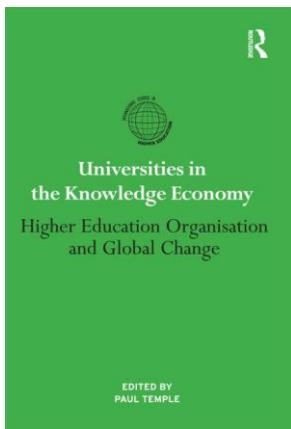


## **Book Review**



### **Universities in the Knowledge Economy: Higher education organisation and global change**

Edited by Paul Temple  
London: Routledge (2014).

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Reviewed by **Stamatia Kremmyda**

This book aims to examine the key roles of universities in a knowledge economy, what those roles are and how they should be accomplished. It critically looks at the complex connections between universities and the knowledge economy of today in different countries. The book is relevant to those interested in or undertaking research in higher education policy and practice, and in the theory of higher education. It introduces the reader to the different responses of higher education institutions to the knowledge economy in an international context. This area of research interest has been developed in recent years in an era in which new social and economic conditions impose an interrelation of higher education institutions to businesses so as to benefit from this interaction.

The volume runs to 13 chapters and is divided into three sections: understanding universities as knowledge producers; presenting some international perspectives and practice; and issues for the future. The editorial team's introduction introduces the reader to the aims and the content of this book as well as the limitations of this book. They make clear that "[t]he dominant overarching objective is to explore the conflict of ideas and the political struggles that inevitably surround any significant policy development in higher education" by focusing "on the most important and interesting examples of responses to the pressures for change."

The opening chapter introduces the research question, which is an examination of the university's role in relation to economic activities in the knowledge economy, which necessarily involves certain historical, political and social dimensions. Also the editor sets the scene for the case studies, in the following chapters, by addressing a range of theoretical positions that represent conflicting views about what the role of the university should be in the knowledge economy, including 'the triple helix' and the 'entrepreneurial university', while in contrast he refers to the possible dangers to universities arising from partnerships with the marketplace like 'academic capitalism' and the 'Faustian bargain'. The editor arrives at the conclusion that the "university as a social form seems to help explain its role in knowledge production, exchange and use: but definite conclusions are frustratingly hard to reach."

Evidence from different countries supports the claim that the effectiveness of the management of university-enterprise interactions depends on various intellectual and cultural barriers (Chapter 4, Chapter, and Chapter 6). The third section deals with the implementations of the engagement of universities in the knowledge economy, which is the need to re-formulate its mission.

The editors have succeeded in providing the reader with a global perspective from their international experience drawing upon a range of countries. They have artfully brought an array of perspectives together that not only signpost but also critique different approaches relevant in culturally diverse higher education systems. In general, the role of a university in the

knowledge economy, while it is presented as interrelated, has been faced with resistance by education systems. The obstacles derive from the structure, the culture and the external political actors who want to impose their own political, social and economic interests through their policies. As a result of this resistance, there is confusion in the role of a university, which needs to re-define its mission independently from political, social and economic influences of the external environment so as to take advantage of the opportunities given within the new economies and not to neglect its educational and social role.

This is a central issue in the contemporary bibliography on higher education management and change - higher education systems that are seen not to comply with what is implicitly required by the European Union agreement in terms of structure, functions, mission and orientation towards change. This book therefore provides a background in describing the social and political context of how education systems respond to changes and why they resist. It is therefore highly relevant and complementary to anyone studying the sociology and management of universities and education in the international context.

The strength of this book is in providing an understanding of how higher education institutions respond to the knowledge economy. This also makes the book useful for policy making studies in higher education and critical discourse analysis because it gives an understanding of the obstacles to the adjustment of higher education institutions to market oriented policy reforms, and it gives examples of countries that resist changes.