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Retaking the university: a battle plan

by [Roger Kimball](#)

On some measures for restoring the American university to its founding principles.

After the Vietnam War, a lot of us didn't just crawl back into our literary cubicles; we stepped into academic positions. With the war over, our visibility was lost, and it seemed for a while—to the unobservant—that we had disappeared. Now we have tenure, and the work of reshaping the universities has begun in earnest.

—Jay Parini, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

*There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.*

—Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*

The old Marxist strategy of “increasing the contradictions”—a strategy according to which the worse t ...

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