

# "September 2<sup>nd</sup> Begins a New Era in Education"



## COLLEGE OF THE UNITED STATES NEWSLETTER

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### Publicity

One of our Team Members, Harvard Lecturer Tal Ben-Shahar, was featured in the Harvard Crimson recently. Tal's "The Science of Smiling"

<http://www.thecrimson.com/Article.aspx?ref=511334>

is the best attended course in the university, drawing over 800 undergraduates (Tal also teaches a course on leadership). His courses emphasize the kinds of Practical Life skills that young people need to be happy and successful.

### The Political Economy of Modern Universities

Larry Summers recent resignation from Harvard's presidency and the 'no-confidence' vote of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences eerily reminded me of an article written by Henry G. Manne, "The Political Economy of Modern Universities" (published in *Education in a Free Society*, edited by Anne Husted Burleigh). Henry G. Manne was a Professor of Law in the Political Science department of the University of Rochester.

Written in 1971 for the Liberty Fund conference which led to the creation of Universidad Francisco Marroquin, [www.ufm.edu.gt](http://www.ufm.edu.gt), this article reviews the history of the economic and political forces shaping American colleges and universities.

Manne notes that almost all private colleges and universities in the U.S. originally were founded by people wanting to promote a particular point of view, usually a religion. Their willingness to fund higher education allowed the founders and trustees of colleges to set the moral course of their individual schools, and often be intimately involved with the content of the teaching. This had its problems insofar as they could stop faculty from teaching according to the principles of free inquiry;

on the other hand, the values and leanings of these colleges were clearly apparent to any prospective student. In other words, students could know what philosophy shaped a college.

With the creation of public colleges and universities, and the huge economic influence of the government on private universities through government grants, scholarships and loans, the trustees no longer have their former economic weight and, consequently, influence. At the public schools, they are now supposed to make wholly disinterested decisions for the good of the public – the task of Solomon.

Dr. Manne says “The thing that has now changed so radically is the trustees’ ability to secure any personal satisfaction or gain from the power to allocate [educational goods]...but the power to make this allocation did not disappear as a result of the trustees’ loss of interest...faculties developed real interests in exercising this power, and it was a simple matter for the faculty to move into the power vacuum created by the trustees’ loss of interest, since no one else offered any objective standards for selection of students.” As Manne puts it “The faculty represents the only continuing identifiable group with specific interests in the way the universities are operated,” and their tenured positions give them extra power.

This is why I thought of the article when I read about Summers resignation after his conflict with the Harvard Faculty. Dr. Manne further discusses at length the organizational nature of today’s universities, one he calls the ‘co-op model.’ “This term is meant to imply joint ownership and management by a large group of people ...but multiple ownership without delegated centralized management guarantees results quite different from those found in a typical business corporation.”

I guess we see that frequently when it comes to universities and colleges.

(Thank you to U.F.M. president Giancarlo Ibarguen for sending me *Education in a Free Society* during my research for the college.)

## **Organization**

Does anyone have any connection to Bruce Kovner, head of Caxton Associates?

*What you can do:*

*Website:* We are in the process of developing the website, using new descriptive text, sections, pictures, links and FAQ’s. If any of you have suggestions, please send them to me.

*Networking:* If you know of other individuals or organizations that might be interested in learning about the College, please send me their information.

***Financial Support:*** At the present, I have many letters out to prospective supporters and advisors. Of course, please send me any suggestions for possible financial supporters.

***Advisors:*** I am looking in particular for well-qualified advisors who would be sympathetic to our mission in: biology, anthropology and archeology, literature, mathematics, and the fine arts. Please send me your suggestions.

***Newsletter:*** Send in any ideas for improvements or topics of interest for the newsletter.

***Thanks for your attention and help.***

***Marsha Familiaro Enright***

**Notice: If you do not want to be on this mailing list or have received this newsletter in error, please notify Marsha at [marsha@collegeunitedstates.org](mailto:marsha@collegeunitedstates.org)**

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