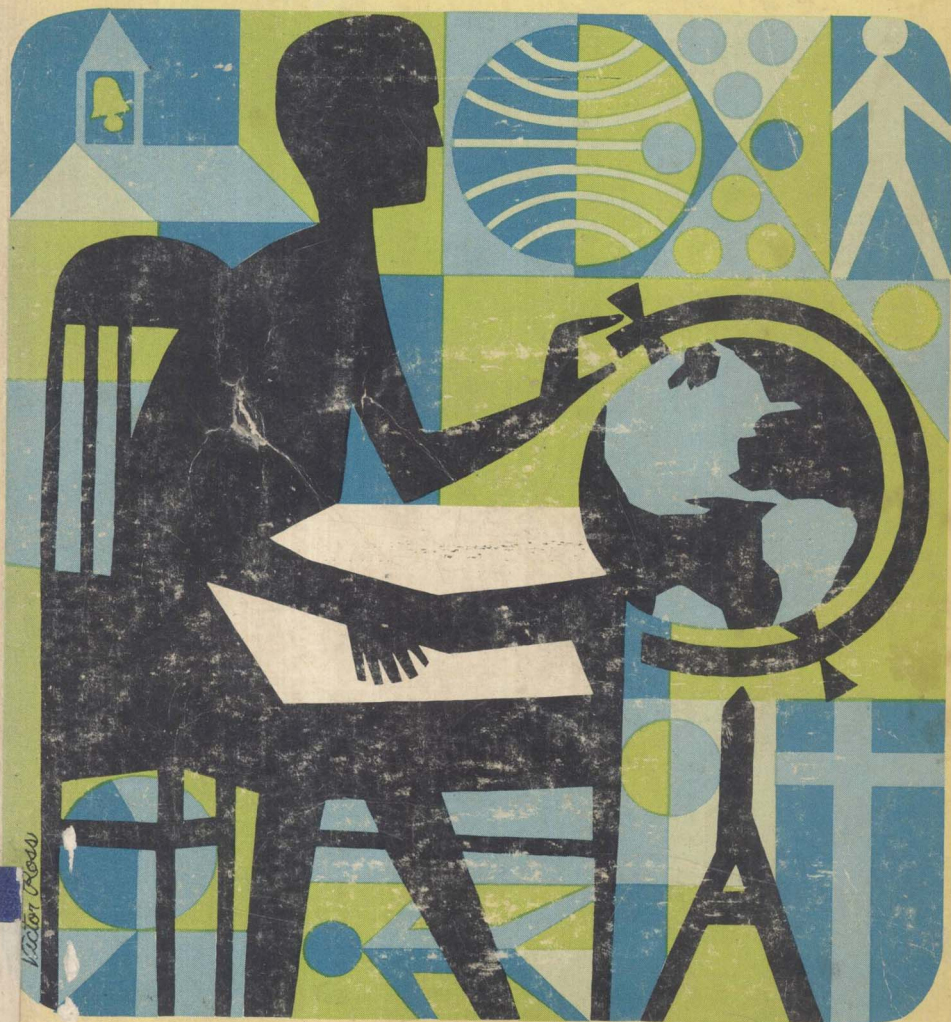


# TEN CONTEMPORARY THINKERS

Robert Maynard Hutchins ✕ George Orwell ✕ E. M. Forster  
Joseph Wood Krutch ✕ Archibald MacLeish ✕ Carl L. Becker  
Walter Lippmann ✕ C. S. Lewis ✕ Julian Huxley ✕ E. B. White



Edited by Victor E. Amend and Leo T. Hendrick

# TEN CONTEMPORARY THINKERS

*edited by Victor E. Amend* BUTLER UNIVERSITY

*Leo T. Hendrick* OLIVET COLLEGE

THE FREE PRESS, *New York*

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A Division of The Macmillan Company

Printed in the United States of America

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Collier-Macmillan Canada, Ltd., Toronto, Ontario

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 63-13536

Fifth Printing May 1966

TEN  
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THINKERS

*Robert Crawford*

## PREFACE

*THE ASSUMPTIONS* on which the editors have based this collection of prose writings are as follows: (1) that an essential part of a liberal education consists in following the best minds of one's time as they engage with problems of politics, literature, history, philosophy, religion, education, and science; (2) that the reading audience—specifically, the college instructor and his students—profits more from relative saturation in the works of a few authors than from superficial acquaintance with many.

Thus the editors have chosen ten essayists who, they feel, have made significant contributions to contemporary thought. They then selected from each essayist, four or five representative pieces written over a span of several decades. These selections—in addition to presenting excellent models for prose composition and rhetorical analysis—should reveal the development of each author's mind and the modification of his ideas as he gives them new applications. They should also show a personality or sensibility responding to the changing circumstances of the twentieth century.

The principle of selection for this book was to choose essays from the earliest and the most recent decades of an author's activity and some pieces spaced as well as possible over the intervening span of years. However, the editors abandoned this formula where it seemed profitable to include an essay of unusual interest or stylistic merit.

The editorial construction of this book has three features: first,

for each author there is a brief headnote listing major biographical facts, the chief areas of interest, and the ideas that dominate his thinking; second, for each author, there is an annotated bibliography of additional works from which reports and research papers can be assigned; and third, from the collection of essays by each author, the editors have compiled relevant study questions, which they hope will stimulate further thought and discussion.

V. E. A.

L. T. H.

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## ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS

(1899- )

*ROBERT HUTCHINS'* abiding connection with education is apparent even from a brief outline of his career. He was an honors graduate of Yale at age twenty-two, graduated from Yale Law School at twenty-six and within three years was appointed dean of that school; at age thirty he became the country's youngest college president—at the University of Chicago—holding this position from 1929 until 1945 when he resigned from the presidency to become Chancellor of the University. In 1951 Hutchins became an associate director of the Ford Foundation, part of whose stated purpose is to "advance education." In 1957 he was appointed president of the Fund for the Republic, an organization aiming toward the elimination of "restrictions on freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression in the United States."

In addition to these more or less academic appointments, Hutchins has held such posts as editor-in-chief of *Great Books of the Western World* (fifty-four volumes containing selections from the works of seventy-four authors from Homer to Freud), chairman of the board of editors of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, president of the Committee to Frame a World Constitution, and head of the Commission on the Freedom of the Press.

Hutchins is an extremely witty, forceful public speaker and has been a voluminous writer in defense of his controversial ideas on education and politics. He has consistently been a sharp opponent of the vocational and social and nonintellectual aspects of American education. In a bold program of innovation at Chicago, he revised

the established curricula of many of the University's schools, generally in the direction of the liberal arts, and always with a view toward cultivating the *intellectual* virtues such as curiosity, thoughtfulness, integrity and discipline. He also abandoned college football, made major changes in entrance and graduation requirements, and, through his emphasis on great books and great thinkers, gave a speculative, philosophical turn to the whole educational program at the University of Chicago.

Every innovator, of course, makes enemies, and Hutchins has, to say the least, many violent opponents. They charge that his system is not practical, and that it focuses too much on the past (that is, its content is too exclusively the "classics in translation" while it ignores modern science; and its purposes are governed by a vaguely defined metaphysics based on Greek and medieval philosophy).

In his political thinking, Hutchins must be classified as a liberal. For example, he has supported internationalism and interracial planning, and he has opposed loyalty oaths and Congressional investigations of subversive thought. Probably the key concepts in all of his political writings are *freedom*—especially in intellectual spheres; *democracy*—which will allow every man to develop his highest capacities; and *international cooperation* toward a moral world order. Hutchins' elaboration of these concepts, like his theories of education, has provoked considerable opposition, particularly among the more conservative. But it has also gained for him a widespread audience of admirers and countless honors both at home and abroad.

### 1. *Gate Receipts and Glory* (1938)

The football season is about to release the nation's colleges to the pursuit of education, more or less. Soon the last nickel will be rung up at the gate, the last halfback will receive his check, and the last alumnus will try to pay off those bets he can recall. Most of the students have cheered themselves into insensibility long ago.

This has been going on for almost fifty years. It is called "over-emphasis on athletics," and everybody deplotes it. It has been the subject of scores of reports, all of them shocking. It has been held to be crass professionalism, all the more shameful because it masquerades as higher education. But nobody has done anything about

From *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 211 (December 3, 1938). (Copyright 1938 by the Curtis Publishing Company.) Reprinted by permission of the author and James Brown Associates, Inc.

it. Why? I think it is because nobody wants to. Nobody wants, or dares, to defy the public, dishearten the students, or deprive alma mater of the loyalty of the alumni. Most emphatically of all, nobody wants to give up the gate receipts. The trouble with football is the money that is in it, and every code of amateurism ever written has failed for this reason.

Money is the cause of athleticism in the American colleges. Athleticism is not athletics. Athletics is physical education, a proper function of the college if carried on for the welfare of the students. Athleticism is not physical education but sports promotion, and it is carried on for the monetary profit of the colleges through the entertainment of the public. This article deals with athleticism, its cause, its symptoms and its cure.

Of all the crimes committed by athleticism under the guise of athletics, the most heinous is the confusion of the country about the primary purpose of higher education. The primary purpose of higher education is the development of the mind. This does not mean that colleges and universities should neglect the health of their students or should fail to provide them with every opportunity for physical development. The question is a question of emphasis. Colleges and universities are the only institutions which are dedicated to the training of the mind. In these institutions, the development of the body is important, but secondary.

The apologists of athleticism have created a collection of myths to convince the public that biceps is a substitute for brains. Athletics, we are told, produces well-rounded men, filled with the spirit of fair play. Athletics is good for the health of the players; it is also good for the morals of the spectators. Leadership on the playing fields means leadership in life. The Duke of Wellington said so. Athletes are red-blooded Americans, and athletic colleges are bulwarks against Communism. Gate receipts are used to build laboratories and to pay for those sports that can't pay for themselves. Football is purely a supplement to study. And without a winning team a college cannot hope to attract the students or the gifts which its work requires.

These myths have about them a certain air of plausibility. They are widely accepted. But they are myths. As the Carnegie Foundation has said, "The fact that all these supposed advantages are tinged at one point or another with the color of money casts over every relaxation of standards a mercenary shadow." The myths are designed, consciously or unconsciously, to conceal the color of money and to surround a financial enterprise with the rosy glow of Health, Manhood, Public Spirit and Education.

Since the primary task of colleges and universities is the develop-

ment of the mind, young people who are more interested in their bodies than in their minds should not go to college. Institutions devoted to the development of the body are numerous and inexpensive. They do not pretend to be institutions of learning, and there is no faculty of learned men to consume their assets or interfere with their objectives.

Athleticism attracts boys and girls to college who do not want and cannot use a college education. They come to college for "fun." They would be just as happy in the grandstand at the Yankee Stadium, and at less expense to their parents. They drop out of college after a while, but they are a sizable fraction of many freshman classes, and, while they last, they make it harder for the college to educate the rest. Even the earnest boys and girls who come to college for an education find it difficult, around the middle of November, to concentrate on the physiology of the frog or the mechanics of the price structure.

Worse yet, athleticism gives the student a mistaken notion of the qualities that make for leadership in later life. The ambition of the average student who grew up reading Stover at Yale is to imitate as closely as possible the attitude and manners of the current football hero. Since this country, like all others, needs brains more than brawn at the moment, proposing football heroes as models for the rising generation can hardly have a beneficial effect on the national future.

The exponents of athleticism tell us that athletics is good for a boy. They are right. But athleticism focuses its attention on doing good for the boys who least need it. Less than half of the undergraduate males—800 out of 1900 at the University of Chicago, for instance—are eligible for intercollegiate competition. But where athleticism reigns, as happily it does not at Chicago, 75 per cent of the attention of the physical-education staff must be lavished on that fraction of the student body who make varsity squads. The Carnegie Foundation found that 37 per cent of all undergraduates engage in no athletic activity, not even in intramural games. Since graduate and professional students are also eliminated from competition, we have more than half the college and university population of the country neglected because we devote ourselves, on the pretext that athletics is good for a boy, to overdeveloping a handful of stars.

And athletics, as it is conducted in many colleges today, is not even good for the handful. Since the fate of the coach sometimes depends on victory, players have sometimes been filled with college spirit through caffeine tablets and strychnine. At least one case reached the public in which a coach removed a plaster cast from a



star's ankle and sent him in "to win." The Carnegie Foundation found that 17.6 per cent of all football players in twenty-two colleges suffered serious injuries. The same report asserts that college athletes have about the same life expectancy as the average college man and not so good an expectancy as men of high scholarship rank.

Most athletes will admit that the combination of weariness and nervousness after a hard practice is not conducive to study. We can thus understand why athleticism does not contribute to the production of well-rounded men destined for leadership after graduation. In many American colleges it is possible for a boy to win twelve letters without learning how to write one. I need only suggest that you conjure up the name of the greatest college football star of fifteen years ago and ask yourself, "Where is he now?" Many of his contemporaries who made no ninety-yard runs enjoy at least as good health as our hero and considerably more esteem. The cheers that rock the stadium have a rapid depreciation rate.

The alleged connection between athletic experience and moral principles is highly dubious. At worst, the college athlete is led to believe that whatever he does, including slugging, is done for the sake of alma mater. He does not learn that it is sometimes better, both on and off the playing field, to lose than to win. At best, the college athlete acquires habits of fair play, but there is no evidence that he needs to join the football squad to acquire them; he can get them from the studies he pursues and from living in a college community which, since it is a community of comparatively idealistic people, is less tolerant of meanness than most. The football players who threw the campus "radicals" into the lake at the University of Wisconsin knew little of fair play, and incidents in which free speech in the colleges is suppressed have frequently shown the athletic group lined up on the side of suppression.

Even if it were true that athletics developed courage, prudence, tolerance, and justice, the commercialism that characterizes amateur sport today would be sufficient to harden the purest young man. He is made to feel that his primary function in college is to win football games. The coach demands it, because the coach wants to hold his job. The college demands it, because the college wants the gate receipts. And the alumni demand it, because the test of a college is the success of its teams and they want to be alumni of a good college.

The university with which I am connected has a different kind of college and a different kind of alumni. I can make this statement because I am in no way responsible for its happy condition.

Robert Crawford