New Management, New Identities?
Danish University Reform in an International Perspective

**Aim of the Project**
This project studies the Danish university reforms as a prism through which to view the worldwide frenzy for such changes.

**Research questions**
Our central questions are:
How did these reforms come about and what are their intended effects on Danish universities? What changes do university managers, academics and students perceive in their own roles and identities? From their enactment and contestation of different visions of the university, what image of a future university is emerging?

**Project design**
Initially the project was designed to study the 2003 University Law (which introduced new governance and management systems, and financial and education reforms) from the different perspectives of policy makers, managers, academics and students. However, a torrent of further reforms followed, including university mergers and a globalization strategy, and culminating in the (short-lived) plan to establish private universities in Denmark. The project design therefore changed so as to place the provisions of the 2003 University Law within the wider context of university reforms.

**Fieldwork projects** (see publications overleaf)
- Danish/international policies for university reform
- University governance and management
- Academic identity
- Figure of the student

**Results**
The results are geared to academics interested in large-scale processes of transformation and to the higher education policy community. Ethnographic studies provide a reflexive space for students, academics and managers to imagine and realise their room for manoeuvre in actively creating the university of the future.

**Book** – currently being written
*Enacting the University: Danish University Reform in an International Perspective*
by Susan Wright, Stephen Carney, John Benedicto Krejsler, Gritt Bykærholm Nielsen, Jakob Williams Ørberg.
Publisher: Springer

**Project team**
Project leader: Prof. Susan Wright, DPU, Aarhus University
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**Funding and duration**
The project ran from 2004 to 2009, supported by the Danish Council for Independent Research in the Social Sciences with a grant of 3.200.000 DKK.
Publications

University reform


Susan Wright and Annika Rabo (guest editors) 2010 Anthropologies of University Reform special issue of Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale 18 (1).


Susan Wright and Tor Halverson (guest editors) 2008 Special Issue: the Bologna Process. Learning and Teaching: International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences (LATISS) 1 (2).


Susan Wright, Don Brenneis and Cris Shore (guest editors) 2005 Universities and the Politics of Accountability special issue of Anthropology in Action 12 (1).

University managers


Carney, Stephen 2006 ‘“We don’t need another hero”: Den danske universitetsreform og spørgsmålet om lederskab’ Dansk Pædagogisk Tidsskrift 4: 21-30.

Academics


Students


Nielsen, Gritt Bykærholm 2010 ‘Student Figures in Friction. Explorations into Danish University Reform and Shifting Forms of Student Participation’, PhD thesis, Danish School of Education (DPU), Aarhus University, September.

Working Paper Series on University Reform:
www.dpu.dk/epokeWP

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