

# UNIVERSITY IS AN (A)POLITICAL SPACE

Universities should be concerned with knowledge not skills; and intellectual capital not economic capital.

Today, college presidents do not feel that political activity is a major function of their colleges.

The function of the academic community to provide social vision is being lost in the shuffle... Teaching has become training at our Large factory-like universities.

The university places itself at the service of the status quo, and farms out its talent do defense and industrial establishments.

It should be educative, not stultifying; creative, not mechanical; selfdirect, not manipulated, encouraging independence; a respect for others, a sense of dignity and a willingness to accept social responsibility, since it is this experience that has crucial influence on habits, perceptions and individual ethics.

# STUDENTS APATHY

If student movements for change are rarities still on the campus scene, what is commonplace there?

Apathy toward apathy begets a privately-constructed universe, a place of systematic study schedules, two nights each week for beer, a girl or two, and early marriage; a framework infused with personality, warmth, and under control, no matter how unsatisfying otherwise.

Almost no students value activity as a citizen.

Rules are accepted as "inevitable", bureaucracy as "just circumstances", irrelevance as "scholarship", selflessness as "martyrdom", politics as "just another way to make people, and an unprofitable one, too."

*“College can shrink your universe, or college can expand it”*

Frank Bruni, on nytimes

University was once a political space for discussion and intellectual development. But what happens when this is subverted, and the university, that is by nature a space of learning and where young people develop not only academically, but enrich their ability to think politically and socially, becomes a place where money is valued above knowledge?

## REFERENCES

in Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society, 1962  
in A Strategy for University Reform by Paul Booth  
in 'Value for money' rhetoric in higher education undermines the value of knowledge in society, by Joanna Williams

# MONEY. THE CENTRAL FACTOR

*College should be about stretching yourself and discovering who you are and what you want. Schools should not become factories. There are hundreds of majors out there, and it's almost always a mistake to base the decision on money alone.*

Trudy Steinfeld, director of career services at New York University

Work should involve incentives worthier than money or survival.

Enjoying being a student, making new friends, trying out new ideas, engaging with politics and culture, are left out when we become fixated on putting a price on everything.

The focus upon gaining a qualification that can be traded in the post-graduation labour market shifts attention away from what is really valuable about education.

UNIVERSITY ≠ POLITICS