

Review of: "The Myth of the Liberal Arts vs. National Universities Divide: A Marketing Strategy"

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The article "The Myth of the Liberal Arts vs. National Universities Divide: A Marketing Strategy" offers a timely analysis of how the perceived distinction between liberal arts colleges and national universities is largely constructed by marketing narratives rather than grounded in substantial educational differences. The author uses credible sources, such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), to back up the argument that both institution types share many similarities in their mission to foster critical thinking and prepare students for diverse career paths.

One of the article's key strengths lies in its use of reputable data to dismantle commonly held assumptions. The analysis of interdisciplinary programs and the role of general education at national universities effectively highlights that many features traditionally associated with liberal arts colleges are also present in national universities. This is an important contribution, as it challenges simplistic narratives often perpetuated by institutions themselves in their marketing efforts.

However, the paper's framing is somewhat limited. While the author argues that the divide between these institutions is mostly a marketing strategy, there is less exploration of how these marketing messages shape student perceptions or influence educational choices. A deeper examination of how students are affected by these narratives would have enriched the discussion. Furthermore, the paper does not fully consider how institutional differences—such as size and funding—might lead to variations in student experience that go beyond branding.

The article also risks oversimplification. Although it does well in pointing out the shared goals between national universities and liberal arts colleges, it downplays genuine distinctions that might matter to prospective students. For example, the personalized attention and smaller class sizes at liberal arts colleges are presented as features that can also be found at national universities, but the paper does not fully address the scale at which these offerings exist in the latter. This may leave the reader with an incomplete picture of the student experience at both types of institutions.

On the whole, the article is well-researched and provides a valuable critique of the higher education marketing landscape. Its reliance on high-quality sources adds to its credibility, though its arguments could benefit from further nuance regarding the realities of student choice and institutional structure.