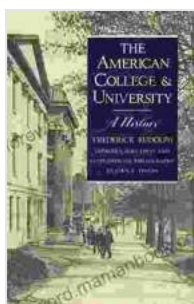


The American College and University: A Timeline of Higher Education in the United States

The history of higher education in the United States is a long and complex one. From its colonial origins to the present day, the American college and university has undergone a remarkable transformation. This article provides a brief overview of that history, tracing the evolution of American higher education from its early beginnings to its modern form.



The American College and University: A History

by Frederick Rudolph

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The Colonial Period (1636-1775)

The first colleges in the United States were founded in the colonial period. These colleges were primarily religious institutions, established to train ministers and other religious leaders. The first college in the United States was Harvard College, which was founded in 1636. Other early colleges

included Yale College (1701), the College of William and Mary (1693), and the University of Pennsylvania (1740).

The colonial colleges played an important role in the development of American society. They provided educated leaders for the new nation, and they helped to create a culture of learning and intellectual inquiry. However, the colonial colleges were also limited in their scope. They were primarily focused on the classics and religious studies, and they did not offer a wide range of courses in the sciences or other fields.

The Early National Period (1775-1865)

The American Revolution brought about significant changes in higher education. The new nation needed educated citizens to help build and lead the country. In response to this need, a number of new colleges were founded in the early national period. These colleges were more secular than the colonial colleges, and they offered a wider range of courses in the sciences and other fields.

One of the most important developments in the early national period was the establishment of the land-grant universities. These universities were established under the Morrill Act of 1862, which granted federal land to states for the purpose of establishing colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts. The land-grant universities played a vital role in the development of American agriculture and industry, and they continue to be important institutions of higher education today.

The Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries (1865-1945)

The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw a period of rapid growth and expansion in American higher education. The number of colleges and

universities increased dramatically, and the curriculum became more diverse. New fields of study, such as the social sciences and the natural sciences, were introduced. The research university also emerged during this period, as universities began to place a greater emphasis on research and scholarship.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the rise of the liberal arts college. Liberal arts colleges are small, private institutions that emphasize a broad-based education in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Liberal arts colleges play an important role in American higher education, and they continue to be popular with students who are seeking a well-rounded education.

The Post-World War II Era (1945-Present)

The post-World War II era has been a time of continued growth and change in American higher education. The number of students attending college has increased dramatically, and the curriculum has become even more diverse. New fields of study, such as computer science and information technology, have been introduced. The research university has also continued to grow in importance, and universities now play a major role in the development of new technologies and ideas.

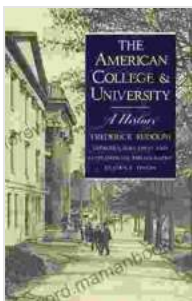
The post-World War II era has also seen the rise of the community college. Community colleges are two-year institutions that offer a variety of academic and vocational programs. Community colleges play an important role in providing access to higher education for students who may not be able to attend a four-year college or university.

The Future of American Higher Education

The future of American higher education is uncertain. However, there are a number of trends that are likely to continue. The number of students attending college is expected to continue to grow, and the curriculum is likely to become even more diverse. The research university is likely to continue to grow in importance, and universities will continue to play a major role in the development of new technologies and ideas.

The community college is also likely to continue to play an important role in American higher education. Community colleges provide access to higher education for students who may not be able to attend a four-year college or university. They also offer a variety of vocational programs that can help students to prepare for a career.

The future of American higher education is bright. The American college and university has a long and distinguished history, and it is well-positioned to meet the challenges of the 21st century.



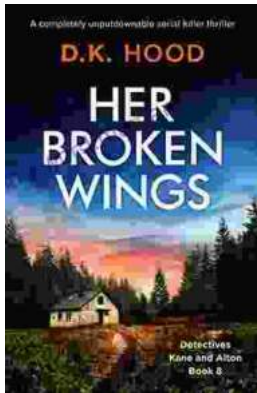
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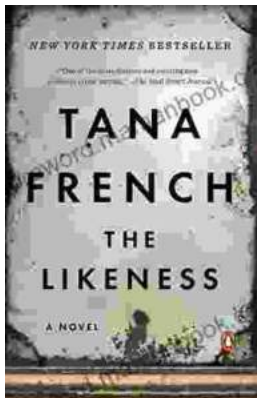
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