

Book Reviews

***End of Academic Freedom: The Coming Obliteration of the Core Purpose of the University.* By William M. Bowen, Michael Schwartz, and Lisa Camp. Information Age Publishing, Incorporated, 2014. ISBN: 1-62396-660-4**

Academic freedom is a complex and deeply philosophical principle that underscores the quest for knowledge, individual autonomy, and the importance of unrestricted inquiry. It includes the rights to express ideas, question established norms, and disseminate findings without fear of censorship or reprisal. This freedom is fundamental to the pursuit of truth and the spread of knowledge, creating an environment where intellectual debate and innovation flourish. It is crucial for advancing knowledge, cultivating critical thinking, and sustaining a democratic society.

Academic freedom continues to be a fundamental element of higher education but faces numerous critiques arising from political, economic, social, and technological pressures. Navigating these critiques necessitates a delicate equilibrium between safeguarding the principle of free inquiry and responding to modern challenges, thereby ensuring that universities continue to serve as arenas for open and critical intellectual discourse.

“End of Academic Freedom: The Coming Obliteration of the Core Purpose of the University” provides a powerful and insightful critique of contemporary threats toward academic freedom. The critique relevant to nowadays challenge on higher educational field. In the first chapter, by highlighting the

historical context and origin principles of academic freedom, authors emphasized its critical and important of environment where free flow of ideas can exist. He outlined universities priority has shifted and prioritizing financial interest and ideological standards rather than pursuit knowledge.

In chapter two, while remained questioning the core value of university, as the main stakeholders in higher education, he outlined the systems of higher education are under pressure from numerous prominent actors in national, state, and local politics, as well as from leaders in the business and industrial sectors. These stakeholders are urging universities to prioritize economic development and the advancement of collective prosperity. In chapter three, the authors invite the reader to understand the conditions of university in modern context and setting. University administrators emphasize the significance of "attracting, retaining, graduating, and placing" students. Trapped and focused into those routines, the university unconsciously omits any reference to "educating" them. This oversight neglects the internal, subjective, and cognitive dimensions intrinsic to the learning process, essential for fostering and perpetuating knowledge effectively.

As the follow up for chapter three, chapter four identifies the variables that make university begin to lose its origin and how importance of critical thinking, social sensitivity, and innovation. The prominent one is complexity in society and its correlation with industrial revolution. Thus, in order to describe the abstraction of “knowledge”, chapter five discusses the meaning of “knowledge” in



modern society context and what is the university's role. Furthermore, the rest of the book provides information regarding the existence of obstacles between academic freedom and current university circumstances. By identifying and elaborating variables hampered academic freedom, authors showed what are the consequences for society.

The book offers awareness that universities are deviating from their fundamental mission of generating, preserving, disseminating, validating, and applying knowledge. They believe this deviation is due to obstacles like authoritarianism, corporatism, illiberalism, supernaturalism, and political correctness, which undermine academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas. While factors like student numbers, increased efficiency, and job creation are undeniably important, universities have a much broader mission.

To address these challenges, the book suggests that universities should implement systems that promote openness, transparency, and a balance of diverse viewpoints. The authors argue that rather than concentrating solely on metrics such as student numbers and job readiness, universities should focus on fostering a diverse range of ideas and creating environments that protect and encourage intellectual dissent. From this perspective, derive insights and arguments regarding academic freedom, including the regulation and oversight of the marketplace of ideas, the flow of information within universities, the role of language in university governance, and the dynamics between administrators, faculty, and students. This approach is seen as crucial for

preserving the genuine purpose of higher education institutions.

Lastly, the book is still relevant to the current condition of higher education around the world. University becomes employee's factory which increasing marketization of education and reduce academic freedom. Additionally, the insights into the structure of information flows within universities are increasingly significant in the context of rapid technological advancements. Ensuring technology enhances rather than hinders academic freedom and knowledge dissemination is a contemporary challenge, making the book's analysis and recommendations vital for today's academic landscape.

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