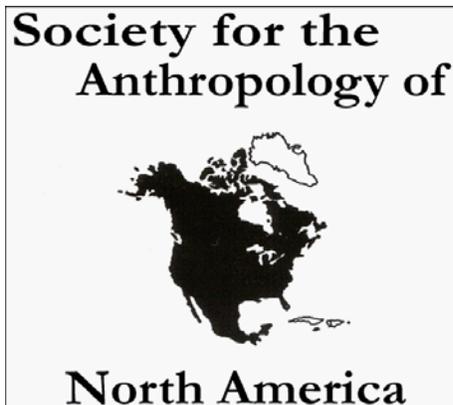


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KEYNOTE ADDRESS

SANA Annual Conference Spring 2004

Global Inequality, War, and the American Scene

By Micaela di Leonardo

Part 2 of 2

Abstract: I use the "American scene" frame to remind us, as progressive Americanist anthropologists, of what we are doing and what we are up against. We must oppose the stigmatization and trivialization of others at the same time that we correct misperceptions of ourselves and our work. We need to connect our research to historical political-economic functioning, and to a consideration of the efficacy of ongoing political organizing. The casualization of American higher education labor, structurally part of the casualization of global labor, is a key part of the process of the unraveling of a counter-public voice here in the belly of the beast.

Key words: labor, U.S., academic workers, higher education, corporatization, globalization, Americanist anthropology

April 24, 2004 (Atlanta). I will attempt to sketch in some thoughts on the evolving "American scene," to use Henry James' Gilded Age phrase -- the shifting public sphere, and our relationship to it as anthropologists as well as citizens. I frame our current situation not only in terms of shifting political economy, but specifically with what we used to denominate a laborist perspective. This choice is in part a response to the worsening national and international scene, but especially in view of the utter failure of U.S. media both to contextualize news in terms of political economy and to report economic issues accurately. And here enters my use of James's "American scene."

I use the term advisedly -- the Jamesian reference is redolent with images of the United States at the nineteenth century fin-de-siècle, many of which uncannily echo our own situation today: the violent end of Reconstruction, the avalanche of new immigration, the profound corruption and excess of the Gilded Age, new American imperial ventures in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Some have praised James for his prescient "multicultural" vision of the new United States, but Afro-American literary critic Ken Warren, in his extraordinary study Black and White Strangers, concludes that, given his abundant and especially antiblack set of racist statements, "James's contribution to the discourse on race in America is ambivalent at best" (Warren 1993:22).

But there is another way in which I'd like to index James: his carefully worked out, and very influential vision of "old" Europe -- sophisticated but corrupt, profoundly unequal, filled with the ennui of despotism -- vs. the "new" United States -- democratic, young, idealist, fresh, but also naïve, ignorant of the ways of the world. In some interesting ways, it now looks as if the positions have been reversed: the Spanish have voted in the Socialists, Blair is losing his mandate,

Editor's Note: This is the second of two installments of Micaela di Leonardo's keynote address. The first installment appeared in the Fall, 2004 issue. The Spring 2004 SANA Conference on *Containment and Transgression: Global Encounters with North America @ Twenty-first Century* was held in Atlanta.

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European citizens are nearly uniformly antiwar, and the French, Germans, and Italians have been energetically resisting further neoliberal welfare state cutbacks. We are now living under despotism, tired, and relatively ineffectual. We can't even get common international prisoner of war rights for those men and boys on Guantanamo.

I have also used the "American scene" frame to remind us, as progressive anthropologists, and specifically as progressive Americanist anthropologists, what we are doing and what we are up against. This 2004 SANA conference theme and statement point to the difficulties of maintaining an understanding, simultaneously, of the political, economic, and cultural complexities and interrelations of the Americas, and of the realities of United States global dominance. And our colleagues at times do not help. At the 2003 AAA Meetings, in a large panel on the new imperialism, a Third Worldist anthropologist actually criticized a number of us for focusing on the United States at all. We were committing the crime of being US-centric! Excuse me, but how exactly do we analyze contemporary imperialism, in order to fight it, if we avoid considering the shifting cultural and political economy of the globe's major imperial power?

We Americanist anthropologists don't get no respect. But anthropologists as a whole have public relations, and thus communication problems. Anthropology as trope entered various nations' public spheres over the 20th century, and thus has become, with or without anthropological complicity, part of the very ideological framing of questions of power, powerlessness, and cultural difference. That analysis is one strand of my argument in *Exotics at Home*. In short: American anthropology, publicly misidentified as the provisioner of otherness, of the denial of coeval time, of consumable difference, has become affiliated in popular culture with the exoticism and low status of its presumed objects: the South, and all economic, racial, sexual, and religious minorities in the North. We are most commonly represented, in other words, as the court jesters of the academy. Thus the job of radical anthropologists is doubly complexified. In fighting the stigmatization and trivialization of others we must also correct misperceptions of ourselves and our work. And the surest means of so doing is to insistently and repeatedly connect our research, no matter how seemingly purely "cultural" our topics – to historical political-economic functioning – to shifting and varying economic contexts, to power and powerlessness, to a consideration of the efficacy of ongoing political organizing.

A key, very successful, example of such radical analysis by an anthropologist – or at least a political scientist appointed in an anthropology department—is Columbia University’s Mahmood Mamdani’s *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*. Mamdani, who was profiled in the *New York Times*, compellingly lays out the historical backdrop of contemporary fundamentalist Muslim terrorism. Post-Vietnam, as we know, the U.S. government shifted to a Cold War strategy of proxy fighting: training and arming private groups to fight in Indochina, Latin America, Africa – and Afghanistan. “The real damage the CIA did was not the providing of arms and money, but the privatization of information about how to produce and spread violence—the formation of private militias – capable of creating terror.” And, of course, the best-known CIA-trained terrorist is Osama bin Laden. Timothy Mitchell, commenting on the effect of Mamdani’s work, notes that it puts a skewer through the “‘culture talk’ that has substituted for serious explanations of political Islam” (Eakin 2004).

It is, of course, the postmodern revolution in the academy that has heightened the use of such ungrounded – ahistorical and anti-economic – “culture talk.” And, as I document in *Exotics*, the problem is compounded by the historically low status of U.S. research in anthropology, and thus the sense within the discipline as a whole that mere U.S. residence, rather than actual interdisciplinary scholarly labor, is sufficient to declaim on United States culture, politics, and economy.

Let me lay out an unpleasant illustration of precisely these points. I would use the old Bob Dylan album title *Bringing It All Back Home*, except that I was startled out of my wits when the old rapscaillon appeared in a Victoria’s Secret commercial, so perhaps we should retire that one. Here is the situation: The part-time faculty at New School University have been attempting to organize since the early 1980s, and held an official election to choose a national union with which to affiliate. Two thirds (65%) of those eligible voted on March 5th 2004, and, by a healthy majority, chose the United Auto Workers to represent them. The New School Administration, which hired a union-busting law firm to fight the organizing drive, and did everything in its power to prevent or delay the vote, appealed to the National Labor Relations Board to disqualify the vote on the grounds that the percentage of those eligible who voted was too small (Robbins 2004). Fulltime New School faculty member Adolph Reed pointed out sardonically that New School President Bob Kerrey only received a 48% voter turnout for his last election to the U.S. Senate. In response to a letter from the organizing committee protesting this refusal to accept the results of a legal election, New School Provost and cultural

anthropologist Arjun Appadurai wrote on the university’s website on, and I quote him exactly:

I want to remind you, my faculty colleagues, of how the playing field is set up in this particular campaign. The United Auto Workers is a giant organization, with a huge membership, and a formidable set of resources, as well as a powerful set of motivations to expand its organizing efforts into the sphere of the academy. Where was the UAW a decade ago, when, across the country, part-time faculty across the country were struggling to organize on their own and in a piece-meal manner? Apparently, the privileges of representing a huge and thriving manufacturing sector were quite adequate to this mega-Union. Now, suddenly, faced with a shrinking membership base in their core historical constituencies, they have suddenly discovered the needs of part-time faculty and seek to outsource their business to the academic sector.

New School University, by any measure, is the David struggling against the UAW’s Goliath. ...We have here the paradox of an industrial behemoth seeking new constituencies to extend its vast reach, in a debate with a small, undercapitalized, progressive institution, using the language of the underdog and preaching to the faculty about how they – and I – should be allowed to express our views (<http://www.newschool.edu/admin/pres/apr2uelec.html>).

Now, one of the interesting features of this set of characterizations is Appadurai’s extraordinary lack of knowledge of American union history, where cross-industry organizing has always been the norm, not the exception (and by the way, Appadurai’s Indian birth is irrelevant to this issue. His ignorance of United States history marks him as profoundly American). Certainly it is the case that deindustrialization – which picked up in the U.S. in the 1970s, not just recently, as Appadurai would have it – led many national unions to organize outside their traditional constituencies. But those “traditional” constituencies were quite broad. The UAW was organizing agricultural implement makers and aircraft workers from the late 1930s, white collar engineers and clericals from the 1940s, prison guards and health care clericals from the 1970s, and teaching assistants from the 1980s (Nelson Lichtenstein, Roger Lancaster, personal communications, UAW website, www.uaw.org). The UAW was asked to, and began representing all workers, from top to bottom, at The

Village Voice, in 1979. The National Writers' Union, of which I am a proud member, affiliated with the UAW in 1989. And many other national unions, such as the United Electrical Workers (UE), the Hotel and Restaurant Workers (HERE), the Communications Workers (CWA), government workers (AFSCME), as well as the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the National Education Association (NEA), and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), have been working with graduate student and faculty organizing efforts for at least two decades.

With apologies to Gertrude Stein, I'd like to point out to Provost Appadurai that a union is a union is a union. By definition, unions, whether in the North or the South, represent labor, inherently weaker than management, and all progressives – and Appadurai has repeatedly characterized himself as one – should support their growth, not liken them, absurdly, to Goliaths. Yes, of course, American union history is rife with corruption, with race and gender exclusion, with sheer failure to represent labor constituencies. But the last two decades have seen an extraordinary shift in U.S. unions – a shift towards energetic and militant organizing, negotiation and strikes – especially in the low-paid service sector – towards higher and higher levels of female and race-minority – and even gay – membership and leadership, towards international union alliances, following the globalization of capital. This is not the kind of thing one learns in imagining the globalized universe as a bunch of scapes, rather than in engaging in real historical political-economic analysis. Or maybe Provost Appadurai should have added labor-scapes, union-scapes, and management-scapes to his model.

Let's now consider the issue of the rise of contingent faculty labor in US colleges. In the early 1970s, only about a fifth of American college teachers were contingent; today, about half are. At the New School, an astonishing 85% of all faculty are considered part-time – and many of them have taught there for decades (The Villager 2004). This process in the academy is, of course, part of the larger processes of first, the casualization of American labor – a deliberate corporate strategy to reduce payrolls by avoiding paying salaries continuously, and avoiding paying benefits, raises, and overtime. Contingent faculty, in the aggregate, face job insecurity, poor chances of promotion, inferior benefits, and lower status overall. If we control for levels of education and years of work experience, contingent faculty compensation, compared to that of fulltime faculty, averages 1/5 lower for women and 1/4 lower for men (Saltzman 2000).

Second, the process is one of many signs of the corporatization of American universities – including the increasing layers of higher and higher paid

di Leonardo continued on page 5

PHOTO GALLERY

From ACT-UAW, the union of part-time faculty
of New School University

<http://www.newschooluaw.org/index.html>



Rally in support of the right to unionize
July 1 2004



The New School Rally

May 21 2003



Rally in support of the right to unionize
July 1 2004

administrators, creating new and increasing bureaucratic burdens for faculty, the emphasis on “streamlining” programs that do not bring in high levels of outside research funding, and on pleasing the constituency deemed to be the important “consumers” of the university’s “product”: undergraduates and their parents. Faculty and graduate students, seen as drains on the budget unless they bring in big research funding, come a very distant second. And indeed, contingent faculty at the New School are hired semester by semester – even those with decades of service at the institution (Washington Square News 2004) – surely a practice that treats the core of a trained workforce like boxes of widgets ordered at the last minute in the classic advanced capitalist practice of “just in time inventory.”

Certainly it is the case that American universities in general, and the New School in particular, are facing budget squeezes arising from declining public funding for higher education and rising infrastructural costs. In particular, public universities are suffering because of state budget shortfalls in the Bush recession, and all American institutions are feeling the long-term pinch of the federal government’s withdrawal from college tuition financing. Presumably, though, a progressive university administration would address these issues with a stepped-up endowment campaign and working in concert with all institutions of higher education to force the federal government to refund this centerpiece of our economy, not with a small-minded, highly expensive, and ultimately futile effort to invalidate a perfectly legal union representation election for nearly your entire professoriate (The New School University administration lost two appeals, in May and September 2004, but refused to recognize ACT-UAW as the official bargaining unit until the union mounted a highly successful speakers’ boycott of the school [Doak 2005]). Finally, it behooves university administrations in such situations to maintain consistency. Before the union election, the New School’s website list of frequently asked questions included this one: “Can the New School challenge an election if the number of voters is too small?” The single answer was “No,” but after the election, Provost Appadurai announced that “[t]he election...resulted in voter turnout so low as to make the ‘results’ impossible to treat as the authentic voice of the faculty” (Press 2004).

Of course it is true that the hardships of contingent academic workers fade into obscurity in the face of those of working class, impoverished, and imprisoned Americans, and even more so when we compare them to the travails of international sweatshop workers, of those caught in the sex trafficking net, in refugee camps and squatter settlements throughout the global South, in the genocidal situation in southern Sudan, in those tiny cells

on Guantanamo, and in war zones everywhere. But, and here is one of the themes of the SANA 2004 conference: The casualization of American higher education labor is structurally part of the casualization of global labor, and is also a key part of the process of the unraveling of a counter-public voice here in the belly of the beast. We have all read and heard endlessly about the corporate mergers and FCC pusillanimity that have led to the half-dozen corporation stranglehold on American newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations. The “new infotainment state,” which not only censors progressive critique but also blurs the lines between news and entertainment, is clearly, in this age of vile and much-watched shows like “The Apprentice,” an active participant in a bread and circuses shell game, preventing ordinary Americans from recognizing what their own government, and global capital, are doing to them and all the globe’s peoples.

In this parlous state of affairs, we have a fragile American progressive public sphere – in the left press like The Nation, The Progressive, In These Times, The Village Voice, American Prospect, in English-language left book publishers like Verso, Pluto, Monthly Review Press, New Left Review, Common Courage Press, and the New Press, in long-existing radio programs like “Democracy Now” and the new AirAmericaradio network, occasionally on local cable television, and, of course, on the Internet in listserves like www.portside.com, www.commondreams.org, and www.moveon.org, and those covering specifically union, women’s, gay, black American, Latino and other issues of the day. In fact, I have relied heavily on those organs of information in writing this talk. What we perhaps haven’t noticed is the way in which an independent progressive professoriate, with a very few independent think tanks like the Economic Policy Institute, functions as a safe house for this fragile and always threatened progressive public sphere.

Academics not only write grant applications for and undertake the crucial studies of historical, economic, political and cultural phenomena, worldwide, whose findings can then be disseminated throughout the progressive public sphere. They also write for or appear on these media, for no or very low remuneration, allowing them to continue in existence despite all the political-economic forces arrayed against them (And I can testify, having written a great deal for The Nation, that we are talking about *very low remuneration*. You need a day job if you write for The Nation). Left, feminist, and anti-racist professoriates also provide rich streams of life-giving income to nonacademic progressives through course book adoptions and campus speaking invitations. And they bring academics and non-academics together at conferences that sometimes reach broad publics, whether through book publication or simply mass media coverage.

For example, the excellent and eminently teachable anthology No Sweat, which brings together anti-sweatshop union activists, labor economists and historians, sweatshop workers themselves, and even some members of the fashion industry, arose from a New York University American Studies Program conference. And UCLA labor historian Nelson Lichtenstein's interdisciplinary and union-heavy conference on Wal-Mart in April, 2004, actually got sympathetic New York Times coverage.

There really is a reason for all those appalling New Right attacks on "tenured radicals" and their terrible, terrible power. The difference between the New Right vision and ours, however, is our understanding first, that we are rigorous and right, not sloppy and biased, and second, that principled progressive academics are hardly living in some Jimmy Stewart idyll of leather-patch jacketed professors strolling around campus ponds and gardens while munching apples. We know how fucking overworked we are! So it turns out that living wages, and job security, for the rapidly increasing share of contingent academic workers is not such a fringe issue after all, not such an expression of spoiled American solipsism in this era of increasing poverty and danger worldwide.

Let's return to the American scene as a whole. What is it? It is the hemisphere and all its nations, with their long histories of capital, commodity, and human flows. It is the global reach and destructive force of U.S. geopolitical might, U.S. military force, and U.S. capital — all of them converging to bring war to many areas, and to increase global inequality. And it is the global reach of U.S. cultural commodities — film, television, celebrities — that provoke both longing and disgust at home and abroad. It is a rapidly shifting, working-class majority, multiracial nation with the New Right in power, and feisty but weakened labor, civil rights, civil liberties, feminist, gay, and environmental movements—It is also a corporate-controlled but always shifting Babel of media narratives, narratives explaining, misrepresenting, rationalizing — but also protesting against, dissenting from the status quo. And we are contributing to those narratives, to the best of our abilities, as anthropologists — singly, as teachers, researchers, and writers -- and jointly, as members of the Justice Action Network of Anthropologists and as citizen activists in a wide array of movements. As Allen Ginsberg ended his wonderful McCarthy-era poem, "Howl," "America I'm putting my queer shoulder to the wheel."



Do you know who this man is?
Answer on page 19

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Micaela di Leonardo is Professor of Anthropology and Performance Studies at Northwestern and author most recently of Exotics at Home: Anthropologies, Others, American Modernity (Chicago). As a School of American Research Residential Fellow in Santa Fe, NM, 2005-06, she will finish The View From Cavallaro's, her historical ethnography on gender, race, political economy and public culture in New Haven, CT. She may be reached at l-di@northwestern.edu



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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

By *Alisse Waterston*

The topics covered in this issue of North American Dialogue (NAD) are among the most current, and, sadly, among the most pressing in the first few months of the second stage of the Bush regime. We feature Part II of Micaela di Leonardo's brilliant keynote speech presented at the SANA conference held last April, 2004 in Atlanta, Georgia. Her insightful and incisive commentary on "the evolving ...and worsening...American scene" ties together what only *seem* to be disparate issues: the new corporate model now structuring American universities, the struggles of contingent faculty labor, the growing threats to the already "fragile American progressive public sphere" - all happening in a world marked by increasing poverty, danger, and U.S. military and economic power.

The fragile progressive public sphere includes academia, which is fast becoming a preferred site of New Right attacks. It is telling that di Leonardo's words have more, not less relevance than they did one year ago.

The articles by Tim Sieber and Melanie Bush are focused on these New Right attacks. Sieber brings the past into the present in his discussion of the impact of McCarthyism on Anthropology during the 1950s and 60s, and of today's politically connected groups engaging in activities that are eerily reminiscent of those earlier, terrible years. Sieber summarizes David H. Price's new book Threatening Anthropology that tells a cautionary tale of the "red scare" era. He also outlines some recent "campus watch" efforts, a growing and frightening trend. Likewise, Bush takes on and critiques some of the basic assumptions that underlie these new assaults on the progressive public sphere. Despite the potential dangers and our vulnerability, all three authors urge us to continue to oppose attempts to keep us silent about "the shifting cultural and political economy of the globe's major imperial power," to use di Leonardo's words. We have no

choice but to "exercise an active defense," as Sieber warns, "...if we are to continue to fulfill anthropology's liberatory and humanizing project."

We are not alone in this battle. Just as the contributors and I were putting finishing touches on this issue of NAD, the April 4th edition of The Nation arrived in my mailbox. "Silencing Speech on Campus" is the focus of that edition, which features three main articles and an editorial on the topic. In one article, History professor and Nation contributor Russell Jacoby outlines differences between today's situation and the McCarthy era. Jacoby writes, "In a sign of the times, the test for disloyalty has shifted far toward the center. Once, an unreliable professor meant an anarchist or communist; now it includes Democrats" (2005:13). I find this a chilling comment since it reveals just how much headway the New Right has made in shaping and controlling the agenda. Like Tim Sieber and Melanie Bush, Jacoby reveals how the New Right appropriates "liberal" discourse towards a distorted end: charges against "subversive" professors "...are advanced not against but in the name of academic freedom or a variant of it; and, in the final twist, the new conservative critics seem driven by an ethos that they have adopted from liberalism: affirmative action and a sense of victimhood, which they officially detest" (2005:13). Jacoby, like di Leonardo, shows us what we're up against.

SANA and NAD will continue to serve as a forum for dialogue on this and other key issues of grave concern. This year's SANA conference in Mérida, Yucatán (May 3-8, 2005), promises to be the biggest and best yet. In partnership with CASCA and UADY, the SANA conference on *Translocality: Discussing Culture and Change in the 21st Century* will explore issues surrounding "war, state terror, and structural violence (as these) escalate across the globe and as people move and organize across geo-political borders" (<http://sananet.org/2005conf/papers.html>). Hope to see you there!

McCarthyism, Academia, and Anthropology: The Old and The New

By Tim Sieber

Abstract: Anthropology is reclaiming its earlier history of radicalism, public engagement, and dissidence, concealed in most late 20th century official versions of the canon of anthropological achievement. In the McCarthyism of the 1950s and 60s, hundreds of anthropologists were monitored and often persecuted for their politics. Their work as public scholars and activists drew more repression than their writing for academic peers, according to a recent historical study by David H. Price. Cold War politics entered Anthropology, as colleagues, students, and administrators helped the FBI and the State purge and punish activists. Today's post-9/11 political climate and the Patriot Act once again license attacks on academic freedom, threatening critical, activist anthropologists. A variety of neo-conservative campus watch groups, ostensibly private but closely linked to the State, promote new repressive interventions in academe. Anthropologists can learn from McCarthyism how better to defend those engaged in scholarly practice promoting liberation

Key words: History of Anthropology, McCarthyism, critical anthropology, academic freedom, activist anthropology

In times of change we look to the past to draw enlightenment and guidance on how to understand and meet new challenges. Can it be incidental that in an era marked by a strong rightward shift in U.S. politics, increasing religious fundamentalism, and rising attacks on academic freedom, that a new spate of anthropological works have appeared that critically examine earlier periods of political strife and conflict on campus, provide examples of courageous faculty dissidence, and detail political attacks on the professoriate? For anthropology alone, we now have new biographies of such professors as Melville Herskovits (Gershenvorn 2004), Ruth Landes (Cole 2003), and Leslie White (Peace 2004), a compilation of writings by past dissenters against prevailing political trends (Gonzalez 2004), a book reclaiming anthropology's early 20th century anarchist roots (Graebner 2004), an anthology that takes on today's top political pundits (Besteman and Gusterson 2005), and an important history of the impact of McCarthyism on anthropology at mid-20th century (Price 2004). It seems the discipline is reclaiming its history of political dissent, and recognizing the price that our anthropological forebears have sometimes had to pay for their courage.

The last work mentioned, Price's Threatening Anthropology: McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists (Duke, 2004) is the first and only book-length study of McCarthyite Cold War political persecution of anthropologists during the 1940s and 1950s (one chapter also takes a brief look at the 1960s). Price says the FBI infiltrated more than 50 universities and monitored "hundreds" of anthropologists. He gives detailed case studies of some two dozen individuals, including Melville Jacobs, Albert Canwell, Richard Morgan, Morris Swadesh, Gene

Weltfish, Bernhard Stern, Jack Harris, Mary Shepardson, Cora DuBois, Ruth Landes, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Oscar Lewis, Margaret Mead, Marvin Opler, Philleo Nash, Paul Radin, David Aberle, Kathleen Gough, Ashley Montagu, Bernard Mishkin, and briefer treatments of another two dozen, including Murray Wax, Dell Hymes, and Eric Wolf.

Anthropologist David H. Price presents his book as a cautionary tale, stating that Cold War McCarthyism offers lessons for what anthropologists might expect in our newly arrived post-9/11 age of the USA Patriot Act. He notes that the Patriot Act reinstates provisions of the Smith and Hatch Acts that were used to persecute leftists during McCarthyism, and removes most other safeguards and protections for citizens' and educators' civil rights that were introduced in the mid-1970s by Senator Frank Church's "Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect To Intelligence Activities." Before examining today's situation, I will outline the compelling story that Price tells in Threatening Anthropology.

Repression of Anthropologists: The McCarthy Era

Price's carefully documented account rests on extensive archival research using FBI surveillance files, obtained through 750 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and appeals, archives of professional associations (including the AAA and AES), and interviews and correspondence with participants. Despite the limitations in the information the FBI would release to Price under FOIA rules, his portrayal is detailed and illuminating.

McCarthyism was ostensibly about finding communists - those who supposedly posed a national security threat and who might facilitate a feared Soviet take-over of the U.S. government. Yet those persecuted were not limited to communists or even socialists. Liberals, pacifists, and others of widely varying politics were pursued. Triggering FBI notice was anthropologists' engagement as public citizens or activists in opposition to government policies, and their organizing against or critiquing the prevailing political and economic order. At the time, anthropologists were often involved in campaigns for social justice, and in criticism of colonialism, color segregation, or other regimes of racial, economic, or gender injustice, and many challenged the Cold War national security state and associated military-industrial complex. The FBI confused many white mainstream liberals in anthropology with communists, Price says, because of their "assortment of 'thought crimes' ranging from reading subversive materials, speaking out against imperialism, not fearing the Soviet Union, studying the culture of poverty...establishing private, desegregated schools, mingling socially with blacks, and working for the establishment of civil rights legislation" (Price 2004: 238).

While some attention was paid to anthropologists' scholarly writings, Price makes clear that it was in their public roles as teachers, citizens, and public scholars that anthropologists were most threatening. Classroom lectures, public speeches on and off campus, campus activism around different causes, popular writings in newspapers and magazines, as well as political activism outside academe (e.g., participation in neighborhood fair housing campaigns or civil rights protests) were all duly recorded in FBI files. In fact, Price shows that leftists such as Leslie White, who eschewed activism and wrote only for academic peers in highly specialized venues within the ivory tower, were monitored but not subjected to hearings or worse persecution that was reserved for activists.

Price's detailed accounts are gripping. He writes of the extensive pattern of surveillance, intimidation, and persecution, and the human consequences for victims' lives and careers. Loyalty and security hearings that interrogated and intimidated progressives were not limited to Congress, or to Joseph McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee, McClellan's Senate Permanent Sub-committee on Government Operations, or to McCarren's Judiciary Sub-Committee on Internal Security, but also occurred at the state and local levels. Price views such hearings as "status degradation rituals" designed to ruin social reputations and destroy careers.

The FBI never acted alone, but had willing collaborators in academe and the wider citizenry, who were eager to voice suspicions of teachers, colleagues, and neighbors. Anthropologists were informed on by students, department and university colleagues, and fellow scholars. An entire chapter entitled "Hoover's Informer" is devoted to George Peter Murdock who had secretly informed on AAA colleagues to J. Edgar Hoover, even though he later served as chair of the American Anthropological Association's (AAA's) Committee on Scientific Freedom, established to defend anthropologists from unfair attacks. Price points to others, such as Karl Wittfogel and Ralph Linton, as FBI informers against colleagues. Vigilante citizens, private groups, journalists and local politicians (such as those affiliated with the American Legion that compiled its own "citizen" files to share with the FBI), radio reporters and commentators, newspaper writers, state legislators, and members of university boards of trustees, also worked to punish and purge academics considered dangerous. The FBI secretly met with and leaked information to employers, officials, and managers with control over anthropologists, abetting slander campaigns and seeding innuendo designed to destroy professional careers and opportunities. Those in positions to make decisions on people's careers, of course, were normally one's own colleagues, administrators, and managers within the academic infrastructure.

The resulting effects on targeted scholars were wide-ranging: lost jobs through denial of hirings, reappointments, promotions, or tenure, and not only in academe, but in federal and in U.N. jobs. Research funding was withheld, publication opportunities closed off, books purged from public libraries, and the ability to travel affected by manipulations of passport controls. Anthropologists were even tracked and spied on while conducting fieldwork abroad. Their graduate students, secretaries and family members were investigated as potential subversives. Some, such as Morris Swadesh, Jerome Rauch, and Paul Radin, ended up leaving the U.S., or academia. Incredibly, most damage was done secretly, behind the scenes, invisible, and not always obvious to victims.

The book recounts many stories about these scholars and the disruption and division that McCarthyism introduced into academia, including anthropology. Among other accounts, Price tells us how Cora DuBois lost a Berkeley faculty position for refusing to sign the California loyalty oath in 1949, how Vilhjalmur Stefansson's life's work, a twenty-volume Arctic encyclopedia was scrapped by his publisher after only two volumes due to his politics; how Ashley Montagu was fired from Rutgers after criticizing McCarthy, Gene Weltfish from Columbia after being subpoenaed by McCarthy to appear before Congress, and Kathleen Gough from Brandeis for a speech against President Kennedy after the Cuban Missile Crisis. The FBI interfered in Philleo Nash's political campaign for Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, and Senator McCarthy attacked him publicly when he was a Truman advisor. Karl Wittfogel informed on colleagues and graduate students before McCarran's Senate committee, resulting in one of his students committing suicide. Owen Lattimore's students, after attacks on the professor by McCarthy, were blacklisted and had difficulty finding work. Joel Montagu's Fulbright grant was sabotaged, Oscar Lewis' fieldwork in Mexico was monitored by the FBI as late as 1960, and passport controls were exerted over Paul Radin. This book is an anthropological page-turner.

Faculty lacked unions, and professional associations that were supposed to defend due process and academic freedom caved in to the hysteria. The ACLU, the AAUP, and the AAA did little or nothing to defend those under fire, offering weak or no defense of scholars' rights of due process, and even then only did something when proof was strong that someone had been *unjustly* accused of being a communist. As with today's "terrorists," communists were not defined as meriting equal rights or due process. Until late in McCarthyism, Price demonstrates that the AAA took a timid stance toward defending members, painting itself as "non-political."

Today's Times: An Emerging New McCarthyism?

One year after passage of the Patriot Act, the AAUP established the "Special Committee on Academic Freedom and National Security in a Time of Crisis," issuing an October 2003 report outlining a wide range of threats to academic freedom that were becoming visible. (<http://www.aaup.org/statements/REPORTS/911report.htm>)

The report notes many new restrictions on the circulation of ideas, information, and people that create new impediments to academic free speech, dialogue, research, and collaboration. A special section focuses on the campus-level "climate" for academic freedom, and finds much to be concerned about, especially in terms of new pressures on professors' classroom speech, curriculum decisions, and choices of speakers for campus lectures, conferences, and even commencement exercises. Cited incidents are drawn from eleven different schools in all regions of the country, and many cases involve legislative attempts at the state and congressional levels to intervene in campus decision-making, even in faculty personnel matters. For issuing this and other recent defenses of academic freedom, the AAUP has been attacked by the Right as "the OPEC of higher education," a "trade group," "radical," and the "Beltway voice of the tenured, left-leaning academia" (Giller 2003).

Anthropologists Daniel Segal and Richard Handler have noted that, indeed, "higher education is one of the few remaining sites in contemporary America where left-progressive arguments are presented to a *mass* audience..." (2005:4), and an institutional setting that includes "a more left-progressive spectrum of thought than is present in either electoral politics or the mainstream news media today" (2005: 5). The recent sharp spike in the number of attacks by conservative campus "watch dog" groups on academia make clear, they say, that "America's neo-conservative intelligentsia would like the academy to fall into line with its agenda" (2005: 4).

Most visible in today's attacks on scholars and faculty are many campus "watch groups" connected to neo-conservative figures, organizations, and think tanks closely associated with the G. W. Bush and other recent Republican administrations. Academics, particularly those in the humanities and social sciences who raise critical questions about government policies, are being accused by these groups of a lack patriotism, disloyalty, rigid ideological orthodoxy, anti-Americanism, and an unfair bias against the Republican Party that they claim has left universities politically doctrinaire and one-sided. "Tenured radicals" are even perceived to dominate academia. Just as in the 1950s, it is not the scholarly research and writing of academics that inflame today's critics but rather their teaching, public speeches, and popular writings, including those posted on the Internet.

Many questions, of course, can be raised by the Right's characterization of academia as a left-dominated sphere. Some of the key recent studies, as Segal and Handler point out, are very selective in terms of institutions examined, as in the recent study of faculty party voting distributed by the National Association of Scholars that focused especially on Berkeley and Stanford, "two secular universities located in the decidedly 'blue' San Francisco area" (Segal and Handler 2005:4). The complexity of the political spectrum, they note, is overly simplified by any Republican-Democratic binary.

It is noticeable that anonymously filed complaints about faculty on campus watch web sites show that only one or, at most, only a few faculty at any one school are targeted. This suggests that it is a small, but visible minority who are coming under attack. Indeed, as Howard Zinn reminds us in his recent essay, *How Free is Higher Education?*, "Yes, some of us radicals have somehow managed to get tenure. But far from dominating higher education, we remain a carefully watched minority." (Zinn and Macedo 2005: 93).

Even though most of today's campus watch groups increasingly attack those who critique the short- and long-term policies of the state, the watch groups themselves are private, non-profit organizations who invoke first-amendment rights and even civil rights discourse to attack academics as dogmatic abusers of ideological power. In this era of privatization of the public sphere, it seems that political harassment of dissenting intellectuals has devolved largely to such non-profit organizations operating under the mantle of non-partisanship and free speech. While posing as underdogs against an ideologically monolithic academe, they actually have close ties to the state.

Anthropologist Janine Wedel, writing in the *Washington Post*, notes that much government authority and work have recently been "handed off to private organizations" whose employees now do twice the amount of public work than government employees themselves. Wedel notes the importance of these public-private networks and partnerships to current neo-conservative initiatives nationally:

I use the term "flex groups" to capture the members' facility for maneuvering between government and private roles plus their skill at both relaxing the government's rules of accountability and... at conflating state and private interests. The essence of these groups is that the same collection of people interacts in multiple roles, both inside and outside of the government, and keeps resurfacing in different incarnations and configurations to achieve their goals over time (Wedel 2004).

She notes that it is possible, then, for “flex players to increase their influence and use one role to provide deniability, if needed, for actions taken in other roles” (Wedel 2004). It is likely that in the current era, these private groups will do much of the instigating of repression that was directly pursued in the past by the FBI.

Some Recent Campus Watch Efforts

Campus Watch is an offshoot of the pro-Israel lobbying group, Philadelphia’s Middle East Forum directed by Daniel Pipes, Bush appointee to the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace, and to the Defense Department’s Special Task force on Terrorism and Technology. In the post-9/11 period much of the focus of right-wing watch groups has been on academia’s handling of Middle East policy issues, specifically the Israel-Palestine conflict, and later, the U.S. intervention in Iraq. Even before September 11, 2001, Campus Watch had created a blacklist of “anti-Israeli” Middle East Studies academics (none are anthropologists). At first, twenty-two campuses were declared to harbor “anti-Israel” faculty; the list now includes 40 campuses, expanded to include visible critics of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The organization’s broad attacks on most Middle East Studies centers have incorporated anthropologists. The related recent funding bill, HR 3077 passed by Congress, authorizing special political oversight over federally funded area studies programs, explicitly targets international studies, modern languages, and anthropology. The bill’s goal is to prevent scholars from teaching courses, under federal funding, that are supposedly hostile to U.S. political interests.

Campus Watch compiled dossiers on offending faculty and placed them online for public inspection, listing personal telephone numbers and emails, which led to debilitating spamming, with thousands of harassing messages that included death threats. Some observers, such as Kristine McNeil, fear more sinister outcomes to such public attacks:

Ruining people’s careers may be only the tip of the iceberg. If he [Pipes] succeeds in smearing scholars by pressuring university administrations, students and their parents, and eliminating their sources of funding, some in the academy fear that Campus Watch eventually may try to offer allegations and support to John Ashcroft’s Justice Department with the aim of having their targets charged with crimes punishable under the USA Patriot Act (McNeil 2002).

Immediately after September 11, 2001, a number of academics were targeted by yet another group, the conservative American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA), co-founded in 1995 by Lynne Cheney (spouse

of U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney) and Senator Joseph Lieberman, representing trustees of colleges and universities nationally who are traditionally drawn from the country’s more conservative, business-oriented ranks. Soon after September 11, ACTA staffers Jerry Martin and Anne Neal compiled 117 disloyal and unpatriotic statements by academics, journalists, and politicians into a report entitled, *Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It*. Forty-one academics on 14 different campuses were targeted, and included anthropologists such as William O. Beeman (Brown) and Hugh Gusterson (MIT).

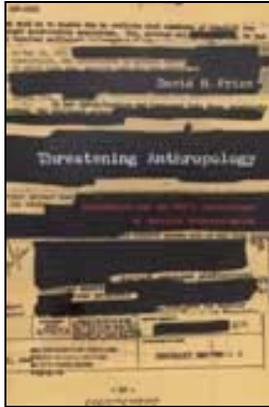
Americans for Victory over Terrorism (AVOT) is an offshoot of the right-wing Claremont Institute and was founded by former Reagan-era U.S. Secretary of Education and Bush I anti-drug Czar William Bennett, to attack academics, journalists and politicians not sufficiently supportive of the war against terrorism, and to combat those who “blame America first.” AVOT has sponsored teach-ins, panels, and speeches on U.S. campuses, featuring Bennett, former CIA Director James Woolsey, and Washington Post columnist Charles Krauthammer.

Perennial left-basher David Horowitz, of the California-based Center for the Study of Popular Culture, continues his work through Students for Academic Freedom (SAF), a new organization now active on 150 campuses. SAF has its own website that includes anonymous student postings against faculty (four anthropologists are listed as of February 15, 2005, including one who is a SANA member, SANA Prize Winner, and former President of the AAA). In its recent position paper on “Controversy in the Classroom,” the AAUP has criticized SAF strategy as “inimical to liberal education” by seeming to encourage students to avoid classroom dialogue with professors and instead encouraging students to resort to anonymous Internet attacks against professors

(<http://www.aaup.org/statements/SpchState.comaclass.htm>). SAF has helped create and establish a model for spying and informing on professors today.

SAF also publishes a web-based magazine, *FrontPage*, whose web site sells books and pamphlets with titles such as Campus Support for Terrorism, edited by David Horowitz and Ben Johnson (“When will the academic world take its head out of the sand and join the rest of the nation in fighting the war on terror?”), and The Hate America Left, by David Horowitz and Jaime Glazov (“This book blows the lid off the network of academics, lawyers, fundraisers and professional agitators providing aid and comfort to the enemy”).

Attempting to appropriate a discourse of rights, diversity, tolerance, and academic freedom itself, SAF is currently advancing an “Academic Bill of Rights” designed to prevent discrimination against conservative



Threatening Anthropology:

McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists

By David H. Price

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students and professors who resist the left-wing orthodoxy claimed to exist in universities. They even liken universities to a Stalinist, totalitarian "one party state" because of the prominence of Democrats. Such "one party domination," says conservative syndicated columnist Jeff Jacoby, is "problematic" since it can lead to professors using "their classrooms to indoctrinate and propagandize," and engage in "intellectual harassment" of conservative students (Jacoby 2004).

A chief SAF activity is to research and document the political party affiliation of humanities and social science faculties through public voter registration records. SAF research indicates a strong faculty Democratic preference, extending in some figures to a more than 9:1 ratio, and their aversion to Republicans, party of choice for conservatives. David Horowitz's essay "The Academic Blacklist" even argues that,

The most successful and pervasive blacklist in American history is the blacklist of conservatives on American college campuses, their marginalization in undergraduate life and their virtual exclusion from liberal arts faculties, particularly those that deal with the study of society itself...the blacklist really begins with the politicization of the undergraduate classroom...and the systematic political harassment of conservative students by their radical professors.

The "Academic Bill of Rights" has been introduced in nine different state legislatures, as well as in Congress, has passed in Georgia, and led to a memorandum of understanding among major university and college presidents in Colorado to observe its principles. Essentially the bill gives license for grievance if faculty feel discriminated against on account of their religious, political, or ideological affiliations. The AAUP recognized and addressed the bill's dangers in a December 2003 statement of its Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, arguing that the bill "express[es] distrust of faculty capacity to make...[personnel] judgements, and...transfer[s] the supervision of such determinations to a college or university administration or to courts." Faculty selection and evaluation then would be "determined by essentially political categories," rather than by "relevant scholarly standards, as interpreted and applied by the academic profession"
http://www.aaup.org/statements/SpchState/Statements/bill_ofrights.htm).

NoIndoctrination.org is yet another self-described "non-profit, non-partisan organization that collects and disseminates information to promote the importance of multiple and contrasting points of view in higher education," particularly regarding "possible indoctrination" in classroom teaching and student orientation programs, according to their website. Their

website also includes anonymous student postings (“Warning: postings are only opinions,” it notes) mostly attacking professors’ “biased” teaching. At least nine of the current 163 postings between 2002 and 2005 concern courses taught by anthropologists, both cultural and biological. Complaints censure anthropologists for “demonizing America,” “denouncing George Bush and the Republican Party,” being “pro-socialist,” inducing “guilt” over white racism, asserting race has no biological reality, “preaching Native American Indian oppression,” approving homosexuality, “vilifying white men,” “playing class warfare,” and taking “Marxist” approaches. One student wrote that his introductory textbook (a popular, standard one now in its 10th edition) “could have been written by Michael Moore or Susan Sarandon”!

Unfortunately space does not permit discussion of even more related campus watch organizations beyond those mentioned here, but they include Academic Bias.com which has produced a film called “Brainwashing 101,” and the Virginia-based Young America’s Foundation that singles out for ridicule a “course of the month” (in July 2003, YAF featured “General Anthropology” from the University of North Carolina).

Back to the Future: Today’s Challenges

Even if our field is not experiencing the scrutiny directed at Middle East Studies, Peace Studies, and Labor Studies, Anthropology is already in the cross-hairs of some campus watch groups. Segal and Handler note that the central traditions of our discipline put anthropology on a collision course with conservative pressures on today’s academia (Segal and Handler 2005: 5; see also article by Melanie Bush, this issue of *NAD*).

In the post-1960s era, many new AAA sections like the Society for the Anthropology of North America (SANA) have emerged with a mission of intensifying anthropology’s public posture on critical policy issues of our time. Indeed, many in anthropology today subscribe to visions of a critical “Public Anthropology” that closely links public service, policy work, and activism to traditional scholarly concerns. Perhaps we need to realize, as Faye Harrison (1997) and David Nugent (2002) have noted, that anthropologists of the past have assumed such postures before, but have also been marginalized in our dominant 20th century disciplinary canon. Likewise, Price notes that anthropologists today do not realize the extent to which McCarthyism sanitized anthropology of its public radicalism, and drove the field inside the ivory tower.

Today’s parallels with the last great period of academic repression during McCarthyism are clear. In the 1950s classes were also monitored, and faculty were accused of indoctrinating students. The AAUP recognizes the continuity of the threat over the years: “The John Birch Society undertook that role in the

1960’s; an organization called, “Accuracy in Academia” did so in the 1980s; and “Campus Watch” assumed that role for professors of Middle Eastern studies after September 11, 2001”

(<http://www.aaup.org/statements/SpchState.comaclass.htm>).

Just as in the past, when campus monitors collaborated with officialdom and in persecution of suspected communists, today’s campus watch groups also intervene in local controversies, attempting to generate external political pressure on faculty and universities, and pressing for faculty dismissals (Mattson 2005).

It is no surprise that many of the current attacks are associated with arguments for weakening tenure protections in order to make it even easier to purge offending academics – especially in tax-supported public institutions. Even tenure offers little protection to the majority of today’s faculty, however, since as contingent academic workers, they do not have its protection. The AAUP’s February 2005 report on “Contingent Faculty Appointments” reminds us that, “Today, 44.5 percent of all faculty are part-time, and non-tenure-track positions of all types account for more than 60 percent of all faculty appointments in American higher education,” trends that are only increasing

(<http://www.aaup.org/Issues/part-time/>). In the coming period, those with tenure privilege need to be vigilant in supporting academic freedom for *all* faculty.

One of the clearest lessons that Price’s assessment offers is that academia’s collective defense of the academic freedom of *any* of its members – “no matter how distasteful the views expressed” (Price 2004: 353) – is key to the protection of *everyone’s* academic freedom. Such aggressive defense and protection was not offered by the AAA during most of the Cold War, nor for that matter, was it offered by other scholarly organizations. Price concludes that “defensive actions could have changed the outcome...or prevented the abuses that followed. The silence of the association empowered those attacking its members” (2005: 353). He counsels pressuring the AAA to rise more quickly to members’ defense, and cites cases where “organized defenses during attacks on intellectual freedom mattered,” noting that “this has important implications for scholars living in times of present and future witch-hunts and purges” (Price 2004: 353).

SANA and allied progressive sections seem well poised to understand the lessons of the past, and to be ready to meet present and future challenges. We must exercise vigilance, solidarity, and an active defense if we are to continue to fulfill anthropology’s liberatory and humanizing project. What Price notes about anthropology a half century ago applies no less now: “That anthropologists could be counted among those protesting the innumerable injustices and indignities of our socioeconomic system is a credit to the potential of

anthropology" (Price 2004: 354). That responsibility today requires at least as much courage and constancy as it ever has, and in uncertain and changing times like ours, perhaps even more.

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CASCA/SANA/UADY PROGRAM PREVIEW

TRANSLOCALIDAD / TRANSLOCALITY / TRANSLOCALITÉ CONGRESO / CONFERENCE / CONFÉRENCE Mayo May Mai 3-8, 2005 Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico

Centro Cultural de la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán SPECIAL EVENTS

May 3 Plenary Session: ANTHROPOLOGY AND TRANSLOCALITY. CHALLENGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY Chair: Marie France Labrecque (Laval). Papers: Steffan I. Ayora-Diaz (UADY) *Conocimiento científico y colonialismo: Lo translocal y la exploración antropológica de los procesos globales*. Deborah Thomas (Duke) *Blackness across Borders: Jamaican Diasporas and New Politics of Citizenship*. Francine Saillant (Laval) *Humanitaire et translocalités*. Discussant: Josephine Smart (Calgary).

May 3 2005: INAUGURAL CEREMONY Rector de la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, Raúl Godoy Montañés (UADY); CASCA President Julia Harrison (Trent); SANA President Lee Baker (Duke); Francisco Fernández Repetto (UADY) Director de la Facultad de Ciencias Antropológicas de la UADY.

May 4 2005 Plenary Session ANTHROPOLOGY CONFRONTS EMPIRE Chair: Pierre Beaucage (Montréal). Papers: Gabriel Torres (CIESAS Occidente) *Los pies de barro del imperio: informalidad, entrapamiento local y diversidad cultural*. Noel Dyck (Simon Fraser) *Confronting Empire From Within: Merida, NAFTA, and Sleeping With The Elephant*. Lynn Stephen (Oregon) *Negotiating the Contradiction of Empire in Transborder Communities: Lessons from Indigenous Migrant Workers*. Discussants: Michelle Daveluy (Alberta) and Karen Brodtkin (UCLA).

May 5 2005 Special Session and Presentation of the Weaver-Tremblay Award. HERMAN W. KONRAD, TRANSLOCAL ANTHROPOLOGIST FROM CANADA. Chairs: Julia Harrison (CASCA President-Trent) and Denise F. Brown (Calgary). Papers: Julia Harrison (CASCA President) *A few Words on the Weaver Tremblay Award in Canadian Anthropology*. Gabriela Vargas-Cetina (UADY) and Julia Harrison (Trent) *Herman W. Konrad, a Truly Canadian and Truly Translocal Anthropologist*. Laurie Nock (Grande Prairie College) *Three Fingers to the Selectric. Herman W. Konrad's Contribution to Knowledge*. Doyle Hatt (Calgary) *Don Quixote del Norte*. Denise F. Brown (Calgary) and Piedad Peniche Rivero (Archivo General del Estado de Yucatán) *Herman W. Konrad, Trailblazer*. Marylee Mulholland (York) *Barren Bulls and Charging Cows: The Making of Anthropologist in Tlaxcala*. Alicia Peon Arceo (Florida-Gainesville) *Herman, una presencia constante y permanente*. Julia Harrison (CASCA President) *Presentation of the Weaver Tremblay Award in Canadian Anthropology*. Candelaria Konrad (Calgary) *Words of acceptance of The Weaver Tremblay Award*.

May 5 2005 Weaver-Tremblay Reception.

May 6 2005 Keynote Address. Leith Mullings (CUNY Graduate Center)

May 8 2005 Trip to the Dzibichaltun archaeological site and closing banquet across the seashore in the City and Port of Progreso

Society for the Anthropology of North America

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MAY 3-8, 2005

The Society for the Anthropology of North America (SANA)

The Canadian Anthropological Society / Societe Canadienne d'Anthropologie (CASCA)

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MY TURN: VOICES OF DIALOGUE

The Movement for an “Academic Bill of Rights”: A New Assault on Academic Freedom

By *Melanie E.L. Bush*

Abstract: The new “academic freedom” movement calls for an affirmative action of sorts for conservatives in the academy. An “Academic Bill of Rights” is being considered by at least nineteen states, and has been adopted in some state legislatures. Underlying these proposals is a belief that the dominance of liberal views in universities marginalizes the perspectives of traditionalists and conservatives. The movement does not seek to open discussion but to create a mechanism for defending against “indoctrination.” The results will inevitably close debate and reduce civility rather than increase engagement. This essay outlines several problematic assumptions and assertions that underlie the concerns raised by those involved in the so-called “academic freedom” movement in an effort to unmask and reveal this emperor with no clothes.

Keywords: Academic Freedom, Intellectual Diversity, Academic Bill of Rights

“Intellectual diversity,” “academic freedom,” and “national pride” have formed the calling card of a new movement in the educational and legislative spheres, functioning in concert with a political climate that has in recent years been shifting to the right. Those involved challenge gains made in multiculturalism, ethnic studies, and in the critical analysis of U.S. foreign and domestic policies sometimes explicitly and at others implicitly. Representatives of these “academic freedom” movements assert that intellectual thought is not and should not be value-laden while they themselves are deeply entrenched in a conservative orientation.

Framed in language about free speech, academic neutrality and protecting national interests, this “academic freedom” movement calls for affirmative action of sorts for conservatives in the academy and the penalization of institutions that allow liberal views to dominate. This perspective has received hearing in Congress, is being considered by at least nineteen states, and has made significant gain in some state legislatures. These legislative changes would shift the monitoring of campus activities from peer reviewers and academic institutions to the state. David Horowitz, author of the “Academic Bill of Rights,” is a key spokesperson behind this effort.

The proposed measures seem to be the intellectual parallel to the Patriot Act with serious implications for critiques of the organization of society both nationally and globally. Underlying these proposals is a belief that the dominance of liberal views in the academy marginalizes the perspectives of traditionalists and conservatives. Debates have ensued about this issue in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Academe and numerous other publications.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has taken a strong stand against the “Academic Bill of Rights,” arguing that its proposals would, in fact, intrude upon academic freedom in exactly the way its proponents say they object. In a formal statement, the AAUP notes that the bill takes us in the wrong direction by squelching critical inquiry, central to any intellectual endeavor, but especially to liberal education (AAUP 2003).

Who’s Who

A constellation of groups are connected to this broad project, including the American Enterprise Institute, Hoover Institute, Lincoln Institute, Leadership Institute, Manhattan Institute, American Civil Rights Institute, Intercollegiate Studies Institute, Young America’s Foundation, Discover the Network, FrontPage Magazine and Campus Watch, a group that focuses on monitoring faculty positions related to the Middle East. These seem to form the core of this effort”

- **Students for Academic Freedom (SAF)** has campus-based chapters that seek to pass an Academic Bill of Rights at their institutions. Their stated goal is “...to end the political abuse of the university and to restore integrity to the academic mission as a disinterested pursuit of knowledge.”
- **The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE)** states they “will defend and sustain individual rights at America’s increasingly repressive and partisan universities, bringing public scrutiny to bear on threats to free speech, religious freedom, right of conscience, legal equality, due process, and academic freedom on those campuses.”
- **The American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA)** describes itself as “a non-profit educational organization committed to academic freedom, excellence, and accountability on college and university campuses. It supports programs and policies that encourage high academic standards, strong curricula, and the free exchange of ideas.”
- **The National Association of Scholars (NAS)** is, according to its website, “an organization ...committed to rational discourse as the foundation of academic life in a free and democratic society...only through an informed understanding of the Western intellectual heritage and the realities of the contemporary world can citizens and scholars be equipped to sustain our civilization’s achievements. In light of these objectives, the NAS is deeply concerned about perspectives within the academy that reflexively denigrate the values and institutions of our society.”

Facts, Figures and Falsehoods

Several problematic assertions underlie the concerns raised by those involved in the movement for “academic freedom”. What follows is a review and response to seven of them.

Assertion #1: Democrats are an overrepresented majority of faculty in the United States.

In recent years, researchers have collected information about electoral party registration of academics. Economics professor Daniel Klein (Santa Clara U) conducted a survey in 2003 among a sample of humanities and social sciences faculty and found a 15:1 Democrat to Republican ratio overall, with important differences by discipline. The ratio among anthropologists is 30:1 while among economists it is 3:1. Using voter registration data, Klein also examined party affiliations of UC Berkeley and Stanford University faculty in the social sciences, humanities, hard sciences, math, law, journalism, engineering, medicine, and business school. According to his findings, the Democrat to Republican ratio is 7.6 to 1 at Stanford; 9.9 to 1 at UC-Berkeley (Klein 2003). An earlier study conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute and University of California at Los Angeles in 2001-02 found that 48 percent of faculty self-identified as either liberal or far left, 34 percent as middle of the road and 18 percent as conservative or far right (Jacobson 2004).

It should not be surprising that certain employment sectors draw people of particular ideological and political persuasions. In a recent issue of *Anthropology News*, Daniel Segal and Richard Handler offer several reasons why anthropologists are more likely to be Democrats, including the field’s engagement with marginalized groups, our focus on culture, and our analyses of social forces (2005).

One might hypothesize a high Republican to Democrat ratio among corporate executives, prison administrators or members of the military elite. If “equal” partisan representation is imposed on academia, might not the same apply for all fields? Furthermore, had these surveys been conducted at religious, military or business schools would the results have been similar?

This approach is reminiscent of McCarthyism. Congressional investigations of the 1940s and ’50s, focused on political affiliation, and demonized many, including academics. In 1950, Senator Joseph McCarthy declared that the “traitorous actions” of privileged faculty in the university was the greatest threat to democracy (Lewis 2005). This language mirrors that found in the 2001 ACTA report entitled *Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It*, in which academics were vilified for “...sponsor[ing] teach-ins that typically ranged from moral equivocation to explicit condemnation of America” (Lewis 2005).

Diversity of perspectives exists across professions more than within. If the essence of liberal education is critical thinking then the orientation of individual faculty members should no more matter than whether they are married or go to church. To the extent that diversity does not exist in certain disciplines, perhaps the real question has to do with why so many share a similar perspective.

Assertion #2: The “imbalance” in political affiliation creates a hostile environment for conservatives.

Universities exist within society and tend to pattern the power relations of that society. Despite rhetoric about democracy, U.S. society seems to discourage interaction between people with different perspectives. We are taught to demonize, marginalize and dismiss those with views that are outside the mainstream. I believe our concerns need to be directed more to ensuring that the underrepresented have voice and recourse than to seek additional means to center the dominant.

U.S. society has work to do to better address and respect differing views without resorting to demonization or caricature. The movement to legislate an “Academic Bill of Rights” frames this issue poorly. Policies and procedures already exist within institutions whereby students may file grievances if they feel they have been treated unfairly. The movement does not seek dialogue but to create a mechanism for defending against “indoctrination.” Cast this way, the results will inevitably close debate and reduce civility rather than increase engagement (Ehrlich and Colby 2004).

Assertion #3: The “imbalance” in political affiliation skews what students learn in the classroom.

Academic communities are served well by intellectual exchange; students should not be penalized for holding divergent perspectives from teachers. In fact, differing perspectives are central to the learning process. Moments of disagreement provide opportunities for the student to develop her or his own thinking. Far from being a barrier to learning, new and different ideas open the possibility for the development and application of critical thinking skills. Furthermore, disciplinary standards ought to be established and maintained by those with expertise in the field. Otherwise, the authority of disciplinary knowledge is either simply dismissed as opinion or left to people without expertise.

In everyday life, dominant values are relayed continuously through the media and corporate advertising. Academia is one of the few remaining venues where questions about vested interests can be raised and history can be told from other perspectives. Who has the right to ask questions, make assertions, or

frame narratives that explain the organization of society? If alternative views are disallowed and dissent criminalized, what happens to the pursuit of “truth” or even “understanding”?

Assertion #4: Conservative faculty are at a hiring disadvantage and conservative students receive lower grades.

Increasingly, hiring in academia today is for non-tenure track positions, (both part and full time) in a tight job market. This creates a climate that can lead the untenured to be fearful about raising questions, dissenting or challenging the status quo (Lindorff 2005).

According to the long-held and established position of the AAUP, “decisions concerning the quality of scholarship and teaching are to be made by reference to the standards of the academic profession as interpreted and applied by the community of scholars who are qualified by expertise and training to establish such standards.” The proposed “Academic Bill of Rights” calls for appointments based on plurality which, the AAUP fears, would “invite diversity to be measured by political standards that diverge from the academic criteria of the scholarly profession...and can easily become contradictory to academic ends” (AAUP 2003). Under new standards as called for by this bill, one might imagine the scenario whereby an anthropology department be compelled to hire someone who supports creationism so that “diverse” views be represented.

Assertion #5: Forum and commencement speakers should represent a range of political views and offer an intentional “balance” of presentations.

Conservative organizations funnel upwards of \$38 million to students on campuses that support conservative programs, publication of campus newspapers and training. The Young America’s Foundation speakers’ program has helped students bring 200 celebrity right-wing speakers to campuses, and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute funneled large sums to over 80 conservative campus publications (Hubbard and Halperin 2004; Holland 2004). There is no comparable funding for progressive students. In today’s political climate it is extremely important that students have access to leaders in various disciplines who raise serious questions about the status quo.

Additionally, students are being offered prizes, including laptops and iPods for videotaping faculty and administrators “engaged in public political speech” who they believe “indoctrinate” as opposed to teach, or assert liberal views that are unrelated to course topics (academicbias.com). Students are being encouraged to report faculty they feel are biased (NoIndoctrination.org). While progressive students who feel offended by conservative faculty are invited to file grievances, most complaints are against faculty who

critically discuss U.S. history, policy and practice. The Campus Leadership Institute (CLI) trains and supports conservative student groups to “bring the conservative revolution to your campus,” and offers speakers and support to help students win student government elections, and for starting conservative papers. CLI’s mission is to “fight political correctness and the campus left.”

Assertion #6: The emphasis on multiculturalism in curricula reduces the quality of academic standards because the focus is no longer on “truth” but private interests of blacks, Latinos, Asians, women, and other groups.

Underlying this assertion is the struggle over who tells the story, who says what is “true,” who “controls the way we are taught to conceptualize our past...who will control the economics and politics of the present and the future” (Rothenberg 1996). Since the 1960s, some headway has been made to change the curriculum to include those who had previously been rendered invisible by mainstream thought. Many groups and individuals actively struggled to achieve this inclusion. The shift to the right, the growing ideological dominance of the elite, and the expanding polarization of wealth and power coincide with the framing of multiculturalism as a private interest. The new “academic freedom” movement is an attempt to reassert the power of “traditionally” higher status groups.

Assertion #7: Conservatives are the new underrepresented minority with no voice and no recourse; liberals and “left-wing” faculty and administrators are silencing them.

There is an irony to this complaint. Most often, it is voiced by conservatives who suggest either biological or cultural explanations and ignore statistical evidence that point to the role of discrimination in the unequal distribution of resources and other societal disparities. Why, in this case, does the difference signify discrimination, while in others it does not? It is also ironic that those who have traditionally held power in society would raise grievance about their own lack of representation, especially since they still do hold such power. Their assertions deny the long social history of inequality in the U.S.

Emerging Responses

There is an emerging response from the academy to this assault on academic freedom. In 2004 Duke University held an open forum on academic freedom. Their website includes presentation transcripts and articles. The Graduate School of the City University of New York has conducted a series of forums, and individual colleges in CUNY are planning future events. SANA has taken up the issue in North American Dialogue and in panels and events it sponsors. The

Center for American Progress, has formed campusprogress.org to “strengthen progressive voices on college and university campuses nationwide; counter the growing influence of right-wing groups on campus; and empower new generations of progressive leaders.”

Anthropologists should continue to play a critical role in challenging this campaign for so-called “intellectual diversity.” The assault against academic freedom can be halted — we need to continue to unmask and reveal this emperor with no clothes.

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ANTHROPOLOGY OFF THE SHELF

Why America's Top Pundits Are Wrong

Anthropologists Talk Back

Edited by anthropologist Catherine Besteman and SANA member Hugh Gusterson

California Series in Public Anthropology, 13

The following description was issued by U of California Press:

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Catherine Besteman is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Colby College and author of Unraveling Somalia: Race, Violence, and the Legacy of Slavery (1999), among other books. Hugh Gusterson, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Science at MIT, is author of Nuclear Rites: A Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War (California, 1996) and People of the Bomb (2004).

Answer from page 6

Alan Ginsberg

Photograph from

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/ginsberg_a.html

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