

'Warwick University Ltd: Lessons from 1970 and the higher education sector today'

A conference sponsored by Warwick UCU

Friday 6 June 2014, Woods-Scawen Room, Warwick University Arts Centre

'Is it inevitable that the university will be reduced to the function of providing, with increasing authoritarian efficiency, pre-packed intellectual commodities which meet the requirements of management? Or can we by our efforts transform it into a centre of free discussion and action, tolerating and even encouraging "subversive" thought and activity, for a dynamic renewal of the whole society within which it operates?': Warwick University Limited, p. 166.



Warwick University Limited, edited by E. P. Thompson, the great historian of the English working class, and one of Warwick's leading academics, was published as a Penguin Special in 1970. It followed events that began with a student occupation of the administration building and the discovery that some academic staff and students, in their activity outside the university, had been spied upon by local businesses. Thompson argued that this, and other correspondence discovered there, revealed surprisingly close links to business that compromised the university as an open, academic community. This conference marks the book's re-publication by Spokesman (http://www.spokesmanbooks.com/acatalog/Trade_Union_Classics.html) and is an opportunity to commemorate a key moment in the university's early history and to examine the book's prescient analysis of the 'business university' and its relevance to higher education today.

Programme:

The meeting is open to all. No booking is required.

Morning session: 10 am – 12.30 pm

Chair: Hugo Radice – editor, second edition, *Warwick University Ltd*; Life Fellow, Leeds University

Speakers:

Student activists from 1970

Judith Condon – author, former Workers' Educational Association tutor-organiser

Ivor Gaber – broadcaster, journalist, Professor of Political Journalism, City University

Julian Harber – former Workers' Educational Association tutor-organiser

Barbara Winslow – Professor of Women and Gender Studies, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York

Warwick University staff, 1970

David Epstein FRS – Emeritus Professor of Mathematics, Warwick University

Afternoon session: 2 – 4.30 pm

Chair: Dennis Leech chair – Warwick UCU branch, Professor of Economics, Warwick University

Speakers

Tom Docherty – Professor of English, Warwick University

Lucy Gill – Post-Graduate Officer, Warwick University Students' Union

Joanna de Groot, Professor of History, York University; UCU executive (personal capacity)

Martin Parker – Professor of Organisation and Culture, Leicester University

Speaker from Defend the Right to Protest (to be confirmed)