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Features

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The world we have lost: a parable on the academy

by [Robert L. Paquette](#)

On the Alexander Hamilton Center affair at Hamilton College.

More than a half century ago, Willmoore Kendall, an unrepentant cold warrior and one of this country's most brilliantly original political theorists, spoke at Harvard about disturbing trends in academic culture. To those preaching that a college campus should be an expansive site for the toleration of virtually every sort of idea and behavior, he had no patience. "The university," he declared,

exists only by virtue of a faith that human beings are worthy of special attention; that the development of the human intellect is an end in itself; that the exercise of memory and reason is not a perversion of the nervous system; and that the scholar is somehow superior to the fool—all of them propositions that admit of no scientific proof; propositions that must, in fact, be maintained despite clear and cogent evidence that untroubled happiness is reserved for morons.

When Stuart Taylor, a wi ...

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