

TURNING THE TIDE: CHALLENGING THE RIGHT ON CAMPUS

*AN ANALYSIS OF RIGHT WING AND CORPORATE
INFLUENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION*



By Anuradha Mittal with Felicia Gustin
With a Foreword by Howard Zinn

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FOREWORD

There is a persistent myth about the world of the academy and that is the myth of “disinterested learning.” The pretense is that the student in college or in the university, lives in a pleasant cocoon, removed from the conflicts of the world outside, and in this protected environment knowledge is pursued without the contamination of political or economic interest. Yes, the “ivory tower,” rising high above the battlefield of ideas, the class struggle, the racial clashes, the sexual conflicts.

This valuable report reminds us that, far from being a haven from the outside world, the world of war, of famine, of racism and exploitation, the campus is an arena for ideological struggle, in which the stakes are far higher than grades and degrees and career choices. The crucial prize is the mind of the student, the values of the young, for on them depends the future of the nation, as the coming generation makes choices that decide life and death for not only people in our country, but men, women and children all over the world.

We learn in this carefully researched study that right-wing conservatives have set out, with enormous funds at their command, to capture the thinking of students, to imbue them with certain ideas: the glories of the capitalist “free market,” the justness of the nation’s wars, the genius of the American political system, pride in the nation as “superpower” bringing democracy and liberty to other places in the world. Most often, this ideological campaign takes the form, not of pressing those ideas, in an obvious way, but rather deflecting critical examination of them by “radical teachers,” “Marxist professors,” “leftist literature,” or even liberal faculty members.

The fact that conservatives are going to such strenuous lengths to combat ideas critical of U.S. society, of foreign policy, of economic exploitation, of racial and economic inequality, is itself a sign that such criticism began to take hold in the heat of the Sixties, when large numbers of Americans, including the students, began to question the system. That questioning frightened the political leaders of the United States, as they felt their power threatened by the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, the women’s movement. They set out to preserve the legitimacy of the status quo, by influencing the minds of the coming generation.

We see in this report the evidence for what I have said above, the details of the campaign to turn the minds of young people away from “dangerous” ideas. We see the extent to which this has been successful. It is the counterpart, on the campus, to the strenuous efforts made by the various administrations of the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate years, to do away with what they term “the Vietnam syndrome.” By using the word “syndrome” they are categorizing as some sort of sickness that period in which citizens turned against racial segregation, against war, against governmental power used to buttress the wealth of the privileged.

Also in this important study is evidence that the right-wing attempt at mind control has only been partly successful, that many students on campuses all over the country have resisted the attempt to stifle critical thinking. We learn about alternative voices, about stu-

dent solidarity with campus workers, about anti-war actions. We learn about the Institute for Democratic Education and Culture (IDEC), a network of progressive scholars and cultural activists and its project, Speak Out, which promotes these voices. We learn about campus newspapers which insist on their right to criticize Establishment policies, whether in the nation, or in the academy.

In these pages, you will find a valuable account of the Boston Summit of June 2005, sponsored by IDEC - Speak Out, where the problem of right-wing power on campuses was analyzed, and where strategies to challenge that power were discussed. The point was not simply to react to the conservative thrust, but to develop progressive alliances, to support campus publications, to connect the campus to the world outside, and to root all of this in history.

The premise of such activity is that at least half of the young people on campuses around the nation are still open to new ideas. And if these students, while still in school, can join the struggle for peace and justice, there is a chance that we will all see a different and better world.

—Howard Zinn

TURNING THE TIDE

CHALLENGING THE RIGHT ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

The traditionally elitist nature of U.S. higher education was transformed with the passage in 1944 of the GI Bill, which put higher education within the reach of millions of veterans of World War II. For the first time in U.S. history, the children of people with average financial means – the sons and daughters of workers and farmers – had access to a college degree and within a very short period, enrollment in colleges and universities swelled.

However, this access to higher education would not begin to extend to people of color until the Civil Rights movement began to emerge on the national panorama a decade later. The Supreme Court's historic 1954 decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, coupled with grass-roots organizing efforts, set the stage for federal legislation that would transform public education. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 led to the 1965 Higher Education Act which provided significant aid to poor Black colleges and led the number of African American college students to quadruple within a decade.¹ These gains opened the door for all communities of color, the poor and other previously disenfranchised members of society to pursue a college education.

At the same time, the sons and daughter of the predominantly white veterans who benefited from the GI bill were also coming of age, imbued with the notion that attending college was a given. By 1969, when the first wave of baby boomers had completed higher education, total enrollment was up to 8 million.²

Colleges and universities themselves were transformed by the massive influx of students who had been traditionally locked out of higher education. Campuses became vibrant hubs of political activity with students playing a key role in civil rights, anti-war, women's, ethnic studies, environmental, affirmative action, multicultural curricula, and anti-globalization activism. After all, education, at its best, enables people to learn more about the world and engage in critical thinking, and ensures democratic participation in issues that affect their lives. By the 1980s, success in these struggles resulted in the commitment of resources for programs like ethnic studies, women's studies, and environmental studies at universities nationwide.

But at the same time progressive advances were being made, conservative forces were coming together to strategically determine how to insure that their own influence would dominate the campus arena. We are seeing the success of those efforts today.

1 Lyndon B. Johnson and Civil Rights, http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/Lyndon_Baines_Johnson.htm

2 "Overview and Influence of the G.I. Bill," American Institutions Survey (Hopkins) Department of Translation Studies, University of Tampere, Finland.

THE RIGHT ADVANCES ITS AGENDA

“The battle over what is taught in higher education, who gets access to it, and the way in which students are acculturated on college campuses is both symbolically and practically a battle for the hegemony of the society at large.”³

All political movements are keen to win the war of shaping and influencing young minds. After all, campus activists often go on to become intellectual leaders, organizational visionaries and political candidates. Not surprising then that the centerpiece of the Right’s agenda has been to shape higher education programs.

Over the last few decades, the organized conservative movement has been busy influencing campuses and thereby diminishing the role of colleges and universities as a democratizing force in our society. Whenever academia has given students exposure to alternative economic and political views, the Right has been there to ensure that conservative ideas are reinforced. Their success is reflected in the growth of the College Republican National Committee (CRNC). Reduced to just 409 chapters in 1998, the CRNC has today tripled its membership with 120,000-plus members on 1,148 campuses, while the College Democrats of America claim members on only 903 campuses.

The polls bear this out even more clearly. An annual survey, sponsored by the American Council of Education in 2003, reported that only 17% of college freshmen considered it important to be involved in an environmental program, in comparison to double that number in 1992. A majority (53%) of 2003 freshmen wanted affirmative action abolished while only 55% favored reproductive rights compared to two thirds in 1992. 53% of students believed that “wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now,” compared with 72% in 1992.⁴

More recently, a poll commissioned by the John S. and James C. Knight Foundation and conducted by the University of Connecticut, which interviewed 112,003 teens, found that one in three U.S. high school students thinks that the press ought to be more restricted while even more say that the government should approve newspaper stories before readers see them.⁵ A third of high school students think that the First Amendment “goes too far.” Three-quarters thought that flag burning was illegal and 74% said that people shouldn’t be able to burn or deface an U.S. flag as a political statement while almost one-fifth said that Americans should not be allowed to express unpopular views.⁶



³ Cowan, R. & Rhee, N., “The Big Picture,” *Uncovering the Right on Campus*, Center for Campus Organizing, 1997.
⁴ Cloud, J., “The Right’s New Wing,” *Time*, August, 2004.
⁵ The survey found that 36% believe that newspapers should get “government approval” of stories before publishing; 51% say that they should be able to publish freely,

and 13% have no opinion. Toppo, G., “U.S. Students say Press Freedoms go to Far,” *USA Today*, January 31, 2005.
⁶ Zaitchik, A., “Generation Red, White and Gray: If the Children are the Future, We’re Screwed,” www.nytimes.com, February 8, 2005.

Given this climate, our report, *Turning The Tide: Challenging the Right on College Campuses*, presents an historical overview of Right-wing and corporate influences on higher education. We believe that for progressives to strategize on how to counter these influences, we need to be aware of how conservative political organizations affect campus culture and effectively advance their agendas. The conclusion of the report, *The Way Forward*, presents some options on how to start building a broad-based and sustainable movement for progressive values on college campuses.

RIGHT-WING POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON CAMPUS

Over the past 30 years, the Right has built a nationwide campus network with a highly-organized infrastructure, an extensive network of campus affiliates, and over a dozen conservative student-focused think tanks that spend over \$40 million annually. Its influence and reach can be seen in a range of well-orchestrated actions on campuses nationwide. While the list of such actions is long, the following are samples of the most egregious:

- A law suit brought by a student against Rutgers in 1979 reduced funding for the Public Interest Research Group (PIRG). Since then, Right-wing think tanks and youth organizations have worked to eliminate student-fee funded campus progressive groups such as PIRGs and United States Students Association (USSA) with the battle moving to several state legislatures. The Eagle Forum Collegians (EFC), a Christian-right group, led by Phyllis Schlafly, set up a project called “Defund USSA,” which aims to cut the USSA's funding from individual student governments. The EFC campaign has had some success as courts in a few states have ruled against the use of compulsory student fees to fund political activism.

Similarly, efforts have been made to defund gay rights groups such as the Pride Alliance at the Georgia Tech on the assertion that the university employs an unconstitutional classification system to allocate its mandatory student activity fees. In addition, they are challenging what they call “non-monetary advantage that the gay rights group receives from various levels of the Georgia Tech administration.”

- In April 1994, Right-wing student activists from around the country went to Harvard to ratify the Cambridge Declaration. The event, described as the conservative equivalent of the 1962 launch of Students for a Democratic Society in Port Huron, Michigan, attacked multiculturalism, affirmative action, and diversity seminars.
- Students for Academic Freedom, founded in 2003 by David Horowitz, is pressing states to adopt its noble-sounding Academic Bill of Rights: “Curricula and reading lists in the humanities and social sciences should (provide) students with dissenting sources and viewpoints where appropriate.”⁷ In reality, it is an attempt to intimidate professors and make them censor what they say and teach in their courses.

Their campaign resulted in the Colorado State Legislature hearing from students and faculty in 2003 about alleged persecution of conservatives on campuses. Their claim: left-wing professors ridicule conservative students, subject them to reading lists with only leftist authors, grade them down and attempt to recruit them into leftist causes. The Academic Bill of Rights has traveled to several other states including Georgia, Missouri, Michigan, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, California, Utah, Washington, Pennsylvania, Hawaii, and Indiana. In March 2005, a bill (H 837), inspired by the Academic Bill of

7 Gitlin, T., “Permission to Speak Freely,” *Mother Jones*, March/April 2005, r.” *USA Today*, January 31, 2005.

Reminiscent of the anti-communist McCarthy hysteria, the report goes on to list the names of 117 students and faculty and the ‘unpatriotic’ statements they made – “break the cycle of violence,” “ignorance breeds hate,” – as dangerous to national security.

Rights and that would allow Florida's public university students to sue their professors for the “leftist totalitarianism” of “dictator professors,” was approved 8-2 on party lines by the Republicans on the Florida House Choice and Innovation Committee.⁸ In September 2005, the Inter-University Council of Ohio reached an agreement with Senate sponsors of the Ohio Academic Bill of Rights (Senate Bill 24) to implement key principles of academic freedom in all public and private colleges and universities in the state.

- In December 2005, a web site (uclaprofs.com) was launched by the Bruin Alumni Association, purporting to expose “UCLA's radical professors” and offering students as much as \$100 in return for “information about abusive, one-sided or off-topic classroom behavior” by professors, in the form of detailed class notes with audience reactions and lecture recordings. The Bruin Alumni Association, a non-profit organization unrelated to the UCLA Alumni Association, was started by alumnus Andrew Jones with the goal of publicizing and reforming the “exploding crisis of political radicalism on campus,” according to the Bruin Alumni Association Web site. The website links to the “Dirty 30,” a list of 31 professor profiles who Jones claims are among the most radical at UCLA with each professor ranked with a scale of “power fists” – five fists being the most radical.
- On February 1, 2005, ABC’s *World News Tonight* provided an uncritical platform for conservatives who complained that their free speech was being curtailed on college campuses across the country. ABC anchor Charles Gibson introduced the segment by saying that conservatives “claim they are victims of a double standard on college campuses.” He then supported the notion by saying, “There certainly is evidence to suggest that college campuses are bastions of liberal thinking. Seventy-two percent of faculty members in one survey identified themselves as left of center.” However ABC failed to note death threats against pro-Palestinian professors, nor did it evaluate the credibility of complaints made by the Right-wing.⁹
- A report, *Defending Civilization: How Our Universities are Failing America and What Can Be Done About it*, published by the Defense of Civilization Fund (headed by Lynne Cheney), attacked students and college faculty who opposed the war in Afghanistan. The report urged college administrations “to adopt strong core curricula that includes rigorous courses on...America’s continuing struggle to extend the principles on which it was founded.” Reminiscent of the anti-communist McCarthy hysteria, the report goes on to list the names of 117 students and faculty and the ‘unpatriotic’ statements they made – “break the cycle of violence,” “ignorance breeds hate,” – as dangerous to national security.
- Students Against War, a campus group who chanted at recruiters and ripped up their literature on January 20, 2005, was threatened by the Seattle Central University adminis-

8 Vanlandingham, J., “Capitol Bill Aims to Control ‘Leftist’ Profs,” *Independent Florida Alligator*, March 23, 2005.

9 Action Alert: ABC’s Assist Campus Conservatives: Were

Censorship Stories too Good to Check? Fairness And Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), February 3, 2005.

tration to take responsibility and apologize to the U.S. Army for their inaugural protest or face being disbanded. This was in complete disregard for the administration's own procedures, denying the group due process and failing to protect their freedom of speech.

- The New York City Department of Education prohibited Rashid Khalidi, director of Columbia University's Middle East Institute, from participating in an training program for secondary-school teachers after the *New York Sun* published an article assailing his involvement in the program. This led to Joel Klein, the city's schools chancellor, to announce that Dr. Khalidi would no longer be allowed to participate. The Middle East Institute has come under heavy fire from politicians and newspapers like the *Sun*, which have accused the program of promoting pro-Palestinian views, disparaging Israel, and intimidating pro-Israel students.¹⁰
- 10 professors at Santa Rosa Junior College in California recently found red stars – along with a copy of the state's Education Code prohibiting the teaching of "communism" – on their office doors, courtesy of the College Republicans' president.
- Ward Churchill, a tenured professor at the University of Colorado, Boulder has been fighting attacks on his reputation and career, along with academic freedom, tenure, and ethnic studies. This is in response to his essay, *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality*, where he attempted to explain the 9/11 attack, comparing some World Trade Center employees to Nazi technocrats.¹¹

Due to Right-wing threats of violence, Churchill's lecture at Hamilton College in New York was cancelled as were several other scheduled speaking engagements. Right-wing talk radio and television shows led the call to censure the professor along with Colorado Governor Bill Owens, a major player in Lynn Cheney's American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). As Colorado University (CU) President Betsy Hoffman warned just before she announced her resignation, these attacks are intended not to simply discredit Ward Churchill, but are part of a concerted national campaign to undermine academic freedom. At CU and campuses across the country, attacks have begun on ethnic studies and women's studies, on affirmative action, and on professors who are critical of the status quo. There is clearly an orchestrated attempt to neutralize political dissent on campus.

Phyllis Schlafly used the incident to make the case for rethinking "academic freedom," claiming that the "reluctance of the University of Colorado to fire Professor Churchill is

¹⁰ Read, B., "Columbia U. Professor, Criticized for Views on Israel is Banned from Teacher-Training Program," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 22, 2005.

¹¹ Professor Churchill argued that since some WTC workers operated the financial machinery of American power,

which for example is responsible for sanctions resulting in deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children, then these workers were understandable if not legitimate targets of revenge.

The Conservative Movement Continues to Thrive on Campuses

By Patrick Coyle

Director of Lectures,
Young America's Foundation

"The left is so devoid of valid arguments that it resorts to dirty trick campaigns."



The religious Right has already manipulated the court system to win school funding for religious propaganda at the expense of funding progressive organizations, through the court cases of *Rosenberger vs. University of Virginia* and *Smith vs. Regents in California*.

showing that colleges and universities are nests of subsidized radicals. And Churchill is no anomaly; like-minded professors hold forth on campuses all over the country.”¹²

- The College Republicans at Holyoke Community College (HCC) waged a month-long harassment campaign against Student Senate president Angela Greany, who earned their ire when her effort in the student senate to pass a resolution calling on the HCC administration to ban military recruiting on campus. Failing to succeed in opposing this politically (they were trounced in a debate with the HCC Antiwar Coalition), the College Republicans began to follow around, physically intimidate, and sexually harass Angela Greany. The national Campus Antiwar Network received an email from a College Republican bragging because he (mistakenly) believed that their sexist intimidation campaign had cowed Greany into resigning as Student Senate president.
- David Barton, a leading conservative Christian advocate, accompanied by a hundred students from Oral Roberts University, has been defending displays of religion in public life and public school classrooms. The California and Texas school boards have already consulted Barton on their curriculums and sympathetic legislators in a dozen states have passed American Heritage Education Acts intended to protect teachers who discuss religion’s role in history.¹³ The religious Right has already manipulated the court system to win school funding for religious propaganda at the expense of funding progressive organizations, through the court cases of *Rosenberger vs. University of Virginia*¹⁴ and *Smith vs. Regents in California*.¹⁵

All these incidents along with countless more attest to the groundswell of the conservative presence on college campuses driven by fiercely committed, well-trained and fearless college students and increasingly recognized by the mainstream press as growing in visibility and sophistication.¹⁶

12 Schlafly, P., “College Faculties: Farm Teams for the Radical Left,” <http://www.humaneventsonline.com/article.php?id=6954>

13 Kirkpatrick, D., “Putting God Back into American History,” *The New York Times*, February 27, 2005.

14 In July 1995, Ron Rosenberger was granted access to the annual student fees collected from those attending University of Virginia, to fund the publication of his

Christian Evangelical magazine, *Wide Awake*.

15 In early 1993, the State Supreme Court (*Smith v. Regents*) ruled that student fees could not be used to support groups with which students ideologically disagreed.

16 Chamberlain, P., “Conservative Campus Organizing,” *The Public Eye*, Fall 2005.

SO HOW HAVE THEY ACCOMPLISHED IT?

THE RIGHTWARD SHIFT ON U.S. CAMPUSES

Time magazine's cover-story, "The Right's New Wing," (August 2004) reported, "The movement is very old and powerful, run not by gangly kids but by seasoned generals of the Right," who with their record-setting budgets which help sponsor hundreds of campus publications, student groups and guest lectures, have reached the height of their tactical power.¹⁷

Time magazine's cover-story, "The Right's New Wing," (August 2004) reported, "The movement is very old and powerful, run not by gangly kids but by seasoned generals of the Right," who with their record-setting budgets which help sponsor hundreds of campus publications, student groups and guest lectures, have reached the height of their tactical power.

For our purposes, the movement can be traced to 1951, when William F. Buckley's *God and Man at Yale* attacked that university for spreading "socialist" ideas and for its lack of religious instruction in the classroom. To institutionalize his mission of eroding liberalism from campuses, Buckley helped create the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) in 1953, the first education institute devoted to turning colleges to the Right. Its goal: "To further in successive American generations of American college youth a better understanding of the economic, political, and spiritual values that sustain a free and virtuous society."¹⁸ The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and corporate activists took this strategic advice to create new organizations to heart, and began building a powerful array of institutions designed to shift student attitudes and beliefs over the course of years.

In 1960, young conservatives who had worked on Senator Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign, took up his call to form a national youth organization which would train new Right-wing leadership. Around 100 students met at the estate of William Buckley and formed Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) which was hailed in a 1961 magazine article - "American conservatism has recently received a shot in the arm and American liberalism a kick in the pants. Administering both is a new and fast-growing national organization called Young Americans for Freedom."¹⁹

The idea of conservatives creating institutions that could stand the test of time received further stimulus from Lewis F. Powell, who would be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court by President Nixon. In a 1971 memorandum to Eugene Sydnor, Jr., Director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Powell warned that the U.S. economic system was under a broad attack by "Communists, new leftists, and other revolutionaries who would destroy the entire system, both political and economic."²⁰ And that the "most disquieting voices joining the chorus of criticism come from perfectly respectable elements of society: from the college campus, the pulpit, the media, intellectual and literary journals, the arts and sciences, and from politicians."²¹ Powell recommended that the business community aggressively "confront" this by building organizations that would use "careful long-range

17 Cloud, J., "The Right's New Wing," *Time*, August, 2004.

18 <http://www.isi.org/cn/about/history.aspx>

19 "The YAF's Are Coming," *The Commonweal*, April 14, 1961.

20 http://reclaimdemocracy.org/corporate_accountability/powell_memo_lewis

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

planning and implementation, in consistency of action over an indefinite period of years, in the scale of financing only available in joint effort and in the political power available only through united action and national organizations.”²²

In 1978, William Simon, Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Nixon and Ford, called for a radical rethinking of conservative principles. His book, *A Time For Truth*, urged the Right to rise and create a new set of institutions capable of leading the United States into a new age. He urged corporations to support counter-intellectuals in this struggle. In 1978, he and Irving Kristol started the Institute for Educational Affairs (IEA), which played a pivotal role in the rise of conservative college newspapers and they organized conferences to connect editors of these papers. Leslie Lenkowsky, the president of the IEA, worked on putting together a Collegiate Network (CN) of all the papers receiving IEA assistance, training a cadre of conservative college-age youth who would eventually transform the country’s media landscape.

In 1990, the Madison Center for Educational Affairs, an organization then headed by William Bennett, Harvey Mansfield, and Alan Bloom, merged with IEA to sustain the growing number of conservative student publications which, at the time, numbered 57. The Madison Center administered the Network until 1995, when the Collegiate Network moved from Washington, DC to Wilmington, Delaware and became affiliated with the Intercollegiate Studies Institute.

Fast forward to today. The recent wave, as with college conservative movements in the past, has been fueled and financed by an array of conservative interest groups. However, it is important to understand the underpinnings of their strategy that has helped them advance their agenda so successfully.

THE RIGHT'S STRATEGY: BUILDING A POWERFUL CAMPUS MACHINE

Recognizing the value of investing in students over a long period to build a powerful campus machine, a dozen Right-wing institutions have spent nearly \$40 million each year, over the last 30 years, to promote their agenda. In 2004, the three largest conservative campus organizations, Young America's Foundation (YAF), Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) and the Leadership Institute spent approximately \$25 million on various campus outreach programs.²³ According to *Newsweek*, ISI gives conservative groups at Yale nearly twice as much money as the college gives to all its student groups combined.

These resources are directed at four distinct goals: training conservative campus activists; supporting Right-wing student publications; indoctrinating the next generation of conservatives; and a communications strategy which would generate myths such as "academia has a liberal bias."

Through coordinated activities, these groups have embarked on campus enrollment drives to convert temperamentally conservative youngsters and those who have not yet identified their ideological persuasion, into organized Right-wing activists. Consequently, from Maine to California, including progressive academic bastions like Berkeley and the University of Wisconsin – Madison, students have taken up the offer.

To accomplish this goal, the Right has successfully deployed certain tactics. The key ones being:

CONSERVATIVE FOUNDATIONS FUND THE WAR OF IDEAS

"Funds generated by business...must rush by the multimillions to the aid of liberty...to funnel desperately needed funds to scholars, social scientists, writers and journalists who understand the relationship between political and economic liberty. [Business must] cease the mindless subsidizing of colleges and universities whose departments of economy, government, politics and history are hostile to capitalism."

—William E. Simon, *Time for Truth* (1979)

Over the last four decades, conservatives have successfully mounted a campaign to reshape politics and public policy priorities at the national, state and local level. Their "war of ideas" has been waged through the "conservative labyrinth," an interconnected institutional apparatus, which has been developed and supported by the conservative foundations.

At the Philanthropy Roundtable's 1995 annual conference, Richard Fink, president of the conservative Charles G. Koch and Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundations, made use of economist Friedrich Hayek's model of the production process to advocate for social change grant-making. Fink argued that the "translation of ideas into action requires the development of intellectual raw materials, their conversion into specific policy products,

²³ Pfeifer, B., "Right-Wing Campus Network Increasing," The Boston Independent Media Center, <http://boston.indymedia.org/feature/display/33147/index.php>

According to the Media Transparency Grants database, between 1985 and 2000, conservative foundations had given away at least \$1 billion.

Overall, conservative funders have supported organizations and networks whose main mission is to “take back” the universities from “liberal” scholars and academic programs.

and the marketing and distribution of these products to citizen-consumers.” Fink argued the need for grant-makers to invest in change along the entire production continuum, funding scholars and university programs where the intellectual framework for social transformation is developed, think tanks where scholarly ideas get translated into specific policy proposals, and implementation groups to bring these proposals into the political marketplace and eventually to consumers.²⁴

Conservative foundations including Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation; Carthage Foundation; Earhart Foundation; Charles G. Koch, David H. Koch & Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundations; Phillip M. McKenna Foundation; J.M. Foundation; John M. Olin Foundation; Henry Salvatori Foundation; Sarah Scaife Foundation; and Smith Richardson Foundation, have broadly followed such a model, investing hundreds of millions of dollars in a targeted, multi-dimensional and strategic manner.

According to the Media Transparency Grants database, between 1985 and 2000, conservative foundations had *given away* at least \$1 billion. Twelve foundations mentioned above, over a two-year period (1992-1994), collectively granted \$88.9 million to two main causes: First, it awarded tens of millions of dollars to individual scholars, academic study programs, research institutes, and public policy centers, whose work supported and strengthened conservative social and public policy views. Second was to develop a network of faculty, students, alumni and trustees to oppose and reverse progressive curricula and policy trends on the nation's campuses.²⁵ In addition, they have endowed chairs within higher education institutions, policy centers and graduate fellowships.²⁶

This trend has continued with conservative foundations channeling millions of dollars into academic programs, scholarship programs (training the next generation of conservative thinkers and activists), fellowships and professorships – with the aim to buff an intellectual sheen over conservative ideology, bring students into their fold, focus media attention on conservative causes, and create and cultivate media stars like Ann Coulter and Christina Hoff Sommers. They provide tens of millions of dollars to place students as interns in conservative policy institutions, media outlets, advocacy organizations and law firms. They spend millions more to help conservatives maintain public prominence through senior fellowships and residencies at prominent think tanks and research institutions.

Overall, conservative funders have supported organizations and networks whose main mission is to “take back” the universities from “liberal” scholars and academic programs. This agenda was clearly articulated by T. Kenneth Cribb, president of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, in a lecture at the Heritage Foundation. “We must ... provide resources

24 Moving a Public Policy Agenda: The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations, <http://www.mediatransparency.org/movement.htm>

25 Academic Sector Organizations and Programs, From a report by NCRP, http://www.mediatransparency.org/academic_sector_organizations.htm

26 “Right Wing Watch – Buying a Movement,” People for the American Way, <http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=2057>, June 22, 2005.

and guidance to an elite which can take up anew the task of enculturation. Through its journals, lectures, seminars, books and fellowships, this is what ISI has done successfully for 36 years. The coming age of such elites has provided the current leadership of the conservative revival. But we should add a major new component to our strategy: the conservative movement is now mature enough to sustain a counteroffensive on that last Leftist redoubt, the college campus... We are now strong enough to establish a contemporary presence for conservatism on campus, and contest the Left on its own turf. We plan to do this by greatly expanding the ISI field effort, its network of campus-based programming.”²⁷

Conservative funders have also subsidized the writing and dissemination of books attacking “liberalized higher education.” This includes Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* (1986); Charles J. Syke's *Profscam: Professors and the Demise of Higher Education* (1988); Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Corrupted Our Higher Education* (1990), and Dinesh D’Souza’s *Illiberal Education* (1990).

This has gone hand-in-hand with support for every critic of democratic higher education. Dinesh D’Souza received a \$30,000 grant from the Olin Foundation via the Institute for Educational Affairs to write *Illiberal Education*, another \$20,000 to promote the book and also held a \$98,400 Olin Research fellowship at the American Enterprise Institute in 1991.²⁸ In 1991, the Olin Foundation granted \$25,000 to Linda Chavez for research on multiculturalism while Christina Hoff Sommers was supported by more than \$100,000 from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the Carthage Foundation, and the Olin Foundation for her book, *Who Stole Feminism?* Roger Kimball is editor of the conservative magazine *New Criterion*, which also receives grants from John Olin Foundation.

This support has also been extended to conservative magazines. According to Beth Schulman of *In These Times*, between 1990 and 1993, leftist foundations invested \$269,000 in four progressive publications: *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *Mother Jones*, and *In These Times*. During the same period, the right invested ten times as much, pumping \$2.7 million into *The New Criterion*, *National Interest*, *Public Interest*, and *American Spectator*.

The Olin Foundation spends \$15 million annually on grants to such publications, including *American Spectator*, *Crisis*, *National Review*, *Business Today*, and the *Journal of Democracy*. *The Dartmouth Review*, a member of the Collegiate Network, has alone received \$295,000 from the Olin Foundation. Financial assistance is also provided to conservative think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute. Between 1995 and 2002, the Collegiate Network received more than \$4 million in grants from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the Sarah Scaife Foundation, the Carthage Foundation, the Scaife Family Foundation and other Right-wing foundations.²⁹

Between 1990 and 1993, leftist foundations invested \$269,000 in four progressive publications: *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *Mother Jones*, and *In These Times*. During the same period, the right invested ten times as much, pumping \$2.7 million into *The New Criterion*, *National Interest*, *Public Interest*, and *American Spectator*.

27 Messer-Davidow, E., "Manufacturing the Attack on Liberalized Higher Education," *Social Text*.

28 McMillen, L., "Olin Fund Gives Millions to Conservative Activities in Higher Education; Critics See Political Agenda," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 22, 1992. Cited in Wilson, J., *The Myth of Political*

Correctness: The Conservative Attack on Higher Education, Duke University Press, 1995.

29 Berkovitz, B., "Collegiate Network Thrives at Twenty-Five," *Working for Change*, Working Assets Online, 2004.

The conservatives, flush with support from Right-wing foundations, have launched a coordinated, nationwide movement driven by a long-term vision: Defeat campus liberalism itself.

Support from conservative funders also allowed organizations to create “counter-institutions” which would assist with restructuring efforts. For example, the Bradley and Olin foundations provided the ISI with the seed money to get the National Alumni Forum (NAF) up and running in 1994. NAF’s mission: “Organize alumni support for academic freedom and challenge practices and policies that threaten intellectual freedom and undermine academic standards.”

It is this well-organized and well-funded network that has enabled conservative voices to be heard in the media and on campuses. In comparison, progressive students have been left to fend for themselves. For example, the largest student-led environmental group, the Sierra Student Coalition (the student arm of the Sierra Club) services a network of 200 affiliated groups in high school and colleges chapters and 15,000+ total members with 2.5 staff (one position is only for 6 months a year), and a budget of around \$225,000.³⁰

COORDINATED LONG-TERM VISION

The conservatives, flush with support from Right-wing foundations, have launched a coordinated, nationwide movement driven by a long-term vision: Defeat campus liberalism itself. Unlike conservatives, progressive students lack a coordinated long-term goal. Progressive students usually organize around a multitude of specific issue-based campaigns like sweatshops, living wage campaigns, university investment strategies, or affirmative action. There is little coordination between these campaigns. They share no common message. Instead, they generate multiple issue-based messages from their various organizations.

CAMPUS OUTREACH

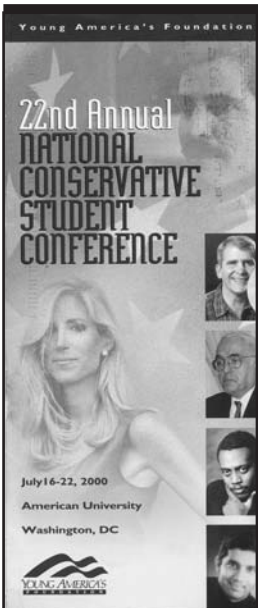
Conservatives have determined that funding youth activism and journalism is an investment to sustain their movement. This belief resulted in the three largest groups – YAF, ISI, and the Leadership Institute – spending nearly \$25 million on campus outreach in 2003.

- **Speakers Programs:** In 2004, YAF subsidized over 150 campus lectures by celebrity Right-wing ideologues including Laura Ingraham, Dinesh D’Souza, Ann Coulter, Ward Connerly, Star Parker, Michelle Malkin, and Rich Lowry – who also appear frequently on television’s talking heads programs, write for premier Right-wing magazines and web sites, and produce best-seller books.

³⁰ Email communication with Derek Brockbank, National Director, Sierra Student Coalition, March 2005.

Conservative Youth-Focusing Organizations	Short Description	Amount Spent	Reporting Year	Primary Activity
Young America's Foundation	"The principal outreach organization of the conservative movement; committed to ensuring that thousands of young Americans understand and are inspired by the ideas of personal freedom, free enterprise, and traditional values"	\$10,431,158	2002	On Campus
Intercollegiate Studies Institute	"To assist college students and professors to attain an understanding of the values and institutions that sustain a free society."	\$6,909,594	2003	Media/Journalism
The Leadership Institute	"Premier training ground for tomorrow's conservative leaders"	\$6,214,603	2002	Leadership Development
The Federalist Society	"Promotes intellectual diversity in the legal profession and throughout the legal community"	\$3,647,093	2003	Legal/Law Studies
Center for the Study of Popular Culture	"Founded in 1988 by Peter Collier and David Horowitz to strengthen the cultural foundations of a free society"	\$2,792,762	2002	Media/Journalism
Independent Women's Forum	"Established to combat the women-as-victim, pro-big-government ideology of radical feminism; seeks to restore, strengthen, and extend that which promotes women's well-being by advancing the principles of self-reliance, political freedom, economic liberty, and personal responsibility"	\$2,057,427	2003	Legal/Law Studies
Center for Individual Rights	"Litigates a small number of precedent-setting cases intended to defend individual liberties, with special emphasis on cases involving free speech and civil rights"	\$1,681,651	2003	Legal/Law Studies
American Civil Rights Institute	"To support educational efforts to eliminate racial and gender preferences in government programs and policies at the state and federal level through publications, media, brochures, broadcasts and public relations"	\$1,614,100	2003	Legal/Law Studies
Collegiate Network	"To enhance the educational opportunities of students by providing materials, advice, and assistance to teachers and students involved with the production and writing of student newspapers and journals"	\$964,774	2003	Media/Journalism
Accuracy in Academia	"Publish and distribute literature promoting accuracy and fairness in academic institutions"	\$325,905	2002	Media/Journalism
Students for America Foundation	"Conducts educational and research activities, awards students with campus enterprise grants, distributions books and other educational materials on college campuses to promote leadership, the principles of free enterprise and Christian values"	\$149,401	2003	On Campus
Total Reported Expenses		\$36,788,468	2002/2003	

Through its Collegiate Network of nearly 100 newspapers, the ISI spent nearly \$9 million publishing books and periodicals and another \$1 million supporting conservative campus publications in 2003.



Providing conservative speakers is a cornerstone of the Right’s strategy to dominate the campus debates. “Even a single successful speaking event can have very far-ranging consequences that go beyond the lecture itself, consequences that can benefit your long-term campaign.”³¹ A Young America Foundation (YAF) leaflet states: “Its speakers energize students in the fight for freedom on campus against radically anti-American, leftist professors.”

Some of the benefits of speaker programs cited by conservatives include the galvanizing of group membership, encouraging reticent people to express their views more openly, garnering on and off-campus publicity for the conservative cause, and discrediting the left. “Regardless of who your speaker is, the most extreme elements on campus believe that any conservative is controversial and should not be permitted to speak. They will often protest and ...tear down your publicity poster. Don’t let that worry you because this is another education function of holding a lecture; you are showing...the undemocratic and irresponsible nature of your opposition. Don’t hesitate to label their efforts as a “dirty tricks” campaign. Use it to underscore the Left’s desire to have only its view aired.”³²

- **Campus Publications:** Another effective strategy used by the Right-wing has been the channeling of money and support to a network of campus newspapers and publications. Through its Collegiate Network of nearly 100 newspapers, the ISI spent nearly \$9 million publishing books and periodicals and another \$1 million supporting conservative campus publications in 2003. The network’s website states: “By documenting questionable uses of mandatory student fees, the proliferation of politicized academic departments, and the stifling of debate through constitutionally dubious speech codes, the student reporters and editors of the Collegiate Network have helped set the terms of the debate surrounding modern higher education.”³³

A similar effort has been led by YAF’s National Journalism Center which trains scores of students every year in skills of press work, and assigns them internships with media locations including the Washington Post, New Yorker, and the Wall Street Journal.

The endeavor has paid off. Today nearly every major college in the nation has an active Right-wing student newspaper while alumni of conservative campus periodicals fill the ranks of think tanks and Capitol Hill offices as well as journals of opinion and other media outlets. For example, Dinesh D’Souza’s political education, as for many conservative pundits and authors, began while working on *The Dartmouth Review*, a conservative college newspaper.

- **National Publications:** Conservative groups also publish a number of national publications geared for the campus arena including *Libertas* (Young America’s Foundation),

31 James B. Taylor, Young America’s Foundation, *A Student Strategy for Campus Reform*, 1995.

32 Ibid.

33 <http://www.isi.org/cn/about/history.aspx>

Intercollegiate Review (ISI), *NAS Update* (National Association of Scholars), among others. This takes conservative outreach to another level, reaching multiple campus contacts nationally with a unified message. It also links conservative campaigns and provides students with a broader view of what is happening at colleges and universities nationwide.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Conservatives have created centralized training opportunities ranging from summer schools and internships, to national conferences where public figures perform mentoring roles for students.

- **Internships and Fellowship Programs:** According to Karen Paget, a contributing editor at *The American Prospect*, “Conservative funders pay meticulous attention to the entire ‘knowledge production’ process. They think of it in terms of ‘a conveyor belt’ that stretches from academic research to marketing and mobilization, from scholars to activists.”³⁴

This is very obvious with the ISI funneling \$4 million to summer fellowships, worth as much as \$40,000 for individual students. Paid internships, and entry-level jobs provide livable wages that help develop young talent and commitment and reduce burnout.

These investments have been worthwhile as former ISI fellows have gone on to provide leadership to major public policy organizations and have been senior advisors in several Republican administrations. For example, Richard Allen, Ronald Reagan’s Security Advisor and Edwin Feulner, President of the Heritage Foundation, were ISI graduates. But just how successful they have been is suggested by the rise of one Nixon-loving ideologue, who in 1973 became chairman of the College Republicans and who today is credited as among the greatest influences on President George W. Bush: Karl Rove.

The Leadership Institute, run by Mortan Blackwell, a long-time GOP activist and one time Reagan advisor, has trained some 40,000 conservatives in the last twenty-five years through its 18 educational programs, an intern program, an Employment Placement Service and a Broadcast Journalism Placement Service to train young conservatives and then place them in public policy positions.³⁵ Its website proclaims, “The Leadership Institute’s mission is to identify, recruit, train and place conservatives in politics, government, and the media.”³⁶ Nearly 200 of its graduates went on to become state legislators and more than 300 have wound up as staff members on Capitol Hill.

- **Annual Conferences:** Recognizing that students on different campuses need opportunities to come together regionally or nationally to discover and define a group identity and

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34 Sachs, E. & Waligore, T., “Alternative Voices on Campus,” *The Nation*, February 17, 2003.

35 <http://www.leadershipinstitute.org/01ABOUTUS/01History.htm>

36 <http://www.leadershipinstitute.org/01ABOUTUS/aboutus.htm>.

to develop a sense of participation in a national movement, several conservative think tanks and organizations organize annual conferences. For example, the National Conservative Student Conference brings together students who attend workshops and nightly banquets where they meet peers sharing similar political opinions and mingle with conservative luminaries such as Ralph Reed, Oliver North, Dinesh D’Souza, and others. A similar national conference is now held annually for high school students. This is in line with the Right’s more recent strategy of influencing younger students in elementary and secondary education.

“Those interested in freedom need to gather once a year to discuss, network, learn, and socialize. Our liberty is being threatened at every turn, and the enemies of freedom will prevail if we do nothing. It’s time to come together and strategize about the future. A National convention of freedom lovers – that includes you – will make a difference, a big difference, in our battle for liberty,” reads the brochure for Freedom Fest, first organized by the Young America’s Foundation in Las Vegas in May 2005,³⁷ and now an annual event.

MESSAGING THE MESSAGE: THE POWER OF FRAMING

Despite the increasing conservative trend on issues, a large proportion of students are still not yet prepared to declare a particular political affiliation. This is where the conservative media activists come in who are successfully synthesizing complex ideas into easily understood concepts.

While there is no emphasis among progressives to support students in developing their own consistent message, inclusive language or “frames,” are deliberately chosen by the Right to make their ideas attractive to a larger number of students who otherwise might not agree on a specific issue. Compared to progressive students, who use theoretical concepts like democracy, social justice, and anti-corporate messages, campus speakers like David Horowitz, who have written extensively on the lack of free speech rights for conservative students, encourage conservative students to publicize this view.

The Collegiate Network helps shape messages and provides “talking points” for conservative student activists through annual conferences, journalism courses, grants, fellowships, and summer internships. The Collegiate Network handbook for student activists, *Start the Presses*, states: “As a media outlet you have the power to transform a minor event or fact into a major embarrassment...If the school persecutes you, send out press releases, notify alumni and give the administration a public black eye.”³⁸

³⁷ Freedom Fest: Where Free Minds Meet, Young America Foundation’s Brochure for their annual conference, May 12-14, 2005.

³⁸ Colapinto, J., “The Young Hipublicans,” <http://yaf.com/hipublicans.shtml>, May 25, 2003.

And then there's general P.R. advice on how to spin conservative messages on campus. Republicans at universities and colleges nationwide organize bake sales to protest affirmative action policies. Their strategy – to sell cookies for \$1 to white students and then discount them for people of color – often succeeds as an effective way to communicate their message: affirmative action policies are unfair.

Other “messaging” tactics by the Right include:

- **Conservatives as Oppressed “Minorities” or “Victims”:** At the same time that the Right has successfully established their framework for campus organizing, it has managed to hide its own role in the process, portraying themselves as victims of “political correctness,” “liberal racists,” “feminazis,” biased professors, leftist courses, and a campus climate that promotes hatred of the U.S., just to name a few examples. A common tactic to promote this notion of “being oppressed” includes focusing on departments like Sociology or Ethnic or Women’s Studies, where they collect liberal professor’s statements, take them out of context, and use them to weave a circumstantial case of bias. Their goal: to convince people that universities have been hijacked by tenured radicals who brainwash youth with their socialist ideology.³⁹ Their message: “Create safe zones for conservatives who are constantly under attack.”⁴⁰ Even the rhetoric of the Left has been taken over by these “victimized” conservatives. They are defenders of “individuality” and “freedom” – phrases borrowed deliberately from progressive Free Speech movements of the 1960s.
- **Focus on Wedge Issues:** In addition, when working within a campus, the Right focuses on “wedge issues” that divide liberal opinion. As a result, free-market economics, attacks on affirmative action, and opposition to codes regulating hate crimes, have been effective.

THE RIGHT’S “TRUE LIES”: SPREADING THE CULTURE OF MYTHS

A brief distributed by the Young America’s Foundation (YAF) in 1995 defined affirmative action as being discriminatory in all cases, which “seeks to advance members of underrepresented groups by taking factors other than merit into account in the hiring and admissions process.” This inaccurate legal definition of affirmative action policy subverted the civil rights heritage and is an example of the Right’s strategy of propagating lies to secure their end goal.⁴¹ Other such myths prevalent today include:

- **Political Correctness:** Another myth, supported and spread by the Right, is “political correctness represents a crisis in education.” The phrase, *political correctness*, which emerged in the 1990s and popularized by books like De’Souza’s *Illiberal Education*, mag-

39 Holland, J., “Why Conservatives are Winning the Campus Wars,” New Progressive Institute, 2004.

40 Charles Mitchell, a prominent student conservative at Pennsylvania’s Bucknell University at the National Conservative Student Conference in 2004.

41 Affirmative action is actually designed to make hiring and admissions more meritocratic by balancing out discriminatory tendencies in institutions and society at large.

Even the rhetoric of the Left has been taken over by these “victimized” conservatives. They are defenders of “individuality” and “freedom” – phrases borrowed deliberately from progressive Free Speech movements of the 1960s.



The Right has not only carefully crafted its message, but has also devoted attention to its messengers. It has courted women and people of color and then recruited them to advance its agenda by getting them out in public.

azine articles, and editorials, describes feminist scholarship, affirmative action, hate speech restrictions, and multiculturalism, as a reign of terror at U.S. universities.

President Bush's speech at the University of Michigan's 1991 commencement brought the slogan to new national stature. He used the myth of political correctness to support his attack on radicals: "The notion of political correctness has ignited controversy across the land. And although the movement arises from the laudable desire to sweep away the debris of racism, sexism and hatred, it replaces old prejudices with new ones."⁴² Bush claimed that the danger to freedom comes not from racists but from the "political extremists" who "roam the land, abusing the privilege of free speech, setting citizens against one another on the basis of their class or race."

Bush's political correctness speech revealed the success of the conservative attack on universities. The day after his speech, *This Week with David Brinkley* focused on "Political Correctness on Campuses." Soon after, PC on campus was a featured topic on *Nightline*, *Good Morning America*, a week-long series on the *MacNeil Lehrer Newshour*, and *Crossfire*. And this myth is being used even today to stir up anti-left hysteria on the campuses.

- **Campuses are hotbeds of the Left:** Another lie extensively used by the Right is that they are fighting a Marxist conspiracy in the universities and that radicals have seized the administration of universities just as they seized administration buildings in the 60s.

A 1982 *U.S. News & World Report* cover story warned "a small but fervent group of radical leftist professors is expanding its foothold on the nation's campuses."⁴³ The Young America Foundation called itself "a resource for advice and support for students who face an ideological struggle against what *U.S. News and World Report* has estimated are 10,000 Marxists professors."⁴⁴ This message is echoed in Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*: "Yesterday's student radical is today's tenured professor or academic dean...It is important to appreciate the extent to which the radical vision of the sixties has not so much been abandoned as internalized by many who came of age then and who now teach at and administer our institutions of higher education."⁴⁵

Other myths publicized by the Right are: Right-wing newspapers tend to be more rational; Freedom of Speech protects hate-mongers; etc.

MESSENGRERS OF THE MESSAGE

The Right has not only carefully crafted its message, but has also devoted attention to its messengers. It has courted women and people of color and then recruited them to advance its agenda by getting them out in public.

⁴² "Excerpts from President's Speech to University of Michigan Graduates," *New York Times*, May 5, 1991.

⁴³ "Marxism in U.S. Classrooms," *U.S. News & World Report*, January 8, 1982, cited in Shor, I., *Culture Wars: School and Society in the Conservative Restoration 1969-1984*,

Routledge, 1986.

⁴⁴ Begley, A., *Lingua Franca*, June-July 1992.

⁴⁵ Kimball, R., *Tenured Radicals*, Harper & Row, New York, 1990.

- **Conservative Women “Empowering Feminism”:** The college conservative movement has not only retrofit itself as the Right-wing version of the 60s Free Speech Movement, it has framed the conservative women’s movement on campuses as a new brand of “empowering feminism.”

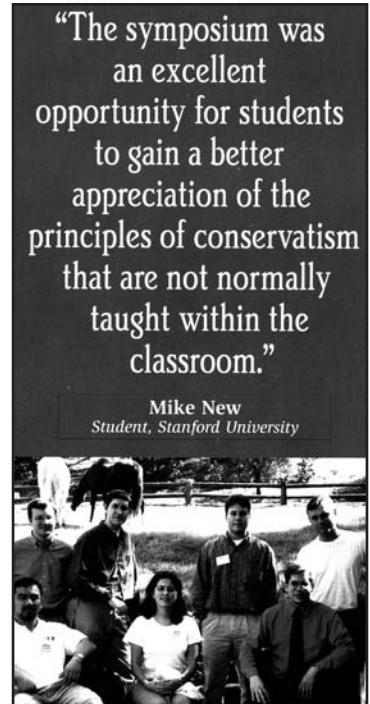
A number of highly-organized conservative women’s groups including the Clare Boothe Luce Policy Institute, Eagle Forum⁴⁶, and the Independent Women’s Forum (IWF) have led the charge. The IWF’s “Take Back the Campus” campaign, brings speakers like Phyllis Schlafly, Ann Coulter, Katherine Harris, and Christina Hoff Summers, to college campuses to explore questions such as “whether women’s studies programs actually harm women by propagating feminist myths of women as victims.”⁴⁷

Conservatives have appropriated the feminist label to denounce campus feminism as “intellectually and socially stifling” to women. It can be perplexing to hear conservatism advocated as an ideology that frees women, but it is the skill with which the Right has reframed the issues for the campus crowd and brought in charismatic women to deliver their message. Their message: “Take Back the Night” marches on campuses, sex and dating rules, and rape-awareness lectures, instead of empowering women do exactly the opposite. They infantilize.”⁴⁸

- **Conservatives of Color Enter the Debate:** In addition to recruiting women to deliver the conservative anti-feminist message, the Right-wing has enlisted people of color as spokespeople. Their intended goal: Confront national polls that show that African Americans hold more liberal views than white Americans on issues involving poverty and race relations.

The YAF’s speaker guide lists Star Parker as “one of the nation’s top leaders in representing Black Americans.” Alan Keyes, Clarence Thomas, J.A. Parker, Ward Connerly, and Walter Williams are some of the “alternative Black speakers” sponsored by the YAF. Their message: “We need to move beyond racial and gender preferences.” Other conservative speakers of color include Dinesh D’Souza, Linda Chavez, Michelle Malkin, among others.

These conservative voices on campus and in the media are backed by monetary support from conservative organizations. The Hoover Institute, a conservative think tank at Stanford University funded Thomas Sowell’s *Race and Economics*, published in 1975.



⁴⁶ Eagle Forum Collegians (EFC), a network of campus affiliates opposed to political correctness, multiculturalism, and women’s and gay studies, launched by Phyllis Schlafly in 1993, publishes a quarterly newsletter, *The Eagle Eye* and sponsors conferences and Leadership Summits with the mission “to provide students with the tools necessary to combat PC and liberalism on campus and to educate and inform the public on relevant issues.”

⁴⁷ Both Schlafly and Sommers are listed in the speakers

guide of the Young Americas Foundation, which routinely gives \$10,000 grants to student groups to bring conservative lecturers to their campuses. Sommers is also a speaker for the ISI.

⁴⁸ In *The Mornings After: Sex, Fear and Feminism on Campus*, Katie Riphe ridicules “rape crisis feminists’ as neurotic leaders of a cult of female victimization in which women “celebrate their vulnerability (and) accept, even embrace, the mantle of victim status.”

When working within a campus, the Right focuses on “wedge issues” that divide liberal opinion.

Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the Olin Foundation, the Scaife Foundation and the Bradley Foundation are other organizations funding people of color with conservative values. This support has been extended to Black conservative organizations like the Lincoln Institute and Black PAC⁴⁹ and publications including *National Minority Politics, Diversity and Division*, and the *Lincoln Review*.

SECURING SUPPORT FROM CONSERVATIVE ALUMNI

Recognizing the influence alumni can have on their alma mater (alumni giving is the traditional financial base of support for higher education, alumni giving represented 27.5 percent of \$24.4 billion raised by colleges and universities in 2004), conservatives are approaching alumni to “raise funds for programs such as speakers and publications, and to bring pressure on your college to reform.”⁵⁰

“They (alumni) are awakening to the threat radical politicization poses to the integrity of their schools.”⁵¹ Today Right-wing alumni organizations such as Women for Freedom (WFF) led by Larissa Yanov, a Wellesley alumna, and Lynne Cheney’s National Alumni Foundation (NAF), founded in 1995, are orchestrating conservative attacks on campuses across the country. In 1997, the NAF launched a national advertising campaign outlining troubles in higher education and created a new vehicle for alumni giving, the Fund for Academic Renewal. The campaign ran advertisements in Ivy League alumni magazines, encouraging alumni to use Fund for Academic Renewal to help them target their gifts, instead of allowing their alma maters to spend money without “donor input.”

With assistance from the ISI’s Forum for University Stewardship, conservative alumni groups at Stanford, Dartmouth, Duke, Princeton, Vassar, among others, are actively influencing the agenda. In 2006, a conservative alumni group at UCLA caused a furor when it began paying students to target and expose left-leaning faculty.

This strategy has worked for conservatives since universities listen to their alumni’s dollar-backed opinions. According to Cheney of the NAF, it “comes down to the question of who owns the universities.”⁵² When Ellen Wood-Hall, the first woman president of Converse College in South Carolina, introduced visitation hours for men, support groups for lesbians, and other new ideas, alumnae from as far back as 1943 threatened to withhold financial support and launched a local media campaign against her. Hall was eventually forced to resign. This move was praised by *Campus* magazine as an example of how “higher education could be reformed overnight.”

49 PAC, founded by William Keyes, worked for Jesse Helms reelection, opposed “terrorist outlaw” African National Congress and extremists including Jesse Jackson and the Congressional Black Caucus.

50 Student Strategy for Campus Reform, YAF.

51 *Campus*, quarterly magazine of ISI, 1993.

52 Memphis Commercial Appeal, March 18, 1995.

CONFINING EDUCATION INTO A CORPORATE STRAIGHTJACKET

“It is essential that universities affirm and reaffirm the value of an independent critique of the corporate elite. Tacitus once said of the Romans, “they made a desert and called it peace.” We risk a similar fate if we fail to protect academia from becoming nothing more than fodder for profiteers and a public station affirming corporate lies and misinformation through its research.”

—Leonard Minsky, National Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest

In an on-going effort to support counter-intellectuals, corporate investments in universities have helped dramatically change the mission of higher education. From the revolving door between corporate CEOs and university administrators, to corporations funding “objective” research, to the corporate R&D (research & design) in university labs, corporate influence is transforming virtually every aspect of academic life.

The corporate takeover is altering academic priorities, degrading the integrity of academic journals, undermining the independence of university professors, and determining what research is done at universities.⁵³ “The outside funds determine what universities will teach and research, what direction the university will take. Today corporate donors decide to fund chairs in areas where they want research done. Their decisions decide which topics universities explore and which aren’t.”⁵⁴ The result: With administrators more and more dependent on corporate largesse to fund research and construct buildings, universities are pleasing their benefactors and never swaying too far from the center. At the same time, traditional liberal arts educations are being undermined as funding shifts from the humanities and the less-profitable social science departments into research labs and business schools.

Corporatization of college campuses has gone hand-in-hand with colleges and universities hiring more non-teaching staff than professors. From 1975 through 1985, non-teaching professional staff people at colleges and universities grew by 61% whereas faculty size increased by a mere 6%. Since 1980, administrative costs have grown by 60%, whereas instructional costs have increased by only 39%.⁵⁵ “The fastest-growing category of non-teaching staff are “professionals,” which include fund raisers, athletic coaches, and accountants.”⁵⁶ These professionals make little or no contribution to the universities’ main purpose of educating students. Instead, they act as the go-betweens for the university and corporations. For example, athletic coaches realize that their primary responsibility is fundraising. To attain this goal, they need championship-winning teams and bowl games which are particularly lucrative because of corporate sponsorship.

53 Lawrence Soley examines the issue very comprehensively in *Leasing the Ivory Tower, The Corporate Takeover of Academia*, South End Press, 1995.

54 Cal Bradford, a former fellow at the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey Institute for Public Policy, was denied an extension of his contract after he criticized the

university’s ties to corporations. Quoted in *Leasing the Ivory Tower*.

55 Taking Care of Faculty Business, May 12, 1998, <http://www.udel.edu/AAUP/May98.htm>

56 *Leasing the Ivory Tower*.

The Young America Foundation called itself “a resource for advice and support for students who face an ideological struggle against what U.S. News and World Report has estimated are 10,000 Marxists professors.”



One controversial example of industrial influence is the \$25 million research agreement negotiated in 1998 between the College of Natural Resources (CNR) at the University of California, Berkeley and the Swiss biotech corporation Novartis. Novartis provided \$5 million per year for five years in research funds for the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology, as well as access to its proprietary genomics database. In return, Novartis gained a seat on university and departmental research committees, restricted academics' freedom to discuss the benefits of the deal, and secured first rights to negotiate exclusive licenses on any patentable discovery made in the department.

This deal, negotiated in secrecy, withheld critical information from faculty, students and the public. Robert Berdahl, then chancellor of Berkeley, although standing by the Novartis deal, expressed his own unease in a speech at what he called the privatization of the public universities. He highlighted two forces stimulating the growth of the university-industrial complex: declining public funds, and a systematic, successful campaign to develop an anti-liberal, Right-wing agenda in universities.

The deal was brought to light by the CNR Executive Committee, ably-chaired by a vulnerable untenured Assistant Professor Ignacio Chapela. Later Professor Chapela, whose findings on the genetic pollution of maize landraces threatened the biotechnology industry, had to face an uphill battle to secure tenure. According to fellow Berkeley Professor Carlos Muñoz Jr., “This case sends a clear message that faculty who challenge the dominant paradigm are not welcome, especially if they don't accept corporate funding.”⁵⁷

Given the benefits that corporations receive from pouring money into academia, industry spending for academic research has continued to climb. It went from \$1.4 billion in 1994 to \$2.2 billion in 2001, a jump of 57 percent. In the 1960s, industry money accounted for just 3 percent of academic research funds; in 2003 it was nearly 8 percent, on average. Meanwhile, there are schools where corporate dollars comprise 30 to 40 percent of their research budget. For instance \$31 million in research money that Duke received from the industry in 1992 more than tripled to \$109 million in 1999.⁵⁸

Even when strings aren't visibly attached, donors receive massive paybacks in the form of public relations benefits from their donations. Philip Morris's Miller Brewing Company's donation of \$150,000 each year to the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships to African American students, is complemented by more than \$300,000 a year in advertising the program and its contributions. These advertisements carry the Miller logo.

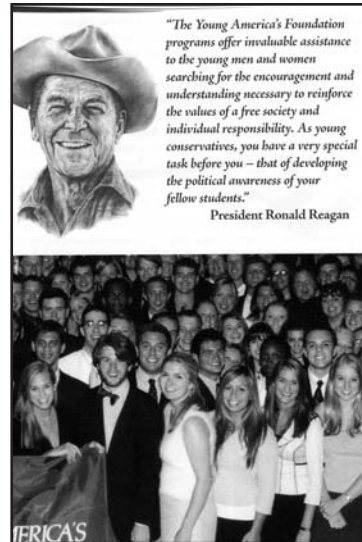
In her book, *University, Inc.: The Corporate Corruption of American Higher Education*, Jennifer Washburn says the connections between private industry and the academy have begun to “undermine the foundation of public trust on which all universities depend.” Further, she argues that because corporate money comes with strings attached, universi-

⁵⁷ For more information on the Chapella case, visit www.tenurejustice.org

⁵⁸ Grose, T. “Proceed with Caution,” *Prism Online*, Volume 13, Number 2, October 2003.

ties and professors are acting more and more like for-profit patent factories. The growing influence over universities affects more than just today's college students, she says, it compromises the future of all those who will be employed, governed or taught by the products of U.S. universities.

However all costs of research are not paid by corporate dollars, government grants, or foundation monies. The burden is also borne by tuition-paying students, who are subsidizing projects that benefit multinational corporations. Over the last two decades, the cost of attending two- and four-year public and private colleges (including tuition and other education-related expenses) has grown more rapidly than inflation, and faster than family income as well, while federal and state financial aid to students has not kept pace with increases in tuition. For example, for the lowest-income families in 1980, tuition at public two-year colleges represented 6% of their family income. For the lowest-income families in 2000, tuition at these colleges represented 12% of their income.⁵⁹ In February 2006, President Bush signed the Deficit Reduction Act which will cut at least \$12 billion from federal student loan programs in 2007, resulting in students and families facing increased interest rates at a time when college costs are skyrocketing. Given the financial pressures along with academic burden on college students, it is therefore not surprising that involvement in political activity on college campus is minimal.



59 *Losing Ground*, National Status Report on the Affordability of American Higher Education, National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2000.

ALTERNATIVE VOICES ON CAMPUS

In the wake of the conservative onslaught, various organizing measures have been undertaken by progressives on college campuses. The war in Iraq helped fuel a student anti-war movement, coalescing around opposition to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and more recently, to military recruiters on campuses, with students defying threats of disciplinary action.⁶⁰ The 2004 re-election of George W. Bush further reinvigorated organizing on college campuses.

Linked to student-labor solidarity, there is a growing movement across the country to hold corporations accountable for their human rights violations.

CURRENT U.S. STUDENT ACTIVISM

Thousands of high school and college students across the country organized walkouts on January 20, 2005, marching as organized contingents in counter-inaugural demonstrations in Boulder, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Austin, Chicago and other cities. In March 2005, students organized actions and protests to mark the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Subsequent arrests and police brutality spurred calls for free speech. For example, students organized a picket of the City College of New York (CCNY) in defense of free speech on March 17, 2005.⁶¹ Students at the San Francisco State University (SFSU) also put out a call to defend free speech there.⁶²

During the 2004 Presidential race, with an approximately 14 million young people eligible to vote for the first-time, efforts to mobilize youth were perhaps the most extensive on record, with numerous groups on and off college campuses working to register and mobilize students to the polls. New initiatives were launched to link young progressive voters in a national campaign to support progressive candidates. Efforts included combining celebrity endorsements with youth culture to make political participation “cool.” Young activists also attended concerts, graduations, and other events where they registered and educated young people about the elections.

Labor is another issue that has helped unite national student groups. Each Spring, students on about 200 campuses organize some 250 activities, including rallies, teach-ins, marches, distribution of fliers, all with the same message - workers rights are human rights, during the annual Student-Labor Week of Action.⁶³ This project, which started six years ago as a day of action, is today a week-long activity, educating students about labor issues and mobilizing support with a united message.⁶⁴

NATIONAL STUDENT CAMPAIGNS FOR CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Linked to student-labor solidarity, there is a growing movement across the country to hold corporations accountable for their human rights violations. One such national effort is the Killer Coke campaign where nearly 100 colleges and universities have joined the call by the

⁶⁰ Visit www.campusresistance.org for a list of coordinated actions during the week of campus resistance.

⁶¹ Visit www.traprockpeace.org/free_speech_ccny.htm

⁶² Visit www.traprockpeace.org/free_speech_sfsu.htm

⁶³ Visit United Students Against Sweatshops at: www.usasnet.org for more information on the student labor week of action.

⁶⁴ Gillick, K., “A Week of Student Labor Action,” *Alternet*, April 5, 2005.

Colombian beverage workers union for a boycott of Coca Cola, by either canceling contracts or banning vending machines, making it the largest anti-corporate campaign since the one against Nike.⁶⁵

Such national student-led campaigns have been very successful. Students involvement on hundreds of college campuses helped contribute to the victory of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) against Taco Bell who were fighting to raise the price paid to farmworkers for tomatoes they picked.⁶⁶ Similarly, the student movement has been successful in forcing some colleges to sever ties with corporate donors that use sweatshops or to insure that campus clothing lines be sweatshop-free.

Today student activism is getting broader in scope – it is challenging police brutality, the death penalty, the Confederate Flag on the South Carolina Capitol building, laws criminalizing youth, and the roll back of affirmative action.

Students are exhibiting an enthusiastic militancy, as activists increasingly realize that many of the single-issue campaigns that they have been working on, have a common root cause. Other key aspects of this progressive movement include:

- **Progressive Training Programs:** Some national progressive organizations are collaborating with student groups to help develop and articulate their message, providing training infrastructure to assist with skills-building in organizing on campuses.

Through hands-on exercises, workshops and interactive sessions, their aim is to give progressive students the tools to solve problems they face in building strong and sustainable organizations and strategize on long-term change and strengthen all aspects of student organizing.

- **Progressive Speakers:** “If we can get college students accustomed to reading and hearing progressive ideas, they may become activists themselves, or at least more critical citizens.”⁶⁷

In a direct challenge to Right-wing-sponsored college speakers, Speak Out/The Institute for Democratic Education and Culture has, for 16 years, been bringing progressive speakers and artists voices to college campuses across the country to encourage critical and imaginative thinking about domestic and international issues.⁶⁸ These efforts reach new audiences of young people who haven’t been exposed to progressive ideas. It also invigorates progressive campus activists, counters Right-wing hegemony and shifts the debates. A number of progressive national organizations also have speakers bureaus which provide experts in their specific arena of work.

Today student activism is getting broader in scope – it is challenging police brutality, the death penalty, the Confederate Flag on the South Carolina Capitol building, laws criminalizing youth, and the roll back of affirmative action.

65 Blanding, M., “Coke the New Nike,” *The Nation*, March 24, 2005.

66 To learn more about students’ involvement in the campaign against Taco Bell, visit <http://www.ciw-online.org/>.

67 Wilson, J., “A Progressive Media Revolution on

Campus,” Independent Media Center, Bloomington, IL, May 10, 2005, <http://indy.pabn.org/news.php?id=613>

68 <http://www.speakoutnow.org/>

- **Progressive Journalism:** Students hungry for alternatives to Right-wing campus journalism have resulted in the galvanizing of some progressive publications in recent years. Alternative campus publications are becoming an important venue for progressive students looking for a chance to be heard. They bring students together and create a shared sense of movement from a scattering of newly- formed notions about how to make the world a better place.

Progressives have tried to establish their own network of campus newspapers,⁶⁹ and now new national efforts to strengthen progressive journalism on college and university campuses are being launched, which offer training, information, website templates, an online discussion forum, mentoring, and funding to a limited number of progressive publications and student journalists.

- **Progressive Think Tanks:** Progressive think tanks offering analyses and suggestions on public policy issues are working with college campuses to ensure student involvement in the policy process, and plug students into the national political framework. For example, Political Research Associates (PRA) recently published the report, *Deliberate Differences: Progressive and Conservative Campus Activism*. The collaboration between the Oakland Institute and Speak Out on this report is a model for how think tanks and groups working in the campus arena can contribute to countering Right-wing hegemony.

⁶⁹ In 1987 the Center for National Policy, Washington-based progressive think tank, held a conference of student journalists. But subsequent fundraising was disappointing. It raised \$10,000 to fund twenty newspapers in 1988

THE WAY FORWARD

All such efforts are commendable, but remain tenuous.

Despite the resurgence of progressive activism on college campuses, there is a dire need for progressives to assert themselves and communicate what they stand for with a compelling and coherent message. This will require a national effort that will work with college and university students on the substance, intellectual foundation, and communication of progressive ideas in the coming years.

Despite the resurgence of progressive activism on college campuses, there is a dire need for progressives to assert themselves and communicate what they stand for with a compelling and coherent message.

Joshua Holland in *Why Conservatives are Fighting to Win the Campus Wars* states: “Savvy organizers have seized on all that righteous anger and created an appealing image for today’s young conservative: rebellious and countercultural, courageously fighting the power. The young conservative’s conspiratorial view of liberalism will last a lifetime. That’s why the progressive leaders have a choice to make: They can continue to leave it to earnest but poorly-networked students to fight it out with a shoestring budget against a well-lubricated political machine, or they can get in the game and start pushing back.”⁷⁰

With this goal in mind, Speak Out - The Institute for Democratic Education and Culture in collaboration with the Oakland Institute and with support from the Panta Rhea Foundation brought together twenty-five members of its network in June 2005 from across the United States to explore what will it take to challenge the above described conservative juggernaut.⁷¹ The group met in Boston, June 18-19, 2005 (the Boston Summit), to articulate what would it take for the progressives to develop a unified, strategic approach with long-term goals as well as a framework for sustained organizing in the campus arena.

The recommendations made below are a result of the conversation that started at the summit and draw upon the experiences and knowledge of the attendees.⁷² It in no way encompasses all the possible strategies available to us. We know that incredible challenges lie before us. We also know that tomorrow’s political, social, cultural, and economic leaders are being formed today on the nation’s college campuses. So this is merely a beginning. A start because we know that working together, we are in a position to take on the challenges – to turn the tide and shape the future.

⁷⁰ Holland, J., “Why Conservatives Are Fighting To Win The Campus Wars,” <http://nyc.indymedia.org/newswire/display/any/128036>, 23 Oct., 2004.

⁷¹ The list of the attendees is attached to the report.

⁷² An executive summary of the summit was prepared by Miguel Lopez, based on the transcripts produced by Jason Ferreira, Christina Ree, and K. Wayne Yang, Speakout Board members.

MOVEMENT BUILDING: GROUNDWORK FOR A CAMPUS INITIATIVE

It is essential that progressives launch the groundwork for a campus initiative to position ourselves strategically, targeting the larger political environment and setting the agenda based on progressive values. To set the context for this, we would need:

- **A Proactive and Strategic Left:** The Left needs to be proactive – not merely viewing its work as combating the Right – but its purpose being to set the agenda (rather than just respond to the Right) and take back the discourse that is used to frame campus issues (e.g., freedom of speech, multiculturalism, patriotism).

The Left must be strategic as to where it invests its limited resources. This will require strategic mapping. For example, it needs to consider differences between private and public universities; small and large campuses; and community colleges, junior colleges, and four-year elite colleges, in order to identify the specific needs of different student bodies. In addition, geographic location (east coast, west coast, mid-west, etc.) should be taken into consideration. Lastly, as part of the development of a “strategic plan,” progressives need to have a balance between short- and long-term goals and objectives.

- **Strategic Alliance-Building:** Progressives need to find points of commonality among themselves that will nurture strategic alliance-building and move us from single-issue focus to a broad value-based movement.

This will require identification of “like-minded” individuals and institutions who could come together to build a potential national infrastructure, a coalition, or a network of progressives working on diverse issues, but coming together around a united agenda – a value-based ideological vision that can guide the movement. For example, groups working on diverse social issues ranging from hunger, poverty, homelessness, and economic insecurity have been able to converge around the human rights framework to build a national struggle for economic justice for all and this in turn has strengthened their specific issue-based struggle.

Such an effort will require consensus on what is/are the most critical issue(s) to be addressed on campuses so as to not dilute the effort into multiple small issues. Progressives would need to forge their forces and resources (financial and human) and minimize the focus on issues that divide the Left. There is a lesson to be learned from the success of right-wing activists like Ralph Reed and Grover Norquist in formulating government policy. We must deal with the split between the “activist” wing and the “political” wing of the progressive movement. In short, in creating unity, the movement would need to identify the larger goal that unites its purposes.

In addition, such an effort would require different ways of organizing and dialoguing. For example, it would need to grapple with issues of class difference, racism, sexism, heterosexism (among many –isms) to ensure the creation of an inclusive movement.

It is essential that progressives launch the groundwork for a campus initiative to position ourselves strategically, targeting the larger political environment and setting the agenda based on progressive values.

- **A Sense of Movement History:** Past struggles, both in the United States and around the world offer lessons in successful progressive organizing. Any progressive effort on a campus initiative needs to be rooted in the rich history of civil, economic, political, and racial justice struggles since they offer essential lessons in building a sustainable movement that can counter the Right's influence on college campuses. We must understand what and how previous generations have accomplished what is now taken for granted as "everyday rights." We can also learn from what didn't work.

This understanding of history should be incorporated within educational/ training opportunities for college students. In particular, current college students should be educated about the role that students (K-12 and college) have played in progressive movements. The educational building block for the movement should also include an examination of how movements are built, sustained, and die. At the same time, we acknowledge that new conditions and technologies require innovative and creative approaches and past forms of organizing may not always be applicable.

- **A Foundation of Trust and Respect:** Any sustainable alliance needs to rest on a foundation of respectful relationships strengthened by mutual trust. Every attempt must be made to create such relationships between different constituencies.

In addition, opportunities must be provided for the movement to assess and refuel itself and this should extend to campus movements as well. To refuel itself, the movement should provide contexts, such as national conferences, which can help inspire and rejuvenate members in the struggle.

In addition, within such a movement various actors must play multiple roles. For instance, leaders should serve as catalysts and help awaken students to various issues. These same leaders, however, must also be listeners, responding to issues identified by the students as critical.

- **An Understanding of the Right:** It is essential that the progressives understand how the Right operates and the role conservative funders and leaders have played in organizing college students, mentoring new leaders, and building campus alliances. For example, one reason behind conservative success has been their willingness to make long-term investments. Instead of recruiting students to do grunt work, they are molding youth into effective leaders. Progressives need to learn the lesson and do one better

Progressives need to find points of commonality among themselves that will nurture strategic alliance-building and move us from single-issue focus to a broad value-based movement.

CAMPUS LEADER
 JANUARY 1988 VOL. 7, NUMBER 3
Bring a Foundation Speaker to Your Campus For Black History Month
Help Advance Conservative Ideas By Interning With Young America's Foundation
Young America's Foundation will be hosting an Activism Training Seminar

The deadline for submitting your application for a paid summer internship with Young America's Foundation is quickly approaching. The Foundation is seeking highly motivated college students for its **Summertime Internship Program**. Internships include mentoring and writing, as well as helping to plan the Foundation's summer conferences. To apply, send your resume and two writing samples to the attention of Nicole Braggard, Young America's Foundation, 1181 Lakeshore, Herndon, Virginia 20170. Apply now! The deadline for applications is March 14, 1988. Join us in bringing conservatives alive to America's college campuses.

February is Black History Month. It is a time set aside on many college campuses to host special events and bring in guest speakers to celebrate "Black history." Unfortunately, these events are often monopolized by the Left, focusing on "oppression," "institutional racism," and "victimization." These speakers rarely discuss the progress that has been made, and they often fail to promote racial tolerance and a vision of unity.

If your campus plans Black History Month events, Young America's Foundation urges you to consider bringing a member of our **Foundation Speakers Program** to counter the divisive rhetoric of the Left. Foundation speakers, such as **Ward Connerly, Abbe King, Alan Keyes, Walter Williams, Steve Parker, Reginald Jones, and Armstrong Williams** are speaking role models who stress individual responsibility, moral virtue, and self-reliance. They provide a refreshing alternative to the progressive liberal speakers who seek to promote racial tension and a vision of victimhood.

This February, help balance the debate on your campus by having one of these excellent Foundation speakers. To find out more about the Young America's Foundation Speakers Program, call Pat Coyle at 1-800-292-9231.

This important seminar teaches you the secrets of reforming your campus by sponsoring a conservative speaker. If you would like to attend this free program, call Pat Coyle at 1-800-292-9231.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY:

RESHAPING THE PUBLIC DEBATE

Sustaining a movement requires a “hook” to attract a significant number of people and a “learning moment” that would transform individuals from observers to active participants.⁷³ A thoughtful communications strategy aimed at reshaping the public debate requires:

- **A Message that Resonates:** Progressives need to be adroit at providing a message, a counter-narrative, via current and evolving technologies and media. Working together, national progressive organizations and student groups need to develop and articulate their message that can resonate with students who have not yet made their minds up.

The efforts of the Left to “market” or “frame” a message is essential to addressing the critical issues of the day and reaching a broader audience. This will also require an examination of the relationship the Left must have with the “the press” and “the media.”

In addition, progressives must consider how to go beyond ten, twenty, or thirty-second sound bites and help deepen the debate. This will require capacity-building of college students to engage in complex ideas through the availability of training infrastructure to assist with “frames” and offer concrete skills-building on campuses such as intellectual leadership, reading lists, summer trainings and internships. Also media savvy and leadership conferences will help send students back with ideologies and strategies to counteract conservative influences.

- **An Ideological Framework:** Within a progressive movement, the specific work of think tanks and research institutions should be established. In addition, these institutions should be pushed to make their work relevant to student development and action. In addition, alliances among similar institutions (i.e., large public universities) could be formed to effectively coordinate and implement various strategies for movement-building. Students with similar “political agendas” should seek to develop alliances across campuses.
- **Identification of “Best Practices” and Curriculum:** There is already good work being done by progressive groups and individuals on campuses across the United States. We need to document these efforts so as to identify the existing “best practices” that could be replicated. In addition, curriculum that has been used effectively to create progressive change should be identified for distribution.
- **Support for Alternative Progressive Campus Publications:** Alternative campus papers can stimulate people to move thinking in new directions and help shift campus discourse to the left. For example, in summer 2001, the liberal *Dartmouth Free Press* obtained a copy of the college’s report on institutionalizing diversity the weekend before it was to be released. By that Monday, the *Free Press* had produced an entire issue devoted

Working together, national progressive organizations and student groups need to develop and articulate their message that can resonate with students who have not yet made their minds up.

73 PRA Report.

ed to in-depth analysis and opinion pieces from many perspectives, a day before a short article appeared in the campus daily. This illustrates that a separate publication devoted to opinion journalism can make a greater impact than a few scattered op-eds in the established daily paper.

While the conservatives have invested heavily in the marketplace of ideas, most liberal or progressive foundations have not stepped forward to aid student newspapers, media, projects to link progressive campus newspapers (such as the Independent Press Association's Campus Journalism Project) or training programs for progressive campus journalists. If the progressive movement hopes to counter the shift to the right in op-ed columns, talk radio, cable TV and internet, it must fund the broader public discourse, a discourse that begins on college campuses.

Alternative campus papers can stimulate people to move thinking in new directions and help shift campus discourse to the left.

BUILDING A POWERFUL PRESENCE ON CAMPUS

The Left does not have an organizational structure equivalent to that of the Right on most college campuses. Any campus initiative would require building a structure that would include students as well as faculty, staff, and administrators – that is, those who work with students over long term.

Some specific ideas to attain this goal include:

- **Listening to What Students Have to Say:** To integrate and sustain student involvement, it is essential that the progressive movement listens to what students identify as concerns and issues of critical importance.
- **Developing On-Campus Mentors:** The development of progressive faculty, staff, and administrators is important, especially if they are to be mentors to students and support capacity, courage, commitment, and confidence of college students, on or off campus, through systematic training, financial assistance, and organization.
- **Building Sustainable Student Organizations:** One big challenge that progressives face on college campuses is the decline of interest in campaigns. This is attributed to the quick turnover of leadership and inadequate transfer of knowledge from one set of leaders to the next; saturation of the campaign so no new members with similar views are left to join; achievement of a goal and then the inability to expand the goals of the group to sustain and increase interest; and/or failure to achieve or articulate recognizable goals, which can lead to member disinterest.⁷⁴ Sustainable student groups, that are able to face the loss of leadership once students graduate, could effectively tackle this issue. National organizations can also provide continuity and support to their campus affiliates and chapters to address these transitions.
- **Progressive Training Programs:** There is a need for national ideological progressive training programs, which instead of just focusing on a specific issue area, would offer general training on progressive organizing and groom students for leadership instead of viewing students as pool of available labor.

Training centers and summer internships should also be envisioned off the campus where college students are brought together from multiple colleges. This will enable students to see themselves as part of a larger movement beyond their campus and provide training opportunities to work in coalitions.

We need to envision college campus as the training ground for future activists who will make a difference as a student as well as after graduating. Internships, a necessary part of a college student's career preparation, are available in scores of national political organizations and should be highlighted through various means, like the conservative organizations who have promoted their programs more visibly on their websites.⁷⁵

⁷³ PRA Report.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ PRA Report, August 2004

- **National Forums for Student Leaders:** It is important that student activists have opportunities to come together and discuss their ideas and experiences about the necessary steps for building a progressive movement on campuses. In addition, regional conferences of campus leaders, including progressive faculty, staff, administrators and students, would also contribute to these efforts.
- **Campus Speakers and Artists:** Speakers on college campuses generate attention and play an important role in stimulating discussion and debates around issues. They can transform students' worldview and motivate them to become involved in social activism. Besides their sometimes celebrity status, outside experts also bring rhetorical skills and help legitimize sponsoring student groups and might assist in alliance-building that begins before and then extends after the campus visit.

Artists too have an increasingly important role to play in building a progressive campus movement. Through a range of genres – written and spoken word, music, dance, theater, film, visual arts, etc. artists are able to open students' imaginations to the possibilities for change and reach them in profound and sustained ways. They also encourage and facilitate students' own cultural endeavors which are indispensable for movement-building.

There is a reason that a cornerstone of the Right's campus strategy lies with promoting their speakers and artists and providing substantial resources for these efforts. They are keenly aware of the impact a speaker or artist can have in both the short and long-term and progressives must also understand this if we are to be effective.

CHALLENGING THE RIGHT

While the Right commits to funding over a number of years, progressive foundations often focus on issues leaving no real change an opportunity to develop.

To “turn the tide,” progressives need a unified, strategic approach, long-range goals as well as a framework for sustained, long-term organizing. Other areas we must look at include:

- **The Need for Major Funding and Resources:** Left-wing foundations need to be a lot more methodical in funding priorities. While the Right commits to funding over a number of years, progressive foundations often focus on issues leaving no real change an opportunity to develop.

Left-leaning funding sources exist but rarely use their limited resources to foster lasting institutions or institution-building efforts. For example, Nan Aron, executive director of the Alliance for Justice, attributes the rapid spread of the conservative college press to the “ambitious” funding of “strategic” right-wing foundations with “very well-defined” goals, a vision she hasn’t observed on the left.

According to Chip Berlet, chief analyst at the Boston-based Political Research Associates, “Instead of sporadic and inconsistent stopgap funding, progressives must reorient resources to long-term, strategically important projects. It is like being below a dam that is leaking. Your house is covered in a foot of water. You start mopping faster and faster and then someone comes and says, ‘you know, if we fix the dam we are not going to be knee-deep in water.’ And you say, ‘Don’t bother me, I’m mopping.’”

- **Mobilize the Undecided:** According to UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute, 27% of first-year students identified themselves as progressives, and 23% as conservative in 2003 and of those numbers an even smaller percentage are actually involved in activism. But according to the same study, centrist students, whose politics are neither conservative or progressive, constitute 50% of college students. We must explore how to reach these students.

The same Institute’s 2006 annual study found that an all time high of 83.2% of entering freshman volunteered at least occasionally during their high school senior year and 70.6% typically volunteered on a weekly basis. This commitment to social and civil responsibility, says the report, is likely to continue in college among 67.3% of freshman.⁷⁶

Students working in campus volunteer activities and community service do not necessarily identify themselves as progressives but clearly have the potential to develop in that direction. If a student is involved in tutoring inner-city youth, for example, it would be a logical next step for that student to look at *why* inequities exist in public education. It is important that we make these linkages. Progressive groups have already made some inroads in educating religious students through service learning programs that attract mostly apolitical students interested in service projects involving social action, personal

⁷⁶ The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2005, Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA, 2006.

reflection, and academic credit.⁷⁷ These centrist students are an untapped source of potential activists and need to be mobilized.

- **Organizing Through the Web:** The strategic use of new technologies is vital for our efforts and progressives already know what a powerful tool the internet can be for organizing, educating and mobilizing.

It is also a way to track, analyze, challenge and defeat the Right. The sophisticated, determined, corporate-funded conservative movement will not automatically be swept back by some unforeseen force. A cost effective approach for national groups is organizing through the web where a network of blogs could monitor conservative efforts on college campuses and develop plans to counter them.

- **Investment Strategies:** From ending apartheid in South Africa to supporting justice for farmworkers, progressive student movements effectively use investment strategies in their struggles. The same tactic could be used to pressure college administrations to stop investing their endowments in over-the-top conservative companies like Coors Brewing Company or Sinclair Broadcasting.
- **Linking the College Campus to the Larger Environment:** Progressives need to build a movement that can find an appropriate balance between working inside and outside of the political, social and economic status quo.

Presidential, state, and local elections and multi-national corporations continue to shape much of campus debate, and even faculty research. Progressives must articulate how they will work within such a reality and/or contest such political and economic frames (other frames, such as religion, could be added as well). In addition, a progressive movement seeking to develop a campus initiative must also consider the relationship between college campuses and local communities.

A goal should be to link college students to local communities and community institutions which can be part of an effective alliance. This movement outward from the campus must also reach the national and international realms as well. Progressives must work to link the needs of students on specific campuses to the realities of students at other campuses and to non-students across the nation and around the world. A national network comprised of students, faculty, media, and university leaders, that links activists at different schools and providing overall support would play a key role in meeting this challenge.

Progressives need to build a movement that can find an appropriate balance between working inside and outside of the political, social and economic status quo.

⁷⁷ Chamberlain, P., "Conservative Campus Organizing," *The Public Eye*, Fall 2005.

TURNING THE TIDE

While small in actual numbers, the Right has come to dominate the campus arena through strategic planning and massive funding, successfully undermining the work of progressive educators and policy makers and threatening the academic freedom it claims to defend. The corporatization of campus research, services and governance is further eroding higher educational as transnationals increasingly fund universities to increase their own profits, frame public debate, and define society's values.

Tomorrow's political, social, cultural, and economic leaders are being shaped today on college campuses. Future professionals, scientists, lawmakers, academics, journalists, researchers, educators, artists, doctors, public administrators are currently studying for their careers. If we are to have an impact on the future of this country and the world, progressives must understand the critical importance of influencing those who will one day have influence on our society at all levels. If progressive voices are not heard, whose voices will young people hear?

All those who truly care about the future must be engaged as we work to promote progressive values, principles, and ideas, building alliances, leadership and skills. Campuses remain vulnerable if left to student activism alone. We don't pretend to have all the solutions and we offer this document as merely one contribution to a national dialog that seeks to insure colleges and universities are accessible, democratic, and diverse. With so much at stake, it is incumbent on progressives to rally together in order to truly turn the tide!

List of Participants

Boston Summit, 18-19 June, 2005

1. **Chip Berlet**, Senior Analyst, Political Research Associates
2. **Blase Bonpane**, Director, Office of the Americas
3. **Linda Burnham**, Executive Director, Women of Color Resource Center
4. **Jean Caiani**, Program Officer, Panta Rhea Foundation
5. **Pamela Chamberlain**, researcher, Political Research Associates
6. **Elena Featherston**, author, diversity activist
7. **Jason Ferreira**, Speak Out Board of Directors, Ethnic Studies Professor, San Francisco State University
8. **Felicia Gustin**, Co-Director, Speak Out
9. **Tom Hayden**, author, activist
10. **Alice Y. Hom**, Director, Intercultural Center, Occidental College, Los Angeles CA
11. **Derrick Jensen**, author, environmental activist
12. **Marc Bamuthi Joseph**, performance poet, program director, Youth Speaks
13. **Miguel Lopez**, Speak Out Board of Directors, Professor, University of San Francisco
14. **Katya Min**, Co-Director. Speak Out
15. **Anuradha Mittal**. Executive Director, The Oakland Institute.
16. **Eddie Moore Jr.**, Director, Intercultural Life, Central College, Pella IA
17. **Gina Pacaldo**, educator, artist
18. **Christina Ree**, Speak Out Board of Directors, Development Coordinator, Creative Growth Art Center
19. **Loretta J. Ross**, National Coordinator, SisterSong
20. **Hans Schoepflin**, Panta Rhea Foundation
21. **Hugh Vasquez**, diversity activist, author
22. **Rev. C.T. Vivian**, civil rights activist
23. **Tim Wise**, anti-racism activist, author
24. **Wayne Yang**, Speak Out Board of Directors, Founder and Co-director, East Oakland Community High School
25. **Howard Zinn**, historian, author, activist

