In this section there are a number of background studies prepared as “working papers” during the course of the research. Other items were moved from the body of the original draft report. They provide additional details and thoughts developed during the course of the research. The papers reflect the views of the individual authors, and may or may not reflect the views of Political Research Associates. A number of links have vanished from the Internet. If replacements are found, they will be added to this text.
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Islamophobic Prejudice in the United States

by Chip Berlet

Islamophobia as Xenophobia and Racism

Throughout U.S. history there are periodic outbursts by anti-immigrant backlash movements. Islamophobia in the United States has an effect on a much larger group of people than those who choose to practice the religion of Islam. A report issued by NYU Law School in 2011 found that immigrant communities that were rightly or wrongly identified as Muslim still faced a harsh reality. The report focused on “on discriminatory law enforcement practices against Muslims in the U.S.” while at the same time “recognizing that the conflation of race, religion, and national origin” by many Americans creates “a much larger category of persons considered ‘Muslim’ than only those who adhere to Islam.” This includes “non-Muslim members of middle Eastern, south Asian, and Arab communities.”

Iman Sedge of the national Muslim Student Association points out that:

===It seems there’s always the assumption that something going on in the Middle East has to do with Muslims. Take the Egyptian revolution. There may be Muslim elements, but mainly it’s political, not religious. A lot of countries in the Middle East that are predominantly Muslim but not “Islamic countries” inevitably get tied to Muslim issues. Muslims in the U.S. are affected by that. Whatever happens in the Middle East gets tied to Muslims, ridiculous things that are not really Muslim.

This conflation is based on ignorance, but has real consequences, not only in law enforcement but also in terms of targeting its victims. Our campus interviews revealed a startling level of ignorance about Islam the religion and the ethno-cultural practices of Muslims from a wide array of national and family backgrounds.

OneAmerica, a statewide human rights group. Its founder and executive director, Pramila Jayapal, has worked hard to reduce anti-immigrant sentiments and support immigrant rights. “We stood up after 9-11 and did some effective organizing, “ she remembers. “We registered 26,000 new immigrant citizens; we worked
with the Governor and other political leaders and made some real gains.”. However, she worries about the actual “condition on the ground, out in our communities” where the “situation is much worse. Even if we have small gains, it feels like there is a constant push to the political right.”

Her view is shared by her colleague Abdullah Jama. “We have a dialogue with conservatives in this state about immigration,” says Jama, “but we see ultra-conservative think tanks and so-called experts constantly trying to create a clash between immigrants and law enforcement. The [predominantly Muslim] Somali community here ends up being portrayed as terrorists using arguments that we see as baseless conspiracy theories. This creates fear among voters.”

Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center based in Los Angeles says the growing anti-immigrant backlash is a national trend. She agrees it is being fueled in part by the right-wing populist rhetoric. “These right-wing activists are creating a climate of fear in immigrant communities and undermining efforts to minimize the human cost of punitive immigration enforcement policies” says Hincapié.

“Right now, there is high unemployment and a lack of an adequate social safety net for all working class people in the United States,” she says, “and the fear and anxiety about our economic situation is cynically being used by anti-immigrant politicians and strategists and trumped by right-wing commentators.” Hincapié says that “immigrants are being used as scapegoats.”

The “lies and distortions about immigrants coming from these right-wing movements are based in racism and xenophobia,” she warns, “and these forms of bigotry are spreading way beyond the boundaries of the conservatives themselves.”

Immigrant rights organizers see the spread of alarmist conspiracy theories suggesting that Muslims are prone to terrorism and pose a threat to Western civilization as a hyperbolized interpretation of the thesis of Huntington in his *Clash of Civilizations*.

### Confrontation: Muslims and Civil Liberties

By 2007 a new civil libertarian consensus was emerging built around opposition to stereotyping of Muslims. The loose-knit coalition lined up in opposition to the Bush Administration and neoconservatives in both the Republican and Democratic parties.

Introduced in 2007, The “Homegrown Terrorism and Violent Radicalization Prevention Act” (H.R.1955 and S.1959) was blocked by a coalition of civil liberties groups that spanned the political spectrum. One section of the legislative text drew special attention:

==The Internet has aided in facilitating violent radicalization, ideologically based violence, and the homegrown terrorism process in the United States by providing access to broad and constant streams of terrorist-related propaganda to United States citizens.

This was widely seen by both supporters and opponents as being aimed at provocative and sometimes pro-terrorist Internet information available to young Muslims living in the United States.

The coalition opposing the bill included the American Civil Liberties Union, the libertarian Cato Institute, the conservative Free Congress Foundation, and right-wing anti-tax activist Grover Norquist. On the left were groups including the National Lawyers Guild, Center for Constitutional Rights, the Bill of Rights Defense Committee, and the Defending Dissent Foundation.² Criticism also grew over a series of hearings held by the Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs on the subject of Islamic Terrorism. Critics argued that the hearings were favoring witnesses who stereotype Muslims and feeding Islamophobia.

The Committee was chaired by Senator Joseph Lieberman, the Independent Democrat from Connecticut who has long been an integral part of neoconservative-led advocacy efforts to push an expansive “war on terror” in the Middle East. On May 8, 2008 a report emerged from the Committee’s office. Titled *Violent Islamist Extremism, the Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorism Threat*. It was primarily prepared by Lieberman’s Committee staff and published under Lieberman’s name and that of the ranking Republican on the Committee, Senator Susan Collins of Maine. The Report did not represent the views of the full Committee, and when contacted, several members of the Committee indicated they had not been consulted regarding the preparation or release of the Report.  

A coalition of civil liberties and civil rights groups warned the Lieberman/Collins report contradicted established federal policies that sought to minimize stereotyping of Muslims and Arabs in the United States and encourage resistance to acts of terrorism in the name of Islam. A letter signed by over 20 groups warned that:

===Focusing the discussion of home-grown terrorism on Muslims may actually increase the potential for violent radicalization in the United States. Many witnesses before the Committee spoke of the growth of Islamophobia and the polarization of the Muslim community as risk factors that raise the potential for extremist violence. Unfairly focusing suspicion on a community tends to create the very alienation these witnesses said could lead to homegrown terrorism.  

A joint statement by the Muslim Advocates, Muslim Public Affairs Council, Council on American Islamic Relations, and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee took issue with the Lieberman/Collins report.  

The letter argued that the report sabotaged its own goals: “Unfortunately, the Committee's report undermines fundamental American values (as well as its own stated recommendations) by encouraging alienating suspicion of several million Americans on the basis of their faith. Contrary to Secretary [Michael] Chertoff’s recommendations, it thus exacerbates the current climate of fear, suspicion and hate mongering of Islam and American Muslims.” According to the press release accompanying the letter:

===The report heavily relied upon a widely criticized and deeply flawed New York Police Department study on domestic radicalization that claimed that typical "signatures" of radicalization include wearing traditional clothing, growing a beard, or giving up cigarettes, drinking, and gambling. The advocacy groups also expressed dismay with the fact that the Committee, while citing the value of increasing outreach to American Muslim and Arab-American communities, heard testimony from only one witness from the American Muslim community.

The groups asked for a dialogue on this last point: "Given that only one of nineteen witnesses before the Committee represented the American Muslim community,” the letter writers noted, “we also urge you to include representative American Muslims at future hearings on Islam or the American Muslim community.”

American Muslims also launched a campaign to encourage more precise language when linking Islam and terrorism, which the committee’s report failed to do. According to Religion News Service, “In March, the National Counterterrorism Center drafted a memo for the State Department urging diplomats to drop words like ‘jihadists’ or ‘mujahedeen’ (those engaged in jihad) when describing terrorists because it ‘unintentionally legitimizes their actions.’"
In fact, in January of that year the Department of Homeland Security had suggested, "We should not concede the terrorists' claim that they are legitimate adherents of Islam," according to a memo obtained by the Associated Press.  


2 Author Berlet is a vice-president of the Defending Dissent Foundation and participated in the coalition criticizing the Lieberman/Collins report and the coalition that blocked the legislation.  

3 Berlet online articles.  

4 “Memorandum to Members of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs,” http://www.defendingdissent.org/alerts.html#memo.  


Comments on Islamofascism Awareness Week

by Jamie Donovan Urrutia

I’ve noticed during my searches for IFAW that after the initial week in 2007, coverage begins to taper off quite markedly starting with the one held in April 08 and Oct 08. I’ve found barely any reference to the IFAW events in 2009. The primary websites associated with IFAW include virtually no extensive information on the speakers or events taking place as part of subsequent IFAW following 2007. The webpage for IFAW Fall 09 has nothing on it. They did not seem to have one in April 09 like they did in 08. Primarily Horowitz et al. seem to be speaking at schools on Islamofascism, Jihadic threats to the West and Israel etc without the overriding theme of strictly taking part IFAW. Particularly, Horowitz seems to have begun a new initiative entitled “The Campus War Against Israel and the Jews” focused on the anti-Israeli (read anti-Semitic) sentiments supposedly found in abundance on college campuses. It is perhaps likely that this initiative is meant to replace IFAW with what may be considered a safer, less critiquable movement. It is largely spearheaded by the David Horowitz Freedom Center in conjunction with the Terrorism Awareness Project and Front Page Magazine. Additionally other pet projects seem to continuously emerge from the likes of individuals like Robert Spencer and his Jihad Watch.

While all three publicized IFAWs shared the same basic agenda, certain themes were emphasized with each one. The first sought to undermine the campus left by way of calling attention to the plight of Muslim women, calling out feminists to stand up for the rights of women living abroad in Muslim countries. The second IFAW focused on the prevention of genocide and the threatening stances and statements made by radical Islam leaders and groups. The third IFAW was entitled “Stop the Jihad on Campus“ and seemed to focus highlighting ties between student organizations sympathetic to radical Islamic causes and their general campus defenders on the left.

Recently, several schools seem to have cancelled speaking engagements with Horowitz, claiming that they are either too inflammatory or because they are laced with bigoted undertones. I didn’t notice any event cancellations during the initial IFAWs. Perhaps it is because the schools feel more comfortable with challenging such events given that the movement has lost steam, Bush is no longer president, and perhaps there is simply a greater concern over offending people (left or right) on campus. Interest by campus conservatives may also have waned given the sometimes extreme rhetoric of critics of Islam. Certainly in one instance a campus conservative group chose to rename the event “Terrorism Awareness Week” in a clear toning down of language. Another instance I read about seemed to suggest that the campus group backed off of endorsing the event even though it seemed likely they had invited the speaker. Additionally the overriding concern with economic issues and the rise of new (old) memes concerning socialism and totalitarianism in regard to government policies, terrorism and war may have been put on the back burner. Of course, the recent Ft Hood shootings have probably reinfused some life-blood into feelings anti-Muslim resentment and the associated movements such as IFAW.
Historic Contexts:

by Chip Berlet

Anti-Imperialism, the New Left, and Anti-Racism

In the mid-1960s revelations about the CIA manipulating foundations to support U.S. Cold War policies were creating a national scandal. This especially tarnished the National Student Association when its International Desk was shown to be essentially a CIA front. During this same period, opposition to the war in Vietnam was growing. The result was a break between politically Liberal groups and what was emerging as the New Left with its emphasis on anti-imperialism and anti-racism.¹

The concept of anti-imperialism will return later in this study as a factor in examining the difference between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.

Student protests against the war in Vietnam were part of an organic and uneasy coalition of liberal and radical peace activists with religious leaders, liberal politicians, the New Left, and Black activists. It was during this period that the Neoconservative political tendency began to be developed.

Hoover’s FBI investigated student antiwar efforts and the larger 1960s antiwar movement in a vain effort to prove they were part of a vast communist plot.² Under the illegal FBI COINTELPRO program, agents were ordered by Hoover to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize" targeted leaders and organizations in the antiwar movement, the Civil Rights Movement, Black Nationalism, and a range of socialist and communist groups.³

Black Nationalist ideas and groups grew during the 1960s and played a growing role in national politics and in disagreements within the Civil Rights Movement over strategy and tactics. The tentative coalition between some parts of the predominantly-White New Left and Black Nationalists around anti-racism and anti-imperialism caused serious concern across America, especially among the liberal intellectuals who would later form the base of the Neoconservative political tendency. It also generated the era’s most infamous FBI COINTELPRO operation that resulted in the extra-legal killing of Black Panther organizer and coalition builder Fred Hampton in Chicago in 1969—an actual conspiracy that has unfortunately led credence to additional anti-government conspiracy theories that lack a factual basis.⁴

¹ While there is a huge body of literature on anti-imperialism, in this report we simply mean a radical left critique of U.S. foreign policy initiatives that rejects the government’s assumption or assertion that the U.S. has a right to intervene using political coercion or military force in any part of the globe where it perceives its interests are threatened.

² Davis, James Kirkpatrick. (1997). Assault on the Left: The FBI and the Sixties Antiwar Movement. Westport, Conn.: Praeger; Donner,
Conservatives & the Backlash Strategy

In 1971 corporate attorney Lewis F. Powell, Jr. wrote an influential memo claiming that there was an organized “Attack [on the] American Free Enterprise System.” To counter this Powell suggested a coordinated campaign to reshape the ideological debate on college campuses, in the media, and in the political and legal arenas. On campus, Powell complained about the leftist drift of education and college students:

=== "We have seen the civil rights movement insist on re-writing many of the textbooks in our universities and schools. The labor unions likewise insist that textbooks be fair to the viewpoints of organized labor. Other interested citizens groups have not hesitated to review, analyze and criticize textbooks and teaching materials...."

=== "Social science faculties (the political scientist, economist, sociologist and many of the historians) tend to be liberally oriented, even when leftists are not present."

Powell urged corporate America to fund coordinated and overlapping campaigns to take back America from the liberals and the New Left. Prefiguring the tropes of the Tea Party movement, Powell suggested the "threat to the enterprise system is not merely a matter of economics. It also is a threat to individual freedom." He claimed: "inequitable taxation" was part of a trend that, as "the experience of the socialist and totalitarian states demonstrates," greased a slippery slope whereby "the contraction and denial of economic freedom is followed
inevitably by governmental restrictions on other cherished rights.”

The Powell memo was widely circulated among business and political leaders and reached the White House. Within a few months, Powell was named by President Richard Nixon to a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court.  

The 1971 Powell memo picked up on longstanding conservative and libertarian complaints about statism, collectivism, and big government; as well as a defense of a Laissez Faire model of political economy. All of this had previously been aired in conservative publications including the *Freeman* and *National Review*. This time, however, a number of wealthy ultraconservatives such as Richard Mellon Scaife, Joseph Coors and others began funding right-wing organizations and institutions in a strategic manner to help build a national and state network of think tanks, training centers, watchdog groups, opposition research groups, magazines, and endowed chairs for professors at universities.

William Simon, an ultraconservative ideologue, chose election year 1978 to renew the call to bolster public support to defend the Free Enterprise system against what he termed the liberal onslaught. Simon had served as Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Nixon and Ford from 1974 to 1977. Simon urged that money “generated by business (by which I mean profits, funds in business foundations and contributions from individual businessmen) must rush by 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.”

Many of the claims that democracy and liberty require particular nineteenth century "neoclassical" Free Market economics came from ultraconservative ideologues at the University of Chicago. Whether or not Strauss was the progenitor of neoconservatism, the Chicago School of political economy became popular across various sectors of the Political Right. Corporate conservatives such as Powell and neoconservatives such as Simon can agree on some underlying economic policy matters, while fiercely debating other issues.

In 1971 Karl Rove (who later became a key Republican strategy adviser), became the executive director of the national College Republicans. That was the same year Powell wrote his memo that would unlock the flow of hundreds of millions of dollars from conservatives to roll back the New Deal and the New Left and create a New Right. This marked a lurch to the Right by the young Republicans. It also saw the expansion of a significant number of programs to identify and train conservative students on college campuses. As Pam Chamberlain found in 2005

==A list of conservative alumni of campus supportive programs reads like a Who’s Who of current Right strategists and spokespeople…Sen. Rick Santorum, (R-PA), Grover Norquist, head of Americans for Tax Relief, and Ralph Reed, the former director of the Christian Coalition and current Georgia political candidate, have all been associated with the College Republicans or their National Committee. Edwin Feulner, President of the Heritage Foundation, and Richard Allen, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, were involved with the Intercollegiate Studies Institute as students.

The concerted effort to fund a counter-offensive aimed at restoring conservative and traditional curricula and program on college campuses was effective. This has continued to today. Between the 1971 Powell Memo and the rise of the Tea Party movement and the attack on President Obama as a socialist totalitarian, more than $1 billion was spent by conservative organizations on conducting a war on progressive Left ideas.


Alliance for Justice, Justice for Sale, p. 5.


Strategic Conservative Funding

by Sally Covington

From Moving a Public Policy Agenda: The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations

Tracing Funding patterns of the Following Foundations:

- Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation,
- Carthage Foundation,
- Earhart Foundation,
- Charles G. Koch Foundation,
- David H. Koch charitable foundations,
- Claude R. Lambe charitable foundation (controlled by David H. Koch)
- Phillip M. McKenna Foundation,
- J.M. Foundation,
- John M. Olin Foundation,
- Henry Salvatori Foundation,
- Sarah Scaife Foundation,
- Smith Richardson Foundation.

The twelve foundations listed above were studied by Sally Covington for her report: Moving a Public Policy Agenda: The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations, published by the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy.

The foundations awarded $300 million in grants over the 1992-1994 study period, of which $210 million was strategically targeted to support conservative policy and institutional reform objectives. This amount is broken down into specific sector funding:

$88.9 million to support conservative scholarship and programs, train the next generation of conservative thinkers and activists and reverse progressive curricula and policy trends on the nation’s college and university campuses.

- University of Chicago
- Harvard University
- George Mason University
- Yale University
- Claremont McKenna College
- University of Virginia
- Marquette University
- Boston University

Read More About It!

➢ Buy the Report:
Sally Covington,
Moving a Public Policy Agenda: The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations
$79.2 million to build and strengthen a national infrastructure of think tanks and advocacy groups, $64 million of which was directed to institutions with a major focus on domestic policy issues and $15.2 million to institutes focused on American national security interests, foreign policy and global affairs.

- Heritage Foundation
- AEI
- Free Congress Foundation
- Cato Institute
- Citizens for a Sound Economy
- Hudson Institute
- Hoover Institution
- National Bureau of Economic Research
- Manhattan Institute
- Ethics and Public Policy Center

$10.5 million to assist conservative pro-market law firms and other law-related projects and organizations.

- Institute for Justice
- Center for Individual Rights
- Washington Legal Foundation
- Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies

$9.3 million to support a network of regional and state-based think tanks and advocacy institutions.

- Wisconsin Policy Research Institute
- Pacific Institute for Public Policy Research
- Heartland Institute
- American Legislative Exchange Council

$16.3 million to finance alternative media outlets, media watchdog groups, and public television and radio for specific, issue-oriented public affairs or news reporting.

- American Spectator Educational Foundation: (American Spectator Magazine)
- National Affairs: (The Public Interest
- National Affairs: (The National Interest Magazine)
- Foundation for Cultural Review: (The New Criterion Magazine)
- Commentary Magazine
- Center for the Study of Popular Culture
- Accuracy in Media

$5.4 million to organizations working to transform the social views and giving practices of the nation's religious and philanthropic leaders.

- Institute on Religion and Democracy
- Institute for Religion and Public Life
- Acton Institute

Christian Right critiques of liberalism and alleged socialism have long incorporated claims of a vast sinister conspiracy to undermine “God and Country.”

The Christian Right & the Republican Party

The rise of the Christian Right in the 1970s significantly assisted the election of conservative Republican Ronald Reagan as President and began a thirty year migration of the Republican Party toward harsher and more exclusionary forms of right-wing electoral politics.

William “Bill” Lind, Director of the Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Christian Right epicenter, the Free Congress Foundation, sets out the basic theme of the backlash against the Left on campus:

The New Left had launched a massive assault on Western culture in the academy, beginning in the 1960s. The cultural revolution in the academy had spread to wide segments of the general population, promoted especially by the entertainment industry. Most of the Democratic Party had gone over to the new anti-Western view, adopting its mantra of “racism, sexism and homophobia.”

While free market economics was triumphing world-wide and Communism’s days were obviously numbered, America’s culture was turning into a moral sewer. Clearly, a new conservatism was needed in response -- a conservatism built not on economics but on defense of traditional Western culture.1

According to Lind, through “most of the Cold War era, American conservatism rested on the twin pillars of free market economics and anti-Communism.” Culture was not seen as a political issue during the Cold War, writes Lind, “for the simple reason that Traditional, Western, Judeo-Christian culture was accepted by the vast majority of Americans.” This included the “American political Establishment, both political parties and most other elites as well.” In fact, Lind claims caustically, rejection “of Western culture was limited to a few small, eccentric bands in places like Greenwich Village.”

The Christian Right is only one sector of the coalition that helps elect Republicans, along with classic Republican conservatives, economic libertarians, neoconservatives, and others.2 Nonetheless, Christian Right voters are the largest single voting bloc in the Republican Party, and have
been since the early 1980s. Some 15% of the electorate identifies itself as mobilized to vote by the Christian Right. A significant number of Christian Right activists have an apocalyptic view of the role of Israel as fulfilling idiosyncratic interpretations of the Christian Bible. This helped produce the Christian Zionist Movement that ends up in coalitions with neoconservatives, foreign policy hardliners, and national security militarists in defense of the most aggressive policies of the Israeli government toward Palestinians.

In terms of the campus debate over antisemitism, many Republican strategists and elected officials owe a political debt to the Christian Right, and support campaigns against Leftist ideas on campus, with slogans against “political correctness,” “multiculturalism”, the anti-Jewish bias of Middle East and Islamic Studies, and antisemitism in campus antiwar and Pro-Palestinian demonstrations.

The result, somewhat unexpectedly, is that Campus Republican clubs are often the organizational nexus for confrontational rhetoric and actions that portray Islam in ways that are at least overly-simplified and stereotyped—and at worst naked displays of Islamophobic bigotry.


2 See chart of sectors.

Conservative Critique of the Academy

In the early 1990s college campuses once again became an ideological battleground, with conservatives asserting that colleges and universities had become breeding grounds for a let-wing “political correctness” movement. This led to a series of high profile and hyperbolized incidents between conservatives on campus and those with more liberal or progressive sentiments. This ideological culture war is the direct forerunner to the debate over what constitutes antisemitism on campus today.

The campaign against campus-based “liberal elites” heated up in the late 1980s with a series of books by conservatives, including the ones reviewed below by Pam Chamberlain in her study of campus activism:

- Alan Bloom (1988) sets the tone for criticizing the content of modern collegiate liberal arts curricula. His main thesis is that the demise of general education requirements and replacement of the great books of Western literature and philosophy with multicultural courses not only have diminished the quality of contemporary education and demoralized our young potential leaders, but have threatened the core of our democratic process.

- Dinesh D’Souza, (1991) defines what he sees as “illiberal education,” or a close-mindedness and intolerance among liberals on campus. Through a collection of case studies, he observes that a “new racism” is being created on campus by resentment associated with affirmative action and a new politics of sensitivity to issues of gender and sexual orientation that has politicized scholarship.

- Katie Roiphe (1993) summarizes the conservative argument about the harm feminism has inflicted on campus by detailing her own experiences at Harvard and Princeton. She is critical of feminists who project “victimhood” and create absolutist positions
where ambiguity should exist, especially concerning rape and sexual harassment.\(^3\)

David Horowitz and Peter Collier (1994) produced an anthology of articles from their journal *Heterodoxy* on “How to survive the PC campus.”\(^4\) Using humor and sarcasm, contributors to *Heterodoxy*, from almost the first issue in 1992, criticize a “politically correct” culture that “restricts the range of allowable opinions on campus.”\(^5\)

Alan Charles Kors and Harvey Silverglate (1998) reassert this perspective with further investigation of the polarization of political debate on campus, documenting incidents of the “tyranny of progressives... asserting absolute truth over the souls, consciences and the individuality of our students.”\(^6\) They present a series of anecdotes focusing their criticism on what they see as major violations of free speech rights around student and faculty discipline.

In 1988, you would have been hard-pressed to find a dozen mentions of the term political correctness as a critique of liberals, but by 1992, there were 10,000 articles in the English language on political correctness. Somewhere between 1985, with the creation of the right-wing watchdog group Accuracy in Academia and the 1991 publication of the Dinesh D’Souza book, *Illicit Education*, “political correctness” became a key frame on the Political Right. According to Russ Bellant, in 1991 the right-wing watchdog group Accuracy in Academia, sponsored a Washington, D.C. conference on "Politically Incorrect: Fighting the Campus Thought Police."\(^7\) Among the scheduled workshops: "Affirmative Discrimination on Campus," "Intolerance in the Name of Tolerance," "Marxist Indoctrination in the Academy," and "Fighting Liberal Fascism on Campus."

### The Political Correctness Campaign

David Horowitz and his *Front Page Magazine* were a major source of the “political correctness” charge. In a 2002 review of D’Souza’s book *Letters to a Young Conservative*, Jeffrey Hart, claimed on *Front Page* that “Political Correctness now pervades every university campus, except for a few provincial small schools,” and it “is a tyranny of the minority of zealots who are able to terrify otherwise sane people into affirming things they could not possibly believe.” Hart called the book “silver bullet into the heart of Political Correctness, a coagulated version of what once passed as liberalm.” Search the Front Page website today and over 30,000 hits for the phrase “political correctness” pop up.

Pam Chamberlain observes that one result of the “political correctness campaign,” was a “demand that colleges change to make the campus safe for conservative students and faculty and to make room for a ‘diversity of thought.’”

Critics of the “political correctness” campaign argued it was built around a propaganda model of unsubstantial allegations repeated endlessly from a multitude of conservative voices all reading from the same basic script. Feminist scholars especially criticized the “political correctness” campaign as an attempt to reframe legitimate debates over inequalities of power on campus and in the wider society. Jean Hardisty observed that when “the right uses the label ‘political correctness’ to ridicule concerns over inequality “it attacks both the progressive movement and the struggle against racism and other forms of oppression.”\(^8\)

Liberals and leftists who sought a critical debate on issues of race and gender, power and privilege, and what belongs in the academic canon—all of which were appropriate for discussions on a college campus—found themselves marginalized and mocked as lockstep dema-
gogues seeking to stifle free speech through Orwellian language revisions and political coercion. This reached an absurd apogee in 2008 when Jonah Goldberg claimed in *Liberal Fascism* that liberals and their socialist allies were pushing America down a slippery slope toward tyranny through totalitarian social planning and political correctness. An authentic academic expert on fascism, Robert Paxton, debunked Goldberg’s definitions of fascism, and scolded Goldberg for capitulating to the “the sloppy current American usage by which “liberal” means, usually pejoratively nowadays, any and all of the various components of the Left, from anarchists and Marxists to moderate Democrats….Goldberg stereotypes liberals to make them abstract, uniform, robotic.”

Pam Chamberlain has noted the manner in which conservative students jumped into the anti-liberal fray was relatively “consistent across campuses,” and “heavily depending on sarcasm, personal attack, and activities geared to attracting publicity.” For example conservative students staged events such as Capture an Illegal Immigrant Days and Coming Out as Conservative Days.

One common tactic is to stage an “Affirmative Action Bake Sale” where typically there was a sliding scale: White Males charged $1 for a cookie, White Females $.75, Hispanic/Black Males $.50 and Hispanic/Black

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6. Bellant / Coors
Militarism, Neoconservatism, and Anti-Terrorism

By Chip Berlet

Terrorist attacks by a small number of totalitarian Muslim theocrats are still a potential threat more than a decade after the attacks on 9-11. How best to respond to this terrorist threat is the subject of much research, analysis, and debate. These debates occur within numerous subcultures, including among homeland security analysts, foreign policy experts, government officials, political constituencies, politicians and elected representatives, the media, and the general public. Among the most vocal subcultures expressing opinions on this topic are the relatively small number of neoconservative political activists and advisers.

U.S. government policies regarding the Middle East are hot-button topics on many campuses in the United States. The role of the neoconservatives in shaping these policies comes up frequently—sometimes in classrooms, sometimes in campus demonstrations. Neoconservative intellectuals play a major role in framing public conversations as to what constitutes antisemitism on college campuses. They see this as part of a broader attack on Western Civilization by radical leftists and jihadist Muslims.

The neoconservatives say they are merely political realists. Nonetheless, dozens of scholarly and journalistic books and scores of essays contend that neoconservatism is a major source of Islamophobia in both the United States and Europe.

"Conservative columnists, hardline Christian Zionist religious leaders, some of them prominent neoconservative radio and television talk show hosts with large audiences, have regularly used hate speech and dangerous invective aimed not at extremists but at Islam and Muslims in general," writes Esposito. "The result has been a growth of Islamophobia, discrimination toward Muslims based on their religion or race that has led to hate crimes and other acts of violence."3

Today, certain followers of neoconservatism circulate widely-publicized dubious claims about the nature of radical Islam, Jihad, Sharia Law, and terrorism. In addition, they stake out a hardline position on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. There is a loose-knit network of neoconservative groups that bring these claims and speakers promoting them to college campuses. We discuss some of these individuals and organizations throughout this report.

Neoconservatism plays a role in defining the nature and extent of antisemitism on campus in part because it had an already established network of individuals and groups that saw US college campuses as a place to battle what was seen as an iron-fisted grip of leftist ideology and multiculturalism. Neoconservatism also has an established presence of well-known media and policy experts, and this sometimes helps legitimate the spread of Islamophobic ideas and rhetoric on college campuses.

At times the rhetoric of some neoconservatives recalls "the witch hunts of the McCarthy era," writes Martensson.

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A coterie of neoconservative media (the Weekly Standard and the New York Sun as well as the Washington Times) and interconnected Web sites (Campus Watch, Jihad Watch, and Front Page) coordinate to repeat unsubstantiated charges and claims, taking quotes out of context to create "facts on the ground." By recycling the same charges, themes, and articles, they support and enhance each other's accusations to make it look as if masses of people and groups are constantly uncover-
ing new threats. They target not only Muslims but also non-Muslim academics, journalists, and policymakers who speak out against their bigotry and disinformation. All who criticize their actions are painted as unpatriotic, anti-Semitic apologists for Islam, or supporters of suicide bombers. The goal of these anti-Muslim individuals and organizations is to discredit and keep Muslim organizations weak and disenfranchised, and to marginalize Muslim representation in politics, and major American organizations.4

According to Taras, in Britain a form of “literary Islamophobia has been given a name—Blitcon.” Taras identifies three well-known British authors as “literary neoconservatives”: Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, and Salman Rushdie. “All three supposedly believe that Islamism poses a fundamental threat to Western Civilization. Amis and his onetime fellow editor of the British Journal New Statesman, Christopher Hitchens, who (like Rushdie) now lives in the United States, have especially become entangled in Islamophobic controversies in recent years.”5

Maira suggests Islamophobia is sometimes related to an aggressive US foreign policy, writing that “The national allegiances of Muslim, Arab, and South Asian Americans have come under intense scrutiny for sign of betrayal to the nation and for any wavering in allegiance to the project of ‘freedom’ and ‘democracy’ as defined in the neoconservative vision of the New American Century.”6 Abbas refers to the “neo-Orientalist and neoconservative times we live in now.”7

Leaman and Ali write that:

===Islamophobia is found in the United States among neoconservatives, some Christian evangelicals, and some pro-Israel groups. Islamophobia is also deeply influential in some segments of the United States media—Fox News is particularly noteworthy—and among right-wing lobbyists and politicians who [perceive] Islam as a potent threat to America, Christianity, and “the West” more broadly.8

Being swept up in campaigns to demonize Muslims seems to be a major cause of Islamophobia. “Gallup makes the argument that Americans’ prejudice against Muslims is at least partly fueled by misinformed beliefs.” An example is that “people who believe Muslims worldwide oppose equal rights for men and women tend to be much more likely to report prejudice against Muslims.” In fact, based on a set of interviews conducted in the Middle East, majorities of Muslims in Iran, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, among other places, say that women and men should have equal legal rights.”9

Ironically, according to another Gallup poll, on an individual level, “the strongest predictor of prejudice against Muslims is whether a person holds similar feelings about Jews.”10

A complication here is that some critics of neoconservatism use overly-simplified analyses that can slide into antisemitic stereotypes about Jewish Power. A common stereotype ties support for Israel in the United States to Jewish identity. In a survey of polling data, Bard found that “Support for Israel is not restricted to the Jewish community. Americans of all ages, races and religions sympathize with Israel. This support is also nonpartisan, with a majority of Democrats and Republicans consistently favoring Israel by large margins over the Arabs.

===The best indication of Americans’ attitude toward Israel is found in the response to the most consistently asked question about the Middle East: “In the Middle East situation, are your sympathies more with Israel or with the Arab nations?” The organization that has conducted the most surveys is Gallup. Support for Israel in Gallup Polls has remained consistently around the 50% mark since 1967. The most recent poll, reported by Gallup in February 2011, found that sympathy for Israel was 63% compared to 17% for the Palestinians.
Bard observes that polls “indicate the public views Israel as a reliable U.S. ally, a feeling that grew stronger during the Gulf crisis. In May 2011, CNN found that 82% of Americans believed Israel is ‘friendly’ or an ‘ally.’”

While Neoconservatism is a highly influential ideological current, it has been developed and maintained by a relatively small group of public intellectuals. A number of early neoconservative ideologues came out of Jewish intellectual traditions. This has led some analysts to hyperbolize this into antisemitic stereotyping. Most Jews are not neoconservatives, and many neoconservatives come from secular viewpoints or other ethno-religious traditions. For example, there are several high-profile Catholic neoconservative intellectuals. How neoconservatism is debated on campus ranges from reasonable assertions that are widely shared by many political scientists to outlandish assertions that strain credulity or involve antisemitic stereotypes.

1 There are differences between the neoconservative movements in the United States and Europe, and both are sometimes grouped with those who support “Free Market” economic policies as “neoliberals,” using the term in the classic and European sense rather than as used in the US to describe those generally allied with the Democratic Party.


3 Esposito, 2002, p. 227
4 Martensson, 2011.
5 Taras, 2009, p. 221.

Following the Controversy through Documents

EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism

Note: The European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia is now called the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. The Working Definition was never adopted.

The purpose of this document is to provide a practical guide for identifying incidents, collecting data, and supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism.

Working definition:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

• Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

• Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

• Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.

• Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

• Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

• Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

2005

On Academic Freedom
Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure
American Association of University Professors

In spring 2005, the Association’s Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, in response to a controversy that was roiling the British academic community, approved a statement condemning academic boycotts. The statement declared that since its founding in 1915, the AAUP has been committed to preserving and advancing the free exchange of ideas among academics irrespective of governmental policies and however unpalatable those policies may be viewed. We reject proposals that curtail the freedom of teachers and researchers to engage in work with academic colleagues, and we reaffirm the paramount importance of the freest possible international movement of scholars and ideas. We affirm these core principles but provide further comment on the complexities of academic boycotts and the rationale for opposing them, and we recommend responses to future proposals to participate in them.

Read More:
A Blind Eye to Campus Anti-Semitism?

by Kenneth Marcus

Commentary Magazine

September 2010

Excerpt:

[...] When complaints were lodged over these incidents [at the University of California at Irvine], which took place in 2003 and 2004, the university responded either with relative indifference or with little urgency. But when the federal government was asked in 2004 to intervene to deal with incidents that its own investigators had determined to be clear-cut violations of the civil rights of Irvine’s Jewish students, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights failed to prosecute a single case. Indeed, it has finally become clear that the current policy of the office charged with enforcing civil rights at American universities involves treating anti-Semitic bias as being unworthy of attention—a state of affairs in stark contrast to the agency’s quite justified alacrity in responding to virtually every other possible case of discrimination. While one cannot identify the motive for this astonishing double standard with complete certainty, the justification for it involves an unwillingness to treat Jews as a distinct group beyond considerations of religious adherence.

Faced with the demand to address anti-Semitic actions verified by its own investigators, the federal government passed on prosecution because it was unable to define the group that was the victim of the assault. Washington found itself unable to answer the question “Who is a Jew?”

The lack of a coherent legal conception of Jewish identity has rendered the Office for Civil Rights (henceforth, OCR) unable to cope with a resurgence of anti-Semitic incidents on American college campuses, of which the Irvine situation is enragingly emblematic. The problem stems from the fact that federal agents have jurisdiction under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act over race and national-origin discrimination—but not over religion. And because they have been unable to determine whether Jewish Americans constitute a race or a national-origin group, they found themselves unable to address the anti-Semitism at UC-Irvine. This confusion has led to enforcement paralysis as well as explosive confrontations and recriminations within the agency.
2010

Op-Ed: U.S. must enforce policy on campus harassment

By Kenneth L. Marcus
Jewish Telegraphic Agency
December 8, 2010

Excerpt:

Buried in the recent policy statement on bullying in the public schools, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights announced a major policy on anti-Semitism: For only the second time in its history, OCR pledged that it would use its civil rights enforcement powers to protect Jewish students from anti-Semitic harassment.

The landmark ruling bolsters the 2004 policy that I issued while heading OCR during the first George W. Bush administration but which had been abandoned or ignored in the intervening years. The new policy is a big deal for students on many college campuses, where anti-Semitism has made a startling return. However, it is hardly clear whether OCR will enforce it fully.

[...]OCR’s new policy means that Jewish students again will receive the same legal protections as black, Arab, Asian and female students. This has been a tough issue for the bureaucracy because Congress banned discrimination in federally funded education programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability - but not religion.

Bureaucrats have been reluctant to protect Jewish students because Judaism is a religion, and Congress has not authorized probes of religious bias. Moreover, officials do not want to be seen as saying that American Jews are a separate “race” or “nation.” The new policy wisely steers clear of these problems, anchoring protections in ethnic bias.

[...]Ultimately, Congress must act to protect all religious minorities -- not just Jews but also Sikhs, Muslims and others -- from discrimination at federally funded secular institutions of higher learning. U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter (D-Pa.) and Rep. Brad Sherman (D-Calif.) recently introduced legislation, advocated by the Institute for Jewish & Community Research and the Zionist Organization of America, to accomplish this result.

Read the Full Text:
Anti-Semitism on Campus
A Joint Letter

Note: This letter was repudiated and retracted by the American Jewish Committee, and the original page on the American Association of University Professors has been deleted. Ken Stern was silenced by the American Jewish Committee following a campaign against the letter highlighted by an exchange in Commentary Magazine. We reproduce it here to allow a full discussion of the merits of the competing claims.

by Cary Nelson, AAUP President, and Kenneth Stern, American Jewish Committee

Cary Nelson is the president of the American Association of University Professors.

Kenneth Stern is the American Jewish Committee’s director on anti-semitism and extremism, and was the lead drafter of the EUMC “working definition.”

Recently, there have been allegations of anti-Semitism at three universities—the University of California, Berkeley, the University of California, Santa Cruz, and Rutgers. Any claim of bigotry must be treated with the utmost seriousness, not only because hatred harms its victims, but also because it can undermine academic freedom: students become afraid to be who they are and thus to say what they think. Conversely, a climate which values academic freedom can unleash the best responses to bigotry, by promoting critical thinking and clear ideas.

Yet some, in reaction to these recent incidents, are making the situation worse by distorting the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and what has been called the “working definition of anti-Semitism” (http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/material/pub/AS/AS-WorkingDefinition-draft.pdf). Opposing anti-Israel events, statements, and speakers, they believe the only way to “protect” Jewish students is by imposing censorship.

There has been a debate in recent years about whether Title VI, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in federally funded programs, extends to Jewish students when anti-Semitic intimidation or harassment is directed at them based on the perception of ethnic, as opposed to religious, identity. In October 2010, the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education issued a letter clarifying that in certain limited contexts, anti-Semitic behavior or intimidation (the letter gave examples of swastika daubings and Jew-baiting bullying) is clearly based on a perception of ethnicity or national origin and is therefore covered by Title VI(http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html). “Harassment” encompasses both “different treatment” and the “existence of a racially hostile environment,” meaning that the offending conduct is so severe or pervasive that, in order to continue their education, a student has to suffer an educational environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive.

While some of the recent allegations (such as charging pro-Israel Jewish students admission to a university event while allowing others to attend for free) might well raise a claim under Title VI, many others simply seek to silence anti-Israel discourse and speakers. This approach is not only unwarranted under Title VI, it is dangerous.
Six years ago the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) created a “working definition” of anti-Semitism. Some European countries had no definition of anti-Semitism, and the few which did had different ones, so it was very difficult for monitors and data collectors to know what to include or exclude. The “working definition,” while clearly stating that criticism of Israel in the main is not anti-Semitic, gives some examples of when anti-Semitism may be in play, such as holding Jews collectively responsible for acts of the Israeli state, comparing Israeli policy to that of the Nazis, or denying to Jews the right of self-determination (such as by claiming that Zionism is racism). In recent years the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights have embraced this definition too.

It is entirely proper for university administrators, scholars and students to reference the “working definition” in identifying definite or possible instances of anti-Semitism on campus. It is a perversion of the definition to use it, as some are doing, in an attempt to censor what a professor, student, or speaker can say. Because a statement might be “countable” by data collectors under the “working definition” does not therefore mean that Title VI is violated. To assert this not only contravenes the definition’s purpose (it was not drafted to label anyone an anti-Semite or to limit campus speech), it also harms the battle against anti-Semitism.

The purpose of a university is to have students wrestle with ideas with which they may disagree, or even better, may make them uncomfortable. To censor ideas is to diminish education, and to treat students as fragile recipients of “knowledge,” rather than young critical thinkers. When the disquieting ideas are bigoted, it is incumbent on others on campus to speak out. University leadership should say something when appropriate, too (not in every instance, because its role is not to be a quality control on campus debate).

Universities can do many other things to combat bigotry, from surveying students to see if and how they are experiencing bigotry, to offering courses on why and how people hate, to bringing in outside scholars and others to speak on relevant topics. Title VI is a remedy when university leadership neglects its job to stop bigoted harassment of students; it is not a tool to define “politically correct” campus speech.

Anti-Semitism should be treated with the same seriousness as other forms of bigotry. But one should not, for instance, suggest that a professor cannot make an argument about immigration simply because some might see any such argument as biased against Latino students. Nor was Title VI crafted with the notion that only speakers who are “safe” should be allowed on campus.

By trying to censor anti-Israel remarks, it becomes more, not less, difficult to tackle both anti-Semitism and anti-Israel dogma. The campus debate is changed from one of exposing bigotry to one of protecting free speech, and the last thing pro-Israel advocates need is a reputation for censoring, rather than refuting, their opponents.

The “working definition” is a useful tool to identify statements that merit attention on campus, but deciding whether a given remark is antisemitic can require careful attention to rhetoric, context, and even intent. As the AAUP has suggested, even objectionable statements can have content worthy of debate. Most individual remarks, moreover, do not rise to the level of creating hostile environments.
Split on Israel and Academic Freedom

by Scott Jaschik
Inside Higher Ed, August 17, 2011

Excerpt:

[...] The head of the American Jewish Committee has repudiated the letter and said that it shouldn’t have been signed.

David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, sent a letter to a critic of the letter this month in which he said: "AJC’s internal system of checks and balances did not function well in this case. We believe that the letter was ill-advised and regret the decision to have released it."

The Harris letter was first reported Tuesday by The Jewish Daily Forward, after which the AJC released the brief letter from Harris, but declined to comment further. The repudiation is notable because the AJC signatory on the letter with the AAUP was not some low-level official but Kenneth Stern, director of the American Jewish Committee’s program on anti-Semitism and extremism, and someone who is generally considered to be a leading expert on anti-Semitism. A spokesman for the American Jewish Committee said that Stern was on sabbatical and was not commenting on the situation.

Much of the criticism of the joint letter concerned its discussion of Title VI. The U.S. Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights found in 2010 that some kinds of anti-Jewish activity (it gave as examples the use of swastikas or bullying directed at Jewish students) could constitute the type of ethnic or racial harassment banned by Title VI. The AAUP-AJC letter does not disagree.

But it issued a strong caution against the use of Title VI in some of the disputes that have broken out on various campuses.[...]

Read the Full Text:

Op-Ed: AJC Gets it Right on Anti-Semitism, At Last

By Kenneth L. Marcus
The Forward, August 23, 2011

Excerpt:

[...] The AJC-AAUP statement has been widely lambasted within the Jewish community. Felber’s supporters criticized the statement’s censorship allegations as unfounded, its Title VI interpretation as questionable and its public aspersions as unnecessary. Many commentators, including this author, publicly urged the AJC to retract the statement. The writer Jonathan Tobin bemoaned on Commentary’s Contentions blog that “the letter that Kenneth Stern signed with Cary Nelson stakes out a position that makes it unlikely that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act will ever be applied to protect Jews from anti-Semitism on college campuses.” David Horowitz, the conservative thinker, blasted Stern and Nelson for misrepresenting the campus situation in their “haste to blame the Jewish victims.” Just
about the only supporters of the AJC-AAUP statement were anti-Israel sources, such as The Electronic Intifada, which relied on the Stern-Nelson letter when railing against efforts to eliminate anti-Semitism on college campuses.

In an unusual move, Harris e-mailed Tammi Rossman-Benjamin (the lecturer who filed the Santa Cruz complaint), renouncing his organization’s letter as “ill-advised.” Striking an apologetic note, Harris said that the AJC “regret[s] the decision to have released it.” By way of explanation, Harris added that “AJC’s internal system of checks and balances did not function well in this case.” Other AJC officials have confirmed that the AJC-AAUP statement is now considered renounced by the organization. Harris’s candid acknowledgement of his organization’s error provides a commendable resolution to what had been an unfortunate blemish on the record of his organization and its widely respected anti-Semitism expert.

The AJC’s sudden reversal also heals a rift that the AJC-AAUP statement had created within the Jewish community. This is important, because Jewish communal representatives continue to work with Obama administration officials on figuring out how the federal government can best resolve hostile environment cases at federally funded universities. Last October, the Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights issued an important guidance letter affirming that it would pursue anti-Semitism cases in the same way that it handles discrimination against other groups.

Read the Full Text:
http://www.jewishresearch.org/v2/media_opeds.html

2012
Defining Antisemitism Down
The Struggle at Universities in England

by David Hirsh
Fathom Magazine, September 13, 2012

Excerpt:
There is a strong tradition on the antiracist left of understanding racism and antisemitism as closely related phenomena and of opposing both equally and on a similar basis. The exemplars of this tradition include Karl Marx, anti-Fascism, Franz Fanon, and the Black/Jewish alliance during the civil rights movement in the USA. At Durban in 2001, however, racism had been defined such that ‘Zionism’ was its archetypal and most threatening form, and antisemitism was not only denied but was also practiced with impunity. A significant number of antiracists activists and thinkers were subsequently willing to lend implicit or overt support to organisations such as Hezbollah and Hamas, judging their antisemitism of those groups either to be exaggerated or of little political significance. To be sure, there is also a strong tradition of antisemitism on the left, from Bruno Bauer to Mikhail Bakunin to the Stalinists. Durban illustrated the possibility of the re-emergence of a schism between the worldviews of antiracism and anti-antisemitism.

[...] A number of Jewish communal NGOs responded to the defeat and the trauma experienced at Durban by withdrawing into the OSCE and the European Union where they had some success in getting a positive hearing for their concerns. In this way the ideational polarization between black and white came to be mirrored...
institutionally. Durban, dominated by states which thought of themselves as non-white, represented one way of defining antisemitism; the Jewish organisations retreated into the OSCE, which could be seen as the international coalition of white states, and won it over to quite a different way of defining antisemitism.

Opponents of the EUMC Working Definition have pointed to the fact that the definition was the result of purposive political action by international Jewish groups, and so it was. But this genealogy can only cast shadows over the definition if there is thought to be something inappropriate about their input. Normally it would be unremarkable for communal groups to be involved in defining a racism of which they are the object. But in this case the Jewish groups are accused by anti-Zionists of acting in bad faith. The accusation implicit in this understanding is that the Jewish groups are not really working in the interests of the struggle against antisemitism. Rather they are secretly prepared to sacrifice the struggle against real antisemitism by co-opting its political capital to a dishonest attempt to delegitimise criticism of Israel.

The Jewish groups, and their EUMC Working Definition, are conceived of as being ‘white’ and not antiracist; as part of the struggle of Israel against Palestine and neither part of the struggle of Jews against antisemitism nor part of the global struggle against anti-black racism.

The UCU: a case study of the struggles over defining of antisemitism

In May 2011 the Congress of the University and College Union (UCU) in the UK voted overwhelmingly to pass a motion which alleged that the ‘so-called’ EUMC Working Definition is ‘being used’ to ‘silence debate about Israel and Palestine on campus.’ Congress resolved to make no use of the definition ‘e.g. in educating members or dealing with internal complaints’ and to ‘dissociate itself from the EUMC definition in any public discussion.’

Representatives of the institutions of the Jewish community in Britain judged this disavowal to be the last straw, and said that it was a manifestation of what they called ‘institutional antisemitism’ within the union. Jeremy Newmark, Chief Executive of the Jewish Leadership Council said ‘After today’s events, I believe the UCU is institutionally racist.’ His view was echoed by Jon Benjamin, the Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, who said ‘the UCU has… simply redefined “antisemitism”… The truth is apparent: whatever the motivations of its members, we believe the UCU is an institutionally racist organisation.’

Read the Full Text:
http://www.fathomjournal.org/policy-politics/defining-antisemitism-down/
Confronting Internalized Oppression: Antisemitism, and Jewish Identity

by Penny Rosenwasser, Ph.D.

Penny Rosenwasser is a longtime human rights and social justice activist, and a returning student whose doctoral dissertation is on the subject of internalized oppression. Her book based on the dissertation is Hope into Practice: Jewish Women Choosing Justice Despite Our Fears (2013, AK Press, PennyRosenwasser.com). Her book was awarded an Honorable Mention at the San Francisco Book Festival in 2014. The following is adapted from Rosenwasser’s dissertation.

If a miracle happened tomorrow—and suddenly there were no more racism, no more sexism or classism or ableism or heterosexism or ageism, no more anti-Jewish bigotry—how long would it take oppressed people in this country to liberate ourselves from the grip of internalized oppression? When I consider my friends and colleagues, I see how well we have absorbed the meta-narrative of self-hatred, of self-devaluation: as Jewish women, as women of color, as working class women, as lesbians, as queer and transgender. I find that to be overwhelming. It means that even if I make headway in transforming institutional oppression, as well as changing personal attitudes and behaviors that are hurtful to others, the obstacle of internalized oppression remains.

As used in this study, internalized oppression has two co-equal manifestations. The most commonly described aspect of internalized oppression is the experience of disliking ourselves and other members of our “group”—those from the same culture, race, gender, class, sexual orientation, body size, age, etc.—as members of that group. This experience results from the unconscious process of absorbing and believing the misinformation that those outside of our group have communicated about us. After being mistreated and hearing the lies, over and over, we gradually begin to “act, feel, see and think of ourselves in the ways society has dictated” (Vasquez & Femi, 1993, p. 23).

Additionally, I interpret internalized oppression to include behavioral and emotional responses to past recurring experiences of brutality and persecution, behaviors and feelings that have been passed down through families. For example, Jews responded to historical oppression with terror, anxiety and uncertainty. These behaviors and feelings have then been transmitted through succeeding generations, so that many Jews today have internalized fear—fear that may be triggered by current incidents, but that originated in past Jewish experience and was then passed from parents to children.

Liberation theory is a philosophical framework for understanding oppression. Many social activists in this country who work on "unlearning racism" issues use this theory. Much of the liberation theory expressed here is based on Re-Evaluation Counseling or co-counseling, theory, as well as on the work of Ricky Sherover-Marcuse (1994). Sherover-Marcuse was a Jewish woman activist-scholar who co-pioneered “unlearning racism and anti-Semitism” work in this country in the 1970s and 80s, until her death in 1988. She
herself drew on the work of Herbert Marcuse and the Frankfurt School, as well as on Re-Evaluation Counseling.

The behavior of internalized oppression can manifest in many different ways: from believing we are not good enough, deserving enough, smart enough; or attractive enough; to feeling disgust at members of our group who look or act a certain way; to criticizing ourselves for internalizing the oppression. Significantly, internalized oppression manifests in our believing that there is something wrong with us. We learn to invalidate and hate ourselves, to feel powerless and despairing, and to believe that these feelings are our fault, rather than that these beliefs are planted in us by our socio-economic-political system. The society, the culture, the system, all effectively construct us to turn on ourselves and our people.

I believe that none of us willingly accepts these self-defeating beliefs, but that “Internalized oppression is always an involuntary reaction to the experience of oppression which originates from outside the group...The conditioning to believe the misinformation about who we are begins before we are able to screen out the lies” (Vasquez & Femi, 1993, p. 23). That is, because these ideas are instilled in us when we are preverbal, and are reinforced through the years, the misinformation attaches itself to our identities. It becomes very difficult to free ourselves from such insidious messages.

However, if we can figure out how to let go of these negative embedded beliefs, as well as to strategize how to resist internalizing the continual barrage of misinformation, I believe that we can eliminate large chunks of self-loathing, freeing ourselves up to do our most empowering work in the world. As world-renowned progressive psychiatrist and author Alice Miller (1997) suggests, "The future of democracy and democratic freedom depends on our capacity to...recognize that it is simply impossible to struggle successfully against hatred outside ourselves, while ignoring its messages within" (p. 115).

I initiated this inquiry because I believe that transforming self-hatred can liberate people, so that we no longer need accept limits on ourselves, on what we can do, on how the world can be: transformative learning theorist Jack Mezirow (1991) calls this emancipatory learning. Thus, healing internalized oppression can exponentially expand our sense of what is possible, profoundly empowering a practice of social justice.

Some Suggestions for the Future

As a social justice practitioner, I particularly suggest that activists integrate learning and teaching about internalized anti-Semitism into our activist work. As shown earlier, helping activists free ourselves up will empower all our work for social justice. In conjunction with this, I refer to Plitnick's (2004) words. He suggests that Jews "strike a...better balance between recognizing how good things are for Jews where most of us are living today" (p. 6), "confronting anti-Semitism where it really exists" -- and "confronting with equal vigor those...who dishonor the...centuries of persecution of Jews by ...manipulating charges of anti-Semitism for their own ends" (p.11). (see Hope Into Practice, Jewish women choosing justice despite our fears, Chapter 10).

I also recommend the initial step of "listening circles." Listening circles are small groups of people who approach others, ask them questions, and listen to their responses with rapt attention. These circles can be used at political demonstrations, in city parks, near conflict zones or tragedies. In a slightly more structured way, such listening circles can be set up during afternoon rest periods at synagogues on High Holy Days, incorporating facilitation and taking turns. Listening circles allow people to say what is in
their hearts and minds, and then to listen to each other, without having to articulate conclusions. This practice is based on the belief that many people find healing in being listened to; then they are often able to listen to someone else, including to someone else’s pain.

Jews need to help each other heal, in community, by taking such practices into settings where Jews meet: Jewish community centers and synagogues, Jewish learning centers and retreats, Jewish youth and senior groups, Jewish women’s and men’s groups, Jewish queer and transgender groups, Jewish peace and justice groups, and Jewish camps and social organizations. These exercises can make it safe enough to face the deepest places where Jews have been hurt, and to face how their wounds have set them up to oppress others. Such practices can also support Jews in reaching out for allies. I believe that if people heal their self-hatred that they will be less likely to inflict harm on others -- and I am not just committed to Jews' healing, but to the ethical Jewish tradition of tikkun olam. I especially suggest that such practices be taught by activists who frame resistance to internalized oppression in a social justice context.

Jewish agents of social change have to resist and heal internalized oppression as they simultaneously unlearn their own oppressive behaviors, while challenging and transforming systemic institutional oppression. That is, while changing the destructive internalized voices, it is crucial not to become seduced into believing that such healing is sufficient unto itself. Healing cannot be isolated from the global movement for social justice; instead, work in these interrelated arenas can support each other. As T. Jackins (2001) explains, "There is no real conflict between looking after ourselves as individuals and taking on the full battle against oppression" (p. 28). For example, when I resist the fear that tells me not to speak out, I not only learn to value my voice as a Jewish lesbian, I also empower myself in speaking out to interrupt racism. I resist my own internalized victimization by fighting the victimization of other oppressed groups; so as I heal my internalized oppression, I become a better ally to other targeted groups.

I also suggest that Jewish activists strengthen their practice with other Jews to help Jews distinguish between ethnic identity and racial identity -- to encourage a better understanding of the relationship between race, ethnicity, and Jewish identity. Our inquiry group discovered that despite our diversity, we had a common experience of anti-Jewish oppression; but we did not have a common racial experience, because of the way that both Mizrahi and Ashkenazi ethnicity cuts across racial terrain. These different experiences were also the result of geography, social class, actual physical traits and skin color, etc. We lacked a common language regarding the juxtaposition of anti-Jewish bias and white privilege. More practice and analysis regarding the social construction of race could help diverse groups of Jews reach common understandings along these lines, and could also behoove our alliance building.

As a result of my experience in this study, I enthusiastically suggest that other marginalized groups consider similar strategies in exploring their internalized oppression, including internalized sexism, racism, heterosexism, ageism, classism, etc. Cooperative inquiry combined with somatic practices support personal identity inquiries, specifically through the use of democratic, holistic, inclusive, action/reflection processes, which validate knowledge creation by targeted groups. As author bell hooks (1994) describes, "When our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice" (p. 61).

Since anti-Semitism is perpetrated by non-Jews, social justice practitioners can help gentiles understand Jewish oppression; and non-Jews can then strategize how to dismantle anti-Semitism. Oppression will end when both targeted and op-
pressor groups join forces to end oppression and internalized oppression: as Jews work to resist and heal internalized oppression, allies can take the lead in ending anti-Semitic behaviors and attitudes, by motivating non-Jews to move this work forward. For Jews, encouraging gentiles to combat anti-Jewish prejudice also fights internalized anti-Semitism, supporting the belief that Jews are worth fighting for. It is crucial to include anti-Semitism in anti-oppression trainings, in part because such trainings help people understand how anti-Semitism and racism are used to divert attention from the machinations of the predominantly white Christian male power elite.

From my experience in this study and elsewhere, I suggest that social justice practitioners incorporate experiential tools into their own learning, teaching, training, and activism. Too much analysis has a limited effect for many people. While analysis is essential, it is one significant approach that is most effective in combination with activism and experiential practices, such as somatic work, breathwork, art, music, co-counseling, and movement. These can all help explore and uncover areas that action or intellectual pursuits alone fail to tap. As activist practice becomes more holistic, it can become more effective: helping others channel self-hatred into new capacities to overcome victimization and create self-love -- building more empowered leadership.

The Frankfurt School is a body of social theory, associated with the Institute of Social Research, originating in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1923 and continuing through the mid-60’s. Initially composed of middle- and upper-middle class assimilated Jewish men, it focused on reconciling Marxism with the experience of World War I, Hitler, and the Holocaust. This resulted in what is known as Critical Theory. The Frankfurt School raised the question of how to treat human beings, and investigated prejudice in 1940’s America; its key thinkers included Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Jurgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, and Theodore Adorno.

Editor’s Note: Progressive activists involved in the co-counseling movement have played a key role in confronting antisemitism on the Left for several decades. Because the movement has critics, there has been a tendency to omit references to the work of these activists both individually and collectively. This practice distorts the historic record, no matter what one thinks of co-counseling. A discussion of this controversy appears in Robert Wiener, 2006, “Activists plan New Jersey conference to address left-wing anti-Semitism,” New Jersey Jewish News, February 23, http://www.njjewishnews.com/njjn.com/022306/njactivists.html
Conspiracism and Antisemitism

The Protocols and Apocalyptic Antisemitism

by Chip Berlet

The Protocols are both a forgery and a hoax document with content clearly plagiarized from earlier texts.\(^1\) The public circulation of the Protocols grew out of propaganda intrigues of the secret police of Czarist Russia in the late nineteenth century.\(^2\)\(^3\)\(^4\) The various versions of the Protocols tend to have the same general set of allegations:

- Jews are behind a plan for global conquest
- Jews control the press (print media)
- Jews control “puppet” governments both through secret allies and by blackmailing elected officials
- Jews use intellectuals and college education to confuse people
- Jews manipulate the economy, especially through banking monopolies and the power of gold
- Jews encourage issuing paper currency not tied to the gold standard
- Jews promote financial speculation and use of credit\(^5\)
- Jews replace traditional educational curriculum to discourage independent thinking
- Jews use political liberalism to weaken church and state
- Jews weaken laws through liberal interpretations
- Jews encourage immorality among Christian youth
- Jews work through Masonic lodges
- Jews work through radicals and revolutionaries
- Jews will suspend civil liberties during an emergency and then make the measures permanent.

Conspiracy theories that adopt some or all of the false allegations about Jews are said to be “analogs” of the Protocols, even when the malicious document itself is not mentioned.\(^6\) For example, there are echoes of the Protocols in claims that President Obama is a Marxist building a New World Order.\(^7\)

The specific allegations of the anti–elite conspiracy theories are based on time and place, but the basic elements remain the same:

- Dualistic division: the world is divided into a good ‘Us’ and a bad ‘Them’.
- Demonizing rhetoric: our opponents are evil and subversive... maybe subhuman.
- Targeting scapegoats: “They” are causing all our troubles—"We" are blameless.
- Apocalyptic timetable: Time is running out and we must act immediately to stave off a cataclysmic event.

Sociologist Brenda Brasher notes that in this model of apocalyptic conspiracism, “People are cast in their roles as either enemy or friend, and there is no such thing as middle ground. In the battle with evil, can you really say you are neutral?” Even when conspiracist theories do
not center on Jews, people of color, gays or other scapegoated groups, they create an environment where racism, antisemitism, and other forms of prejudice, bigotry, and oppression can flourish.


3 The main Russian print source for the Protocols first appeared as an appendix in The Big in the Small, and Antichrist as a Near Political Possibility: Notes of an Orthodox Person by Sergei A. Nilus, published in 1905 but republished to wider audiences in 1911, 1917, and 1918.  

4 Hitler’s view of a vast Jewish conspiracy was shaped by U.S. automaker Henry Ford who in the 1920s popularized the Protocols in a series of articles in The Dearborn Independent.  

5 A probably unwitting example of classical antisemitic imagery about Jewish financial interests appeared in Matt Taibbi’s in his Rolling Stone article “The Great American Bubble Machine.” Taibbi writes that from “tech stocks to high gas prices, Goldman Sachs has engineered every major market manipulation since the Great Depression—and they’re about to do it again.” Then this:

...the first thing you need to know about Goldman Sachs is that it’s everywhere. The world’s most powerful investment bank is a great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money.


Conspiracism, Demonization, & Scapegoating
Tracking the Trajectories of Conspiracism

by Chip Berlet

Three trigger events facilitated the sharing of scapegoats and narratives from right to left after the political assassination conspiracy during the 1960s and 70s. These were:

- The Iran Contra Scandal
- The First Persian Gulf War and George H.W. Bush’s use of the term “New World Order” in a speech
- The terror attacks on 9/11 followed by the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq

Naked anti-Semitism was generally seen as outside the boundaries of acceptable political debate. For many years after World War II and the Nazi genocide, overt antisemites such as neonazis (and practitioners of the racist Christian Identity religion) would soften their rhetoric for the purposes of initial recruitment. This was certainly true with groups such as Willis Carto’s Liberty Lobby and the LaRouche network, both of which became adept at hiding the underlying antisemitism of their conspiracy theories.

Not all criticisms of Zionism or the state of Israel are antisemitic, or linked to the conspiracism of the Protocols, but an increasing number of such criticisms do step over the line into bigotry. After 9/11, some in the Political Left began to criticize Bush and Cheney in ways that conflated the neoconservatives, Zionists, and Jews. This tendency also began to emerge in certain hard right political sectors and among some libertarians.

Apocalyptic Christians, on the other hand, found themselves in a strange alliance with neoconservatives, where scapegoating of Islam became commonplace.¹

Conspiracist interpretations of Islam and Muslims, however, should not be confused with the work of a number of scrupulous and careful authors across the political spectrum detailing the very real threats posed by certain forms of militant theocratic Islamic fundamentalism.

In addition to trigger events, suspicion itself can supply a shared frame. Barkun writes how the concept of “stigmatized knowledge,” leads conspiracists not only to suspect all official reports, documents, and public announcements, but also to more readily accept information from “alternative” sources, even when they come from the opposite sides of political and ideological boundaries.²

Chart Two [next page] starts with the premise that there are three main threads of conspiracist scapegoating that trace back to the Freemasons narrative, the Plutocrats narrative, and the Protocols narrative. Note that individuals and groups in a specific thematic category may not be directly connected. For example, author Fletcher Prouty apparently was not in the John Birch Society, even though his work was thematically similar.

¹ Michael Northcott, An Angel Directs The Storm: Apocalyptic Religion & American Empire (London, 2004); Hugh Urban, “Bush, the Neocons and Evangelical Chris-


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**Chart Two**

**Cross-Movement Trajectory of Scapegoats**

1984-2006

Political Left

- Plutocrats
  - Secret Elites
    - Christic Institute, Casolaro "Octopus"
    - Liberty Lobby, LaRouche
      - Secret Team, CIA
  - Jews (Coded)
    - Iran-Contra
    - Zionists, "Israel Lobby"
      - Gulf War I "New World Order"
      - Secret Elites
    - Jews (Overt)
      - Neonazis, Christian Identity
      - JBS, Christian Right, Prouty

Political Right

- Freemasons
  - Secret Elites
  - Jews
  - Apocalyptic Christians, Patriots, Militias

Antiwar AntiGlobalist, Left

Antiwar Isolationist, Patriot, Right

Neocons, Christian Right

"Zionists" ← Bush/Cheney ← Neocons ← "Zionists"

Jews ← Neocons ← Jews

Muslims

9/11, Invasions
Left/Right Antisemitism

The growth of conspiracy theories about U.S. government actions also can be traced in part to a merger of conspiracy theories about the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. with conspiracist formulations about the CIA, U.S. covert action, and the U.S. foreign policy alliance with Israel.¹ This is one avenue by which antisemitic assertions are woven into the discussions of the Political Left to this day.

According to Barkun:

===Prior to the early 1990s, New World Order conspiracism was limited to two subcultures, primarily the militantly antigovernment right, and secondarily Christian fundamentalists concerned with end-time emergence of the Antichrist.²

Today antisemitic theories from the Left and Right converge and mingle to create a myriad of new forms which bear watching for anyone concerned with expressions antisemitism and Islamophobia on campus. Beginning in the 1980s, conspiracy theories about a global plot by elites to create a totalitarian New World Order began to mushroom. Antisemitism became a common ingredient in these apocalyptic narratives of betrayal.

Three trigger events facilitated more growth of the fusionist antisemitic pipeline:

- The Iran-Contra Scandal.
- The first Persian Gulf War and George H.W. Bush’s use of the term “New World Order” in a speech.
- The terror attacks on 9/11 followed by the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Classic right-wing conspiracy theories have been brought into the left by a variety of mechanisms. One major route was through the Christic Institute which challenged U.S. government policies in Central America and the Middle East. In the mid-1980s, Christic Institute director Danny Sheehan, an attorney, praised the work of right-wing populist L. Fletcher Prouty, author of The Secret Team: The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the U.S. and the World.³ Christic adopted not only Prouty’s analysis, but also the title of his book to publicize a lawsuit against U.S. covert action.⁴

Behind the scenes at the ostensibly left-wing Christic Institute, Sheehan and his investigators had secretly opened up a back channel to right-wing groups with a history of purveying antisemitic conspiracy theories.⁵ This included material passed into the case that originated with Willis Carto’s Liberty Lobby and its Spotlight newspaper; and material originating from the Lyndon LaRouche Network.⁶

Another route was through conspiracy researcher Danny Casolaro who claimed there was a secret elite conspiracy for global control which he dubbed “The Octopus.” Casolaro died while researching the plot, and became a martyr to the conspiracist cause from Left to Right.

Attempts by the Political Right to form alliances with the Political Left also occurred through the 1990s.⁷ The government inadvertently accelerated this process with a series of bungled raids on right-wing compounds, which resulted in many needless deaths, such as the 1992 confrontation at the Branch Davidian headquarters in Waco Texas, and the 1993 assault on the Weaver family cabin in Ruby Ridge, Idaho. These events in turn helped spark the
1995 Oklahoma City bombing by neo-Nazi Timothy McVeigh and his allies.  

What began as concerns over government repression soon morphed into a series of conspiracy theories claiming the U.S. government was about to impose martial law. These began in the right-wing armed militia movement, but soon spread to some on the Political Left. A number of leaders on the Political Left, however, blasted the growing conspiracism on the Left during this period.  

Berlet, Toxic to Democracy.  
Barkun, Culture of Conspiracy, p. 179.  
Berlet, Right Woos Left.  
Ibid.  
Ibid.  
Chip Berlet, “Friendly Fascists: The Far Right Tries to Move in on the Left,” The Pro- 
gressive (June 1992), pp. 16-20; Steve Mizrach, “The Left and the Far Right: Cur- 
rious Bedfellows?” http://www.fiu.edu/~mizrachs/left-n-
Berlet and Lyons, Right-Wing Populism in America, pp. 290-295; Goldberg, Enemies Within, pp. 56-61.  
See For Example, Janet Biehl, “Militia Fever: The Fallacy Of ‘Neither Left Nor Right,’” Green Perspectives, A Social Ecology Pub-
llication, No. 37 (April 1996), Online At Http://Www.Publicgood.Org/Reports/Mil fev2.html. Biehl Specifically Criticized Ja-
son Mcquinn, “Conspiracy Theory Vs. Al-
ternative Journalism?” Alternative Press Review (Winter 1996), P. 2; And Adam Parfrey, “Finding Our Way Out Of Okla-
ed From Adam Parfrey, Cult Rapture (Portland, 1995).

The First Persian Gulf War  

On August 2, 1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait, prompting international outrage. A UN Security Council resolution a few months later authorized the use of “all means necessary” to force Iraq to withdraw. Between August and January, U.S. dip-
lomatic and military envoys engaged in extensive briefings and negotiations with their counter-
parts in both Saudi Arabia and Israel.  

The war began in the early morning hours of January 17, 1991 as an Allied air attack support-
ed by President Bush and involving U.S. armed forces.  
Antiwar demonstrators immediately took to the streets with “left-leaning” groups mobilizing 25,000 demonstrators in Washington, DC alone. Many of these demonstrators were college students. On January 27, 1991 huge antiwar protests were held in Washington, DC and on the West Coast. That same day, smaller pro-
tests in support of President Bush’s decision to send U.S. troops to Kuwait were “held in dozens of cities and towns across the country.”  

The First Persian Gulf War accelerated the process. Rhetoric where criticism of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East morphed from careful criticism of Israeli policies could be seen in out-
landish and bigoted claims about Jewish global power such as claims that the Mossad controlled the CIA; the “Israeli Lobby” made a puppet of Bush; and that “Zionists” dictated U.S. foreign policy and global affairs.  
This period opened up
new vistas for right-left synergy, especially around antisemitic conspiracy theories. As protests emerged, veteran liberal antiwar and radical anti-imperialist activists began exchanging private e-mails raising concerns about the appearance of conspiracist and antisemitic placards. The primary worry at first centered on the appearance of devotees of Lyndon LaRouche at antiwar demonstrations across the nation. During the First Persian Gulf War the LaRouchites appeared at antiwar rallies and meetings in thirty cities, including New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., Richmond, Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, Cleveland, Ann Arbor, St. Louis, Omaha, Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

Another concern was the appearance of right-leaning libertarians who promoted isolationist and nationalist themes that conflicted with the primarily progressive coalitions of liberal and radical antiwar organizers. At a few rallies, copies of material from the ultra-conservative conspiracist group such as the John Birch Society were distributed.

At some antiwar demonstrations copies of The Spotlight, a neo-fascist and antisemitic newspaper tied to the Holocaust-denial network of Willis Carto, were distributed. From podiums at antiwar events came rhetoric where criticism of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East began to move from careful criticism of Israeli policies and Zionist ideology into outlandish and bigoted claims about Jewish global power: the Mossad controlled the CIA; the “Israeli Lobby” made a puppet of Bush; “Zionists” dictated U.S. foreign policy and global affairs. It is important to recognize that as a whole the antiwar movement of the time overwhelmingly rejected these overtures by the political right, while recognizing that the attempt reflected a larger ongoing problem.

It certainly was a problem for individuals like Wisconsin antiwar activist Alan Ruff who appeared on a panel discussing the pros and cons of the Gulf War in the town of Verona. He shared the antiwar position alongside local activist Emmanuel Branch. “Suddenly I heard Branch saying the war was the result of a Zionist banking conspiracy,” explains Ruff. “I found myself squeezed between pro-war hawks and this anti-Jewish nut. It destroyed the ability of those of us who opposed the war to make our point.”

The problem of left conspiracism intersecting with historic right-wing antisemitism was evidenced in the months before 9-11-01. For example, in July, 2001 the generally progressive WBAI-FM radio station in New York featured conspiracy writer Jim Marrs touting his book Rule by Secrecy. According to WBAI program host Bill Weinberg, Marrs’ sources:

== are the usual ones, all too familiar to followers of the far right and fascism....Topping the list, of course, is the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, the purported Jewish conspiracy masterplan which served as propaganda for the Czarist pogroms and then the Nazi Holocaust. While Marrs does concede that the Protocols are a hoax, he nonetheless vests much legitimacy in them.

According to Weinberg, “Again and again, Marrs attempts to legitimate the anti-Semitism of Henry Ford, the Krupps and even Hitler, portraying them as mere over-reaction to the arrogant power of ‘international Jewish bankers.’ This was not an isolated instance. WBAI is part of the Pacifica Radio Network, which includes several member stations where there have been longstanding controversies over the broadcast of antisemitic claims. Against this background it is easier to understand the spread of generic conspiracy theories and antisemitic conspiracy theories on the Political Left after the terror attacks on September 11, 2001.

After the 9-11 Attacks

The terror attacks on September 11, 2001 moved conspiracy theory to center stage in the United States. Antisemitic conspiracy theories
emerged on the Internet almost immediately after the twin towers collapsed. Simultaneously, more generic conspiracy theories appeared which speculated that the U.S. government was involved in staging the attacks.

According to the Anti-Defamation League:

Both anti-government and anti-Semitic 9/11 conspiracy theories have grown to such an extent that they form a whole new industry that includes books, pamphlets, videotapes, Web sites and speakers who fill halls with people eager to hear new "evidence" about 9/11.\textsuperscript{10}

If you surfed the web in the days after 9/11 you might have encountered the claim that the Israeli spy agency Mossad warned 4,000 Jews who worked in the World Trade Center to stay home on September 11, 2001. Every aspect of this tale is false. Reporters traced it back to a series of rumors and claims by unnamed sources that bounced around the internet getting more elaborate with each retelling.\textsuperscript{11} This conspiracy story was spun in columns appearing on September 18 and 25, 2001 in the Saudi daily \textit{Al-Watan} by journalist Fahmi Huweidi who suggested that Mossad was among the attack’s possible culprits. In response, commentator Hamad Abd Al-Aziz Al-’Isa sharply criticized Huweidi in the Egyptian weekly \textit{Al-Qahira}. Al-Aziz Al-’Isa noted that Huweidi picked up the information "from Hizbullah’s television channel," in which the claim was that “4,000 Israelis” who worked “at the World Trade Center (notice it doesn’st say 'Jews’) were all absent from work on the day of the attack.” Al-Aziz Al-’Isa went on sarcastically:

All right; let us analyze this 'item' rationally: The Mossad planned the action and, so as not to harm a single Israeli, reported to the 4,000 Israelis (perhaps by means of the Internet) not to go to work that day. Of course, all 4,000 Israelis carried out the order they were given without asking why, and also did not report it to their 460,000 co-

leagues…I was in shock when I read these words...”\textsuperscript{12}

As Al-Aziz Al-’Isa observed, to take this conspiracy theory seriously you would have to be willing to assume that if 4,000 random Jews were told of an impending terrorist attack not one would step forward with a public warning. To believe this about any religious, racial or ethnic group raises serious questions about lingering prejudice.

From the point of view of ADL, 9/11 conspiracy theories that implicate Jews:

are essentially updated versions of classical anti-Semitic canards, claiming that Jews are inherently evil and intent on manipulating and controlling world events to their own benefit. It is essentially a modern manifestation of the anti-Semitic, "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," the infamous 19th century Russian forgery that purported to map out a Jewish conspiracy for world domination.\textsuperscript{13}

Suleiman Al-Nkidan, writing in London’s \textit{Al-Sharq Al-Awsat}, complained in 2001 about the spread of conspiracy theories in the Arab world after 9/11 ending with the question “do any of you remember the Protocols of the Elders of Zion? They too spoke of a Jewish conspiracy against the world, even though no one in his right mind in the world today can view them as the truth....”

The United States’ invasion of Afghanistan just a few months after the terror attacks of 9/11, followed later by the invasion of Iraq, added more dimensions to the conspiracist critique and unleashed new waves of antisemitic conspiracy theories. It also brought out instances where critics of Israeli policies and political Zionism crossed the line into antisemitic stereotyping. The role of the neoconservatives in promoting the Second Persian Gulf War under George W. Bush is well-documented. For many months before the war was launched the neo-
Conservative magazine *Weekly Standard* featured alarmist cover stories justifying a war in the Mideast.\(^{14}\) From this, some conspiracists wove together a narrative linking neoconservatives, Jews, Israel, Mossad, Bush, Cheney, and the CIA into an ugly antisemitic tapestry.

Material from writers critical of antisemitism on the Left, and excerpts from the *New Internationalist* issue on Judeophobia appear later in this report.


\(^3\) Ibid.


\(^5\) Berlet, RWL.

\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^7\) Ibid.


\(^9\) Weinberg, “Rule By Idiocy.”


\(^11\) According To ADL, “This story reportedly began on Al-Manar, a Lebanese TV station, and, within a very short time, spread to newspapers and the Internet, from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, and was then picked up in white supremacist and far-right circles in the United States.” ADL, *Unraveling Anti-Semitic 9/11 Conspiracy Theories*, Report, 2003, p. 20, http://www.adl.org/anti_semitism/9-11conspiracytheories.pdf

\(^12\) The article was translated by MEMRI and posted in translation on the MEMRI website. Certain grammatically and stylistic modifications have been made for clarity. PRA acknowledges Muslim and Arab criticisms of MEMRI for being selective in the material it chooses to translate. Nonetheless, MEMRI translations have been shown to be reliable and are used by PRA when appropriate.


\(^14\) The covers can be viewed at http://www.publiceye.org/militarism/warmania2002/index.html.
9/11 “Truth” Conspiracism Grows

After 9/11 some liberal and left activists joined with libertarian and right-wing dissidents in circulating a variety of claims that U.S. government officials were “Guilty for 9-11.” This turned into a “9/11 Truth movement” where conspiracists debate if Bush and Cheney allowed the attacks to happen to gain political advantage or actually planted explosives to collapse the World Trade Center and sent a missile into the Pentagon. The attacks created a number of conspiracist celebrities such as Michel Chossudovsky and Michael Ruppert.

One promotional blurb for the book, America’s “War on Terrorism,” for example, proclaims that author “Michel Chossudovsky blows away the smokescreen, put up by the mainstream media, that 9/11 was an ‘intelligence failure’. Through meticulous research, the author uncovers a military-intelligence ploy behind the September 11 attacks, and the cover-up and complicity of key members of the Bush Administration.”

Some on the Left embraced the 9/11 conspiracy theories. Conspiracist Michael C. Ruppert’s book, Crossing the Rubicon: the Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil, was published by the progressive New Society Publishers in 2004. The once-proud progressive journalism review organization, Project Censored, continued to decay as it continued to credulously highlight conspiracist material as exemplary journalism under the auspices of conspiracy-monger Peter Phillips.

Leftists and liberals who criticized conspiracist authors, and journalists who refused to print or air the numerous elaborate conspiracy theories about the terror attacks, became targets of conspiracist criticism—condemned as “Left Gatekeepers;” labeled as tools of the ruling elites; and smeared as controlled by the CIA. Again, a number of progressive commentators have criticized this conspiracist trend on the Left.

Progressives who promoted generic conspiracy theories, especially in the 9/11 Truth Movement, continue their clarion calls. For example, on May 17, 2011 KPFA radio held a fundraiser featuring a linkup of conspiracy theorists including Peter Phillips of Project Censored and 9/11 Truth icon David Ray Griffin. Featured on the program was 9/11 conspiracist Carol Brouillet, who highlights (albeit skeptically) the work of antisemitic conspiracy theorists Jim Marrs and David Icke.

Generic conspiracy theories can provide an entry point for recruitment into antisemitic conspiracy theories. This was implicitly recognized by several 9/11 Truth participants who pointed out overt antisemitism and condemned it. For example, on one New York City conspiracy website, the moderator warned one blog participant:

==Jeff, please don’t blindly trust Eustace Mullins as an authority on the banking system or on anything else. Too many people have put blind faith in his writings (or in videos based on his writings). In fact, Eustace Mullins is a notorious Jew-hater who has also written a book titled The Biological Jew, which revives the medieval blood libel against Jews, claiming that Jews ritually drink the blood of Christian children.

The intersection of generic and antisemitic 9/11 conspiracy theories was a busy place. 9/11 conspiracy books by antisemite Jim Marrs and former LaRouche analyst Webster Griffin Tarpley were widely sold and discussed online. Marrs continues to be touted in some left circles as an
expert on “covert” or “deep” politics. Tarpley became a leading figure in the Left antiwar movement, but then became embroiled in a schism based in part on his past antisemitic writings. A confluence of leftwing and rightwing conspiracy theorists built around “9/11 Truth” now holds meetings internationally and crosspost their conspiracy theories on the web where they are forwarded (and thus in part laundered) into more mainstream discussions.

It is this confluence of ideas in conspiracist circles that creates a dynamic that results in making conspiracism in general a legitimate analytical model, and opens the door to antisemitic speculation. As ADL points out:

===What makes the 9/11 conspiracy theories particularly important is that they have united disparate groups of Jew haters — American far-right extremists, white supremacists and elements within the Arab and Muslim world — who are exchanging and echoing information, ideas, and conspiracy theories, particularly through the Internet.

Sadly, as tensions in the Middle East have boiled over, a significant number of Arabs and Muslims have grabbed onto antisemitic conspiracy theories to explain devastating struggles over land and power. This is evidenced by the popularity of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in the Middle East where they have been repackaged into television series broadcast from Lebanon and Egypt. Through the Internet, young Muslims and Arabs in the United States are exposed to these antisemitic conspiracy theories in a form in which they appear as legitimate political analysis.

A 2004 report on "Anti-Semitism in the Contemporary Middle East" surveyed:

===... anti-Semitic reporting, editorials, and editorial caricatures in the government-controlled press of Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states. In the more than one hundred editorial cartoons included in this report, Jews and Israelis are invariably represented as poisonous snakes, murderous Nazis, and bloodthirsty Crusaders.\(^\text{10}\)

In 2006 ADL revisited the 9/11 conspiracy situation and found that “Five years after the devastating September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, conspiracy theories about Jews' involvement in the events of that day continue to be promulgated through the Internet, publications, books and videos.”\(^\text{11}\) According to ADL:

===Today, those theories are even more widespread and some have taken their anti-Semitic allegations even farther by claiming that it was specifically Jewish members of the Bush Administration who directed the government in planning the attacks for the benefit of Israel.

This last reference to “Jewish members of the Bush Administration” refers to criticisms of Neoconservatives and their influence in U.S. foreign policy through both Republican and Democratic administrations. Sometimes such criticisms are fair, and other times they veer off into antisemitic stereotyping.

On a broader canvas, the issue of antisemitism seeping into the progressive anti-globalization movement gained attention within the Political Left.\(^\text{12}\) Naomi Klein, for example, contended that the anti-globalization movement was not antisemitic, “it just hasn’t fully confronted the implications of diving into the Middle East conflict.” Klein complained that “every time I log onto activist news sites like indymedia.org, which practice ‘open publishing,’ I’m confronted with a string of Jewish conspiracy theories about September 11 and excerpts from The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.”\(^\text{13}\)

As heartfelt as that statement is, any cite of the Protocols as valid could legitimately be described as a form of antisemitism. This growing antisemitism on the Political Left tied to the struggles in the Middle East prompted a special issue on Judeophobia of the progressive New In-
ternationalist magazine in October 2004. The dual premise was that antisemitism itself was wrong but that it also undercut the ability to organize for Palestinian rights.

What New Internationalist recognized, and this report asserts, is that after 9/11, historic antisemitic conspiracy theories about Jewish power and control became increasingly legitimized in pro-Palestinian, Left anti-imperialist, antiwar, and Black Nationalist constituencies—even as many leaders in those sectors tried to push them away. This packs the political baggage brought onto campus by students seeking meaningful political involvement as young adults.

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2 This has spawned the analytical subdivision acronyms in which the alleged conspirators are accused of “LIHOP” which stands for “Letting It Happen On Purpose” or “MIHOP” which stands for “Making It Happen On Purpose;” Diane, “LIHOP” vs. “MIHOP”? , November 7, 2007, http://activistnyc.wordpress.com/2007/11/07/lihop-vs-mihop/.


7 E-mail sent to “lhb-volunteers@yahoogroups.com” list with subject: “For those that have time 16 May 2011,” headlined “9/11 Special on KPFA Radio, Thursday, May 19.”

8 Carol Brouillet, “9-11: New Books, Videos, the Growing Movement for Truth and Accountability,”
http://www.communitycurrency.org/overview.html


13 Klein, “Sharon’s Best Weapon.”

14 See Berlet, “ZOG Ate My Brains.”

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The Voltaire Network & Antisemitic Conspiracism

An international network of conspiracy theorists is pressing their support of the brutal Syrian Assad regime in an alliance with neofascists and authoritarians, including some who peddle antisemitism.

Their attacks on United States foreign policies and criticism of Israeli government policies, fused with their conspiracist mindset, has led them to suggest that the anti-Assad forces are being manipulated as part of a plot to use the “the Syrian crisis to dismantle Hezbollah.”

This is the contention of Franklin P. Lamb, writing on Counterpunch on September 3, 2012 in an article titled “Is the Syrian Crisis Being Leveraged to Weaken Hezbollah?” The gold standard of this fusionist conspiracy nexus is the “Voltaire Network” which describes itself as founded by “French intellectual Thierry Meyssan,” and consisting of a “web of non-aligned press groups dedicated to the analysis of international relations,” with points of view coming from “diversified political, social and cultural backgrounds.”

Franklin P. Lamb has written for the Voltaire Network, which describes him on an author page as "Lawyer and former Board member of the Sabra-Shatila Foundation ; Director, Americans Concerned for Middle East Peace (Beirut-Washington D.C.) ; Former Professor of International Law at Northwestern College of Law in Oregon."

Thierry Meyssan is a leading international figure among those that claim the 9/11 terror attacks were part of a vast insidious plot by elites, not the acts of a handful of terrorists. The Voltaire Network includes two former LaRouchite authors, William Engdahl
and Webster G. Tarpley; and U.S. anti-imperialist James Petras. Silvia Cattori is a frequent contributor to the Voltaire Network, with a special focus on interviews.

Voltaire Network participants also collaborate in several ways with a broader and more diffuse set of conspiracist networks, mostly visible online. Participants in this broader network have held international meetings and attended conferences in the United States. The network, which has no formal name, fuses rightwing and leftwing ideological claims into a combined critique of elite power similar to that of pro-fascist ideologues prior to World War II. At least one group in the network is alleged to have support from allies of the Syrian government.

The Voltaire Network sponsored a 2005 gathering in Belgium titled the “Axis for Peace,” which included a number of current leaders and supporters of the LaRouche network, including LaRouche’s wife, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who is the president of the Schiller Institute based in Germany. Christine Bierre, a panelist, is the editor in chief of the French LaRouchite publication New Solidarity, (Nouvelle Solidarité). Panelist Jacques Cheminade is the president of Solidarité et Progrès (solidarity and progress), a political party advocating the ideas of Lyndon LaRouche, and candidate for the 2007 French presidential elections. Former LaRouche network staffer Webster G. Tarpley, a panelist, was a major architect and author of LaRouchite antisemitic investigative reports issued in the 1980s.

Christopher Bollyn, a panelist, is described as “an investigative journalist for American Free Press.” That the newspaper was created and run by notorious anti-Semite Willis Carto is not mentioned. The conference issued Final Declaration that ended up on the Centre for Research on Globalisation website.

See for background:

- Voltaire Network
- Voltaire Network: Main Authors Page
- Franklin P. Lamb, Counterpunch September 3, 2012
- LaRouchite Conference, 2012: Post-Conference Interview with Mohammad Mahfoud
- The Plan to Destabilize Syria, by Thierry Meyssan
- The Lynching of Muammar Gaddafi