

The Enemy Within: Academic Freedom in 1960s and 1970s American Social Sciences

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We Have Growth and Power: American Universities in the Sixties

The Columbia University student strike and occupation, opposing the construction of a gymnasium in Morningside Park (Bradley 2009), was on everyone's mind when Walter P. Metzger spoke at the University of Illinois in the spring of 1968. One of the premier historians of academic freedom in America (Hofstadter and Metzger 1955; Metzger 1961), Metzger saw that the academy had gone through a profound transformation at midcentury. The view from early in the century was that "a violation of academic freedom was a crime designed and executed within the confines of the University. Dissident professors were the victims, trustees and administrators were the culprits, the power of dismissal was the weapon, the loss of employment was the wound" (Metzger 1969, 2). But in the sixties universities were no longer delimited, localized entities. The growth of cities around campuses, of Columbia reaching toward

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Harlem, had wealthy universities and their poor neighbors disputing land use, a municipal and political concern. There was also “the growing involvement of the federal government with the affairs” of academe. The opportunities provided by grant contracts and research institutes undermined the autonomy of universities as well as their control by the faculties (15, 18, 20–25). Metzger called for a new approach to academic freedom and academic government.

University of California president Clark Kerr’s ([1963] 2001) famous speech on “the uses of the university” was the most explicit attempt to design a new concept of governance. Kerr embraced the idea of the university as a sprawling institution growing in population, budget, and services to foreign publics. He called it a “multiversity” and saw administrators playing a vital new role. The president of the multiversity was to be “leader, educator, creator, initiator, wielder of power, pump, he is *also* officeholder, caretaker, inheritor, consensus-seeker, persuader, bottleneck. But he is mostly a mediator” (Kerr [1963] 2001, 27). The peacemaking and mediating skills of President Kerr were soon put to a test by Berkeley’s Free Speech Movement (Heirich 1971).¹ Inspired by participation in civil rights campaigns, Berkeley students wanted to organize politically within the campus (Cohen and Zelnik 2002; Savio 1965). Students felt they, and not the administration, should be the agency of connection with the outer world. This vision was also expressed in the 1962 Port Huron Statement, where University of Michigan students protested that “our professors and administrators sacrifice controversy to public relations; their curriculums change more slowly than the living events of the world; their skills and silence are purchased by investors in the arms race; passion is called unscholastic.”

The third protagonist in the debate over the future of the university was the faculty. The late fifties and early sixties were a golden age for social sciences. The university system expanded in the wake of the GI Bill and the baby boom, increasing opportunities for academic employment (Geiger 2004). The patrons of social science research grew in kind and generosity. In 1958 the National Science Foundation began to fund the social sciences, thus adding to existing funding from foundations and federal agencies (Goodwin 1998; Larsen 1992). As late as 1967–69, social scientists’ expectations were still of continued growth and funding largesse

1. Kerr was removed from the University of California’s presidency by Governor Ronald Reagan, who was dissatisfied by Kerr’s handling of student unrest; see Kerr, Gade, and Kawaoka 2001.

(Committee 1969). Coupled with research money came also a stronger presence in policy circles.² However, as much as outreach offered opportunities, it also posed threats of exposure to political partisanship and of pressures from outside patrons.

The subject of this essay is the response of social science associations to 1960s and 1970s academic freedom controversies. I look at anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, and history. I study debates at association meetings and the reports and policy statements of committees on ethics and political discrimination. The ethics committees dealt with the involvement of association members with nonuniversity patrons, in the wake of revelations about Project Camelot. The committees on political discrimination examined allegations that university administrations were discriminating against radical scholars for their advocacy against the war in Vietnam, as well as in favor of civil rights, feminist, and other revolutionary causes. I argue that in both instances social scientists sought to accommodate the university's new roles by developing codes of conduct for social scientists. The ethical codes and guidelines for employment were voluntary and nonenforceable. Implied in the response of social science associations was that threats to academic freedom arose in social scientists' misguided behavior and not by fault of the new institutional setting of the sixties university.

Let the AAUP Do It: Updating Definitions of Academic Freedom

Before approaching the 1960s and 1970s controversies, I must introduce what the standard of academic freedom in America was at the beginning of this period and how social scientists came to endorse it. Since 1915, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has been the main defender of "academic freedom" (primarily "academic freedom of the teacher," or *Lehrerfreiheit*).³ At the core of the AAUP is the Committee A

2. O'Connor's (2001) history of poverty policy and research reveals how the subject was turned academic and guided by technical and scientific expertise.

3. The AAUP ([1968] 2006) foundational statement is the "Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure," authored by Edwin R. A. Seligman (chairman, economics), Richard T. Ely (economics), Frank A. Fetter (economics), James P. Lichtenberger (sociology), Roscoe Pound (law), Ulysses G. Weatherly (sociology), J. Q. Dealey (political science), Henry W. Farnam (political science), Charles E. Bennett (Latin), Edward C. Elliott (education), Guy Stanton Ford (history), Charles Atwood Kofoid (zoology), Arthur O. Lovejoy (philosophy), Frederick W. Padelford (English), and Howard C. Warren (psychology). To the

on Academic Freedom and Tenure, investigating cases of discrimination in employment. Its main policy document, coauthored with the Association of American Colleges and Universities, is the “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure.” The statement obliges scholars to ethical conduct, such as being accurate, restrained, and respectful of the opinions of others. Furthermore, it remarks that “teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.” If respectful of these norms, scholars are entitled to self-government in distributing academic privilege and enjoy freedom to teach and research (AAUP 1940).⁴ In its investigations Committee A upholds these principles.⁵ When the AAUP finds a breach of this social contract it adds the offending institution to a blacklist, a register of public shame.

From 1915 to its 1940 statement, the AAUP researched and wrote reports on fifty-nine cases. But from 1948 to 1956 not a single report was published. Some cases were investigated but closed “either through an adjustment effected between the complainant and the institution concerned, or, failing that, by a report administered privately to the offending institution” (Report of the Self-Survey Committee 1965, 149).⁶ This record expressed how the AAUP was paralyzed during the McCarthy period (Schrecker 1986).⁷

declaration, the AAUP has added advisory statements on dismissal proceedings, renewal of appointments, professional ethics, political activity, discrimination, recruitment, resignation, and retirement, to name a few of the topics of its policy briefs. On the cases that led to the creation of the AAUP, see Furner 1975.

4. On the side of rights, scholars’ probationary employment period should have a finite term that should not exceed seven years, after which they should be considered for tenure. In the event of contract termination the scholar should be given at least one year of advance warning. In the cases where facts are in dispute, the institutions should provide opportunities for a hearing, and the accused teacher should be given written statement of the charges and is entitled to be accompanied by an adviser acting as counsel. If the reasons for termination are financial, then this should be demonstrated.

5. The investigations may be pursued by the Committee A members or by an appointed committee of AAUP members who are geographically close to the institution and can visit and interview for their report; on the procedures, see Kurland 1980.

6. The general secretary of the AAUP, Ralph Himstead, is often cast as the villain in the locking up of the AAUP. The association lore has it that in 1955 under pressure to resign, Himstead collapsed in his office and died. It remains unclear if his inaction was politically motivated, but a measure of the neglect can be put down as organizational incompetence (Kurland 2009).

7. In the meantime, the American Civil Liberties Union was undergoing a self-purge (Salisbury 1984).

There is a sharp contrast between the McCarthy silence and what followed.⁸ The principal force for that transformation was the civil rights movement. Jordan Kurland provides a significant example. While a young history professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Kurland became a member of the AAUP chapter. In 1963 the North Carolina legislature imposed a ban on associates of the Communist Party from speaking on state campuses. Done in reaction to a civil rights demonstration at a major Raleigh hotel, this was a poorly disguised attempt to red-bait civil rights campaigners and their sympathetic supporters at the universities. It was also a textbook case of a patron (the state legislature) violating the academic freedom of the faculties. The campaign to repeal the law shaped a new generation of activist professors willing to take up the cause of the AAUP. The national office, impressed by Kurland's (2009) efforts, invited him to work full-time for the organization.

In 1969 the AAUP met again with the Association of American Colleges and Universities to reevaluate its main policy document and add some "Interpretative Comments." The standard for dealing with cases of academic freedom has remained unchanged since then.⁹ Where the 1940 text decried controversy in the classroom, the new interpretation stated that the intent "is not to discourage what is 'controversial.' Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry which the entire statement is designed to foster." Further, it argued that "a faculty member's expression of opinion as a citizen cannot constitute grounds for dismissal. . . . Extramural utterances rarely bear upon the faculty member's fitness for the position."¹⁰ The AAUP published in the same year its "Statement on Professors and Political Activity," which established the right of teachers to request reduced workloads or leaves of absence for the sake of extramural political activity (AAUP [1968] 2006). Within walls, the scholar could be controversial and polemical provided he (or she) was being so for the sake of advancing scholarship. Outside those walls, the scholar was encouraged

8. The contrast is not so apparent if one considers surveillance and harassment conducted by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI; the latter remained covert and unchallenged. On this subject, see Price 2004 and Keen 1999.

9. In the event of a complaint it is expected that a first hearing be held by an academic freedom or like committee established in the institution's governance structure; at a second level the AAUP or an outside agency such as a professional or learned society can be asked to investigate; finally, the case can be brought to the courts, and in the public sector they may be considered as violations of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (Finkin and Post 2009).

10. The text is verbatim from an earlier statement by the AAUP of October 1964.

to participate in social and political causes. The 1970 statement represented the ideal of a faculty engaging with society.

AAUP membership is voluntary, and over the years the learned societies have come to underwrite the organization's policy positions. Among the endorsers of the 1940 statement are the American Political Science Association (as early as 1947), the American Historical Association (in 1961), the American Economic Association (in 1962), the American Sociological Association (in 1963), and the American Anthropological Association (in 1970). The initiative to endorse typically came from AAUP activists who were also members of the associations.¹¹

Looking at some of the associations' relationships with the AAUP, we see their adoption of the latter's standard of academic freedom. At the American Economic Association (AEA), a standing committee on the status of the profession became in 1956 the Committee on Academic Freedom and Civil Liberties. It was charged "with the responsibility of reviewing alleged infringements upon the academic freedom or civil liberties of economists and to submit reports which may be supplemented by such general observations and recommendations" (Report of the Secretary for the Year 1956, published in 1957). In practice, the committee reported on the Supreme Court case of Paul M. Sweezy and publicized the conclusions of AAUP case reports involving economists.¹² It refused to pursue its own investigations, fearing an overlap with the AAUP (Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Civil Liberties 1960). The committee ceased to exist with a formal endorsement of AAUP's definition of academic freedom.

While the economists in the late 1950s strengthened their bonds to the AAUP, the American Historical Association (AHA) followed a more tortuous course. As late as 1965 the AHA had no procedures to deal with academic freedom cases. The AHA secretary responded to AAUP queries that it "does not use any of its machinery to implement its endorsement of the 1940 AAUP statement." It justified that "there is a considerable differ-

11. At the AHA it was thanks to the urgings of Theodore L. Agnew of Oklahoma State University at Stillwater (along with Kenneth O. Bjork, St. Olaf College; C. William Heywood, Cornell College; and Ronald V. Sires, Whitman College).

12. The committee reported in detail the case of Paul M. Sweezy, the socialist economist who was charged with contempt of court when he refused to hand in his lecture notes for a campus meeting to the state attorney general of New Hampshire in 1958 and 1959, and the cases of Laurent R. LaVallee and Bud R. Hutchinson investigated by the AAUP (Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Civil Liberties 1958, 1959). On Sweezy, see Schrecker 1986.

ence in posture and atmosphere between an organization which among other things acts to enforce some of its decisions upon reluctant institutions, and a scholarly organization like ours" (Ward 1965).¹³

The AHA reviewed its stance when it was faced by public cases of alleged political discrimination, the most significant being that of Staughton Lynd. In January 1966 Lynd, then assistant professor in history at Yale University, visited Hanoi in contempt of the government's restriction of travel to North Vietnam. The visit and the ensuing punishment in the form of travel constraints and cancellation of passports received media attention (Corry 1965; Halloran 1966; Leader of New Left 1965). In 1968, at the end of his five-year contract with Yale and knowing there would be no renewal, Lynd looked for employment in Chicago (Lynd Leaves Yale Faculty 1968). Given his notoriety, he failed to secure new employment and in 1973 entered law school at the University of Chicago (Novick 1988). Thus one of the foremost historians of the New Left abandoned the historical profession.

At the AHA 1970 meetings, Lynd and three other historians called for the creation of a committee to investigate cases of alleged violation of academic freedom. The resolution set out that the committee "is not authorized to take any action or to commit the association to any course of action in regard to any specific case." It was not allowed to publicize cases by name.¹⁴ It was headed by Sheldon Hackney, who was instructed to investigate "the specific needs for a program parallel to or supplementing that of the AAUP."¹⁵ The committee solicited evidence of discrimination

13. The AHA also met with the AAUP on 15 March 1968 (Davis 1967).

14. Soon after, the AHA with the Organization of American Historians created a Committee on the Defense of the Rights of Historians under the First Amendment. Despite its ambitious title, the committee was mostly concerned with one case and campaign. It sought to enlist moral and financial support for Sylvester K. Stevens against the court action begun earlier in January 1965 by Miss Helen Clay Frick of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The matter was finally closed in May 1967 when the Supreme Court denied application for a writ of certiorari. It considered helping on the [Francis] Russell case, author of a book publishing the love letters of a presidential affair (Warren Harding). But it didn't in the end take the case.

15. The suggestion was also made that "the work of the Committee will be lightened and made more effective by good liaison (1) with similar committees of other associations, through a Washington-based committee created on January 21 by the ACLS's Conference of Secretaries, and (2) with the AAUP here." The Conference of Secretaries was the title given to a series of meetings between the associations' secretaries and the AAUP. It included representatives from the American Council of Learned Societies, American Anthropological Association, American Philosophical Association, American Political Science Association, American Association of Law Schools, American Sociological Association, and American Association of University Professors. The meetings seem to have served to inform the secretaries of the practices of the latter

by members and wrote directly to historians involved in known past cases, building a case file of thirty-eight. Of those, one was from 1942, five from 1962 to 1967, the remainder from 1967 to 1972. By drawing on case evidence, the committee was following the established AAUP practice, but added to it a questionnaire in the later months of 1971, to a sample of half of the membership. Out of 2,200 responses the committee wrote a report, "On the Rights of Historians." The committee reached out to its members and to past cases to discover "standards [that] reflect opinions and values developed by historians over a long period of time." The work was pursued with misgivings, that the association might be doubling the work of the AAUP and that the membership might never agree on a definition.¹⁶

The Hackney report concluded that violations of academic freedom were not only against partisan scholars: the more "typical 'victim' was a young scholar clashing with an 'old guard' over a variety of educational and scholarly issues." From the responses to its questionnaire the committee saw that "an impressive number of the respondents are prepared to tolerate or support the principles of diversity and pluralism." More than half stated that ideological diversity is a positive good to be encouraged, although half also thought it "impermissible for teachers persistently to introduce extraneous material and to use the classroom for purposes of indoctrination." In its final statement of proposals the report noted that "the political, social, religious, and ideological beliefs of historians, when applied with professional integrity, may furnish organizing principles for scholarship and teaching." The AHA committee's focus was on the same subjects that characterized the AAUP definition of academic freedom, notably the demand for due process. Pluralism in the classroom equates well with the call for controversy done in scholarly and ethical terms. The reference to extramural activities was nearly taken verbatim from the AAUP's "1970 Interpretative Comments," when it stated that "historians, having the same political rights as all citizens, should, provided they do

and to organize a joint conference in 1972 (Pincoffs 1972). If their intention was to foster joint action, it failed, and each association acted on its own (Ward 1971; Gaylard 1971; Settle 1971).

16. An excerpt of Palmer's presidential address was deleted from the speech as delivered; in it he wrote: "I would think that, if we were to go into such matters [academic freedom], we would run into duplication or conflict with the AAUP, would have difficulty in setting up committees for fact-finding and visitation, or in gaining access to college officials; and that, in the present state of the world, we would have to re-define the kinds of academic freedom that the Association would be prepared to defend, on the spectrum from pure expression of opinion to violent and disruptive militancy on the campus or off it. On these matters I doubt if our membership could be brought to agree" (Untitled n.d.).

not represent themselves as spokesmen for their institutions, be free from institutional penalties or discipline for extramural political activities.”

The historians wanted to offer their own definition on academic freedom as a response to the Lynd case. What is remarkable is that while more detailed, their statement did not diverge in substance from that of the AAUP. The most notable aspect of that definition was its validation of extramural activities as being irrelevant to judging the scholarly value of social scientists.

We Lack Ethics: Committees on Ethics

The AHA and the AEA were not embarrassed by the involvement of their members with outside agencies. The extramural became more a source of concern for other social sciences, particularly when in 1965 the existence of Project Camelot was revealed (see Horowitz 1967 for the story).¹⁷ This was an ambitious and generously funded research program by the army to study revolutionary movements in Latin America and to develop a counterinsurgency strategy. It was in response to the Project Camelot scandal that anthropology, sociology, and political science created committees to develop ethical standards for social science.¹⁸

One formative episode in anthropologists' historical identity is, still to this day, the Franz Boas controversy. Soon after the First World War, Boas made the startling revelation that fellow anthropologists had “prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies” in Central America. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) reacted by blaming the messenger. With a twenty-one to ten censure motion, it

respectfully asked, in the name of Americanism as against un-Americanism, that Dr. Franz Boas and also the ten members of the American Anthropological Association . . . supporting him in his disloyalty, be excluded from participation in any service respecting which any question of loyalty to the United States Government may properly be raised. (Patterson 2001)

17. The list of consultants to Project Camelot included the economists Thomas C. Schelling and Gordon Tullock (appendix in Solovey 2001), but the AEA did not respond to the scandal.

18. Economics had a short-lived ethics committee in 1959–61. It was created to examine “professional ethics or standards involving plagiarism or questionable practices in using or refusing manuscripts for publication” (Annual Business Meeting 1960). The committee in 1962 issued a report that found no grounds for any inquiry and extinguished itself (Minutes of the Executive Committee Meetings 1963).

The relationship between anthropology and foreign policy interventions remained unexamined until the Project Camelot scandal brought the subject back to the AAA business meeting. The anthropologists were eager not to let this new scandal go without close scrutiny, as a group of them wrote in an op-ed to the *New York Times*, “Attempts to utilize scientific research programs . . . to cloak activities with non-scholarly or non-scientific purposes seriously threaten the integrity of the discipline and the execution of legitimate research” (quoted in Solovey 2001).

In 1965 the AAA set up a committee to examine the relationship between anthropologists and its patrons, both governmental and private. Ralph Beals led the group in authoring a report presented to the membership in January 1967. Beals’s first demand was for full disclosure in the relationships between scientists and government. It also envisaged that the associations establish “standing committees on government operations” to design an informal code of ethics. This was explicitly not a standard for licensing professionals but a voluntary set of rules of conduct (Beals 1969, 167–68).¹⁹

Despite the Boas episode and the Beals report, anthropologists still could not agree on how to make ethics part of their associative life. In March 1970 the ethics committee received from antiwar protesters evidence that several anthropologists working on Southeast Asia were informing on counterinsurgency activities in Thailand. The files were shown to Marshall Sahlins and the committee members Gerald Beneman, Eric Wolf, and Joseph Jorgensen. The group was quick to make public the claims of this new scandal, with the statement that “these documents contradict in spirit and in letter the resolutions of the American Anthropological Association concerning clandestine and secret research, we feel that they raise the most serious issues for the scientific integrity of our profession” (Jorgensen and Wolf 1970). The AAA board received complaints from the accused and castigated Wolf and Jorgensen, since “in communicating on this matter outside the Ethics Committee, [they] went beyond the mandate of the Executive Board to that Committee and were speaking as individuals and not on behalf of the Committee or the Association” (Board Statement 1970). As the AAA newsletter was flooded with

19. The AAUP created in 1966 a committee on professional ethics; its original statement of principle was in the spirit of the 1940 and 1970 statements on academic freedom. Its focus was the classroom and conduct with students, that evaluations should reflect each student’s “true merit” and that professors “do not discriminate against or harass colleagues” (AAUP [1968] 2006, 171).

letters from the membership, the board aimed for discretion. It asked Margaret Mead to study the case, and an earlier plan to hold a conference on the subject was dropped.

The membership was never opposed to ethical standards, but many feared that an ethics committee would become an elite body legislating on whom and what was anthropology (Correspondence 1969). That was also the response given by the Mead report, which argued that counterinsurgency research “is well within the traditional canons of acceptable behavior for the applied anthropologist, and is counterinsurgency only for present funding purposes, a decade ago it might have been called ‘mental health’” (Patterson 2001).²⁰ The Mead report sought to keep the range of legitimate scholarship broadly defined.

At the AAA’s council meeting the report was sectioned for a separate vote and rejected bit by bit (Council Rejects Thai Controversy Committee’s Report 1972). The executive board then decided that no further investigation of the Thailand case would be pursued. The episode thus started with a stark ethical indictment by Wolf and Jorgensen, followed by a prompt undermining by the AAA officialdom and a seeming whitewashing of the affair by Mead, and concluded with an undermining by the AAA membership. Both condemnation and absolution were barred. Anthropologists had created a body to enforce ethical standards, but as it faced its first major case, the committee was emptied of all authority.

Ethics was interpreted not as a professional code to be enforced by a society but as a guide to individuals. The same pattern can be seen emerging in the American Sociological Association’s standing committee on ethics. It requested cases for appraisal and extracted from these cases maxims of proper conduct for sociologists (Committee on Professional Ethics 1973; Epstein 1975). Although the sociologists’ original ethical code included sanctions like reprimanding members and suspending or terminating membership, these were never enforced (Guidelines n.d.). The committees of both the sociologists and anthropologists promised to mediate and arbitrate disputes between the membership, but their main activity was to codify rules of good conduct. It was left to each social scientist to exercise self-control.

Among the political scientists, ethics played a different role as it diverted engagement with cases of discrimination in employment. Political scientists

20. Mead had a record of numerous government-sponsored projects and was a supporter of America’s Cold War stances (Price 2004; Foerstel and Gilliam 1992).

were also among the consultants for Project Camelot, and as a result the American Political Science Association (APSA) created an ethics committee in 1967, headed by Marver H. Bernstein. In 1968 the Bernstein report was published with a list of ethical rules. The principal concerns were with disclosure of sources of funding and confidentiality of data and sources. With the report came the creation of a standing committee on ethics charged with providing advice on ethical issues and guidance whenever queried by the membership (Bernstein 1968). Political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists agreed that the association could provide counsel but no enforcement, and that responsibility for proper conduct rested on the individual scholar.

Soon after, in the fall of 1969, the APSA created a committee on academic freedom “to make a thorough inquiry into the meaning, current status, and prospects for academic freedom for both faculty and student.”²¹ The president of the APSA interpreted the mandate as calling for a major study of the contemporary scope and meaning of academic freedom (Lane 1970; Reports of the APSA Committee 1970). There were interviews with government officials and political science department chairs, and meetings held with the AAUP, and a session on academic freedom was planned for the 1970 annual meeting.

The 1970 session testifies to the APSA’s objections to campus protest, portrayed as the principal threat to academic freedom. William Herberg (1971, 2) observed that “small groups of radicalized faculty and students who, on political and ideological grounds, want to force the professor to teach this and not that, to teach it this way and not that way.” Sidney Hook, a philosopher, rescued the Red Scare from oblivion in an attack on the Supreme Court.²² The Court, he said,

assumes that the Communist Party is like every other political party. He ignores or is unaware, of the official and specific instructions issued by the Communist party to its members who are teachers to betray their

21. The committee included Philip E. Jacob, chair; Leon D. Epstein, Philip Green, Harold Guetzkow, C. Herman Pritchett, James W. Prothro, H. Mark Roelofs, Allan P. Sindler, and James Q. Wilson.

22. The liberal Supreme Court of the 1960s in a landmark case, *Keyishian v. Board of Regents* (385 U.S. 589 of 1967), had found the State of New York loyalty oaths to be unconstitutional. The majority opinion declared that “academic freedom . . . is therefore a special concern of the First Amendment, which does not tolerate laws that cast a pall of orthodoxy over the classroom.” The Supreme Court controversially associated academic freedom with the First Amendment right to free speech.

professional trust, to take advantage of their position in the classroom “without exposing” themselves, to indoctrinate for conclusions laid down by the Communist party and its affiliates. (Hook 1971, 40)

Addressing events like the Columbia uprising, the panel at the APSA wanted to know why these institutions “lacked the nerve.” The reasons were found in the overdemocratization of the campuses. Since,

when universities begin to choose an increasing number of freshmen on the basis of ethnicity and a reverse *numerus clausus*; when they begin to plan curricula on the basis of student political pressure; when faculty members begin to be selected not on the basis of recognized scholarly achievement but on color and/or ideological affiliation, then the University may conceivably be performing useful, perhaps even necessary social acts, but it is no longer involved in the pursuit of truth. (Beichman 1971, 196)

The voices at the APSA meetings objected to the remaking of the university by administrations, government, students, or radical groups. For them, to defend academic freedom was to preserve the university from outsider and unscholarly interventions. Because the core of the university was the scholar, academic freedom should be subsumed under ethics.

In 1971 the committee on academic freedom was merged with the committee on ethics. For some members of the association this meant the abolishing of the committee under the chairmanship of someone who had opposed its creation (Association News 1972). The interpretation was justified, since under the heading of ethics the spotlight on political discrimination went out. In 1976 the committee had to remind the membership that it had the power to investigate cases and receive complaints. It clarified that the “Committee does not have the power to censure, but it makes every effort to use persuasion and vigorous protest to rectify situations it is critical of” (Berry 1976).

The ethics committee had produced eleven “advisory positions” on how political scientists should behave with regard to issues ranging from multiple submission of manuscripts to promptness in appraising manuscripts (Reports of APSA Committees 1972). The new Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom continued to publish advisory statements and maintained a policy of not engaging with individual cases.²³

23. The APSA showed greater concern with the controversy surrounding the jailing of Samuel Popkin (Carroll 1973). The case was one of a scholar being chastised by the courts for

Cases under investigation could not be publicly identified or their conclusions shared (Reports of APSA Committees 1972). The principle of non-disclosure was inscribed in the APSA advisory opinion 12, “The Presentation of Personal Causes at Panels of Annual Meetings”; it stated that

it is improper for any person to use a panel at the Annual Meeting as a forum for the primary purpose of presenting his or her side of personal litigation in which he or she is or has been involved. . . . The Executive Director and the Chairman of the Program Committee should make every possible effort to protect the Annual Meeting of the Association from such activity. (Reports of APSA Committees 1973)

The APSA officials were mandated to “protect” the meetings from controversies of discrimination against its members.

The expressed concern of the APSA was with litigation and to separate institutional responsibility from what its members faced. There was one exception, the case of Bertell Ollman (1983) of the University of Maryland, where the university’s president had prevented Ollman’s nomination to department president. The committee was mandated to investigate and share its findings after a mail ballot (Association News 1979). In its report the committee was careful to deflect any assertion of political discrimination. In two important footnotes, first the council dissociated itself from any conclusion, stating that “lack of access to relevant evidence because of pending litigation makes it impossible at this time to reach any firm conclusion as to whether or not improper political pressures resulted in violation of academic rights and freedom.” And further into the text the committee made a similar move: “We understand by academic freedom the right of a faculty member to seek the truth, in teaching or in research, without interference. It is hard to see how a scholar’s right to seek the truth includes the right to administer a department” (Reports of APSA Committees 1979).

The APSA in comparison with the other learned societies was the most reluctant to address claims of political discrimination and influence the decisions of departments and universities. That the APSA elected ethics as its focus reveals how ethical codes removed litigation and controversy from scrutiny. Ethics exempted the collective from acting on violations on

not releasing the identity of his sources, some of which might have been implicated in the release of the Pentagon Papers (Ellsberg 2003; Rudenstine 1998). The APSA wrote a letter in support of Popkin and a new advisory opinion, “The Scholar’s Ethic Right to Protect Confidential Sources” (Association News 1973).

academic freedom. The associations could provide guidance, but responsibility rested solely with the individual.

We Expect Too Much: Committees on Political Discrimination

The ethics codes expressed the proper conduct for social scientists when they stepped out of academic boundaries. But the radical movement, students and faculty, denied the extramural/intramural distinction. They did their advocacy on extramural subjects within the campuses, and they saw change in the universities' structures as inseparable from their campaign against war, imperialism, gender discrimination, and racism.

Radicals believed in the "radicalism of disclosure." One of the most iconic targets of the early anti-Vietnam War protest on campuses was Dow Chemical Company, manufacturer of napalm used in the bombing campaign. At the University of Wisconsin at Madison the first sit-in against Dow took place in February 1967. In October that year another attempt to disrupt Dow Chemical's recruiting on campus led to a violent confrontation, the first of many that were to spread across campuses. There were also protests against the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. Here too radicals identified within the university an organization that was implicated in an unjust foreign war. Military ceremonies and drills on campuses were seen to exemplify the complicity of universities with militarism (Wells 2005; Gusfield 1971; Neiberg 2001). For the radicals, extramural politics were expressed in the intramural, the corporate and militaristic takeover of the university.

As campus strikes, occupations, sit-ins, die-ins, live-ins, love-ins, and Free Universities multiplied, some in the faculty and the administrations began to tire. The bulk of cases of alleged political discrimination happened at the height of campus protest from 1969 to 1972 when faculty members associated with the New Left had their contracts not renewed or terminated, and tenure denied (Anderson 1996). The AAUP and the associations struggled with the flood of cases. The associations were pressured in 1972-74 by radical members to provide some institutional response. My purpose is to show that the associations were initially receptive to the radicals' complaints but later saw the troubles in radicals' employment arising from misplaced expectations.

Two of the committees that investigated individual cases of political discrimination originated with the events at the political science, sociology,

and anthropology faculty at Simon Fraser University in Canada. The faculty at Simon Fraser was majority radical or left leaning and, in a young university established only in 1965, had set up promotion and hiring procedures that gave students parity in the judgments. The conflict thus arose over what standards to apply in hiring and promoting faculty. The administration rejected the student arrangement and set up a tenure panel with faculty members from other fields. Rushed to meet internal deadlines, the panel rejected renewal of contracts for two prominent members of the faculty and placed others under conditional employment. In retaliation, students and faculty organized a crippling five-week strike that saw half of the students moving to other departments. Eight professors leading the strike were suspended and then had their contracts terminated (Johnston 2005).²⁴

Among the eight was Kathleen Gough (Aberle), who had in 1968 written a damning critique of anthropology for the socialist magazine *Monthly Review*. Gough wrote to the AAA requesting support in her case with Simon Fraser University. On 1 December 1969 the AAA instructed an ad hoc committee staffed by Peter Carstens and Laura Nader to investigate if the university had followed its customary procedures, if these matched other Canadian universities, if it had “correctly and objectively evaluated all pertinent evidence.” The report concluded that “structural weaknesses” were the significant factor leading to crisis. Too much power was centralized in the president. The committee called for reappointing Gough, and Simon Fraser University was urged to review its hiring procedures. The final recommendation was that “ethnographic and comparative study of Universities be treated as urgent research by anthropologists” (Executive Board 1970). This last recommendation was never pursued. All other

24. Also in 1968 was the case of Marlene Dixon, hired as assistant professor in sociology and human development at the University of Chicago. She was an avowed Marxist, a member of the radical caucus of the American Sociological Association. In 1969 the Committee on Human Development unanimously voted to renew her three-year contract. The sociology department voted unanimously against. Several hundred students protested the dismissal and staged a sit-in. The administration placed several students under disciplinary action and facing suspension. After a few weeks the protest was abandoned with the conviction that to battle further would offer no victory. Hanna H. Gray of the history department headed a committee to investigate the case. It proposed that Dixon be given another year of contract, mentioning that she was an “energetic, warm, dedicated, open and compelling teacher;” but had not demonstrated “incisive competence for inducing advanced students in the highest levels of scholarship.” Like Lynd, who spoke at a rally in her support in 1969, Dixon would leave academia to dedicate herself to full-time activism (Janson 1969a, 1969b, 1969c, 1969d, 1969e; UPI 1969).

social sciences shared in this failure to apply social science analysis to threats of academic freedom.²⁵

The American Sociological Association (ASA), also petitioned by a member, created in 1968 a Committee on Freedom of Research and Teaching (sometimes called COFORT, or COFRAT) headed by Robin M. Williams Jr.²⁶ Like the anthropologists, the sociologists found Simon Fraser “to violate accepted standards in allowing non-academic allegations to enter into the academic review process, in providing no adequate mechanism for defense against such allegations, in claiming ethical violations in the absence of a formal code of ethics.” The committee encouraged “sociologists to forego the acceptance of jobs at Simon Fraser University” (Rossi 1971).

Peter H. Rossi chaired the committee from 1973 and in 1974 oversaw the expansion of its remit (Grievances 1973). Rossi was a quantitative sociologist and an expert on urban unrest. He had been one of the experts on the Kerner Commission studying the causes of the 1967 race riots, a believer in the resolution of conflicts by study and mediation (Rossi 2006). Discrimination on the “grounds of political beliefs” was only the first of four profile cases investigated by the committee. Its attention was also taken by disputes over research ownership, discrimination on the grounds of race or sex, and attempts to precensor research by nonprofessional groups (Rossi 1974). Of these, the item most pertinent to this essay was “Disguised Dismissal or Non-Retention of Untenured Faculty.” Rossi explained:

These cases arise because the status of non-tenured people in the university is so poorly surrounded by safeguards against the arbitrary and prejudiced behavior of senior department members or administrators. Ordinarily a non-tenured person can be terminated without presenting the reasons for the action. Hence the procedures for evaluating the

25. The AAA did not keep a standing committee to examine academic freedom cases. In 1971 it corrected its 1949 legislation to make the executive board responsible for providing support to members involved in disputes. The cases would be sent to “remedy agents” such as the AAUP for consideration and if “remedy agents are not handling the case adequately . . . to appoint its own committee from the membership to make the necessary examinations” (Board Presents Resolution 1971). The AAA regularly advertised the AAUP’s list of censored institutions.

26. Also in the first committee were Lewis A. Coser, Richard Flacks, Robert K. Merton, Peter H. Rossi, and Ralph H. Turner (Committees and Representatives 1969). However, the subcommittee that researched the case was made up of John Porter, Richard Flacks, and Edward Gross (Williams 1971).

professional competences of such individuals are very poorly developed and subject to abuse. . . . These cases come to the Committee because there is very little that the AAUP or the courts can do for them.

One such case was the demotion of the department chair and dismissal of four assistant professors at Washington University at Saint Louis. The department had the largest concentration of radicals in sociology, but almost as soon as it formed in 1969 it splintered into groups of Marxist activists and academics (Etzkowitz 1988). When some left, those who remained, junior faculty, were refused renewal of contract. Rossi and his committee concluded that Washington University was in its legal right to dismiss the four professors, but that it failed to appoint an expert committee to assess the competence of those scholars. The committee motioned that the university reinstate the teachers or otherwise be excluded from using the services of the ASA (Official Reports and Proceedings 1974). A similar condemnation followed a year later for a case at Wichita State University (suspended in 1977 once the case entered the courts) and in 1976 at Boston University (Official Reports and Proceedings 1975, 1976a).

On conclusion of the Washington University investigation, the committee's report began to frame the problem in new terms, noting that

many departments sought out young persons of a very liberal or radical bent or with looser teaching and research styles during the period of student discontent and unrest in the hope that such appointments would be responsive to the demands for increased relevance in sociology courses. These recent appointments are not now as attractive with the decline in student activism.

It called for the ASA to ask departments to "make their criteria for hiring, retention, and promotion more explicit." The committee saw the sources of the troubles in a mismatch between the expectations of junior faculty and the departments that hired them.

In 1975, citing lack of funds as an impediment to investigate and mediate new cases, Rossi resigned as head of the committee (D'Antonio 1977). Short on funds, the committee's mandate was changed: "Even if COFORT cannot be supported as suggested . . . it could, for example, draw up and publicize model contracts and develop guidebooks for faculty and administrators in hiring, promoting, and retaining sociologists" (Council Takes Action 1976; Official Reports and Proceedings 1976b). Jack Ladinsky was the author of the "Guidelines for Initial Appointments in Sociology"; its preface stated, "For their part, new faculty did not know what to ask about,

or feared asking about certain issues prior to accepting employment, only to become aware of practices which they found unacceptable when it was, so to speak, too late.”²⁷ The document was the culmination of nine years of investigations. The ASA’s understanding of the political discrimination problem was expressed as one of miscommunication between scholars and their institutions. Not unlike a code of ethics, or the historian’s charter of rights, the sociologists’ guidelines were a document for voluntary use.

The sociologists’ guidelines rejected politics as a resource to interpret the employment difficulties of young radical scholars. The refusal to consider politics was even stronger in economics. For economists the alarm sounded first in 1974,²⁸ with six dismissals at San Jose State University, one from Lehman College (CUNY), and one from the University of Massachusetts at Boston (Rowe 1974).²⁹ The radicals in economics charged that the firings were politically motivated: “An attempt to get at those teachers who have good and close connections with students—at those who point the finger at capitalism” (cited in Golden 1975).³⁰ In a resolution that made direct reference to the events at San Jose State University and Lehman College, they called for the AEA to “establish a standing committee, the Committee on Political Discrimination, whose members shall be appointed each year by the President of the Association to collect information on issues of fact in cases involving termination of employment for alleged political reasons” (Minutes of the Annual Meeting 1975).³¹

27. The guidelines asked for letters of appointment that detailed responsibilities of the scholar and length of contract, and a supplementary document listing the organization of the department, its recruitment and promotion policies as well as grievance procedures within each institution (COFRAT: Guidelines 1978).

28. For an earlier history of discrimination against left-leaning economists, see Lee 2004.

29. The most famous case in economics was, however, with Samuel Bowles from Harvard University in 1972. He received the votes of three of the most prominent members of the department: Wassily Leontief, Kenneth J. Arrow, and John Kenneth Galbraith. Yet despite their support, Bowles’s promotion was turned down by faculty vote. He was not the only radical at Harvard who was refused a reappointment with tenure. Soon after, the decision was made not to reappoint Arthur MacEwan (Weintraub 1973). Student pressure and media attention succeeded in reversing the decision over the employment of Herbert Gintis, who was offered a three-year contract (Lifschultz 1974).

30. The association’s acting president for 1974 (and therefore presiding over the proceedings) was Robert Aaron Gordon, father of David Gordon, a radical at the New School for Social Research.

31. In the 1972 meetings there had been a motion denouncing political discrimination and asserting the association’s strong condemnation of political discrimination against radicals in hiring decisions or government grant allocation (Minutes of the Annual Meeting 1973). However, this had not been accompanied by direct action by radicals, nor did it produce such a clear result as the creation of the Committee on Political Discrimination.

The AEA Committee on Political Discrimination chaired by Kenneth J. Arrow³² concluded three reports in 1976.³³ The first concerned a dismissal at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. The junior professor had her contract suspended until the conclusion of her PhD thesis. However, after her Harvard thesis was approved with a high grade, the university dismissed it as being of low quality. After interviews with members of the department, the committee found no basis for criticizing the personnel committee, since the “issues raised dealt with matters as methods of verifying hypotheses, precision in the formulation of propositions and ideas, command of the scholarly literature to which the thesis is intended to contribute, cogency of expression and exposition, critical evaluation of sources, and so forth.”

However, in a comment accompanying the report, the committee qualified its judgment, stating that

the thesis lay beyond the boundaries of traditional work in economics in its methodology. Any work of this sort runs the risk of being considered by some at the leading edge of research (and in this sense to be “revolutionary”) while others will find it lacking in the basic concepts and techniques that are the mark of a competent researcher in the discipline. (Report-Fact-Finding Panel 1975)

The committee examined the official arguments for dismissal, and finding them scholarly it accepted the judgment; while it raised a deeper issue of subjectivity, it did not recognize it as political.³⁴

In the case at Lehman College, the committee found that “the Department appears intolerant of new ways of teaching and research, in particular, giving little or no credit to teaching and publication in Spanish. On the other hand, it found no definite evidence that the discrimination, which certainly appears real, is based on political motives.” For the sociologists’

32. Arrow’s sympathy toward the radicals seems sincere; he recalled in a recent interview: “There were at least three former presidents of the AEA at Harvard at the time, and all of us were for Bowles, and of course he lost. In some sense there is a body of opinion that is out there that is not represented by the elite, and it is often less open to innovation than is the elite” (Colander, Holt, and Rosser 2004).

33. The AEA also considered (timidly) the issue of ethics. The secretary of the AEA, Rendig Fels, wrote to the AHA secretary: “I would appreciate if you would let me know what your Association does on questions of professional ethics. One of our members has proposed that we devise a code of ethical practices or establish a committee to administer it and ‘constitute a kind of beneficent conscience’” (Fels 1970).

34. For the debate between radicals and mainstream conceptions of the place of politics in economics, see Mata 2009.

committee this would have been regarded as a violation of freedom of teaching, but in the economists' more narrow definition of political it was insufficient (Report of the Committee 1976).

The committee produced a joint and lengthy report for the San Jose cases. The conflict began with the election of a department chair, an appointment made by the administration against the majority of the faculty vote. In many aspects this was like the Simon Fraser case. The AEA committee was unequivocal in denouncing violations of procedural rules both in nominating the chair and in bypassing the personnel committee for employment decisions. But even as the report condemned the university administration as violating due process, it deemed such issues out of its jurisdiction. The report concluded that "intra-university politics, per se, are to be distinguished from the 'political reasons' alluded to therein such that they do not belong to the Committee's jurisdiction" (American Economic Association Committee n.d.).

The committee's ineffectiveness was acknowledged by its members. They reported to the AEA executive committee that their "original mandate will rarely, if ever, be feasible to execute." They were searching for "direct factual evidence" of political discrimination, interpreted as foreign interference of political discourse into the evaluation of an economist's work. The committee members recognized this was a heavy burden of proof: "It must be candidly said that if political factors did enter, say in evaluation of research or of teaching, it would require only the slightest skill on the part of administrators or departments to conceal the fact. Indeed it might require no skill at all because the factors may well be operating at an unconscious level" (Report of the Committee 1976).

In 1976 the committee had a total of eight cases under investigation. To the national media, Arrow explained that there was great difficulty in determining whether dismissals resulted from political beliefs, the quality of a professor's work, or the recession, which had forced some colleges to lay off faculty (Epstein 1976). A feeling of frustration led the committee to propose turning over all complaints to the AAUP (Report of the Committee 1976). By 1977 the Committee on Political Discrimination was no longer accepting new cases (Minutes of the Annual Meeting 1978).³⁵

35. The 1978 case report's summary was that "the Committee is unable to judge the merits of the department's grounds for not reappointing [Professor X]. The Committee finds no evidence, however, that the reappointment decision was based on political discrimination." Arrow commented to the new committee president, Carl Stevens, that "I must say I have the distinct feeling that [X] was treated harshly and very likely in a discriminatory fashion, but he did not get clear evidence that the motivation was political" (Stevens 1978).

The AEA committee did not report to the executive committee from 1978 to 1981 when it concluded its final investigation on the case of Peter Bohmer at UC San Diego. The committee had taken four years to appoint a team to investigate the case and two more years to write a report. It concluded by majority that there had been political discrimination. The conclusion was facilitated by evidence that the FBI had funded the harassment of several radicals, and Bohmer was one of the targets (Report of the Committee on Political Discrimination 1981).³⁶ The committee in its final investigation found a clear instance of a foreign political interference.

Economists and sociologists shared a refusal to discuss the influence of politics in the discrimination cases. The economists defined politics as the explicit presence of ideology or foreign agency, the sociologists focused on due process. Thus sociologists did censure institutions, not as politically discriminatory but as erratic in their procedures. The sociologists deflected political concerns to address the naive young professor who entered into an academic contract without knowledge of the rules of the game. The ASA guidelines instructed members in negotiating their contracts. It was left to the individual scholar to seek clarity and stay out of trouble.

It's Not Them, It's You: Crisis of Confidence

The AAUP's 1970 definition of academic freedom liberated faculty for extramural political action and intramural scholarly controversy. But it did not examine the increasing permeation of the intramural and the extramural, which university administrations, and radical students and junior faculty, were battling to direct. The associations were called to address the unresolved accommodation between the university and its social context. The revelations of participation of social scientists in counterinsurgency projects gave expression to an anxiety over the uses given to social sciences. The marginalization of young faculty because of their campus activism suggested that social science's connection with pressing social issues was much more mediated (by administrations and patrons) than assumed.

The ethical codes (AAA, ASA, APSA), guidelines (ASA), and charter of rights (AHA) were documents to give guidance to a scholar's conduct. Because the social science associations are voluntary organizations with

36. On COINTELPRO, see Cunningham 2004 for analysis and Churchill and Wall 2002 for the documents.

no power of accreditation, attempts to sanction members for breaches of ethical code or due process in faculty appointments were never attempted (Abbott 1988). When committees investigated institutions and individuals (APSA, ASA, AEA) they sought to mediate, not assign blame. Ethical and employment guidelines all perform the same transformation of the violations of academic freedom originating not in the institutional but in the individuals.

Ellen Schrecker (1979) once observed that the midcentury “embargo on Marxism” had been lifted when student radicals of the 1960s turned to the books and became the 1970s academic Marxists. The cases of the 1970s were not as dramatic as those of the 1950s: dismissed scholars often found other employments, and some even prospered. The severity of the controversies is expressed not in human drama but in a crisis of identity and credibility.

The faculty did not spell out an alternative project for the university; instead the faculty broke apart. David Hollinger (2006, 81), writing on academic freedom today, notes disagreement among faculties “on what ethos identifies the university, yielding a diminished capacity to justify to the public the rights and privileges of the faculties.”³⁷ My essay exposes how controversies about academic freedom expressed and reinforced a breakdown of solidarity. When knowledge stepped out into compromising quarters of the social world or when social causes stepped into the campuses, social scientists found each other to blame for the transgressions.

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37. Hollinger’s position is not unlike that of Metzger (1969). For more contemporary discussions on the corporate takeover of universities, see Mirowski and Van Horn 2005; on academic freedom, see Menand 1996.

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