



We Demand: The University and Student Protests (American Studies Now: Critical Histories of the Present)

Roderick A. Ferguson

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In the post World War II period, student movements rebelled against the archaic university. They fought for the new kinds of public the university needed to serve—women, minorities, immigrants, indigenous people, and more—with success that had a profound impact on the intellectual landscape of the twentieth century. Because of their efforts, ethnic studies, Women’s studies, and American studies itself were born, and minority communities have become more visible and important to academic debate. Less than fifty years since this pivotal shift in the academy, however, the university is fighting back.

In *We Demand*, Rod Ferguson shows how the university, particularly the public university, is moving away from “the people,” in all their diversity. As more resources are put towards STEM education, humanities and interdisciplinary programs are being cut and shuttered. This has had a devastating result on the pursuit of knowledge, and on interdisciplinary programs born from the hard work and effort of an earlier generation. This is not only a reactionary move against the social advances since the 60s and 70s, but is a part of the larger threat of anti-intellectualism in the US.

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