



## MINDING THE CAMPUS.COM

*Selections from the Manhattan Institute's web magazine*



### EDITOR'S NOTE

Richard Vedder's meditation on Steve Jobs is the first of seven excerpts from recent articles and blog posts in this issue. Vedder contrasts the almost fevered innovation by Apple under Jobs with the deep and puzzling dedication to non-innovation at our hard-pressed colleges and universities. Russell K. Nieli makes the case that debate on human responsibility for global warming is essentially absent from the campuses. Minding the Campus reporter and commentator Charlotte Allen writes about how a gross fraternity joke at Yale escalated into a five-year ban that amounted to the death knell for one famous frat. Harvey Silverglate and Adam Kissel lament Harvard's odd attempt to pressure students into accepting a seemingly benign behavioral code that represented early thought control for freshmen. From our Forum blog, we feature surprising commentary on how history is taught at Bowdoin (KC Johnson) and how military history may be returning to our colleges after a near-total eclipse based on opposition to "elitism" (Donald A. Downs). And the prolific Mark Bauerlein contributes some sharp comments on "The Resentment of the Diversity Officer."

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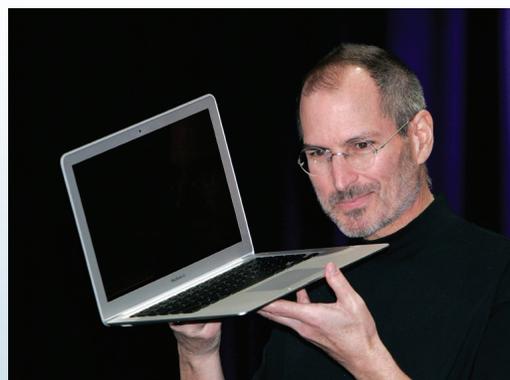
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## STEVE JOBS AND OUR NON-INNOVATING UNIVERSITIES

Richard Vedder | October 7, 2011

The passing of Steve Jobs has focused my mind on something I haven't thought about for a while: American capitalism is so vibrant, so creative, so much a creator of wealth and happiness, while higher education is far less so on all scores. Perhaps this explains why, when we tax capitalists and their suppliers (including employees) to support higher education, we actually often lower our nation's output and, arguably, gross national happiness....

Apple rose to the top tier of American corporations based on market capitalization in little more than a generation. Yet Jobs



was once fired from the company for so-so performance. Success came—but along with that came disappointments, risks, and sticks as well as carrots. Google, Intel, Facebook, Wal-Mart—America is replete with great companies that were essentially non-existent half a century ago and succeeded by building a better mousetrap or the equivalent—with enormous positive consequences.

For example, I think Wal-Mart has done more to help poor people than most federal poverty programs. As Adam Smith famously said in 1776, "by pursuing his own interest he [the capitalist] frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it."

*Continued on page 3*

## HARVARD PRESSURES FRESHMEN TO SIGN A MORAL PLEDGE

Harvey A. Silverglate and Adam Kissel | September 13, 2011

Harvard College's Class of 2015 found something unprecedented awaiting their arrival on campus: an ideological pledge. It was framed as a request for allegiance to certain social and political principles. No such request had been made of Harvard students since the college's founding by Puritans in 1636.

First-years are being pressured to sign a "Freshman Pledge" committing them to create a campus "where the exercise of kindness holds a place on a par with intellectual attainment"—all in the name of "upholding the values of the College" including "inclusiveness and civility."

The request—originating from the Dean of Freshmen, in consultation with the secretary of Harvard's feared disciplinary tribunal, its Administrative Board, and communicated via dormitory tutors who are the students' main liaison with the administration—asked that students commencing their four-year journey of intellectual and spiritual awakening take a position on social and political issues that are much debated in our contentious times. "Inclusiveness" and "civility" have become, for better or worse, buzz words among those who argue over the extent to which harsh rhetoric should be avoided in the name of providing students protection from the hurt feelings that often result from vigorous arguments.

For Harvard's incoming freshmen, that debate has been decided in their absence, presented as gospel at the very start of their student experience. Dean of Freshmen Thomas Dingman has decreed Harvard's official position and established the direction in which every student's "moral compass" (Dingman's words) must point....



And thus, Dingman decided to prevail on his young charges to sign their names to the pledge of their allegiance to Harvard College's morality, as defined by the dean's office, which was to be framed and hung in the entry to each Harvard freshman residential house. There the pledge would hang all year for all to see whose signature was affixed and, in contrast, whose designated signature line remained conspicuously blank, indicating a refusal to sign onto the values that four years of education must not undo....

There have been occasional feints in the direction of pressuring students to conform to some individual administrator's personal sense of the student's obligation to engage in only civil discourse. But Harvard has never, until now, expected so much conformity to the college's purportedly official position on questions which, within a university campus as well as in the society outside the ivy walls, free men and women have long been allowed, indeed encouraged, to debate. Although Dean Dingman has reversed course and announced that the pledges will be posted without the signatures, he has insisted that Harvard freshmen still need to know what Harvard's moral "expectations" are, so as to live and speak accordingly....

...Surely Harvard should not have been pressuring its freshmen to publicly sign onto a dean's conception of the approved and hence official college position on such personal and philosophical values as "inclusiveness," "civility," and "kindness."... The leaders of the next generation must not be taught that virtue resides in a pledge of fidelity to the values of those who hold power over them.

*Read the full article at [www.MindingTheCampus.com](http://www.MindingTheCampus.com).*

*Harvey A. Silverglate, is the co-founder and chairman of the board of The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). Adam Kissel is vice president of programs at FIRE. Both are Harvard alumni.*

## STEVE JOBS *Continued from page 1*

Such stories of providing great pleasure to the public, such innovation, such risk-taking, are virtually non-existent in higher education, except in the vibrant for-profit sector. Tragically, we have a federal government that is hostile to the one part of higher education that has the same motivations that produced us creators of so much good, persons like Bill Gates and Steve Jobs (both college dropouts)...

In a policy sense, we need to stop harassing for-profit higher education with such things as 90/10 rules, state certification requirements, federally defined definitions of credit hours, “gainful employment” regulations, etc. In general, we need to reduce government involvement in higher education (something even the for-profit schools are probably uneasy with, given the reliance of their students on federal loan and grant funds). We need to let markets operate more in higher education as they work in computers and related information technology fields.

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*We need to stop harassing for-profit higher education. We need to let markets operate.*

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We need to level the playing field between participants, we need to radically change accreditation rules, etc. For example, why should for-profit schools pay taxes that go to subsidize their competitors? Why should accrediting organizations have the right to prevent new entrants into

higher education unless there is a very large possibility that they are fraudulent? No one “accredits” Apple, the Mac, or the iPad. Is the quality of the iPad any less than

that of, say, Slippery Rock State University or Chicago State because the iPad is not accredited but the latter schools are?

Steve Jobs’ passing reminds us of the strengths of human ingenuity and the effectiveness of market forces. Let’s bring more of both to higher education.

*Read the full article at [www.MindingTheCampus.com](http://www.MindingTheCampus.com).*

*Richard Vedder, who directs the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, is an adjunct scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and teaches at Ohio University. Full disclosure: he writes that he has benefited handsomely from an early investment in Apple.*

## EXCERPTS FROM THE FORUM

### NOTES ON BOWDOIN'S CURRICULUM

Prompted by The National Association of Scholars’ intriguing—and commendable—decision to use Bowdoin as a case study to explore the liberal arts experience, I took a look last week at the staffing decisions in Bowdoin’s history department. Three unusual patterns emerged: (1) a seemingly disproportionate emphasis on environmental and African history; (2) an inconsistent commitment to scholarship as a requirement for promotion and/or tenure; and (3) a preference for narrowness (history of diet, history of science, two environmental historians of the Pacific coast) in U.S. history, all while running away from any approaches that could be deemed “traditional.”...

Bowdoin requires History majors to complete 10 courses, a pretty typical course load; majors must concentrate in one region, from which they can take no more than six courses. In fall 2011, however, the department made a curious change. Heretofore, all Bowdoin history majors will have to take at least four courses in non-Western (Latin American, African, or Asian) history. That’s up from three previously. At the same time, the department doesn’t require students who concentrate in U.S. history to take even one course in European history. Or, in the alternative, European history concentrators must take the four non-Western classes, but can graduate without enrolling in a single offering in U.S. history...

— *KC Johnson, Brooklyn College*

## Excerpts from the Forum

### THE RESENTMENT OF THE DIVERSITY OFFICER

This week's "Diversity in Academe" issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* contains an interview with the "first-person ever appointed to the position of vice president for diversity and equity at the University of Virginia," a man named William B. Harvey. We might first note the disheartening statement about the college curriculum near the end of the interview: "A Western European framework obviously completely ignores the contributions of people of color." That statement is so easily refutable by a million examples that one hardly knows what to do with it. Let's remember, too, that one of the characteristics of the European outlook from the beginning is to explore other cultures, to learn about them, to record them, to incorporate them. To say "completely ignores the contributions of people of color" is to allow resentment to interfere with historical fact.

The *Chronicle* interviewers are entirely in sync with Harvey's position (for instance, they ask, "What major issue stands in the way of higher education making more progress on the diversity front?"). They do not even intimate anything that might be problematic about diversity initiatives and values—no questions such as, "Do you find anything in the arguments against affirmative action that is reasonable?" That is unfortunate, because as long as diversity passes as a self-evident good, as long as it stands without question, indeed, as long as the cynicism and suspicion of the diversity officer goes unchecked, then on this issue the campus will be a closed society, a limited marketplace of ideas.

— Mark Bauerlein, *Emory University*

### MILITARY HISTORY AND 'THE REVOLT AGAINST ELITISM'

If the definition of military history includes "the new social military history" that embraces the broader cultural, social, and psychological aspects of war, then military history is alive and well, even among elite departments that are beholden to identity politics and research. But the status of military history plummets when it is defined in traditional terms, which military historian John Lynn defines as "the study of military institutions and practices and of the conduct of war in the past." Military historians "are those who write military history, whether this work comprises their main scholarly effort or simply part of it, whether or not they define themselves as military historians."

If you exclude the University of North Carolina and Northwestern, which are outliers among the top 20 departments in terms of their hospitality to military history, there are only 9 traditional military historians in the 18 other departments, according to our scrutiny, which intentionally erred on the side of generosity. Including all 20 departments, traditional military historians comprised 15 out of 1273 total faculty members. On the positive side, recent events suggest that the pendulum really is swinging back to some degree, at least regarding military history.... The coming to campus of thousands of veterans under the Yellow Ribbon program has also had a positive impact on many campuses, making them more receptive to military presence.

Advocates of military-related programs such as ROTC and veterans affairs have also adopted the discourse of diversity to justify their presence on campus, claiming the rights of equal respect and recognition, and pointing to how military presence broadens the intellectual and experiential diversity of campus life. Such arguments carried the day at Columbia University, where the University Senate voted to bring Navy ROTC back last April after a decade-long political process and the recent demise of DADT. [My new book] *Arms and the University* concludes on a hopeful yet realistic note, affirming that we are witnessing a "return of the soldier" to higher education in many respects after decades in which many campuses have been hostile to all things military.

— Donald Downs, *University of Wisconsin, Madison*

*I do not want us to shut down economic drive to support false science, and on the other hand, I do not want to leave behind a scorched earth. .... Let's get the science right! A better debate and research is needed by honest and believable scientists who study climate professionally.*

—Richard Lindzen, Professor of Meteorology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Is the earth in a global warming phase? If it is, how severe is this trend? Is the warming primarily a product of natural causes or do man-made factors play a dominant role? If man-made factors are important, is the main culprit the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced from the burning of fossil fuels or are other factors more salient?...

These are just some of the questions that need to be asked and debated in the ongoing controversy about global climate change. Alas, they are rarely asked today on college campuses due to what can only be described as the stifling dominance of a smug orthodoxy that is so cocksure of itself.... While many critics of the Gore-Hansen Model would love to debate its defenders on college campuses, they are almost never asked, and the science on the issue is simply considered settled and incontrovertible. Critics of the reigning orthodoxy are arrogantly dismissed as crackpots, tools of the oil industry, or the climatological equivalent of Holocaust deniers....

Anyone with the least acquaintance with campus environmentalism today probably knows the Al Gore-James Hansen litany by heart... the litany goes something like this: Science has definitively settled the issue—our planet is rapidly heating up and unless drastic changes are made very soon global temperatures will continue to rise at an alarming rate. This climate change is due primarily to man-made factors, especially to the increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that derive from the burning of fossil fuels like coal and gas. Left unchecked the warming will reach an out-of-control tipping point where greenhouse effects produce feedback loops that will lead to wild and unprecedented swings in weather patterns, the melting of the polar ice caps, the extinction of the polar bears, the rise in global ocean levels to the point where all the earth's coastal cities will be underwater, the expansion of the world's deserts, and the global spread of malaria and other tropical diseases....



Russell K. Nieli

What readers are perhaps not so informed about is that every one of these claims is highly problematic and hotly contested by intelligent and informed scientists—scientists who, as the Climategate scandal showed, the Gore-Hansen crowd has often tried to silence or discredit. Here, for instance, is just a small sampling of what knowledgeable critics have argued against the Gore-Hansen thesis....

With the science of climate change so uncertain, why, one must ask, are people like Al Gore, James Hansen, and (according to some surveys) the majority of scientists working in climate-related fields, so convinced of the truth of the anthropogenic global warming thesis?...

We like to think of scientists and scholars as honest truth brokers only minimally influenced by factors other than their overriding concern to assess the truth. And in many cases this is clearly so. But scientists and scholars, even some of the most gifted, are human beings and under the right conditions are subject to fads and foibles no different than anyone else. Experience shows just how often the case is that scientists and others with specialty knowledge exaggerate the importance of their own field and their own projects and often distort the situation that concerns them the most. Public health scientists have often exaggerated the importance of public health threats; military and defense analysts routinely exaggerate the threat of hostile foreign forces; homeland security experts exaggerate the threat of domestic terrorism. The importance and prestige of those in any given field is usually enhanced by hyping developments in which

*Continued on page 7*

## THE FEMINIST WAR ON FRATERNITIES

Charlotte Allen | September 19, 2011

The Pope Center's Duke Cheston has issued what is essentially a call for the abolition of college fraternities, adding a conservative battle cry to a war which hitherto has been largely waged by liberals: feminists, political correctness-besotted campus administrators, and, lately, the Obama administration's Education Department. In an essay for the Pope Center's website he wrote: "For the sake of students...colleges should find a way to drastically change fraternity culture—and soon—or get rid of them." Cheston argues that fraternities, widely regarded as incubators of binge drinking and—at least in the minds of some feminists (and, apparently Cheston himself) — a campus culture of rape. Citing an incident in which a college friend had shrugged off an alleged rape committed by one of the friend's fraternity brothers, Cheston wrote: "joining a fraternity had encouraged my friend to think that rape wasn't that bad."...

I must take issue with Cheston and offer a defense—at least a two-cheers or even a one-cheer defense—of fraternities and the important "positive" function they serve of keeping the banner of political incorrectness, especially as regards feminist victimology, flying on college campuses when few other institutions are willing to challenge the reigning ethos....

(Here is) the incident that seems to have constituted the Fort Sumter of the campus war against fraternities. In the fall of 2010 some pledges in the Yale chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon (DKE) were marched blindfolded, as part of a hazing ritual, past a dorm housing freshman women. While marching they chanted, "No means yes, and yes means anal!" and other X-rated poetry expressing a desire to have sex with dead women. A Yale feminist webzine branded the 18-year-old pledges "a moving gang of men, chanting in deep, throaty voices for sexual assault," apparently not noticing that the whole thing was a gross joke....

I confess that when I read about the Deke pledges' chant, I laughed. Not because I believe that rape and forcible sodomy are anything less than despicable crimes, but because the chant was such a well-placed poke in the eye

at the Yale Women's center and the humorless feminists who staff similar campus women's centers across the country....

The reason that feminists, campus administrators, the Education Department, and even some conservatives such as Cheston seem to have determined that verbal fraternity hijinks don't deserve ordinary free-speech protection is that they're the equivalent of falsely shouting, "Fire" in a crowded theater. They have bought into what Heather Mac Donald, writing in the Manhattan

Institute's *City Journal* in 2008, called the "campus rape myth"—the ceaseless effort by campus feminists and administrators to gin up incidences of

rape out of what are essentially drunken encounters late at night. Thank to feminist ideology, the female students get to pass themselves off as victims who bear no responsibility for their excessive alcohol consumption and provocative behavior, while their male partners who indulge in the same amount of binge-drinking and sexual recklessness are relentlessly punished....

Read the full article at [www.MindingTheCampus.com](http://www.MindingTheCampus.com).

Charlotte Allen is a Minding the Campus contributing editor.

### ATTENTION STUDENTS!

Minding the Campus is interested in student perspectives on current campus issues.

We've published articles by students from UC-Berkeley, Yale, Dartmouth, Princeton, the University of Delaware, and elsewhere and are now forming a College Contributors program. We are searching for dedicated students to write monthly articles about a wide range of topics, preferably revolving around academia.

If you are interested in blogging for the Manhattan Institute, please e-mail your name, institution, class year, and two short recent writing clips to CAU director Alison Smith at: [asmith@manhattan-institute.org](mailto:asmith@manhattan-institute.org)

## GLOBAL WARMING *Continued from page 5*

their expertise would be called upon and their knowledge needed to prevent grave social harms.

MIT's Richard Lindzen, a long-time skeptic of the Gore-Hansen Model of global warming, has explained how the serious challenge to American scientific and military dominance posed by the Soviet launching of the Sputnik satellite in the 1950s sent a clear message to the American scientific community that has stuck with it ever since. After Sputnik, says Lindzen, it became clear that the way to gain status, prestige, and, above all, government funding for one's scientific research, was through the medium of public fear and crisis creation. A similar dynamic was at work earlier, he says, in the creation of the Manhattan Project, which was originally established as a counterweight to what was believed to be an advanced Nazi atom bomb project....

*The New York Times* science editor John Tierney offers a similar take on the global warming issue, stressing both the self-interest of scientists involved in crisis mongering and the more general, herd-like conformism that afflicts scientists along with everyone else. "I've long thought that the biggest danger in climate research," Tierney writes, "is the temptation for scientists to lose their skepticism and go along with the 'consensus' about global warming. That's partly because it's easy for everyone to get caught up in 'informational cascades,' and partly because there are so many psychic and financial rewards for working on a problem that seems to be a crisis. We all like to think that our work is vitally useful in solving a major social problem—and the more major the problem seems, the more money society is liable to spend on it. ... Given the huge stakes in this debate—the trillions of dollars that might be spent to reduce greenhouse emissions—it's important to keep taking skeptical looks at the data. How open do you think climate scientists are to skeptical views, and to letting outsiders double-check their data and calculations?"

The last sentence was an oblique reference to attempts by many climate scientists to suppress skeptical voices, which was so clearly in evidence in the scandalous Climategate emails. A commentator on Tierney's blog adds the following valuable insight: "To survive, most workers in scientific fields must follow the grant money. If all the grants this year are for work on the crisis *du jour*, then that's the work which gets done. The annoying fact is that somebody pays for science. The 'somebody' may be an Evil Oil Company, the Department of Defense, the National Science Foundation, or anyone else with bags of money. We shouldn't be too amazed when we find that the 'somebody' tends to get the science he or it wants to see."

...But I think there is an additional element here that is less talked about but probably as important as the kinds of issues Lindzen and Tierney bring up. This is the attraction of global-warming orthodoxy not as a falsifiable scientific theory or source of research funding but as a substitute religion that engages all the energies and capacities to enhance meaning in life that an earlier generation of secular scholars and scientists

often found in various

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*Like socialism and Freudianism, global-warming alarmism may prove in time to be a God that failed.*

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brands of socialism or psychoanalysis. With the general decline and discrediting of both Marxism and Freudianism over the past thirty years radical environmentalism in various forms has taken their place in the lives of many secular intellectuals as a source of existential meaning and purpose. The insular, defensive, cult-like behavior displayed by so many global warming advocates when they are confronted with the concerns of informed skeptics reinforces such an interpretation and explains their refusal to debate dissenters. True believers have no converse with heretics. And such cult-like behavior reinforces one final suspicion: like socialism and Freudianism, global-warming alarmism may prove in time to be a God that failed.

*Read the full article at [www.MindingTheCampus.com](http://www.MindingTheCampus.com).*

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*Russell K. Nieli, a frequent contributor to Minding the Campus, is a senior preceptor in Princeton University's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, and a Lecturer in Princeton's Politics Department. He is the author of Wounds That Will Not Heal: Affirmative Action and Our Continuing Racial Divide, to be published in 2012 by Encounter Books.*

# CENTER FOR THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

The mission of the Manhattan Institute's Center for the American University is to draw attention to the condition of the contemporary university. The current environment on university campuses values *Diversitas* over *Veritas*—but cultural diversity is a poor substitute for truth, which must be the prevailing aim of the university. And discovering truth is impossible without a commitment to freedom of inquiry and the broadest possible range of viewpoints. To make the idea of intellectual pluralism in our universities the centerpiece of a larger public campaign, the Center for the American University commissions books on big topics; organizes conferences; originates op-eds and articles; and most importantly, runs three unique initiatives designed to support our mission: [MindingTheCampus.com](http://MindingTheCampus.com), the VERITAS Fund, and the Capitalism Project. For more information contact CAU director Alison Smith at [asmith@manhattan-institute.org](mailto:asmith@manhattan-institute.org).

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—Harvey Silverglate, attorney, civil libertarian, co-author of *The Shadow University*

"Minding the Campus is indispensable to understanding the degradation of higher education in America today and the sad circumstances into which we send our nation's young minds and sensibilities."  
—Alan Charles Kors, professor of history, University of Pennsylvania, co-founder of FIRE



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