



PROJECT MUSE®

## The Uses of the Foreign Student

Margaret O'Mara

Social Science History, Volume 36, Number 4, Winter 2012, pp. 583-615 (Article)

Published by Cambridge University Press



➔ For additional information about this article

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/493217>

*Special Section:*  
The Uses of the University: *After Fifty Years*

Margaret O'Mara

---

## The Uses of the Foreign Student

*The rise of the global university is often associated with the concomitant wave of late twentieth-century neoliberalism and privatization and correlated with universities embracing “corporate” models of governance. However, it is a phenomenon with roots in the earliest years of the Cold War that emerged out of a set of institutions and policies with diplomatic rather than explicitly economic aims. Notable among these were the programs aimed at bringing foreign students and scholars to the United States and exporting American-style educational experiences abroad. While only a fraction of these foreign visitors had the US government as their primary financial sponsor, they as a class became the object onto which political values of a particular era were projected, from the postwar internationalism of the Truman years to the Great Society liberalism of Lyndon B. Johnson to the free market ethos of Richard M. Nixon and Ronald Reagan. The decentralized and privatized means by which policy makers administered these measures obscured the degree to which they influenced the shape of the higher education system and their wider impacts on the American economy and society. This article explores international educational exchange as a critical element of American universities’ evolving public identity during the Cold War and post-Cold War periods and as an example of the governmental use of the university as an agent of state power and as a tool of political ideology.*

*Social Science History* 36:4 (Winter 2012)

DOI 10.1215/01455532-1717181

© 2012 by Social Science History Association

One of the more striking characteristics of the American university system in the early twenty-first century is its dominance of the worldwide market for research-intensive higher education. In marked contrast to an American elementary and secondary school system that straggles behind that of other industrialized nations, American universities—particularly the elite group of research universities that was the focus of Clark Kerr’s *Uses of the University* in 1963—dominate international rankings and continue to draw a high caliber of students and scholars from around the globe. The annual ranking of the world’s 500 best universities issued by Shanghai Jiao Tong University regularly concludes that American institutions make up at least 17 of the top 20, leaving room only for Oxford, Cambridge, and sometimes Tokyo University in the very top tier. Farther down the list, midsize and more modestly funded US universities rank higher than the flagship national universities in countries with some of the world’s most rapidly growing economies (Institute of Higher Education 2007). Top American universities like Stanford and Harvard have become powerful international brands, and even more modestly ranked American universities have leveraged their international cachet to build high-profile overseas campuses. In *Uses Kerr* (1963: 86) predicted that the transformation of the American university after 1945 would culminate in “a truly American university, an institution unique in world history, an institution not looking to other models but serving, itself, as a model for universities in other parts of the globe.” Surveying the contemporary global higher education landscape, it seems that this is one of Kerr’s several predictions in the book that have come to pass.

However, the process of constructing this “truly American university” has involved a very large number of non-Americans. The immediate post-war years saw an intensive effort by national policy makers to use international educational exchange as an instrument of diplomacy and propaganda, resulting in an upsurge in foreign student populations in the United States, particularly from former European colonies caught between the two poles of American and Soviet influence. Pulled by rich research opportunities and generous government and private scholarship programs, and lacking comparable higher education opportunities at home, foreign students and scholars came to US universities in ever-increasing numbers throughout the Cold War decades, continuing this upsurge even as global economic realignments after 1970 changed the financial and geopolitical reasons for this kind of study. Because of the fields in which they concentrated and because of the

career choices they made after graduation, foreign scholars made disproportionately large contributions to American academic research strength and to the knowledge-intensive industries that commercialized this research (Kerr 1990; Saxenian 1999, 2007). Largely drawn from ethnic and national groups considered “nonwhite” by twentieth-century Americans and overwhelmingly male, they formed a distinctive demographic counterpart to an American university population that was less ethnically diverse and increasingly female.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1945 and 2000 the presence of foreign students and scholars formed a virtuous circle with university research strengths to concentrate human and social capital in American research universities and, in turn, contributed to the United States’ dominance of the global supply chain in knowledge-intensive industry clusters. As both white- and blue-collar jobs migrated overseas at the end of the twentieth century, the prominence of the American multiversity in the worldwide higher education market came to play an increasingly important political role for the United States in attracting and retaining human capital, seeding innovation, and shaping culture. By the first decade of the twenty-first century proliferation of overseas joint ventures between American universities and foreign institutions and governments attested to the extent that American-style higher education—and especially the American MBA—had become the international standard. Economic liberalization and the resultant expansion of the middle class in nations like India and China sustained and increased the overseas demand for an American degree in the post-Cold War era even as the higher education systems in those nations expanded and became more competitive.

The population of foreigners studying at American universities already had exploded in size by the time that Kerr delivered the Godkin Lectures that became the bases for *The Uses of the University*, yet Kerr’s focus is elsewhere. The text is sprinkled throughout with prescient observations about the emerging importance of the “knowledge economy,” the transformative effect of federal funding, and the multiple dimensions of research universities’ economic engagement (Kerr 1963). However, although he presided over an institution that had one of the largest populations of foreign students and scholars (not to mention many faculty stars who were nonnative-born), Kerr seems to ascribe no special *practical* significance to the international dimensions of the multiversity in terms of its human capital, its curriculum, or its outlook. He smartly and sharply delineates the university’s evo-

lution as a cosmopolitan and internationalist institution, the product of a vital era of Euro-Anglo-American “Atlantic crossings” in which most international exchange flowed outward from the United States to Germany and whose participants built a modern university system with a shared sensibility and intellectual purpose (ibid.; Rodgers 1998). But he dispatches this history quickly before moving on to the evolution of the multiversity itself. The tone of *Uses* is one in which such transmetropolitan collaborations are things of the past with little relation to the potentially tremendous practical uses of the university in the future.

Kerr’s distinction between the intellectual life of the university (which retains its international sensibility) and the practical purposes of the multiversity as an economic and social institution firmly roots *Uses* in a particular time and place. Kerr was writing at a moment when large research universities had become powerful instruments of national policy, institutions whose teaching and research activities were seen by political leaders as critical to the Cold War fight. The messy conglomeration of the modern American university—“so many things to so many people,” as Kerr (1963: 8) put it—was never so firmly in the service of the national state as it was in those glory days of postwar expansionism and liberal pluralism. The history of more relevance to Kerr’s idea of the multiversity was that of pragmatic public investment in vocational education and applied research, beginning with the Morrill Act of 1862 and reaching a crescendo in the wake of the launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957.

The international dimensions of university activity also did not have much relevance to the American economic order of 1963, nor did they appear to be of particular salience to the changing role and future prospects of the American multiversity as an economic and social actor. While these programs had grown significantly in the 15 years prior to the publication of Kerr’s book, the transformations they wrought were dwarfed by the enormous changes set in motion by the GI Bill and the expansion of the military-industrial complex. International exchange and teaching programs ostensibly functioned as tools of Cold War political diplomacy rather than of economic competitiveness. Access to a global talent pool seemed incidental to the real uses of the university.

In the nearly five decades after the publication of Kerr’s book, and particularly after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the internationalization of the university became a defining institutional characteristic, especially for

Kerr's elite cohort of schools, who consistently attracted among the largest populations of foreign students and scholars and had highly internationalized curricula. As more and more elements of a once largely American manufacturing supply chain began to migrate overseas, and as knowledge-driven production activities took on a more prominent role in the national and world economy, the bifurcation between the intellectual (internationalized) uses of the university and the practical (nationalized) uses of the university began to dissolve. Simultaneously, declining public investment in higher education and growing possibilities for the commercialization of research increased the significance of private capital and the visibility of corporate partners on university campuses.

Foreign students were caught right in the middle of these processes. Often treated as side notes, special cases, or occasionally scapegoats for political anger, foreign students were in fact critical personnel whose actions both reflected and contributed to the structural reorientation of the research university between 1945 and 2010. While scholars have paid particular attention to the role of (largely nonwhite) foreign students in the American Cold War project (see, e.g., Borstelmann 2003; Bu 2003; Dudziak 2002; Kramer 2009), less attention has been paid to explorations of their uses beyond the Cold War era or, more broadly, during the neoliberal era of global economic realignment that commenced in the early 1970s. The consideration of foreign student programs' history over the full extent of this period functions as a window through which to explore the broader evolution of the Cold War multiversity in the postindustrial transition of the 1970s and 1980s and the post-Cold War era of the 1990s and the early 2000s.

The story of foreign student programs—and, specifically, the successive ideological frames through which national politicians viewed such programs—not only provides an understanding of the relationship between globalization and the multiversity since 1963 but also helps us better understand Kerr's seminal work. The case of the foreign student is particularly relevant to the story of Kerr's multiversity since 1963, because so many of these students studied at these types of institutions. While successive decades saw an increasing institutional and geographic diversity across foreign student programs, with foreigners studying everywhere from Ivy League universities to small, regional liberal arts colleges, the elite cohort of large research institutions that were the focus of Kerr's attention have been the places with the largest populations of foreign students by far.

The communion is philosophical as well as demographic. In his discussions of the opportunities presented by the new postwar order, Kerr sketched out a bold vision of a society in which these newly empowered multiversities would play a critical role in shaping politics, economics, and culture. His later writings expounded further on the idea of the university as an instrument of social change, proposing “urban-grant universities” as solutions to urban economic decline and social inequity (Kerr 1969) and more. At the same time, *The Uses of the University* and Kerr’s successive writings reveal the profound degree to which universities were followers, respondents, and agents of broader national initiatives driven by Cold War geopolitics and postwar imperatives for national economic stability and continued economic expansion. Kerr describes a federal-grant university in which certain disciplines became privileged over others and a system in which the bulk of federal largesse went to a relatively small and unchanging pool of larger institutions.

The fact that Kerr’s more hopeful prescriptions and predictions did not come to pass—and in fact very soon foundered on the rocks of student protest, broader political upheavals, and demands for curricular and administrative reform—points to the degree to which even elite and well-endowed universities were not entirely the masters of their own destiny. Universities became significant institutions in postwar American life not because they set the standards for political behavior and social engagement but because of institutional enlargements that resulted from large flows of government investment in scientific research, teaching, and student support. Universities followed the money and altered institutional missions and emphases accordingly.

This article thus follows from the proposition that universities are parastatal agents that, especially in the last 60 years, have operated as agents of national policy more often than they have, as a body, influenced the direction of national policy making and politics. The case of foreign students suggests that the strongly unidirectional nature of the state-university relationship existed not only during Kerr’s era of expansive postwar liberalism but also endured throughout the campus rights revolutions of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s and into the professionalized and privatized era of the 1990s and early 2000s.<sup>2</sup>

This is not intended to diminish the achievements of individual universities and their administrators or to dismiss the multiple, unique, and localized dynamics of institutional change and growth. It also should not be interpreted

as a dismissal of the enormous effect that the work of individual university-based intellectuals has had on American thought, invention, and entrepreneurship since the mid-twentieth century. But it does help us better understand universities as institutions that have managed to be the focus of so much public research investment and political attention (pro and con) and that have shaped the culture so profoundly while, paradoxically, continuing to have very intermittent success in attracting sustained public investment in basic educational functions. In short, universities have been a means by which policy makers have tried to accomplish their own ends; they have not been able to turn this instrumentality into lasting social engagement or sustained political support of higher education.

### **State and Parastate**

The modern research university has a long history as one of the most international and cosmopolitan of social institutions. From the foreigners who flocked to German universities in the nineteenth century to the scholars from six continents who enrolled and taught at European and American institutions in the early twentieth century, multinational cohorts of foreign scholars and students have shaped campus culture and influenced the curriculum (Cieslak 1955; Geiger 1986; Teichler 2004). Prewar foreign student populations also reflected, to a certain degree, historical economic and imperial relationships, from Filipinos in the United States to Indians in Great Britain (Kramer 2009). However, the sizes and demographics of modern populations of foreign students and scholars on university campuses worldwide have been determined largely by a set of laws and institutions established since the end of World War II and shaped in their implementation by the exigencies of the Cold War and the postcolonial, postindustrial era.

In the United States, the age of American-led multilateralism after 1945 was one in which international education even more intensively paralleled national interests and became regulated and funded accordingly. Prior to World War II, international educational exchange functioned as a largely privatized and decentralized enterprise supported by private foundations and the resources of scholars and universities themselves. The indifference of Washington policy makers to these activities mirrored the broader prewar pattern of minimal federal intervention in higher education (and agreement by academics and politicians alike that such a hands-off approach was desir-

able and necessary to academic freedom). After the war, public agencies took a renewed interest in the foreign student that was informed both by the internationalist frameworks that underlay postwar reconstruction and institution building and by the strategic constructions of early Cold War geopolitics that prompted an avalanche of federal investment in university-based research and teaching (Geiger 1986, 1993; Leslie 1993; Loss 2012; O'Mara 2005). Like the area studies programs that came out of the same Cold War moment, foreign student exchange programs were animated by the idea that peace could be achieved through greater cross-cultural understanding and the presumption that such exposure would naturally impress on foreigners the superiority of the democratic, free market system.<sup>3</sup>

Yet even as postwar, Cold War, and postcolonial imperatives reshaped American programs for foreign students, policy makers preserved the privatized and decentralized nature of the system, resulting in an infrastructure that used universities and philanthropies as agents of the state. Two reasons explain the parastatal nature of foreign student policy. First, the privatized administrative system already existed, and it had a decades-long track record of successful administration of foreign student programs. Second, universities were a heterogeneous bunch with wildly different educational missions, financial priorities, and political needs.

Yet within this parastatal structure, the federal government made its influence felt. The identification of international education as a critical geopolitical tool created permanent streams of public funding for educational exchange and empowered institutions, chief among them the Institute of International Education (IIE), to administer the programs and track their demographics. The engagement of these administrative nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and of the private philanthropic foundations that functioned as significant funders of these programs gave international educational exchange a quasi-privatized character that would become particularly relevant in an age of declining federal funding and rising university corporatism. The use of such entities as agents of the national state helped mask the extent of government involvement in the international educational enterprise, hewing to a pattern of Cold War state building by proxy on display in the broader transformation of American universities into multiversities.

## Exporters of Democracy, 1945–1968

Internationalism provided the impetus for the United States' most enduring and high-profile foray into international educational exchange, the Fulbright Act of 1946. Sponsored by the freshman US senator and former Rhodes Scholar J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the political fragility of the initiative became apparent in its framing as a modest, budget-neutral program that used foreign credits raised by the sale of "war junk" to endow scholarships for American scholars to go abroad and for foreign nationals to study and teach in the United States. Similarly, the diffused and privatized nature of the program's administration, which worked in an already well-established infrastructure of foreign student programs administered by nongovernmental entities like the IIE, kept it well below the political radar screen. Yet its creator also characterized the initiative as critical to immediate national interests. On the Senate floor Fulbright observed that "the necessity for increasing our understanding of others and their understanding of us has an urgency that it has never had in the past" (quoted in Johnson 1963: 5). Overshadowed by concomitant multibillion-dollar schemes for postwar reconstruction, industrial planning, and defense reconversion, the program became law with little fanfare on August 1, 1946, as Congress moved toward recess and escape from a muggy, scantily air-conditioned Washington (Vogel 1987).

Despite a good deal of scholarly and institutional interest in foreign educational exchange, its reliance on a finite resource of foreign credits limited its scope in its earliest years. By the 1950–51 academic year only about one of eight foreign students in the United States received any kind of support from the US government (IIE 1952). The Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations stepped into the breach, defraying selection costs for the first six months of the program and creating an enduring connection between private philanthropy and public programs of educational exchange. In 1948 passage of the US Information and Educational Exchange Act (or the Smith-Mundt Act) had provided a permanent source of administrative funding from the State Department and created a new, enhanced program for international educational exchange. The Fulbright Program became subsumed within this larger, more permanent infrastructure.

The passage of Smith-Mundt marked the waning of internationalism as a primary rationale for foreign study and the rising importance of Cold War propaganda and nation building. While Fulbright had introduced the origi-

nal legislation with postwar reconstruction and peacemaking in mind—the development and passage of this legislation occurred immediately after the ratification of the UN charter and was imbued with a similar spirit—by 1948 policy makers were assessing these exchanges’ utility in the context of a hardening Cold War. Testifying before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in support of the legislation in 1947, Secretary of State George Marshall argued that “so long as propaganda is engaged in, we will be confronted by the necessity of taking some action ourselves” and identified “the exchange of students and intellectuals and so on” as one strategy for accomplishing this (US Congress 1947).

The shift in rationale likely worked to the program’s political advantage. In becoming one front in the United States’ global propaganda battle, international student exchange programs gained sustained political viability in an era of hard-line approaches with an unwavering focus on fighting communism. “The program,” wrote Harry S. Truman (1951) in a letter to the Fulbright board, “is proving effective in combating communist lies and distortions about social, economic and political conditions and objectives in our respective countries.”<sup>4</sup> By the late 1950s the perceived utility of foreign students as political ambassadors was even more explicit. Dwight D. Eisenhower (1957), under whose leadership Cold War propaganda programs reached their apogee, reminded a group of foreign student visitors to the White House that “when you go home you have a certain responsibility to make known, as widely as you can, what are your impressions of another country in which you have been privileged to live for this time.”

The privatized and diffuse structure of policy implementation also strengthened the political base from which foreign student programs could operate. By the 1950s international educational exchange had become firmly positioned as a political institution over which a constellation of public and private interests had a controlling stake. Higher education institutions themselves were only one of several in this thicket, and their voices—with the exception of a few high-level administrators who already had the ear of Washington—rarely played a controlling role in setting national policy or shaping the prevailing discourse about the uses of the foreign student. This was left to the presidents and Congresses who authorized such programs, the NGOs and foundations that administrated and funded them, and the policy advocates who together formed a consensus-driven and Washington-centric cloud of interest networks (Hecló 1978).

Universities themselves were coming into the debate with different considerations in mind. Among the multiversity cohort in particular, university presidents, chancellors, and senior administrators did not necessarily disagree with the consensus view about the use of the foreign student (Terzian and Osborne 2006). In practice, however, increased foreign student cohorts—particularly from Asia, Latin America, and Africa—presented a number of political hurdles for the modern multiversity leader. In the wake of the GI Bill and demobilization, institutions of all types were struggling to accommodate a flood of new American students. Public institutions faced strong pressure from their legislative overseers to serve in-state students first. In some parts of the country, this sentiment collided with racist and nativist sentiments. Responding to President John J. Tigert's request in 1945 for increased foreign student support, the University of Florida regent T. T. Scott responded with disgust: "I have warned him time and again that he must stop spending state money for this purpose, and he still insists on bringing all of these 'dagoes' to the university" (Osborn 1974: 266; quoted in Terzian and Osborne 2006: 292). In places where the presence of non-European (and racially other) foreigners was a visible and possibly disruptive addition to the surrounding community, it is hardly surprising that educators approached foreign student programs with some ambivalence (table 1).

The steady growth of the Fulbright Program and the increase in international exchange and foreign student populations through the 1950s generally brought new international diversity to many university campuses, but they did not bring significant new sources of revenue or marked administrative changes to most schools. The 1958 passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) changed this. Enacted amid the national hand-wringing about American scientific and technological capacity after the launch of the Soviets' Sputnik satellites, the NDEA brought a windfall of federal money to large American research universities and altered the political and fiscal calculi that shaped their administrative priorities. Along with significant increases in federal funding for research and teaching in the hard sciences and mathematics, the NDEA's Title VI funneled federal dollars to establish non-Western language study centers and expand non-Western academic programs in the nation's universities, inaugurating the golden age of area studies and spurring a new appreciation of the uses of foreign scholars and university-driven internationalism. In the first six years after the NDEA's enactment, the number of teachers of non-Western languages in 20 univer-

**Table 1** Foreign students and scholars in the United States by place of origin

Place of origin	Students				Scholars			
	1954-55		1997-98		1954-55		1997-98	
	N	% of total	N	% of total	N	% of total	N	% of total
Africa	1,234	3	23,162	5	9	1	2,211	3
Asia	9,838	29	277,508	58	129	20	28,135	43
Europe	5,196	15	71,616	15	336	53	24,419	37
Latin America	8,446	25	51,368	11	62	10	4,061	6
Middle East	4,416	13	30,962	6	29	5	2,580	4
North America	4,714	14	22,613	5	48	8	2,882	4
Oceania	337	0.01	3,893	1	22	3	1,195	2
World total	34,280	100 <sup>a</sup>	481,122	100 <sup>a</sup>	605	100	65,483	100 <sup>a</sup>

Sources: Institute of International Education 2005.

<sup>a</sup>Totals do not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

sity area studies centers rose from fewer than 80 to over 200, and the number of languages taught rose from 20 to 76 (Clowse 1981; Mildenerger 1964).

Money poured into American universities for international education programs from both governmental and philanthropic sources, and the number of Fulbright fellows rose steadily, from 84 in 1948 to over 4,800 by 1961. The Fulbright Program continued to represent only a fraction of foreign students and scholars overall, but its high political and academic profile gave it an oversize influence on public and political understanding of international educational exchange. By the 1960–61 academic year about 58,000 foreigners were studying in US universities; France, the nation with the next largest number of foreign students, had fewer than half that many (UNESCO 1963: 9, table 3).

However, the demographics of foreign students had not changed markedly from the prewar period. The largest cohort came from Asia, and Europeans hailed almost entirely from countries far outside the iron curtain (IIE 2005). The increased investments of private philanthropies during the 1950s had also shifted the balance of support for student programs, so that the majority of visitors either were self-supporting or received funding from an entity other than the US government (despite overall levels of US investment that were higher than in the prewar era).

The dissonance between foreign student and scholarly programs' nation-building purpose and the realities of who these foreign visitors were and what they encountered when they got here spilled into the arena of electoral politics by 1960. On the presidential campaign trail, John F. Kennedy tried to burnish his foreign policy credentials by disparaging the Eisenhower administration's inattention to international education policy and made a pointed critique of the government's failure to serve a more diverse cohort of foreign students—particularly those from African nations. "Last year we gave 200 scholarships to all of Africa to come here to the United States," Kennedy (1960b) chided during a Kalamazoo, Michigan, campaign rally in the fall of 1960. "In the Congo, 8 or 9 million people, who could go Communist at any time, there are 12 college graduates, in all of the Congo. In all of Africa, 1 percent or less have finished high school, and yet we expect them to maintain a free society?" While still a candidate, Kennedy (1960a) intervened in a diplomatic impasse regarding who would pay to fly a planeload of African scholars to the United States, tapping his personal fortune to pay for the

airlift himself. Two weeks before the election he further committed his candidacy to the cause of foreign exchange and understanding by proposing a new program where young Americans would live and work in less-developed nations. On taking office, he made this campaign idea a reality by signing the executive order in March 1961 that created the Peace Corps.

Kennedy made pointed efforts to target program resources to students and scholars from the nations and continents emerging from colonial rule and perceived to be at most risk of Soviet influence. His administration vigorously supported expansion of the Fulbright Program via the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (also known as Fulbright-Hays). Sharing a similar purpose as its 1948 predecessor yet anticipating the emergent détente of the late Kennedy years, the act aimed “to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by educational and cultural exchange . . . and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world.” Along with enriching and enlarging the Fulbright Program and providing for its permanent administrative structure in the State Department, the law authorized the president to provide for “exchanges with countries that are in transition from totalitarianism to democracy, which include, but are not limited to Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania” (United States 1961).

The expansive liberalism that fed ideas about the uses of the foreign student was firmly on display in the analyses and assessments of the Fulbright Program and related exchange efforts issued during the Kennedy era. A 1963 report on the Fulbright Program titled *A Beacon of Hope* presented the program as central to the American national project:

The program thus expresses what we as Americans feel are our common human interests with people over the globe—our passionate belief in education and the free inquiry of the human mind; our hope to enrich the cultural stream of life, our own and that of others; the wish to understand the world and its people and share knowledge and experience; our desire to demonstrate, in a world fearful of power and violence, our basic good faith and good intent; and perhaps, because idealism is never far from the American character, no less our hope to find all men brothers, alien to none. (US Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs 1963: 9)

The report contained multiple enthusiastic accounts of the Fulbright Program accomplishing precisely what its authors intended it to, cultivating and exporting an elite class of enlightened scholar-leaders who returned home with a positive view of the United States and a willingness to evangelize about the advantages of American culture and democratic governance. A survey of nearly 3,000 former Fulbright grantees found that “testimony is overwhelming from all sources that the program as a whole is effective” and “evidence is also abundant that the exchange program has succeeded in helping dispel among foreign visitors many misconceptions and ugly stereotypes about the American people” (*ibid.*: 1–2).

Moving beyond the more rarefied environs of the Fulbright Program, the lived experience of foreign study was less uniformly positive. The early postwar years had produced scant survey evidence about the life of the foreign student and the uses of foreign student programs; the IIE (1952: 640) reflected that “it is perhaps characteristic of us as a nation that we have thrown ourselves wholeheartedly into such an enormous venture without ever having subjected it to critical scrutiny.” By the mid-1950s analyses ranging from governmental reports to graduate dissertations had begun to fill the gap, and their findings revealed a state of play that was as diverse and uneven as the higher education landscape itself. These analyses revealed that students came to the United States for many reasons, that the quality of their experiences depended greatly on the resources and locations of the institutions at which they studied, and that students of color tended to have more negative and more isolating experiences at American universities (e.g., Cieslak 1955; Gardner 1952). By the mid-1960s the alienated foreign student had become ingrained enough in the conventional wisdom that the program’s administrators eagerly grasped onto any good news emanating from such surveys. One 1965 report commissioned by the executive branch found that students’ positive opinions of the United States stayed about the same whether they had been here one year or over three, and in fact that negative opinions of the United States increased over the length of stay. Nonetheless, the report’s authors concluded, “This study on balance revealed the more favorable aspects of foreign student life and seemed to indicate a relatively high degree of satisfaction” (US Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs 1965: ii).

By the mid-1960s the explicit references to foreign students as potential agents of positive American propaganda had largely disappeared from the

public record, replaced by a more nuanced and subtle rhetoric that echoed the internationalism of 20 years earlier. Johnson, welcoming Washington-area foreign students to the White House in what had become an annual event, noted the imperfections of the American system to his international (and increasingly nonwhite) audience. Alluding to the disjunction between American declarations of human equality and the realities of a still-segregated nation that would have personally affected many of his listeners, Johnson conceded that the United States was, “like your own countries, an unfinished society.” He continued, “No man or nation is wise enough to prescribe a single economic system or a single set of political institutions to meet the needs of more than a hundred countries, each with its own history, its own resources, its own culture, and its own proud spiritual traditions” (Johnson 1964; see also Dudziak 2002).

While Johnson’s words implied a leveling of the playing field, the vision that animated the approach of the government and its philanthropic allies was one that reified the nation-state’s legitimacy and the American state’s supremacy. Saskia Sassen (2006: 148) has argued that the post-World War II moment was one whose “larger organizing logic was one centered in international regimes aimed at protecting national economies from external economic forces rather than at forming a global economy.” The formation and implementation of government-funded and government-sponsored foreign educational exchange programs during the first two decades of the Cold War reflect this. While framing their intent as the promotion of mutual understanding and global peace, the authors and administrators of these initiatives were quite explicit about such initiatives serving the American national interest.

Like broader propaganda and overseas development activities of the period, the encouragement and direct support of foreign students and faculty at American universities operated on the presumption that exposure to American culture would create lifelong allies and spur efforts to replicate American-style capitalist democracy in a postcolonial, Cold War world (Osgood 2008; Westad 2007). And like the government programs for scientific research and teaching that were expanding and reorganizing higher education in profound and enduring ways, foreign student and scholar programs recognized the American research university as a critical political instrument in the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism (Lowen 1997; O’Mara 2005). Yet as with other Cold War programs, policy makers’ expect-

tations that these programs would be powerful exporters of democracy to the so-called Third World were compromised and contradicted by the discrimination encountered by the increasing cohort of students whose skin color made them racial others in 1950s and 1960s America (Borstelmann 2003; Dudziak 2002).

### **Global Competitors, 1969–1990**

The tragedy of Vietnam, the social tumult of the rights revolution, and the emergence of serious foreign competitors in trade and manufacturing all challenged the presumptions of postwar liberalism and gave foreign student programs a quite different political landscape in which to operate from the late 1960s forward. The Kennedy and Johnson eras had emphasized expansive, government-driven efforts to use international education as a tool for democratic nation building. Nixon and his Republican successors shifted direction, emphasizing the important roles of privately funded programs as well as public ones and employing a more utilitarian rhetoric that indicated that foreign student programs were as likely to produce future chief executive officers (CEOs) as future presidents. In an era when campuses were aflame with protests against the established social order, the professional, studious foreign student should have presented a particularly attractive figure to anxious politicians and university administrators alike. Yet the idea of the foreign student became more diffuse and political sentiment toward these visitors more mixed as the years wore on.

One reason for this shift was the changing circumstances of individual students themselves. When foreign students were short-term visitors, the idea of them being useful ambassadors of cultural understanding made sense. They came here briefly, obtained a positive view of the United States along with their degrees, and returned to their home countries (ostensibly with a rosier view of Americans). The immigration reforms of 1965 enabled foreigners to be more than a transitory presence in and around American universities. With eased immigration restrictions and growing communities of their fellow compatriots nearby, Asian graduates in particular chose to stay in the United States in growing numbers. Foreign representation on university faculties increased; foreign-born entrepreneurs started to play a significant role in commercializing new technologies and building vibrant high-tech clusters in places like California's Silicon Valley. Foreign scholars became

more geographically and institutionally diffuse, studying at more types of institutions in all regions of the country (IIE 2005). Overall, international educational exchange programs grew significantly in size and scope starting in the 1970s. The number of foreigners studying abroad grew not only in the United States but in Canada and western Europe as well (Woodhall 1987).

As these demographics began to change and foreign students and scholars both grew in number and went from short-termers to permanent residents, political ideas about the use of foreign students and scholars began to change. While their broader economic impact went largely unacknowledged, their contributions to university quality attracted notice. "These students present the United States with an exceptional opportunity," Nixon (1971) told Congress. "Not only do they enrich the international dimension of education for American students, but they also provide outstanding talent for our research and teaching programs." Yet this type of endorsement seemed rather tepid in comparison to the more effusive praise leaders had showered on foreign students a decade earlier.

A differing degree of political attention reflected diplomacy as well as demography. In the early 1970s the largest national cohort of foreign students in the United States came from China, a consequential statistic given the diplomatic overtures Nixon and his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, were committed to in the first Nixon term. They seem to have recognized international educational exchange—particularly the training of Chinese in American-style business practices—as a potentially powerful instrument in the thawing of Sino-American relations. Kissinger's continued commitment to education as *détente* was evident in his instrumental role in the founding in 1984 of the first American MBA degree program in China.<sup>5</sup>

More broadly, the 1970s marked an increase in the rhetorical conflation of the preservation of democracy with the exportation of free market ideology. Such connections were already omnipresent in postwar America, with large corporations becoming essential state partners in industrial expansion, welfare capitalism, and overseas development as well as exporters of American values through the goods they sold and the managers they employed (De Grazia 2005; Kuisel 1997; Spector 2008). The social and economic disruptions of the 1970s, coupled with shifting relationships with both the USSR and China, gave rise to an increased focus on economic liberalization as the most potent weapon against communism. In this larger political context,

American leaders considered foreign students not merely future presidents but future CEOs as well.

Yet the Nixon- and Ford-era détente and the compatibility of foreign student programs to this internationalist worldview were not enough to quell a rising concern that foreign students in the United States—particularly those from increasingly competitive capitalist economies in Asia—posed a competitive threat. By the time Gerald Ford assumed office, the economic expansion of the postwar period was a thing of the past, and he tempered his praise of foreign student programs accordingly. “The practical problem is we have unemployment at the national average of about 7.5 percent today,” he ruminated at a May 1976 news conference (as his election campaign gathered speed). “And it does raise the question whether these foreign students coming here take a job away from an American who wants a job to raise his family or to get his education” (Ford 1976).

Although the occupants of the White House were becoming less enthusiastic about the uses of the foreign student, the universities themselves were recognizing the presence of foreigners as rather useful. The University of Washington’s 1974 “Policy on International Students” made particular note of the fact that the presence of international students reflected well on institutional prestige and raised the university’s global visibility and status. Increased commercialization of research created a logical path from university laboratory to technology-driven start-up companies. With foreigners taking up a good portion of spots in science and engineering graduate programs, international students became a highly visible part of the newly dynamic world of technology transfer, and study in a highly ranked American university became a path to success and wealth for foreigners with entrepreneurial ambitions.

Yet the real economic contributions of foreign students to the American economy were not resonating in 1980s Washington. By the time Reagan took office, the globalization of markets and the rise of overseas competitors had made the rhetorical shift away from national security and toward economic security even sharper when it came to the way presidents and their partisans talked about foreign students and international collaborations in research and education. In a message to Congress about scientific exchange programs, Reagan (1982) was careful in his promises of support: “We intend to continue our participation in international research and development programs on the

basis of mutual benefit and mutual interest, and to identify the most fruitful areas for cooperation. And through trade, investment and development assistance we will share the harvest of our scientific enterprise with our friends in need.” With an economy still in recession and nations like Japan and Taiwan demonstrating that they could produce high-quality goods more cheaply and efficiently than American firms, the attitude of American leaders to the parts of the world that supplied many foreign students had changed. We will partner with you, Reagan seemed to be saying, but only if there is something worthwhile in it for us.

The warnings about a “rising tide of mediocrity” sounded in the landmark 1983 assessment of American education, *A Nation at Risk*, amplified concerns about American competitiveness across multiple platforms and contexts. While the slim, 36-page report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) focused on the perceived shortcomings of the American K–12 system, its warnings of how these inadequacies translated directly into national economic weakness had a powerful ripple effect on the world of higher education that by the 1980s had reached higher levels of internationalization than ever before.<sup>6</sup> The number of foreigners in elite graduate programs in the sciences and engineering was a source of particular worry. “American universities are being flooded by waves of foreigners,” noted a 1990 report in that reliable bellwether of elite opinion, the *New York Times* (DePalma 1990). The influx of students from abroad pointed out the inadequacies of those at home, whose supposedly subpar preparation left them unqualified for the rigors of these graduate programs and hence left “empty seats that have been filled by foreigners” (ibid.).

The deregulatory, probusiness bent of the Reagan and George H. W. Bush eras also filtered into the workings of international education policy. The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 1985 debated how best to promote links between colleges and US businesses that were engaged in international economic activity (US Congress 1985). This was one signal of a broader shift away from public purposes and toward private collaborations, a transition fueled by declining public investments in higher education at the state level, which affected universities’ recruitment and reception of foreign students. One 1984 study found that while private institutions reaped financial benefits from having tuition-paying foreign students on their rolls, tuition payments did not cover per-student costs in public institutions. The tendency for foreign students to specialize in expensive fields (hard sciences,

engineering) further exacerbated the problem (Agarwal and Winkler 1985: 520; Winkler 1984).

The fields in which both students and scholars chose to specialize reflected the shift in political priorities and the rising importance of business education and the cachet of the American MBA. In 1955–56, the academic year of the IIE's first *Open Doors* annual survey of foreign students and scholars, as many foreign students specialized in the humanities (22 percent) as in engineering. Beyond these two most-chosen fields came social sciences, with 15 percent of the students. Business administration drew a mere 9 percent. The humanities and social sciences together drew close to 30 percent of the students through the end of the 1960s. Yet the humanities dropped in the rankings rather precipitously in the 1970s, drawing only 4 percent of students by the 1979–80 academic year. The social sciences likewise experienced a loss of foreign student representation, from close to 13 percent in 1969–70 to 8 percent 10 years later. Meanwhile, engineering remained at the top and strengthened its position, attracting as many as 27 percent of foreign students in 1979–80 (IIE 2005).

The most impressive gains, however, came in business and management. Attracting fewer than 12 percent in 1969–70, it rose to become the choice of 16 percent by 1974–75 and by the end of the Cold War was the field of focus for about 20 percent of foreign students. In 2009 business was the most popular field for foreign students, outpacing engineering and all others as the choice of over 20 percent of the more than 670,000 foreigners studying in the United States (IIE 1991, 2009).

These shifts can be explained in part by where students came from and by the parallel expansions and contractions of particular fields and disciplines in American higher education since the 1950s. While more students came from Asia than from any other world region throughout the half century, the proportion of those coming from the Americas shrank. Canada supplied more foreign students than any other nation through the end of the 1960s; aside from a surge of students from Iran in the years preceding and during the Iranian Revolution, the East Asian nations occupied the top spots in the rankings after the 1960s (IIE 2005).

While the perennial popularity of engineering and the physical sciences among foreign students may be expected in the 1950s and early 1960s, given the relatively lesser importance of fluency in English, the surge in business education indicates something larger at work. In the increasingly volatile and

skills-driven job market of the 1970s and beyond, the MBA turned into an essential credential, and the American-style MBA became a global model (Pfeffer and Fong 2004; Starkey and Tempest 2001). Business programs at American universities grew accordingly at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels.

Funding also played a role. As political and economic imperatives shifted, an increasing number of foreign students came to the United States on their own dimes. In 1954–55 close to half of international students reported being self-supported or family-supported. At the close of the 1980s this proportion had increased to close to 63 percent and held steady, with about 65 percent of international students relying on personal or family funds in 2009 (IIE 2005, 2009). As overall foreign student populations grew, direct government support accounted for a minuscule percentage of foreign student subsidy. However, *indirect* support—via federal research grants that paid for graduate student manpower, for example—became more important. Universities themselves grew over this period from providing a negligible amount of support for foreign visitors to supporting over 17 percent of them in 1988–89 and over 25 percent of them two decades later (IIE 2005, 2009).

The changing global economic landscape of the last two decades of the Cold War thus prompted two kinds of political responses from American leaders. The first was anxiety about the competitive threat posed by well-educated foreigners and a commensurate concern that foreign students were crowding out Americans seeking opportunity for degrees and jobs in high-value fields. The second was a shift in focus away from liberal education and toward professional fields, particularly business—a shift prompted by corporate globalization, driven by university fiscal imperatives, and evidenced by rising student demand for these degrees. Yet even though the substance of the rhetoric changed, the institutional superstructure through which these programs operated did not. The privatized, diffuse, and parastatal nature of foreign student programs in fact most likely saved them from oblivion. Had they been centrally administered and reliant chiefly on federal funds, the economic uncertainties and small-government ethos of the Reagan-Bush years would likely have placed foreign student programs on the chopping block along with other creations of the postwar liberal state.

## Open Markets and Open Borders, 1990 to the Present

At the end of the Cold War a stunning 26 percent of doctoral degrees earned in the United States were awarded to foreigners. In the sciences and engineering more than half the degrees went to noncitizens (DePalma 1990; IIE 1990). By the late 1990s close to half a million foreign students were enrolled on US campuses. Nearly 60 percent of them were from Asia. By 2009 China and India alone accounted for 30 percent of the foreigners studying in the United States (IIE 2009).

The swelling ranks of foreign students reflected the high quality of American universities, whose value as international brand names had increased in the wake of the embrace of neoliberal market reforms in China, India, and eastern and central Europe after 1989. The consternation of the 1980s about competition and costs remained, kept alive in good part by research and advocacy emanating from right-leaning scholars and think tanks opposed to immigration liberalization (e.g., Borjas 2002a; Vaughan 2007). However, the market opportunities posed by rapidly growing economies in less-developed nations had quelled this anxiety. Immigration debates centered on the dilemma posed by workers at the unskilled and ill-paid end of the employment spectrum, particularly the illegal and undocumented immigrants. Educated immigrants were considered a class apart, a distinction reified by the establishment of the HIB visa program for highly skilled workers in 1990. The tech-fueled economic boom of the late 1990s further legitimized the economic purpose of immigrant entrepreneurs and, with them, the international educational exchange programs that had first brought many of them to the United States.

After September 11, 2001, the political landscape of the foreign student visa program changed significantly. The revelation that several participants in the 9/11 attacks were in the United States on legitimate student visas led to calls for comprehensive reform and tracking of what had become a wide-ranging program involving thousands of institutions and relatively little oversight (Borjas 2002b). The increased scrutiny of student visas—and the real and perceived increases in hostility toward foreigners, particularly those from Islamic countries—resulted in a drop of foreign student and scholar entries for the first time since 1971 (IIE 2005).

If foreign students were dissuaded by post-9/11 immigration restric-

tions, then their staying home did not mean that they passed up an opportunity for an American-style university education. Economic liberalization, industrialization, and aggressive investment in national higher education systems in Korea and Japan since the 1970s, and China and India since the 1980s, had slowed the brain drain to the United States and created incentives for immigrant students and entrepreneurs to return home. Yet American universities remained potent global brands and lures for the best and brightest overseas students. Small villages in India were home to storefront operations that tutored prospective applicants for the Graduate Record Examination.<sup>7</sup> A gifted Chinese teenager who won admission to Harvard University became a national celebrity after her parents penned a best-selling advice book about how to get one's child into this elite bastion of higher education. In turn, elite American universities began to actively recruit in China and other emerging economic powers for the very best students. On one such recruiting trip, Harvard admissions dean William Fitzsimmons told a rapt and densely packed auditorium of Beijing high school students that "there are no quotas, no limits on the number of Chinese students we might take" (Jan 2008). The continued demand for a US degree, along with considerable concern about the impact of declining populations of foreign students and professionals on both the American knowledge economy and on US standing abroad, resulted in foreign student populations returning to pre-9/11 levels by the 2006–7 academic year, when close to 600,000 foreign students studied in the United States (IIE 2007).

Meanwhile, the magnetic attraction of American higher education and the deficits in "soft skills" of management and marketing in booming national economies prompted American universities to open branch campuses and sponsor programs—often offering MBA and executive MBA degrees—from Beijing to Singapore to Cape Town. In many cases, foreign governments have been instrumental in establishing these institutions, especially where indigenous universities are undeveloped or barely existent. The most widely publicized of these efforts in recent years have involved Dubai and Qatar, both of whom have aggressively courted elite American universities to open branches, dangling generous endowments and subsidies as incentives. The only major player to buck this international trend is India, whose national government has rejected overtures from American universities and has focused on further developing its own system (Neelatakan 2008). While some US schools have shied away from these expansions and partnerships

because of concerns over quality control and faculty recruitment, these programs often become a lucrative gambit for increasingly cash-strapped institutions (particularly state-supported ones).

The economic utility of foreign students, scholars, and international programs does not mean that the political utility of American universities abroad has evaporated, however. Although the explicit policy purposes of international education faded after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the internationalized research university's function as a tool of public diplomacy has been revived in the post-9/11 era. "I believe that America's international education and exchange programs have proven to be our single most important public diplomacy tool of the last fifty years," said Karen Hughes (2007), George W. Bush's undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, in November 2007. "These programs build long term relationships with the future leaders of the world—they are tremendous intellectual capital for our country and we want to make sure they continue to grow." In March 2007 Hughes led a delegation of US college and university presidents to India for a two-week mission to promote "Brand America" in that nation's universities abroad and increase bilateral cooperation. By the end of the George W. Bush administration, the US government had once again found potent diplomatic uses for the foreign student, but MBA programs and the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines—rather than the humanities and social sciences at the core of liberal arts education—were the vehicles by which the goal of mutual understanding and cooperation were to be accomplished.

### **The University and the State**

While foreign student and scholar programs had less political visibility and involved fewer overt federal outlays than the programs undergirding the expansion in university research (and, to a good degree, the former phenomenon is a dependent variable of the latter), they have had profound effects on the internal organization of universities and their external missions and reputations. This has grown rather than diminished in the post-Cold War era. American universities' ability to draw on a global talent pool has reaped economic rewards in a knowledge-driven era when higher education is considered a critical part of the so-called triple helix driving business innovation. It has compensated for an American K-12 educational infrastructure that has

lagged behind foreign competitors in imparting core mathematics and science skills. The presence of international students has also partly compensated for steady declines in research investment by the state in the post-Cold War period. Dominance of higher-education markets has in turn maintained American businesses' managerial position in global supply chains, particularly in the technology industry. Production and back-office operations may have moved abroad, but the hub of high-tech management and capital investment remains California's Silicon Valley. The high proportion of foreign-born and American-educated entrepreneurs behind successful technology companies attests to the pivotal role international educational exchange has played in the postindustrial economic landscape. And educated human capital has been the system's best advertising, giving elite American institutions global visibility and marketability.

Globalization also has entailed trade-offs. The particular competitive advantage imparted by foreign students, combined with the changing demographics of foreign students and the demands of foreign markets, has arguably contributed to the emphasis on business administration and the STEM fields both in research universities and in American education policy—an emphasis that has come at the expense of the social sciences and humanities. Opportunities to capitalize on global reputation have brought financial profit possibly at the cost of diluted educational standards. The overseas face of the American university is unidimensional and practical; foreign outposts of American universities tend to offer professional degrees like the MBA, not liberal arts diplomas. The process of going global has, particularly in the post-Cold War era, closely overlapped with becoming more corporate, leading to broader questions about the university's identity and social purpose.

In 1963 Kerr wrote of universities being “dangled as bait” in the regional economic development game, bestowing competitive advantage on certain metropolitan areas over others elsewhere in the United States. In the twenty-first century the bait has become the educated human capital that universities produce. These educated students and workers are globally footloose. The Chinese math whizzes who win admission to Harvard most likely will return to China after graduation, putting their newly acquired skills and social networks to work in growing China's market economy. Thus the economic impact of the university has become more diffuse not simply because of migration within the United States but because of migration across oceans and continents.

Kerr could not have predicted the magnitude of these structural changes in 1963, although he lived to see them come to fruition.<sup>8</sup> What is striking about such changes is the degree to which universities were instrumental in broader processes of human capital production and global economic diffusion and the degree to which universities themselves did not have a directive role in shaping them. From the Cold War to the post-9/11 new world order, national policy makers articulated what international educational exchange programs were supposed to be for and who would be served by them and literally planted the flag for these programs to serve national interests rather than institutional ones. Federal policies of the immediate postwar period set up an extensive administrative infrastructure—neither governmental nor academic—that not only tracked statistics and trends but also interpolated these to the wider public. Individual universities and scholars in them performed analyses of the administrative impacts and lived experiences of foreign scholar programs in their particular institutions, but national-level research on the subject remained the province of government commissions, foundations, and the IIE.

Large research universities undoubtedly found a real benefit in the presence of foreign students on campus, and the growing number of institutions hosting foreign visitors over the second half of the twentieth century attested to the intellectual and financial boon presented by these students. For most of this period university administrators were largely absent from the national discourse around the broader uses of the foreign student for national or academic ends. Only recently have research universities made concerted efforts to emphasize global education, and this is chiefly in the realms of marketing a more well-rounded educational experience to American students (study abroad, international affairs programs, etc.) or of recruiting top-ranked (and tuition-paying) students regardless of national origin.

The case of the foreign student provides some food for thought about the broader dynamics of university-state relations over the Cold War period and into the post-Cold War era. In the Cold War era international education was one of many arenas in which universities functioned quite explicitly as what Eisenhower's science advisers termed "agents of our national hopes" (President's Scientific Advisory Committee 1960: 11). In the post-Fordist globalized economy of the 1970s and beyond, international education retained a diplomatic purpose but also became a symbol of the rising competitive challenge of former foes and so-called Third World nations. After

the end of the Cold War and the economic liberalizations of the early 1990s in countries like China and India, a growing international consumer demand for American university education among the newly minted middle classes framed a Stanford or Harvard education as the ultimate consumer product. Neoliberal national political leaders in the United States encouraged this perception. Universities did not contest these externally imposed narratives or create alternative ones of their own, perhaps because they recognized that it was not in their economic interest to do so. Nonetheless, the importance that both policy makers and foreign educational consumers placed on American multiversities as sites for a particularly valuable kind of human capital production did not trigger a commensurately louder voice for American research institutions in national and international policy making. In the Cold War and beyond higher education served critical political and economic purposes, but the terms on which it served were determined in good part by those outside the campus.

## Notes

This article began its life as a paper presented at the 2008 Policy History Conference in St. Louis, Missouri; I am grateful to my fellow panelists and audience members for their comments at that gathering. Thanks also go to my University of Washington colleagues Jordanna Bailkin, Stephen Hanson, and Resat Kasaba for valuable suggestions that made this article better as well as to Christopher P. Loss, Paul H. Mattingly, and the two anonymous referees who read it on behalf of *Social Science History* for their incisive and helpful comments on earlier drafts.

- 1 This article covers a period of tremendous shifts in US racial politics as well as significant changes in the demographics of foreign student programs, which saw great increases in the number of students from Africa, Latin America, and Asia in the wake of decolonization and economic globalization. Nonetheless, the broader racial categories of “white” and “nonwhite” remained remarkably steady and largely uncontested in the realm of national policy making and governance that is the focus of this article. My use of these terms mirrors the way that such officials categorized students, with those of European origin being “white” and most (but not necessarily all) students from African, Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern nations being “nonwhite.” Eastern European students from the Soviet bloc, while being political “others,” did not fall in the category of “nonwhite” or “of color.” The majority-male demographics of foreign student populations in the early Cold War decades was due in good part to men’s greater access to education in many of the nations from which foreign students came. By 2009–10, however, women made up the majority of foreign students in the United States (Institute of International Education 2010).

- 2 Christopher P. Loss (2012) has shown the critical role universities played as para-statal agents in defining democratic citizenship during the twentieth century but argues that this conceptualization disintegrated in the face of student-led pressure for curricular change and institutional responses to calls for increased diversity. I have argued elsewhere (O'Mara 2005, 2007) that research universities acted as agents of state expansion and intervention via federally funded research and teaching activities, a use of the university that reached its high-water mark in the early 1960s but that has continued to have a profound effect on the geography of "knowledge work" to the present day.
- 3 The extensive literature on area studies contains trenchant analyses of the way geopolitical and intelligence considerations shaped the structure and administration of these programs, a reality fiercely at odds with the assurances by their funders and administrators that academic freedom was protected. See in particular Diamond 1992 and Simpson 1999. For discussion of the cultural frameworks, see Rafael 1994.
- 4 The Fulbright Program was one of several channels by which foreigners came to study in the United States during this period. Another federal program serving complementary ends was the participant training program of the US Agency for International Development Point Four program supplying technical assistance to so-called Third World nations. While less well-known than the Fulbright and having less of a presence on the campuses of elite "multiversities" than in land-grant institutions, Point Four brought thousands of foreigners to US campuses to participate in agricultural and technological research. They returned home to apply that knowledge as part of broader technical assistance efforts. For further discussion, see Adams and Garraty 1960; Atwood 1959; Richardson 1969.
- 5 Jointly run by the Dalian Institute of Science and Technology and the State University of New York at Buffalo, the program graduated its first cohort in 1987 and was notable in offering a degree from the American institution rather than a Chinese credential (Goodall et al. 2004).
- 6 These conclusions have since been challenged. See, e.g., Berliner and Biddle 1996; Wong et al. 2004.
- 7 I witnessed this firsthand during a 2006 research trip to the southern Indian state of Karnataka, where the presence of such tutorial facilities in a very small rural village undoubtedly had something to do with the presence of the high-tech hub of Bangalore less than 50 kilometers away. With the city home to thousands of Indians who had either studied or worked in the United States (and benefited financially from this association), word of the significance of an American graduate degree would have quickly spread to the rural hinterland. Yet the presence of this service in a very small village with extremely poor social and physical infrastructures was striking. See O'Mara 2006.
- 8 Kerr died in December 2003. He also lived to write about them, albeit with a focus on the internationalization of the disciplines rather than the implications of economic globalization on the uses of the university. See Kerr 1990.

## References

- Adams, W., and J. A. Garraty (1960) *Is the World Our Campus?* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Agarwal, V. B., and D. R. Winkler (1985) "Migration of foreign students to the United States." *Journal of Higher Education* 56 (5): 509–22.
- Atwood, R. S. (1959) "The United States Point Four Program: A bilateral approach." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 323 (1): 33–39.
- Berliner, D. C., and B. Biddle (1996) *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud, and the Attacks on America's Public Schools*. New York: Basic Books.
- Borjas, G. (2002a) "An evaluation of the Foreign Student Program." Faculty Research Working Papers Series, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, July.
- (2002b) "Rethinking foreign students." *National Review*, June 17.
- Borstelmann, T. (2003) *The Cold War and the Color Line*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bu, L. (2003) *Making the World like Us: Education, Cultural Expansion, and the American Century*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Cieslak, E. (1955) *The Foreign Student in American Colleges*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Clowse, B. (1981) *Brainpower for the Cold War: The Sputnik Crisis and National Defense Education Act of 1958*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- De Grazia, V. (2005) *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- DePalma, A. (1990) "Graduate schools fill with foreigners." *New York Times*, November 29.
- Diamond, S. (1992) *Compromised Campus: The Collaboration of Universities with the Intelligence Community*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dudziak, M. L. (2002) *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Eisenhower, D. D. (1957) *Remarks to the American Field Service Students, July 18*. Public Papers of the Presidents. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Ford, G. (1976) *The President's News Conference, May 3*. Public Papers of the Presidents. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Gardner, J. W. (1952) "The foreign student in America." *Foreign Affairs* 30 (4): 637–50.
- Geiger, R. (1986) *To Advance Knowledge: The Growth of American Research Universities, 1900–1940*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- (1993) *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Goodall, K., M. Warner, and V. Lang (2004) "HRD in the People's Republic: The MBA 'with Chinese Characteristics'?" *Journal of World Business* 39 (4): 311–23.
- Hecl, H. (1978) "Issue networks and the executive establishment," in Anthony King (ed.) *The New American Political System*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute Press: 87–124.

- Hughes, K. (2007) Remarks at the Institute of International Education, Washington, DC, November 13, 2001, [www.state.gov/r/us/2007/95187.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/us/2007/95187.htm) (accessed May 23, 2008).
- Institute of Higher Education (2007) Top 500 World Universities, 2007. Shanghai: Shanghai Jiao Tong University.
- Institute of International Education (1952) *Education for One World, 1951–1952*. New York: Institute of International Education.
- (2005) *Open Doors, 1948–2004: Report on International Educational Exchange*. New York: Institute of International Education.
- (2007) *Open Doors, 2006–2007*. New York: Institute of International Education.
- (2009) *Open Doors, 2008–2009*. New York: Institute of International Education.
- (2010) Personal and Academic Characteristics of International Students, 2009–10. *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*, [www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data](http://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data) (accessed January 20, 2012).
- Jan, T. (2008) “Colleges scour China for top students.” *Boston Globe*, November 9.
- Johnson, L. B. (1964) Remarks to a Group of Foreign Students, May 5. *Public Papers of the Presidents*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Johnson, W. (1963) *American Studies Abroad: Progress and Difficulties in Selected Countries; A Special Report from the U.S. Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Kennedy, J. F. (1960a) Background memorandum prepared by Senator Kennedy’s office, August 1. The American Presidency Project, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25889](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25889) (accessed June 15, 2012).
- (1960b) Remarks of Senator John F. Kennedy, Kalamazoo, MI, October 14. The American Presidency Project, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=74021](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=74021) (accessed June 15, 2012).
- Kerr, C. (1963) *The Uses of the University*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (1969) *The Urban-Grant University: A Model for the Future*. New York: City College of New York.
- (1990) “The internationalisation of learning and the nationalisation of the purposes of higher education: Two ‘laws of motion’ in conflict?” *European Journal of Education* 25 (1): 5–22.
- Kramer, P. A. (2009) “Is the world our campus? International students and U.S. global power in the long twentieth century.” *Diplomatic History* 33 (5): 775–806.
- Kuisel, R. F. (1997) *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Leslie, S. (1993) *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Loss, C. P. (2012) *Between Citizens and the State: The Politics of American Higher Education in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Lowen, R. (1997) *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mildenberger, K. W. (1964) “The federal government and the universities.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 356 (1): 23–29.

- National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Neelatakan, S. (2008) "In India: No foreign colleges need apply." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 8.
- Nixon, R. M. (1971) *Message to the Congress Transmitting Annual Report on the International Educational and Cultural Exchange Program, August 5*. Public Papers of the Presidents. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- O'Mara, M. P. (2005) *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- (2006) "Reinterpretation of the Technology Park: Notes from the field." Unpublished working paper. Woods Institute for the Environment, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.
- (2007) "Cold War politics and scientific communities: The case of Silicon Valley." *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 31 (2): 121–34.
- Osborn, G. (1974) *John James Tigert: American Educator*. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida.
- Osgood, K. (2008) *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- Pfeffer, J., and C. T. Fong (2004) "The business school 'business': Some lessons from the U.S. experience." *Journal of Management Studies* 41 (8): 1501–20, papers.ssrn.com.
- President's Scientific Advisory Committee (1960) *Statement: Scientific Progress, the Universities, and the Federal Government*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Rafael, V. (1994) "The cultures of area studies in the United States." *Social Text* (41): 91–112.
- Reagan, R. (1982) *Message to the Congress Reporting on United States International Activities in Science and Technology, March 22*. Public Papers of the Presidents. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Richardson, J. (1969) *Partners in Development: An Analysis of AID-University Relations, 1950–1966*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Rodgers, D. (1998) *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sassen, S. (2006) *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Saxenian, A. (1996) *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (2007) *The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Simpson, C. (1999) *Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences during the Cold War*. New York: New Press.
- Spector, B. (2008) "Business responsibilities in a divided world: The Cold War roots of the corporate social responsibility movement." *Enterprise and Society* 9 (2): 314–36.
- Starkey, K., and S. Tempest (2001) *The World-Class Business School: A UK Perspective*. London: Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership.

- Teichler, U. (2004) "The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education." *Higher Education* 48 (1): 5–26.
- Terzian, S. G., and L. A. Osborne (2006) "Postwar era precedents and the ambivalent quest for international students at the University of Florida." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 10 (3): 286–306.
- Truman, H. S. (1951) Letter to the Chairman, Board of Foreign Scholarships, on Fulbright Program, May 10. Public Papers of the Presidents. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- UNESCO (1963) *Study Abroad*, 14th ed. New York: UNESCO.
- United States (1961) Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, U.S.C. 22: 2451; 2452a.
- US Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs (1963) *A Beacon of Hope: The Exchange-of-Persons Program*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- (1965) *Foreign Students in the United States: A National Survey*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- US Congress (1947) House Special Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. H.R. 3342, 80th Cong., 1st sess., May 13, 14, 16, 17, and 20. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- US Congress (1985) House Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education of the Committee on Education and Labor: Hearings on the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Title II (College Libraries); Title VI (International Education); Title VIII (Cooperative Education); Title X (F.I.P.S.E.); Title XI (Urban Grant Universities). 99th Cong., 1st sess., September 6 and 10. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Vaughan, J. (2007) "International students and visiting scholars: Trends, barriers, and implications for American universities and U.S. foreign policy." Statement presented to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight and the House Committee on Education and Labor Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness, Washington, DC, June 29.
- Vogel, R. J. (1987) "The making of the Fulbright Program." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 491 (1): 11–21.
- Westad, O. A. (2007) *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Winkler, D. R. (1984) "The fiscal consequences of foreign students in public higher education." *Economics of Education Review* 3 (2): 141–54.
- Wong, K. K., J. W. Guthrie, and D. N. Harris (2004) *A Nation at Risk: A 20-Year Appraisal; A Special Issue of the Peabody Journal of Education*. New York: Routledge.
- Woodhall, M. (1987) "Government policy towards overseas students: An international perspective." *Higher Education Quarterly* 41 (2): 119–25.