Manifesto of a Tenured Radical

Nelson, Cary

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“Cary Nelson joins moral passion to clear thinking. Read him on the job crisis, hate speech, the canon, engaged pedagogy, cultural studies—and be reinvigorated for hard work to be done in mean times.”

— Richard Ohmann, author of English in America

“Armed with a keen conscience and a fearless wit, Cary Nelson exposes the moral bankruptcy that underpins the current crisis of academic labor. From underpaid cafeteria workers and underemployed Ph.D.’s to overindulged professors and CEO-wannabe university presidents, Nelson’s groves of academe are littered with inequality and injustice. Whether on the topic of the future of literary studies or the unionization of graduate students, Manifesto of a Tenured Radical presents a devastating case for the correction of the profession.”

— Andrew Ross, author of The Chicago Gangster Theory of Life

In an age when innovative scholarly work is at an all-time high, the academy itself is being rocked by structural change. Funding is plummeting. Tenure increasingly seems a prospect for only the elite few. Ph.D.’s go begging for even adjunct work. Into this tumult steps Cary Nelson, with a no-holds-barred account of recent developments in higher education.

Manifesto of a Tenured Radical is filled with remarkable stories about daily life in higher education, extending beyond published accounts to reveal what transpires behind closed doors, in meetings, conversation, letters and internal memoranda. Eloquent and witty, it urges academics to apply the theoretical advances of the last twenty years to an analysis of their own practices and standards of behavior. In the process, Nelson offers a devastating critique of current inequities and a detailed proposal for change in the form of “A Twelve-Step Program for Academia.”

CULTURAL FRONT

CARY NELSON is Jubilee Professor of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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