). The sum of neoliberal governmentality is far greater than these co-constituting parts. The gross affective consequence of neoliberal governmentality is the subordination of the state to the market—and more specifically, to capital (Lazzarato, 2015). Foucault's analysis of neoliberalism is especially useful in providing a rough cartography of the imminent and infinite realizations of this affective consequence. In summary, Foucault instructs that neoliberalism's mark on the planet can be recognized by four technologies of biopolitics/biopower: hyper-individualism, hyper-surveillance, economic determinations of productivity, and competitive entrepreneurialism.

Hyper-individualism is the supremacy of the individual (and identity) over the collective and/or subjective. In American Academe, we perform this in the battles over collective bargaining, the colloquial expression of "student-centered" faculty, and the privatization of what constitutes a "higher education" into a bundling of personalized goods and services. One simple illustration is the move from a residence hall community to an apartment complex wherein students can make the individual choice to live alone, together, or together, alone. Another example can be found in promotion and tenure policies to include expectation for a national or international reputation of the scholar (rather than the scholarship), which often gets indexed by holding office in national associations (i.e., popularity), or receiving national awards, more so than they influence of one's actual work on subsequent scholarship, policy, or practice.

Hyper-surveillance is the obsession with all things being known, documented, and signified as knowable through statistics and positively verifiable. In American Academe,

we perform this in faculty performance databases that count, codify, compartmentalize, and therefore "capture" our productivity, be it peer-reviewed publications, student course evaluation scores, number of credit hours generated through enrollments, or number of external dollars garnered or simply number of proposals for external dollars submitted. Not to mention the ever-increasing presence of accountability mechanisms: from faculty meeting minutes, to reports on our reports about reports that document the reporting of our activity. I will return to this particular technology of biopolitics within the neoliberal university later.

Economic determinations of productivity means only that with value in an economy—be it an economy of knowledge, of manufacturing, or most likely an economy of population (e.g., human capital)—only our things that can be configured as valuable for one or more of these economies *economically* can be understood as productive and desirable. If our bodies can't contribute economically, we are not just useless. We are wrong. In American Academe, we economize ourselves in the crass refusal of tenure-line faculty to stand in solidarity with adjunct, clinical, or practice-focused colleagues. As individual faculty members, we each know our place, and we scramble to secure our footing in the economy seemingly designed especially for our unique individual talents—be that an economy of research, teaching, or administration.

Competitive entrepreneurialism fashions the ethics of our time. On our own we succeed or we fail. And on our own we must succeed against one another or else we fail. And on our own our failure ensures others' success, which reinscribes our failure—on our own. Yet, when we succeed, our success marks our bodies as innovative, exceptional, and valuable to the marketplace to which we are most suited. In American Academe, we perform this in the rapid one-upsmanship of tenure and promotion committees and expectations, in the redeployment of resources to support the most economical producers inevitably setting others further and further behind. There is no dearth of examples demonstrating the competitive entrepreneurial subjection of the neoliberal professor. From academic awards to citation index ratings to public influence rankings, each reward and beget rewards for the successful academic entrepreneur.

For Foucault (2008), these technologies support the subjectivation of people into the "entrepreneur of the self." Individual faculty members, then, are responsible for cultivating selves that respond to the market, rather than scholarship. Roberto Esposito (2015), Manuel DeLanda (2006), and Maurizio Lazzarato (2013) would suggest that the economy is the institution or vessel through which all subjectivation happens in neoliberal capitalism. To this more radical end, faculty members—and the knowledge imperative that rests in their responsibility—are themselves commodified to exist. Capital not only defines the individual, it must valorize the individual. Yet, work—Foucault's human

capital—cannot valorize the individual as part of the economy unless the work itself entangles the economy.

As a governmentality, neoliberalism transcends the art of governing. It is not a governance structure itself, nor a model for governments. As a governmentality, neoliberalism does not organize or operationalize systems of control and political relations—such a government could conceivably heed off a crisis. Rather, as a governmentality, neoliberalism delineates what Foucault (2008) called the “conduct of conducts,” the rules of desire and action afforded individuals and communities to self-impose. Neoliberalism makes certain truths possible, certain ways of knowing knowable. It creates commonsense. As a governmentality, neoliberalism builds a circus of possibility by refuting immanent planes of (im)plausibilities. From such conduct of conducts, neoliberalism breeds crisis—the current transformation of knowledge.

Such a governmentality of things has radical consequences for the knowledge imperative of higher education, for the configured livelihoods of those of whose bodies have assumed responsibility for the knowledge imperative (i.e., the faculty), and for the expansion, or truncation, of opportunities in the production of the knowledge imperative. The neoliberal sphere is the crisis of American higher education—temporal, spatial, environmental, economic, and personal. As consequence, within the performed crisis, faculty members must create and re-create neoliberal regimes through their work or the work will not have use. Faculty work must engender new markets for capitalist exploitation (e.g., technology transfer, patents, or so-called public–private partnerships that allow private enterprise access to public trusts, which in turn are transformed into markets¹) or academic knowledge is useless. Not just useless—it will be wrong. Faculties must individually and collectively support the false-scarcity of knowledge as a commodity or their purpose is absconded and transfigured into the hobbies of esoteric nutjobs or the technocratic machinery of an Ikea assembly kit. The neoliberal sphere is *the* crisis—the moment, circumstance, and conditions that faculty members (re)make everyday—the conduct of conducts—from which nothing will ever be the same. Furthermore, this crisis is abstracted into the realm of what appears commonsensical. After all, it gets made every day, in this crisis as the “Age of Humankind” becomes recognizable primarily through the neoliberal sphere ubiquitously enfolding across the Anthropocene.

The Anthropocene

In a scientific sense, the Anthropocene is our current geologic period—one in which humans are the primary agents of affect and effect on the planet—humankind has as much power over geologic change as anything else, if not more so (Oldfield et al., 2014). Such science forces us to socially

grapple with the consequences of human agency not as separate from nature, but constituent *and simultaneously* constituting of nature (Lövbrand et al., 2015). Put more simply, we invent nature, with every decision we make socially and politically regarding how we choose to understand it. A blunt consequence here is that what we often consider “human ecosystems” or “human ecologies”—the bedrock of much ecological theorizing that goes unquestioned in education research today, including postsecondary education research (see Perna, 2006, or Renn & Arnold, 2003). These should simply be understood as ecosystems and ecologies, as the “human” need not be separated into an elevated, qualifying, or descriptive status.

Ontologically, the Anthropocene asks theorists to engage postnatural, postsocial, and postpolitical ways of being (Lövbrand et al., 2015). If nature is invented, and the social is imagined, and politics are up for grabs, there are opportunities for social theorists to fracture the dominant mode of being—that which ascribes us to reach for unreachable universal truths and ideals. From these beginnings, posthumanist thinkers, such as Rosi Braidotti (2013), connect these flattened (e.g., Spinozist) ontological claims while drawing attention to the significance of life in the biopolitics of neoliberal regimes. Roberto Esposito (2008, 2015) is a leading posthumanist engaging critique of neoliberalism as a biopolitical governmentality. He and Braidotti alike center “life” in their posthumanism as the political situation of the Anthropocene. Life, according to both Braidotti and Esposito, can be understood as the ancient Greek *zoe*—life itself. When *zoe* is made into a group (e.g., a population, a faculty), its subjectivation is valorized into particular qualities, and this can be understood using the term, *bios*. The Anthropocene, in a normative sense, recognizes that the *human version* of bios carries geologic responsibility, and this Esposito names *anthropos*.

All of our things, whether natural or plastic, share agency with us humans. Things matter. And things, created in human minds as subservient and only actants inasmuch as humans give them credence to be, in fact are setting their own agendas (Bennett, 2010). While perhaps, similarly to Bruno Latour’s (1993) assertion that we have never been modern, we might now recognize that complicit with the neoliberal regime, we have never, actually been human. That is, we have never fully actualized our humanness, but rather usurped ourselves into our current—and possibly inevitable—posthuman necessities (Braidotti, 2013). Whether it be the sense of self we can only recognize through our online status updates, or the claims to personal wellness we can only make through the fitbit technes we invite to become part of our bodies, our humanness now can only emerge as far as it can be individually surveyed for its economic contribution to the competitive entrepreneurial *esprit de corps*. Such is the social/political condition for postsecondary education today.

As a strange, yet imminent twist of planes, taking the Anthropocene seriously points toward a need for a non-anthropocentric onto-epistemological orientation. My point here is that any critique of neoliberalism, particularly any critique circulating within, without, and through postsecondary education, should recognize the posthuman and non-anthropocentric necessity of social theory as we engage with science. Centering a humanness (i.e., a known/knownable human subject) in analysis, critique, and action does not make sense in a context wherein science itself forces us to reconcile the agency of machines and other things. Hence, posthumanists theorize new ontologies of “becoming-animal,” “becoming-earth,” and “becoming-machine” (Bennett, 2010; Braidotti, 2013; Esposito, 2015). This is an optimistic synthesis of the Anthropocene. For here lies great promise: posthumanist and non-anthropocentric ontological retaliation as academic activism might indeed afford some salvation for those who want to imagine anew the knowledge imperative for democratic purposes and emancipatory regimes of pluralistic truths. I will return to this ontological retaliation later in the article. Recognizing the anthropocene as not only our geologic period, but as framing our social—and especially political—contexts draws a new line of flight for thinking/doing through the intensity of neoliberalism’s stranglehold on our daily performance of the knowledge imperative.

Production and Performance of the Neoliberal Knowledge Imperative

To illustrate the reconfiguration of knowledge through neoliberalism’s biopolitical technologies, I return to the faculty performance review system alluded to earlier, and I draw from personal experience to elucidate my rendering of the neoliberal crisis at work. Like many faculty members across American colleges and universities today, I am asked to produce an annual report of my scholarly activity. Also like many campuses across the nation, my campus has adopted a performance management system to “support” my production of this annual review. The system, “Neo-Tech” (a pseudonym so as to protect the innocence of the machine), enables me to quantify my scholarly contributions from the previous year. I populate Neo-Tech with detailed information about anything and everything that my institution has requested be counted as scholarly activity. A non-exhaustive, but representative list of such items follows:

- Articles
- Books
- Chapters
- Technical reports
- Academic presentations
- Non-academic presentations

- Invited lectures
- White papers
- Grant submissions, including monetary value/amount
- Grant awards, including monetary value/amount

Neo-Tech overtly reduces my scholarship to economic production; it literally counts how much activity my labor produced. Yet, Neo-Tech is not the only software system that is at play in surveying and economizing my labor-as-institutional-commodity. Nearly all of my activities are somehow captured by an institutionalized system, generating ever newer and ever more data points to build an imagining of me as an academic.

In addition to my Neo-Tech produced annual review, I complete an instructional load form that tracks how many credit hours I teach, how many students enroll in these credit hours, and what content (i.e., courses) occupy these credit hours. I supply a separate accounting of the credit hours I have been released from either by course buyouts funded by grants or as part of compensation for administrative labor that I might perform for the institution (e.g., program coordination). My funded research activity, which might earn me favor in Neo-Tech, also requires that I certify my effort via another software program’s form. In my professional life as a faculty member, I have also completed a “position responsibility statement” that captures the percentages of effort across my job responsibilities that cumulatively produce my faculty line (e.g., 40% teaching, 40% research, 20% service). I submit these forms to systems owned, leased, or outsourced by my university. Data points are generated about me, about my scholarship, about my productivity. And worth gets assigned. Over. And. Over.

These data populate a network of systems with no means for capturing the qualitative worth, value, influence, significance, or innovation of the work. These systems become a counting and discounting machine. Now, this might just seem annoying. Or an obstruction to me getting to do my work. Or a detour from my professor-ing. But in fact, as the assemblage becomes the professor-ing, it indeed takes on zoe—life, and en masse via my colleagues and the broader campus, is a becoming bios—a form of life. (For, the dehumanized representation of life void of any actual life form is unacceptable.) I become the output, represented in campus reports, complete with college-wide and inter-college comparisons as well as comparisons w/aspirant peers; etc., etc. When my annual review is born, my scholarship is born anew. I am no longer my work. My work is no longer me. I am only my work; I am only human capital. My work consumes me. All of which begs a question—How does the knowledge imperative become embodied in the practices of professor-ing as a professor performing my review of my performance?

Posthumanist Readings of the Neoliberal Knowledge Imperative

It is easy to interpret the faculty performance review as a surveillance technology. Perhaps it is too easy. Clearly, there is an element of what Foucault (2008) considered disciplinary power—the heavy influence of the state over how I keep my job (or rather, prevent losing my job). The reviews are there, in part, to document what a professor has achieved. The act of supplying the review with my achievements simultaneously reminds me that I am *expected* to achieve—and that these expectations are tied to my tenure, promotion to full, merit pay increases, the indexes of success in my career (to say nothing of sustaining my job security, no pun intended).

Yet, the surveillance function of performance review can also be read, as diffracted through the neoliberal condition of the academy, to move beyond discipline, and in fact, an effort to produce and sustain particular bios—a particular form of life as a Faculty, in communitarian sense. This diffraction is a posthuman movement in explaining the situation, and it would inevitably emerge differently if I were situated as a woman, as Latino, as single, or as professor-ing through a disability. The assemblage of the performance review creates the reality of neoliberal governmentality (via the hyper-surveillance, economic means of production, and the entrepreneurial investment of the individual), thus enabling or activating the (biopolitical) situation in which certain modes of professor-ing become the new version of what a professor can be known as becoming.

To make the abstract more concrete, what I refer to as the performance review assemblage includes things like my Curriculum Vitae, my computer, the data management system software that I must use to enter my accomplishments (Neo-Tech), me, the report generated by my inputs, and the engagement with that output by my Department Chair, the Dean, the Provost, and others who combine the data produced from me with those produced by other faculty members.

Inputs to Neo-Tech do not capture *qualities* of my accomplishments. These inputs are simply exchanges of capital within a monetary system that values certain categories of achievement—like the peer-reviewed journal article—over others—like the book chapter that appears in a friend's edited volume. In the case of evaluation, the Dean of the College must engage with that output as if it is me. Or rather, as if it becomes me. Because, it does become me. I am now my Neo-Tech output. The Dean will make recommendations about my performance based on that output—that-is-me, and attach them to her section of the emerging Neo-Tech database. I, Ryan Evely Gildersleeve, as a professor, am now beyond me—beyond my Neo-Tech report—I am me plus my report plus my Dean's report minus me (or at least minus my body, minus my theoretical contributions, minus my influence on the field as circulated through the

findings in my research reports, minus my shocks-to-thought that I worked so hard to figure out and explain tediously in manuscripts submitted for inclusion in special issues about neoliberal higher education).

To summarize the conduct of conducts of the neoliberal regime in the Anthropocene: I become my work. My work becomes my Neo-Tech Report. My Neo-Tech Report, a thing, a becoming-machine, is self-organizing. It may or not be what we consider “conscious.” But the machine organizes itself, moves itself through the fiberoptics of digital networks to circulate across and throughout and perhaps beyond the institution. It, dare I say, has a personality, perhaps. It might even be considered to be endowed with, or rather to produce through its own line of flight, zoe (i.e., life).

Hence, the biopolitical turn: the line of flight for Neo-Tech as zoe to bios sans anthropos jumps into a neoliberal governmentality through which professor-ing becomes about the productivity and not about the knowledge imperative. Rather the knowledge imperative of professor-ing becomes the performance review of productivity and can be marked and illustrated when individual performance reviews are amalgamated and subjected to institutional level analyses, as well as used for intra- and inter-institutional comparisons. Social Sciences versus Education versus Engineering . . . this line moves beyond the disciplining of bodies (i.e., the individual professor) and into the situation where the bios is politically produced as a productive faculty (communitarian).

Ontological Retaliation—The Refusal of Work—Contesting Human Capital

I began this article with grand gestures about the role that neoliberalism and its coziest of contexts, the Anthropocene, have played in reconfiguring the knowledge imperative of Academe. As a governmentality, neoliberalism-of-the-anthropocene strangles the creative and generative potential of the knowledge imperative, harnessing it for subordination to capital and the market. My posthumanist (i.e., non-anthropocentric) readings of a faculty performance review system bring us to the edge of critique, but to jump off that cliff into a new realm of possibility—a parrhesias, as Foucault (2008), Huckaby (2007), and Kuntz (2015) might say—a retaliatory action must be formed. For such action, I turn to the Italian philosopher, Maurizio Lazzarato. Lazzarato (2015) fashions a critique of capitalism that names American higher education as a quintessential example of neoliberal governmentality. He suggests that our best chance of disidentification from capital, of deterritorializing/reterritorializing the body politic, of establishing freedom from market-logic is “the refusal of work” (p. 245). I find great promise in such possible laziness, and I elaborate below after a brief summary of Lazzarato's critique.

Lazzarato (2013) argues that the neoliberal condition entraps the subject into a subjectivation process wherefrom the body politic is produced as “the indebted man”—a subject known only through debt. This subject posture is a particularized relation to capital, applied universally to the *bios* of the Anthropocene. It comes about from the necessity of the body politic to owe the ruling classes (in contemporary American discourse, the 1%). Institutions enshrined in the perpetuation of capitalism (like American higher education), emplace bodies as indebted for our subjective possibilities. The Faculty is indebted for the opportunity to work, to produce knowledge, to be scholars.

When Lazzarato calls for the refusal of work, it incites lazy action—the creation of space/time to halt the infinite accumulation of capital necessitated (and produced) through neoliberal governmentality. Fracturing neoliberalism requires the disruption of capital. According to Lazzarato (2015), “Although their purpose is to produce money, the operations of capital have more than economic effects. Capital endows us with perception and a certain sensibility . . .” (p. 252). The perceptions and senses produced through neoliberalism valorize the masculine over the feminine, the supremacy of Whiteness, the strength of the debtor over the indebted.

Laziness, then, disrupts neoliberalism as a governmentality, as it suspends the subjectivation of the Faculty through work (i.e., debt). Instead, “‘Lazy’ action operates disidentification. Its introduction into a world organized around activity undermines identities themselves” (Lazzarato, 2015, p. 251). In the refusal of work, it is working for the accumulation of capital, working to repay the debt of employment, working for the neoliberal regime and the capitalization of the knowledge imperative that is refused.

The Lazy Academic

The refusal of work, then, can take form as lazy action, in the spirit of Duchamp’s (1973) lazy person and Deleuze’s *seer* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983). Lazzarato calls for a *political* formulation of these existential and conceptual figures. I look to two American sources for inspiration to politicize what I call a *lazy academic*. First, I draw from Aaron Kuntz’s responsible methodologist, from his 2015 volume of the same name. A responsible methodologist, according to Kuntz, commits to truth-telling, from a trusted and historically informed position, but the responsible methodologist does *not* obsess over *technes* of method. The instrument of the interview, the observation, the fieldnote, etc.—these are but conceptual tools at the disposal of the responsible methodologist. Their formation and practice is secondary to the thoughtful, deliberate, obstinate obsession with parrhesia—Foucault’s notion of truth-telling that provides for an ethics of inquiry and democratic participation.

The responsible methodologist, then, must ignore the easy calls for efficiency in inquiry that help scholars maximize their publication records. The responsible methodologist does not rely on method, but rather engages methodologies sans methodology (Koro-Ljungberg, 2016) to explore, experiment, and rhizomatically engage concepts and phenomena of inquiry. The development of trustworthy and historically infused postures called for by Kuntz and supported by Koro-Ljungberg are oppositional to neoliberal knowledge, but rather, catapult a refusal to work-as-commodity—a rebuttal to the academic as human capital.

Second, in crafting a political form of lazy work to retaliate against the neoliberal university, the lazy academic joins the “slow scholarship movement” (Mountz et al., 2015) in giving form to the refusal to work. Engaging a feminist ethics of care to confront the neoliberal university’s commandments of compressed time, productivity, and elitism, Mountz et al. argue for slowing the university down to preserve that which is good about it. Specifically, they demonstrate how the contemporary capitalization of faculty scholarship (in research, teaching, and service) damages and harms the knowledge imperative of academe. They provide a list of pragmatic actions that faculty members can use to slow time in the neoliberal university so as to generate and value “care-full” (p. 1251) scholarship. These suggestions range from the simplicity of sending fewer emails to the collaborative of discussing and sharing about slowing down to the challenging task of re-orienting achievement goals to focus on doing the *minimum* amount of work required for the traditional benchmarks of employment and sustainability (i.e., tenure and promotion). The goal of slowing down in this movement is to regain control over the research process, imbuing it with more thoughtful, deliberate, and deeply contextualized intentionality. It refutes the speedy, efficient, commodification of academic activity.

The slow scholarship movement is similar to Shahjahan’s (2015) call for slowing down and being lazy in the research process. Although, rather than targeting neoliberalism’s commodification of knowledge, Shahjahan points to the colonizing effects that neoliberal time has over the academic. Shahjahan theorizes time as a colonial technology, used to comport the academic body into a capitalist endeavor. In Shahjahan’s arguments for laziness, he asks that academics spend more time in deeper reflection and cultivate “our embodied selves and nurturing ‘depth’ in our work for equity and social justice . . . improving the quality of life and our work” (p. 499) irrespective of the time it takes to complete.

The lazy academic should incorporate Kuntz’s responsible methodologist into the slow scholarship movement proffered by Mountz et al. and Shahjahan, because these can serve as departure points for developing a lazy ethic in retaliation to neoliberalism. Indeed, the slow scholarship movement can act as the political context for the responsible methodologist

in disidentifying from academic labor into a subject position of the lazy academic. The lazy academic then, as a disidentification, deterritorializes/reterritorializes the indebted scholar from the neoliberal university's obsession with infinite capitalist accumulation. For the lazy academic, by assuming the role of the responsible methodologist and perpetuating the slow-scholarship movement, incrementally helps to reconceptualize what can be considered work.

For example, if critically engaging ethnographically with a group of Mexican migrant farmworkers as part of my research, then activity, such as taking the time to walk through a grocery store and touch, smell, taste, and admire *reflexively* the fruits and vegetables available to me could become-work that provides a deeper historicizing context to my inquiry. The groceries, as things, could become tools for research and such historicizing could support the parrhesiastic goals of the responsible methodologist. Such activity requires I ignore the neoliberal imperative to make immediate sense of migrant farmworking, and report through commodified channels of knowledge production. Spending time with fruit, then, lazily supports a posthumanist ethnographic engagement, while simultaneously refutes the human capital imperatives to understand migrant farmworkers and myself simply through our capitalist accumulation.

The slow work of the responsible methodologist then is an onto-epistemological turn. Concomitant with the posthumanist movement from zoe to bios sans anthropos that the Anthropocene engenders, the lazy academic refutes the subjection of neoliberalism, which is built upon an anthropocentric ideal. By refusing to be made human, refusing to be engulfed by the bios of anthropos (i.e., the human defined by work—human capital), refusal of work generates a post-human subject that can more readily subvert the neoliberal imperative of higher education, reclaiming the knowledge imperative for more radically democratic means.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Note

1. See Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) for more specific examples.

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