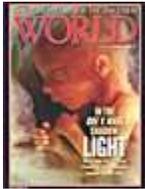




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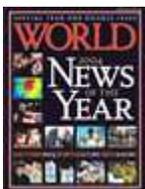
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Conformity on campus

EDUCATION: Raucous students and ideologically identical professors set the tone at America's colleges and universities, but some student movements provide hope for change | *by Marvin Olasky*

This fall four new studies of professors' political attitudes showed a large tilt to the left:

- Daniel Klein, an economics professor and researcher at Santa



Clara University and Stockholm University, surveyed more than 1,000 professors around the United States and found Democrats outnumbering Republicans at least 7-1 in the humanities and social sciences, with departments such as anthropology and sociology coming in at about 30-1.

- In a separate study of voter registration records, Mr. Klein found professors at Stanford and the University of California-Berkeley tilted Democratic 9-1. Among younger professors at those two universities the imbalance was even greater: 183 Democrats, six Republicans.

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- The American Council of Trustees and Alumni polled 658 students at 50 top colleges concerning their perception of faculty. Almost half agreed with these statements: "Professors use the classroom to present their personal political views . . . presentations on political issues seem totally one-sided . . . [professors] frequently comment on politics in class even though it has nothing to do with the course." ACTA president Anne Neal said, "If this were a survey of students reporting widespread sexual harassment, there would be an uproar."

- The Center for Responsive Politics ranked organizations by per capita employee contributions to presidential candidates. The University of California system and Harvard finished first and second, with both backing John Kerry over George Bush 19-1. (The next three institutions: Time Warner, Goldman Sachs and Microsoft.)

The evidence provided by these new studies paralleled data from some older ones:

- The Center for the Study of Popular Culture measured voting by Ivy League professors in 2000 and found a 9-1 ratio for Al Gore over Mr. Bush. The Center also asked professors to describe themselves politically: The ratio there was 11-1 liberal over conservative.

- The American Enterprise Institute in 2002 published results of research into voter registration by humanities and social science instructors at 19 universities. To pick a few in alphabetical order: Colorado was 116-7 left (Democrat or Green) over right (Republican or Libertarian); Cornell was 166-6; San Diego State was 80-11; Stanford was 151-17; the State University of New York-Binghamton was 35-1; UCLA was 141-9.

The critical question is how alumni will react to such information. One wealthy Vanderbilt alum sent me this note: "I have recently begun the following when approached for financial support from the several colleges represented within my family and to which I have given generous support in the past. I listen patiently to the dialogue and in a very chummy manner I ask if they are promoting diversity which I believe is a good thing. The response is always a gushing affirmative answer. I reply that I am happy about this but I have realized that the professors are 90+ percent liberal which certainly is anything but diverse; but I would like to pledge \$100,000 dollars as soon as this imbalance is corrected and there is true diversity of thought and speech without reprisal. I ask that they call me back when this is accomplished and I will gladly make good on my promise. If every

conservative would adopt this policy there would be swift changes."

Two recent college graduates published this year book-length discussions of campus problems: Ben Shapiro's *Brainwashed: How Universities Indoctrinate America's Youth* and Brendan Steinhauser's *The Conservative Revolution: How to Win the Battle for College Campuses* contain useful specific detail. Here are four brief looks at campus problems and responses to them: Jamie Dean reports on discrimination against Christian students, Gene Edward Veith reviews Tom Wolfe's new fictional portrayal of campus life, and Priya Abraham and Max Goss report on conservative student journalists and activists who are fighting back.

Intolerant tolerance

When University of North Carolina student Timothy Mertes during a "Literature and Diversity" class discussion identified himself as a Christian and said he felt "disgusted, not threatened" by homosexual behavior, Professor Elyse Crystall was appalled. She sent an e-mail to the class, calling Mr. Mertes's comments "hate speech," and saying, "That a white, heterosexual, Christian male . . . can feel entitled to make violent, heterosexist comments and not feel marked or threatened or vulnerable is what privilege makes possible."

The comments garnered attention from the U.S. Department of Education, which ruled last month that Ms. Crystall's e-mail amounted to "intentional discrimination and harassment." The agency has promised to protect college students from religious discrimination, but according to David French, president of Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), the agency will have its work cut out for it.

"We are consistently seeing that conservative, Christian organizations are not exactly the darlings of university administrations," Mr. French says. "A host of injustices are being visited against these groups."

FIRE has been involved in more than 600 individual liberty cases on at least 200 college campuses since 1999. Many of those cases included discrimination against Christians.

One case involved IntersVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) and Rutgers University. In September 2002, Rutgers officials banned IVCF from meeting on campus because of the group's policy that leaders must "adhere to biblical standards and belief in all areas of their lives." The

school said the policy amounted to discrimination. FIRE sent a letter to the administration, asking it to reverse the decision. When Rutgers refused, FIRE referred the case to the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF). ADF filed a lawsuit against Rutgers on behalf of IVCF, saying the school violated the group's rights to freedom of expression, religion, and association. Four months later, in the face of bad publicity, Rutgers relented, and ADF dropped the suit.

A similar showdown occurred earlier this year at Purdue University, where officials threatened to shut down a Christian women's housing group that refused to sign a nondiscrimination policy requiring the group to ignore faith when selecting members. FIRE intervened, sending a letter to university president Martin Jischke, reminding him of the group's First Amendment rights. Mr. Jischke quickly responded, granting the housing cooperative an exemption from the nondiscrimination policy.

Ohio State University, under pressure from ADF, recently made a similar move, agreeing to allow religious student groups to define membership standards apart from a nondiscrimination policy.

But not all universities are so accommodating. ADF recently filed a lawsuit against the University of North Carolina on behalf of Alpha Iota Omega, the only Christian fraternity on campus. UNC revoked AIO's student-organization status last year after the fraternity refused to sign a nondiscrimination clause that would have required the group to admit non-Christians with no interest in the fraternity's primary purpose of evangelism.

"The Supreme Court has ruled repeatedly that private organizations have the right to determine their own membership," says ADF senior counsel Jordan Lorence. "Requiring the fraternity to sign the policy to obtain benefits holds the fraternity hostage by using their own beliefs against them."

The outcome of religious liberty cases could have an impact beyond the borders of university walls. ADF attorney Joshua Carden says a victory for groups like AIO could extend to churches with tax-exempt status. "If the government were to operate according to UNC's reasoning, police in any state with a nondiscrimination policy could go into churches and demand membership be open to anyone, including non-Christians," Mr. Carden says. "That's UNC's logic writ large." —*Jamie Dean*

Today's Jungle

If parents of America's college students would all read Tom Wolfe's new novel and come to believe what it says, they would get in their cars, drive to campus, and drag their offspring kicking and screaming from their co-ed dorms, frat houses, and rule-free residence halls. If what Mr. Wolfe says about life at the university is correct and if it becomes known, taxpayers would cut off their subsidies, donors would stop giving, parents would refuse to pay tuition, and all that would be left of once-noble institutions of higher education would be their sports teams.

I am Charlotte Simmons is a work of fiction, and no doubt exaggerates the bad and leaves out much that is good. But Mr. Wolfe's cultural observations cannot be dismissed. He is a social realist, who researches his novels by months of careful observation of his subjects, like an anthropologist studying a primitive culture. For this, his third novel, Mr. Wolfe examines the culture of a major university, doing his field research at Stanford and the Universities of North Carolina, Michigan, Alabama, and Florida.

The novel tells the story of Charlotte Simmons, a bright, idealistic, virtuous young woman from a tiny, mountain community in North Carolina, who makes a perfect score on her SATs and gets a full-ride scholarship to the fictional DuPont University, an elite institution ranked second only to Harvard. Charlotte comes from a blue-collar church-going family whom she dearly loves, but she is thrilled at her opportunity to transcend her humble origins and pursue the life of the mind at one of the best universities in the world.

Then we follow Charlotte's initiation into campus life. She is put in a co-ed dorm, in which men and women share the same communal bathrooms. She is regularly "sexiled," which means kicked out of her dorm room while her roommate is having sex. She is engulfed by the vilest language. Campus dances consist of young men and women grinding their private parts together. Students are constantly drunk.

The rich high-society kids, who predominate in this elite school, look down on poor, country-girl Charlotte, and even the students who are out of the social hierarchies still feel pressured to be "cool."

Charlotte is appalled by all of this. She holds onto her integrity—repeating to herself as her mother told her, "I am Charlotte Simmons!"—

but she has the misfortune to be pretty, which makes her a target for the predatory frat boys, athletes, and intellectualoids who want to have sex with her.

This is a depressing novel—not just for the vile language Mr. Wolfe unpleasantly transcribes for us or for the purposefully repellent sex scenes—but for the agony of seeing Charlotte, one of Wolfe's most attractive characters, pulled down into the cesspool, both in her degradation and her success.

Readers learn lots about contemporary campus culture. Students don't "date" anymore. Instead, they "hook up" for totally impersonal sex. Sex, having already been separated from reproduction, is now separated from a relationship. Girls dress up like prostitutes to attract guys, who never dress up at all and who call women "dumpsters" for their semen.

What about the life of the mind? Charlotte finds a small circle of outcast intellectuals who care about ideas, but they are weak and spineless (except for the feminists) and utterly full of themselves. One of them is a "tutor" for the athletes, which entails writing their papers for them in their special "jock" classes. The professors are obsessed with left-wing politics, but the students don't seem to care much. They will dutifully turn out for Gay Rights rallies, but they are mostly concerned with "rut-rut-rutting."

Most universities have Christian groups, though they did not show up on Mr. Wolfe's social radar screen. There is no trace of any at DuPont. Charlotte desperately needs a good peer group to be part of. She also needs discipleship, a source of forgiveness, and a worldview that gives a framework for the life of the mind, something universities have evidently lost.

Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* sparked a revulsion at the unsanitary conditions of packing houses and inspired a wholesale reform of the nation's food industry. Perhaps Mr. Wolfe's novel could do the same for the higher education industry. —*Gene Edward Veith*

Journalistic Dissenters

If the more than 100 student editors gathered at the Capitol Hilton in Washington were the foot soldiers, then the big-name journalists addressing them were the grizzled veterans. Even as they celebrated 25 years of independent conservative newspapers on college campuses, the

language they used was that of an unfinished battle.

"You're not being a conservative publication unless you're being persecuted," joked Rich Lowry, editor of *National Review*. He was editor of the *Virginia Advocate*, the right-wing paper of the University of Virginia.

Mr. Lowry was one of several alumni of the Collegiate Network, a band of 86 conservative college papers that began with one University of Chicago publication in 1979. While the Dec. 2 anniversary celebration was light-hearted, it underscored how far conservatives have come in creating their own voices in journalism—and in producing their own success stories.

The two upstart students at the University of Chicago who created *Counterpoint* have graduated to become prominent journalists in their own right. John Podhoretz helped to found *The Weekly Standard* and is a *New York Post* columnist. Tod Lindberg is the editor of the Hoover Institution journal, *Policy Review*. They were the first to receive a grant to support their paper. After seeing several supporters, the network is now administered under the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, which promotes conservative thought at universities. The Collegiate Network has also churned out other well-known commentators such as Ann Coulter and Dinesh D'Souza.

From a sampling of conservative campus papers, today's writers are just as unapologetic as their predecessors. Reporters at the University of Maryland's *Terrapin Times* discovered that their faculty's contributions to Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry far outstripped those to George Bush. Bucknell University's *The Counterweight* drew attention to the leftist slant of the campus' women's resource center, which informed female students of a national pro-abortion rally but not pro-life ones. The *Carolina Review* of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill tackled the institution's grade inflation and declining educational standards (in a "special" issue).

But even with a growing presence, conservative students are still not melding well on many liberal campuses. Case in point was *The Yale Free Press*, which was stolen from 11 residential colleges over Thanksgiving break. Several student editors at the Washington Collegiate Network event had similar stories. "This impulse for censorship is common on campus," said Sam Cecil, a Yale economics major who edits another conservative paper, *Light and Truth*.

Still, the students are helping to "fulfill the true meaning of a liberal education on campus," says CN public affairs director Sarah Longwell. "That impact is immeasurable." —*Priya Abraham*

Coming out conservative

Over the years college "activism" has generally been on the political left. Now, student activists of the right are setting up protests, counterprotests, and publicity stunts, and receiving sharp responses from liberals. Some examples:

- College Republicans from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro hosted "Morals Week," a weeklong series of events promoting abstinence and personal responsibility.

- Students at Harvard, Wellesley, Penn State, the University of California at Davis, the University of Texas, and other schools around the country sponsored "Conservative Coming Out" days to proclaim publicly their allegiance to traditional values and individual freedom.

- Conservative student groups hosted "affirmative action bake sales" at Northwestern University, the University of Rochester, the University of California at Berkeley,

UCLA, and other schools around the country. SMU administrators shut down the bake sale on their campus, where members of the Young Conservatives of Texas mocked

racial favoritism by selling cookies to white males for \$1, white females for 75 cents, and African-Americans for a quarter. Ed Jones, an African-American state senator, joined the sale at the University of Colorado to show his opposition to racial preferences.

- Students are working to bring more conservative speakers to campus, and sometimes running into opposition. Bucknell University temporarily blocked the Conservatives Club from bringing in Republican Pat Toomey because of a rule prohibiting current political candidates, even though the school had invited presidential candidate Ralph Nader to speak at its commencement. —*Max Goss, a doctoral student at the University of Texas*

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