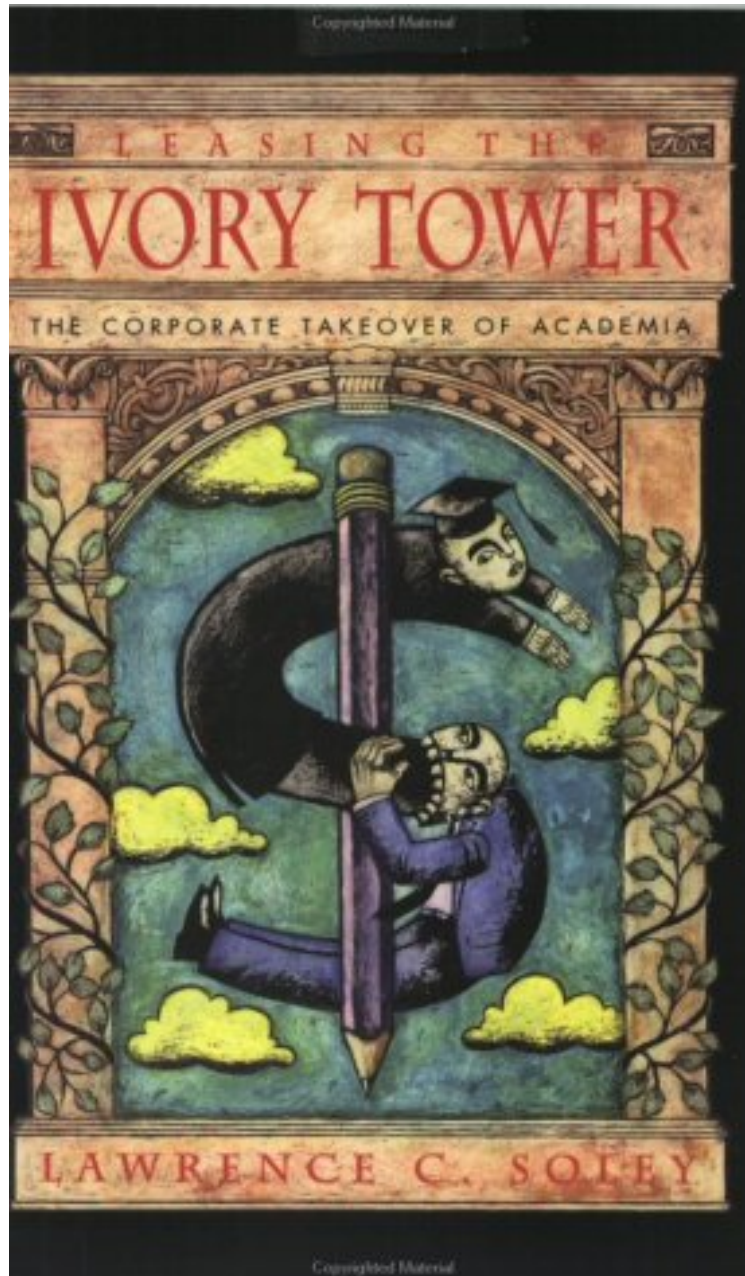


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## Leasing the Ivory Tower: The Corporate Takeover of Academia

*Lawrence C. Soley*

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**Lawrence C. Soley : Leasing the Ivory Tower: The Corporate Takeover of Academia** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Leasing the Ivory Tower: The Corporate

## Takeover of Academia:

Exposes the growing corporate threats to the future of intellectual inquiry and civil society itself. Corporate investments, Soley argues, have dramatically changed the mission of higher education; they have led universities to attend to the interests of their well-heeled patrons, rather than those of students.

From Publishers Weekly House Speaker Newt Gingrich's course "Renewing American Civilization" at a Georgia college, funded with Republican PAC money and tax-deductible corporate contributions, was only the most visible instance of the epidemic political and corporate corruption of higher education, contends media critic and investigative reporter Soley. He takes a critical look at industry-driven university research programs, corporate conflicts of interest among academic "expert witnesses," right-wing think tanks on university campuses and expansion of business and applied-research programs that attract corporate money at the expense of the liberal arts. His case would be stronger if he did not also attack many basic aspects of university administration without explaining what is wrong with them: for instance, the fact that university presidents are expected to raise money for their institutions and that they often draw large salaries. He also relies too much on repetitive clichés like "corporate fat cats" and "conservative tycoons" and appeals to a pristine past in which universities pursued knowledge in an atmosphere of pure, high-minded academic freedom—a utopian vision many otherwise sympathetic readers may question. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Soley returns fire here in the escalating battle between liberals and conservatives over "political correctness" on college campuses, university curricula, and control of the U.S. educational agenda. He confronts Dinesh D'Souza, author of *Illiberal Education* (1991), and Roger Kimball, author of *Tenured Radicals* (1990), head-on; and he charges that the debate over "political correctness" is a red herring. Soley counters that big business, the military, and conservative think tanks have taken control of major campuses, such as Columbia, MIT, Brigham Young, and Michigan State. He argues that many universities have become research and development centers for major corporations and that almost all money donated to universities comes with strings. He also targets professors who spend more time consulting than teaching and university presidents more familiar with corporate boardrooms than classrooms. Soley documents his accusations and observations well, and his book will provide balance to any collections recently dominated by a barrage of conservative works. David Rouse