

ACADEMIA

1. Definition.

- a. Academia is the class of scholars, artists, or scientists in higher education.
- b. The term traces back to Plato's school of philosophy founded at *Akademia*, a temple of Athena, north of Athens, Greece.
- c. Synonyms are "intelligentsia" and "experts."

2. Influence.

- a. Universities are the "nerve centre" of Western civilisation.¹
- b. They are the "high priests" of secular culture.

3. Critique.

- a. Elitism.
 - (1) The arrogance of the age—maybe every age—is that intellectuals believe, by default, that they're smarter, more moral, and more evolved than those who came before them.²
- b. Hubris.
 - (1) "[T]he universities have become the authority centers of world culture.... It conveys itself as simple reality and does so in such a such a way that it never has to justify itself. The truly powerful ideas are precisely the ones that never have to justify themselves."³
 - (2) Experts rarely admit when they are wrong, and they rarely face any penalty for being wrong (i.e., the experts who predicted X covid-19 deaths per day).
 - (3) They believe they know more than they really do.
- c. Peer pressure.
 - (1) "Your scholars are free in the legal sense, but they are hemmed in by the idols of the prevailing fad."⁴
 - (2) Scholars are just as likely as anyone else to succumb to peer pressure.
 - (3) They are motivated by money and job security, as everyone else is.
- d. Bias.
 - (1) Academics are very often blind to their own presuppositions.
- e. Narrowness.
 - (1) Compared to the past, few academicians today are generalists.
 - (2) Specialisation and technical expertise has replaced philosophy and the liberal arts.

4. Dominant Presuppositions.

- a. Atheism.
- b. Naturalism/materialism.
- c. Secular humanism.

¹ William. F. Buckley, Jr., *God & Man at Yale*, 172.

² David Harsanyi.

³ Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, 6.

⁴ A. Solzhenitsyn, "A World Split Apart" (The Trinity Forum, 2002), 11.

- d. Marxism.
- e. Postmodernism.

5. Trends.

- a. Statism.
- b. Socialism.
- c. Cultural marxism.
- d. Keynesian economics.
- e. Wokeism.
- f. Cancel culture.
- g. Virtue signalling.

(1) “As those of us in education are all too aware, the ‘elite’ schools are now determined to transform their students into political activists. Students are to learn what to think, not how to think. Being elite now means holding a particular set of ideas, not a set of virtues. Virtue is signalled, not acquired.”⁵

6. Decline.

- a. “As colleges and universities become increasingly consumed by identity politics and social justice ideology, higher education is disintegrating. True education is being eclipsed by political movements hell-bent on destroying the very institution that made higher education possible. This has been a long time coming, but once education was separated from a religious principle capable of justifying the rational pursuit of knowledge, the demise of the university was merely a matter of time.”⁶
- b. “The question I’m left with now is how long elites can remain elite when their ‘elite’ educational system is turning the next generation into ignoramuses, people who have never been allowed to think for themselves, androids who know only how to repeat the approved slogans and adopt approved attitudes. A decade from now, won’t the children who have been brought up on great literature, encouraged to think for themselves, taught how to argue and speak with eloquence, urged to develop their full humanity, children who know history and poetry and philosophy—won’t they become the new elite, the ‘true nobility’?”⁷

7. New Zealand Situation.

- a. Why doesn’t New Zealand have any Christian liberal arts universities?

8. Application.

- a. Challenge MPs to uphold academic freedom at New Zealand’s public universities.

⁵ James Hankins, “[Virtue vs. Virtue-Signalling.](#)” First Things, 11 October 2021.

⁶ Mark T. Mitchell, “The Death of God and the Death of Higher Education,” Real Clear Education, 2 Apr 21.

⁷ James Hankins, “[Virtue vs. Virtue-Signalling.](#)” First Things, 11 October 2021.

Bibliography

Buckley, William F., Jr. *God & Man at Yale: The Superstitions of Academic Freedom*. 50th Anniversary Ed. Regnery Gateway, 1986.