



The New Idea of a University

Ian Robinson, Duke Maskell

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Something has gone deeply wrong with the university - too deeply wrong to be put right by any merely bureaucratic means. What's wrong is, simply, that our official idea of education, the idea that inspires all government policies and 'initiatives', is itself uneducated. With the growing emphasis in higher education on training in supposedly useful skills, has the very ethos of the university been subverted? And does this more utilitarian university succeed in adding to the national wealth, the basis on which politicians justify the large public expenditure on the higher education system? Should we get our idea of a university from politicians and bureaucrats or from J.H. Newman, Jane Austen and Socrates? The New Idea of a University is an entertaining and highly readable defence of the philosophy of liberal arts education and an attack on the sham that has been substituted for it. It is sure to scandalize all the friends of the present establishment and be cheered elsewhere.



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