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Between Citizens and the State, by Christopher P. Loss

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Christopher P. Loss. *Between Citizens and the State: The Politics of American Higher Education in the 20th Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2012. 238 p. ISBN 9780691148274. \$35.

Christopher Loss's *Between Citizens and the State: The Politics of American Higher Education in the 20th Century*, winner of the 2013 American Educational Research Association Outstanding Book Award, traces the development of higher education and its eventual arrival at the current business model. In this book, Loss (Vanderbilt University), who has written vigorously about higher education in regards to public policy, convincingly portrays the state and higher education's "marriage" (and eventual split) over the course of a little more than a century and begins with the educational implications of World War I and the concept *in loco parentis*. (p. 22). *In loco parentis* was a commonplace ideology in early 20th higher education because it positioned professors as parents and students as their children; a position that has shaped higher education until World War II. Though this ideology was abandoned, universities and colleges alike still implement orientations and other functions that place the university in the role of the parent. Orientations have been minimized to often only one day affairs, instead of the week long processes that they use to be, and are run by faculty and staff. Likewise, many classes have been implemented to help students adjust to their new environment and way of living.

Loss makes a distinction between government's involvement pre and post 1950s as government influence and funding shifted dramatically. According to Loss, this era was known as "The Rights Revolution." The ideology that existed before this revolution was rooted in a deep desire to cultivate "better" citizens: "While citizens have always been trained to serve the state, not until the twentieth century did the state take an active interest in, and provide financial support for, training democratic citizens" (p. 11). The United States government sought in vain for years to make higher education accessible and a priority in order to develop its nation's citizens and develop new educational institutions through various programs such as the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862, G.I. Bill of 1944, and National Defense Education Act of 1958 just to name a few (p. 3). By attempting to create more civically engaged citizens, the government was fueling (and funding) a social and political force that had not yet realized the potential of its power. Studies showed that once citizens were more aware of their suffering they became restless and disgruntled and resulted in "The Rights Revolution," as Loss so eloquently coins and assigns as the title of chapter six. With the removal of the university institution as the mediator to the state, students felt alienated not only from their respective educational institutions but from government in general. Loss discusses activists such as Mario Savio who took to the steps of Sproul Plaza in 1964, as well as groups with special interests that began forming around the country. Women's and

African American Studies became two major political movements for students and higher education. Students began to attach their university existence to certain causes and ideologies: "apparently the emotionally debilitating effects of in loco parentis were relieved whenever students committed themselves to organized political action" (p. 183). As a result, universities started to preach diversity which is still prevalent around university and college campuses.

This shift in ideology forced a wedge between higher education and the state that has yet to be resolved. As the government saw it, their experiment had failed and they began to lose faith in the higher education system as it suited their specific needs. Higher education did create more politically informed citizens; however, the government could not have anticipated how dissatisfied those citizens would become. From an educational standpoint, true learning was taking place within the realm of universities and colleges across the country. Students were protesting the war and finding and identifying themselves in ways that had not been possible previously: "Diversity offered a new and powerful way to conceive of citizenship, politics, and American higher education after 1975. It emerged as the defining idea of the contemporary university at the same time that the state-higher education partnership collapsed" (p. 215). In the last chapter, "The Private Marketplace of Identity in an Age of Diversity," Loss discusses this collapse and defunding of higher education post 1975 as a result of the "radicalization" that happens on its campuses: "Events such as these convinced many observers that higher education had become a breeding ground for political radicalism, not democratic citizenship" (p. 217). Christopher Loss does not take this position; he does, however, neutrally examine the differing ideologies that caused the collapse of the relationship that existed between higher education and the state. As a result, the government decided it had better begin to cut ties with colleges and universities. Higher education has thus become increasingly stripped of federal and state funding due to the radicalization of students and (real) financial concerns. Loss's discussion of higher education, although dense, is a unique, accurate, and factually based portrayal of the evolution of the university system since World War I.

Through this chronology the reader is able to grasp an understanding of how social, political, and economic issues affect higher education and the ways in which the state's involvement changes and evolves over time. Loss's account is relevant to state comprehensive universities as he focuses on how the university system shifted to meet the needs of the student which were at odds with what was expected from the state. Throughout his observations and data, he portrays how students of state systems shifted university focus from collectivism to individuality. Education became a personal endeavor versus an apparatus that operated solely in conforming citizens to state needs. The community college system is largely affected by this because some students enroll for vocational training only and are not on track for four-year degrees. Relationships cultivated within the community stabilize retention rates and allow students to obtain these certificate programs/two-year degrees at a lower cost than larger university or college settings. Thus, the university and college sys-

tem is still the mediator between the citizen and the state. The only change is the amount of government involvement and funding: "A mediator between citizens and the state in the twentieth century, higher education now wields its own influence largely absent the state's direct, hands-on involvement" (p. 234). The government realized it could not control what happened within the doors of any respective institution of American higher education and since the Powell Manifesto has increasingly found ways to cut ties. While all comprehensive university systems have all felt the financial strain of this separation, Loss points out that the institution of American higher education has endured and cultivated educated citizens of the state.

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