

FREE EXCHANGE

on Campus



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For Immediate Release

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Broad Coalition Decries Blacklist of Professors and Efforts to Limit Free Speech on Campus

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A coalition of student, faculty and civil liberty groups calling itself “Free Exchange on Campus” is condemning a blacklist of 101 professors.

The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America is edited by David Horowitz, who has been instrumental in introducing legislation, the so-called “Academic Bill of Rights” (ABOR), in 24 states. If adopted, ABOR would limit the speech of college and university professors.

“The book is purposefully misleading. Mr. Horowitz claims to be protecting the classroom, but most of his stories talk about activities that happen outside the classroom. The only thing Horowitz proves in this book is the distance he is willing to go to silence his critics,” said Kathy Sproles, President of the National Education Association's National Council for Higher Education.

The book states on its cover, “Terrorists, racists and communists – you know them as The Professors.”

“To hear them tell it, left-wing indoctrinators control universities without regard for teaching, but their evidence has been either thin or completely fictitious,” said William Scheuerman, vice president of the American Federation of Teachers and a professor of political science at the State University of New York.

Last month, at a hearing before Pennsylvania state lawmakers, Horowitz was forced to retract his previous claims, such as a story about a Penn State University biology professor who had supposedly shown the film *Fahrenheit 9/11* to a class of science students. He also backed away from a story about a student allegedly given a lower grade because of his views on abortion. Last month, facing public outrage, a Horowitz protégé at UCLA, Andrew Jones, was forced to abandon a campaign to pay students to spy on professors. Jones is the author of a blacklist of UCLA faculty called, “The Dirty Thirty.”

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In *The Professors*, Horowitz attacks professors for having communist relatives. He cites the distinguished Columbia University history professor Eric Foner, whose uncle was a member of the Communist Party. The book also condemns Foner for quoting African-American author and Cold War-era communist Paul Robeson, who said, "The patriot is the person who is never satisfied with his country."

University of Illinois communications professor Robert McChesney, whose students have selected him as an award-winning instructor, comes under attack by Horowitz for raising questions about the news media, its corporate ownership and what effect that has on news coverage.

Said McChesney, "They used two quotations from my two decade-long career as a teacher as evidence that I somehow use the classroom as a bully pulpit to push liberal causes. This is as illogical as taking two paragraphs from a conservative faculty member and concluding that they propagandize exclusively for conservative ideologies."

Georgetown University law professor Mari Masuda is criticized for her courses that mix the study of law with social activism.

Larry Estrada, associate professor of ethnic studies at Western Washington University, is accused of favoring the creation of an independent Hispanic state in America's Southwest to be called "Atzlan." Said Estrada, "I think this attack is libelous. They never contacted me or talked to me about my viewpoints. I've never advocated secession."

Other professors are attacked seemingly for practicing Islam, questioning immigration policies or suggesting that middle-school students can be motivated to learn through rap music.

"The college experience is supposed to be about the free exchange of ideas. A good university is supposed to have faculty with a wide range of viewpoints. I don't agree with everything that is said in my classrooms – nor am I supposed to," said NEA student chairperson Mandy Plucker of South Dakota State University. "I don't want to see my professors blacklisted for speaking freely and I don't want the government interfering with decisions that rightfully belong on campus."

"David Horowitz seeks to undermine the well-placed confidence of this nation in its exemplary higher education system," said Roger Bowen, general secretary of the American Association of University Professors. Added Bowen, "Students from all over the world come to study here because of the quality of education that comes from the free exchange of ideas. David Horowitz, apparently, is afraid of free exchange, and would like the government to step in and control the flow of information and discussions."

Free Exchange on Campus is a coalition of organizations representing college and university faculty, students and civil liberty groups. Coalition members oppose attempts to limit academic freedom and free speech on America's campuses. Organizations in the Free Exchange coalition include:

American Association of University Professors (www.aaup.org)

American Civil Liberties Union (www.aclu.org)

American Federation of Teachers (www.aft.org/higher_ed

<<http://www.aft.org/highered>)

Campus Progress / Center for American Progress

(www.campusprogress.org / www.americanprogress.org)

Center for Campus Free Speech (www.campusspeech.org)

National Association of State PIRGs (www.studentpirgs.org)

National Education Association / NEA Student Program (www.nea.org/he/

<http://www.nea.org/student-program>)

People for the American Way Foundation / Young People For (www.pfaw.org /

www.youngpeoplefor.org)

United States Student Association (www.usstudents.org)

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