

Book Review: Greg Lukianoff, *Unlearning Liberty: Campus Censorship and the End of American Debate*. Encounter Books, 2012. ISBN: 978-1594036354 (Hardcover). 294 Pages. \$25.99.

Reviewed by Timothy McGettigan¹

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In *Unlearning Liberty* Greg Lukianoff has published a timely and provocative analysis of contemporary threats to freedom of speech at US colleges and universities. Lukianoff is a First Amendment attorney, and he is also the President of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). Thus, Lukianoff makes it abundantly clear that there is hardly anyone who is better qualified to author this book.

Lukianoff opens his discussion by highlighting the problem of certainty. Certainty, or the presumption that one's beliefs are as perfectly formed as they could possibly be, does indeed pose a dire threat to the freedom of speech. Intellectually speaking, doubt is a far more productive engine of progress and intellectual dynamism than certainty. Though this may sound contradictory, doubt is actually a form of wisdom. If we're going to be honest, we have to admit that all human knowledge is imperfect. Even our best ideas can be improved. It is only by doubting our most cherished beliefs that knowledge-seekers can continue the never-ending search for more and better insights. Conversely, certainty ossifies intellectual progress. When people feel certain, those folks tend to operate on the false assumption that their beliefs need not—nay, must not!—change. Even worse, certainty has a tendency to inspire rancorous and irresolvable antipathies. Those who are certain in their beliefs tend to be less tolerant of opposing viewpoints and

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