Academic Unfreedom in America: Rethinking the University as a Democratic Public Sphere

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At a time when social forms and collective bonds increasingly lose their shape or disappear altogether, higher education seems to retain a reassuring permanency as a slowly changing bulwark in a rapidly dissolving landscape of critical public spheres. Higher education may be one of the few institutions left that still fosters critical inquiry, public freedom, and common deliberation, simultaneously keeping alive the promise of a democratic ethos and politics. Of course, educating young people in the spirit of a critical democracy by providing them with the knowledge, passion, civic capacities, and social responsibility necessary to address the problems facing the nation and globe has always been challenged by the existence of rigid disciplinary boundaries, the cult of expertise or highly specialized scholarship unrelated to public life, and antidemocratic ideologies that scoff at the exercise of academic freedom. Such forces have hardly gone away; they have been intensified and supplemented by the contemporary emergence of a number of diverse fundamentalisms, including a market-based neoliberal rationality, a post-9/11 militarism, and an aggressive right-wing patriotic correctness, all of which exhibit a deep disdain, if not contempt, for both democracy and publicly engaged teaching and scholarship. This means that while the American university still employs the rhetoric of a democratic public sphere, there is a growing gap between a stated belief in noble purposes and the reality of an academy that is under siege.

Just as democracy appears to be fading in the United States so is the legacy of higher education's faith in and commitment to democracy. Higher education is increasingly abandoning its role as a democratic public sphere as it aligns itself with corporate power and military values, while at the same time succumbing to a range of right-wing religious and political attacks.[1] Instead of being a space of critical dialogue, analysis, and interpretation, it is increasingly defined as a space of consumption, where ideas are validated in instrumental terms and valued for their success in attracting outside funding while developing increasingly "strong ties with corporate and warfare powers" (Angus 69). As the culture of research is oriented towards the needs of the military-industrial-academic complex, faculty and

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students find their work further removed from the language of democratic values and their respective roles modeled largely upon entrepreneurs and consumers. With no irony intended, Philip Leopold argues that it is an "essential part of an academic career" that academics be viewed as business entrepreneurs, trained to "watch the bottom line" and to be attentive to "principles of finance, management, and marketing" and to the development of a "brand identity (academic reputation) that is built on marketing (publications and presentations) of a high-quality product (new knowledge)" (n. pag.). In another statement pregnant with irony, Robert Gates, the Secretary of Defense under George W. Bush, has recently proposed the creation of what he calls a new "Minerva Consortium," ironically named after the goddess of wisdom, whose purpose is to fund various universities to "carry out social sciences research relevant to national security" (Brainard n. pag.). Gates would like to turn universities into militarized knowledge factories more willing to produce knowledge, research, and personnel in the interest of the warfare and Homeland (In)Security State than to assume the important role of tackling the problems of contemporary life while holding dominant institutions—especially those that trade in force, violence, and militarism—accountable by questioning how their core values and presence in the world alter and shape democratic identities, values, and organizations. Unfortunately, Gates's view of the university as a militarized knowledge factory and Professor Leopold's instrumental understanding of faculty as a "brand name" and the university as a new marketplace of commerce are not lines drawn from a gag offered up by Jon Stewart on the *Daily Show*. Instead, such views have become highly influential in shaping the purpose and meaning of higher education. Hence it no longer seems unreasonable to argue that just as democracy is being emptied out, the university is also being stripped of its role as a democratic setting where, though in often historically fraught ways, a democratic ethos has been cultivated, practiced, and sustained for several generations.

Higher education in the United States appears to be suffering from both a crisis of politics and a crisis of legitimacy. Politically, higher education is increasingly being influenced by larger economic, military, and ideological forces that consistently attempt to narrow its purview as a democratic public sphere. Public intellectuals are now replaced by privatized intellectuals often working in secrecy and engaged in research that serves either the warfare state, the corporate state, or both. Intellectuals are no longer placed in a vibrant relationship to public life but now labor under the influence of managerial modes of governance and market values that mimic the logic of Wall Street. Consequently, higher education appears to be increasingly decoupling itself from its historical legacy as a crucial public sphere, responsible for both educating students for the workplace and providing them with the modes of critical discourse, interpretation, judgment, imagination, and experiences that deepen and expand democracy. Unable to legitimate its purpose and meaning according to such important democratic practices and principles, higher education now narrates itself in terms that are more instrumental, commercial, and practical. As universities adopt the ideology of the transnational

corporation and become subordinated to the needs of capital, the war industries, and the Pentagon, they are less concerned with how they might educate students about the ideology and civic practices of democratic governance and the necessity of using knowledge to address the challenges of public life.[2] Instead, as part of the post-9/11 military-industrial-academic complex, higher education increasingly conjoins military interests and market values, identities, and social relations while John Dewey's once-vaunted claim that "democracy needs to be reborn in each generation, and education is its midwife" is either willfully ignored, forgotten, or becomes an object of scorn (Dewey qtd. in Hollander and Saltmarsh n. pag.).

Prominent educators and theorists such as Hannah Arendt, John Dewey, Cornelius Castoriadis, and Maxine Greene have long believed and rightly argued that we should not allow education to be modeled after the business world. Nor should we allow corporate power and influence to undermine the semiautonomy of higher education by exercising control and power over its faculty, curricula, and students. Dewey, in particular, warned about the growing influence of the "corporate mentality" and the threat that the business model posed to public spaces, higher education, and democracy. He argued:

> The business mind [has] its own conversation and language, its own interests, its own intimate groupings in which men of this mind, in their collective capacity, determine the tone of society at large as well as the government of industrial society [. . .]. We now have, although without formal or legal status, a mental and moral corporateness for which history affords no parallel. (qtd. in R. Bernstein 25)

Dewey and the other public intellectuals named above shared a common vision and project of rethinking what role education might play in providing students with the habits of mind and ways of acting that would enable them to "identify and probe the most serious threats and dangers that democracy faces in a global world dominated by instrumental and technological thinking" (R. Bernstein 45). All of these intellectuals offered a notion of the university as a bastion of democratic learning and values that provides a crucial referent in exploring the more specific question regarding what form will be taken by the relationship between corporations and higher education in the twenty-first century. In the best of all worlds, corporations would view higher education as much more than merely a training center for future business employees, a franchise for generating profits, or a space in which corporate culture and education merge in order to produce literate consumers.

Higher education has a deeper responsibility, not only to search for the truth regardless of where it may lead, but also to educate students to make authority politically and morally accountable as well as to expand both academic freedom and the possibility and promise of the university as a bastion of democratic inquiry, values, and politics, even as these are necessarily refashioned at the beginning of the new millennium. While questions regarding whether the university should serve public rather than private interests no longer carry the weight

of forceful criticism as they did when raised by Thorstein Veblen, Robert Lynd, and C. Wright Mills in the first part of the twentieth century, such questions are still crucial in addressing the reality of higher education and what it might mean to imagine the university's full participation in public life as the protector and promoter of democratic values, especially at a time when the meaning and purpose of higher education is under attack by a phalanx of right-wing forces attempting to slander, even vilify, liberal and left-oriented professors, cut already meager federal funding for higher education, eliminate tenure, and place control of what is taught and said in classrooms under legislative oversight.[3] While the American university faces a growing number of problems that range from the increasing loss of federal and state funding to the incursion of corporate power, a galloping commercialization, and the growing influence of the national security state, it is also currently being targeted by conservative forces that have hijacked political power and waged a focused campaign against the principles of academic freedom, sacrificing critical pedagogical practice in the name of patriotic correctness and dismantling the university as a site of autonomous scholarship, independent thought, and uncorrupted inquiry.

Conservatives have a long history of viewing higher education as a cradle of left-wing thought and radicalism. Just as religious fundamentalists attempted to suppress academic freedom in the nineteenth century, they continue to do so today. Yet in its current expression, the attack on the university has taken a strange turn: Liberal professors, specifically in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, are now being portrayed as the enemies of academic freedom because they allegedly abuse students' rights by teaching views unpopular to some of the more conservative students. To understand the current attack on the academy, it is necessary to comprehend the power that right-wing thinkers have historically attributed to the political nature of education and the significance this view had in shaping the long-term strategy they put into place as early as the 1920s to win an ideological war against liberal intellectuals; that is, those who argued both for changes in American domestic and foreign policy and for holding government and corporate power accountable as a precondition for extending and expanding the promise of an inclusive democracy.

During the McCarthy era, criticisms of the university and its dissenting intellectuals cast a dark cloud over the exercise of academic freedom, and many academics were either fired or harassed out of their jobs because of their political activities outside the classroom, their alleged communist fervor, or left-wing affiliations. In 1953, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) was founded by Frank Chodorov in order to assert right-wing influence and control over universities. ISI was but a precursor to the present era of politicized and paranoid academic assaults. In fact, William F. Buckley, Jr., who catapulted to fame among conservatives in the early 1950s with the publication of *God and Man at Yale*, in which he railed against secularism at Yale University and called for the firing of socialist professors, was named as the first president of ISI. The current president of ISI, T. Kenneth Cribb, Jr., delivered the following speech to the Heritage Foundation in 1989 that captures the ideological spirit and project behind its view of higher education:

> We must [. . .] provide resources and guidance to an elite which can take up anew the task of enculturation. Through its journals, lectures, seminars, books and fellowships, this is what ISI has done successfully for 36 years. The coming of age of such elites has provided the current leadership of the conservative revival. But we should add a major new component to our strategy: the conservative movement is now mature enough to sustain a counteroffensive on that last Leftist redoubt, the college campus [. . .]. We are now strong enough to establish a contemporary presence for conservatism on campus, and contest the Left on its own turf. We plan to do this greatly by expanding the ISI field effort, its network of campus-based programming. ("Targeting" n. pag.)

ISI was an early effort on the part of conservatives to "'take back' the universities from scholars and academic programs regarded either as too hostile to free markets or too critical of the values and history of Western civilization" ("Targeting" n. pag.). As part of an effort to influence future generations to adopt a conservative ideology and leadership roles in "battling the radicals and PC types on campus," the Institute now provides numerous scholarships, summer programs, and fellowships to students (Blumenthal 14).

The Chronicle of Higher Education reported in 2007 that various conservative groups are spending over $40 million "on their college programs" (Field A35). Perhaps the most succinct statement for establishing a theoretical framework and political blueprint for the current paranoia surrounding the academy is the Powell Memo, released on August 23, 1971, and authored by Lewis F. Powell, Jr., who would later be appointed as a member of the U.S. Supreme Court. Powell identified the American college campus "as the single most dynamic source" for producing and housing intellectuals "who are unsympathetic to the [free] enterprise system" (n. pag.). He recognized that one crucial strategy in changing the political composition of higher education was to convince university administrators and boards of trustees that the most fundamental problem facing universities was the lack of conservative educators, or what he labeled the "imbalance of many faculties" (n. pag.). The Powell Memo was designed to develop a broad-based strategy not only to counter dissent, but also to develop a material and ideological infrastructure with the capability to transform the American public consciousness through a conservative pedagogical commitment to reproduce the knowledge, values, ideology, and social relations of the corporate state. The Powell Memo, while not the only influence, played an important role in generating, in the words of Lewis Lapham, a "cadre of ultraconservative and self-mythologising millionaires bent on rescuing the country from the hideous grasp of Satanic liberalism" (32). The most powerful members of this group were Joseph Coors in Denver, Richard Mellon Scaife in Pittsburgh, John Olin in New York City, David and Charles Koch in Wichita, the Smith Richardson family in North Carolina, and Harry Bradley in Milwaukee—all of whom agreed to finance a number of right-wing foundations to the tune of roughly $3 billion[4] over thirty years, building and strategically linking "almost 500 think tanks, centers, institutes and concerned citizens groups both within and outside of the academy [. . .]. A small sampling of these entities includes the

Cato Institute, The Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the Manhattan Institute, the Hoover Institution, the Claremont Institute, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, [the] Middle East Forum, Accuracy in Media, and the National Association of Scholars" (Jones n. pag.). For several decades, right-wing extremists have labored to put into place an ultraconservative reeducation machine—an apparatus for producing and disseminating a public pedagogy in which everything tainted with the stamp of liberal origin and the word "public" would be contested and destroyed.

Given the influence and resources of this long campaign against progressive institutions and critical thought in the United States, it is all the more important that we, as educators, sit up and take notice, especially since the university is one of the few places left where critical dialogue, debate, and dissent can take place. Some theorists believe that not only has the militarization and neoliberal reconstruction of higher education proceeded steadily within the last twenty-five years, but that it is now moving at an accelerated pace, subjecting the academy to what many progressives argue is a new and more dangerous threat. One of the most noted historians of the McCarthy era, Ellen Schrecker, insists that "today's assault on the academy is more serious" because "[u]nlike that of the McCarthy era, it reaches directly into the classroom" (B20). As Schrecker suggests, the new war being waged against higher education is not simply against dissenting public intellectuals and academic freedom, but is also deeply implicated in questions of power across the university, specifically regarding who controls the hiring process, the organization of curricula, and the nature of pedagogy itself. Moreover, conservative trustees and academics within the university receive assistance from a growing number of well-funded and powerful right-wing agencies and groups outside the walls of the academy. Joseph Beinin argues that many of these right-wing foundations and institutions have to be understood both as part of a backlash against the protest movements of the '60s—which called into question the university as a "knowledge factory" and criticized its failure to take its social functions seriously—and as political movements that shape public knowledge in ways unconstrained by the professional standards of the university. He writes:

> The substantial role of students and faculty members in the anti-Vietnam War movement; the defection of most university-based Latin America specialists from U.S. policy in the Reagan years, if not earlier; similar, if less widespread, defections among Africa and Middle East specialists; and the 'culture wars' of the 1980s and 1990s all contributed to the rise of think tanks funded by right-wing and corporate sources designed to constitute alternative sources of knowledge unconstrained by the standards of peer review, tolerance for dissent, and academic freedom. (242)

Subject to both market mechanisms and right-wing ideological rhetoric about using the academy to defend the values of Western civilization, the promise of the university as a democratic public sphere appears to be dwindling.

While it is crucial to recognize that the rise of a "new McCarthyism" cannot be attributed exclusively to the radical curtailment of civil liberties initiated by the George W. Bush administration after the cataclysmic events of September 11, 2001, it is nonetheless true that a growing culture of fear and jingoistic patriotism emboldened a post-9/11 patriotic correctness movement. This is most clearly exemplified by actions of the right-wing American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA), which issued a report shortly after the attacks accusing a supposedly unpatriotic academy of being the "weak link in America's response to the attack" (Martin and Neal n. pag.).[5] Individuals and groups who opposed Bush's foreign and domestic policies were put on the defensive—some overtly harassed—as right-wing pundits, groups, and foundations repeatedly labeled them "traitors" and "un-American." In some cases, conservative accusations that seemed disturbing, if not disturbed, before the events of 9/11 now appeared perfectly acceptable, especially in the dominant media. The legacy of this new-style "McCarthyism" is also on display in Ohio, California, and a number of other states where some public universities are requiring job applicants to sign statements confirming that they do not belong to any terrorist organization as defined by the Bush-Cheney administration, which would suggest anyone on the left.

The nature of conservative acrimony may have been marked by a new language, but the goal was largely the same: to remove from the university all vestiges of dissent and to reconstruct it as an increasingly privatized sphere for reproducing the interests of corporations and the national security state while also having it assume a front-line position in the promotion of an imperialist military agenda. In short, universities were castigated as hotbeds of left-wing radicalism; conservative students alleged that they were being humiliated and discriminated against in college and university classrooms all across the country. The language and tactics of warfare moved easily between so-called rogue states such as Iraq/Iran and a critique of universities whose defense of academic freedom did not sit well with academic and political advocates of the neoliberal security-surveillance state.[6] McCarthy-like blacklists were posted on the Internet by right-wing groups such as Campus Watch, ACTA, and Target of Opportunity,[7] attempting to both out and politically shame allegedly radical professors who were giving aid and comfort to the enemy because of their refusal to provide unqualified support for the Bush administration. "Academic balance" was now invoked as a way to protect American values and national identity when it really promoted a form of affirmative action for hiring conservative faculty. In a similar manner, "academic freedom" was redefined, both through the prism of student rights and as a legitimating referent for dismantling professional academic standards and imposing outside political oversight on the classroom. If the strategy and project of conservative ideologues became more energetic and persistent after 9/11, it is also fair to say that right-wing efforts and demands to reform higher education took a dangerous turn that far exceeded the threat posed by the previous culture wars.

Under the Bush-Cheney administration, the war on terror became a pretext for a war against any public sphere that took responsibility for the welfare of its citizens and residents, including higher education.

The neoliberal mantra of "privatize or perish" became a battle cry for a generation of right-wing activists attempting to dismantle public and higher education as democratic public spheres. The right-wing coalition of Christian evangelicals, militant nationalists, market fundamentalists, and neoconservatives who had gained influence under the Reagan administration now had unprecedented power in shaping policy under the second Bush presidency. Academics as well as public school teachers who critically addressed issues such as the U.S. presence in Iraq, the neoconservative view of an imperial presidency, the unchecked market fundamentalism of the Bush administration, or the right-wing views driving energy policies, sex education, and the use of university research "in pursuit of enhanced war making abilities" (Turse n. pag.) were either admonished, labeled "un-American," or simply fired. Similarly, academic and scientific knowledge that challenged the rational foundations of these anti-democratic worldviews was either erased from government policies or attacked by government talking heads as morally illegitimate, politically offensive, or in violation of patriotic correctness. Scientists who resisted the ban on stem cell research as well as the official government position on global warming, HIV transmission, and sex education were intimidated by congressional committees, which audited their work or threatened "to withdraw federal grant support for projects whose content they [found] substantively offensive" (Cole B7). Educators who argued for theoretical and policy alternatives to abstinence as a mode of sex education were attacked, fired, or cut out of funding programs for education. And when the forces of patriotic correctness joined the ranks of market fundamentalists, higher education was increasingly defined through the political lens of an audit culture that organized learning around measurable outcomes rather than modes of critical thinking and inquiry.

As the web of surveillance, security, mistrust, and ideological damnation spread from enemies within to enemies abroad, the Bush administration routinely and in a highly indiscriminate way increasingly revoked residency visas or denied visas to foreign scholars wishing to enter the country. All of those who were denied entry or were forced to leave the country allegedly posed a threat to national safety—though the nature of that threat was rarely ever spelled out by the Department of Homeland Security. For example, in 2007, the up-and-coming musicologist Nalini Ghuman was stopped at a San Francisco airport while on her way to perform at a Bard College music festival and was told that "she was no longer allowed to enter the United States" (N. Bernstein A19). Ms. Ghuman, a British citizen, had lived in the United States for the last ten years and was at the time an assistant professor of music at Mills College. Leon Bostein, the president of Bard College, argued that Ms. Ghuman's case is "an example of the xenophobia, incompetence, stupidity and [. . .] bureaucratic intransigence" that increasingly characterizes the National (In)Security State (N. Bernstein A19). Ms. Ghuman said the ordeal made her feel like a character in a Kafka novel. "'I don't know why it's happening, what I'm accused of,' she said. 'There's no opportunity to defend myself. One is just completely powerless'" (N. Bernstein A19). In a similar case, Riyadh Lafta, an Iraqi professor

of medicine, was denied a visa to visit the University of Washington in order to present his research findings on the high rate of cancer among children in Southern Iraq. Those academics and scientists familiar with his case believe that he was denied the visa because he had published a study in 2006 in the British medical journal, *The Lancet*, that "controversially estimated that more than 650,000 Iraqis—far more than officially reported—had died as a result of the American-led invasion" (Bollag n. pag.). Not only are such cases troubling and abusive, they are also part of a broader pattern of censorship and denial of academic freedom put into place by a government that neither tolerates dissent nor feels any responsibility to provide reasons to those it denies visas, interrogates, or puts into prison.

One of the more outlandish government abuses concerned the internationally recognized academic Tariq Ramadan, a Swiss citizen and Islamic scholar who has published over twenty books. In 2003, he was offered the prestigious Henry B. Luce Professorship of Religion, Conflict and Peace-Building at the University of Notre Dame. Ramadan accepted the job, resigned his position in Switzerland, and obtained a work visa early in 2004. Nine days before he was to fly to the United States, the Department of Homeland Security revoked his work visa, thus preventing him from assuming his teaching position at Notre Dame. While not offering a specific explanation for revoking his visa, the government suggested, without any substantial proof, that Professor Ramadan "endorsed or espoused" terrorist activities. Not only was Ramadan an outspoken critic of terrorism in all of its forms, but he was also a strong advocate of reconciling the democratic principles of both Islam and Western modernity. Professor Ramadan's advocacy in the name of peace and against global violence later earned him the distinction of being named by former Prime Minister Tony Blair "to serve on a British commission to combat terrorism" (Shuppy n. pag.). But the U.S. government continued to reject his visa application, even in defiance of a federal court order, offering up new and specious arguments in which it claimed that Ramadan had donated to charities that contributed to Hamas, even though the two humanitarian organizations that provided relief for the Palestinian people were not blacklisted by the U.S. government until 2003, a year after Professor Ramadan donated to them about $800. Ultimately, Professor Ramadan was prevented from obtaining a U.S. visa because he was critical of Bush's Middle East policies and a moderate who refused the violence of all fundamentalisms. In 2006, he wrote an article in the *Washington Post* on why he was banned from entering the United States. His words are as ominous as they are important. He writes:

> My experience reveals how U.S. authorities seek to suppress dissenting voices and—by excluding people such as me from their country—manipulate political debate in America. Unfortunately, the U.S. government's paranoia has evolved far beyond a fear of particular individuals and taken on a much more insidious form: the fear of ideas [. . .]. I fear that the United States has grown fearful of ideas. I have learned firsthand that the

> Bush administration reacts to its critics not by engaging them, but by stigmatizing and excluding them. Will foreign scholars be permitted to enter the United States only if they promise to mute their criticisms of U.S. policy? It saddens me to think of the effect this will have on the free exchange of ideas, on political debate within America, and on our ability to bridge differences across cultures. (B01)

Another instructive instance pertains to the barring of foreign academics who upon arriving in the United States to attend conferences and share their research are detained, interrogated about their political views, and then put back on flights to their own countries. This procedure has become so commonplace that many scholarly associations now hold their annual meetings in Canada. The arbitrary way in which recognized international public intellectuals and committed scholars have been denied visas by the U.S. government serves as a chilling reminder that international knowledge production is being policed in an unprecedented fashion and that appeals to the principle of academic freedom are largely viewed by the (In)Security State as either irrelevant or what Herbert Marcuse called "a disturbance created by criticism" that is ultimately met with state violence and open brutality (26). Sadly, the government is not the only political entity restricting open inquiry, critical knowledge, and dissent in the United States.

The current harassment of critical intellectuals after 9/11 has also been aggressively promoted by private advocacy groups. Media watchdogs, campus groups, and various payroll pundits not only held favor with the Bush administration, but also received millions of dollars from right-wing foundations and were powerfully positioned to monitor and quarantine any vestige of independent thought in the academy. Since the events of 9/11, academics who challenged the political orthodoxy of the Bush administration have been subjected to intimidation and harassment by conservative politicians, ultra-conservative commentators, right-wing talk-show hosts, Christian zealots, and conservative students.

Some of the most famous cases include professors such as Joseph Massad (Columbia University), Norman G. Finkelstein (DePaul University), Nadia Abu El-Haj (Barnard College), and Ward Churchill (University of Colorado at Boulder). Though these cases received wide attention in the dominant media, they represent just some of the better-known instances in which academics have been attacked by right-wing interests through highly organized campaigns of intimidation, which taken collectively suggest an all-out assault on academic freedom, critical scholarship, and the very idea of the university as a place to question and think.[8] Ward Churchill, in particular, stands as an example of the expanding web of attacks against leftist academics whose political views are represented by right-wing media as symptomatic of most professors in academia. For instance, Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the House, argued with reference to Churchill: "We are going to nail this guy and send the dominoes tumbling. And everybody who has an opinion out there and entire disciplines like ethnic studies and women's studies and cultural studies and queer

studies that we don't like won't be there anymore" (qtd. in Smallwood n. pag.). Responding to the intense pressure placed on the University of Colorado at Boulder to fire Churchill, a faculty panel was formed to investigate the incident. Recognizing that Churchill could not be fired for his infamous remarks comparing some victims of the 9/11 attacks to Nazi bureaucrats since such commentary was protected by the First Amendment, the panel searched for other acts of wrongdoing, which, in this case, eventually amounted to a charge of "research misconduct." John K. Wilson, who has published widely on the issue of academic freedom, argued that Churchill was accused of "making broad claims without adequate evidence" ("Footnote Police" n. pag.),[9] a far cry from what could reasonably be called research misconduct. Not only did the committee allege that such "misconduct" took place on the basis of a footnote reference, among other minor charges, but it proceeded to issue a "notice of intent to dismiss" ("Recommendation of Interim" n. pag.). Churchill was fired on July 24, 2007 (Frosch n. pag.). Clearly, this is an instance in which the University of Colorado succumbed to the concerted pressures of various reactionary organizations and former Colorado Governor Bill Owens, who was a right-wing activist for ACTA. Shockingly, the university committee actually affirmed in its report that academics who take unpopular positions can expect "to have their scholarship as well as their politics scrutinized" (Baron n. pag.). What is crucial about Churchill's case is that the research being investigated by the Colorado panel was work that had actually been in circulation for many years, but became the subject of a formal inquiry only after Churchill's ill-tempered comments about 9/11. This sends a chilling message to faculty in Colorado and across the nation, especially to young, nontenured faculty who are doing critical scholarship and who want to participate in public life by making their work politically relevant—a warning that was further reinforced when the Colorado committee reminded Churchill that he might not have been investigated if he had he just kept his head down and remained quiet (Baron n. pag.). No less chilling is the message sent out recently by "Bud" Peterson, chancellor of the Boulder campus, who in the aftermath of Churchill's firing insisted that the classroom is a place where the truth should not be bracketed by "relativism"—right-wing code for faculty to teach the facts, keep quiet, and never question authority. Undaunted by his own hypocrisy, Peterson made it clear recently how serious he is about the importance of introducing the search for nonpartisan truth in the classroom by announcing that he plans "to raise $9 million to create an endowed chair for what is thought to be the nation's first professor of Conservative Thought and Policy" to counter what *The Wall Street Journal* calls the left-wing politics of the Boulder campus (empirically determined by a voter registration analysis that revealed that the 800-strong faculty includes just 32 registered Republicans, which, of course, has nothing to do with determining how one actually performs in a classroom) (Simon A1).[10]

While Gingrich was honest enough to reveal that Churchill was just a pawn in a much larger war being waged by right-wing extremists in order to divest the university of its critical intellectuals and critically oriented curricula, programs, and departments, ACTA

subsequently produced a booklet titled *How Many Ward Churchills?* in which it insisted that the space that separated most faculty from Churchill was small indeed, and that by protecting such individuals, colleges and universities now "risk losing their independence and the privilege they have traditionally enjoyed" (Neal et al. 22). And how do we know that higher education has fallen into such dire straits? These apocalyptic conditions were revealed through an inane summary of various course syllabi offered by respected universities that allegedly proved "professors are using their classrooms to push political agendas in the name of teaching students to think critically" (Neal et al. 2). Courses that included discussions of race, social justice, gender equality, and whiteness as a tool of exclusion were dismissed as distorting American history, by which ACTA meant consensus history, a position made famous by the tireless efforts of Lynne Cheney, who has repeatedly asserted that American history should be celebratory even if it means overlooking "internal conflicts and the non-white population" (Schrecker qtd. in Park n. pag.). Rather than discuss the moral principles or pedagogical values of courses organized around the need to address human suffering, violence, and social injustice, the ACTA report claimed that "[a]nger and blame are central components of the pedagogy of social justice" (Neal et al. 12). In the end, the listing of course descriptions was designed to alert administrators, governing boards, trustees, and tenure and hiring committees of the need to police instructors in the name of "impartiality." Presenting itself as a defender of academic freedom, ACTA actually wants to monitor and police the academy, just as Homeland Security monitors the reading habits of library patrons and the National Security Agency spies on American citizens without first obtaining warrants. In 2007, ACTA supported a bill passed by the Missouri House of Representatives stating its public universities must protect religious freedom and "the teaching that the Bible is literally true" (Jaschik n. pag.). In response, Cary Nelson, the president of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), "called the bill [. . .] 'one of the worst pieces of higher legislation in a century!'" (qtd. in Jaschik n. pag.).

Despite its rhetoric, ACTA is not a friend of the principle of academic freedom or diversity. Nor is it comfortable with John Dewey's insistence that education should be responsive to the deepest conflicts of our time. And while the tactics to undermine academic freedom and critical education have grown more sophisticated, right-wing representations of the academy have become more shrill. For instance, James Pierson in the conservative *Weekly Standard* claimed that when sixteen million students enter what he calls the "left-wing university," they will discover that "[t]he ideology of the left university is both anti-American and anticapitalist" (n. pag.). And for Roger Kimball, editor of the conservative journal *The New Criterion*, the university has been "corrupted by the values of Woodstock [. . .] that permeate our lives like a corrosive fog." He asks, "[w]hy should parents fund the moral de-civilization of their children at the hands of tenured antinomians?" (n. pag.). Another example of these distortions occurred when former Republican Presidential candidate Reverend Pat Robertson proclaimed that there were at least "thirty to forty thousand" left-wing professors or, as he called them, "termites that have worked into the woodwork of our

academic society [. . .]. They are racists, murderers, sexual deviants and supporters of al Qaeda—and they could be teaching your kids! These guys are out and out communists, they are propagandists of the first order. You don't want your child to be brainwashed by these radicals, you just don't want it to happen. Not only be brainwashed but beat up, they beat these people up, cower them into submission" ("Interview with David Horowitz" n. pag.). Inflated rhetoric aside, the irony of this rallying cry against propaganda is that it supports a conservative project designed to legislate more outside control over teacher authority, enacts laws to protect conservative students from pedagogical "harassment" (that is, views differing from their own), and passes legislation that regulates the hiring process. But most right-wing ideologues are more subtle and more insidious than Robertson, having dressed up their rhetoric in the language of fairness and balance, thereby cleverly expropriating, as Jonathan Cole suggests, "key terms in the liberal lexicon, as if they were the only true champions of freedom and diversity on campuses" ("Academic" 8).

One of the most powerful and well-known spokespersons leading the effort for "academic balance" is David Horowitz, president of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture and the ideological force behind the online publication *FrontPage Magazine*. A self-identified former left-wing radical who has since become a right-wing conservative, he is the author of over twenty books and founder of Students for Academic Freedom, a national watchdog group that monitors what professors say in their classrooms. He is also the creator of *DiscovertheNetworks.org*, an online database whose purpose is to "catalogue all the organizations and individuals that make up" what he loosely defines in sweeping monolithic terms as "the Left" (qtd. in Jacobson, "What Makes David" A9). As one of the most forceful voices in the assault on higher education, Horowitz has used the appeal to intellectual diversity and academic freedom with great success to promote his Academic Bill of Rights (ABOR),[11] the central purpose of which, according to Horowitz, is "to enumerate the rights of students to not be indoctrinated or otherwise assaulted by political propagandists in the classroom or any educational setting" (B12). Horowitz's case for the ABOR rests on a series of faulty empirical studies, many conducted by right-wing associations, which suggest left-wing views completely dominate the academy.[12] The studies look compelling until they are more closely examined (Lewis n. pag.).[13] For example, they rarely look at colleges, departments, or programs outside of the social sciences and humanities, thus excluding a large portion of the campus. According to the *Princeton Review*, 4 of the top 10 most popular subjects are business administration and management, biology, nursing, and computer science, none of which are included in Horowitz's data (Younge n. pag.).

While it is very difficult to provide adequate statistics regarding the proportion of liberals to conservatives in academe, a University of California, Los Angeles report surveyed over 55,000 full-time faculty and administrators in 2002–03 and found that "48 percent identified themselves as either liberal or far left; 34 percent as middle of the road, and [. . .]18 percent as conservative or far right" (Jacobson "Conservatives" A8-11). All in all, 52.3 percent of college faculty either considered themselves centrist or conservative, suggesting that

balance is far less elusive than Horowitz would have us believe. Furthermore, a 2006 study by the journal *Public Opinion Quarterly* argues that "recent trends suggest increased movement to the center, toward a more moderate faculty" (Zipp and Fenwick n. pag.).

But there is more at stake here than the reliability of statistical studies measuring the voting patterns, values, and political positions of faculty. There is also the issue of whether such studies tell us anything at all about what happens in college classrooms. What correlation is to be correctly assumed between a professor's voting patterns and how he or she teaches a class? Actually, none. How might such studies deal with people whose political positions are not so clear, as when an individual is socially conservative but economically radical? And are we to assume that there is a correlation between "one's ideological orientation and the quality of one's academic work?" (Fish n. pag.). Then, of course, there's the question that the right-wing commissars refuse to acknowledge: Who is going to monitor and determine what the politics should be of a potentially new hire, existing faculty members, and departments? How does such a crude notion of politics mediate disciplinary wars between, for instance, those whose work is empirically driven and those who adhere to qualitative methods? And if balance implies that all positions are equal and deserve equal time in order not to appear biased, should universities give equal time to Holocaust deniers, to work that supported apartheid in South Africa, or to pro-slavery advocates, to name but a few? Moreover, as Russell Jacoby points out with a degree of irony, if political balance is so important, then why isn't it invoked in other commanding sectors of society, such as the police force, Pentagon, FBI, and CIA? (Jacoby 13).

The right-wing demand for balance also deploys the idea that conservative students are relentlessly harassed, intimidated, or unfairly graded because of their political views, despite their growing presence on college campuses and the generous financial support they receive from over a dozen conservative institutions. One place where such examples of alleged discrimination can be found is on the Web site of Horowitz's Students for Academic Freedom (SAF), whose credo is "[y]ou can't get a good education if they're only telling you half the story."[14] SAF has chapters on 150 campuses and maintains a Web site where students can register complaints. Most complaints express dissatisfaction with teacher comments or assigned readings that have a left/liberal orientation. Students complain, for instance, about reading lists that include books by Howard Zinn, Cornel West, or Barbara Ehrenreich. Others protest classroom screenings of Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* or other documentary films such as *Super Size Me* and *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*. Here is one student's complaint: "This class was terrible. We were assigned [three] books, plus a course reader! I don't think that just because a professor thinks they have the right to assign anything they want that they should be able to force us to read so much. In fact, I think the professor found out my religious and political beliefs and this is why he assigned so much reading."[15] Another student felt harassed because she had to read a text in class titled *Fast Food Nation*, which is faulted for arguing in favor of government regulation of the food industry. This is labeled "left indoctrination" (Ivie n. pag.).

What is disturbing about these instances is that aggrieved students and their sympathizers appear entirely indifferent to the degree to which they not only enact a political intrusion into the classroom, but also undermine the concept of informed authority, teacher expertise, and professional academic standards that provide the basis for what is taught in classrooms, the approval of courses, and who is hired to teach such courses. The complaints by conservative students often share the premise that because they are "consumers" of education, they have a right to demand what should be taught, as if knowledge is simply a commodity to be purchased according to one's taste. Awareness of academic procedures, research assessed by peer review, and basic standards for reasoning, as well as an understanding that professors earn a certain amount of authority because they are familiar with a research tradition and its methodologies, significant scholarship, and history, is entirely absent from such complaints that presuppose students have the right to listen only to ideas they agree with and to select their own classroom reading materials. Because students disagree with an unsettling idea does not mean that they should have the authority, expertise, education, or power to dictate for all their classmates what should be stated, discussed, or taught in a classroom. What is lost in these arguments is the central pedagogical assumption that teaching is about activating and questioning all forms of knowledge, providing students with the tools to critically engage with what they know and to recognize the limits of their own knowledge. It is also about learning to think from the place of the other, to "raise one's self-reflexiveness to the highest maximum point of intensity" (Hall 270).

Defending higher education from this brand of anti-intellectualism is not motivated by "political bias" on the part of so-called left-wing universities. It is motivated, quite simply, by a principle informing all academic inquiry and education: Intellectual responsibility involves an ongoing search for knowledge that enables a deeper and better understanding of the world. Neither academics nor students can ignore the conditions that make such knowledge available or even possible, that is, the conditions that enable critical scholarship and critical pedagogy both to survive and to flourish. Critical pedagogy is about teaching students how to hold authority and power accountable, providing them with the tools to make judgments freed from "the hierarchies of [official] knowledge" that attempt to shut down critical engagement. Such pedagogical tools are necessary for what Jacques Rancière calls "dissensus" or taking up a critical position that challenges the dogma of common sense (Carnevale and Kelsey 259). As he puts it, "the work of dissensus is to always reexamine the boundaries between what is supposed to be normal and what is supposed to be subversive, between what is supposed to be active, and therefore political, and what is supposed to be passive or distant, and therefore apolitical" (267). Dissensus does more than call for "a modification of the sensible" (260): it also demands a utopian pedagogy that "provides names that one can give to [. . .] the landscape of the possible," a landscape in which there is no room for the "machine that makes the 'state of things' unquestionable" while capitalizing on a "declaration of our powerlessness" (265-67). In this way, critical pedagogy is about providing the conditions for students to be agents

in a world that needs to be interrogated as part of a broader project of connecting the search for knowledge, truth, and justice to the ongoing tasks of democratizing both the university and the larger society.

For many conservatives, the commitment to critical thinking and the notion of pedagogy as a political and moral practice rather than a disinterested technical task is simply a mode of indoctrination. For instance, Horowitz advocates in his book *The Professors* for a system of higher education that effectively depoliticizes pedagogy, deskills faculty, and infantilizes students, and supports this position through the charge that a number of reputable scholars who take matters of critical thinking seriously in reality simply indoctrinate their students with political views. The book, as detailed by a report of the Free Exchange on Campus organization, is an appalling mix of falsehoods, lies, misrepresentations, and unsubstantiated anecdotes ("Facts Count" 1). Not only does Horowitz fail to include one conservative academic in his list of "dangerous" professors, but many professors are condemned simply for what they teach, as Horowitz actually has little or no ammunition against *how* they teach. For example, Professor Lewis Gordon is criticized for including "contributions from Africana and Eastern thought" in his course on existentialism (*The Professors* 2). An utterly baffling criticism since Lewis Gordon is the world's leading African existential philosopher, a philosopher, moreover, who recognizes that "the body of literature that constitutes European existentialism is but one continent's response to a set of problems that date from the moment human beings faced problems of anguish and despair" (4). Horowitz's endless invective against critical intellectuals, all of whom he seems to consider left-wing, is perfectly captured in a comment he made on Dr. Laura's talk show in which he told the listening audience that "campus leftists hate America more than the terrorists" (qtd. in Berkowitz 1-6). How does one take seriously Horowitz's call for fairness when he labels the American Library Association in his online magazine as "a terrorist sanctuary" (qtd. in Rose n. pag.), or describes Noam Chomsky, whom *The New Yorker* named "one of the greatest minds of the 20th century" (Macfarquhar n. pag.), as "demonic and seditious" and claims the purpose of Chomsky's work is "to incite believers to provide aid and comfort to the enemies of the U.S." (*Unholy* 56)? Indeed, what is one to make of Horowitz's online manual, *A Guide to the Political Left*, in which the mild-mannered film critic Roger Ebert occupies the same ideological ground as Omar Abdel Rahman, the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing? Can one really believe that Horowitz is a voice for unbiased and open inquiry when he portrays as activists for "left-wing agendas and causes" the late Peter Jennings, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Garrison Keillor, and Katie Couric?[16]

But apparently politicians at all levels of government *do* take Horowitz seriously. In 2005, Florida legislators considered a bill inspired by the ABOR that would provide students with the right to sue their professors if they felt their views, such as a belief in Intelligent Design, were disrespected in class (Vanlandingham n. pag.). At the federal level, the ABOR legislation made its way through various House and Senate committees with the firm backing of a number

of politicians and was passed in the House of Representatives in March 2006, but went no further.[17] In 2007, a Senate committee in Arizona passed a bill in which faculty could be fined up to $500 for "advocating one side of a social, political, or cultural issue that is a matter of partisan controversy" (Jaschik, "$500" n. pag.).

As Stanley Fish has argued, "balance" is a flawed concept and should be understood as a political tactic rather than an academic value (n. pag.). The appeal to balance is designed to do more than get conservatives teaching in English departments, promote intellectual diversity, or protect conservative students from the horrors of left-wing indoctrination: its deeper purpose is to monitor pedagogical exchange through government intervention, calling into question the viability of academic integrity and undermining the university as a public sphere that educates students as critically engaged and responsible citizens in the larger global context. The attack by Horowitz and his allies against liberal faculty and programs in the social sciences and humanities such as Middle East studies, women's studies, and peace studies has opened the door to a whole new level of assault on academic freedom, teacher authority, and critical pedagogy.[18] These attacks, as I have pointed out, are much more widespread and, in my estimation, much more dangerous than the McCarthyite campaign several decades ago.

In response to this attack on academic freedom, unfortunately even the most spirited defenders of the university as a democratic public sphere too often overlook the ominous threat being posed to what takes place in the classroom, and by extension, to the very nature of pedagogy as a political, moral, and critical practice.[19] The concept of balance demeans teacher authority by suggesting that a political litmus test is the most appropriate consideration for teaching, and it devalues students by suggesting that they are happy robots, interested not in thinking but in merely acquiring skills for jobs. In this view, students are rendered incapable of thinking critically or engaging with knowledge that unsettles their worldviews and are considered too weak to resist ideas that challenge their commonsense understanding of the world. And teachers are turned into instruments of official power and apologists for the existing order. Teacher authority can never be neutral: nor can it be assessed in terms that are narrowly ideological. It is always broadly political and interventionist in terms of the knowledge-effects it produces, the classroom experiences it organizes, and the future it presupposes in the countless ways in which it addresses the world. Teacher authority suggests that as educators we must make a sincere effort to be self-reflective about the value-laden nature of our authority while rising to the fundamental challenge of educating students to take responsibility for the direction of society.

It should come as no surprise that many religious and political conservatives view critical pedagogy as dangerous, often treating it with utter disdain or contempt. Critical pedagogy's alleged crimes can be found in some of its most important presuppositions about the purpose of education and the responsibility of educators. These include its central tenet that at the very core of education is the task of educating students to become critical agents who actively question and negotiate

the relationships between theory and practice, schooling and everyday life, and the larger society and the domain of common sense. Also at stake here is the recognition that critical pedagogy opens up a space where students should be able to come to terms with their own power as critical agents; that is, it provides a sphere where the unconditional freedom to question and take a stance is central to the purpose of the university, if not also to democracy itself (Derrida 233). In this discourse, pedagogy always represents a commitment to the future, and it remains the task of educators to make sure that the future points the way to a more socially just world, a world in which the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equality function to better, as part of a broader democratic project, the grounds upon which life is lived. This is hardly a prescription for political indoctrination, but it is a project that gives education its most valued purpose and meaning. In other words, critical pedagogy forges both critique and agency through a language of skepticism and possibility and a culture of openness, debate, and engagement—all elements that are now at risk in the latest and most dangerous critique of higher education. Not only is academic freedom defended in the justification for critical pedagogical work, but it is also importantly safeguarded through the modes of academic labor and governance that connect the search for knowledge with a capacity for mutual criticism among teachers and students that is "based in the quality of their ideas, rather than in their social positions" (Angus 67-68).

While liberals, progressives, and left-oriented educators have increasingly opposed the right-wing assault on higher education, they have not done enough either theoretically or politically. While there is a greater concern about the shameless state of nontenured and part-time faculty in the United States (actually, an under-the-radar parallel alternative to the traditional tenure system), such concerns have not been connected to a full-spirited attack on other anti-democratic forces now affecting higher education through a growing managerialism and neoliberal approach to university governance.[20] Neoliberalism makes possible not only the ongoing corporatization of the university and the increasing militarization of knowledge, but also the powerlessness of faculty who are increasingly treated as disposable populations.

The three major academic unions in the United States have neither waged a spirited defense of higher education as a democratic public sphere, nor have they moved beyond a limited defense of academic freedom to a restructuring of university power and the restoration of democratic decision-making to benefit students and faculty. Moreover, as students increasingly find themselves part of an indentured generation, there is a need for educators and others to once again connect matters of equity and excellence as two inseparable freedoms. Why aren't the unions producing their own forms of public pedagogy, educating the larger public about the nature of the crisis of higher education, particularly as it translates into a crisis of opportunity, public life, and democracy itself? What responsibility do the unions have to connect the work of higher education to a broader public good, defend the rights of academics as public intellectuals, and take

seriously academic freedom as a discourse and set of freedoms that not only engage in the search for truth, but also affirm the importance of social responsibility and civic commitment? Perhaps they are quiet because they are under the illusion that tenure will protect them, or they believe that the attack on academic freedom has little to do with how they perform their academic labor. If so, then they would be wrong on both counts, and unless the unions and progressives mobilize to protect the institutionalized relationships between democracy and pedagogy, teacher authority and classroom autonomy, higher education will be at the mercy of a right-wing revolution that views democracy as an excess and the university as a threat to society at large.

Pedagogy must be understood as central to any discourse about academic freedom, but, more importantly, it must be understood as the most crucial referent we have for understanding politics and defending the university as one of the very few remaining democratic public spheres in the United States today. As Ian Angus rightly argues, "[t]he justification for academic freedom lies in the activity of critical thinking" (67-68) and the pedagogical and political conditions necessary to protect it. I believe that too many notions of academic freedom are defined through a privatized notion of freedom, largely removed from the issue of democratic governance, which is the primary foundation enabling academic freedom to become a reality. Right-wing notions of teaching and learning constitute a kind of anti-pedagogy, substituting conformity for dialogue and ideological inflexibility for critical engagement. Such attacks should be named for what they are—an affirmation of thoughtlessness, and an antidote to the difficult process of self and social criticism.[21] In spite of what conservatives claim, this type of pedagogy is not education, but a kind of training that produces a flight from self and society. Its outcome is not a student who feels a responsibility to others, but one who feels the presence of difference as an unbearable burden to be contained or expelled.

In this way, it becomes apparent that the current right-wing assault on higher education is directed not only against the conditions that make critical pedagogy possible, but also against the possibility of raising questions about the real problems facing higher education and society today, which include the increasing role of part-time labor, the instrumentalization of knowledge, the rise of an expanding national security state, the hijacking of public spheres by corporate and militarized interests, and the increasing attempts by right-wing extremists to turn education into job training and public pedagogy into an extended exercise in patriotic xenophobia. All of these efforts undermine the idea of the university as central to a functioning democracy in which people are encouraged to think, to engage knowledge critically, to make judgments, to assume responsibility for what it means to know something, and to understand the consequences of such knowledge for the world at large.

Higher education has become part of a market-driven and militarized culture imposing upon academics and students new modes of discipline that close down the spaces to think critically, undermine substantive dialogue, and restrict students from thinking outside of

established expectations. The conservative pedagogical project, despite paying lip service to the idea of "balance," is less about promoting intellectual curiosity, understanding the world differently, or enabling students to raise fundamental questions about "what sort of world one is constructing" (Rancière qtd. in Carnevale and Kelsey 263). On the contrary, its primary purpose is to produce dutiful subjects willing to sacrifice their sense of agency for a militaristic sense of order and an unquestioning respect for authority. This is more than a pedagogy for conformity; it is also a receipt for a type of thoughtlessness that, as Hannah Arendt reminds us, is at the heart of totalitarian regimes.[22]

In light of this right-wing assault on critical thought, educators have a political and moral responsibility to critique the university as a major element in the military-industrial-academic complex. At the very least, this means being attentive to the ways in which conservative pedagogical practices deny the democratic purposes of education and undermine the possibility of a critical citizenry. Yet such a critique, while important, is not enough. Academics also have a responsibility to make clear higher education's association with other memories, brought back to life in the 1960s, in which the academy was remembered for its "public role in developing citizenship and social awareness—a role that shaped and overrode its economic function" (Angus 64-65). Such memories, however uncomfortable to the new corporate managers of higher education, must be nurtured and developed in defense of higher education as an important site of both critical thought and democratization. Instead of a narrative of decline, educators need a discourse of critique and resistance, possibility and hope. Such memories both recall and seek to reclaim how consciousness of the public and democratic role of higher education, however imperfect, gives new meaning to its purpose and raises fundamental questions about how knowledge can be emancipatory and how an education for democracy can be both desirable and possible.

Memories of educational resistance and hope suggest more than the usual academic talk about shattering the boundaries that separate academic disciplines or making connections to students' lives, however important these considerations might be. There is also, as Stuart Hall points out, the urgent need for educators to provide students with "[c]ritical knowledge [that is] ahead of traditional knowledge [. . .] better than anything that traditional knowledge can produce, because only serious ideas are going to stand up." Moreover, there is also the need to recognize "the social limits of academic knowledge. Critical intellectual work cannot be limited to the university but must constantly look for ways of making that knowledge available to wider social forces" (qtd. in de Peuter 113-14). If Hall is right, and I think he is, educators have a pedagogical responsibility to make knowledge meaningful in order to make it critical and transformative. But such knowledge should be more than a provocation that takes students beyond the world they already know; it should also expand the range of human possibilities by connecting what students know and how they come to know to instilling in them both "a disgust for all forms of socially produced injustice" (Bauman qtd. in Bauman and Tester 4) and the desire to make the world different from what it is.

While Hannah Arendt did not address directly the importance of critical pedagogy, she understood that in its absence monstrous deeds often committed on a gigantic scale had less to do with some grand notion of evil than with a "quite authentic inability to think" (*Responsibility* 159). For Arendt, the absence of a capacity for thinking, making judgments, and assuming responsibility constituted the conditions not merely for stupidity, but for a politics exemplified in old and new forms of totalitarianism. The current right-wing assault on higher education is in reality an attack on the most rudimentary conditions of democratic politics. Democracy cannot work if citizens are not autonomous, self-judging, curious, reflective, and independent—qualities that are indispensable for students if they are going to make vital judgments and choices about participating in and shaping decisions that affect everyday life, institutional reform, and governmental policy in their own country and around the globe. This means educators both in and outside of the university need to reassert pedagogy as the cornerstone of democracy by demonstrating, in our classrooms and the broader public, that it provides the very foundation for students to learn not merely how to be governed, but also how to be capable of governing.

Notes

[1] See my book *The University in Chains*, where I take these issues up in great detail.

[2] See my and Susan Searls Giroux's *Take Back Higher Education,* as well as my book *Against the Terror of Neoliberalism*.

[3] For an excellent analysis of this attack, see Doumani, "Between Coercion and Privatization" 11–57; and Gerstmann and Streb. See Abowd, et al. for a sustained and informative discussion of academic freedom after 9/11. See also AAUP Special Committee; Cole, "Academic Freedom Under Fire" 1-23; American Federation; and Finkin, et al.

[4] See Johnson.

[5] This statement was deleted from the revised February 2002 version of the report previously available on the ACTA Web site at http://www.goacta.org/publications/Reports/defciv.pdf.

[6] I have taken this term, at least part of it, from a quote by Sheila Slaughter. See Byrne.

[7] See "The Hit List."

[8] See Giroux, "Academic Freedom" 1-42.

[9] See also Wilson, *Patriotic Correctness*.

[10] See also Fish, "More Colorado Follies" n. pag.

[11] For more information, the Academic Bill of Rights may be found online at http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/abor.html.

[12] See, for instance, Wilson, *Patriotic Correctness*; Jacoby; Plissner; and Furuhashi.

[13] See Lewis's response to Neal in "Political Bias."

[14] The Students for Academic Freedom (SAF) Web site address is http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org.

[15] "SAF Complaint Center" can be found at http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/comp/default.asp.

[16] This silly shame and smear list can be found online at http://www.discoverthenetworks.com/individual.asp.

[17] In the House of Representatives, ABOR was taken up as HR 3077, which was part of HR 609. It is Title VI of the Higher Education Act. This is why it also called Title VI in some discussions. This House version is also called the College Access and Opportunity Act and passed the House. It has been recommended with some significant revisions to the Senate as S 1614. For a summary of the differences, see the AAUP Web site at http://aaup.org/govrel/hea/index.htm.

[18] See Beinin 242.

[19] I have taken up the issues of critical pedagogy, democracy, and schooling in a number of books. See *America on the Edge*; *Border Crossings*; *Giroux Reader*; *University in Chains;* and with Susan Searls Giroux, *Take Back Higher Education*.

[20] See Bousquet for an excellent analysis of contingent academic labor as part of the process of the subordination of higher education to the demands of capital and corporate power.

[21] These themes in Arendt's work are explored in detail in Young-Bruehl.

[22] See Arendt, *Origins*.

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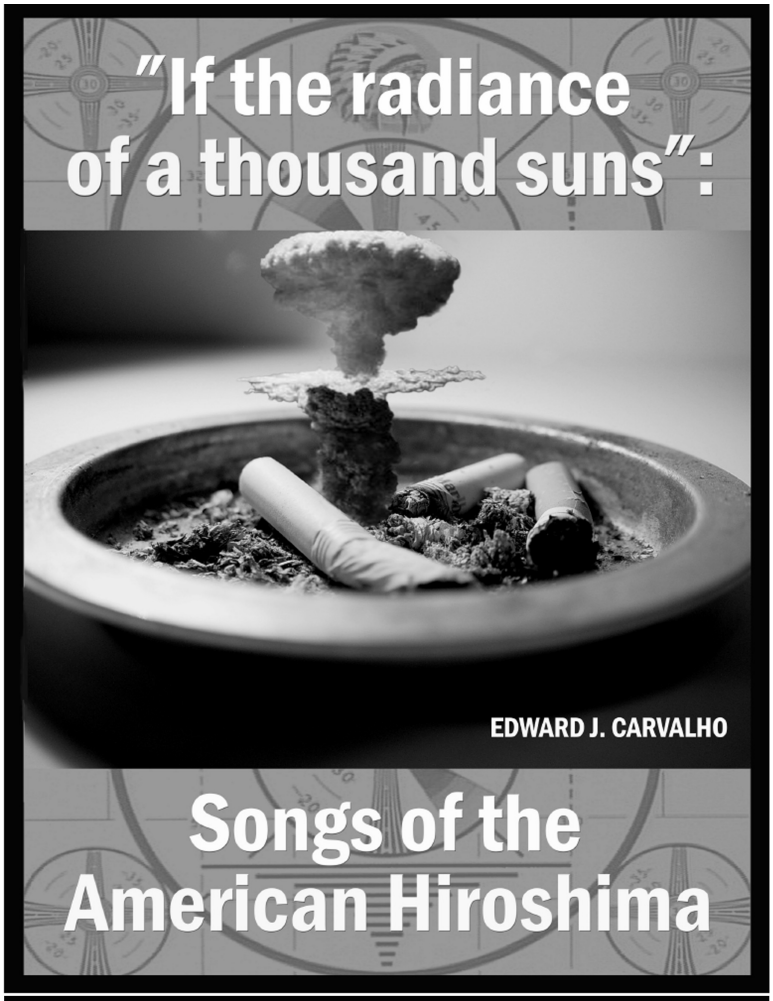

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