

Chapter 3

The Corrosion of Academic Character



Sharon Rider 

Abstract In the *Corrosion of Character*, Richard Sennet (1998) describes the consequences of working life under the new capitalism for the formation of character. In particular, he shows how flexibility and uncertainty, as two sides of the same coin, create a mentality that has ever less room for sound judgment and moral consideration. This paper concerns academic character formation and its corrosion. The focus is on PhD students because they are in the process of formation to become scientists and scholars. The aim is to provide a useful perspective for understanding the frame of mind engendered by the rules of the game of higher education as currently applied and construed. Arguing that character is the result of conduct, and not the other way around, the paper describes how the mindset of human beings involved in the pursuit of knowledge is inevitably bound up with everyday practices of academic training and study seen as forms of work. Since universities are perhaps the singular most important force of ideology production and reproduction in society, given that they both train the professions that enact and enforce it as well as produce the science and scholarship on which those professions are based, the education of those who are to be entrusted with the inculcation of the relevant norms and values is of fundamental relevance.

Keywords Higher education · Philosophy of education · Doctoral education · Character · Virtue · Vice

The original version of this chapter was revised: The chapter was inadvertently published without the block quotes the original version of chapter 3. The text has now been corrected with the block quotes. The correction to this chapter is available at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-5277-6_17

S. Rider (✉)
Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden
e-mail: Sharon.rider@filosofi.uu.se

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. 2021, corrected publication 2022
Á. Mahon (ed.), *The Promise of the University*, Debating Higher Education: Philosophical Perspectives 10, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-5277-6_3

Introduction

Stocks, bonds, objects of art, real estate. Now, what are they? An opportunity. To what? To make money? Perhaps. To lose money? Perhaps. To “indulge” and to “learn” about ourselves? Perhaps. So fucking what? What isn’t? They’re an opportunity. That’s all they are. They’re an event. A guy comes to you, you make a call, you send in a card. ‘I have these properties I would like for you to see.’ What does that mean? What you want it to mean? Do you see what I’m saying? Things happen to you.” (“Ricky Roma”, *Glengarry Glenn Ross*, directed by J. Foley, 1992).

In the *Corrosion of Character*, Richard Sennet (1998) describes the consequences of working life under what he describes as a ‘new capitalism’ for the formation of character. In particular, he shows how flexibility and uncertainty, as two sides of the same coin, create a mentality at odds with the kinds of qualities that we associate with integrity, judgment, and the capacity for moral thinking. Through a series of vignettes considering the fates and fortunes of individuals, Sennet demonstrates how a certain form of mental life is shaped by the prevailing conditions for earning a living, putting down roots and raising a family. Around the same time came Michael Power’s (1997) *Audit Society* and Bill Readings’s (1996) *The University in Ruins*. Power’s book showed how ‘system decay’, the instability and uncertainty intrinsic to the project of deregulation has resulted in the creation of a cadre of professionals for the checking and control of quality assurance and accountability, often in compliance with norms and values at odds with the principles guiding the activities of the professionals under audit. (Just-in-time delivery of products and services would be an example made especially poignant by the medical chaos produced by Covid-19 crisis.) Just as Power’s demonstrated how the inherent vagueness of the idea of the audit gives it its power, Readings’s book has become canonical for its formulation of the idea of ‘excellence’ in higher education as an empty signifier in the market-oriented discourse that has penetrated and in part re-oriented higher education and its institutions. In the two decades that followed, critiques of neoliberalism have become something of a growth industry, especially with respect to the university, in part due to a genuine concern with the effects of New Public Management, marketization, medialization and globalization on higher education and research, but also at least in part as a direct result of the very commodification of the academy that is being criticized. Perhaps the most influential of these was Slaughter and Rhoades’ (2004) *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*, which detailed how universities have moved from serving students to minimizing costs and maximizing revenue.

This paper will focus on a few aspects of the corrosion of academic character that are not commonly thematized in the literature. I will focus on PhD students because they are in the process of formation to be scientists and scholars; it is especially at the level of doctoral training that we can see clearly what we implicitly value in science and teaching insofar as we see to it that the next generation incarnates the requisite qualities. In the spirit of Sennet’s (1998) book, I hope to provide a perspective that can be useful for understanding the frame of mind engendered by the

reformulation of the rules of the game of higher education as currently applied and construed. I will not rehearse common knowledge about how scientometric indices are utilized in steering research funding and skewing scholarly practice, or how employability assessment exercises or regional economic development programs are entangled in university disinvestment in the humanities, etc. Rather, I want to show how the mindset of human beings involved in the pursuit of knowledge is inevitably bound up with everyday practices of academic training and study seen as forms of work.

To do this, the first and main part of the paper will articulate the problem of character corrosion under what Thomas Piketty (2020) calls the ideology of ‘hypercapitalism’: our implicit faith in a meritocratic economic order, especially acceptance of the notion that the successful have earned their prosperity, that philanthropy compensates or balances accumulation; that since social mobility is thought possible and equal opportunity is thought real, the less advantaged are thought responsible for their situation; thus the present distribution of resources is unpreventable (at least, if we are to avoid economic collapse). But my interest is not in a global view of how ideology structures life on the local or individual level, but rather how individual or local practices evolving out of this picture perpetually renew and reinforce it. And since universities are perhaps the singular most important force of ideology production and reproduction in society, given that they both train the professions that enact and enforce it (teachers’ education, law, economics) as well as produce the science and scholarship on which those professions are based, the education of those who are to be entrusted with the inculcation of the relevant norms and values is of fundamental relevance. The positioning of the latter in terms of the idea of character formation in working life discussed in the first section will be the theme of the second section.

Character Construction and Work

The relationship between character formation and work has a long history, going back to the Greeks, who thought that the repetition of unwholesome activities and exhausting movements of the soul as well as the body from a young age, together with the incessant preoccupation with lowly things, corrupted and disfigured both. Among the most debilitating habits hindering the healthy development of the human being and the polis, it was thought, was absorption in matters having to do with making money, which enslaved and deformed men individually and collectively, effectively crowding out concern with truth, beauty, and justice, which could only be actualized by the free man. And this is only natural since, for the Greeks, character is the result of conduct, and not the other way about. You become just by performing just acts, temperate by engaging in temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts, etc. And since the realization of these virtues was the essence of human flourishing, only the free man could be genuinely happy, according to Plato and Aristotle.

The conditions of work under late capitalism are not those of ancient Athens, of course. One need not embrace a Marxist theory of exploitation to see that different economic and political systems will structure working life in different ways. Liberal philosophers like Adam Smith expressed concern that the organization of labor in the modern factory of his own day could be damaging for workers' sensibilities, and a century later John Stuart Mill saw consumerism as potentially deleterious for morality and culture. Conservative thinkers like Edmund Burke worried that the unbridled avarice of free-market capitalists combined with egalitarian freedoms would result in a culture utterly lacking in wisdom and virtue and inhospitable to human flourishing. In this dark premonition, humanity is reduced to T.S. Eliot's 'Hollow Men', or alternatively, as Max Weber feared, prisoners in a steel-hard casing of petrified rationality the only content of which is teleological efficiency. Not long thereafter, Michael Oakeshott's (1991/1962) critique of the spirit of innovation built into capitalism was at the same time a condemnation of the thoughtless acquisitiveness and fleeting loyalties ensuing from it. The question of what makes for community, culture and character is thus not in itself an ideological position. Rather, one must have already assumed a certain position with regard to the meta-political questions for any political stance – left, right or center – to hold together. The kinds of questions I have in mind are of the kind:

What is a community?
 What is a culture?
 What is morality?
 What is work?
 What is responsibility?
 What is character?

The new capitalism, in other words, is not simply a way of organizing how we work, but also of how we live, how we think, and how we learn. It *does* something with each and every one of us, and to all of us together. The question is: is it possible to maintain the inventiveness, speed, and flexibility of the market mentality without undermining the capacity for long-term commitment, collaboration, concern, impartiality, and empathy? Can homo economicus, who is always revising his calculations of what is in his best interest, be a devoted father, a reliable neighbor, an honest broker, a serious scholar, or a good teacher? Or, has the deregulation of the labor market colonized previously autonomous value spheres, as Michael Sandel (2012) has suggested?

Sennet (1998) argued that our vocations or professions are not merely names for a certain position within the economy, but locate us in the world more broadly, defining our possibilities and duties in relation to ourselves and others. As the conditions of employment become more tenuous, so do our characters and commitments. In life as in labor, the long-term is increasingly usurped by the fixed-term, leading to a tendency to always be looking around the corner for the next possibility, the next project. Sennet's focus was not the usual concern with the familiar effects on workers' incomes and employment conditions, but rather what the latter do to them as social beings and, in particular, to their values. In contrast to the promise of

liberation in flux and flexibility, Sennet concluded that previously highly-regarded character traits such as dependability and commitment, necessary for the existence of basic institutions such as mortgages, tuition payments, familial obligations and the like, were eroding in the whirlwind of unpredictable income flows, relocations and frequent variations in work schedules. This attention to the ethical dimension of work in the new economy paved the way for a slew of studies that rekindled the debate about the vital role of security and stability for social cohesion and moral conduct, and how the new labor market, characterized as it is by contingency and precarity, but also as the primary source of identity and self-worth, constitutes an assault on human concern, thought and judgment. An especially important aspect of this transformation is what Arlie Russell Hochschild (1997) has diagnosed as ‘time famine’. And experience, dedication, attentiveness, considered judgment and duty require, if anything, time.

One should notice here that the kinds of virtues that sociologists today worry are under siege largely resemble ones that Aristotle would have emphasized, and, similarly, would have seen as emanating out of our shared institutions and practices. The character traits just mentioned are tied to dispositions such as trustworthiness, self-control, fairness, reciprocity, civility and respect, sound judgment and the like, which, Aristotle argued, are cultivated and enhanced by regular, repeated enactment. This is the respect in which dispositions to think or act consistently in different circumstances are ‘second nature’; they are habits in the same way as the culture in which they are cultivated are ‘habitats’, that is, as the environment in which practices and artefacts have meaning and use. And those surroundings are not just tools, settings, and resources, but how these are integrated in our life together with our families, friends, colleagues, and fellow citizens. The idea that such values can be drummed into our heads by instruction *ex cathedra* on mission statements or compliance exercises audited by quality controllers or evaluation experts in the absence of an enabling environment is, from this point of view, nonsense. No ethical review board or research codex, for instance, can countervail a culture that is skewed toward competition rather than collaboration, or toward short-term self-interest rather than long-term investment in an enduring common future. If our workaday world consists of the efficient instrumentalization of things, people, and ourselves, then *that* will be the character of the work and the workers involved.

The Character of Academic Work

In *The Managed Heart*, Hochschild (2003/1983) studied emotional labor in the workplace, noting that the engineering and commodification of attitudes such as care amounts to an erasure of the boundary between genuine solicitude for those with whom we have intimate relationships and the artificial posture of concern that employees may need to adopt in their professional roles. Habits instilled in the workplace become, as it were, ‘second nature’, making it difficult for the employees themselves to distinguish between the real and the imitation. But it is not only

outward conduct that is reconstituted. The capacity for moral judgment is whittled down every time an employee provides information with the aim of selling products and services rather than solving problems or answering questions. Similarly, dispositions such as self-discipline, patience, and cooperation can all be reconfigured in an atmosphere in which what counts is what's counted, the quantifiable and comparable net result, rather than the continuity and durability of institutions and practices in which they evolve and are embedded.

Reconstruing the connection between the professional and the personal implies a derangement of the internal conditions of both. Professions such as law and medicine build on trust. This does not mean that doctors were always in each and every case primarily concerned with the health and well-being of their patients, or that lawyers everywhere and always have scrupulously followed the law with the best interests of their clients in mind. But insofar as they have not, they were thought to have gone wrong, to have *failed* to follow their calling: the one was not a 'good doctor', but a quack, charlatan, or snake oil salesman; the other was not a 'man of the law', but a shyster, con man, or huckster. In the market logic of the new capitalism, the moral approbation is not as clearly warranted. In medicine, cost-benefit analysis has been fully integrated into the system: cost cutting measures have depleted staff and swelled caseloads, and doctors are encouraged, even coerced, by time-auditing schemes to increase patient throughput efficiency and to ration follow-up tests and referrals to specialists. In law, the logic of legal work is increasingly marketized to the extent that the larger the firm, the more it is conducted as a business enterprise. In the spirit of meeting with client expectations, ethical issues of responsibility and trustworthiness are muddled by the idea that whatever can be done should be done for the customer lest he turn to another firm for guidance. Whether or not you are a good lawyer has less to do then with principles of professional accountability and more to do with what you can get away with. The point is that where there once was a tension in professional life between market incentives and professional norms, the trajectory has been to usurp the autonomy of professional values by drawing them ever further into the marketplace where they are supplanted by inducements to behave in accordance with its logic.

What about higher education and research? What does PhD training today entail? The matter is complex and the landscape varied. There are significant differences between programs in the humanities and ones in the natural sciences or professions, for instance. Further, there are considerable variations within fields depending upon the ratio between private and public institutions in a given country, and their status relative to each other as well as in relation to the 'global market'. Nonetheless, there are a number of observations that can be made that can be understood in terms of the foregoing reflections. First and foremost, there is the wave of casualization of faculty that has swept over universities everywhere. Tenure in the United States has over the course of the last two decades rapidly declined from the rule to the exception. As of 2017, between one-fourth and one-half of Ph.D.'s get hired in academic jobs at all, and only a third of these jobs are on the tenure track. Thus, the odds of any given Ph.D. getting a tenure-track job lie between 10% and 25% (cf. Andrew Cuff, 2017; Weissmann, 2013). The situation has not improved since then. In the

UK, two thirds of researchers and about half of teaching staff are employed on fixed-term contracts. Beyond that, there are tens of thousands of academic staff on zero-hour or otherwise ‘alternative’, usually insecure, contracts (O’Malley, 2020). According to the report, *Second Class Academic Citizens: The dehumanising effects of casualisation in higher education* (Megoran & Mason, 2020), this development is not a side effect, but the intended outcome of the reorganization and reconstitution of academic work. The goal is greater adaptability and lower costs for the institution. Casualisation is thus not a problem to be solved by managers or a system flaw that can be corrected through training or new human resource policies. To use Oakeshott’s (1991/1962) terminology, it is not a mere change, but an *innovation*.

There is abundant evidence that casualized workers in higher education suffer, not only privately (say, by fixed-term contracts effectively ruling out making long-term financial commitments such as buying a house and planning for a family), but also professionally, from the ‘time famine’ mentioned earlier. Quite simply, they are not compensated for the time it actually takes to prepare adequately for classes, complete their marking, provide proper feedback, and keep up with the latest research in their fields, much less contribute to it. Further, they experience de-professionalization: they are not entrusted to choose the subject of their research; their work must conform to the career goals of the grant holder who employed them; they are told to publish more papers in top-rated journals but not given the time for the research and writing; they are given responsibility for teaching modules which they deem of dubious quality, taught by staff without the relevant competence, and so on. Of special interest in the report is the selection criteria for permanent hires: regardless of discipline, the *modus operandi* is to prefer candidates who are seen as instrumental to the institution’s goal of moving up the league tables. That means, of course, that merit is measured almost exclusively in terms of citations, journal impact factor and grant capture. In principle, one need not actually *read* the papers that have produced these desirable results; the presumed effects of good research are evidence enough. The assumption is that the system *is* meritocratic, so professional judgment of merit is not necessary. Returning to Piketty’s (2020) point, nothing succeeds like success, and failure is *ipso facto* proof of failure. When we impress upon our graduate students the importance of selective publication strategies, encourage them to nudge their way into the right citation cartels, emphasize above all else the intricate art of grant application writing, demonstrate in our daily discourse what impresses us and what we find embarrassing in our colleague’s achievements and shortcomings, we are not simply providing them with the necessary tools for survival in the academy, but also telling them what our standards are, what we judge to be of value and importance, and thus socializing them into a way thinking about the aim and character of academic work, one which they will carry with them when they in turn train the next generation.

And what have they learned? They have learned in the writing of every article and the formulation of every research project, in the time they spend or don’t spend on preparing their lectures or responding to student questions, a proprietary, entrepreneurial and ‘meritocratic’ attitude. The lessons are generally not taught as explicit doctrine, but by way of example in how we act. The standards of what has

been described as a winner-take-all academic star system (Liu & Bailey, 2018) are premised on the idea of equal opportunities, and as if everyone benefits spontaneously from the accumulations of those who have the most, those who accumulate citations and research funding; they aspire to be like them, the entrepreneurs, those who deserve most and are the most useful. They learn to disdain and stigmatize the 'losers' (for instance, the contingent faculty who, on this scheme, are assumed to lack merit, talent or diligence). In this environment, cooperation and collaboration are, at best, a means of furthering one's own interests and aspirations and convincing oneself that by so doing, one is furthering everyone else's. And in that sort of workplace, it will not matter much how one succeeds, only that one succeeds. The door is left swinging wide open for hucksters and snake-oil salesmen. The Macchiarini scandal is merely a spectacular example of the potential consequences of what happens every day at universities all over the world (Hyvönen, 2020).

In the famous speech from *Glengarry Glen Ross* cited to introduce this paper, the sales pitch is disarmingly honest in its jaded view of human ideals and pieties. Art? Learning? Money? They all come down to moments in in a senseless stream of events to seize or let pass; the only meaning they have is the one you invest in them here and now for your own purposes and pleasure. Some new element may prove to be a life-changing event or not, but you will have to live under the constraints of the consequences whether you choose it yourself, it's thrust upon you, or you just happen to stumble over it. What Ricky Roma is actually selling is not worthless property in Florida, but an ontology of life as pure potentiality, and the image of himself as one who realizes it in full: self-confident, sovereign, satisfied. Before his fall from grace, Paolo Macchiarini was to the Karolinska Institute of Medicine what Ricky Roma was to the real estate firm of Mitch and Murray.

The shrugging acceptance of this state of affairs among academic professionals is striking. The struggle for access to quality education as a means to achieving greater equality has been pivotal for economic development and human progress (Rider, 2020), yet we who are charged with providing it at the highest level seem to be content to sacrifice collective as well as personal responsibility on the altar of competition between workers at the level of the individual and the market efficiency of the institution at the level of the system.

This leads to a second and final point regarding education and character. Philosophers from Plato to Kant have agreed that education is perhaps first and foremost training of the will and self-awareness, in learning to recognize what it is that you really want and what is required to achieve it. The question was raised earlier in this paper about the possibility of somehow harnessing the productive energy and regenerative force of the competitive self-interested spirit of capitalist liberalism while preserving the endurance and fortitude of institutions and habits of mind that have evolved over centuries or more. Recalling the Aristotelian thought that dispositions to act are the result of prior acts, the ideal aim of postgraduate education could be described as encouraging conduct that maintains, enhances and, if the situation should require it, radically alters the capacity of those being trained to maintain, enhance, and, if the situation should require it, radically alter the

capacity of those being trained to...in perpetuity, since we do not and cannot know for certain what the future will bring.

Tweaking his concept toward a slightly more social model of action, one might see this training in terms of what Steve Fuller (2018) has called ‘modal power’, i.e. control over our intuitions of contingency, necessity, possibility and impossibility. Fuller argues forcefully that the cumulative advantage arising from formal arrangements that ensure perennial dividends to certain groups, institutions and individuals should be counteracted. Such arrangements include some of the sacred cows of the academy, including peer review, specialization, and the reification of scientific or scholarly consensus in the form of citation statistics. He presents a number of discomfiting characteristics of academic gatekeeping at journals and funding agencies, and provides a revealing account of what they tell us about the inclination toward continuity at the expense of risk-taking (and therewith the potential for genuine renewal). The interests of the industrial mindset force the academy to think of epistemic achievement in terms of accumulation, the ultimate aim of which is monopoly, which, as Piketty has shown, blocks social mobility. In science, as in society, the result is stagnation and disempowerment.

Fuller points out that the power wielded by academic journals, funding agencies and science academies in virtue of their authoritative position marginalizes in the first instance dissenting views within the academy, while at the same time demanding their submission and respect. The upshot is that heresy is punished, regardless of whether the claims are formulated with theoretical sophistication and in terms of established scientific data, or just culled from the internet: ‘conformity is the primary marker of competence’ (Fuller, 2018, p. 124). We should be wary, he thinks, of respecting experts for what they ‘possess’, that is, knowledge of a coherent body of delimited, dependable and pertinent techniques and facts, that automatically authorizes the expert to decide some matter. The value of expertise is not the knowledge possessed by the expert as such, but the deliberations and actions leading up to and ensuing from her expert decision within her sphere of discretion, i.e. the acts constituting the exercise of modal power and the dispositions arising out of those acts. Sociologically speaking, says Fuller, ‘expertise is the most potent non-violent form of power available’ (2018, p. 161).

Inspired by this ideal, one could say that the best way for graduate programs to instill a sense of collective responsibility in students while enhancing their modal power is to do the opposite of what we are doing. Instead of justifying and reinforcing the Matthew Effect at every turn and bolstering a sensibility that the only point of the game is to accumulate points, beat the competition, reap the most rewards at minimal cost to ourselves even if that is at the expense of others and seeing to it that our papers are in order so that the accountants and auditors are satisfied with our production statistics, we should openly admit that the game has been fixed. Consensus, epistemic or otherwise, requires manufacture and maintenance, and what counts as competence and expertise will be determined by specific interests and alignments. But the rules of the game are not settled once and for all. They can be changed to be more inclusive, for example, not for the purposes of social justice

in the first instance, but for the sake of epistemic vigor and viability, which would mean negotiation (with regard to merit, fairness, cost, benefit, etc.).

In a sense, the call here is simply to further the Enlightenment ideal that every man can and ought to think for himself, and that education is nothing more or less than a program of study devised to enable him to do so to the best of his ability. This principle applies no more and no less to the professoriate or professionals than to anyone else. Such a cultivation is first and foremost directed toward the actualization of the human potential for autonomy in the individual, the community, and, ultimately, the species. What we need is ‘education of a personal character, a free being, who is able to maintain himself, and to take his proper place in society, keeping at the same time a proper sense of his own individuality’ (Kant, 1960, §32, p. 30). As Kant points out in a footnote, even if enlightenment might seem to be quite a simple matter, in practice it is very difficult to accomplish; it is arduous and it takes time (Kant, 1951, §40, p. 137). From the point of view of quarterly reports and assessment exercises, it is inefficient. Not to allow one’s reason to remain passive, but to attain and maintain self-legislation is something that is often accompanied by the desire to move beyond what is strictly speaking possible to know with certainty, and, importantly, there is no dearth of self-appointed authorities who will satisfy that desire. The most demanding part of enlightenment is to acknowledge that its constitution is only ‘negative’. Its essence is self-regulation and self-correction, nothing more. For this, it requires confrontation with a world of other minds and other thoughts, as well as laws of nature. But it also demands the freedom to act in accordance with its own demands and its own discernment, what was once called ‘conscience’. If higher education, science and scholarship continue on their current trajectory, there will be a ceaseless parade of innovations and plenty of ‘opportunity’ for the likes of Macchiarini and Roma. ‘Education? Perhaps. Knowledge? Perhaps. Economic growth? Perhaps. “I have this course I would like you to take.” “I have this project that I would like you to fund.” What does that mean? What do you want it to mean?’

References

- Cuff, A. J. (2017, May 3). An academic lottery or a meritocracy? *Inside Higher ED*.
- Foley, J. (Director). (1992). *Glengarry Glen Ross* [Motion picture]. New Line Cinema.
- Fuller, S. (2018). *Post truth: Knowledge as a Power game*. Anthem.
- Hochschild, A. R. (1997). *The time bind: When work becomes home and home becomes work*. Metropolitan Books.
- Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling: Twentieth anniversary edition with a new afterword* (2nd ed.). University of California Press.
- Hyvönen, M. (2020). World class at all costs. In S. Rider et al. (Eds.), *World class universities: A contested concept*. Springer.
- Kant, I. (1960). *Education*. University of Michigan Press.
- Kant, I. (1951). *Critique of judgement* (J. H. Bernard, Trans.). Hafner Publishing.
- Liu, C., & Bailey, D. (2018, October 5). *The apprentice in theory: Fan, student, star*. Los Angeles Review of Books.

- Megoran, N., & Mason, O. (2020). *Second class academic citizens: The dehumanising effects of casualisation in higher education*. University and College Union.
- Piketty, T. (2020). *Capital and ideology*. Belknap Press, an Imprint of Harvard University Press.
- Oakeshott, M. J. (1991). *Rationalism in politics and other essays*. (New and expanded Ed.). Liberty fund.
- O'Malley, B. (2020, January 21). 'Dehumanising' impact of casualisation of HE staff exposed. University World News.
- Power, M. (1997). *The audit society: Rituals of verification*. Oxford University Press.
- Readings, B. (1996). *The university in ruins*. Harvard University Press.
- Rider, S. (2020). Three notions of the global. In S. Rider et al. (Eds.), *World class universities: A contested concept*. Springer.
- Sandel, M. J. (2012). *What money can't buy: The moral limits of markets*. Allen Lane.
- Sennet, R. (1998). *The corrosion of character*. W.W. Norton
- Slaughter, S., & Rhoades, G. (2004). *Academic capitalism and the new economy: Markets, state, and higher education*. Johns Hopkins Univ. Press.
- Weissmann, J. (2013, February 23). How Many Ph.D.'s Actually Get to Become College Professors? *The Atlantic*.

Sharon Rider is Professor of Philosophy at Uppsala University, where she was Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts 2008–2014. She is Deputy Director of *Engaging Vulnerability*, a program hosted by Uppsala University with funding from the Swedish Research Council (2015–2025). Rider's work focuses on the cultural conditions for autonomy, responsibility and knowledge, and how these might be conceptualized in ways that neither reject nor rely on conventional notions of rational agency. Recent publications include *Post-truth, Fake News: Viral Modernity and Higher Education*, eds. Michael Peters, Sharon Rider et al. (Springer 2018) and *World Class Universities: A Contested Concept*, Sharon Rider, Michael Peters et al. (Springer 2020).