

Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University

Kathleen Fitzpatrick

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Kathleen Fitzpatrick's *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University* is an inspiring and convincing look at how anyone involved in higher education can nurture generosity and help integrate their institutions into their communities to further the public good.

At the center of Fitzpatrick's argument is the concept of generosity, defined not as an act or a value, but as a practice—an ongoing orientation toward the world that informs personal decisions and institutional structures. Fitzpatrick argues that competition, and the cultural understanding of education as a private responsibility rather than a public good, is at the root of higher education's challenges.

The transformations proposed include close engagement with community groups, greater emphasis on scholarship that reaches the general public, and restructured tenure criteria. These are large changes, but arguments for them are convincingly laid out, with plenty of examples to illustrate how they can be accomplished. The book considers approaches to reading—an activity crucial to academic life—to examine how individuals can incorporate generosity into their teaching, service, and scholarship and then makes recommendations at the institutional level for prioritizing community and collaboration.

This structure demonstrates how everyone in higher education has a role to play in saving universities. The book itself is collaborative in nature and an example of how writing can be a communal endeavor: Fitzpatrick posted an early draft online to get feedback on her ideas and then incorporated the responses into the final version.

Generous Thinking has all the trappings of an academic book, including an extensive bibliography and a thorough discussion of sources used to build the argument, but its prose is accessible and clear. With its call for generosity and community-building that is potentially revolutionary, Kathleen Fitzpatrick's *Generous Thinking* is an indispensable addition to conversations on the state of higher education today.

REBECCA HUSSEY (March/April 2019)

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