Educating for Liberty: The First Half-Century of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute By Lee Edwards Regnery, 343 pages, $27.95

Liberal observers of the conservative resurgence on American college campuses are beset by the vague feeling that national conservative groups are taking advantage of conservative students. The New York Times Magazine's infamous article, "The Young Republicans," offers examples of this dubious view of right-leaning students. Author John Colapinto's skepticism about the thoughtfulness of campus conservatives dominates the article, and he implies that young conservatives are pawns of right-wing activist groups whose interest lies simply in furthering conservative policies rather than teaching students to be clear thinkers.

Colapinto wrote that groups like the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), Young America's Foundation, and the Collegiate Network "spend money in various ways to push a right-wing agenda on campuses." This heavy-handed judgment does an injustice to these groups, and particularly to ISI, founded in 1953, which has been called the intellectual anchor of the conservative movement for its emphasis on deep scholarship of the Western...