

Liberal Education Articles

Colour Code: **Scholarly Article**

Online Article

Resource

Essays/Papers

Qotes- articles with an orange Q have a matching quote down below

Bolded are favorites

Civic Engagement

Agresto, J. (2011). **The Liberal Arts Bubble**. *Academic Questions*, 24(4), 392-402.

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs12129-011-9250-y.pdf>

Agresto reviews the critiques and threats to liberal arts which have evolved over centuries of scholars in America, and asks what has created liberal education institutions as they existed before the mid-nineteenth century, linking the answer to the usefulness of liberal education. He then addresses the fall of liberal education following the 1960s, linking it to criticism, skepticism, ideology, and a move away from the traditional foundations of liberal education. He concludes by providing some thoughts on how to fix the errors of liberal education in order to prevent its decline.

Applebaum, Y. (2016, June 28). **Why America's Business Majors Are in Desperate Need of a Liberal-Arts Education**. *The Atlantic*. Retrieve from

<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/06/why-americas-businessmajorsare-in-desperate-need-of-a-liberal-arts-education/489209/>.

The article provides reasons business majors and other related programs should have liberal education experience in order to ensure future career success. Applebaum points to a couple of areas in which business majors are lacking crucial skills such as the ability to think, write, and reason in a complex way. Liberal education could help resolve this and on top of that help students become better citizens at the same time.

Basu, A., Frank, J., Sitze, A., & Umphrey, M. (2017). **The Liberal Arts in Illiberal Times. *The Amherst Student* (146-16). Retrieved from**

<http://amherststudent.amherst.edu/?q=article/2017/02/08/liberal-arts-illiberal-times>.

Q

“You could also put it this way: because higher education may need to be out of step with public opinion in order to serve the public interest, it is bound to taste rotten — or at least bitter — to

the very public whose support is necessary for it to pursue its mission, and which it ultimately serves.” -Basu,

““What is the point of higher education?” ... First, “to promote inquiry and advance the sum of human knowledge” through research that could be independently verified by peers whose authority derives from years of disciplined training and study. Second, to teach a younger generation not only the best of what had been thought and said, but also to instill the courage to search for new truths. And third, to develop a generation of young leaders who were dedicated to serving the public interest.”- **Basu,**

Basu, Frank, Sitze and Umphrey powerfully address the state of liberal education following the 2016 American election. They argue that liberal education institutions are especially necessary in the current age. For them, liberal arts and educational institutions are about serving public interest, not public opinion. It is to grow in our abilities to speak and confront problems head on while being respectful, humble, and courageous.

Crutcher, R. A. (2011). **Fluency Across the Boundaries: A Case for Liberal Education in the 21st Century.** *The Presidency, (Winter)*, 17-21. Retrieved May 10, 2018
<http://www.acenet.edu/the-presidency/columns-and-features/Pages/Fluency-Across-theBoundaries-A-Case-for-Liberal-Education-in-the-21st-Century.aspx>

Beginning first with his own experience with liberal education, Crutcher advocates the need to provide all students with a liberal education which covers a broad range of topics. While supplementing his work with interviews from other academics and LEAP advocacy initiatives he highlights the need to prepare students to meet the challenges of the 21st century through liberal education. He highlights the practical benefits of a liberal education, and its relevance to both the workforce and to good citizenry. He concludes by stating that for the sake of future sustainability, liberal education must be made accessible to all students.

Fischer, K. (2012). **Bucking Cultural Norms, Asia Tries Liberal Arts.** *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 58(23). Retrieved from
<https://www.chroniclecom.ezproxy.uleth.ca/article/Bucking-Cultural-Norms-Asia/130667>.

Fischer describes the reforms that are taking place at some Asian universities. These reforms require a shift away from test-taking students to students that can innovate and invent to adapt to a changing world. She describes liberal education similarities between both the west and the way students had been educated historically in the east before focusing on liberal arts initiatives that are making their way into Chinese universities and high schools. She does so by focusing on specific case-studies, outlining some challenges being faced in the education system while doing

so. Fischer concludes her article by stating that the liberal education system in Asia will take a different approach from the West, which will allow it to fit into the differing Asian cultures it will be placed in.

Hohendahl, P. U. (2011). **Humboldt Revisited: Liberal Education, University Reform, and the Opposition to the Neoliberal University.** *New German Critique*, 38(2 (113)), 159-196.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288137>

Hohendahl reexamines the use of Wilhelm von Humboldt in postwar discourse on liberal education. He outlines some complications with his organization before he divides his article into three parts. The first part includes the appropriation of Humboldt by conservatives to restore the pre-fascist German university in 1945, followed by the appropriation of Humboldt in the reform movement of 1960. The second part analyzes more recent American discourse surrounding higher education, with similar use by conservatives and liberals. The third section involves the George W. Bush administration's implicit rejection of Humboldt's ideas. He concludes by stating that in the modern context it is difficult to integrate Humboldt into universities without a radical and unorthodox reading of his writings.

Hovland, K., & Schneider, C. G. (2011). **Deepening the Connections: Liberal Education and Global Learning in College.** *About Campus*, 16(5), 2-8.
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/abc.20074>

Hovland and Schneider address citizenship and education in an evolving global environment. They utilize the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Shared Futures: Global Learning and Social Responsibility initiative and the Liberal Education and America's Promise centennial promise campaign, which includes a set of essential learning outcomes to outline how this new global environment might be addressed. They also outline the essential liberal goals of Michigan State University as a resource to add to what they call a global blueprint. Hovland and Schneider conclude by stating that global learning cannot be added on, but must be a transformative rationale which can be utilized to address multidisciplinary global challenges and create prepared global citizens.

Johnson, E. (2015, June 22). Business Can Pay to Train Its Own Work Force. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.chroniclecom.ezproxy.uleth.ca/article/Business-Can-Pay-to-Train-Its/231015>.

Johnson discusses and explore the issues surrounding who should pay for education. With the business world asking education to have students more ready to meet their needs, Johnson

suggests that businesses should take more responsibility in paying costs instead of letting the taxpayers cover their bills.

Lewington, J. (2017, March 14). How universities are working to shatter the ivory tower: Academic life is slowly becoming more engaged with the outside world – and students are leading the way. *Maclean's*. Retrieved from http://www.macleans.ca/education/university/how-universities-are-working-to-shatter-the-ivory-tower/?utm_source=Academica+Top+Ten&utm_campaign=cfd4810fff-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2%202017_03_16&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b4928536cf-cfd4810fff-47700461 Q

“Universities have not always been the best of neighbours. Community members squabble with the schools over irritants like development plans, rowdy student parties and self-centred research practices. That’s beginning to change as universities increasingly turn to local residents and nonprofit organizations as allies, not adversaries.” – Lewington

Lewington explores the many community/university projects that are beginning to appear all across Canada. Universities and communities can be at odds, but a seven-year study on university-community engagement slated to end for 2019 is discovering many institutions and their neighbours are joining together to help improve their society. They are doing so through a variety of programs such as those for disabled children, apps for the homeless to find shelter, and parks. She uses case studies from universities such as Acadia, Carleton, Toronto, Calgary, and UBC.

Mead, W. B. (2014, January 17). Learning from the Insights and the Errors of a Great Mind: Michael Oakeshott on Liberal Education. *Anamnesis Journal*. Retrieved from <http://anamnesisjournal.com/2014/01/learning-insights-errors-great-mindmichaeloakeshott-liberal-education/>. Q

“The distinctive and central goal of a liberal education, Oakeshott advises, is the emancipation of the student from his society’s and his own preconceptions, in the process of opening to him or her glimpses of the vast wisdom of the ages.” - **Mead, W. B.**

Mead reviews Michael Oakeshott’s “The Voice of Liberal Learning”. Mead looks at both the good and bad from the essays written in the book. A few discussions focus on liberal learning as conversations between students and faculty and between disciplines.

Moore, A. (2016, October 4). **We need to challenge the primacy of “productivity” as an educational metric: A good education is not simply job-training.** *University Affairs*. Retrieved from <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/opinion/in-myopinion/needchallenge-primacy-productivity-educational-metric/> 

“Those of us who care about the liberal arts need to start making more forceful and honest arguments.” - Moore

Moore speaks about redefining the way we measure productivity following university. Measuring the value of a liberal arts degree through job growth and salaries alone is not a good measure of success because for some, not all goods can be assigned a cash value. Rather, what makes liberal arts so important are the public goods that emerge from it.

Nussbaum, Martha. (2007). **Cultivating Humanity and World Citizenship.** *Forum Futures, University of Chicago, 37-40.*

Nussbaum states that “the idea of “liberal education” [is] higher education that cultivates the whole human being for the functions of citizenship and life in general”. Nussbaum then goes on to talk about three crucial abilities for good citizenship in our diversifying and pluralistic world. Although, Nussbaum concludes by stating that we lack these three skills and therefore most of us are poor citizens. To end the article, reasons as to why liberal education can increase these skills are given and the need to retain the role of art and humanities in our education institutes is highlighted.

Patel, E. (2017, February 5). **How Robots Will Save Liberal Education.** *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/HowRobotsWill-Save-Liberal/239113> 

The hallmarks of liberal education – building an ethical foundation that values the well-being of others, strengthening the mental muscles that allow you to acquire new knowledge quickly, and developing the skills to apply it effectively in rapidly shifting contexts – are not luxuries but necessities for preparing professionals for the coming transformation of knowledge work to relationship work.” - Patel

Using his own personal experience and developing research, Patel argues that liberal education is the best route to secure employment in an age where jobs are increasingly being taken by technology. He highlights that the skills that cannot be replaced by robots are those taught in liberal education: human interaction, creativity and good judgement. He further argues that

liberal education has the infrastructure to create these “relationship workers” by including strong ethical foundations and an ability to adapt quickly to new circumstances. He concludes that while robots may be able to take technical skills, they will never replace the strong citizenship qualities produced by liberal education.

Peterson, P. M. (2012, June 18). Liberal-Arts Education: Has the Global Migration Stalled? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/LiberalArtsEducation-Has/132327>.

Peterson explores the adaptability of liberal education in the wake of global resurgence, focusing on China. She raises questions surrounding the compatibility of Western liberal arts to Chinese cultural studies and deeply integrated ideological views. However, countries facing the forces of globalization require liberal education to combat precarious hyperspecialization and to improve nation building. She concludes by stating that liberal education needs to adapt and adjust to local contexts if it wants to continue its global migration.

Pittis, D. (2017, September 17). Yes, post-secondary education makes you rich, but that may not be the best part. *CBC News, Analysis*. June 26th, 2018 retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/education-canada-economics-1.4268921>.

Pittis shares some of the payoffs of post-secondary education such as better paying jobs, longer life, and more volunteering. He continues on to distinguish the complaints of taxpayers and students on the amount they are paying into education and further explains the benefits to both parties. Pittis concludes by highlighting the importance of post-secondary education.

Porterfield, D. R. (2015, September 22). College rankings crush liberal arts education. It's time to revalue it. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2015/09/22/college-rankingscrush-liberal-arts-education-its-time-to-revalue-it/?utm_term=.1dd96e23ec6e Q

“But in today's world, enhancing earning power simply isn't enough.” - D.R. Porterfield

An essay written by Daniel Porterfield, the president of Franklin & Marshall College. Porterfield points out how college ranking systems are more about salary value than about education value. A good post-secondary institution offers a broad range of core courses. They are about improving skills, doing independent research, and working along with faculty. With information becoming more accessible, critical thinking, reasoning skills and problem-solving skills are more important now than ever before. Liberal arts give students a chance to develop and hone these skills and so much more. Liberal arts students are leaders of the new world. Not because of their salaries, but because of their ability to think.

Raths, D. (2016, April 11). **Redefining Student Success in a Digital Ecosystem**. *Campus Technology*. Retrieved from <https://campustechnology.com/Articles/2016/04/11/Redefining-Student-Success-in-a-Digital-Ecosystem.aspx?Page=1> 

“By abandoning (the) idea of personal formation in favour of a poly technical approach – focused on specific kinds of workforce preparation skills or competencies – we end up with something quantified in ways that will lead to a devaluing of the experience.” - Raths

Raths discusses the challenge of student success in terms of a digitally-driven world. In order to succeed learning needs to be open, participatory, and connected. Graduating with high grades does not necessarily constitute a good career. Having the ability to connect knowledge across different courses and sharing that knowledge will make a student successful.

Shinn, L. D. (2012, June). **Liberal Education in the Age of the Unthinkable**. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 44(4), 15-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2012.691858>

Shinn proposes liberal education as the solution to unexpected, rapid, and complex global changes, using the metaphor of “black swans” to label these situations. He focuses first on the financial black swan of the global recession and the technological black swan of the Internet that require higher education to shift. He advocates for flexible, innovative and adaptive liberal education in the face of these challenges and warns against narrow undergraduate specialization. He goes further to state that institutions themselves should become more flexible and interdisciplinary in themselves, using Berea College and Arizona State University as case studies. Finally, he outlines traditional implementations to this reorganization and concludes by stating that traditional education is no longer efficient nor effective, and that liberal education should be embraced in order to provide the learning that students require.

Shorris, E. (1997, September). **As a weapon in the hands of the restless poor**. *Harper's Magazine*, 50-59. Accessed on May 17, 2018 from <https://harpers.org/archive/1997/09/ii-as-a-weapon-in-the-hands-of-the-restlesspoor/>

Shorris founded the Clemente Course for the Humanities, a ten-month-long academic program designed to provide college-level literature and philosophy classes to low-income students in New York City. In this essay, Shorris tells the story of the program's first two years. This story is touching and shows the incredible potential that each human has.

Sleeper, J. (2012). **With Friends Like These... Who Will Defend Liberal Education?** *Dissent*, 59(4), 23-26. <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/with-friends-likethese-who-will-defend-liberal-education>

Sleeper details the political challenges that liberal education universities face in the midst of increased partisan ideology and neoliberal management. He critiques presidents and trustees for treating students like customers and professors like employees, focusing particularly on New York University President John Sexton.

Smith, M. B., Nowacek, R. S., & Bernstein, J. L. (2017, January 19). **Don't Retreat. Teach Citizenship.** *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/don-t-retreat-teach/238923>.

Smith et al. share three citizenship traits that are required: A breadth of knowledge from across a range of disciplines, empathy, and political participation. They advocate for more emphasis on these in higher education institutes.

Stewart, M. (2018, June). **The 9.9 Percent Is the New American Aristocracy.** *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/06/the-birthof-a-new-american-aristocracy/559130/>. Q

"Education—the thing itself, not the degree—is always good. A genuine education opens minds and makes good citizens. It ought to be pursued for the sake of society. In our unbalanced system, however, education has been reduced to a private good, justifiable only by the increments in graduates' paychecks. Instead of uniting and enriching us, it divides and impoverishes." - **Matthew Stewart**

Stewart analyses the 9.9 percent, a group not as rich as the 0.1%, but also not facing the same barriers faced by the bottom 90% of the population. This group believes in themselves as a meritocracy, while most of their success is based on intergenerational elasticity. Stewart describes how the 9.9 percent stays that way, through assertive mating, elite colleges which require expensive entry qualifications and tuition, tax breaks, the economic segregation of neighbourhoods (and schools,) and by convincing themselves they have earned their living through merit, not privilege. Stewart shows that the degree of resentment the 9.9 percent causes noncollege educated voters, the majority of them voting Trump, to become polarized. He concludes by warning the 9.9 percent that the system they uphold will soon fall, and likely take them with it. He urges them to challenge the system, and to fight for other people's children; not just their own.

Telling, K. (2018, February 19). **Selling the Liberal Arts Degree in England: Unique Students, Generic Skills and Mass Higher Education**. *Sociology*.
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0038038517750548>

The main purpose of the article is to explore changes in post-war English higher education. Changes such as “movement from an elite to a mass higher education system, from a social mobility to a marketized conception of meritocracy, and towards an increasingly generic conception of employability”. Beyond that, the conversation turns to the beneficial contributions liberal education has had with these changes and how schools should look at liberal education as a viable avenue.

Traphagan, J., & Spinuzzi, C. (2013, October 4). College: You’re not just doing this for you. *The Dallas Morning News: DallasNews*.
<https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2013/10/04/college-youre-notjustdoing-this-for-you> 

“The public university is a civic enterprise aimed at making society a better place by creating educated, knowledgeable and capable individuals whose actions can directly improve the social whole. But what universities do powerfully contributes to the creation of successful businesses, government, schools and so on by providing well-educated citizens and employees: people who have strong critical thinking skills and who can innovate and solve problems, argue effectively, understand other points of view, and strengthen the social, moral, legal and physical fabric of our country.” - Traphagan & Spinuzzi

“The ideas, skill and capacity to think deeply and critically generated through a liberal arts education may change ourselves, but more importantly, they change our world.” - **Traphagan & Spinuzzi**

In this article, liberal education is both seen to have internal value and external value. But the main focus is on the civic benefits liberal education provides and the importance of this education in contributing to the society and our fellow neighbours. Traphagan and Spinuzzi state that the primary focus should be to bring the knowledge back to the society. “The public university is a civic enterprise aimed at making society a better place by creating educated, knowledgeable and capable individuals whose actions can directly improve the social whole. But what universities do powerfully contributes to the creation of successful businesses, government, schools and so on by providing well-educated citizens and employees: people who have strong critical thinking skills and who can innovate and solve problems, argue effectively, understand other points of view, and strengthen the social, moral, legal and physical fabric of our country.”

Zimmerman, J. (2017, February 23). **Scholars Behind Bars.** *The New York Review of Books*, 64(3), Retrieved from <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/02/23/scholars-behindbarscollege-prison/> **Q**

“A student on campus who is not much interested in academic learning, and does not work hard for it, can receive a public subsidy, but a prisoner who devotes himself single-mindedly to his classes isn't deemed worthy of any public help at all.” - **Zimmerman**

Zimmerman analyzes education in prisons while addressing whether prisoners should receive a post-secondary education. He utilized Bard Prison Initiative as a case study to show that teaching inmates about liberal arts gives them the opportunity to earn degrees and become contributors to their communities. He further expands his article to show how these prison programs are becoming more effective than “elite” liberal education programs in colleges today. However, these prison programs are privately funded with few of them existing.