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Cultural Diversity and the Perversion of Tolerance

The mainstream media's amplification of the "PC" controversy has offered a moralistic way out for anyone who doesn't like being asked to reflect on systemic harm done to a wide range of groups the political right treats as economic burdens, malcontents and wound-lickers. As they have done in the past, the national media have seized an idea and distorted it through trivialization and exaggeration. The term "politically correct" should be buried, as it has been emptied of meaning through over-use and distortion. The purpose of this essay is to show how this popular subject perverts the idea of tolerance and to highlight the national media's changing role in defining tolerance for the American public. We do not assume the "public" is necessarily taken in by the prevailing presentations, but we do view the lack of equally visible intelligent criticism of the distortions presented by the media as a sign of right-wing dominance over public discourse. Rather than mimic one man's cynical flattery of the American people when he regularly asserts they are too smart to be taken in, we make a different assumption below, namely, that "the American people" are not the ones who possess the means by which the subject of this essay and many other contemporary political issues are framed.

Newsweek's depiction of a recent menace to society warns of the new fascists and McCarthyists, the "tenured radicals" on college campuses whose authoritarian impulses come into full flower as they arrogantly badger undergraduates for not toeing the PC party line through incorrect expression (Adler 1990). Deployed by the same mentality responsible for Accuracy in Academia, PC has become a buzzword in a campaign ostensibly waged against intolerance and authoritarianism in the university. This roundabout propagation of the right's cultural agenda which the PC "debate" entails allows the media to cast itself on the side of the angels without seeming to take too strong a one-sided stand. In classic doublespeak, contemporary efforts by professors to talk about chauvinism,

discrimination, and imperialism are branded categorically by the media as exercises in intolerance. The subject of national magazines, best-selling books, and television talk shows, the issue is now squarely in the public sphere. A survey conducted for the Times Mirror Company in May 1991 found that 48 percent of a national adult sample had heard the term, which places it in the domain of a wider public (Public Opinion Online 1991). As a result of the pressure on universities, knees are jerking nationwide in reaction to what is represented by the media as the intolerance of multiculturalism *per se*. Recently, some liberals have begun to join conservatives in the ranks of the National Association of Scholars, an organization whose primary mission is to stamp out PC. Contrary to the way in which this situation appears, the greater intolerance comes as it always does, from the right. The interesting thing about the present controversy is that the mass media, one of the greatest beneficiaries of the first amendment, is now seeking to silence academic discourse.

In the 1960s, a political target for conservatives was the "liberal" media—mainstream newspapers and magazines, and the commercial television networks—culminating in the Pentagon Papers case. Throughout the Nixon presidency, Vice-President Spiro Agnew was known for his attacks on the media, declaring that they failed to keep news and opinion separate and, furthermore, that they wielded a liberal bias. In the Reagan years, following a Democratic administration which gained little sympathy from the press, the Right re-grouped and this time its media strategies were more subtle and contained little of the clumsy sort of confrontation for which the comparatively un-savvy Nixon and Agnew were known. In part, the Reagan strategy amounted to exploiting the competition among reporters and their organizations by tossing bones in the form of scoops to those particularly adept at understanding and catering to the image demands of conservatives in power. Reagan's administration was well known for its frequent "leaks" which, it has been reasonably speculated, were planned quite carefully. The strategy also amounted to manipulating the media in other ways whenever possible, particularly television. In the Bush as well as the Reagan eras television news has been eager to show whatever pictures might be released or authorized for public consumption. During the Persian Gulf war, Pentagon-supplied action-pictures, video games, and expert interviews with retired colonels about the intricacies of smart weapons were what excited viewers' fancies, not the talking head of Peter Arnett and other unexciting second-hand reports of death and destruction. In 1971 CBS shocked the American public with the documentary about government public relations efforts in "The Selling of the Pentagon." In 1991 CBS sold the Pentagon.

Under Reagan, the craft of deceptive PR practices was elevated. In stage-managing the broadcast of pleasing pictures on the evening news, whatever critical commentary reporters might obligingly provide as accompaniment was rendered extraneous. A segment of Bill Moyers' valuable 1990 PBS series "The Public Mind" usefully illustrates how tele-

vision news was enfeebled by Reagan's former adviser Michael Deaver and his staff, who knew that they could get television's visual imperative to work in their favor. Openly contradictory images such as Reagan vetoing legislation supportive of labor unions, juxtaposed with him hoisting a beer that evening with the "working stiff" (Deaver's words) at a working class bar, deflate the antagonism for those who are harmed: "It hurts, but it feels good" is the message. Distressed about being used to purvey staged, but pleasing images which are at great odds with critical realities, CBS White House correspondent Leslie Stahl confesses to Moyers that she is not able to resist. After all, she offers, the TV news is also supposed to entertain. It is a visual medium. And entertain it does, but television is not the only news medium which in pursuit of commercial success seeks to please rather than trouble, to oversimplify rather than probe ("The Public Mind" 1990).

Most newspapers and magazines compete commercially and thus cater to the demands which marketplace popularity dictates. The heat-without-light approach to journalism is, of course, exactly what the Bush administration expects of the media, which received high marks for its performance in the Gulf. Among other things, the war provided a frightening opportunity for national politicians to provide evidence of leadership of any kind, even if by way of a holocaust. But President Bush and his retainers know that he'll have to have some other credits besides the decimation of Iraq to his name in the coming election, particularly on the domestic front. He's also aware that it could be a campaign liability to launch a failed war on a real domestic problem. Witness the "war on drugs," which isolates an inanimate object (drugs), Third World drug smugglers (the foreign invaders), and "low-life" street pushers rather than giving attention to the systemic problems which lead people to steal and kill in order to be able to numb themselves from hopelessness. The war on drugs will remain a failure in large part because conquering the drug trade would require a war on poverty, which Bush would never wage in earnest. Bush's economic style is trickle-down all the way. Give him a capital gains tax cut and the nation will be kinder and gentler. In essence, Bush's domestic policies articulate by example that noblesse oblige is a New Dealism which ought to go the way of all liberal balderdash.

The political ramifications of the PC controversy reach far beyond academia and in very important ways complement the economic and political programs begun by the Reagan regime. With the onset of campaign, the controversy takes on a more insidious character as a debate on intellectual tolerance in academia is converted into a political issue. In what seems to be *Newsweek's* hope, given its extensive coverage of the subject, the magazine recently declared that the PC controversy could very well become an important "wedge issue" in the next presidential election (Thomas 1991, 70). The press has already done its part by contributing anecdotes to pave the campaign trail. Indeed, a moral "victory" here might help to further extend the conservative influence over academia to the de-

gree it now enjoys over the mainstream media. There is merit to *Newsweek's* suggestion, as George Bush demonstrated in his May 4th, 1991 commencement address at the University of Michigan when he attacked campus leftism in the name of the Bill of Rights.

The new orthodoxies of political correctness which so outrage conservatives are now familiar. They are illustrated by the frequently trotted out stories of misguided efforts, in the name of sensitivity, to rule out phrases such as "a chink in his armor" and "a nip in the air" due to assertions about their racist overtones, stories of the denial of students' constitutional right to engage in noxious expression, and stories of righteous and counter-productive attempts by faculty to bully students, colleagues and administrators into intellectual self-flagellation through unconstitutional amendments to university codes. Matters are not helped much when, in the name of multiculturalism, academics are quoted making statements damaging to all scholars committed to stimulating a broader range of vital thought in the university. Literary critic Stanley Fish was recently quoted in *The New Republic* saying of his students and colleagues: "I want them to do what I tell them to . . . I want to be able to walk into any first-rate faculty anywhere and dominate it, shape it to my will. I'm fascinated by my own will" (Siegel 1991, 40). On a recent forum about the PC controversy, Fish denied ever having made such a damnable statement, and the force of his denial necessitates a presumption of innocence ("Firing Line" 1991). Unfortunately, the viewpoint, perhaps falsely and maliciously attributed to Fish, is representative of a certain strain of radical chic academic discourse, uttered perhaps by lesser minds, and certainly detrimental to the varied perspectives its adherents presume to represent. The view offers sound reasons for liberals to join conservatives in opposing multicultural efforts as a Pandora's box of nihilism while it delivers ammunition needed by conservatives to defend tradition for its own sake and the power it edifies for them against the imagined onslaught of untold numbers who would seek to politicize art and literature (imagine!) and who deign to suggest that the production and interpretation of culture do not occur autonomously of political and economic influences.

In a recent column, *Newsweek's* George Will (1991) depicts the "tenured radicals" as the SS of academia who brutalize the malleable minds of their students (72). These nefarious creatures couldn't change the country in the '60s with their now roundly discredited political heresies (and witness the moral victory of capitalism in Central and Eastern Europe) so they systematically harass our country's future leaders by instituting requirements to study multicultural nonsense, to reflect tediously on racist and sexist language, to fear chastisement or punishment for exercising their right to shout racist slogans and, to top it off, to reject Western intellectual traditions wholesale. These charges, now widely circulated by the press, cite Nazism and McCarthyism as the bogeymen which the political correction officers are resurrecting. The "thought police" are out to corrupt our youth through intellectual terrorism and indoctrination.

Occasionally, in the name of “fairness,” several of these magazines have also buried in their pages brief defenses of the nobility of the causes of combatting racism, sexism, imperialism and other isms within higher education. This gives the press a token of “balance,” but they rely much more on the juicy stuff that sells copies. Editorial intentions aside, examine the covers of national magazines which have “covered” the PC story in the past year or so and decide whether “balance” is the first word which comes to mind (Adler 1990; Fennell 1991; Thomas 1991).

Despite its un-balanced coverage of the PC controversy, the popular media unquestionably votes in favor of applying pressure on universities which goes beyond requiring them to comply with the Bill of Rights. According to *Newsweek's* cover story, “What is distressing is that at the university, of all places, tolerance has to be imposed rather than taught, and that ‘progress’ so often is just the replacement of one repressive orthodoxy by another” (Adler 1990). Admitting that a repressive orthodoxy is in place, *Newsweek* leaps to the conclusion that any challenge to it must be equally orthodox, if not more, so.¹ Much of this and other analyses of the subject go beyond legal demands and argue for teachers and students who advance reasonable efforts to transform the academy to engage in self-censorship and for university administrators to apply “appropriate” institutional pressure. No longer a defender of freedom of expression, the mainstream media goes beyond fueling justified rage over the denial of constitutional rights and advances a reactionary gag rule against intellectual fashion. Fashion no doubt will subside on its own and deserves critical scrutiny in the meantime. But more perniciously, in eliding the reasonable and the unreasonable efforts to advance cultural awareness and understanding, the media goes beyond critiquing fashion to help legitimate academic censorship. In essence, the media have been irresponsible and they are doing harm to university autonomy and academic freedom.

The subject of political correctness is troubling among liberals who understandably wish to distinguish absurd excess from enlightened change, particularly when they hear the word “intolerant.” Wishing to avoid implication in the excesses of political correctness, liberals are apt to toss out their tolerance for pluralism and equality along with the orthodoxies which are truly offensive. Liberalism stands behind First Amendment protections of the right to engage in hateful expression as long as it is not directed at individuals or accompanied by violent acts. Though sometimes at odds with liberal theory, much of the political left has moved in liberalism’s direction as socialist theory argues increasingly on behalf of pluralism and tolerance. For example, Norberto Bobbio argues in his collection of essays on the future of democracy for what he terms a “left-wing view of John Stuart Mill,” (Bobbio 1987, 99) by advocating the appropriation of the ideals of the classic texts of liberal theory within socialist thought, while David Held’s (1987) vision of socialism calls for abandoning “the seemingly endless and fruitless juxtaposition of liberalism with Marxism” (263).

Such tendencies must seem a bit scary to liberals who are not interested in increasing their lefty quotients, particularly those who have been around long enough to have witnessed McCarthyism first-hand. McCarthyism languished (or was at least abortive) in the Vietnam era as the nation called for an end to the death toll. Then in the 1980s, the flames of the Cold War which Reagan and Thatcher fanned so vigorously were accompanied by the return of a latent McCarthyism in the form of dismantling social (“ist”) programs and, in the case of Reagan, calling upon the unemployed and homeless to look in the Sunday *New York Times* employment section for salvation. Riding high on the rhetoric of the free world against the evil empire, Reagan found easy prey at home among those in the Democratic party who would stand in his way as he unburdened this country from the threat of creeping socialism. The intimidation factor was a valuable tool for Republicans in the 1988 presidential campaign as we witnessed the rhetorical victory of George Bush, who eternally damned Michael Dukakis as a “card carrying liberal,” that is, a member of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), on national television. Bush neglected to mention that the ACLU has taken on some very unpopular causes in the name of tolerance, including a 1977-78 defense of the rights of right-wing, militant, uniformed neo-Nazis to hold public demonstrations in the largely Jewish suburb of Skokie, Illinois, despite the extreme offensiveness to a wide spectrum of other Americans and despite a loss of fifteen to twenty percent of the ACLU’s national membership (Hentoff 1980, 310-15).

As the ACLU incident during the Bush-Dukakis debate illustrates, Liberal and Left are in essence the same for right-wing ideologues, who generously apply the color red to any political challenge. This tendency is further entrenched by (regrettably) opinion-leading publications such as *Newsweek*, which offers its own curdled depiction of the new red stain of PC in academe—as if there were such a monolithic dogma—as “a totalitarian philosophy” (Adler 1990, 51). In addition, it asserts that “[p]olitically, PC is Marxist in origin” and “[i]ntellectually, PC is informed by deconstructionism, a theory of literary criticism associated with the French thinker Jacques Derrida” (Adler 1990, 53). For anyone with a passing knowledge of Marxism and contemporary literary criticism, this inaccurate conflation must prove puzzling, since Marxian theory and deconstruction are found more often to be in fundamental opposition to one another. Such distortion at the intellectual level has its equivalent in *Newsweek*’s reduction of all political differences within the university and society at large to a choice between the free world and the legacies of Stalin and the Gang of Four: “The failure of Marxist systems throughout the world has not noticeably dimmed the allure of left-wing politics for American academics” (Adler 1990, 53). Through ignorance, deliberate elision, or both, *Newsweek* and other popular magazines have failed to provide an accurate representation to the public of distinct currents in academic discourse but instead have chosen to draw from the standard

repertoire of McCarthyist tactics by lumping together and demonizing all intellectual challenges to conservative cultural, political and economic hegemony. Moreover, whether or not one agrees with Marx's explanations of the causes of human suffering under industrial capitalism, it remains a fact that he was committed, both through his personal experiences and through his philosophical writings, to the preservation of freedom of expression (now presumably imperiled by the thought police), which Marx saw being threatened in his own time by a trend which has worsened in our time, namely, the concentration of elite control over the means of public expression and the silencing of opposing views (Marx 1974).² One need not be a "Marxist," however one chooses to define the term, to truthfully acknowledge that the dominant definition of freedom of public expression today is one which is equated primarily with property rights, not democracy.

Now the private property of conservatives, a distorted idea of freedom of expression has the assent of a growing number of liberals for "pragmatic" reasons. Unsure of the tides, many Democrats since the Reagan era have embraced the ideology of the "political liberal and fiscal conservative" (a Republican who lies?) who, in the best of all possible worlds, would prefer not to classify catsup as a vegetable but for the time being must be pragmatic and favor welfare statism for selected populations only, mainly within the defense industry. Perhaps that will change as Bush's continued vulnerability on the domestic front presents a greater political opportunity. Democrats in Congress want to do the right thing but there isn't enough PAC money in it. What's an incumbent to do? Unfortunately, given its record over the past several years, Democrats could just as easily and complacently serve the right exactly what it wants, namely, added power to shame college teachers into silence about real societal problems. After all, why not be civil? What is it with these PC fanatics anyway? It's not clear that we can hope for more from a party with little heart, one which in recent years has helped to seal leaks in a political vacuum whose opening mainly admits latter-day social Darwinists.

Conservatives have selectively beaten down not only the excesses but also the achievements of the welfare state, yet they remain frustrated because their victory hasn't been a total one. It seems to have been wisely noted by the beneficiaries of the massive re-distribution of wealth during the Reagan era that socially traumatic economic readjustment requires the lubricant of cultural legitimacy. It is quite appropriate, then, that the wholesale scuttling of the New Deal inheritance was accompanied on the political and cultural fronts with appeals to racism and sexism on the one hand and a rekindling of extreme nationalism on the other. The destruction of Iraq bodes well for defense industry economics, just as depictions of the family's "new traditionalism" and charges of "reverse discrimination" assure the promulgation of discriminatory gender and race economics.

With the political and economic programs of Reagan and Thatcher now fully in motion, time is being set aside for unfinished ideological mop-up

work in the form of attacks on efforts to foster social justice which fall outside the legal system. In the Reagan era and since, dismantling social programs was defended by the argument that they didn't work. In the absence of state support, we are now met with the brutal subtext of a conservative ideology which says, in essence, "We don't want to correct injustice, we only want to seem like we're doing so." Tokenism and its power to deflect attention away from criticisms of deeper problems is alive and well, from Supreme Court appointments to photo opportunities in inner city classrooms. The political correctness controversy, from this angle, presents an excellent opportunity for the right to effectively discredit any vestiges of intellectual support for progressive social change. This cultural assault from the right in the name of "tolerance" leaves the term gutted of meaning.

What we are seeing with the "down with PC" campaign is the abandonment of the ideals of tolerance which liberal theory historically has defended and to which progressive movements should now appeal. The mass media have now come to be a bullhorn for an intolerant right which temporarily has the moral indignation of a majority of the public on its side. But for the media to side with the Right in branding institutional efforts to support and expand diversity in the university as McCarthyist is nonsense. McCarthyism relied on the concentrated power of national politicians to be effective in intimidating those who were subdued. The red scare was a "struggle" only in the sense that it was staged to appear so, for those who waged the Cold War against their fellow citizens had the might of Congress on their side. A major difference between the politically correct zealots of today, who (if they do exist) are hardly representative of the very wide range of scholars committed to fostering and supporting diversity in education and in society, and the McCarthyists of the 1950s, is that the former do not have the ability to abuse their very limited positions of power over the public mind the way the courts and Congress did in bludgeoning private citizens. Under McCarthyism, individuals had their livelihoods destroyed by innuendo alone since members of Congress are protected from libel suits in matters of state. No such power exists in the hands of university employees, and the First Amendment provides recourse for those in public universities who feel they are being censored by this imagined menace. Not surprisingly, William F. Buckley, Jr., in a recent debate on political correctness on "Firing Line," refers to academic McCarthyism of the 1950s as a "historical fiction." He also says fear of suppression was not suggested by more than a few of the 2,500 academics with whom he had contact in that era. Rather than evidence of McCarthyism's absence, this observation seems more explainable as self-censorship and denial. Contradicting Buckley's casual assertion is the wealth of evidence to illustrate the insidious as well as the more blatantly brutal realities of academic McCarthyism in Ellen Schrucker's (1986) *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*.

The “tolerance” called for today by the right is a term of expedience, passionately defended by those whose dominance is challenged by claims made by legitimate interests which have been ignored, suppressed, or defeated. Our reasoning is illustrated usefully through an analogy from Robert Paul Wolff (1965) in a collection of essays co-authored with Herbert Marcuse and Barrington Moore:

It is as though an umpire were to come upon a baseball game in progress between big boys and little boys, in which the big boys cheated, broke the rules, claimed hits that were outs, and made the little boys accept the injustice by brute force. If the umpire undertakes to “regulate” the game by simply enforcing the “rules” actually being practiced, he does not thereby make the game a fair one. Indeed, he may actually make matters worse, because if the little boys get up their courage, band together, and decide to fight it out, the umpire will accuse them of breaking the rules and throw his weight against them! Precisely this sort of thing happens in American pluralist politics. (47-48)

In the same slim but powerful volume, Marcuse characterized such tolerance as “repressive tolerance” because “[i]n such a society, tolerance is de facto limited on the dual ground of legalized violence or suppression (police, armed forces, guards of all sorts) and of the privileged position held by the predominant interests and their ‘connections’” (Marcuse 1965, 85) Typically, those who enjoy disproportionate power do not wish to have indefensible attitudes or behaviors politicized. From this perspective, it is vital to the winning of consent over those who are dominated that political controversy be subdued by way of defining as common sense the rationale for the prevailing order. By definition, common sense is not subject to scrutiny.

In the post-Reagan era a cultural revolution is afoot. “Not another Vietnam” recently meant more than winning a military campaign with decisive technological advantages, concealment of civilian casualties, and massive public relations support from the mainstream media. It also meant that the ability to wage war must exist without the stone in the shoe of political legitimation which campus life of the 1960s represents to conservative political leaders of today. Unlike China’s cultural revolution, the one now being launched is more carefully adapted to the conditions of late capitalism. Those conditions necessitate a war of attrition rather than a war of confrontation; not a conspiratorial master plan³ but rather a combination of the benign neglect of careerist political leaders, and a refusal to be held accountable to marginalized or displaced peoples domestically or internationally. This new post-correct attitude which the Right now promotes is really not so new. It simply took a while for conservatives to deftly propagate it. What it entails is fostering a guilt-free environment for self-righteous philistinism.

The label “fascist” is hurled increasingly against the idea of political correctness, and not just its exaggerated excesses. But what is fascist in asking students or the museum-going population to reflect in depth on the fact that European settlers committed wholesale genocide on indigenous

populations throughout the Western hemisphere when they arrived? This and other legacies of Western civilization must be known, preserved, and passed on to future generations, for these facts are as much a part of our Western heritage as Aristotle, Shakespeare, Mill and Emerson. There is no party line of political correctness which says that the great works should be banned in favor of Afro-American, feminist, or Third World literature and philosophy. Nor is there a party line which says that the only way to analyze the works of the traditional "canon" is to politicize them. There are other reasons for enjoying, reveling, and struggling in the richly rewarding experiences of reading great works of literature, as Irving Howe argues: "If you look hard (or foolishly) enough, you can find political and social traces everywhere. . . . Politics may be 'in' everything, but not everything is politics" (Howe 1991, 4). Nevertheless, Howe no doubt also agrees that the politics that are "in" culture are sometimes of such importance that to ignore them, at least in some contexts, is to lead an unexamined life. The contemporary politicization of culture provides a welcome corrective to the conservative attitude that the objective of studying art, literature and philosophy is simply to achieve private fulfillment or for seizing culture's exchange value as a mark of status.

We live in changing times. According to the Right's modern dogma, Eastern and Central Europe have seen a thousand points of light shining from the West. Any lingering doubts about this come only from one source, namely, the has-beens of the '60s and '70s who can no longer hope for the millennium but who instead must content themselves with delicious opportunities to abuse undergraduates with their personal and political frustrations. The "thought police" are, to judge from George Will and others, the singular cause of any vestigial doubts among Americans about their national identity. According to Will's assessment, the new orthodoxies are relativist to the core, but that is a reactionary interpretation which defends existing cultural and political inequality. Herbert Marcuse offered an alternative at another time in our history, but one that is equally relevant today. In advocating redress on behalf of the disenfranchised, Marcuse did not deny the possibility of arriving at truth and rationality, but instead he lamented the systemic limitations on the possibility of our attaining those goals. In the name of rationality, doesn't it make sense to allow the irrational to be spoken? This is, after all, among the fundamental principles of freedom of expression. Why is it any more defensible to allow a professor to suggest that brain size is related to intelligence, an argument which has led to racist conclusions, than it is allow a teacher to suggest to a class that many works of Western culture just might favor docility in women, and thus potentially are worthy of criticism, or that the history of the American West might valuably include serious discussion of genocide? Whose "rationality" should prevail in defining when to apply tolerance?

Measured opposition by liberals to the excesses of political correctness is a valid and meaningful moral response to fundamentalism and ortho-

doxy. But care needs to be taken in considering what the extent of that opposition should be and what agendas are edified in the process. The emerging wholesale rejection of the idea of actively fostering pluralism and equality implies that any political commitment which is fundamental is fundamentally evil. Conservatives suffer no comparable infirmities. The Right's fundamentalisms of social Darwinism and the "free" market are pure: Greed is good. The words "White Power!" scream from between the lines of the Right's moral indignation about political correctness. Before liberals and the internecine left pounce on political correctness as peevish self-victimization in an attempt to not be associated with the excesses of a few (as if the right hasn't its own, more serious, Teflon-ed excesses), they should reflect on the agendas they serve.

Omitted from this essay are the many other areas of life penetrated by the talk of political correctness, including a wide range of issues from social ecology, parenting, and domestic work. They are all areas in which social pressure, not legal means, are applied to achieve and support social justice. To the extent that such expression is deemed excessive and needlessly orthodox by a community's standards, it warrants the pejorative label "politically correct." But that is not the same as seeking any means possible to silence expression simply because it antagonizes complacent but prevailing thought. In an era of radical surgery on legal provisions for social justice, it is more important than ever to find extra-legal (not necessarily illegal) means of promoting social responsibility. The right seeks not only to eliminate the bureaucratic excesses of the welfare state, it also attacks the personal and group commitments to the noble purposes for which the welfare state was created. Hopefully, the buzzword of "political correctness" will disappear soon. More urgent than this is the need to say goodbye to the idea purveyed by the right that politics are best kept in the hands of professionals and that culture should not be invigorated by political scrutiny. Pluralism and equality are threatened not only because of mindless dogmatism, but more generally because these ideals demand reflection, creativity and innovation in realms where tradition, formula, and loyal obedience are rewarded. Whether there are little Napoleons in the academy who would like to bend everyone to their will is irrelevant. Not only do they not have the power, but we can only assume, as the liberal theory which defends tolerance suggests, that truth will out and fraudulence will be exposed. In the meantime, if the idea of tolerance is to remain useful, it should be applied in the name of equality, not for the hidden reason of preserving inequality.

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NOTES

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1. The president of one right-wing philanthropic organization fears that "capitalism is no longer the dominant orthodoxy" in universities, which his foundation seeks to rectify through generous giving to projects such as conservative darling Dinesh D'Souza's (1991) book *Illiberal Education* (Henson and Philpott 1991).

2. For contemporary views on the problems stemming from media concentration see Bagdikian (1987) and Schiller (1989).

3. Hundreds of thousands of foundation dollars are being invested to sponsor right-wing student newspapers (Henson and Philpott 1991).

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