

# Avoiding the Freefall

From BreakPoint with Chuck Colson

**Tom Wolfe's best-selling novel *I Am Charlotte Simmons*** has focused unwanted attention—unwanted at least by college officials—on the sexual antics of American college students. The behavior is scandalous, but an even greater scandal is what students are being taught.

This mis-education is the subject of a new book by former BreakPoint editor Jim Nelson Black. In *Freefall of the American University*, Black describes how "colleges and universities are corrupting the minds and morals of the next generation." That's quite an indictment, but *Freefall* will leave any open-minded reader realizing that the evidence supports it. As Black puts it, "the university is not a safe place to send your child." He isn't referring to their physical safety, although with all the drugs, drinking, and promiscuity on many campuses, those concerns are real.

Rather, what *Freefall* describes is the systematic effort on the part of what have been called "tenured radicals" to re-educate our kids. Instead of teaching them the kinds of things you expect them to learn in college, the curricula at most schools undermine the Western moral and intellectual tradition.

This contempt for the traditions—the ones that made the university possible in the first place—is as plain as the type in a course catalog. The University of Pennsylvania teaches, for example, "A Feminist Critique of Christianity," but certainly not a "Christian Critique of Feminism." Columbia teaches "Sorcery and Magic," and Bucknell offers "Witchcraft and Politics." Then there are the many courses on various kinds of sexuality—not biology courses, mind you, but courses like Swarthmore's "Lesbian Novels since World War II."

All the schools I've mentioned are highly selective and, not coincidentally, expensive. A parent struggling to pay tuition may wonder what a course in "Sorcery and Magic" will do for their child's future. These are reasonable doubts: Our best schools are graduating heavily indebted students who don't know basic history as well as high school students in the 1950s did.

This "intellectual crippling" is exceeded only by what Black calls the "moral crippling" of our kids. Many universities actively subvert the moral underpinnings of our civilization. They substitute environmental awareness, acceptance of all "lifestyles," and similar politically correct nostrums for traditional ideas about right and wrong, and they turn a blind eye to substance abuse and promiscuity.

Fortunately, as Black tells us, Christian parents don't have to settle for expensive and subversive mediocrity. The key lies in doing some homework and becoming informed consumers.

Instead of choosing schools on the basis of where they are ranked in the *U.S. News & World Report* survey, Christian parents ought to look to alternative sources of information, like National Review's or the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's guides. These alternative sources provide not just "safer," but better alternatives: schools that provide a real education, both in and out of the classroom.

It's important to remember that, at least in terms of earning potential, it's going to college that makes the biggest difference. Where your children go will not make as much difference to their wallets, however, as it will to their minds and souls, which is why avoiding the freefall Black describes ought to be your top priority when choosing a college.

"BreakPoint with Chuck Colson" is a daily commentary  
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