Anti-Intellectualism in the Age of Contested Knowledge Production:

Perpetual Inaction, When Ideas Constrain Discourse

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Abstract

This thesis is a qualitative, critical inquiry, which demarcates a new era of anti-intellectualism. By using think tanks as a heuristic device, two new conceptual terms, each meant to capture prevailing iterations of anti-intellectualism in contemporary society, are offered. Once established, a case study examines changes to the University of Colorado's nondiscrimination policy. This provides insight into the ways this new era of anti-intellectualism and its new dimensions impact institutions of knowledge production. The corrupting influence of money and politics on the production of intellectual ideas has come to define modern anti-intellectualism, and the problematic impacts of this milieu are documented here. Ultimately, the production of politically or financially motivated ideas has contested more disinterested and intellectual knowledge production, leaving a field of perpetual inaction, as scientific controversies are settled, but politicians and citizens refuse to accept them based on partisan political grounds, a hyper-capitalist mindset, and the glaring influence of ideology.

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CHAPTER ONE

<u>Introduction, Methodology, and the Road Ahead</u>

How did it come to this?

  If you have ever engaged in a dialogue about a political subject with someone at a significantly different point on the political spectrum than you, it is likely at some point during or after the conversation you wondered to yourself, "What universe does this person live in?" Somehow, in the face of the same information, we manage to reach completely different conclusions. Where progressives see a need for gun control, conservatives see the need for less. Where progressives see a consensus regarding climate change, many conservatives see a controversy—even conspiracy. Where many progressives see same-sex marriage as a civil right, many conservatives see it as a violation of religious freedom. Of course, neither conservatives nor progressives are homogenous, and not all conservatives or progressives subscribe to any of these views, but brushed with a broad stroke, there are easily identifiable patterns, and perhaps the most prevalent is consistently coming to distinctly opposite conclusions even when given the same information.

  These opposing worldviews are nothing new, indeed, the nature of being a conservative or a progressive often includes seeing things very differently. What does seem new is the level of entrenchment and pervasiveness of these disagreements, and the ideological knowledge machines behind their production and entrenchment. Following World War II a social compact between business, labor, universities, and government "proclaimed that at some fundamental level we were all in it together, that as a society we depended on one another" (Reich, 1998, p. 4). This agreement has since fallen apart.

"The unraveling began in the late seventies and early eighties, and continues today" (Reich, 1998, p. 4). No longer able to agree on the basic rules of the game, political discussants are no longer playing on the same field, each have their own referees, scorekeepers, and goals. In this sense we do live in different universes.

There are a number of disciplines and scholars studying how we came to this point; political psychology suggests there are psychological differences engrained in our view of the world from birth, fueled by confirmation bias and accelerated through fragmented and partisan media, that lead us to such different interpretations (Shermer, 2011). Emerging political neuroscience suggests these differences are observable on a biological and even genetic scale (Jost et al., 2014 & Jost & Amodio, 2012). Political communication scholars argue there is an emerging ism, partyism, which explores biases rooted in and directed political identities (Sunstein, 2014). The factors underlying this disconnect among these bifurcated political populations are multifaceted, impossibly complex, and will never be fully understood.

As a result, the psychological and cultural threads that tie these factors together, as well as the institutions driving and/or standing against them, offer ideal locations for anyone who wishes to shine light on such broad societal trends. Anti-intellectualism is an underutilized theory that allows scholars to do exactly this type of work, as it is a psychological, sociological, historical, institutional, and cultural phenomenon. Continuing the tradition of scholarship in this area, my thesis uses anti-intellectualism as the chain that links these problematic societal trends. Thus, its analysis furthers our understanding of these problematic trends. To present a concrete analysis of this vast and elusive phenomenon I look at how it operates in two institutions of knowledge

production, think tanks and universities, over the last several decades. Doing so reveals new manifestations that connect the creep of partisan politics and moneyed interests into the realm of knowledge production that accelerated the breakdown of a relatively effective social compact, and limit the possibility of its return.

The Road Ahead

Chapter One will continue with a methodology and limitations section. Chapter Two introduces brief histories of think tanks, universities, and anti-intellectualism. This grounds the upcoming discussion in a historic analysis that focuses mainly on salient trends from the 1970s through the present. Chapter Three represents the culmination of my analysis of these trends, and begins my synthesis of these three subjects. Using think tanks as a heuristic device allows me to demarcate two new categories of anti-intellectualism, ideological rationalism and unreflective market logic. To this point my research is done exclusively through a secondary analysis of available resources and literature.

Following the analytical trail, and remaining open to research opportunities as they arose, led to Chapter Four, a case study that tracks amendments to the University of Colorado's (CU) nondiscrimination policy that included the addition of political philosophy and affiliation. Studying this process shines considerable light on ideological rationalism, and further demonstrates the ways it differs from the traditional properties of anti-intellectualism, while at the same time being inexorably entwined among them. Chapter Five follows this up with a case study of a social drama at Marquette University. And finally, Chapter Six expands on the previous chapters by offering a host of examples of ideological rationalism in order to more fully explicate this term and to demarcate the

modern era of anti-intellectualism clearly and closes my work with a brief personal reflection.

Methodology and Limitations

> [A]t my intellectual core perhaps is the sense that—however naïve you think this—the world of social phenomena is bafflingly complex. Complexity has fascinated and puzzled me much of my life. How to unravel some of that complexity, to order it, not to be dismayed or defeated by it? How not to avoid the complexity nor distort interpretation of it by oversimplifying it out of existence? This is of course an old problem: Abstraction (theory) inevitably simplifies, yet to comprehend deeply, to order, some degree of abstraction is necessary. How to keep a balance between distortion and conceptualization? (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. vii, originally in Strauss, 1993, p. 12)

The above quote introduces the preface of the third edition of Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss's *Basics of Qualitative Research*, (2008) and it captures the essence, importance, and complexities of qualitative research. Critical inquiry, which this thesis can be categorized under, is a form of qualitative research that studies subjects with the "goal … to critique and challenge, to transform and empower," seeking "not just to study and understand society but rather to critique and change society" (Merriam, 2009, p. 34). Power dynamics are central to this type of research, and particularly power in combination with hegemonic social structures and tendencies. The focus is "less on individuals than on context," asking questions "regarding whose interests are being served." I would add to this, critical inquiry also asks questions regarding whose interests are being neglected. Among these questions, critical qualitative research raises questions

about "the nature of truth and the construction of knowledge." In the example of critical education research, queries are made into the context of "where learning takes place, including the larger systems of society, the culture and institutions that shape educational practice, and the structural and historical conditions framing practice" (Merriam, 2009, p. 35).

Critical inquiry is compatible with a variety of qualitative methodologies. My inquiry is guided by theoretical sampling and combines a series of literature reviews, case histories, a case study, and finally provides a string of evidence from news media in order to develop an understanding of two new iterations of anti-intellectualism. The purpose is to document some of the ways anti-intellectualism manifests in the modern era. In order to study and illuminate this broad, historic, and elusive phenomenon, it must first be grounded in historical context. This context is provided through a series of literature reviews that document salient changes to the germane subjects over the last 30-40 years as they relate to each other. Anti-intellectualism is a significant factor in the foreclosure of challenges to hegemonic social structures, as it limits tolerance and discussion on subjects that challenge these systems, and it is not an easily reducible phenomenon. Though it can be empirically studied and documented through quantitative measures, when understood broadly and as a barrier to challenges of the status quo, research regarding anti-intellectualism lends itself to qualitative inquiry.

Each of these subjects, anti-intellectualism, think tanks, and universities, could be viewed and studied from a number of perspectives, including an almost infinite number of possibilities regarding entry points, controversies, and other criteria worthy of research. Here they are looked at as they relate to one another. Anti-intellectualism, and

the ways it manifests in these two institutions of knowledge production guides my analysis. From here my focus narrows, looking at the ways money and politics influence anti-intellectualism, and the ways this influence impacts, manifests, and is driven by think tanks and universities. Literature reviews and case histories are often used when conducting case studies (Merriam, 2009, p. 45). My analysis of these histories and literature results in the proposal of two original terms meant to provide the appropriate language to encapsulate the modern era of anti-intellectualism. This is in itself a form of knowledge production that aligns with critical inquiry and theoretical sampling as it represents the natural emergence of new categories based on a saturation of evidence within extant literature (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). My initial description of these new categories is accomplished using think tanks as a heuristic device. My use of institutions of knowledge production to study anti-intellectualism stems from the fact that this phenomenon is most likely to impact locations in which intellectual work, or perceived intellectual work, and knowledge production are taking place.

After establishing these two new dimensions of anti-intellectualism, I constrict my focus further through a case study examining the ways one of them manifests in the modern university. This is accomplished by documenting changes to the nondiscrimination policy at my home institution, the University of Colorado (CU). After this I offer a chapter that goes into less depth, but more variety, to demonstrate the ubiquity of these new expressions of anti-intellectualism in contemporary society. Following this structure provides the foundational understanding of the important theoretical concepts involved, a reevaluation and narrowing of how I understand the ways these concepts operate in contemporary society and are salient to my research, a rich

description of one of the specific manifestations of these theoretical concepts through a case study, followed by a cursory glance at the multitude of arenas these concepts manifest in society.

In a general sense, a case study is a "historical or in-depth descriptive study of a phenomenon" (Merriam, 2009, p. 39). Case studies and qualitative critical inquiry function cooperatively as methodological approaches, as both focus on a "search for meaning and understanding, [with] the researcher [as] the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, [using] an inductive investigative strategy, [with] the end product being richly descriptive" (Merriam, 2009, p. 39). Several traditional tactics of data collection for qualitative studies are employed, in particular interviews; analysis and reviews of extant literature, including academic and relevant media reporting; and an investigation of original documents. Analysis of this data is inductive and comparative— though not necessarily in a traditional sense—and the findings are presented through rich descriptions of the relevant themes uncovered (Merriam, 2009, p. 38, Figure 2.1).

My case study at CU is accomplished through a critical theory perspective and historical analyses triangulated with germane documents; including minutes from board meetings and other source material, media reports, and purposeful interviews with key and accessible actors involved in each case study. The unit of analysis is identifiable, easily bound, and the objects of study are clearly delimited. This need to delineate the object of study, or the case, is "the single most defining characteristic of case study research" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). "If the phenomenon you are interested in studying is not intrinsically bounded, it is not a case" (Merriam, 2009, p. 41).

This type of analysis involves "description, explanation, and judgment" (Merriam, 2009, p. 49). This aligns with previous studies of anti-intellectualism, including Richard Hofstadter's groundbreaking book, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963), within which he explains: "It is the complex itself I am interested in—the complex of historical relations among a variety of attitudes and ideas that have many points of convergence" (p. 7). Anti-intellectualism is his point of entry for understanding and connecting these complex relations and attitudes, and it is used here in a way that carries this tradition forward.

One distinction between the way I provide my analysis and a more traditional structure of a case study is that I offer analysis throughout. While in some ways this is less formal, it is more transparent and easier for the reader to follow. If I were to present each item included as a disinterested piece of data, and then analyze it all in a discussion section, I would be misrepresenting the reality that I chose to include that data and specifically when it is introduced. Analyzing the data and the rationale behind my choice of its inclusion throughout helps to counter one of the perceived limitations of qualitative case studies, that being the "researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis." While this has its advantages, the fact that "[t]he investigator is left to rely on his or her own instincts and abilities throughout most of this research effort" can be viewed as a lack of rigor. This draws criticism, particularly regarding the "'problem of bias … introduced by the subjectivity of the researcher' and others involved in the case" (Merriam, 2009, p. 52).

This critique stems, largely, from the fact that as the main investigative tool, decisions are made based on a researcher's instincts and intuition (Corbin & Strauss,

2008 & Merriam, 2009). Because the methodology of critical inquiry makes critiques and challenges (Merriam, 2009), the data included, by design, is not disinterested. Transparently advancing my analysis and reasons for including specific data throughout is a tool of reflexivity that helps to rebuff these critiques. I also provide the full text of interviews in my appendix, with a few unrelated redacted statements as requested by the interview subjects, and I cite all of the publicly available original source material referenced, though not nearly all that was reviewed.

Three strategies are employed and emphasized throughout to strengthen the validity and reliability of my findings. 1) Triangulation through multiple sources of data and data collection methods; 2) Reflexivity, critical self-reflection regarding my "assumptions, worldview, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation"; and 3) "Rich, thick descriptions" that provide "enough description to contextualize the study such that readers [are] able to determine the extent to which their situations match the research context, and, hence, whether findings can be transferred" (Merriam, 2009, p. 229, Table 9.1). Unlike many case studies that aim to observe corporeal experiences, my aim is to observe concepts, in part through corporeal experiences, and in part using institutions as heuristic devices. In my offerings of rich, thick descriptions intent on giving readers the ability to decide if the findings can be transferred, it is the conceptual context that is most important. This offers other scholars the utility of applying these concepts to research well beyond the subjects studied here.

Guiding my work from its start has been a process of theoretical sampling, which is "a method of data collection based on concepts derived from data." This method is "different from conventional methods of sampling" in that "it is responsive to the data

rather than established before the research begins" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 144).

Theoretical sampling is like detective work, in which the "researcher is purposely looking

for indicators of … concepts so that he or she might examine the data to discover how

concepts vary under different situations" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 144). This "is

especially important when studying new or unchartered areas because it allows for

discovery," which permits "researchers to take advantage of fortuitous events" (Corbin &

Strauss, 2008, p. 145). The opportunity to use CU as a location for my case study is an

example of one such fortuitous occasion I take advantage of here. More fixed or

dogmatic methodologies might not have allowed this shift, demonstrating the importance

and validity of my choice to use theoretical sampling.

"The procedures for theoretical sampling are simple: the researcher follows the

analytic trail" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 146). Theoretical sampling allows "the

development of categories in terms of their properties and dimensions," and its aim is

"not just to come up with a list of categories," but "to tell us something about those

categories. The understanding provided must go beneath surface explanations" (Corbin &

Strauss, 2008, p. 149). So it would not be sufficient for me to say that anti-intellectualism

has new dimensions and to offer a narrow definition of each. Instead, my goal is to

"explain how and when" these new dimensions take on meaning, what they "look like

under different conditions, and … some of the consequences" their emergence brings

about (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 149).

Because the institutions and phenomenon under scrutiny here could be considered

through an endless number of viewpoints, the reader should emphasize critiques on the

logical validity of those perspectives included, rather than the multitude of those left out.

While I do my best to offer relevant viewpoints that flow counter to my argument, as well as what I agree or disagree with about them, to do so ingenuously and comprehensively is not possible nor attempted. The most important test for validity that should be applied when evaluating qualitative research is not in regard to whether that research can be replicated, but "whether the results are consistent with the data collected" (Merriam, 2009, p. 221). The point is not that a different researcher would have followed the same line of analysis, but that the one I present is logically understandable and defensible (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 147).

While some of the limitations of my choice of methodology have been discussed already, one remains in need of mention. Theoretical sampling is complete when a point of saturation, "the point in the research when all the concepts are well defined and explained" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 145), is reached. A point of "total saturation (complete development)" will probably never be achieved, which means at a certain point "a researcher has to say this concept is sufficiently well developed for purposes of this research and accept what has not been covered as one of the limitations of the study" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 149). Theoretical sampling is a process that is meant to continue, and it is a process that I have only begun. To reach a point of saturation would require more time, money, and energy than I have been able to commit. This is likely to "leave gaps in the overall story." Thus, rather than pretend this work is done and "foreclose on the research problem sooner than [I] should" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 149), I acknowledge this is only a start. Further, after establishing both new terms, I focus my analysis on one in order to provide the depth necessary in the space I have. This is

both an advantage and a limitation, as it highlights one at the expense of the other, but the

logical validity of this choice is made clear throughout.

CHAPTER TWO

From Useful to Marketable: The Marketization of Knowledge Production

The production of knowledge is something that has been with humanity as long as humans have had the ability to observe, think, retain, synthesize, and create new information. Today, institutions of knowledge production, represented primarily by universities, non-profit research organizations, governments, think tanks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media organizations, and private research funded by corporations, produce and disseminate information on a scale that is relatively unprecedented. Media, in an inclusive sense of the term, almost always acts as the arbiter of knowledge between these institutions and the public. Whether this happens through engagement with the public through a blog, Twitter, Facebook, a newspaper or magazine, indirectly via an interview with a journalist, via an academic journal, or an almost infinite number of additional possibilities, media are the vehicle that transmits the information.

One aspect of the mediatization of knowledge is the ways changes in communication technology have impacted this production and dissemination of knowledge. This has been a driving force behind how we understand our existence, and then circulate that understanding around the world, since communication technology first came to exist. From the days of painting stories on rock walls, to the Guttenberg Press, to radio, to television, to the advent of the Internet, right down to the advent of particular websites—particularly social media like Facebook and Twitter—each of these technological changes brought with them immeasurable impacts to culture, society, and the ways knowledge is produced and shared. At the same time, the ideas distributed through these mediums remain the driving force behind knowledge production, not the

mediums or media itself. Thus, while media are implicit in much of this thesis, as changes in media technology and journalistic norms are integral to the trends examined here, this is not my primary focus. Rather, my emphasis primarily centers on some of the changes that have taken place in the last 30-40 years in two institutions of knowledge production, American universities and think tanks, as they relate to the history and modern manifestations of anti-intellectualism in the United States.

While I argue these changes are being driven by modern politics and a seemingly endless creep of market fundamentalism into every corner of American life, there is no simple explanation, and one could justifiably choose to view these multifaceted issues from a number of perspectives. Those discussed here are not meant to encompass every possibility, or even to contend they are necessarily the most significant perspectives to consider. It is to say they are integral elements motivating the ways knowledge is produced, disseminated, and understood in a modern context, and both worthy and in need of discussion. This chapter delves, briefly, into the histories of American universities and think tanks. Rather than attempt to outline or summarize the past of either of these institutions of knowledge production in considerable depth, I focus on significant deviations from historical precedence in each, especially elaborating on those taking place since in the last 30-40 years.

Before this, I review anti-intellectualism, which acts as the foundation for my analysis of universities and think tanks. Applied as a theoretical perspective, anti-intellectualism offers a clearer understanding of the historical context underlying the attitudes and cultural climate in which changes in universities and think tanks take place. At the same time, by understanding the ways anti-intellectualism manifests in these

institutions, the phenomenon itself is better understood. In this way, applying anti-intellectualism as a theoretical perspective helps to better understand anti-intellectualism as a phenomenon.

Anti-Intellectualism in Literature

Though not the first, postwar consensus historian Richard Hofstadter's Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Anti-Intellectualism In American Life* (1963), is the seminal treatise on anti-intellectualism in the United States. Within it he argues anti-intellectualism in the United States is "older than our national identity, and has a long historical background" (1963, p. 6). He describes the phenomenon broadly and imprecisely as a psychological attitude or a notion, as well as a historical subject with its own institutional history. Susan Jacoby suggests anti-intellectualism is best "understood as a complex of symptoms with multiple causes" (Jacoby, 2008, p. 10), highlighting the benefit of its broad, imprecise nature to its use as a conceptual device. In the next two chapters the institutional histories of think tanks and universities are both utilized as heuristic devices to illustrate some of the factors driving and justifying anti-intellectual dispositions in modern life, as well as the impacts of anti-intellectualism on these institutions of knowledge production.

Understood as a cultural phenomenon anti-intellectualism is broad and inclusive. When viewed as a concept it helps scholars understand and demarcate broad cultural trends. It is both a phenomenon that happens in our psyches, in our culture, and in our institutions, as well as a research device that can be used to understand certain trends in society regarding our psyches, culture, and institutions. Understanding the phenomenon allows us to then apply it as a conceptual tool, drawing analysis through this perspective. I will first describe the phenomenon, before then reimagining it to include changes that

have taken place in the last several decades, and then it will be applied as a conceptual tool to better understand both.

Currently there is a hesitance by scholars to employ anti-intellectualism as a concept. This may, ironically, be a remnant of anti-elitism, a dimension of anti-intellectualism. After all, what comes across as more elitist than academics bemoaning cultural trends of anti-intellectualism? If this trepidation were cast aside, researchers would quickly find value in the ways anti-intellectualism helps explain broad cultural shifts and trends in American life. Its utility to understanding two such trends, the increasingly contentious and gridlocked partisan political climate, and the pervasive encroachment of free-market, utopian capitalist principles in the United States in to the realm of knowledge production, are demonstrated here.

Before going further, clarifying what constitutes an intellectual is necessary as this shines significant light on how I understand anti-intellectualism, and find it most relevant to critical inquiry. Definitions vary and are offered throughout literature, but one consistent feature of intellectuals is their rational, critical, and reflexive search for knowledge and verity (Claussen, 2004). In one of his more influential essays, "On Knowledge and Power," C. Wright Mills suggests that whatever else intellectuals may be, they are "among those who ask serious questions," and above all intellectuals belong "to that minority which has carried on the big discourse of the rational mind" (Horowitz, 1963, p. 613). For Mills intellectuals make up a small group of thinkers who critically examine society, culture, and the ways power is distributed. They are engaged, motivated, and actively advocate on behalf of their beliefs.

In *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994), Edward Said provides a range of explanations, examples, and context regarding our perception of intellectuals throughout history. Said outlines an archetype of the engaged, adversarial, and constantly questioning intellectual in the first few pages of text. His depiction of the role of this superlative intellectual is eloquently put and worth quoting at some length.

> …this role has an edge to it, and cannot be played without a sense of being someone whose place it is to publicly raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them), to be someone who cannot easily be co-opted by governments or corporations, and whose *raison d'être* is to represent all those people and issues that are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug. (p. 11)

He goes on to suggest intellectuals should do this on the basis of universal principles. Those principles amount essentially to the idea that humans are entitled to freedom and justice from powerful worldly entities. Fighting against and bringing violations of these standards to light should be a central focus for intellectuals. Essentially, for Said, intellectuals should prioritize giving a voice to the oppressed and speaking truth to power. Understood in Mills and Said's terms, knowledge production, opinions, or ideas that unreflectively reinforce the status quo, or single-mindedly support political, corporate, and/or government elites, are inherently anti-intellectual.

On the other hand, Hofstadter primarily views intellect as a roaming, "critical, creative, and contemplative side of mind" (Hofstadter, 1963, p.25). Unlike Said or Mills' model of the engaged intellectual, for Hofstadter intellectuals do not necessarily have to participate in any specific act or behavior that includes speaking truth to power or

standing for the oppressed. Rather, they must only refrain from letting money, power, ideology, personal biases, and prejudice, or other corrupting influences override the critical, rational, and open flow of their enquiries, judgments, and suppositions. Viewed from this perspective, knowledge production, opinions, or ideas delimited by predetermined ideological perspectives or free-market solutions are inherently anti-intellectual. Ideas must guide themselves and go through critical, rational analyses open to whatever conclusions logically follow, and they must be open to being challenged.

As a result intellectuals must be open to having their ideas disproven, and adapting their positions in response to changing information. In other words, they must reserve the right to be wrong (Said, 1994 and Sassower, 2014). This highlights the small "t" in the truth sought by intellectuals, as their judgments cannot be set in stone nor entirely detached from the powers they seek to critique. Acknowledging and remaining flexible to the fluid nature of intellectual activity, even judgments, is impossible for anyone too committed to ideological partisan positions, or tied to policy preferences of wealthy elites, again highlighting the anti-intellectual effect of these forces.

Without dismissing the multitude of other ways in which scholars have classified intellectuals, from jesters to vagrants, the broad and workable definitions highlighting the engaged and detached intellectual presented above are adopted here. Thus, anti-intellectualism can primarily and broadly be considered anything discouraging people from engaging in or accurately judging the behavior of intellectuals described above, essentially acting as a mechanism of social control. This is an important clarification to keep in mind as scholars have defined anti-intellectualism in a number of ways, but none have done so exactly as I just have. In this sense anti-intellectualism can be understood as

implicitly supporting hegemonic tendencies and thought, as even Hofstadter's roaming intellect will call everything into question, including core societal beliefs. John Dewey once "admitted that 'intellect *is* dangerous' because once you think and analyze no one can guarantee where it will lead" (Sassower, 2014, p.62, italics in original). Anti-intellectualism contributes to a stifling of the challenges that would stem from this ostensibly dangerous intellect from being created, shared, analyzed, understood, and accepted in modern society.

It is worth noting that my choice to limit my definition of intellectuals to what I have described above is self-serving, as these are the types of intellectuals most likely to face the ire of anti-intellectual dispositions. And this definition is not meant to suggest that it represents the range of intellectuals across society today. But these are related, as anti-intellectualism stifles the engaged and roaming intellectual, forcing intellectual activities to other outlets. It may be that today we live in the era in which the most prominent intellectuals are the Jesters, the comedians, and musicians. George Carlin, Joan Rivers, and Richard Pryor were not just funny, they raised awareness about social issues and spoke truth to power in important ways that certainly qualifies them as prominent public intellectuals of their day. In recent years John Stewart, Stephen Colbert, John Oliver, and Bill Maher—a long cadre of white men—all use their late-night shows to do the same. Aahmer Rahman, Hannibal Burress, and W. Kamau Bell, and some musicians, particularly rappers, like Talib Kweli, Lupe Fiasco, and Big Boi, use their art, their platform, and even social media to act as engaged intellectuals. In many ways these types of intellectuals might be experiencing a rise in prominence and influence. At the

same time, Cornel West, Noam Chomsky, Rosa Clemente, Ta-Nehisi Coats, and other more traditional engaged intellectuals, have little mainstream influence.

Anti-Intellectualism: A Review of Key Works

Although there are previous authors who wrote on the subject, none were as influential as Hofstadter. As mentioned, Hofstadter traces anti-intellectualism as a notion, an attitude, and a historical subject. He also suggests that its vagueness makes it more useful as an epithet. His most succinct definition, and the "common strain that binds it together," is a psychological attitude. Hofstadter describe this attitude as, "a resentment and suspicion of the life of the mind and of those considered to represent it; and a disposition constantly to minimize the value of that life" (1963, p. 7). However, those who harbor such attitudes rarely exhibit "a pure and unalloyed dislike of intellect or intellectuals" (1963, p. 7).

In advanced democracies political elites tailor messaging to these attitudes, and as a result it seems these late-stage democracies are likely to reach a point in political communication in which anti-intellectualism undergirds support for pseudointellectuals or polemicists. This helps to foster a misplaced trust in pseudointellectuals, fueled by and combined with a misplaced suspicion cast toward intellectuals closer to matching the aforementioned archetypes. The impact of this is accelerated due to failures of the public to accurately judge intellectual ideas. All of these elements directly or indirectly minimize the value of the life of intellectuals by devaluing societal trust and understanding of who and what qualifies as an intellectual or intellectual idea.

Hofstadter is careful not to simplify anti-intellectualism, and refuses to give it a "rigorous or narrow" meaning. "I can see little advantage in a logically defensible but

historically arbitrary act of definition, which would demand singling out one trait among a complex of traits" (1963, p. 7). His book offers a series of case histories or studies as evidence of the fluctuations of anti-intellectualism throughout the history of the United States, dealing with "the milieu, the atmosphere, in which American thinking has taken place" (1963, p. 7). My research continues and expands on these traditions by examining evidence of anti-intellectualism in two of the more prominent institutions American thinking takes place, both of which operated markedly differently during Hofstadter's lifetime, and offering the conceptual terminology to describe modern anti-intellectualism.

Perhaps the most enduring feature of Hofstadter's work is his description of three overlapping strains of anti-intellectualism, later teased out and classified by sociologist Daniel Rigney. Religious anti-rationalism, which is associated with (Protestant) evangelical religious thought. Populist anti-elitism, which is associated with populist political thought on the right and left of the political spectrum. And unreflective instrumentalism, or the evaluation of thought based disproportionately on a monetary or otherwise "practical" basis (Bates, 2011; Claussen, 2004; Hofstadter, 1963; & Rigney, 2011).

Rigney also adds media as a source and component of anti-intellectualism, though he does little more than mention this fact (Rigney, 1991). Finally, he offers a fourth dimension of anti-intellectualism, unreflective hedonism—which is basically the idea that intellectual pursuits are hard work, and as such are often replaced by more pleasurable activities like watching television. Rigney does little to cultivate unreflective hedonism as a concept, and it remains underdeveloped today. The need for research in this area is increasing as the ubiquity and distraction of entertainment expands from our television

screens to screens in our laps, the palms of our hands, the watches on our wrists, and even the glasses on our faces.

Though Rigney mentions it, the role of media as a component of anti-intellectualism would not be explored in depth until Dane Claussen's, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Media* (2004). To this day Claussen's work remains the only major piece of literature directly examining this subject, and within it he examines "evidence of anti-intellectualism, in magazine coverage of higher education" (Claussen, 2004, p. 51). Claussen finds evidence supporting each strain of anti-intellectualism, and concludes that universities are portrayed almost exclusively as places for students to socialize, party, network, and gain the credentials needed for future employment and financial security. He finds the role of research, thought, debate, and studying, are downplayed, underestimated, or almost entirely overlooked.

Chapter two of Claussen's book provides a thoughtful review of related literature, which is particularly helpful and highly recommended to the interested reader. Here he reviews Hofstadter, Rigney, Hage, R. Jacoby, Posner, and others, as their work relates to mass media. An important text, both for its historiography of anti-intellectualism literature, and its condemnation of media as a chief component of anti-intellectualism in the modern era, Claussen's biggest misgiving throughout the book is his narrow focus on higher education as the target of anti-intellectualism. This is a common and unfortunate oversight, as it leaves the impression anti-intellectualism is not a concern outside the halls of the academy. In a nation founded by intellectuals, which requires an educated citizenry for its very model of governance to succeed, and in an increasingly complex, connected,

and mediated world, the effects of anti-intellectualism are pervasive far beyond from the Ivory Tower. Simply put, this should concern us all.

Susan Jacoby's *Age of Unreason* (2008) describes the ways anti-intellectualism has continued to manifest in the U.S. since Hofstadter's writing. Jacoby provides a worthy update to Hofstadter's monumental work, though she tends to romanticize the past, and displays some considerably elitist views on university courses that focus on pop culture; specifically film studies. This elitist stance could offer some insight into why studies on unreflective hedonism remain so scarce, as they require venturing into the world of entertainment studies. More important here, Jacoby examines the historical evolution culminating in the current era of anti-intellectualism in the United States. She finds anti-rationalism and anti-intellectualism are flourishing "in a mix that includes addiction to infotainment, every form of superstition and credulity, and an education system that does a poor job of teaching not only basic skills but the logic underlying those skills" (Jacoby, 2008, p. 307). Jacoby's analysis is meticulously researched and thought out. She misses a major point, however, ascribing very little influence on modern anti-intellectualism to think tanks, and largely excluding them from the book.

In addition to the necessity of addressing this gap left by Jacoby, two latent themes found throughout anti-intellectualism literature need to be stressed, the impacts of post-neoliberalism politics, and the pervasive influence of moneyed elites. Claussen points out the limited nature of discussion on both the role of the business community and modern politics on anti-intellectualism. Think tanks play a significant role in both of these areas. For instance, the role of business on anti-intellectualism today is unmistakable in light of the increasingly prevalent connection between knowledge

production and the ideology of moneyed interests, i.e. corporations, wealthy investors, and other beneficiaries—"winners"—of the free-market. This knowledge production, all-too-often, takes place in advocacy tanks, funded by economic elites. The same can be said of the connections between partisan political goals and knowledge production taking place in think tanks.

Intellectuals and the business community have a long history of standing in opposition to one another. Hofstadter suggests the two are "dedicated to different sets of values," bound to endless conflict (Hofstadter, 1963, p. 233). For the business community money and power are the central ideals, while for those of critical intellect, "quality and moral values" are the central ideals (Hofstadter, 1963, pp. 234-35). As a result business and intellect are essentially incompatible. He goes on to argue that locating the business community at the "vanguard of anti-intellectualism in our culture" is not out of a desire to overstate its role. He attributes this primarily to the simple fact that "business is the most powerful and pervasive interest in American life" (1963, p. 237).

The pervasiveness and access to power, and hegemonic control of the business community in the United States has only grown since Hofstadter's days. And his vision from that moment in history—the late 1950s and '60s—underscores the necessity that existed at the time for businesses and wealthy elites to gain entry into the arena of expertise and knowledge production. Access into this arena has since been gained, largely through think tanks. Not coincidentally, many of these institutions were founded and/or funded, and shaped in the interests of these same economic elites identified by Hofstadter as standing in opposition to intellectuals.

Jacoby goes into some detail on social Darwinism, one of the precursors to the current strain of business-centered anti-intellectualism that is particularly applicable here. In the past social Darwinism was used to justify great accumulations of wealth by businessmen like Rockefeller, Carnegie and Ford. Today the legacy of social Darwinism survives, in part through the pseudo-scientific work of think tanks staunchly advocating free market principles, by a more elusive, modern form of anti-intellectualism, referred to here as *unreflective market logic*. "Social Darwinism has never died … [it manifests] most recently, in the form of market economy worship that presents itself not as political opinion but as a *summa* of objective facts" (Jacoby, 2008, p. 80).

Henry Giroux makes a similar, albeit bolder analysis, referring to the "widespread production and adoption throughout society" of free market fundamentalism as, "the politics of economic Darwinism," and links this process to neoliberalism. "[E]conomic Darwinism undermines all forms of solidarity while simultaneously promoting the logic of unrestricted individual responsibility" that goes beyond an "unchecked ideology of privatisation" (Giroux, 2011, p. 165). Giroux points out that economic Darwinism is not natural; it requires interminable reproduction via a number of cultural apparatuses. Among these Giroux identifies new and old media, public and higher education, and commercial messaging. Think tanks, oddly absent from the list, are perhaps the most exemplary institutions among the cultural apparatuses behind the politics of economic Darwinism. Unreflective market logic can be considered the knowledge production and accompanying style of thinking that legitimates economic Darwinism through these cultural apparatuses. So, for example, when members of media act as an apparatus of

economic Darwinism, they often do so using unreflective market logic. The same is true for members of think tanks, politicians, and so on.

The second recurring yet latent theme within anti-intellectualism literature, the role of modern politics on the phenomenon, is characterized in part by the rise of ideologically based knowledge production, referred to here as *ideological rationalism*— another term offered to better delineate the emergence of a new and unique era of anti-intellectualism. Ideological rationalism represents the conceptual foundation for informed ideological partisanship. Examining ideological rationalism is to seek an understanding of where the ideas partisan ideologues cling to, fight over, and wield in political and cultural battles stem from, and what they exclude from discourse. It explores the production of knowledge underlying cultural trends. Where do our attitudes regarding things like welfare, same-sex marriage, climate change, gun control, genetically modified foods, criminal justice, race and class relations, and other prevalent societal issues originate? Studying ideological rationalism attempts to explain the ideational process behind attitudes and beliefs on controversial matters through the conceptual lens of anti-intellectualism. This shines significant light on the powers driving the creation of these ideas, and should reveal motivated parties and mechanisms of intentional social control.

While I mostly view ideological rationalism in relation to think tanks and universities, it is part of a broader cultural trend that involves an unwillingness to listen to, or even imagine the possibility, of learning "anything from an ideological or cultural opponent, represent[ing] a departure from the best of American popular and elite intellectual traditions" (Jacoby, 2008, p. xix). The result of this departure is felt across the United States and is reflected in its culture and institutions. It is apparent in the polarized

climate typical in the modern political milieu, in the rise (or return) of partisan media,

and in the increased failure of congressional leaders to work across partisan lines to pass

legislation (Bonica, 2014; Desilver, 2013; & Sunstein, 2014). Through a systematic

process of knowledge production rooted in political ideology, advocacy tanks help to

legitimate this polarization from every perspective, further entrenching society into

irreconcilable ideological camps.

The American University in the Age of 'Useful' Knowledge

"So long, ivy-covered walls, tweedy professors, and genteel university presidents—hello

to markets, profits, and computers," (Johnson, Kavanagh, & Mattson, 2003, p. 3).

Stanley Aronowitz provides a thoughtful review of the American university in

chapter three of *The Knowledge Factory: Dismantling the Corporate University and*

Creating True Higher Learning (2000), and rather than attempt to reinvent a well-

rounded wheel, I will summarize some key aspects from his work, relying somewhat

heavily on it to lay the foundation for the rest of my analysis of American universities in

this chapter.

The land-grant college system began when it was signed into law by Abraham

Lincoln in 1862, "offering grants of tracts of federally owned lands to states that agreed

to establish institutions of research and instruction devoted to the production and

transmission of scientific and technical knowledge" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 16). Slow to

gain popularity—particularly in agricultural states—the focus of these new institutions

quickly shifted toward vocational training and adopted the ethics of business, rather than

a liberal education similar to universities in Europe (Aronowitz, 2000).

In 1907 Columbia professor J.R. Wheeler set out the following objectives for universities,

> which many subscribe today: 'to preserve and transmit liberal culture; to share useful knowledge with the populace at large; to serve as an agent of beneficial social change in a burgeoning industrial and commercial order; and to serve as a center for disinterested inquiry and the production of new knowledge through research and scholarly writing.' (quoted in Aronowitz, 2000, p. 15)

During the industrializing era starting in the mid-1800s, "affluent alumni contribute[d] enough money to enable" Columbia and Harvard to "evolve into universities, in the contemporary meaning of the concept" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 16). Philanthropy from wealthy elites like Andrew Carnegie and the Rockefellers drove this process. "[M]ost of the major private universities were founded by leading rail and manufacturing capitalists as monuments to their wealth and largesse" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 16). The next section, which details the history of think tanks, shows these same elites were integral in the founding of these institutions as well.

Keeping this parallel to think tanks and the engrained influence of wealthy elites on the modern American university in mind helps connect the histories of these two institutions of knowledge production. It also serves as a reminder that instrumentalism, driven by private and corporate sponsorship in the academy, is nothing new. "By 1900 the university-corporate complex was in full bloom" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 16). And writing in 1909, John Jay Chapman observed, "The men who stand for education and scholarship have the ideals of business men. They are in truth business men. The men

who control (American universities) today are little else than business men" (quoted in Aronowitz, 2000, p. 17).

Clearly, against the backdrop of this history, any critique bemoaning the presence of money, business, and corporate influence on the academy only continues a long tradition. Their timeless ubiquity does not suggest these appraisals have been without merit, rather they emphasize a longstanding and problematic trajectory that scholars have consistently condemned, yet apparently failed to stop. However, keeping the enduring nature of these critiques in mind acts as a reminder that romanticizing a past that may have never existed can quickly become ahistorical. Thus, my purpose is to connect these longstanding trends from past to present, exploring how money, business, and corporations continue to influence the academy today, not to romanticize a past that never was. Anti-intellectualism, which has been a constant thread winding through U.S. history, helps to make such a connection.

In the 1930s the onset of World War II brought with it a new partnership between government and universities in the form of government contracts that allowed some universities to expand their "research functions," to build "new facilities to house them," and to hire "new science and engineering faculty and staff" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 20). Unlike some of its European and Soviet counterparts that created freestanding research institutions to conduct military research, the United States located its military research in universities (Aronowitz, 2000) and think tanks (Medvetz, 2012). After the war, "[t]he knowledge machine that was mobilized … was not dismantled; rather, it became the key adjunct to the permanent war economy of the Cold War" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 38). "From 1945 to the early 1980s, Congress appropriated, with almost no dissent, the R and

D expenditures associated with 'defense,' which … included substantial support for the biological and human sciences," marking a "period of enormous expansion for research universities" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 43).

This normalization of funding for particular government research, research considered 'useful'—that is of an immediate benefit, i.e. instrumental—in particular, is similar to and historically coincides with the second wave of think tanks, discussed in more detail next. Most significantly, these government contracts opened the door in think tanks and universities to the direct and indirect influence of money on research. Once ajar, wealthy private interests followed closely behind.

> Large-scale scientific work has always thrived on government support; scientists lived off the military for most of the postwar period and, on this consideration, found few reasons to object when private corporations offered research funds. After all, many government contracts were tied to dedicated applications as well. (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 44)

In the latter half of the 20th century a combination of factors, including economic uncertainties and the collapse of the Soviet Union "contributed to the rise of conservative skepticism of all things modern, including 'useless' science and critical thinking," leading to "close scrutiny from press as well as the federal government" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 43). Along with this came the emergence of a "'free-market,' anti-big government political climate," in which "research funds for projects not directed to specific product applications were mercilessly cut" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 43). Although American universities had always been tied to corporate interests and useful knowledge, this direct trussing of research to the creation of saleable products was new.

In such a milieu, the pressure for science "to justify itself on commercial and other practical criteria" increased, leading many academic researchers to scramble "to make arrangements with private corporations" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 43). This led to conflicts of interest limiting intellectual possibilities within the academic community. One of the finest examples of this is the delivery of "papers concerning scientific research at scholarly meetings" omitting "information on patent grounds" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 48). This foreclosure of intellectual communication due to market forces is intrinsically anti-intellectual. On top of this, such arrangements between private corporations and universities and/or researchers may also "compromise the scientist's 'dedication to a neutral position regarding the outcome of scientific experiments'" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 48).

Far from disinterested communities of scholars, universities and the scholars within them have increasingly become interested, vested, and reliant on the financial success of their work. By 2000, Aronowitz had declared the death of higher education, claiming, "with only a few partial exceptions, there is little that would qualify as higher learning in the United States" (p. xvii). Undergraduate education now "may achieve what a decent secondary school was expected to deliver fifty years ago" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 2). Aronowitz claim is rather broad, and perhaps falls into the trap of romanticizing a momentary flash of radical thought in the academy during the 1960s and '70s. He even indicates as much.

"By the 1980s, the number and influence of radical faculty in the academy had grown large enough to cause alarm in insurgent intellectual conservative precincts" (2000, p. 61). The values of these radical faculty—

antiracism, antisexism, and a passionate commitment to more equality—had, in

the Reagan era, become defined as "ideological."

Seen in this context, the fiscal crisis of public education has become an occasion

for the recentralization of universities and may, perhaps unintentionally, mark the

end of the brief period of academic innovation and legitimate dissent begun by

junior faculty, especially women and African Americans,[1] in the 1970s. (2000, p.

61)

In this sense what Aronowitz is describing as the "death" of the university, might be

better designated a return to previous form. Nonetheless, I tend to agree with his

assessment that this is troubling, and the continuation of a long and downward spiral.

And today, in the aftermath of this history, there remains a crisis in the academy

(Aronowitz, 2000; Johnson et al.; & Giroux, 2014). As demonstrated, this crisis is neither

new nor unique, but it does seem to have reached or at least returned to a critical point,

and perhaps the final nails are being hammered into the coffin of one of the last

institutions capable of resisting the overwhelming societal trends toward fundamentalist

hypercapitalism and partisanship. In our current market fundamentalist landscape nearly

everything is valued primarily or disproportionately on instrumentalist measures, citizens

are viewed as consumers, and freedom is increasingly tantamount to economic freedom

for wealthy elites and corporations from taxes or government regulations (Cannella &

Miller, 2008; Giroux, 2007 p. 104; & Giroux, 2014, p. 35).

This crisis is not the result of a natural process, the normative—though perhaps

never realized—goals of the university, or the wishes of academics whom walk its halls,

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[1] It is important to note this statement erases the intersectionality of Black women, as it
implies African Americans and women are inherently distinct groups.
[2] Gender identity and expression were added at the same time as political affiliation and

teach its students, support its mission, and drive its knowledge production. However, this crisis is authoritarian in nature, and the desired result of a coordinated assault on public and higher education, "the nature of the assault varies across countries," but shares "a common set of assumptions and practices driving the transformations of higher education into an adjunct of corporate power and values" (Giroux, 2014, p. 30).

"The neoliberal paradigm driving these attacks … abhors democracy and views … higher education as a toxic civic sphere that poses a threat to corporate values, power, and ideology" (Giroux, 2014, p. 30). This is in part the legacy of a McCarthyesque attack on academics and academic freedom fronted by the likes of David Horowitz (Giroux, 2007), and in part the legacy of over a century of effort from the business class to infiltrate the university, which has been historically viewed as hostile to their interest in an unfettered pursuit of capital (Hofstadter, 1963 & Giroux, 2014). The expansion of these trends in recent years have not happened in a vacuum, rather, they are directly related to the rise and dominance of neoliberalism over the past 30-40 years (Giroux, 2014), and populist tendencies that have become increasingly widespread. Within this time, education "has been removed from its utopian possibilities of education young people to be reflective, critical, and socially engaged agents" (Giroux, 2014, p. 31). One would hardly expect to find CU, with its main campus located in the liberal bastion, often sarcastically referred to as "The Republic of Boulder," to be at the vanguard of this neoliberal project, or attack, on higher education. Yet, it is.

In Chapter Four I detail how some of these developments in the academy manifest via a case study at CU, which finds itself in a unique position at the frontlines of what appears to be a losing battle. In the context of the history of think tanks, which can be

looked to as potential harbingers of things to come in the university, these trends are even more disconcerting. The next section outlines this history in more detail, but for now it is worth noting they began as institutions designed with the intention of providing sound and rational advice to government, known as 'universities without students,' and now operate—largely as a result of the insertion of money and politics, combined with changes in media technology—in ways hardly recognizable from their original purpose.

How have the changes in think tanks impacted our understanding and expectations of knowledge production taking place in universities? Are universities destined to suffer a similar fate as think tanks? And if so, can anything be done to stop it? These are the types of questions critical inquiry seeks to answer in its effort to challenge, critique, and transform society (Merriam, 2009). And while there are no easy or definitive answers to these questions, they are among those underlying and motivating my pursuit of this research.

One thing that is clear is that some of the trends underway in the university, like those in think tanks, are the result of the perverting influence of money and partisan politics and the hegemonic dominance of a neoliberal version of unfettered capitalism (Giroux, 2014; Aronowitz, 2000; & Johnson et al., 2003). For anyone who believes the university is integral to democracy as a means of helping society awake from false consciousness, and to nurture young citizens into mature adults, with critical or even cultivated minds, these are concerning developments. It is among this camp that I firmly include myself.

"The 1960s stand as the last decade when big questions were raised about the modern university" (Johnson et al., 2003, p. 11). Since this time universities no longer

simply "collude with big business; they have become increasingly *identical* to business" (Johnson et al., 2003, p. 12, italics in original). Although the imperatives of business may have "always invaded the hallowed halls of academia," the business leaders of the modern era have gone even further. "They want to assert not just influence but much more control over the educational processes themselves, and understanding this transition is crucial" (Johnson et al., 2003, p. 2). While the business magnates of yesteryear may have purchased prestige in higher education through donations that got their names on ivory-covered buildings, today's magnates mission lies in remolding higher education into "training camps for their workforce" (Johnson et al., 2003, p. 2). How this manifests in the academy, or the symptoms of what ails the university, are explored in more detail next.

Symptoms of University Malaise

There are a few main trends that are both driving changes to university structures, as well as results of these changes. And while mostly headed in the same direction, save for brief glimpses of true dissent and radical thought in the 1960s and '70s, these trends are like snowballs rolling down the hill, adding to their mass as they speed up, becoming increasingly harder to stop or discern where they begin or end. The bottom of the hill, as far as I can tell, remains out of sight. There are a number of alterations to the university structure that have occurred in the last 40 years that can be looked to as evidence of this continued decline, as well as indicators of where it is headed.

Although the university system has a significantly longer history than think tanks, dating back centuries,

the contemporary American higher education system is barely sixty [now 75]

years old. Its resemblance to the earlier model, in which college was mainly a

finishing school for children of the upper middle class and the very rich or for

training teachers and members of the clergy, is purely formal. (Aronowitz, 2000,

pp. 10-11)

Thus, this is where I focus my analysis. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the permeating

nature of broad cultural trends, and the fact that both are institutions of knowledge

production, the American university and think tanks have undergone a number of parallel

and related changes. At the heart of these variations are anti-intellectual attitudes, which

underlie the expanding influence from money and partisan politics in the academy. Often,

administrators, boards, foundations, and outside agitators are central actors pushing for

these changes, making the decisions driving them, or ultimately enacting them into

universities laws and policies (Aronowitz, 2000 & Giroux, 2014).

One result of these transformations in the academy is that the old focus of anti-

intellectual ire, "the full-time tweedy professor[,] is now truly a thing of the past,

replaced by a pool of underpaid contingent laborers with little, if any, benefits and no job

security" (Johnson et al., , 2003, p. 5). "Far from the image of an ivory tower where

monk-like scholars ponder the stars and other distant things, the universities tend to

mirror the rest of society" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 11). Both of these observations highlight

the emergence of a new era of anti-intellectualism, and perhaps the success of previous

eras.

As intimated, among the most apparent symptoms of these shifts in universities

can be viewed with a look at changes in hiring, contracting, and awarding tenure to

professors. Starting in the 1970s, accelerating significantly in the '80s through the early '90s, and persisting through the new millennium to the present, tenure track hires as the norm have practically disappeared (Aronowitz, 2000; Cannella & Miller, 2008). In 1969 only 3.3 percent of new hires in universities were non-tenure track, today that number is over 75 percent (Cannella & Miller, 2008, p. 33; Kezar & Maxey, 2014). "For more than thirty years, the unstated policy of Research 1 was to deny tenure to eligible junior faculty" (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 51).

This is problematic for a host of reasons, perhaps most prominently among them being that tenure is meant to promote academic freedom—including the freedom to research subjects not dictated by market or partisan political forces, and the freedom to research and speak on subjects that challenge our core societal beliefs. Without academic freedom professors and the academy lose their autonomy and become trapped within the same dominant forces of the status quo the university has historically allowed scholars and students some reprieve from. The result of this is the university now only rarely offers a space for, or produces societal actors whom embrace, radical thought, indirectly foreclosing challenges to the status quo (Giroux, 2014 and Aronowitz, 2000).

> The second dimension of academic freedom, the rights of the faculty as a collectivity to retain sovereignty over the educational process, has been buried … Whether a department or program should be established, expanded, retained, or eliminated; which faculty should be hired or dismissed; how programs and departments will be assigned and workloads and classroom sizes determined are only a few of the crucial decisions affecting schools that have gradually been assumed by administrations and boards of trustees. (Aronowitz, 2000, p. 65)

This second dimension is one my case study at CU expands on, focusing on changes driven by its publicly elected Board of Regents, demonstrating the problematic implications of this shift in control.

Finally, a related and troublesome tendency in the university hiring process is seen in regard to an increase in part-time hires. Again, going back before the era of neoliberalism to 1969, only 20 percent of university faculty were part time (Feldman, 2001). By 2011 that number had more than doubled to 41.5 percent (Curtis, 2014). This appears to be the most recent data available, but little about the trends in public spending, the economy, or our cultural anti-elitist view directed at the professorial class suggests that this course would have reversed itself in the last several years. If anything it is likely to have only worsened.

The cumulative effect of the aforementioned trends is a weakening and restructuring of the professoriate, from tenure track and otherwise contracted positions to adjunct and part-time faculty whom have no contracts, few benefits, less union representation than their tenured and full time peers, little bargaining power or organization, and whom operate on a contingent basis with the universities and institutions of higher education that employ them (Aronowitz, 2000). Today more than 76 percent of university faculty falls into this category of contingent employment (Curtis, 2014). Among the issues with these developments are: A lack of true academic freedom; a majority of adjuncts pay is below the poverty line, though additional sources of income or privilege mean they rarely live below the poverty line; and students are less satisfied and more likely to transfer when they take courses with adjuncts (Eaton & Kezar, 2014; House Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2014). The fact that the pay for

adjuncts is below the poverty line leaves a disparate group making up the adjunct class on university campuses. These instructors range from those with a modicum of privilege, family assistance, or other forms of supplementary income, down to those living in their cars and relying on government programs for assistance (Segran, 2014; House Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2014; & Giroux, 2014). On top of this, contingent faculty are less likely to have time or necessary support to forward one of the chief ambitions of the university, knowledge production.

There are a number of complex factors contributing to and driving recent changes in the university, among them: new types of institutions competing with traditional universities, e.g. the University of Phoenix online; a decline in funding for public universities and a shift in what is being funded toward an increased focus on athletics, new buildings and technology, administrative pay, and Science Technology Engineering and Math programs (STEM); increased demands for flexibility; the emergence of new disciplines; and an increasing amount of the population attaining degrees (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Absent from the previous list, but added with emphasis here, are challenges from the conservative business class via think tanks, starting in the 1970s, and America's long history of anti-intellectualism. Aside from examining this challenge from think tanks, extant literature covers most of these changes rather well. Yet many of these trends, even those deemed nearly unanimously problematic by academics, continue unabated. Why, if the issues are clearly documented, as well as some of the steps that could be taken to stand against them, have academics so far failed to adequately do so? I have no clear answer for this, except to tautologically point back to the very trends we wish to stop as the same ones impeding us from doing so.

It is, perhaps, a dark irony that faculty are kept so busy focusing on instrumental work they are left without the time or perspective to engage in efforts that would challenge the macro trends threatening universities as locations intended to foster unconstrained intellect, or engaged intellectuals (Giroux, 2014). While ironic, it is not a coincidence. Traditionally professors in research universities are expected to perform three main tasks: research, service, and teaching. The now-defunct system that employed mostly full-time tenure track professors encouraged and allowed professors the academic freedom and ability to perform all three of these functions, which tied them closely to the university and its long-term mission.

The shift toward contingent faculty over the last several decades has left large portions of university faculty detached from the research and service functions of university work as well as the long-term goals of the university itself. This has coincided with a shift in control over university ambitions and curriculum from a modicum of input from professors, to administrative staff generally more focused on running universities like businesses than institutions of knowledge production (Johnson et al., 2003 & Aronowitz, 2000). This leaves universities staffed with overqualified and underpaid part-time teachers, whose connection to the university they are teaching in only lasts a semester at a time, and at times is spread across multiple universities or campuses (Giroux, 2014 & Johnson et al., 2003).

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W.E.B. Du Bois highlights the intertwined nature of the goals of a university education and those of intellectuals. "[T]he true college will ever have one goal—not to earn meat, but to know the end and aim of that which meat nourishes" (Du Bois, 1903, p. 115). In other words, Du Bois rejected the notion a

university education should be structured around instrumentalist goals, but rather

understanding the social systems within which those goals are positioned. "[T]he

university system is the largest repository of intellectuals, even when we agree that most

academics aren't intellectuals" (Sassower, 2014, p 92). I would add to this, universities

are also the largest repositories of future intellectuals, and one of their integral goals

should be both curating and cultivating this impending class of thinkers, as well as a

populace made up of their peers capable of not just evaluating their ideas, but adding to

them. This notion, that universities should create citizens capable of self-governing,

harkens back to Thomas Jefferson's ideal of democratic education, and however

misrepresentative of the American university system, it remains a normative goal

(Johnson et al., 2003).

Next, a similar timeline and evaluation of recent changes in think tanks is offered,

particularly noting the parallels to American universities, and the insertion and corrupting

influence of money and politics in these institutions.

The Evolution of Think Tanks in Three Steps

The exact timeline surrounding the emergence of think tanks is not precise, and

for my purposes it does not need to be, but it is generally agreed among scholars that the

first phase of think tanks came about around the turn of the 20th century. These

institutions were founded by a small number of wealthy elites, including Henry Ford, the

Rockefellers, and Andrew Carnegie, who were "concerned with the necessity of

providing sound, rational advice to government at a time of increasing complexity of both

domestic and foreign policy problems" (Pigliucci, 2010, p. 128). Large and permanent

endowments allowed these first think tanks financial autonomy, eliminating the need for

either government support, or to fundraise in perpetuity. This is when the operating

model of a 'university without students' came to be. In other words, the academic think

tank was born. Academics and scholars from across the political spectrum filled these

institutions, united by the shared "ideal (if not necessarily the practice) that reason

reaches across ideologies" (Pigliucci, 2010, p. 128). The relatively multi-partisan and

autonomous nature of this first era of think tanks is important to keep in mind.

The second phase followed World War II and brought about the contract research

think tank. In large part this was an effect and affirmation of the crucial role defense

scientists played during the war. This era of think tanks is exemplified by the birth of the

Research and Analysis (RAND) Corporation; which remains the quintessential contract

research think tank in the U.S. today (Abelson, 2000). A departure from the previous era,

most notably, in that the nature of government contracts necessarily established a direct

link between the funding source and the recipients' research. This placed a new financial

constraint on think tanks (Pigliucci, 2010). Although contractors could not dictate

research outcomes, the opening of the door to contract research gave way to influence

over the types of questions being asked; and which think tanks were awarded lucrative

government funded contracts. This was a significant change from the more autonomous

university model of the previous era.

It is generally understood that the modern think tank started to come to

prominence in the 1970s and '80s, and that is the timeline adhered to in broad strokes

here. However, Andrew Rich argues that the birth of the third era of think tanks can be

traced to the Committee for Economic Development (CED), which was founded in 1942.

The CED represented a "new variant on think tank models," and was explicitly backed by

big business. Anticipating the end of World War II, "business leaders were concerned with generating high employment in a postwar economy" (Rich, 2004, p. 43). The CED was considered necessary to help generate ideas to accomplish this task. In this sense the CED could be viewed as a prototype of the modern think tank. Unlike some of the think tanks operating today, however, which are prone to research supporting the interests of the business class, the CED garnered a reputation for being "a maverick in the business community" (Rich, 2004, p. 44).

The modern era of think tanks, like the second, further increased financial constraints on these institutions. Notably, it also added an unremitting focus on media visibility and partisan knowledge production (Medetz, 2012; Rich, 2004; Rich & Weaver, 2000). This phase brought about what can be considered the modern era of think tanks and is characterized by the proliferation of advocacy oriented think tanks (advocacy tanks hereafter). As with the first wave, wealthy interests helped found and fund the think tanks of this era. Distinctly and fatefully dissimilar from the first wave, however, was the explicit intent of the conservative business class to influence policy in reflection of its own interests through these institutions. Well-known conservative business elite Joe Coors for example, helped two Catholic conservatives, Edwin Fuelner and Paul Weyrich, with funding to launch the Heritage Foundation in 1973 (Rich, 2004 & Fawcett, 2014). The now dominant think tank began with the unambiguous intention of challenging Keynesian economics and to offer an alternative to the knowledge production taking place in universities, which Coors found unfavorable to the conservative business class (Medvetz, 2012). The tactics employed by the Heritage Foundation, particularly its overt

ideological position and its incessant focus on media visibility, transformed the field of

think tanks irrevocably (Medvetz, 2012; Rich, 2004, p. 219; & Rich & Weaver, 2000).

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI), which was founded in the 1940s, largely

reflecting the academic style of the Brookings Institution, and always right-of-center,

went through a restructuring in the 1970s that sent it significantly further to the right, and

away from its roots. Previously facing a scarcity in relevance and donations, AEI "saw its

budget quadruple from $1 million to more than $4 million, largely on the strength of

corporate donations" in the first half of the decade (Medvetz, 2012, p. 106). Throughout

this time "executives from Mobil Oil, Standard Oil of California, Continental Can,

Proctor & Gamble, Rockwell International, and Libbey-Owens-Ford" all joined AEI's

board (Medvetz, 2012, p.106). By the end of the 1970s the organization's annual budget

had grown to nearly $10 million. Today AEI operates as an academic-advocacy tank,

offering more in-depth research than the likes of Heritage, but with an overt and

predictable ideological position guiding its research (Medvetz, 2012). It is no surprise or

coincidence then, with its funding and board dominated by Big Oil, AEI has been one of

the main players in knowledge production designed to explicitly cast "doubt on the

claims of the scientific community that fossil fuels cause global warming" (Faber, 2008,

p.88).

The modern era of think tanks denotes an almost complete departure from the

normative ideal which they were born, acting as universities without students. Pigliucci

describes some of the characteristics of this departure, finding it "hard to read a 'report'

from some of these outlets and not think that their 'conclusions' were actually the

premise from which the whole exercise started, a definite departure from the model of a

university—with or without students" (Pigliucci, 2010, p. 129). In support of his position

he cites Abelson quoting the "director of a major policy institute," who says think tanks

"don't want to stimulate public dialogue, they're out to impose their own monologue";

and Leila Hudson, who says: "These institutions have substituted strategy for discipline,

ideological litmus tests for peer review, tactics and technology for cultures and history,

policy for research and pedagogy, and hypotheticals for empiricals" (Pigliucci, 2010, p.

129). It is not hard to see how this is reflected in the polarized and effectively stalemated

climate that exemplifies the modern political milieu in the United States. Until the role of

problematic advocacy tanks in this process is suitably identified and loudly denounced—

particularly by academics and news media—the role played by some of these institutions

contributing to this degradation of discourse is likely to persist.

Although literature on think tanks has increased over the last 25 years, several

significant gaps remain. One that will not be further explored here, but emphatically in

need of mention and additional research, is the absence of research on the racial, ethnic,

and gender demographics of think tank staff, research, and representation in media. The

ways in which marginalized groups are represented in think tanks and their research are

some of the many important questions that it seems have yet to even been posed in

existing literature.

Next, there is a scarce amount of research scrutinizing think tanks from a media

studies perspective. A study examining the ideational process of agenda setting or

framing in news media, as it stems from think tank research, is one example of an area

that could be further pursued. The two new iterations of anti-intellectualism elaborated on

in the next chapter could be used as the basis for such a study. The ways think tanks

engage with social media represents another area rife with potential for scholars of media studies to analyze. How this engagement compares to universities, political advocacy groups, business advocacy groups, non governmental organizations (NGOs), news organizations, public relations organizations, and among think tanks themselves, as well as the level of attention they garner, are just a few of the questions that have yet to be answered. Finally, there is the gap addressed, but certainly not filled here: a lack of literature explicitly fastening think tanks to anti-intellectualism and juxtaposing these institutions to knowledge production in universities.

With these themes in mind, the next chapter examines how modern anti-intellectualism and think tanks are related in more detail, as well as expanding on the terms introduced briefly here, *ideological rationalism* and *unreflective market logic*.

CHAPTER THREE

The Anti-Intellectual Pedagogy of Think Tanks: The Rise of the Pseudo-Intellectual

"I would argue that the more distinct the space of think tanks has become, the more it has blurred the separation between intellectuals and nonintellectuals in America by serving as a conduit for the imposition of political, market, and media forces upon the intellectual field," (Medvetz, 2012, p. 215).

This chapter first provides a review of extant literature that explicitly, or implicitly, ties anti-intellectualism to think tanks. Although literature in this relatively specific intersection of subjects is limited, a few themes are clear. The most prominent and problematic themes that emerge stem from the perverting influence of money and partisan politics on knowledge production and intellectual discourse in these institutions. After the literature review I propose two original terms to help demarcate modern manifestations of anti-intellectualism in order to expand our understanding of the phenomenon. "Without a conceptual language, there is no basis for discussion, conflict, negotiation, or the development of a knowledge based practice" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 10-11). My intention is to provide this conceptual language to properly encapsulate the current era of anti-intellectualism. This aligns with a qualitative approach to knowledge production (Corbin & Strauss, 2008 & Merriam, 2009).

In this chapter these terms are observed and elucidated through historical analysis using think tanks as a heuristic device. This explores these manifestations of anti-intellectualism as historic subjects, and are offered to illuminate both the cultural trends of anti-intellectualism that are most prevalent today, as well as the institutional forces of knowledge production driving them. While my interest in anti-intellectualism goes

beyond think tanks, they arguably represent the finest exemplars of politicized and monetized knowledge production today, and thus make for ideal sites to introduce iterations of anti-intellectualism driven by these corrupting forces. In Chapter Six I provide a myriad of examples, or evidence, narrowing in on one of these cultural trends, demonstrating its expansive nature in modern society. This multilayered approach aligns with the ways anti-intellectualism has previously been conceptualized, adding to a more concrete understanding of this elusive phenomenon. It also offers enough rich description that scholars should be able to then apply these terms to unique circumstances or specific cases they are interested in studying within and beyond think tanks.

Think Tanks and Anti-intellectualism in the Literature

Critiques of anti-intellectualism suggest it is too broad, undefined, and difficult to apply as a conceptual tool (Medvetz, 2012, p. 217). When topics themselves are broad and elude simple definitions, however, these characteristics shift and become a researcher's strategic advantage. This ambiguity requires, at times, a comfort with being imprecise—something academic writing generally, and with good reason, frowns upon. In some cases, and certainly in the case here, getting too specific would be counterproductive. For that reason think tanks are loosely defined in this chapter, and except in a few cases, referred to generically. Other authors have explored in detail and designed elaborate typologies exploring what should and should not qualify as a think tank, but detailing those works would only distract from mine, and thus they are circumvented.

Leaving a somewhat ambiguous definition of think tanks allows for a general discussion, while escaping the overly functionalist view or getting unnecessarily bogged

down in specifics. My ambition is to describe broad trends and the ways some think tanks contribute to them, not to add to the chorus of debate regarding what is and is not a think tank. I am interested in describing the complexities of modern anti-intellectualism. Starting more broadly and imprecisely is necessary in order to give these individual examples context.

My purpose is not to suggest that all, or even most think tanks are contributing to an anti-intellectual discourse in the United States; it is to say enough are to make this is an area worthy of attention and further study. It would be a worthy project for a scholar to document which think tanks are more predisposed to anti-intellectual activities, but that is not the project at hand. I am only working with the assumption that some think tanks are contributing to an anti-intellectual discourse in the United States, not which, or how many. And though this contribution is not empirically quantified here, I am confident it could be in a number of ways.

My intent is also not to discount or discredit the multitude of scholars working in think tanks producing quality research, following their roaming intellect, and who make a distinct effort to separate the influence of donors or partisan ideology from their work. It may be that many think tanks are, by-and-large, bastions of intellectual thought and ideal sites for intellectuals today. None of this changes my critique. Further, none of my critiques of the knowledge production happening in think tanks are meant to imply universities are ideal institutions of knowledge production. Accordingly, universities are also assessed as bastions of modern anti-intellectualism.

Finally, my aim is also not to accuse specific individuals or entire think tanks of maliciously practicing anti-intellectualism. I agree with Hofstadter's analysis in the final

pages of his introduction: "Men do not rise in the morning, grin at themselves in their mirrors, and say: 'Ah, today I shall torment an intellectual and strangle an idea!'" (1963, p. 22). My analysis of contemporary anti-intellectualism does suggest, however, that there is a growing class of think tank experts passing as intellectuals, and portrayed as such in media, who *do* rise in the morning, grin at themselves in their mirrors, and say: 'Ah, today I shall torment the other side's intellectuals, and strangle their ideas regardless of merit!' If this is the case, then understanding how this attitudinal change came about in historical context, what the implications are to modern culture in the United States, and opening up a dialogue on these matters is an important undertaking. I argue the increased prevalence of money and partisan politics in knowledge production are the main factors driving these changes. This makes the nexus of partisan politics, moneyed interests, and institutions of knowledge production an ideal location to explore this historic context.

In the late 1950s think tanks were less prominent players in societal discourse and policy, and operated markedly differently compared to think tanks today (Medvetz, 2012; Rich, 2004; & Smith, 1991). Yet, Hofstadter's description of the most likely arbiters of anti-intellectualism is astonishingly prescient when considering the ways think tanks often operate in the modern era. "[A]nti-intellectualism is not the creation of people … categorically hostile to ideas." Rather, "leading anti-intellectuals are usually men deeply engaged with ideas, often obsessively engaged with this or that outworn or rejected idea" (1963, p. 21). In order for it to become "articulate enough to be traced historically," anti-intellectualism necessitates competent spokespeople. These spokespeople are often "marginal" or "would-be intellectuals, unfrocked or embittered intellectuals, the literate

leaders of the semi-literate, full of seriousness and high purpose about the causes that bring them to the attention of the world" (Hofstadter, 1963, p. 21).

First, this reinforces my choice to study anti-intellectualism in think tanks and universities, as these locations are likely to hold such spokespeople. And second, without naming specific names, it is uncontroversial to say there are a number of experts working in a range of think tanks who match Hofstadter's portrayal of anti-intellectualism's spokesperson—particularly those who are obsessively engaged with outworn and rejected ideas. Profiling these experts would be a worthwhile research goal, but is not the one I am taking on here. Last, Hofstadter singles out Carnegie and Ford, two founders of the first wave of think tanks, as illustrative figures of anti-intellectualism during their time (Hofstadter, 1963, p. 241), suggesting the link between the two may have been engrained from the start.

Think Tanks in America (2012), by Thomas Medvetz, examines think tanks from a sociological perspective. Medvetz' book is based on his dissertation, and the two are among the best-available works on think tanks and anti-intellectualism. Rather than understanding anti-intellectualism as a broader cultural phenomenon, or psychological disposition as Hofstadter and other scholars have, Medvetz views it in Bourdieu's terms as a struggle of expertise within a *field of power*, with different experts vying for influence in society and public policy. In this sense the marketplace of ideas is given serious regard, as Medvetz sees anti-intellectualism operating as a battle of ideas between experts in this marketplace. While he fails to fully account for its integral role in this process, media often act as the de facto referee of the experts and expertise engaged in this competition; and habitually fail to adequately do so (Haas, 2007).

Overall, Medvetz comes across as relatively dismissive of the historical use of anti-intellectualism as a concept, and chooses to understand it as "a strategic stance or 'position-taking' in the intellectual field … that typically involves an attempt by a relatively autonomous intellectual group to discredit its less autonomous counterparts" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 20). This is a major oversimplification, and said "position-taking" could often merely represent the justified pushback by intellectuals against anti-intellectualism. What Medvetz implies is that because relatively autonomous intellectuals (often academics) feel threatened by displacement in public discourse by their less autonomous counterparts (often think tank experts), accusations of anti-intellectualism by the former directed at the latter should be disregarded. This amounts, essentially, to a genetic fallacy and leaves little room for critiques of anti-intellectual dispositions. It also ignores the utility of anti-intellectualism as a conceptual device beyond Medvetz' constricted view. Nonetheless, further demonstrating the validity and importance of anti-intellectualism as a concept, there is not only room within its conceptual tent for Medvetz' understanding of it, the structure of the tent is significantly enriched by his addition.

Though the explicit connection between anti-intellectualism and think tanks is relegated to the last few pages of the book, the implicit relationship between the two is pervasive throughout. For example, Medvetz finds the emergence of proto-think tanks "marginalized or excluded" America's most autonomous intellectuals from the public discourse (2012, p. 80). Yet he fails to identify this as a consequence of anti-elitism and part of a cultural trend and legacy of anti-intellectualism in the United States. Part of the reason think tank experts successfully displaced autonomous and academic intellectuals

from public discourse is their escape from the perception cast on autonomous and academic intellectuals as aloof radicals, detached from society in the Ivory Tower. Anti-elitist attitudes suggest, paradoxically, that these traditional intellectuals cannot understand the world they live in and devote their lives to studying.

Think tank experts, who operate interstitially, have largely and intentionally avoided being placed in the class of effete academic intellectuals Hofstadter referred to as "eggheads." This deliberate avoidance, documented by Medvetz, though not described as such, seems to me to be a reaction to attitudes of anti-elitism in the United States, and represents a strategic and cynical attempt by think tank experts to avoid its wrath. Medvetz' failure to identify it as such is hard to understand, but could be explained through his limited view of anti-intellectualism. This demonstrates one problem with viewing this widespread and longstanding phenomenon as little more than a battle among experts. Medvetz closes his book with a question that is, hopefully, rhetorical, asking if money and political power should direct ideas, or if ideas should direct themselves. In the modern era of anti-intellectualism it seems the former, money and political power, are only expanding their influence and ability to guide ideas to self-serving conclusions.

The decline of public intellectuals in the United States, a common and debatable narrative in discussions of the subject, is inherently linked to the nation's legacy of anti-intellectualism. Rather than "dating to a specific period," the disappearance of public intellectuals "has been a steady process," and lamenting this "is itself wishful thinking and an appeal to a past Americans themselves have never fully experienced" (Sassower, 2014, p. 59). "Unlike the European continent they left behind, where historical continuity was more evident, the newcomers relied upon religious leaders to provide the minimal

semblance of intellectual life." Unsurprisingly, the threat of intellectual ideas and discourse to religious doctrine made early intellectual leaders in the United States "less hospitable—and at times hostile—to religious ideas in particular and philosophical ideas in general" (Sassower, 2014, p. 60). In this way not only has anti-intellectualism been a constant thread throughout United States history, it has also been engrained in our sense of what an intellectual is, and even how they view themselves. This intertwining of anti-intellectualism in intellectual thought has allowed a persistent pseudo-intellectualism, driven by Hofstadter's spokespeople of anti-intellectualism, to thrive in U.S. culture.

This entrenchment of anti-intellectualism in the nation's founding ideals and intellectuals may alter our notion of where the decline of public intellectuals and their ideas began, but it does not negate the existence of a decline, or suggest it has been uniform throughout history. Thus, while attitudes toward, and public acceptance of intellectuals and their potentially deviant ideas in the United States have waxed and waned throughout time, it seems the overall trajectory has been fixed from the start. It is important not to be ahistorical, though, and keeping this context in mind helps avoid such malpractice. Sassower also notes the lack of historic intellectual continuity in the United States is no coincidence, rather it stems from a deliberate effort made "to desecrate and decimate any morsel of dignity—and intellectual activity—the indigenous locals had to offer" (2014, p. 60). This is an important point, and it reminds us intellectual activity throughout time has often been measured on the basis of Eurocentric, racialized, standards.

Keeping this context of a long gradual decline in mind, in chapter five of his book, *Nonsense on Stilts* (2010), Massimo Pigliucci goes into some detail on the

parallel—albeit difficult to directly link—process of a modern decline of public intellectuals and the rise of think tanks. First, Pigliucci gives several definitions of what a public intellectual is, agreeing largely with Noam Chomsky's formulation that public intellectuals, and all citizens for that matter, should "speak truth and expose lies;" and Said, "who said intellectuals 'question patriotic nationalism, corporate thinking, and a sense of class, racial or gender privilege'" (2010, p. 106). He goes on to discuss Richard Posner's concept of *solidarity value*, the idea that people do not want to be informed, and "even less so challenged in their beliefs and worldview" (2010, p. 110). Instead, people would rather "see a champion defending their preconceived view of the world, a sort of ideological knight in shining armor" (2010, p. 110). This entrenchment of worldviews is pervasive in the modern age of anti-intellectualism.

Pigliucci, summarizing Posner, attributes the decline of public intellectuals not to a lack of quantity, but quality, and offers three driving factors. Each of these factors has been impacted by the proliferation of advocacy tanks in the modern era, and each can be significantly better understood through the conceptual lens of anti-intellectualism. First, "intellectuals are sought after at least in part for their entertainment and solidarity values" (2010, p. 111). Put differently, intellectuals today are sought after at least in part for their marketability to different news media and their ideological consistency. This is fueled by news conventions calling for balance and objectivity that make ideological predictability from sources an asset. Advocacy tanks often offer both of these attributes—experts and research geared specifically toward media, and coming from predictable ideological backgrounds. Further, anti-intellectualism, specifically unreflective hedonism, helps explain this decline in light of the struggle for attention between difficult ideas and

entertainment. As a result, rather than intellectuals and their potentially divergent, nuanced, and unpredictable ideas getting airtime, partisan ideological sound bites rule the day.

Second, "public intellectuals just aren't what they used to be," due to "the inevitable march of academia toward increased specialization of its scholars" (Pigliucci, 2010, p. 111). In this case, think tank experts step in and fill the role of a generic public intellectual, further crowding out the field of expertise for academic intellectuals. Part of the explanation behind their ability to do this resides in the legacy of anti-elitism in the United States that legitimates and reifies a suspicion and mistrust of academics. The refusal of a significant portion of the population to accept the scientific consensus on human-caused climate change—fueled by conservative think tanks—exemplifies a dangerous manifestation of anti-elitism (Jacques, Dunlap, & Freeman, 2008). Think tank experts escape this suspicion by operating in an *"interstitial field*, or a semi-structured network of organizations," that overlap "more established spheres of academic, political, business, and media production" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 25). Not quite academics, not quite politicians, not quite business people, not quite public relations experts, and not quite journalists, but a little of each, think tank experts defy simple categorization.

Last, "there is the failure of the so-called marketplace of ideas" (Pigliucci, 2010, p. 112). This failure is not due to a scarcity of ideas within the market, rather, it is due to the lack of a competent public, unable to decide which ideas are worth purchase. And in a democratic society, with a citizenry and media not just poorly suited to judge intellectual ideas, but at times openly hostile toward them (McDevitt, Briziarelli, & Klocke, 2013), such a marketplace may not be an ideal model to begin with. Nonetheless, think tanks

often portray themselves as competitors in this marketplace, championing the model, which helps preclude any true interrogative of its merit. Murray Weidenbaum's book, *The Competition of Ideas: The World of the Washington Think Tanks* (2009), is exemplary of this attitude and amounts largely to a defense of think tanks and their contribution to public discourse and policy. It is weakly sourced, largely anecdotal, and would not pass muster if it was submitted for any serious academic peer review process—highlighting on a micro level some of the macro issues with think tank research; a lack of clear and acceptable standards in knowledge production (Haas, 2007 & Medvetz, 2013).

In addition, think tanks have offered elites a site to fund research that often, rather than adding sincere ideas to the marketplace, obscures and degrades the market's overall value (Medvetz, 2013). This happens both as a result of think tanks contributing policy preferences of elites disguised as detached scientific findings, and research lacking any standardized process that is presented on par with ideas and research coming from autonomous and academic intellectuals that goes through a peer review process and responds to valid challenges made by the scientific community. Anti-intellectualism, when considered an attitude or notion casting suspicion toward critical thought, and even more specifically anti-elitist dispositions, are emboldened by this questionable research as it legitimates their suspicions, leaving the impression all research is partisan, advocacy research, which is not the case.

Briefly, let me digress to note the argument that the narrative of a current decline in regard to public intellectuals is incorrect, and that the contemporary era actually represents an intellectual renaissance regarding the ability for intellectuals to engage with

publics. Anyone can create a blog, write a letter to the editor, or engage with the public

directly in a number of other ways and many scholars are doing so. There is some merit

to this pluralistic-view insofar as the possibilities these new communication technologies

open for intellectual engagement with publics, however, ultimately it is too sanguine.

Particularly when considered in light of a citizenry unfit to judge the merit of their ideas,

the ability for intellectuals to engage directly with the public matters less and less. If

academics or intellectuals make their findings available to the public directly, and a large

enough portion of that public is too distracted (unreflective hedonism), unable to

accurately judge the information amongst an overwhelming plethora of contradictory

options (anti-rationalism), is overly suspicious of its source (anti-elitism), or is

ideologically opposed to the findings (ideological rationalism), then the impact of these

intellectuals and their ideas is limited. Contemporary studies of political neuroscience,

support this premise, and are incorporated into my analysis shortly.

A New Era Needs New Terms: 'Ideological Rationalism' and 'Market Logic'

Before elaborating further on what I argue are the most prevalent and problematic

modern manifestations of anti-intellectualism, it is helpful to first quickly revisit its

original three dimensions. First, anti-rationalism, or the appeal to the warmth of emotion,

over the cold hard logic of reason, is what Jacoby argues defines anti-intellectualism in

the age of unreason. Historically rooted in fundamental religious beliefs, anti-rationalism

is best epitomized by creationists—who are not coincidentally emboldened by a think

tank, the Discovery Institute, which provides a pseudoscientific backing for these beliefs

(Jacoby, 2008). Without negating the importance placed on anti-rationalism by

Hofstadter and Jacoby, it seems there is another, bigger threat to intellectual discourse

that is essentially a modern, secular mutation of anti-rationalism—ideological rationalism.

The very nature of anti-rationalists essentially precludes them from taking part in a rational debate, curbing, though not stopping (Giroux, 2005), their influence on public discourse and policy. This has forced creationists to rebrand under the banner "intelligent design" in an effort to make their anti-rational policies more palatable in places like public schools. These efforts to sneak religious, anti-rational ideas into the public education system, under the guise of scientific knowledge are related to, and potentially more worrisome than the old guard of anti-rationalists. This increasingly common partisan ideological basis of knowledge, often produced in think tanks and amplified in the echo chamber of partisan news media, is more accurately conveyed with the epithet ideological rationalism.

This does not mean anti-rationalism should be discarded entirely. On the contrary, ideological rationalism is best understood as a subset of anti-rationalism. This is an important point to understanding anti-intellectualism, and ideological rationalism as a manifestation of it. As a cultural phenomenon anti-intellectualism is a broad, deliberately vague and elusive concept, and each dimension of anti-intellectualism can only be understood as they relate to the phenomenon as a whole. Ideological rationalism takes this a logical step further, representing a new iteration of an old anti-intellectual tradition. This may be a natural consequence of modernity. In the Age of Information even those with anti-rational dispositions require increasingly nuanced and informed bases for their beliefs to withstand challenges from rational actors.

Think tanks take advantage of anti-rational dispositions by providing superficially logical foundations for irrational and emotional beliefs, as well as contesting the more traditional and refereed knowledge production and dissemination that happens in universities and news media. The contestation of knowledge production brought on by think tanks, challenging the more traditional arena of academic knowledge production, is relatively new, and offers partisans and wealthy elites an ideal location to fund research that reflects their interests, but appears unbiased, simply meant to help solve societal problems (Medvetz, 2012). "[F]acing a problem of excessive openness in the field of expertise, [conservative activist-experts] undertook an aggressive closure strategy, or an attempt to 'certify' their knowledge through the creation of new research centers" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 186). This strategy of closure is inherently anti-intellectual, and highlights the creation of ideological rationalism in think tanks. Along with this, "the conservative discourse of dependency gained public momentum through the formation of the space of think tanks" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 186-187).

In chapter five of his book, "From Deprivation to Dependency: Expert Discourse and the American Welfare Debate," Medvetz outlines the impact of think tanks on welfare reform debates in the 1990s limiting policy considerations and framing the debate in said discourse of dependency, emphasizing individual responsibility for poverty, downplaying the role of race, and regarding welfare recipients as "both the root of major social ills and a case of fiscal irresponsibility" (2012, p. 201). He contends "the suppliers of intellectual discourse who had the greatest impact on the welfare reform process were those who shaped the terms of the debate itself during the three decades preceding Clinton's presidency" (2012, p. 210). The role of think tanks in this process "cannot be

captured by a simple 'billiard ball' model of causality," but instead must be considered

"in terms of their reconfiguring effects on the social structure—not just on the formal

institutions of politics, but also on the market, the media, and the space of knowledge

production" (2012, p. 210).

He then argues that their influencing the welfare reform debate "should be

described less in terms of what think tanks produced than in terms of what they

precluded, especially with respect to the potential relevance of more autonomous

intellectuals" (2012, p. 210, emphasis in original). This tactic of preclusion, closing off

possibilities and narrowing the debate, is an anti-intellectual process, suggesting that

understanding think tanks in terms of, and as arbiters of, anti-intellectualism is a useful

method.

The potentially contentious "implied counterfactual" point in Medvetz' argument

regarding the impact of think tanks on welfare reform debates is "that in the absence of a

highly developed space of think tanks … autonomously produced social scientific

knowledge likely would have played a greater role in shaping the terms and conditions of

policy debate after the 1960s" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 211). This claim is contentious in that

given the United States' prominent history of anti-intellectualism, one could argue that

"social scientific knowledge would not have altered the political orthodoxy" anyway (p.

211). Of these two possibilities Medvetz finds "the first to be far more compelling," and I

tend to agree with him. Unlike the motivated knowledge production that came from think

tanks, autonomous social scientific knowledge would not have narrowly defined the

parameters of the welfare reform debate, and avoiding this narrowing of possibilities is

one of the key differences between an anti-intellectual and an intellectual appraisal of options.

Further, until the advent of advocacy tanks in the modern era, the United States "had followed a trajectory broadly similar to that of other advanced countries in granting scientific and technical argumentation a central role in political debate" (2012, p. 212).

My view, then, is that for autonomous social scientists to have remained marginal to political life after the 1960s, even in the absence of competition from heteronomous counterparts (of which think tanks are now the exemplars), the United States would have had to become an extreme outlier among nations by expunging scientific and technical argumentation from politics altogether.

(Medvetz, 2012, p. 212)

This last quote implies, rather than expunging scientific and technical argumentation from politics, the advent of advocacy tanks and their entry into the space of knowledge production corrupted the arena, marginalizing, and effectively replacing scientific and/or obfuscating technical argumentation in American politics in favor of a motivated and perverted form of knowledge production.

Next, anti-elitism and unreflective instrumentalism can be looked at as the two relate to one another. First, anti-elitism historically refers to a trend of anti-elitism directed at the cultural elite. University professors, liberal media and politicians, and Hollywood celebrities populate this class. On the other side of the coin, the economic elite, personified by the corporate elite and the super rich, frequently escape the populist wrath of anti-elitists (Rigney, 2011). This is a vital observation, yet for some reason it is only mentioned in passing by Rigney. The prevailing myth of meritocracy in the United

States (McNamee & Miller Jr., 2009) that has allowed wealthy elites to consistently escape this wrath is directly related to unreflective instrumentalism.

In extant literature, unreflective instrumentalism is often seen as concomitant to instrumentalist tendencies in higher education (Claussen, 2004 & Rigney, 1991). This is a myopic view, as more broadly instrumentalism simply signifies the inclination to view potential outcomes to given situations primarily on a monetary evaluation. Instrumentalist views have been pervasive throughout the capitalist-driven history of the United States, but this predisposition has certainly increased in the last few decades. Because intellectual activities are not limited to the halls of the academy, the potential damage caused by unreflective instrumentalism includes an all-encompassing range of intellectual pursuits and societal questions. The pervasive attitude and justification of instrumentalist evaluations of issues in the United States helps explain why the economic elite have escaped anti-elitist wrath—they (either an individual or a corporation) entered a fair competition in the free market, fought the hardest, had the best ideas, and won (McNamee & Miller Jr., 2009). Or so the story goes.

This confluence of dynamics—the evasion of anti-elitist ire by the business class, understood partially as a result of the persistent instrumentalist slant in American life, embedded in its legacy of anti-intellectualism—exposes the need for a better idiom to describe this modern phenomenon. As a dimension of anti-intellectualism, unreflective market logic encompasses this related, though meaningfully different trend. The argument is not that scholars with an affinity for free market principles are automatically practicing unreflective market logic—though they are likely to have a higher propensity to than scholars without such an affinity. It is to suggest that when scholars, policy

makers, or institutions begin with the foregone conclusion that the market is a panacea for every issue, or delimit possibilities primarily based on instrumental criteria, they are practicing unreflective market logic. It is also to suggest that this practice is common in advocacy tanks, and is a generally expanding trend (Domhoff, 2010 & Medvetz, 2012).

As part of the culture of anti-intellectualism in the United States, unreflective market logic represents a combination of anti-elitism—with the dearth of populist ire directed at economic elites taking on particular significance—and unreflective instrumentalism—with the imbuement of instrumentalist tendencies beyond higher education being particularly significant. Next, ideological rationalism and unreflective market logic will be explored in more depth, but their roots in the legacy of anti-intellectualism, and its historic dimensions, are important to keep in mind.

Ideological Rationalism

Before going further into describing what ideological rationalism is and how it functions, it is important to note that there are at least two distinct types: liberal (leftist) ideological rationalism and conservative (rightist) ideological rationalism. Each of these has different institutional histories, makes appeals to different audiences, to different emotions, and through different logics. Part of the explanation for this is the "impressively stable," primary dimensions (Jost & Amodio, 2012) underlying, motivating, and distinguishing liberal and conservative ideologies:

> (a) [A]dvocating versus resisting social change (as opposed to tradition), and (b) rejecting versus accepting inequality. Individual preferences with respect to these two dimensions are theorized to emanate from basic psychological orientations

toward uncertainty, threat, and conformity (i.e., epistemic, existential, and relational motives). (Jost & Amodio, 2012, p. 56)

Because "civilization has been drifting, over a period of many centuries, in the direction of increasing social, political, and economic equality … resistance to change has generally entailed a defense of inequality." (Jost & Amodio, 2012, p. 56). This makes it "reasonable to suggest … the left-right difference primarily juxtaposes 'the conservative emphasis on tradition and conformity and the progressive's emphasis on change in the interests of the people'" (Jost & Amodio, 2012, p. 56). When there is "at least some range (or menu) of possible opinions," scholars hypothesize "conservative ideology should be more appealing to individuals who are either temporarily or chronically high in needs to manage uncertainty and threat," with liberal ideology appealing to those "low in such needs" (Jost & Amodio, 2012, p. 57).

Political neuroscience, an emerging "interdisciplinary venture that tackles questions of mutual interest to political scientists and psychologists [and anyone interested in understanding the nature of modern politics] by drawing, at least in part, on the theories, methods, and assumptions of biology, especially neuroscience," (Jost, Nam, Amodio, & Bavel, 2014, p. 4) supports these contentions. One review of "extensive behavioral" and "neuroscientific evidence" indicates "epistemic and existential motives to attain certainty and security (or, conversely, to resolve ambiguity and threat) are positively associated with attraction to conservative (or rightist) ideology but negatively associated with attraction to liberal (or leftist) ideology" (Jost & Amodio, 2012, p. 62).

A "meta-analytic review of 88 studies conducted in 12 countries between 1958 and 2002," found "situational and dispositional variables associated with the management

of threat and uncertainty were robust predictors of political orientation" (Jost & Amodio,

2012, p. 57).

> Specifically, death anxiety, system instability, fear of threat and loss, dogmatism,
>
> intolerance of ambiguity, and personal needs for order, structure, and closure were
>
> all positively associated with conservatism (or negatively associated with
>
> liberalism). Conversely, openness to new experiences, cognitive complexity,
>
> tolerance of uncertainty, and self-esteem were all positively associated with
>
> liberalism (or negatively associated with conservatism). (Jost & Amodio, 2012, p.
>
> 57)

Because of these distinctions, appeals to emotion meant to construct a more thoughtful,

rigid, and/or powerful ideology, all among the goals of ideological rationalism, must

target liberals and conservatives differently. Appeals to conservatives are likely to target

fear, and to provide a sense of certainty, order, and structure. Appeals to liberals are more

likely to target openness to complexity, a sense of what is best for the interests of the

people and equality, and to take advantage of a sense of self-esteem. This seems

counterintuitive at first—how can one appeal to openness in order to foreclose debate?

But on further inspection the possibility becomes clear. For instance, the "greening" of

products or politicians, in which they appeal to environmental concerns generally held by

liberals in order to sell products or to gain political favor, rather than actually addressing

those concerns.

In this chapter, and in any considerable depth in this thesis, I mostly shine light on

the history of conservative ideological rationalism. This is a limitation and a significant

gap that my future work will focus on filling, but it is also justified. In a basic sense

Hofstadter views the intellect as threatening to power and the status quo, which conservatism implicitly supports, thus aligning his analysis with my choice to focus on conservative ideological rationalism. Identifying liberal ideological rationalism's full history, which actors benefit from its construction, which actors are marginalized by it, and how prevalent it is, are not explored here but would make a worthwhile project. Further, due to the outright effort of conservative activists through advocacy tanks to create a new form of knowledge production in the last several decades, beginning my analysis on the right is justifiable. Last, public polling and analysis shows, "partisan warfare, like polarization, is highly asymmetric. Animosity and ill will are significantly more concentrated at the conservative end of the ideological spectrum" (Ingraham, 2014, para. 5).

Louis Althusser suggests "[i]deology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (1970, p. 162). Although he dismisses it, Althusser's description of why such an imaginary is needed, and who creates it, is too eloquent to pass up sharing. More importantly than its eloquence, while Althusser finds it too simplistic and false, I believe with a slight modification it broadly explains the construction of ideology rather well.

> Priests or Despots are responsible. They 'forged' the Beautiful Lies so that, in the
>
> belief that they were obeying God, men would in fact obey the Priests and
>
> Despots, who are usually in alliance in their imposture, the Priests acting in the
>
> interests of the Despots or *vice versa*, according to the political positions of the
>
> 'theoreticians' concerned. There is therefor cause for the imaginary transposition
>
> of the real conditions of existence: that cause is the existence of a small number of

cynical men who base their domination and exploitation of the 'people' on a

falsified representation of the world which they have imagined in order to enslave

other minds by dominating their imaginations. (1970, p. 163)

If we replace "Priests" and "Despots" with "money" and "politics" in the above quote, its

relevancy in the modern era becomes clear. These are the driving forces behind the

modern era of anti-intellectualism.

Rather than being strictly anti-rational, ideological rationalism is based on a

specific and often thoroughly constructed rationale that stems from a predetermined

worldview. If anti-rationalism is an appeal to the warmth of emotion over reason,

ideological rationalism can be thought of as an appeal to emotion through a specifically

crafted reason. In addition to understanding it in relation to Posner's *solidarity values*,

ideological rationalism can be understood as a manifestation of identity politics, which is

the tendency to view political decisions through one primary, unifying perspective. The

term has been used to refer to a range of phenomena, including multiculturalism, the

women's movement, civil rights, LGBTQ activism, and much more (Bernstein, 2005, p.

47).

Most often, and sometimes pejoratively, identity politics are associated with the

tightknit bonds of historically oppressed or marginalized communities, and its use as a

unifying tool to help advance their interests. At times throughout history such bonds have

been formed for the purposes of survival, representation, and generally come as a

response to oppression or displacement brought on by the dominant group. Following the

successes of liberal social movements in the 1960s, particularly the Civil Rights

Movement, identity politics have been appropriated by a group that does not share a

history of oppression or marginalization—mostly White, cis-gendered, heterosexual, often fundamentally religious, and mostly conservative, anti-rationalists. Political and economic elites have taken advantage of this group's fear of losing power, or of individual group member's personal sense of a lack of power, to encourage a tribal, unified perspective. This, among other factors, has turned the Republican Party into "the true marker of identity politics in contemporary America" (Edge, 2010, p. 431).

It is important to note that conservative ideological rationalism is inexorably tied to, and perhaps began with the Republican Southern Strategy, meant to coalesce White voters in the South into a Republican coalition after the 1960s. It is also important to note that following the election of the nation's first Black President, we have seen a rebirth, or rebranding, of this same type of strategy, aptly dubbed the "Southern Strategy 2.0" by African American Studies scholar, Thomas Edge (Edge, 2010). Seen in this light, conservative ideological rationalism is understood as an heir to the legacy of anti-intellectualism and paranoia in American thought, and as a unifying tool that takes advantage of this amalgamation to maintain a consistent and narrow worldview among a historically privileged group.

This unifying tool has been crafted, in part, with the specific intention of bringing disenfranchised White voters to the Republican Party. And it is embedded in racially divisive logic as its construction is rooted, largely, in the resentment felt by many White people toward Black Americans following the Civil Rights Movement. As a result, conservative ideological rationalism is likely to be increasingly prominent during times of racial tension, and/or when a heightened awareness of race enters the American

psyche. Given the ways it appeals to White resentment, it would be particularly true when the supremacy of Whiteness feels threatened.

G. William Domhoff comes closest to tracing this mutation of anti-rationalism as it relates to think tanks, though he does not explicitly tie it to anti-intellectualism. Following the 1960s "ultraconservative foundations and think tanks" took a more assertive stance, and then took advantage of the turn to the Republican Party by White Americans resentful of changes brought on by the civil rights, feminist, environmental, and gay-rights movements. "Joining with the new Christian right and longstanding middle-class rightists, the corporate ultraconservatives" created a political coalition to advocate free market, antigovernment solutions to the economic problems of the 1970s, and also to rollback gains made by liberal social movements over the preceding decade (Domhoff, 2009, p. 967). By taking advantage of the aforementioned resentment, elites funding this new political coalition crafted a specific rationale, rooted in existing conservative ideology, and fueled by anti-rational thought.

Considered from this perspective, conservative ideological rationalism can be understood as a rationale deliberately constructed by political and economic elites, designed to appeal to latent and overt tendencies of anti-intellectualism in American thought, as well as long-standing racial divides. This rationale combines anti-elitist trends that particularly mistrust or impugn liberal academic and media elites, with unreflective instrumentalist trends that place a constant and disproportionate focus on monetary evaluations of societal questions, and with anti-rational dispositions that favor appeals to emotion over appeals to logic, or that fail to adequately evaluate logic or scientific processes. From this melting pot of anti-intellectualism a very specific rationale has been

crafted through a number of cultural apparatuses, notably conservative think tanks and media. This has created and reified a coalition of mostly White Americans, historically and presently advantaged people in American society, who feel they are persecuted, facing discrimination, marginalization, and even racism, and need protection against these disadvantages. At the same time this coalition is formed around hegemonic beliefs that unreflectively support, advocate, and reproduce outcomes that benefit elite interests, whether or not they align with the logical interests of coalition members.

This is not the result of a lack of information, rather, it is the result of the repeated denouncement of particular types of knowledge—that coming from liberal media and universities—combined with ideological knowledge production designed to provide a sophisticated rationale that deliberately obfuscates emotion and knowledge. This appeals to preexisting belief systems and anti-intellectual logic. Perhaps this type of coalition building is a necessary feature of late-stage democracy, but it currently seems to work to the U.S. democracy's detriment. It also seems toxic to the state of race relations in the country, as it makes race into a wedge issue and entrenches voters along racial divides. The "role of race in forming the current incarnations of the major political parties has been well documented," particularly the coalescence of conservative Southern White Democratic voters who absconded to the Republican Party "after the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965" (Edge, 2010, p. 432). A glance at some of the modern Republican Party's appeals to racism shows their abundance in the last forty years.

Nixon's Southern Strategy, Reagan's "states' rights" speech in Philadelphia (Mississippi) and invocation of the "welfare queens," the Willie Horton ad, Jesse Helms's campaigns against Harvey Gantt, Karl Rove's smear campaign against

John McCain in the 2000 South Carolina primary, the suppression of voting rights

in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, and Bob Corker's "Playboy ad"

against Harold Ford Jr. in 2006. (Edge, 2010, p. 432)

Many of the aforementioned examples were aided and legitimated by research and

messaging produced in advocacy tanks, particularly the demonization and racialization of

welfare recipients (Medvetz, 2012).

Keeping this racial divide among political parties in mind, Cass R. Sunstein

recently coined the term *partyism*, "a form of hostility and prejudice that operates across

political lines," that leads to a devaluation of "proposals from the opposing party" and a

refusal "to enter into agreements with its members, even if [an] independent assessment,

freed from partyism, would be favorably disposed toward those proposals or agreements"

(Sunstein, 2014, p. 1). Sunstein argues this is among the most problematic and overt

sources of division, vitriol, and prejudice in the United States today, going so far as to say

that "in some cases partyism is worse than racism" (Sunstein, 2014, p. 2).

I do not see this as a helpful comparison or one that can be judged effectively

without a strict definition of what is meant by "worse." Surely Sunstein does not mean to

say the human impact, suffering, and harm to society between discrimination rooted in

political identity is worse than the human impact, suffering, and harm to society caused

by racism. For all of his examples of partyism, none include people being killed

disproportionately by the police for their political identity (Gabrielson, Grochowski

Jones; & Sagara, 2014), funneled disproportionately from schools-to-prisons (Ferriss,

2015), into substandard public housing (Seitles, 1996) disproportionally punished for

similar crimes and at higher rates (Abrams, Bertrand, & Mullainathan, 2012), and subject

to the historic legacies of slavery, genocide, exclusion from citizenship, land-theft, and other forms of racialized oppression found throughout the United States' past and present that impact us today. However, I also find the comparison peculiar in that it implies partyism and racism are mutually exclusive, or at least separable. Given the racialized nature and makeup of the two major political parties in the United States, it seems far from being mutually exclusive or distinct, partyism and racism are in many ways inseparable. To his credit, it seems by "worse" Sunstein simply means partyism is more widespread in some areas, particularly hiring practices.

Putting these critiques aside, partyism can be looked to as an important aspect of ideological rationalism specifically, and anti-intellectualism in general, as it represents an entrenchment of worldviews sealed by ideology, that halts an honest or intellectual search for veracity.

> If the statutory status quo is pretty good, and if further action from the national government would likely make things worse, then there would little reason to lament the existence of partyism. In such circumstances, partyism might turn out to be a valuable safeguard. But if a nation faces serious problems, and if imaginable initiatives would helpfully address them, then partyism might turn out to create significant dangers for both peace and prosperity. (Sunstein, 2014, p. 18)

Unpacking this quote a few things become clear. First, partyism benefits the status quo. This supports a system of White supremacy, (C. Mills, 1997) as well as the preferences of wealthy elites (Curtis, 2013). Second, partyism forecloses our ability to consider "imaginable initiatives." Or, put differently, it has a moderating, anti-intellectual effect on the extent of intellectual possibilities. In this way it acts as a system of social control,

limiting the assortment of possible alternatives or challenges to elites. Third, partyism slows "action from the national government," which is often the preference of conservatives and the Republican Party. In this way, though Sunstein demonstrates partyism is an attitude that applies to both political parties, it seems its institutional prevalence in political processes inherently benefits those holding conservative dispositions and aims. Ironically, it seems partyism itself holds fundamentally partisan connotations.

The contribution of think tanks to the era of ideological rationalism may already be apparent in light of the rise of advocacy tanks, but a few examples from extant literature fully crystallize this point and highlight the implications to modern policy debates in the United States. Writing in the late 1980s and early '90s, James A. Smith noted that in the "ideologically charged" environment at the time, experts and policy makers were no longer able to agree, and thus could no longer come to a consensus on policy decisions. During this era drawing "the line between the politically disinterested scholar—more accurately the scholar wrestling honestly with" biases and preconceptions that could cloud their research—and a hired gun posing as an intellectual, pushing an "unshakeable political position" became increasingly difficult (Smith, 1991, p 231). This arresting of development in the policy arena brought on in part by the entrance of think tank experts onto the field of expertise has since continued relatively unabated (Rich, 2004 & Medvetz, 2012).

Medvetz argues modern think tanks are "less and less committed to genuine inquiry" meant to "stimulate enlightened policy decisions," and "more oriented to *deepening well-worn grooves of a paralyzed debate, frozen in place by the contending*

power of potential winners and losers" (Medvetz, 2013, citing Clemons, p. 146, italics added). This demonstrates how think tanks have degraded policy debates and societal discourse through their research. Rather than helping policy makers or citizens gain informed opinions and breakdown important topics, they have provided the stones and cement that form and seal the walls of societies' entrenched partisan debates. Media amplify this through a false equivalence of think tank research.

> The news media's understanding of think tank equivalence may be the result of advocacy think tanks' making all research appear unreliable. Or, it may be that think tank self- promotion has convinced the news media that advocacy and mixed academic and advocacy model think tank research is equally rigorous as education research that adheres to the professional norms. Perhaps the news media presume that research rigor matters little to the public, making the difference less important to journalists. (Haas, 2007, p. 93)

The contribution of think tanks to a culture of ideological rationalism are also seen when any "subject that is important or at all controversial, the lay reader is routinely confronted by experts saying conflicting things," (Rich, 2004, p. 215) undercutting the influence of expertise on policy. "People wield their social science studies like short swords and shields in the ideological wars" (Rich, 2004, p. 215, quoting Henry Aaron of Brookings). This gets at both the contribution of think tanks to ideologically based knowledge production, and the implications this has to policy debates. Rather than inform debate or move policy forward as think tanks have in past eras, the practice of ideological rationalism cements our views and debases knowledge production in general. This helps justify anti-elitist dispositions as it leaves the impression that all knowledge production

stems from or was constructed to support partisan intentions, which is simply not the case.

Finally, think tanks exert influence "even through the production of highly degraded forms of social scientific knowledge… knowledge that few autonomous social scientists would recognize as social science" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 179). In spite of this, and even when their recommendations are only persuasive within ideological echo chambers, "think tanks may still produce a nullifying effect on the value of expertise itself" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 180). Again, this demonstrates precisely how knowledge production entwined in ideology degrades societal trust in expertise, and thus contributes directly to a culture of anti-intellectualism in the United States. In this climate of mistrust the prospects of society coming together to form an efficacious and more equitable social compact, as seen following the second World War, seems further and further from the realm of possibilities. Whether or not this devaluation of expertise is a goal or just a byproduct of the conservative business class's entry into the realm of ideas and knowledge production is unclear, but the effect remains and is to the benefit of the status quo, which is perpetuated through inaction.

As mentioned, in the United States the status quo supports and reinforces a specific racial hierarchy, founded on White supremacy (C. Mills, 1997). Ideological rationalism, like other dimensions of anti-intellectualism, does not just manifest in institutions. There are cultural trends interwoven with and driven by these institutional forces. Some of these seem relatively innocuous, like fears of an imagined "War on Christmas," while others are more dangerous and fuel or feed off racist or bigoted stereotypes, from racialized perceptions of who uses welfare programs or benefits from

affirmative action policies, to a sense of victimhood and even accusations of reverse

racism coming from White people (Edge, 2010). The term, reverse racism, is a misnomer,

as racism cannot be separated from access to and control of resources, i.e. political,

economic, and cultural power. Given the historic and contemporary position of power

disproportionately held by White people, and the social construction of Whiteness in the

United States at the top of the racial hierarchy, it is not possible for White people to

suffer from racism, reverse or otherwise.

Kwame Ture (formerly known as Stokely Carmichael) and Charles Hamilton

explain this in *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (1967), their foundational text on

the subject. "Racism is not merely exclusion on the basis of race, but exclusion for the

purpose of subjugating or maintaining subjugation" (Ture & Hamilton, 1967, p. 47).

Conservative ideological rationalism, through appeals to emotion and existing racial

stereotypes, amplifies and justifies the misperceptions that allow these subjugations to

continue unabated. In this sense, it is an inherently racialized phenomenon. It may be that

anti-intellectualism is itself a racialized phenomenon in that it forecloses challenges to the

status quo. Given the stratified racial hierarchy found in the United States since before its

founding, and which continues today, benefactors of the status quo are disproportionately

White, and thus White people unduly benefit when it stands unchallenged (C. Mills,

1997). At the same time, oppressed and marginalized groups in the United States,

particularly Black Americans, have been systematically excluded from these benefits, and

thus suffer disproportionately when the status quo goes unopposed. This inherently

racialized and even racist nature of anti-intellectualism seems relatively underexplored,

and while going further remains beyond my scope, it seems an area worthy of future research and consideration.

On a grand scale, increased political and even cultural gridlock in the United States, as well as the increased sorting of voters along partisan lines, has coincided with, and been amplified by, the increase of advocacy tanks and ideological rationale in recent decades (Smith, 1991; Rich, 2004; & Medvetz, 2012). Concretely forming a causal connection between these phenomena and institutions is not the task I have taken on, but as demonstrated here, the correlation is apparent through existing research. Ideological rationalism, then, can be seen as a subset of anti-rationalism, all underneath the broader conceptual umbrella of anti-intellectualism. Going even further down the rabbit hole, unreflective market logic can be understood as the confluence of a lack of anti-elitism toward economic elites, and the seepage of instrumentalism, represented by utopian capitalist market logic, into every corner of American life. It is to this concept I now turn.

Unreflective Market Logic

It is no coincidence that Rigney identified business culture as a vital force behind unreflective instrumentalism, or that he predicted unreflective instrumentalism would be the driving force of anti-intellectualism in the future (Rigney, 1991). Indeed, the suggestion that the relationship between economic elites and unreflective instrumentalism has come to in part define the modern era of anti-intellectualism will come as no surprise to anyone with an interest in this area of study. However, there is yet to be an explicit term for this manifestation of anti-intellectualism and given the relatively narrow focus of unreflective instrumentalism on higher education, it seems this concept is lacking. Whether or not unreflective market logic becomes the preferred nomenclature to

encompass these new, or perhaps simply more prevalent trends, is not important, but the need for some designation is apparent.

In *Rich, Free, and Miserable: The Failure of Success in America* (2010), John Brueggemann designates the United States a *market society*, and vividly describes the pervasiveness of market logic on the nation's culture. Likening it to water, market logic is "nebulous and fluid but also potent and unrelenting, it seeps in to every space of our lives, contaminating all" (pp. 10-11). Market logic is useful and even-life giving when contained, as "it leaks into other places in sufficient amounts, though, market logic begins to corrode other aspects of American society" (2010, pp. 10-11). And "[b]lind commitment to market logic and its expansion, without any concern for other factors, is economically short-sighted and morally disastrous (2010, p. 29). Within this market society the individual ability to make money, specifically in regard to minimal taxation and regulation, dominates the discourse (2010, p. 60). The themes of minimal taxation and regulation are prevalent in think tanks, and practically ubiquitous among those on the right of the political spectrum.

Neal Curtis, writing from the United Kingdom, finds that pervasive market logic is not limited to the United States, though it certainly finds a nurturing environment here. In *Idiotism: Capitalism and the Privatisation of Life* (2013), he effectively delivers on the task of his book:

> [T]o set out this enclosure of the socio-economic and political imaginary, and
> show how the market has become the measure of truth as well as the ultimate
> arbiter of every social relationship. This dogmatic condition whereby the
> principles of privatisation – individualism, financialisation, free markets, and

commodification – encompass every aspect of life I have chosen to call idiotism. (2013, p. 11)

As it relates to politics Curtis describes idiotism as a "dual track of depoliticisation," which reduces the "concerns of traditional politics to market relations," and manages "society in accordance with the interests of the hegemonic capitalist fraction" (2013, p. 110). This attitude, its historic manifestations, and the institutions behind its creation and perpetuation have not historically been considered the most prominent aspects of anti-intellectualism, but today represent some of the most common examples of the phenomenon.

What Brueggemann calls the market society, and Curtis calls idiotism are both related to unreflective market logic and embodied within it; noting two distinct differences. First, unreflective market logic has been identified as a modern manifestation of anti-intellectualism; and second, think tanks have been identified as major purveyors of unreflective market logic. Neither Brueggemann nor Curtis brings these factors into their works in any impactful manner. My intention is not to overemphasize the role think tanks play in any of these concepts. It is to simply say that these institutions are one understudied factor among many others. It is also to emphasize the limiting nature of market logic on intellectual thought throughout society, engraining it within the broader phenomenon of anti-intellectualism.

There are at least two aspects of unreflective market logic influence on think tanks in need of consideration: The input of market logic, that is economic elites purchasing entry into the realm of knowledge production; and the output of market logic, that is research promoting views sympathetic to these elite interests. This is not to suggest

a functionalist or directly reciprocal process, just that there are two unique ends that can

be distinguished and could be studied empirically in future research. On the input side,

the history of economic elites funding think tanks is well known. In a case study on

welfare policy Medvetz found that the presence of advocacy tanks enabled economic

elites to present their arguments by proxy, and as "a series of technical and moral

assertions," rather than self-interested claims. Or put differently, advocacy tanks allowed

opponents of welfare to "develop their own form of expertise" (2012, pp. 187-88). This

was precisely the point. These arguments are also routinely grounded in racial

stereotypes, overemphasizing the use of these services among Black people and People of

Color, who are then shamed for doing so.

Eric Lipton, an investigative reporter, has spent a good deal of time uncovering

this process and offers a host of examples. In one case he even quotes a Japanese

diplomat who plainly states the expectation of results that comes with funding think tank

research. "If we put actual money in, we want to have a good result for that money—as it

is an investment." He also cites researchers from think tanks saying that funding comes

"with certain expectations," and that at times this has had a "chilling effect on their

research." In general, self-censorship is cited as the most common form of censorship,

highlighting the difficulty in showing directly reciprocal processes between the input and

output of particular research outcomes (Lipton, Williams, & Confessore, 2014).

In an interview on National Public Radio (NPR), Lipton offers a domestic

example of think tanks funded by particular elites, in this case the Employment Policies

Institute (EPI), which gets much of its funding from the restaurant industry. The EPI

presents itself as, "a non-profit research organization dedicated to studying public policy

issues surrounding employment growth," with a particular focus on "issues that affect entry-level employment" (Employment Policies Institute, 2015). Under this banner the EPI offers an abundance of studies and research, designed to look academic, and that consistently argue raising the minimum wage would be detrimental to the economy. Not coincidentally, the restaurant industry actively opposes raising the minimum wage, as it would hurt their bottom line, and lobbies Congress through the National Restaurant Association, who can then turn to cite the EPI's research to support their position. This creates an echo chamber in which the EPI is able to offer support for the preferred position of its funders under the guise of a detached research organization that is simply interested in giving quality recommendations on policy issues (Gross, 2014). This cycle is common and problematic.

The input of market logic is readily observable in examples like the funding of the Heritage Foundation by Joe Coors, in the restructuring of AEI in the late 1970s, and in Lipton's examples above. Less obvious and common in literature are examples of this occurring on the left. Think tanks on this end of the political spectrum are not immune, however, as they are often funded by the same class of economic elites as their counterparts. Though more research is needed in this area, one study demonstrates how funding of select liberal organizations (both think tanks, foundations, and media) is the result of a deliberate effort to "channel all protest and dissent into activities that do not threaten the wealth and power of the large corporations, or their access to the resources and markets of the world" (Feldman, 2007, p. 429). The effect is an expansion of the meaning of progressive, and a scarcity of anti-corporate, no less truly radical, perspectives (Feldman, 2007, p. 444). This manifests in a lack of opposition to the

preferred positions of economic elites, and a status quo stacked in their favor.

Consequently the effect in this policy arena is a conservative one, rather than a liberal or

truly leftist result.

Domhoff dissects the networks created and utilized by wealthy elites to influence

policy in *Who Rules America?* (2010). Notably, Domhoff traces the history of elites'

pernicious influence in less obvious areas, in particular two areas generally viewed as

liberal: environmentalism and minority-group and community-action organizations.

Following a 1953 conference on resource management the Ford Foundation founded

Resources for the Future, the "first and most prominent environmental think tank" (p.

92). Economists from Resources for the Future "broke ground by incorporating market

economics into thinking about conservation work" showing "there was money to be made

in cleaning up the air and water," reassuring "moderate conservatives that most

environmental initiatives were completely compatible with corporate capitalism, contrary

to the angry outcries of ultraconservatives and the hopes of leftists" (p. 92). This is a

perfect example of how money from corporate and wealthy elites can be used to produce

research outcomes that encourage society to evaluate policy arenas using the logic of the

market, rather than an open search for the most logical solution or policy choices. This

foreclosing of possibilities is inherently anti-intellectual.

Domhoff goes on to detail the Ford Foundation's investment of "tens of millions

of dollars," following the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty in 1964, supporting

"minority-group and community-action organizations" (2010, p. 93). At the time these

investments were seen "as a way of encouraging insurgent groups to take a non-violent

and electoral direction in addressing the obstacles they encountered" (p. 93). Put another

way, these investments were intentionally funneled to less radical groups, and thus those less likely to pose a real challenge to extant power and class structures. This barred any real competition from the left that might have truly stood in opposition to corporate interests in two areas that are often considered the domain of liberal politics. Domhoff argues that this consideration is a mistake, as it "confuses liberalism with a sophisticated conservatism that is supportive of changes that do not challenge the class structure" (p. 96). These more nuanced manifestations of unreflective market logic that take place in purviews typically considered liberal are more difficult to trace and examples of them are less common in extant literature. Consequently, this is an area in need of more focus from scholars, and along those lines I will look at some related changes in a domain generally considered a liberal one, American universities, in the next two chapters.

Examples of market logic guiding the output of knowledge production at think tanks are also prevalent throughout the literature. Recommendations on environmental (Jacques, Dunlap, & Freeman, 2008), education (McDonald, 2013), regulatory, taxation, and welfare policies (Rich, 2004 & Medvetz, 2012) stand out as the most common examples. In the case of environmental policy, researchers have found that the influence of neoliberal think tanks (in the United Kingdom in this particular research note) has been pervasive; and the free market ideology driving their efforts has received little scrutiny of the agenda behind it (Beder, 2001). Put generically, there has been a disproportionately large influence of instrumentalist considerations on a policy arena, with little reflection of the motivations behind such an evaluation. Or put even more plainly, unreflective market logic is taking place in a policy arena that does not necessarily lend itself to instrumentalist evaluations.

Critiques of welfare programs by business elites are couched in a defense of market logic and "a moralistic attitude toward the poor" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 186). Since the beginning of the 1980s, prominent conservative think tanks, "all beneficiaries of conservative philanthropy" have engaged in promoting anti-welfare policy "framed according to a discourse of dependency" (Medvetz, 2012, p. 187). This demonstrates how the input and output of market logic in think tanks, on behalf of economic elites, plays out in recommendations and expertise surrounding welfare policy.

It also demonstrates the racialized nature of these preferences, as they disproportionately impact particular groups, and the connective aspects of unreflective market logic with ideological rationalism and anti-intellectualism. This is the legacy of social Darwinism, now squarely identified as a modern manifestation of anti-intellectualism. Unreflective market logic is one of the tools used by elites to justify a new age of extreme economic inequality. This is not to necessarily suggest elites are buying specific research outcomes. It is to suggest they are strategically funding particular researchers and research organizations who do not necessarily follow rigorous processes to assure a certain standard of research, asking specific and leading research questions, promoting the findings they prefer while ignoring those they do not, and awarding contracts to those researchers and organizations whose work consistently supports their interests and preferred outcomes.

In sum, unreflective market logic can be understood in a number of ways, and is found across society, its institutions, and has a conservative and/or moderating effect on societal discourse. Understood in terms of Brueggemann's *market society* or Curtis's *idiotism* unreflective market logic is seen as a hegemonic, pervasive force, flooding into

every aspect of our lived experience. Understood through its relationship to think tanks unreflective market logic can be seen in both think tank funding by economic elites (input), as well as research, issue briefs, mission statements, and more, that reflect the interests of these economic elites (output). Insofar as it relates to anti-intellectualism, several important features of unreflective market logic have been emphasized.

First, it represents the instrumentalist slant placed on a seemingly infinite number of issues promoted by self-interested economic elites. And second, unreflective market logic is, in part, the result of the entry of the conservative business class into the field of expertise, largely through think tanks, beginning in the mid-1960s and accelerating in the '70s and '80s. This is the same class identified by Hofstadter as standing opposed to intellect, and later by Rigney as the economic elite, who often shirk anti-elitist wrath. Understood in this historical context, unreflective market logic has clear roots in anti-intellectualism, cementing its position in this broad, ongoing, and elusive cultural phenomenon. Keeping these new iterations of anti-intellectualism in mind, the next chapter turns to examine how these cultural trends are impacting the modern American university, with a particular focus on conservative ideological rationalism at the University of Colorado.

CHAPTER FOUR

<u>Anti-Intellectualism in Universities: A Wolf Walks in the Door</u>

If creationists and their efforts to infiltrate the public school system exemplify the

limited impact of anti-rationalism, how might ideological rationalism operate? Intelligent

design has already been identified as one example, and the direct heir to the efforts of

creationists. But another case is found within the halls of the academy itself and acts a

perfect segue to discussing modern anti-intellectualism, specifically conservative

ideological rationalism, in the academy via a case study at the University of Colorado. In

2013 the Board of Regents at CU, which "has a history of injecting political ideology into

the academy," (Reichman, 2013) voted to amend Article 10 of the university's

nondiscrimination policy to include political affiliation and philosophy alongside race,

color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender

identity, gender expression, and veteran's status[2] (Dedrick, 2013).

At the same time, the Board of Regents took steps to "determine whether political

or ideological discrimination exists on its Boulder campus" through a "Social Climate

Survey" (Reichman, 2013). Taken as isolated instances, these changes may seem

innocuous, even potentially beneficial. They are not isolated developments, however, and

are problematic in several ways. First, political affiliations and philosophies are fluid,

voluntary, and ideologically informed processes. Second, knowledge production and

intellectual discourse often, by their very nature, challenge core beliefs—including our

political affiliations and philosophies. Third, these changes stem from, or at least align

perfectly with, the playbook of conservative activist David Horowitz, who has a long

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[2] Gender identity and expression were added at the same time as political affiliation and philosophy.

history of attacking academics and universities as bastions of liberal bias and hostility

toward conservatives (National Coalition Against Censorship, N.D. & Richardson, 2013).

This chapter details these changes to Article 10 through a case study that analyzes

primary source material, minutes from germane board meetings, media reports, and

original interviews with two of the regents intimately involved with proposing, writing,

and implementing these changes.

For academics of the 20th century Joseph McCarthy and his blacklists conjured

up imagery of the Big Bad Wolf. For many academics in the 21st century Horowitz

embodies this fairytale villain, attempting to blow the university house down. Today,

rather than blow it down, it seems Horowitz is content to move in, insist he live with us,

and leave such a mess that our home is devalued to the point that it may as well have

been blown down. All the while paradoxically exclaiming that he is here to help with a

remodel, and that the wolves need to be protected from the pigs.

With no shortage of seriousness and high purpose regarding his cause, Horowitz

aligns almost perfectly with Hofstadter's description of the spokesperson of anti-

intellectualism—a "would-be, unfrocked or embittered" intellectual, "obsessively

engaged with [an] outworn or rejected idea." Such a spokesperson is necessary in order

for anti-intellectualism to be "articulate enough to be traced historically" (Hofstadter,

1963, p. 21). A former leftist and part of the New Left movement in the 1960s, Horowitz

eventually took a turn to the far right, a journey he has chronicled in several books. In the

2000s Horowitz turned his attention to what he refers to as "the radicalization of the

American university." This eventually morphed into a project called the Academic

Freedom Campaign, which was launched in 2003 "to return the American university to

traditional principles of open inquiry and to halt indoctrination in the classroom." This is

a problem that most academics would argue did not, and does not exist. To forward these

self-stated goals Horowitz created the Academic Bill of Rights (ABOR), and Students for

Academic Freedom (SAF), a student group designed to advance these goals within

universities that has chapters on 200 campuses.

Central throughout ABOR is the idea that universities must protect political belief

and affiliation in hiring, firing, and tenure decisions (among others), and that professors

and curricula should "reflect the uncertainty and unsettled character of all human

knowledge in these areas by providing students with dissenting sources and viewpoints

where appropriate" (Students for Academic Freedom, N.D.). The terms "political or

religious beliefs" are used in the first three of ABOR's eight principles. Coming from

Horowitz this is not even a veiled attempt to insert and protect conservative beliefs in the

academy. Beliefs being the key word.

According to Horowitz, "You can't get a good education if they're only telling

you half the story[3]," and as a result he calls for "inquiries into political bias in the hiring

of faculty and the appointment of commencement speakers" (Freedom Center, N.D.).

These inquiries, or witch-hunts if you prefer, manifest in practice as a tallying of the

political affiliation of professors. This tally can then be used to cite an imbalance of

Democrats as evidence of a partisan political bias in the academy (National Coalition

Against Censorship, N.D.). This is a non sequitur. First of all, while there are left and

right-wing scientists, there "is no such thing as left-wing or right-wing science," as the

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[3] This framing of knowledge as a bipartisan good, involving a liberal and conservative
dynamic is fatuous, but strikes a core belief in the U.S., amplified in media, that calls for
a sense of political equivalency in evaluations of knowledge and societal issues.

goal of science is to "search for truth in the natural world" (Jacoby, 2009, p. 312). There

are a variety of reasons that there are more university professors who vote or affiliate

with Democrats instead of Republicans, not the least of which being the progressive bias

of history, but none lead to the conclusion that conservatives are being discriminated

against. Political ideologies should adapt based on new knowledge, not the other way

around. Ideologies that rigidly cling to beliefs at-odds with scientific knowledge

production and consensuses are rightly discriminated against in the academy in the sense

that they are often excluded from serious discourse. This is far from the same as

excluding legitimate scientific debates that have political controversies within them for

partisan political reasons, and it is even further from discrimination based on race, sex,

nationality, sexual orientation, disability, and so on.

In fact, far from discrimination on the hiring end, it may be that any partisan

sorting in universities is attributable to self-selection. Matthew Woessner, a self-

proclaimed conservative, two-time George W. Bush voter and academic, who has studied

political partisanship in the academy extensively, argues exactly this point. Not only that,

activists like Horowitz might actually be fueling the process. Woessner finds, "Horowitz

may be overstating the extent to which conservatives are mistreated on campuses," which

"may be inadvertently discouraging conservatives from pursuing academic careers." In

general, Woessner's research essentially finds Horowitz' entire foundation for ABOR

and SAF are unfounded, with "little evidence that conservative students or faculty are the

victims of widespread ideological persecution" (Woessner, 2012).

Horowitz' mission has not received a warm welcome in the academy, and as I

write this the SAF website has not updated its timeline of events since 2007, possibly

reflecting a loss of interest. Conversely, this might represent a loss of necessity or a change in tactics. In some places it seems, with or without direct involvement, Horowitz' goals are certainly making progress. One of those places is at my home institution, CU, where, as previously mentioned, we now protect the political affiliation and philosophy of students and professors alike within our nondiscrimination policy.

While I do believe there are important distinctions between political philosophy and affiliation and the other protected classes in CU's nondiscrimination policy that make the other categories more justifiable, my suggestion that the categories regarding political identity are problematic does not require the other categories go without critique—that just is not the nature of my project. The protection of religion, as one example, seems particularly susceptible to a similar critique, as religion is also potentially fluid, ideologically informed, and often at-odds with science. One distinction that I find warrants additional scrutiny regarding the political philosophy and affiliation category, even from religion, however, is that if one's core political beliefs are not challenged during the course of their higher education then one has hardly been educated, and at best ze[4] have been trained.

Knowledge production and intellectual work, by design, seek out to rigorously challenge what we believe, to allow us to connect these beliefs more closely to what we can know. Belief and knowledge are separated by exactly this process, and universities should be encouraging and challenging students to close this gap. The implication to students that their political identities should not necessarily be challenged, or to professors that they need to be cautious of initiating such a challenge, goes against the

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[4] While other stylebooks have accepted the common use of "they" as a gender-neutral singular pronoun, "ze" is APA's preference.

very project of the university to grow cultivated citizens, capable of intelligently and critically evaluating what they can know compared to what they believe. To further understand how we got here, the changes to CU's nondiscrimination policy are now looked at via a case study that examines the timeline of events, the actors involved, and the process leading up to and following the change.

Allowing the Wolf Inside

Ideological rationalism often, perhaps even exclusively, manifests surrounding what academics might refer to as 'manufactured controversies.' These differ from scientific controversies in that they "signify a controversy that does not currently exist in the scientific community but is mass-produced and marketed … by politically motivated agents" (Ceccarelli, 2013, p. 762). Continued debates regarding whether the planet is experiencing climate change, if vaccines lead to autism, whether genetically modified foods represent an inherent health risk, or if evolution exists in the natural world (sans intelligent design) would all fall into the category of manufactured controversies. To say that it is not the job of legitimate academics, researchers, and scientists to cater to these manufactured controversies should go beyond being incontrovertible. It should go without saying. But at CU, with its main campus in Boulder, Colorado, this has been called into question.

Though the process leading to the changes to CU's nondiscrimination policy could be studied from a myriad of starting points, this case study begins in 2009, when CU's Board of Regents began talks regarding the inclusion of political philosophy and affiliation as part of its nondiscrimination policy. These categories were first included in a 2010 quadrennial Social Climate survey of the campus (Reichman, 2013; Regents of

CU, 2013). Around this time the regents also approved twelve "Guiding Principles" to establish the mission and goals of the university. These include Principle Six, which states the university will, "Promote faculty, student, and staff diversity to ensure the rich interchange of ideas in the pursuit of truth and learning, including diversity of political, geographic, cultural, intellectual, and philosophical perspectives" (University of Colorado, 2012).

Conspicuously absent from the list of diversity the university is meant to promote are all the other protected classes: race, color, sex, age, creed, gender, gender identity and expression, ability, religion, veteran's status, and sexual orientation. According to meeting minutes it seems Vice President Wilkerson, and consequently the Board of Regents, agreed those classes are encompassed in the preamble, though it does not explicitly mention any of them (Board of Regents of the University of Colorado, 2010, p. 8). There also is no explanation as to why diverse political, geographic, cultural, intellectual, and philosophical perspectives are singled out, aside from strong support from multiple regents—support specifically for the inclusion intellectual and political diversity.

An early iteration of Guiding Principle Six can be found in the minutes of a July 2009 meeting and was worded differently than the final product, describing its goal as to: "Promote diversity, including representation of protected classes, political, geographic, cultural and philosophical diversity" (University of Colorado Board of Regents, July 15-17, 2009, p. 3). Also in the minutes of this meeting are President Benson's priorities for fiscal year 2009/10, which includes continuing "improving the student experience by providing more access, *increased political diversity*, and examining mandatory

graduation requirements" (Board of Regents of the University of Colorado, July 15-17, 2009, p. 4, italics added). While researching the university president's priorities is beyond the scope of this case study, it is clear that the push to inject political diversity, which in context represents a push to increase conservative representation on campus, is coming from multiple fronts.

With the 2010 survey and the addition of Guiding Principle Six leaving the door ajar, Republican regents Sue Sharkey and Jim Geddes thrust it open the rest of the way with their proposed amendment to Article 10 of the Laws of Regents that would include political affiliation and philosophy in CU's nondiscrimination policy. In the spring of 2013 the Board of Regents unanimously approved Sharkey and Geddes' proposal with an 8-0 decision, including one absent regent (Richardson, 2013), becoming the only university in the nation to protect these classes. In Geddes' opinion this is attributable to the fact that CU is one of few universities in the country that has a Board of Regents that is elected by Colorado voters, and this seems likely. In universities with more internal university control regarding who sits on their Board of Regents, and a modicum of input from academics, it is less likely that such changes would have gotten far and been met with so little resistance.

This influence of regular citizen voters of Colorado on the university is important to note, as this public interaction makes the Board of Regents a likely site for anti-intellectualism to make its way into the academy. "Almost since the nation's birth, observers of American culture have noted that one of its distinctive features is its anti-intellectual spirit." (Medvetz, 2012, p. 215) "Among its roots," historians posit, is "the rugged pragmatism for westward expansion," (Medvetz, 2012, p. 216). Because of

Colorado's location in the Mountain West, the state may be even more susceptible to the nation's anti-intellectual spirit. By allowing citizens to decide who is elected to sit on CU's Board of Regents, that spirit finds its way into the academy.

Reviews of the minutes from germane board meetings and interviews with Sharkey and Geddes have turned up little pushback to these changes and only minor discussion on record among the regents themselves regarding the merits of these changes. Interestingly, Geddes seems to imply there were conversations among regents that may have been off the record, and in violation of a strict interpretation of Colorado's Open Records Act, also known as "Sunshine Laws." Responding to a question about my impression that there did not seem to be much controversy or discussion about whether the changes to Article 10 should be implemented, rather only how to implement them, Geddes had this to say:

> Well I think that a lot of steps that led to that decision by the board and I think there were a lot of conversations that occurred that of course aren't necessarily recorded in the public record but occurred in settings where the Board of Regents is at a meeting or among one, two regents if you will. And I have to be a little careful about how I describe it to you only because there are the Sunshine Laws, so called Sunshine Laws, because of the state that if you hold it to the exact meaning of the word would suggest is that if there's three regents or more that are ever talking to each other that becomes a public conversation. And I have no problem with that policy but when we're sitting together there may be one or two regents, two, three, regents, three, four regents you know, I don't think that you know—sometimes it's in the setting of an informal discussion. But there was a lot

of communication that, uh, occurred amongst the nine regents over these issues,

yes. (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015)

Regarding the overall timeline of the changes Geddes describes the process is as follows:

We [CU's Board of Regents] did, four or five years ago, describe the mission of

the university and came up with 12 Guiding Principles. And Guiding Principle

Number Six says you know we will promote intellectual diversity. And it says

other things but intellectual diversity and political and philosophical and

geographic diversity and so forth. And then, so that was one step that occurred.

And then I think, um, that as we progressed through this process it became

apparent that the university goes to great measure I think to address racial

diversity and racial discrimination and gender diversity and gender

discrimination, and you can just fill in the blanks and list all the protected

classes—all the federally protected classes. Plus in our case we began to

understand that it was probably prudent to also include manifestations of

intellectual diversity in which someone who might hold a view, or a philosophy

dear to uh, who was not in step with the majority philosophy or view would also

be protected. (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015)

It is notable the way Geddes describes this as a series of steps, as it highlights a continued

and persistent focus and effort to make these changes, as well as their links. This

represents the conservative focus on the long-game, a progressive conservatism, if you

will.

What exactly qualifies as discrimination against a political philosophy is not clear,

but Geddes offers some insight when elaborating on a hypothetical example of a student

who feels ostracized over his (Geddes consistently uses male pronouns) beliefs regarding

climate change.

> From my perspective though, if somebody wants to, a student let's say in a class,
>
> wants to express his, um, reservations about the theory of global warming or
>
> come right out and say he doesn't believe in that theory of global warming—and
>
> whether or not he's obligated to prove he's right and they're wrong I think is
>
> another issue—but let's just say that he simply expresses the fact that he prefers
>
> the theory of oscillation in the sun's intensities, which some people believe is the
>
> explanation for not only present day temperature changes but reaching back into
>
> the earliest phases of earth, that there's an oscillating about 300 year or 250 year
>
> cycle of intensity changes in the sun that some people say, is, manifests in sun
>
> spots. I'm not trying to explain to you the details of this because I don't claim to
>
> be an expert, but I'm trying to point out that there is another theory at this point.
>
> Now, let's go back to that student, should that student then be ostracized in his
>
> classroom? Should he be put into a position of embarrassment? Should he feel
>
> he's being, um, in some way punished for holding that view perhaps? Or should
>
> he feel that he's obligated to conform with the professors' point of view if he
>
> doesn't agree with it? And suffer some sort of adverse consequences because he
>
> doesn't? That's discrimination for the wrong reason. It's intellectual
>
> discrimination. (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015)

In his example Geddes describes a student using debunked research to argue

against global warming theory and suggests if that student feels ostracized in the

classroom, or embarrassed by their use of this debunked research, they have been the

victim of intellectual discrimination. Debunked scientific research should be ostracized in the university, however, that is the nature of scientific debates that move knowledge forward. But what happens if the student feels ostracized because research tied to their political identity is being excluded because it is debunked in the scientific community? This is a conflation it seems this policy opens the possibility to in a problematic manner. Now this is not clear from Geddes' example, but it seems that a student who holds views unsupported by legitimate research might feel ostracized or forced to conform if they are graded poorly due to their use of debunked or faulty research. Answering whether this would qualify as discrimination under CU's policy requires an arbitration process that makes it impossible to answer hypothetically. But the prospect of facing such bureaucracy alone could easily be enough to influence some professors' pedagogical styles in restrictive ways—particularly those without tenure or teaching politically sensitive issues prone to manufactured controversies.

Along with these changes to CU's nondiscrimination policy, and in line with Horowitz' model, Sharkey and Geddes also proposed, received approval from the other regents, and consequently budgeted for and executed a campus climate survey in 2013. The purpose of this survey was to establish a baseline regarding the level of political diversity on the campus via a tally of political affiliation among its populace, exactly as called for by Horowitz. The survey had some issues initially and was scrapped, but a revised version was eventually carried out to completion, receiving a campus wide response rate of 12.6 percent (Regents of CU, 2014). Both Sharkey and Geddes cited

results from this survey in our conversations as evidence of a liberal bias at CU, and

evidence that conservative students do not feel welcome to share hir[5] views in class.

According to a conservative media outlet, *The Colorado Observer,* Sharkey

transparently sought out support and guidance from Horowitz and his network of

conservative institutions prior to her and Geddes' efforts, with Horowitz even

discouraging her from pursuing the change (Richardson, 2013). However, when asked

whether the changes proposed to CU's nondiscrimination policy and the climate survey

were related to Horowitz, the ABOR, or SAF, both Geddes and Sharkey denied this in

personal communications via phone and email, respectively. According to Sharkey, she

"spoke with Mr. Horowitz as someone whose opinion [she] respects," but "did not

propose the amendments at his suggestion or in response to anything he had previously

written" (Personal Communication, February 9, 2015). And Geddes said he "didn't look

at anything Horowitz wrote. But you know [Horowitz] has advocated some concepts very

similar to what we did." He goes on to describe "what we did" as the nondiscrimination

approach, before modifying his statement to say, "Not that that was an approach. It kind

of evolved spontaneously" (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015).

Although both deny the direct connection, the language used by Sharkey and

Geddes in Article 10, in CU's Guiding Principles, and the language employed by

Horowitz, in ABOR, and by SAF, is remarkably similar. For example, in the "Statement

of Information" preceding the accepted proposal to amend Article 10, Sharkey and

Geddes' argument follows almost the exact same flow of logic as the argument justifying

ABOR. Both can be summed up as follows: Academic freedom is integral to the mission

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[5] While other stylebooks have accepted the common use of "their" as a gender-neutral singular pronoun to replace his or her, "hir" is APA's preferred replacement.

of the university; "the fullest exposure to conflicting opinions is the best insurance

against error;" protecting academic freedom requires respecting diverse opinions and

perspectives, including political beliefs, philosophies, and affiliations; this is true for both

faculty and students; thus these categories should be afforded a series of protections.

They also both cite the same 1967 court decision, *Keyishian v. Board of Regents of the*

University of the State of New York (University of Colorado Board of Regents, 2013 &

Students For Academic Freedom, N.D.).

   Following the changes to Article 10 Horowitz praised Sharkey and awarded her

the Annie Taylor Award for Courage at a conservative weekend retreat for her success

"fighting liberal bias" in universities (Richardson, 2013). If nothing else, this makes it

clear that these actors are on the same side of their fight against a perceived liberal bias in

universities, and that this amendment helps to move that goal forward.

   The ultimate effort of this conservative project goes beyond just quantifying

political affiliation in universities and then pointing to the results as evidence of a liberal

bias—this is just one step. Another step proposes a rectification of any bias. At CU this

project is already in motion on both a philosophical and literal level in Guiding Principle

Six, as it directly includes political diversity, which is distinct from intellectual diversity,

a significantly more valid goal of universities. At CU, this push toward increased

conservative representation is also seen in the form of a "Visiting Scholar in

Conservative Thought and Policy." This three-year pilot program, now in its second year,

invites a prominent scholar who is "deeply engaged in either the analytical scholarship or

practice of conservative thinking and policymaking or both." This program is funded

through private donors, demonstrating one example of private funding being inserted to

influence academic policy (Conservative Thought and Policy, N.D.). The use of private funds makes it easier to justify such pilot programs without influence from students, faculty, or other parties who may object. If your tuition and/or pay are not going toward such a program, certainly you are less likely to object; and if you were to object, then the power and standing behind your objection is diluted. Further, the same players who pushed for the changes to CU's nondiscrimination policy were behind the creation of this program.

Geddes, who is supportive of the program and sees it as a "healthy influence," believes it to only be a "drop in the bucket of what's needed."

> It's limited. It's limited in its ability to reach the majority of our students. So it, uh, in other words, again if you look at an individual department, let's say how about political science—now we happen to have a professor or two in political science that lend some balance to that department but it's not really balanced yet. And, but let's just say that in political science all the guys were on one side or the other, you pick the side I don't care. Do you think that one visiting professor in conservatism or if it were the other way around one visiting professor in liberalism or progressivism would make a big difference? (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015)

Geddes' bifurcated and reductionist view of the academy and pedagogical approaches as being routinely drawn down partisan political lines, and deeply influenced by either a conservative or liberal viewpoint, is misguided and borders on paranoia. When asked if he was talking about including more professors who were committed to a particular ideology his response spoke volumes. "Well they all are. Anybody that tells

you otherwise is lying. Now c'mon. You are. I can tell you are. You can tell I am"
(Personal Communication, February 11, 2015). Geddes view, that all professors are
ideologues committed to and promoting partisan, mostly liberal, ideologies in their
research and to their students, is a harmful mischaracterization of what happens in
universities. It is rooted in anti-intellectual thought, coalesced through persistent
messaging in conservative media and other conservative cultural apparatuses denouncing
knowledge production in universities and all other news media as being tainted by liberal
bias, and represents an impeccable example of a psychological manifestation of
ideological rationalism that results from these forces.

One of the responsibilities of the Board of Regents at CU includes voting to
approve the creation of new academic programs. Here, it seems, there is another opening
for the insertion of partisan politics and ideological rationalism into the university.
Geddes, who is now a regent emeritus, certainly seems to think so. Asked if he was
opposed to the creation of a Master's in Environmental Studies Program at CU Geddes
had this to say:

> No. No, I'm in favor of them having this new degree program as long as the
> faculty is diverse intellectually and there are representatives on the faculty that
> promote some of the other views of the environment rather than having a
> homogeneous faculty that all feel the same way. And if that's the case no I would
> not be in favor of them having that program. Why are you gonna – how are you
> gonna graduate experts in the environment if all they've heard is one side of the
> story? How irresponsible is that?

His answer is telling, and earlier in our interview he makes clear that his reference to "one side of the story" is to the scientists who accept the overwhelming consensus in the scientific community that climate change is real, driven by carbon emissions, and impacted by humans (Cook, 2015). On the other side, in Geddes' view, are those who dispute or deny this consensus. This is evident in his offering of a number of debunked theories as support for the scientific debate surrounding climate change, among these the "oscillations in the sun's intensity," and his claim that "1,300 scientists that I know of that hold PhDs you know that have been counted that don't agree with the global warming theory" (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015).

As far as I can tell this latter point is actually a reference to a petition that has over 31,000 signatories, but lacks credibility and is not solely signed by PhDs. In fact many of the names on the list include zero information regarding the signer's bona fides (Grandia, 2009 & Holland, 2014). Alternatively, the number may have come from well-known climate denier and polemicist Marc Morano, who compiled a report that claimed to catalogue "more than 1,000 dissenting scientists" (Morano, 2010), which has also been roundly debunked (Johnson, 2009 & DeSmogBlog, N.D.). In fact, each of Geddes' claims about supposedly competing theories regarding climate change are found on the list of the "most used climate myths" as described by the website Skeptical Science, which is committed to explaining "what peer reviewed science has to say about global warming" (Cook, 2015). Among these are, oscillations in the sun, failed predictions regarding temperature changes, global ice levels, and disputes regarding the accuracy of climate science measurements (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015).

The creation of the pseudoscience driving Geddes' beliefs regarding global warming is consistently tied to Big Oil, think tanks, and other foundations linked to wealthy elites, as detailed previously and labeled ideological rationalism, purchased and driven by elite preferences, and often using unreflective market logic. As a former regent and influential leader guiding the mission of CU, Geddes' perspective and efforts to insert and protect conservative beliefs in the academy represent one area where ideological rationalism and unreflective market logic, often produced in think tanks, intersect with the academy. This is potentially dangerous ground, making properly labeling and identifying these efforts within the conceptual umbrella of modern anti-intellectualism a necessary effort. The better we can understand how these processes take place, what motivates them, and what perpetuates their societal acceptance, the more likely we are able to counter them if desired.

As seen, if it were up to Geddes, approval of the Master's of Environmental Studies Program at CU would be contingent on the program's faculty representing "both sides" of a manufactured controversy. This is an insertion of partisan politics that intentionally blurs the line between partisan political (manufactured) controversies, and scientific controversies, though Geddes seemed unclear on if there was a difference between the two. When I suggested these two types of controversies were being conflated Geddes said that in the case of environmental studies scientific debates had, "been politicized." Agreeing, I suggested that it seemed Geddes' was saying academics should teach to these manufactured controversies, rather than teach to the science. His response was to say it is the job of professors to teach to both, with the science being most important. The problem is that he consistently fails to navigate the difference between the

two. Where Geddes sees "great controversy raging over" the "actual scientific" aspects of climate change, climate scientists see none. Further, when confronted with statistically accepted facts regarding climate change, including the fact that 97 percent of climate scientists agree on certain principles of the theory (Cook, 2015), Geddes simply refused them. "Well I don't agree with that" (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015).

The issue with expecting academics to teach to the controversy, as we have seen with unreflective market logic, is that this allows elites to manufacture self-serving controversies, like Big Oil with climate denialism, that perpetuate the status quo. Combined with nondiscrimination policies that protect political philosophy and affiliation—and with the majority of people affiliating with one of two major political parties in the United States rejecting the scientific consensus regarding climate change (Public Policy Polling, 2015)—makes for a precarious mixture of threats to academic freedom as it potentially inserts, and subsequently caters sensitively, to partisan political debates and manufactured controversies. If professors feel compelled to include perspectives only because they address manufactured partisan political controversies, or feel they need to speak delicately rather than bluntly in matters of settled science, their academic freedom has been significantly restricted. Not only that, the ability for students to truly develop a closer connection between their ideological beliefs, and the best available knowledge and understanding of the world, is severely hampered under these conditions. In other words, it harms the educational process.

Confronted with Woessner's argument that the absence of conservatives in the academy stems from self-sorting, Geddes said he finds that argument "fallacious," and believes "there are many very qualified academics who can't get a job CU for *that*

reason" and that this is "harmful to the quality of education." Asked to clarify what he meant specifically by "that reason" our exchange went as follows:

Geddes: "Because they're different."

Benn: Because they're conservative?

Geddes: "Yeah. That would be one, one that would be the most obvious description we could use. One segment at least or I'm sure there are perhaps, there are, again getting back to the sciences, perhaps there's people within the discipline of physics that would, were, and again this is all hypothetical I don't really know about physics I'm just using that as an example, that where because they're all kinda grouped together in how they think they're not really interested in bringing somebody in that's different." (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015)

This is important because although no regent can direct the chair of a department to hire anyone in particular, the regents do set the needs of the university, which is one of the major considerations in new hires for every department. Now that the needs of the university include increased political diversity, and the social climate surveys show an imbalance in political affiliation, the pressure for chairs of departments to hire based on this specific criteria could be increased. Geddes seems well aware of this.

There are two factors the university is supposed to use and one is the needs of the university. So if the needs of the university, and we all agree—and we already have agreed, the Board of Regents has—that we will have a diverse faculty intellectually, so that becomes a need of the university. So if the professor is abiding by that Guiding Principle and also buys in if you will to the concept of

creating the richest possible educational soup for his students then he would then

design a um ah, some sort of description of the new candidate that would not in

any way violate anybody's, um concerns, but would more or less describe that

we're looking for somebody who has published and has expressed interest in the

following concepts. And so then it becomes obvious to people who would love to

come teach at CU that might be out of step if you will with the existing faculty

that they want somebody like me. (Personal Communication, February 11, 2015)

What exactly the process will be implementing these changes in order to increase

the diversity of political philosophies and affiliations at CU is not clear, but the university

is now required to take this it on in some way. The ambiguous nature of this procedure

going forward is revealed in meeting minutes from September 17, 2013.

Responding to a question from Gallegos regarding implementation of the

amendments, VP O'Rourke said the *Laws of the Regents* are binding and

pre-eminent source of authority for the university structure. It will be up to the

campuses to amend their corresponding policies and procedures to conform to

regent law and ensure it is enforced consistently. University counsel will be

assisting human resources and other affect departments. (University of Colorado

Board of Regents, 2013)

According to Sharkey, the university Faculty Council is in the process of

structuring and implementing these changes in hiring policies and procedures. However,

Isabella Suave, the Faculty Council Administrator, said she is "not aware of a discussion

within the Faculty Council on how to implement the non-discrimination policy in hiring

practices" (Personal Communication, March 25, 2015). But, there are two Faculty

Council committees "working on statements in response to the climate survey. One of them is [the] EMAC [Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee] committee, responding to diversity issues and the other one is the Personnel Committee, responding to the need for procedures for reporting discrimination and harassment" (Personal Communication, April 14, 2015).

Sharkey has said on multiple occasions that her fight is not over, and that she hopes to see more universities follow CU's lead. While efforts like hers are cloaked in the visage of protecting political ideology from discrimination and expanding debate in the university, they seem closer to the antithesis—efforts to discriminate based on political ideology and to foreclose discussion on politically sensitive debates that have little to do with genuine scientific debates, exemplified by Geddes' views on climate change. The goal is not just to inject conservative voices into the academy, but also to silence liberal ones. If science is neither left nor right wing, and university faculty who study science are predominantly liberal, then what follows of importance is that knowledge has a liberal bias, and not the scientists producing and explicating said knowledge. By arguing it is the other way around Sharkey, Geddes, Horowitz, and their ilk are able to discredit science and feed anti-rational and anti-elitist tendencies that are inherently confused and incredulous when it comes to academics and the scientific process.

To be clear, none of this is to say the academy, the scientific process, peer review, and knowledge production are absent of political influence, without fault, or unworthy of critique. It is to say that the efforts and critiques being made by the likes of Sharkey, Geddes, and Horowitz, are at best misguided and ill informed, while at worst they are disingenuous and motivated primarily by partisan ideology. Rather than a candid desire

to improve the university it seems more accurate to say their project is to remold the academy to accommodate conservative beliefs, regardless of whether these beliefs are defensible through the scientific process. This aligns with the portrayal of conservatives as a discriminated class in need of protection. It also aligns with and highlights the successful effort of conservative elites over the last several decades to craft the perception that white Christians are a persecuted class, and the sense of identity politics built around this notion.

Sharkey, in an ironic demonstration of her own refusal to stand behind the merits of a conclusion, ended our brief email dialogue because she was "concerned with the nature and tone of my questions, which seem adversarial" (Personal Communication, February 9, 2015). While I have no way of knowing the tone she read in my emails, it certainly was my intention to ask adversarial questions; that is the job of an interviewer. Sharkey's refusal to engage in difficult questions suggests to me she is unwilling to defend the merits of this amendment, and is afraid of what might come from questions asked in the light of day. This seems especially likely given both Sharkey and Geddes, as well as the minutes from the germane meetings, confirm that there was little serious debate or controversy over whether the changes to Article 10 should be implemented.

My salient questions and Sharkey's answers from our email interviews are presented without edit, though I have omitted follow up emails and unrelated banalities. The dialogue began when I sent an introductory email (see appendix) to Sharkey introducing myself and asking if she would be willing to speak to me about the changes to CU's nondiscrimination policy on November 30, 2014, and I received a response the same day. On December 1, 2014 I emailed her the questions below designated "Interview

One," and indicated I wanted to "start a dialogue rather than bombard [her] with too many questions." After two follow up emails in January I received Sharkey's responses to Interview One included below on January 26, 2015. I have added italics to emphasize points for the discussion that will follow. There were no italics in the original correspondence.

<div align="center">Interview One</div>

Benn: Do you remember where the idea came from? (I saw one article that suggested it stems from David Horowitz' academic/student bill of rights).

Sharkey: When I came onto the Board of Regents, Regent Geddes and I had heard from a number of students, as well as concerned parents, about concerns that not all political viewpoints were equally respected across the campuses. *We did not take the position that it was the Board of Regents' prerogative to determine who should be hired for any academic position*, but we both strongly believed that the University of Colorado should be a place that not only ensured that students were exposed to a diverse array of views, but ensured that no one would face any discrimination for expressing dissimilar beliefs. We knew that the Laws of the Regents already prohibited a number of forms of discrimination and asked whether those laws could also encompass political affiliation and political philosophy. Over a period of several months, we worked with the university's administration and engaged in a number of discussions with other regents. During those discussions, our colleagues also suggested that gender expression and gender identity should be added to the protected categories, and we worked together to bring a bipartisan, non-ideological resolution to the Board of Regents.

Ultimately, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution and protected political affiliation and political philosophy in the same manner that it protects other characteristics.

Benn: What made you feel it was necessary at CU? (e.g. complaints from students or professors, personal experience or beliefs, etc.)

Sharkey: It's difficult to define a single event that prompted me to propose and support this amendment to the Laws of the Regents. At a fundamental level, it's important to recognize that we live in a very complex society where people are exposed to a broad array of economic, social and political opinions. *My goal has never been, and never will be, to have the University of Colorado dictate what political viewpoints student, employee or faculty member should hold.* Instead, my goal has always been to promote the University of Colorado as a place where intellectual debate flourishes and students graduate with the critical thinking skills necessary for them to thrive. The hallmark of a well-educated person is the ability to consider all side [sic] of an issue and then reach an independent, well-reasoned conclusion, and I have consistently advocated that the Board of Regents should use its authority to ensure that the University of Colorado provides an education that exposes students to the broadest spectrum of the intellectual community.

Benn: What made you feel it would be a beneficial change?

Sharkey: The Board of Regents is the governing body of the University of Colorado, and one of its most important roles is to help define the university's core values. Having the Board of Regents formally adopt a law that protects people of all political affiliations and political philosophies establishes

non-discrimination as one of the University of Colorado's core value [sic]. It

allows everyone in the University of Colorado to understand that the Board of

Regents respects all political affiliations and political philosophies and that it

expects the same from everyone within our community.

Benn: What was the discussion or debate over the change like?

Sharkey: With the regents, our discussion focused less on whether we should

make this change, but upon whether the amendments were broad enough. As I

described above, during the course of the discussion, the regents also added

gender identity and gender expression to the protected characteristics because it

was consistent with our entire board's belief that the University of Colorado

should be welcoming and inclusive to all. We also needed to be clear, however,

that *the amendments to the Laws of the Regents were not intended to prohibit*

people from holding their own viewpoints or passionately expressing them. The

Board of Regents has not endorsed any particular political affiliation or political

philosophy. Nor would it ever want a student, employee, or faculty member to be

either promoted or punished because of their affiliations or beliefs. We should

always seek to hire and promote those faculty members who are the best in their

fields.

Benn: And what, if any, pushback has there been in regard to the change?

Sharkey: The pushback has been very limited, and, for the most part, any

pushback really doesn't understand what the amendments to the Laws of the

Regents were intended to accomplish. Since the amendments, *the Board of*

Regents has not demanded that the campuses hire or promote any faculty

members because of their political affiliations or political beliefs. Nor would we.

What we hope, and expect, is that well-qualified scholars of all political affiliations and political viewpoints will recognize that the University of Colorado is committed to a robust and engaging intellectual environment. If the University of Colorado embraces a culture that promotes and encourages critical thinking, it will best serve the State of Colorado.

<p style="text-align:center">End of Interview One</p>

After receiving Sharkey's responses I followed up on January 27, 2015 with some additional points and questions. After one follow up email on February 6, 2015, I received the answers included in "Interview Two" below on February 9, 2015. Sharkey's answers were prefaced with this note:

Dear Jesse,

Thank you for your interest. As a regent, it's important to me that student [sic] and constituents understand my positions, but I am concerned with the nature and tone of your questions, which seem adversarial. I have taken positions as a regent because I believe they are in the best interests of the University of Colorado, *not to advance an ideological agenda*, and I believe the bipartisan support for the amendments to Article 10 of the Laws of the Regents demonstrates that my colleagues' belief in the same principles of non-discrimination. With that being said, I will briefly answer the questions that you've posed, but I don't plan on continuing a back-and-forth discussion about Article 10.

<p style="text-align:center">Interview Two</p>

Benn: These changes seem to be inspired by David Horowitz' Academic Student

Bill of Rights, which has been heavily criticized by the academic community as an effort to restrict academic freedom and insert political ideology into (among other areas) the hiring process at universities. This impression is bolstered by reports that you met with Horowitz prior to the changes to discuss them, and the fact that you received an award from Horowitz after the addition. How would you respond to this?

Sharkey: I do not agree with the statement that the amendments to Article 10 were inspired by David Horowitz's Academic Student Bill of Rights. After Regent Geddes and I had defined the potential amendments to Article 10, I spoke with Mr. Horowitz, as someone whose opinion I respect, but I did not propose the amendments at his suggestion or in response to anything he had previously written. I also disagree with the notion that the amendments to Article 10 have been drafted to restrict academic freedom or to insert political ideology into hiring processes at the University of Colorado. Under the Laws of the Regents, which I support, "the appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty members should be based primarily on the individual's ability in teaching, research/creative work, and service, and should not be influenced by such extrinsic considerations as political, social, or religious views . . ." The concept that I support is that every qualified applicant should be free to seek employment at the University of Colorado, that the campuses will take whatever steps are necessary to create diverse candidate pools, and that the candidates with the greatest merit will emerge from the search process. The University of Colorado should be taking steps to ensure that the best and brightest candidates of all

political affiliations and political philosophies are welcome at the University of Colorado.

Benn: During the Sept. 14 meeting Jim Geddes suggested that the university "takes action" to increase diversity in a number of areas, but not political affiliation/beliefs, and that this should be changed. In your last email you said, "Since the amendments, the Board of Regents has not demanded that the campuses hire or promote any faculty members because of their political affiliations or political beliefs. Nor would we." Although Regent Geddes' proposal wasn't passed, it seems this is an effort to change the hiring practices to include some sort of mechanism to expand the diversity of political belief/affiliation of professors on campus. How would you respond to this? And why didn't you choose to second the motion?

Sharkey: I respect Regent Geddes's desire to ensure that diverse political perspectives exist on the campuses, but I believe that diversity has to come from faculty-led efforts. After the Board of Regents passed the amendments to Article 10 of the Laws of the Regents and commissioned the Social Climate Survey, the Faculty Council and other faculty groups have indicated that the [sic] will take the reins in proposing how our hiring processes can be strengthened to improve diversity of all types. The Social Climate Survey demonstrated that there were a number of areas, including gender, age, and religious tolerance where the University of Colorado can improve. The Board of Regents has the ability to create policy, but the people who work and teach on the campuses have the greatest ability to create a welcoming environment at the University of Colorado,

and I am eager to see what the Faculty Council proposes.

Benn: Finally, one of my own concerns regarding these changes to our non-discrimination policy is that knowledge production and transformative educational processes like those that take place in universities should, by their very nature, challenge our core ideological and political beliefs. It seems to me that this policy suggests to students that this isn't the case, and that when their core political beliefs are challenged they have grounds to feel discriminated against. I feel like this could restrict educational growth and intellectual development as it gives protected status to belief systems that may or may not match up with reality or the research coming from particular scientific communities, e.g. a partisan disagreement about the reality of climate change doesn't change the overwhelming scientific consensus on certain aspects of this phenomenon. Under the new policy a student who disagrees with that scientific consensus might feel discriminated against when there is little serious attention given to the arguments that climate change is not real, which seems problematic. Under the new policy would a professor making a joke about "climate deniers" be seen as the equivalent of a professor making a joke about homosexuality? The job of professors is not to cater to sensitive partisan debates, rather scientific ones. This new policy seems to favor the former at the expense of the latter. How would you respond to this? My point is that political affiliation and philosophy, unlike or at least to a greater extent than many of the other identities included in the non-discrimination policy, are fluid, voluntary, and ideologically informed. This leaves them open to being challenged in uncomfortable ways that aspects of our

identities like race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., are not. This new policy seems like it could stand in the way of this critical educational process, and hamper the goal of the university to foster a more critical and engaged citizenry. The more you can elaborate on this point the better.

Sharkey: I understand your argument, but I think you misunderstand the premise of the amendments to Article 10. I agree with you that universities classrooms need to be places where debate can freely occur, but that debate cannot occur if some of the participants in the debate are afraid to express their thoughts. The Social Climate Survey demonstrated that significant numbers of students are intimidated to share their thoughts in the classroom, and that's not a dynamic that lends itself to a fully engaged discussion. We need to encourage an environment where the best arguments will emerge from the marketplace of ideas, rather than have a marketplace where some ideas are off limits. If an idea is refuted by other research, evidence, or logic, that refutation is an important and necessary part of the teaching process, but it should occur in a way that respects the dignity of the [sic] those participating in the discussion. The concepts that I endorse are also held by the University of Colorado's faculty, which passed a statement of Principles of Professional and Ethical Responsibilities, which states that "Professor demonstrate respect for students and individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. . . . They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students."

<div align="center">End of Interview Two</div>

Although Sharkey had plenty to say, she responds like a rather typical politician,

offering vague, defensive, and prima facie uncontroversial statements as she circles around directly answering questions or responding to critiques. In Interview One she repeatedly takes a defensive posture to my questions, emphasizing that her intention and the intention of the amendment to Article 10 are not to advocate for a particular political philosophy (see italicized statements), though none of my questions ask about this point. In light of the similarities in language to ABOR, SAF, Sharkey's receipt of an award from Horowitz for her work combatting liberal bias at CU, and Geddes rather blunt acknowledgment that he wants to see more conservatives at CU, it seems Sharkey's defensive stance and repeated statements to the contrary represent a case of someone who doth protest too much.

In Interview Two, my questions came with more specific critiques and points. My hope was this would foster an honest dialogue around the issues I found most concerning about these changes. It seems this put Sharkey into complete defensive mode, as she both ended our conversation and essentially skirts a direct response to every one of my questions and points. For instance, in my last point I offer the comparison of a professor making a joke about denying the existence of climate change and making a joke about homosexuality, and ask whether under the new policy these would be considered equivalent offenses, and Sharkey ignores it entirely. Although she does not provide an answer, my discussion with Geddes made it clear that not only would these now be considered equivalent offenses under CU's nondiscrimination policy, but also that protecting students' ability to disagree with the scientific consensus regarding global warming theory was part of his intention driving the amendment.

Sharkey's avoidance of direct answers in Interview Two leaves little for me to

interpret. Juxtaposed with Geddes remarkably candid responses, though, Sharkey's responses come off as polished and disingenuous. Combined with her refusal to continue our conversation, her relative silence is telling. Following her last email I responded (see appendix) to let her know that I would like to follow up and requested she let me know if she was ever willing to talk more. I received no response.

To be clear, I am not, nor do I think any academic would suggest a professor should ridicule or ostracize a student who expresses views in disagreement with prevailing scientific consensuses or theory. This would not create a welcoming learning environment nor is it an effective pedagogical tactic. I am suggesting that protecting an undefined, fluid, voluntary, and amorphous aspect of our identity, our political philosophy and affiliation, should not be in the same category as the other protected classes. A professor making a joke about conservatives or liberals, Democrats or Republicans, or even referring to any of these categories in a derogatory manner is vastly different from someone making a joke about or referring to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and/or veteran's status, in a derogatory manner.

Further, I am not against taking steps to include more conservatives in the university. In a two-party system I believe the importance of having educated actors and citizens at every point of the political spectrum is paramount, and more conservative engagement in academia is one route to helping achieve this goal. Civil engagement from liberal professors toward conservative peers and students is a necessary aspect in cultivating a convivial environment for ideas and political discourse to flourish. But I do not believe protecting political affiliation and philosophy is an appropriate or necessary

method to be employed in regard to forwarding these goals, and it brings with it far more risk than potential benefit. Discrimination, at its core, simply means to leave something out. Knowledge production is a process of discriminating based on the best available data; this is the only way our scientific understanding of the world can move forward. Though they are far from perfect, academia has rules, standards, and practices that referee this process. When political philosophies or affiliations include the denial of science that works within this framework, they are rightly discriminated against. It is this distinction, in part, that led to the conservative focus on knowledge production in think tanks over the last several decades. No longer satisfied playing by their own rules in these separate institutions, it seems now there is a push from conservatives to insist the academy make accommodations for this problematic knowledge production by changing its rules.

Ultimately it seems the effort of this conservative project in higher education is to supplant traditional knowledge production in favor of ideological rationalism, a specific, motivated, and anti-intellectual disposition in which research is no longer guided or evaluated by the merit of its ideas, substance, and academic rigor, and instead is guided or evaluated based on partisan political criteria. Advocacy tanks like The Heritage Foundation have been practicing the type of pseudoscience that helps create the manufactured controversies that this style of thought caters to since their establishment in the 1970s. Are we seeing a shift toward an acceptance of debate regarding these manufactured controversies in America's universities as we have seen in think tanks? The parallels are hard to deny, the overall trajectories are similar, and the players are often cut from the same cloth. At the same time, these two institutions of knowledge production differ drastically in their missions and the roles they play in society. In spite of their

numerous differences, it seems the blight of the modern think tank may at least offer some clue as to where American universities are headed.

A Crystal Ball: Let's Hope Not

Harking back to Chapter Two, remember that think tanks came to existence sometime around the turn of the 20th century with the intention of providing sound, rational, and detached advice to governments. Wealthy elites provided large endowments that allowed these institutions to conduct research autonomously and without external pressures from government, the public, or partisans. These endowments also placed a barrier between the research being done in think tanks and their funding/funders, weakening the influence of the business class on said research. This is when the archetype of the think tank, a 'university without students,' came to be (Pigliucci, 2010). Though there are still many academic think tanks operating today, they have largely been displaced or drowned out amidst the rising tide of advocacy tanks.

Following World War II the contract research think tank came about. The most important difference between these and academic think tanks is that research done in contract research tanks is explicitly trussed to its funding, which usually comes from the government. This departure from the previous era opened the door to increased influence from wealthy elites and partisan manipulation in think tank research through the nature of its direct funding. While the outcomes of the research cannot necessarily be purchased, the terms in which the research is conducted, and the questions being asked could now be contracted. This gave new power and influence to those who could afford to decide what type of research they would like conducted, and by whom. The conservative business class took note, and then took advantage. The next era of think tanks, born from this

impetus and known as advocacy tanks, is where we can look to in consideration of the direction universities are now moving toward.

In the early 1970s, unhappy with liberal social movements of the previous decade and the consensus driving the social compact between academics, government, business, and unions that was integral to growing the (white) middle class, the conservative business class invested in the knowledge production game (Domhoff, 2009, p. 967). In addition to investments in media and political foundations, think tanks became the primary location for these wealthy elites to present their preferred political positions and policy recommendations under the guise of scientific research, rather than as the self-interested claims they actually represent (Medvetz, 2012 p. 187-88). More than gaining credible footing in the realm of knowledge production alongside other think tanks or universities, what we have seen following this mixing of partisan politics, preferences of wealthy elites, and knowledge production, is a devaluation of the whole field of think tank expertise (Medvetz, 2012).

In the university we are seeing a similar process that seems to be the result of efforts from the same conservative business class that infiltrated think tanks in the 1970s. From the influence of large donors, who are intrinsically wealthy elites, to the insertion of partisan politics as a protected class, to the shift toward the corporate university, it is uncontroversial to say the pervasiveness of business and politics are growing within the academy. Students are viewed as consumers rather than citizens of an academic body. Most new professors are underpaid, overworked, and viewed as contingent, fungible employees rather than citizens or governing members of an academic community meant to contribute to its long term milieu and wellbeing. Spaces in the university are

increasingly filled with corporate sponsorship, advertisements, and other consumer messaging (Giroux, 2014). Student IDs are adorned with Visa and MasterCard logos alongside the images of students' faces and university logos, immediately tying these new adults' identity to consumption, capitalism, and debt (Giroux, 2007, p. 105). Are these the citizens we want our universities cultivating? I do not believe so. But even for those who might disagree with my assessment, we should at least take the time to make a conscious choice to consent to this new agreement regarding the purpose of universities. And for those of us who would choose to dissent, we need to work toward finding alternatives and/or means of resistance. Standing idly by is the other option, but no doubt this qualifies as tacit consent.

Beyond the increased collusion between universities and corporations linking young citizens' identities with consumerism, the perverting influence that stems from the influence of moneyed interests and unreflective market logic is apparent on the side of knowledge production as well. Somewhat similar to the first wave of think tanks, but even more-so, knowledge production in universities is meant to be detached from the influence of private or government donors or sponsors. Yet the creep of influence from market forces is pervasive on individual and institutional levels in the academy. As a young researcher and aspiring academic I often hear the refrain: 'Publish or perish!' With little regard or emphasis placed on what is being published. Perhaps more perilous than this attitude, however, is the increasing reliance on private donors at universities for larger research projects (Aronowitz, 2000 & Giroux, 2014).

The epitome of elite universities, Stanford, recently ran into controversy regarding funding the school received from Google. Critics argued that the funding came with

strings attached requiring that Stanford not use the money to research online privacy, a potential area of embarrassment for the corporate Internet behemoth. Officials from Stanford claimed no-such agreement was made, and may technically be correct, but as seen with think tanks, often it is the self-censorship, the less detectable wink-and-nod, and other less verifiable subtle influences money and private sponsorship can have on knowledge production that is of concern (Angwin, J. & Faturechi, R., 2014).

In general, the transformation underway in universities is a sign of the times as the United States travels ever further into an era of hypercapitalism and market fundamentalism (Cannella & Miller, 2008; Johnson et al., 2003; & Giroux, 2014). And though never entirely detached from the market, the university has been, and even in its diminished state remains, among the last spaces challenging these overwhelming hegemonic forces (Giroux, 2007, p. 111). If the university is destined to suffer a similar fate as think tanks then its descent into the murky world of money and politics has only just begun.

To this point the institutional history of a new era of anti-intellectualism has been documented using think tanks and American universities as heuristic devices. The preceding case study of changes to CU's nondiscrimination policy demonstrates how ideological rationalism is making its way into the university. Though somewhat unique, and particularly at-risk due to its elected Board of Regents, CU is far from the only university impacted by contemporary anti-intellectualism. In that light, the next chapter examines a social drama at another university that highlights the impacts of ideological rationalism on the academic environment.

Chapter Five

Ideological Rationalism and Social Drama at Marquette University

An example at Marquette University offers three unique angles on ideological rationalism, and truly warrants a more thorough investigation than the one I provide here. The basics of the situation are as follows. A graduate student, Cheryl Abbate, was teaching a course on ethics and asked the class for examples of laws that violate Rawls' equal liberty principle, according to which, as many basic liberties should be afforded to everyone, so long as they do not conflict with the liberties of others. A number of examples came up, including seat belt laws and concealed weapons bans. When one student suggested laws banning same-sex marriage violated the principle, Abbate agreed and quickly moved on to "more nuanced examples" (Flaherty, 2014, para. 2).

Following class another student approached Abbate and said he was "personally offended" she had not given more time to discuss the subject of same-sex marriage, and felt she had dismissed the argument based on personal views. Unbeknownst to Abbate at the time, the student was surreptitiously recording their conversation. The student, says he does not "agree with gay marriage," and supported this belief on the basis of a "widely discredited" study that, in the student's words, showed "children that are brought up in gay households do a lot worse in life such as test scores, in school, and in the real world" (Flaherty, 2014, para. 4 & Holz, 2015, p. 4). Abbate, correctly, points out that gay marriage and parenting are different topics. The student, without naming any additional reasons, says, "there are different reasons you can disagree with gay marriage," and eventually defensively states, "Regardless of why I'm against gay marriage, it's still

wrong for the teacher of a class to completely discredit one person's opinion when they may have different opinions" (Holz, 2015, p. 5).

Pausing for a moment, this is an important response, and demonstrates the difference between holding an opinion based on beliefs, and holding one that is defensible in an academic setting. In the academy, one cannot support their position by presenting an argument, having it refuted, and then ignoring that refutation without a counter, or adapting one's position as a result. Ideological rationalism offers a superficial basis for ideological positions that, on further inspection quickly crumbles, and thus evades such an inspection, or seeks to protect against one by establishing boundaries on discourse, and what is open to being challenged.

Abbate then explains to the student that homophobic, sexist, and racist opinions are not appropriate for discussion in an ethics class, and will not be tolerated and explains why. "To argue about that individuals should not have rights is going to be offensive to someone in this class" (Holz, 2015, p. 6). She also suggests that if the student does not like that he can drop the class. The student argues his opinion is not homophobic, and eventually Abbate notices he appears to be recording or filming with his phone and asks if this is the case. The student initially denies it, but when Abbate asks to see his phone he admits, "Oh, I am. I'm going to be showing it to your superiors." Abbate says, "Okay, go ahead," and the student replies, "Absolutely" (Holz, 2015, p. 7). Thus ends their conversation as far as is publicly known. Immediately following the exchange Abbate goes to explain what happened to the philosophy department's assistant chairperson, Sebastian Luft, including that the student recorded the conversation (Holz, 2015). The

student, though he said he would be showing the video to Abbate's superiors, initially denied its existence, and instead took it to his academic advisor (Holz, 2015).

To this point we have a student, unhappy with the pedagogical style of his graduate student teaching assistant, who decided to furtively record his conversation disputing this with her. In the case of the student, it seems he felt his perspective was being unfairly discriminated against and deemed offensive. And for Abbate, she had a student furtively record a conversation with the stated intent of sharing that recording with her superiors. Had the story only involved these two characters it likely would have ended shortly after this, and been handled without ever leaving the halls of Marquette. Enter John McAdams, an associate professor of political science at the university, and, notably, the undergraduate student's academic advisor—a fact McAdams makes an effort to conceal.

A few weeks after the recording, McAdams "published a post called 'Marquette Philosophy Instructor: 'Gay Rights' Can't Be Discussed in Class Since Any Disagreement Would Offend Gay Students' on his conservative-leaning blog, Marquette Warrior" (Flaherty, 2014, para. 9). Within the piece he makes use of the ill-gotten recording and an accounting of the lecture apparently provided by the student, to relay, or more accurately mischaracterize, both the class lecture and the private discussion that took place afterwards between the student and Abbate. And while McAdams goes to lengths to ensure the anonymity of the undergraduate student, he not only identifies Abbate by name, something the university had previously asked he not do to students online (Holz, 2015), he also provides a hyperlink to her personal website, which included her contact information.

In his blog McAdams argues Abbate shut down discussion on same-sex marriage because she felt, "apparently that any gay classmates should not be subjected to hearing any disagreement with their presumed policy views" (McAdams, 2014, para. 7). Based on the transcript of Abbate and the undergraduate student's conversation, and on Abbate's explanation of the purpose of the class lecture, this is a significant distortion. Considering McAdams had access to the illicitly recorded conversation, and offered less than 24 hours for Abbate to respond before publishing his story (Holz, 2015), the misrepresentation appears intentional.

McAdams broadside continues with several more problematic claims. First, he implies the undergraduate student decided to drop Abbate's class based on this interaction. This is not just false, but given McAdams status as the student's academic advisor—something McAdams deliberately concealed from the public—it is likely he knew it was false at the time he wrote it (Weinberg, 2015). In a letter that initiated the process of revoking McAdams tenure and firing him written by Marquette's dean, Richard Holz, this distortion is described as follows:

> As you knew or should have known (since you are the student's academic adviser), the student told the University three days after withdrawing that he had done so because he was getting an "F" at mid-term. He further specifically agreed that his grade fairly reflected his performance and had nothing to do with his political or personal beliefs. (Holz, 2015, p. 3)

Next, McAdams argues Abbate "was just using a typical tactics among liberals now. Opinions with which they disagree are not merely wrong, and are not to be argued against on their merits, but are deemed 'offensive' and need to be shut up" (McAdams,

2014, para. 12). To support this claim he invokes conservative firebrand Charles

Krauthammer, who calls this attitude "totalitarian," states:

> It declares certain controversies over and visits serious consequences — from
>
> social ostracism to vocational defenestration — upon those who refuse to be
>
> silenced.
>
> The newest closing of the leftist mind is on gay marriage. Just as the science of
>
> global warming is settled, so, it seems, are the moral and philosophical merits of
>
> gay marriage.
>
> To oppose it is nothing but bigotry, akin to racism. Opponents are to be similarly
>
> marginalized and shunned, destroyed personally and professionally.
>
> (Krauthammer as quoted in McAdams, 2014, para. 14-16)

McAdams goes on to describe what his heading labels, "The 'Offended' Card,"

essentially the idea that," "[g]roups not favored by leftist professors … can be freely

attacked, and their views (or supposed views) ridiculed. Christians and Muslims are not

allowed to be 'offended' by pro-gay comments." When it comes to "straight white males"

in the "politically correct world of academia," it is a "free-fire zone" (McAdams, 2014,

paras. 19-22). McAdams subsequently critiques the administrations response and their

ability to handle the undergraduate student's complaint. The administration has strongly

refuted these claims (Holz, 2015). He then concludes,

> this student is rather outspoken and assertive about his beliefs. That puts him
>
> among a small minority of Marquette students. How many students, especially in
>
> politically correct departments like Philosophy, simply stifle their disagreement,

or worse yet get indoctrinated into the views of the instructor, since those are the

only ideas allowed, and no alternative views are aired?

Like the rest of academia, Marquette is less and less a real university. And when

gay marriage cannot be discussed, certainly not a Catholic university. (McAdams,

2014, paras. 31-32)

Justin Weinberg, an associate professor in the Philosophy Department at the

University of South Carolina, sums up the problematic nature of McAdams' framing of

the event well.

There are certainly interesting pedagogical questions about how to discuss

potentially offensive topics without violating harassment policies … However, the

event at the center of this controversy does not appear to be one of speech being

shut down because it is offensive. Rather, the comment was off-topic and based

on false claims, and the instructor needed to make a decision about how to use

limited class time, especially given the topic of the lesson and the subject of the

course (which is ethical theory, not applied ethics). Further, as any professor

knows, points may be made in offensive and inoffensive ways, and particular

students may be more or less skilled at putting their ideas into words that make

for a constructive contribution to the lesson. In light of these factors, it is well

within the rights and responsibilities of the instructor to manage classroom

discussion in a way she judges conducive to learning. (Weinberg, 2014, para. 10)

After McAdams published his story online a number of other right-leaning

organizations picked it up and offered their own take, largely based on and without

questioning McAdams problematic narrative (Flaherty, 2014). Abbate quickly became

the focus of what Weinberg called "a political smear campaign" (Weinberg, 2014). This

led to a slew of hostile and even threatening emails and comments directed at Abbate.

The comments in an online article titled, "Settled Science-Nobody Disagrees With Gay

Marriage," offers numerous examples. "This ignorant liberal bitch needs me in her class

for an hour. When I'm done with her she'll have a full understanding of abhorrent

behavior of queers, lesbos and transgender freaks," and, "Settled just like the global

warming hoax." People also refer to Abbate as a "silly bitch," make repeated references

to her veganism, and multiple homophobic and insinuations regarding their presumptions

of her sexual orientation (BFH, 2014).

The comment sections of such articles also became locations for people to share

Abbate's email address, helping open her up to receiving some particularly vile emails,

from which she documents a sampling of on her website (Abbate, 2015). Among her

examples from the "over 100 emails," there are indirect threats, homophobic slurs,

repeated demeaning references to feminism, liberal or progressive politics, animal ethics,

consistent misogyny, and a range of outright name calling, including lines like, "you

fucking CUNT!!" and appeals for her to harm herself or hopes that she, "die a horrible

death." A hand written letter she received in the mail even went so far as to tell Abbate

that she, "must abort yourself," (Abbate, 2015).

Others, like Weinberg, spoke out on Abbate's behalf, as did Marquette when the

university moved to revoke McAdams tenure and began the process of firing him (Holz,

2015). And here the controversy expands. Members of the Association of American

University Professors (AAUP) published a series of opinions on the subject, ranging from

those who said McAdams academic freedom was under attack (Wilson, 2015), to those

who argued posing the matter in terms of academic freedom was a fundamental misstep in its evaluation, and rather should be viewed in terms of McAdams "dereliction of duty" (Allen, 2015).

So now there are three perspectives, the undergraduate's, Abbate's, and McAdams', with the academic freedom of each coming into potential conflict with one another. What seems clear to me after reading a relatively extensive selection of germane writings from McAdams and Abbate, as well as a number of other academics, is that of all the players involved the undergraduate student has the least claim to a legitimate grievance. Although he appears to have felt his opinion was ignored, even discriminated against, Weinberg and the context of the class discussion make it clear Abbate had justifiable cause to handle the discussion as she did. Further, she brought up the undergraduate student's concerns in the next class, giving them considerable time and reflection (Holz, 2015).

The letter revoking tenure and firing McAdams provides a detailed case history of the process surrounding the events, and shows the university was able to appropriately and rather easily respond to and satisfy the undergraduate student's concerns (Holz, 2015). However, the arguments that McAdams' academic freedom is under threat certainly hold some merit. Should he be fired for what he wrote on an extramural blog? Should what he wrote be considered extramural? Did Marquette handle the process appropriately? These are a few of the questions raised by his firing that the academics engaging in debate over the incident are posing one another, and arguing for and against. Though, critiques of Marquette's handling of his firing have been widely criticized, even by those who agree he should be terminated (Allen, 2015 & Kirstein, 2015). And for

Abbate, her academic freedom has suffered greatly, largely as a result of actions taken by McAdams to publicize a mischaracterization and critique of her pedagogical style, along with her name and a link to her blog. Not only was the event so disruptive she was "unable to focus on [her] PhD dissertation," it motivated her to leave Marquette entirely (Abbate, 2014 & Weinberg, 2014a).

This incident highlights a few things. First, McAdams, who is an outspoken conservative, and academics who have voiced support for him, have raised the legitimate question as to whether or not his position as an outspoken conservative influenced his firing. While it does not seem likely that one could say they fired McAdams for his political views, there is a question as to whether or not his status as a bit of a polemicist helped fuel the quick motion for his removal. Tenure promises due process in such a removal, however, and whether the initial move toward his firing was in haste matters less than if that process is followed through with fairly. This seems to be happening now.

But secondly, the incident demonstrates the necessity for those leading class discussions—whether they are professors or graduate teachers like Abbate—to not have their pedagogical style threatened by outside actors. This includes outside actors like McAdams, who was in another department at the same university, as well as the hundreds of people who sent Abbate threatening and violent emails. That does not mean pedagogical styles of professors and graduate students leading classes should not be open to critique from relevant parties. But the attack on Abbate, led by McAdams, went far beyond any constructive critique, and into the realm of an intentional effort to suppress her academic freedom, and ability to lead her class as she saw fit in her role as the

instructor. Though indirectly, this type of suppression of ones' pedagogy represents a serious threat, perhaps most likely to manifest in self-censorship.

What this social drama represents in relation to ideological rationalism is multifaceted. First, it is displayed in McAdams vicious attacks on Abbate, rooted in his political disagreements with her and his sense of exclusion as a conservative in the academy. Secondly, it is displayed in the reactions that McAdams blog garnered, both from other right-wing media like Fox News, as well as the vile comments and emails directed at Abbate, which often included reference to her position on the left of the political spectrum.

At CU, where Abbate is now a doctoral student, the codification of protection of political philosophy and affiliation presents a similarly indirect threat to the academic instructors, professors, and graduate student teachers at the university. With the political affiliation and philosophy of students protected under CU's nondiscrimination policy, a good deal of power shifts to the student's complaint if a situation like the one at Marquette arises here. The threat of a bureaucratic process and disciplinary actions that it brings hangs over the heads of those teaching at CU, and seem to easily be enough to suppress or alter pedagogical tactics discussing some issues, particularly manufactured controversies. This potentially allows otherwise settled matters to remain open for debate.

Indeed, McAdams use of Krauthammer's two examples, the philosophical merits of same-sex marriage and the science of global warming, are telling. To the latter example, while the hard science of climate change has many areas of controversy and debate, there is very little question regarding whether it is driven by carbon emissions and human activity (Cook, 2015). And to the former, which represents a humanistic

evaluation, subsequently with more gray area, there is a question as to when such a debate should be closed, and the progress of history allowed to march on. Not long ago many of the same arguments used against same-sex marriage were used against miscegenation (Curtis, 2015). But in 2015 an argument against interracial marriage would feel antiquated, racist, and offensive. Consequently, such a debate is rightly discriminated against in the academy. It does not seem bold to suggest that in a few decades the same will be true for same-sex marriage. Should university professors be forced to give deference to a debate on its way to the dustbin of history because it aligns with someone's political or religious views? If so, this seems to leave room for interminable inaction on important social issues, perpetuating oppression, and benefitting the status quo.

Finally, the firing of McAdams might represent an example of liberal ideological rationalism. He was an outspoken conservative professor, in a relatively liberal field and profession, whose actions led to a young, liberal, aspiring academic receiving some of the most vile emails and threats imaginable. Did Marquette take advantage of this, and a liberal sense of community and tolerance to close off discourse and fire someone they saw as intolerant and harmful to the university? If so, can such intolerance of intolerance be justified?

Clearly, the social drama at Marquette represents a complicated subject and one that could be reviewed in significant depth. But it does seem to represent a manifestation of ideological rationalism from a number of angles—including the precipitating incident, McAdams' response, the reaction from the university, the undergraduate student's complaint, and the tirade of angry responses directed at Abbate. While it is hard to draw

any conclusions based on my brief analysis, the event demonstrates some potentially problematic implications in light of CU's nondiscrimination policy, and raises more questions than answers.

Next, the final chapter goes into less depth, but more breadth, providing examples of how conservative ideological rationalism manifests in news media, public education, individual attitudes, policy, and more. Though in some ways these examples may seem too simple, the point is not to "shoot fish in a barrel," rather, it is to demonstrate the prevalence of these modern dimensions of anti-intellectualism across society, and their impacts in a range of areas. In this way, stating what may seem obvious to some actually exemplifies the fissure in society regarding some very different ways of perceiving the world.

Chapter Six

Resting My Case With Little Preponderance, But a Plethora of Evidence

To this point, ideological rationalism and unreflective market should have emerged as relatively clear, but basic concepts, representing the first stage in their development. From here, a logical next step would be to delve into a more detailed analysis of each. While my time and space has largely run its course, my goal in this final chapter is to offer a swath of examples demonstrating the prevalence of conservative ideological rationalism. To do so I offer a brief analysis of a number of articles, opinion pieces, and other media manifestations as evidence of how it manifests across society. Most of the examples are from the last few months, revealing their pervasiveness in modern discourse. Conservative ideological rationalism underlies each of these examples and the attitudes represented often stem from and/or are bolstered through knowledge produced in think tanks.

On November 13, 2012, conservative personality Bill O'Reilly used the "Talking Points" portion of his Fox News show for a segment titled, "The far-left running wild." During which, he displays numerous examples of ideological rationalism, while concurrently, and without irony, decrying others for doing the same. His segment can be summarized as follows. After winning the election President Obama had several "leftists" visit the White House to thank them for their loyalty during the campaign. Among this group were, "union leaders, a guy from MoveOn, and Center for American Progress people," (O'Reilly, 2012). According to O'Reilly, some "far-left media folks" who were "totally in the tank" for Obama should have been there as well (2012). As an example,

not one to leave himself out, O'Reilly uses media referring to him as "lamenting" shifts

in the American electorate as inaccurate. And concludes saying:

> But the worse part about it is no one holds them accountable because most people
>
> fear the far-left. They are afraid of them because they are so vicious. Vicious. So
>
> here is what I really lament. We are now living in a dishonest culture. The media
>
> is totally corrupt in this country, it does things that it could never have gotten
>
> away with even 10 years ago.
>
> There are entire media operations that exist solely to promote ideology; obviously
>
> a bad situation that is getting worse. (O'Reilly, 2012)

For anyone at Fox News to make the comment in the final sentence of the quote

above without irony is, well, ironic. But it seems to reflect a common mentality that

aligns with liberal and conservative ideological rationalism. This is not just about

offering a rationale, but discrediting others and excluding their perspectives from

discourse. This sanctions a closing of the mind, which perpetuates ignorance, suspicion,

and fear of outside knowledge. Discriminating against or insulting political adversaries

(Sunstein, 2014), refusing to consider the possibility their ideas have merit (Jacoby,

2008), and avoiding an honest appraisal of their challenges are all endemic features of

ideological rationalism, and O'Reilly highlights these attitudes in the above segment.

A February 26, 2015 piece in *Salon* demonstrates the type of intellectual growth

conservative ideological rationalism seeks to control and prevent. Within it, Edwin

Lyngar traces his evolution from a staunch conservative, who viewed education with

suspicion, hostility, and even borderline paranoia, to the holder of several graduate

degrees and a significantly different and more liberal outlook.

Before college, I voted conservative, hated gay people, loved America and served

my country in the armed services. I've changed because of many factors, but I

know that college and graduate school made a difference. I met people unlike

myself and was forced to defend sometimes ugly political positions. The Tea

Party thrives on blue-collar 'common sense' that is composed of a combination of

ignorance, superstition and fear. A literate and educated populace is an existential

threat to the kind of thoughtless rage that has consumed the right over the past

few years. (Lyngar, 2015, para. 7)

What Lyngar has detailed is his own emergence from an anti-intellectual disposition,

rooted in conservative ideological rationalism, disrupted through a process of education

and challenges to his preexisting beliefs. This demonstrates a few things. First, it shows

the threat of the unconstrained intellect to ideological positions rooted in fear, bigotry,

and ignorance. Second, it reinforces my choice to focus my analysis on conservative

ideological rationalism as an anti-intellectual disposition and form of social control. And

last, it accentuates the importance that professors at universities, like CU, are allowed to

make challenges to students' preexisting political beliefs—and thus emphasizes the threat

brought on by changes like those documented in Chapter Four.

Highlighting the portrayal of conservative Christians as a persecuted class in the

age of conservative ideological rationalism, a February 2, 2015 article from *Talking

Points Memo* took note of Fox News host Tucker Carlson decrying a so-called

"Christianphobia," in what was an overt display of anti-intellectualism. His guest, Rev.

Jonathan Morris, offered an exemplary outburst of the attitude—particularly anti-elitism.

Describing the "types of people who look down on Christianity," Morris blamed the

"elite sectors of our society," citing elites in news media, Hollywood, and, "this is the most important and dangerous one, in academia," (Garcia, 2015, paras. 3-4). The article presents these quotes with almost no editorial, neither calling them anti-intellectual nor critiquing them in any way.

On April 15, 2015, *Talking Points Memo* took note of Fox Business host John Stossel's appearance on "The O'Reilly Factor" in which he challenged O'Reilly's notion that Christianity is under attack. Doing so, Stossel calls O'Reilly, "a 10-food-tall crybaby," and reminds him, "Christians aren't being killed." To which O'Reilly replies, "Not yet," and argues Christians are being "diminished," something Stossel should be "outraged" by, and eventually suggests, "'secularists' want 'unfettered abortion' and gay marriage.'" Stossel responds first by pointing out that the vast majority of people in the United States identify as Christians, reminding O'Reilly, "You've won." And secondly saying, "I'm a secularist and I don't want unlimited abortion. I think you paint with too broad a brush." O'Reilly, cautious of who he offends, and implying, "you're not one of them," forgives Stossel of his secularism, noting he is not a "secular progressive" (MacNeal, 2015).

Speaking of painting with too broad a brush, on April 5, 2015, Mark E. Anderson published a piece titled, "The right-wing and absolutism," with the *Daily Kos*. Within it, Anderson, a combat veteran, takes issue with what he identifies as absolutism on the right. To do so he details prominent themes in the comments of a Facebook meme. "Each and every comment … is absolute in the belief that liberals are cowards, yellow, homosexual, mentally deficient, and that no liberal could have ever served in the military" (2015, para. 11). Anderson points out that though absolutist attitudes on the

right are not homogenous, they are prevalent among the right's most "vocal members." Here, "the right-wing noise machine—Rush Limbaugh, Fox News, Glenn Beck, etc.— has done a wonderful job with promoting absolutist propaganda, in which if you are not a good conservative American, you are the enemy" (2015, para. 12). Though Sunstein's *partyism* reveals this ideological entrenchment is not only a problem on the right, political neuroscience and psychological differences between liberals and conservatives make absolutism more pronounced and effective there. The tolerance for openness and complexity on the left does not preclude absolutist views, but it does make them less likely to take hold or become widespread.

Anderson lists a number of examples of absolutism on the right, "whether it be on climate change and healthcare reform, or civil rights under the guise of religious freedom and gun rights" (2015, para. 12). Each of Anderson's examples of absolutism is supported through ideological rationalism, as knowledge, often created in think tanks is molded to support these preexisting beliefs, rather than challenge their veracity. Media personalities, politicians, and other informed actors are then able to use this knowledge to support their preferences and to contest more disinterested knowledge production that disagrees with them. This prolongs debate on otherwise settled matters, perpetuating and ultimately benefitting the status quo. This halt of honest intellectual discourse is inherently anti-intellectual, and by my judgment harmful to society.

As mentioned, ideological rationalism is not only about what is included in the discussion, but also what is left out. To control discourse moral, rhetorical, and even literal boundaries are drawn around what is acceptable and what can be said, and threatening ideas are excluded whenever possible. In some cases this has led to reporting

from news media that sounds more like reporting from *The Onion*, a satirical publication.

One of these cases stems from Florida, where, though Governor Rick Scott (R) denies it,

"former staffers with the state's Department of Environmental Protection alleged that

senior officials, under the direction of [Scott], had instituted an unwritten ban on using

the phrases 'climate change' and 'global warming'" (McDonnell, 2015, para. 2). And

another originates in Wisconsin, where a "three-person commission that oversees a public

land trust … voted 2-1 to block the trust's dozen public employees 'from engaging in

global warming or climate change work while on BCPL [Board of Commissioners of

Public Lands] time'" (McDonnell, 2015, para. 3). Both of these are manifestations of

ideological rationalism, and both attempt, almost desperately, to foreclose discourse on

climate change or global warming within state governments and their organizations by

literally banning the use of the words.

      Other prevalent examples of efforts to foreclose discourse are found in public

education policy, often initiated through state boards. Throughout the United States there

are efforts by conservatives to restrict so-called anti-American biases being taught in

history classes in public schools. In Jefferson County, Colorado, a proposal in 2014 from

a board member to review advanced placement (AP) U.S. history curriculum stirred up

protests from students and other concerned parties. The controversy was ignited from the

inclusion of the following in the initial draft of the proposal.

      Materials should promote citizenship, patriotism, essentials and benefits of the

      free enterprise system, respect for authority and respect for individual rights.

      Materials should not encourage or condone civil disorder, social strife or

disregard of the law. Instructional materials should present positive aspects of the

United States and its heritage. (Brundin, 2014)

The controversial proposal was eventually scrapped and the school board never

conducted its review (Associated Press, 2015), but the effort is not unique, nor likely to

be the last of its kind.

In fact, the effort in Jefferson County owes credit to the previous, and successful,

work of the Texas State Board of Education, which, in 2013, amended its operating rules

as follows.

(B) Instructional materials should promote *citizenship*, *patriotism*, understanding

of the essentials and benefits of the *free enterprise system*, respect for *recognized*

authority, and respect for *individual rights*. The materials should not include

selections or works that encourage or condone civil disorder, social strife, or

disregard of the law. Violence, if it appears, should be treated in the context of its

cause and consequence. It should not appear for reasons of unwholesome

excitement or sensationalism.

(i) Instructional materials should present *positive aspects of the United States* and

its heritage.

(ii) When significant political or social movements in history generate no clear

consensus, instructional materials should present balanced and factual treatment

of the positions.

(iii) Free enterprise means an economic system characterized by private or

corporate ownership of capital goods; investments that are determined by private

decision rather than by state control; and prices, production, and the distribution

of goods that are determined in a free market. (Texas State Board of Education,

2013, emphasis added)

As highlighted in the italicized words and phrases above, conservative ideological

rationalism and unreflective market logic are now, essentially, legally incorporated into

the Texas public education system. Prioritizing *recognized authority*, appealing to

amorphous values like *patriotism*, and using vaguely anti-immigrant epithets like

citizenship, and restricting education to the *essentials* and *benefits* of the *free enterprise*

system, all reflect a conservative outlook and a closing of possibilities. This is

institutionalized anti-intellectualism. A full textual and historical analysis could be

combined with a case study to truly interrogate the process behind these changes, but it is

clear they are part of a widespread cultural trend and challenge to public education in the

United States.

In Arizona, a "2010 law, designed to target a Tucson Mexican-American studies

program that conservative lawmakers said politicized students and bred resentment

against whites, prohibits courses that promote the overthrow of the U.S. government,

kindle ethnic resentment, foster ethnic solidarity or treat students as members of a group

rather than as individuals," (Planas, 2015) effectively shut down the few ethnic studies

classes taught in the state at the high school and college level. The law has been

challenged, and, thus far, largely upheld by lower courts. It currently awaits a ruling from

the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals (Planas, 2015).

Here we see conservative ideological rationalism effectively employed as a

mechanism of social control. Notably, this law is about a sanctioning of acceptable

knowledge, which limits pedagogy of oppressed peoples. One could hardly give a slave

narrative or a history of racial hierarchies in the United States an honest reading without it breeding some justifiable resentment toward Whites. Erasing this history and teaching each student as an individual, detached from its repercussions, is not only inaccurate, but for those who remain marginalized as a result of this history such an erasure is oppressive.

Moving back to higher education, another social drama brought about in reaction to a course at Arizona State University (ASU), "U.S. Race Theory and the Problem of Whiteness," exemplifies conservative ideological rationalism. "In the space of two months, the course has been singled out by Fox News commentators, been targeted online by White-supremacist groups and spurred small protests and counterprotests in Tempe" (White, 2015, para. 2). The hostility literally took on a personal note for the instructor of the course, assistant professor Lee Bebout. Not only has he received scores of hate-filled emails, "Tempe police say [he] suffered harassment when fliers were distributed on campus and in Bebout's neighborhood with 'Anti-White' printed over a photo of Bebout, who is White" (White, 2015, para. 3).

As this chapter has shown, conservative ideological rationalism is common, operates across a range of institutions, policies, attitudes, and societal questions, and stifles dissent. The examples highlighted here are each merely a glimpse, and could each be studied further to shine light on the predominant cultural tendencies toward anti-intellectualism in the contemporary era.

Final Reflections

This thesis was born out of curiosity, bewilderment, and an interest in understanding why so many of those around me no longer seemed to be able to discuss

sensitive political topics to any positive effect. How and why were people seeing the world so differently? Unable to agree the sky was blue. While political differences have been a relative constant throughout the history of the United States, the level of vitriol, and the distance between political parties seems to be wider than the historic norm, whatever that may be, and growing further apart. Growing up in the 1980s and '90s I learned about the political progress of previous generations. Images from the Civil Rights Movement, second wave feminism and the women's liberation movement, student-led protests against the war in Vietnam and nuclear energy, and Tiananmen Square were all held up as positive or symbolic moments of progress, patriotism, and freedom.

During Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign my dad took me out of school to go see candidate Clinton speak at a campaign event. When he became president I felt like I practically knew him. "I saw him speak," I would tell my friends. This is not what got me interested in politics, but it is the first time I remember caring about presidential politics, or starting to understand anything about the subject. A few years later I remember watching the government shut down and seemingly fall apart.

The contentious and practically dysfunctional nature of national politics continued throughout my teenage years as the Supreme Court decided one of the closest elections in history for George W. Bush. In 2008, change was surely going to come, as the nation elected its first Black president, Barack Obama. By early spring in 2009, only a few months after his inauguration, one thing was clear to me, the only change that was coming politically was more partisan rancor, less genuine discourse, and a widening gap between what is being said and what is being heard by people at different points on the political spectrum.

Though an imperfect measure, presidential elections are the only thing we vote on nationwide, and act in that sense as a finger on the pulse of the nation, and a good heuristic device for my personal experience with the ebbs and flows of hope and disappointment in American politics. Raised hearing sanitized versions of the Great Progress of previous eras in public school, and some less-sanitized versions at home, the would-be political heroes and moments of my day never seemed to manifest. Instead of meeting what felt, to me, like an obviously unjust decision to invade Iraq with protestors rallying en masse in the streets, and media critically evaluating the pursuit of war, the invasion of Iraq was met with broad support in the streets and in media. Rather than marching with my friends in protest I was welcoming them home from tours of service in theaters of war. For me, by and large, there has always seemed to be a disconnect between what we should be doing as a society, and what we actually choose to do, and in many ways, this thesis has been my effort at examining why that is.

Coming to any place of comprehension for such fundamental questions requires an openness to complexity, to following evidence, theories, and analyses where they lead, and transparently advancing an understanding of each. Thus, I applied a qualitative critical inquiry, guided by theoretical sampling, and incorporating multiple methods and means of analysis, including literature reviews, case histories, historical analysis of original documents, original interviews, and more. Underlying and threading this search, or detective work (Merriam, 2009), together, has been my understanding of anti-intellectualism, namely as a mechanism of social control. To explore this multifaceted phenomenon I analyzed predominant trends in two institutions of knowledge production, think tanks and American universities.

From this analysis two conceptual categories emerged, unreflective market logic and ideological rationalism, each representing new iterations of anti-intellectualism. Once grounded as basic concepts my focus turned to more fully expand on ideological rationalism, and more specifically its conservative dimensions. My logical justifications for this are advanced with my analysis, but it is likely no revelation for me to add here that my curiosity in how conservatives think is related to my own position on the far-left of the political spectrum—and not necessarily just the U.S. political spectrum.

Though neither category has reached a point of saturation, the goal of theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), conservative ideological rationalism is well on its way. Logical next steps have been identified throughout, but the most important step is to explore liberal ideological rationalism to more fully balance an understanding of where the ideologies driving partisan rancor stem from on the two predominant ends of the political spectrum. In many ways liberal ideological rationalism is a potentially more fascinating concept given its counterintuitive nature—appealing to a sense of community and a tolerance for openness and complexity to foreclose the boundaries of discourse.

Ideally, ideological rationalism and unreflective market logic have each emerged as relatively clear, albeit basic, concepts, offering other scholars and myself the opportunity to develop them further and apply them beyond think tanks and universities. Intellectual ideas are necessary in a democratic society. Perhaps even more than this, a populace willing and capable of evaluating those ideas is needed for that democratic society to function. Without this, it seems we are destined to see completely different shades of blue when we look to the same sky. To get different results from two plus two. And to further entrench ourselves among those who share our political views, and to

further despise and fail to understand those who do not. By exploring the mechanisms of

knowledge production that undergird anti-intellectual tendencies and perpetuate this

entrenchment of views, we can begin to break them down. If only a chip in the brick, I

believe some progress on that front has been made here.

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Appendix

My interviews with Sue Sharkey and Jim Geddes came about spontaneously.

Because of this, getting approval through CU's Independent Review Board (IRB) was not

feasible. Both Sharkey and Geddes are or were elected public officials, who, unlike

subjects of research that the IRB is meant to protect, such public status makes them

subject to scrutiny from the publics they serve, of which I am a member—both as a

student at CU Boulder, and as a Colorado resident. However, in the interest of

transparency and to preclude any controversy regarding my use of their interviews in this

thesis I have included our pertinent dialogue here, which clearly shows each were made

aware how their interviews might be used, and given an opportunity to redact any

statements they did not want made public.

First Email to Sue Sharkey – November 30, 2014

Ms. Sharkey,

Hello, my name is Jesse Benn. I'm a graduate student in the Journalism and Mass

Communication program at CU Boulder. I had some questions about the recent changes

to the non-discrimination policy at CU that you initiated involving political belief and

affiliation. Is this something you'd be able to talk about? I'm interested personally just as

a student at CU, but my thesis research is also interested in changes to university

structures in the modern era and considering we are the first university to implement this

type of policy it seems we are at the forefront of these changes.

Thanks for your time.

Best,

Jesse Benn

<u>Sue Sharkey Email Response One – November 30, 2014</u>

Jesse,

Go ahead and send me your questions. When would you like a response?

Sent from my iPad

<u>Second Email to Sue Sharkey – December 1, 2014</u>

Thanks for getting back to me so quickly.

If it's okay I'd like to start a dialogue rather than bombard you with too many questions.

To begin would you mind telling me what you remember about the events and rationale

regarding the inclusion of political belief and affiliation?

More specifically…

-        Do you remember where the idea came from? (I saw one article that suggested it

stems from David Horowitz' academic/student bill of rights)

-        What made you feel it was necessary at CU? (e.g. complaints from students or

professors, personal experience or beliefs, etc.)

-        What made you feel it would be a beneficial change?

-        What was the discussion or debate over the change like? (Key points for and

against or your own argument for the change)

-        And what, if any, pushback has there been in regard to the change?

I'm sure that's more than enough for you to consider for now. If you can respond as early

as is convenient I would appreciate it. Thanks for taking the time to email with me.

Best,

Jesse

<u>Sue Sharkey Email Interview Response One – January 26, 2015</u>

Jesse,

Here is my response to the questions you've asked regarding the addition to the university's nondiscrimination policy addressing political philosophy and political affiliation.

1. Do you remember where the idea came from? (I saw one article that suggested it stems from David Horowitz' academic/student bill of rights).

> When I came onto the Board of Regents, Regent Geddes and I had heard from a number of students, as well as concerned parents, about concerns that not all political viewpoints were equally respected across the campuses. We did not take the position that it was the Board of Regents' prerogative to determine who should be hired for any academic position, but we both strongly believed that the University of Colorado should be a place that not only ensured that students were exposed to a diverse array of views, but ensured that no one would face any discrimination for expressing dissimilar beliefs. We knew that the Laws of the Regents already prohibited a number of forms of discrimination and asked whether those laws could also encompass political affiliation and political philosophy. Over a period of several months, we worked with the university's administration and engaged in a number of discussions with other regents. During those discussions, our colleagues also suggested that gender expression and gender identity should be added to the protected categories, and we worked together to bring a bipartisan, non-ideological resolution to the Board of Regents. Ultimately, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution and protected political

affiliation and political philosophy in the same manner that it protects other

characteristics.

2. What made you feel it was necessary at CU? (e.g. complaints from students or

professors, personal experience or beliefs, etc)

It's difficult to define a single event that prompted me to propose and support this

amendment to the Laws of the Regents. At a fundamental level, it's important to

recognize that we live in a very complex society where people are exposed to a

broad array of economic, social and political opinions. My goal has never been,

and never will be, to have the University of Colorado dictate what political

viewpoints student, employee or faculty member should hold. Instead, my goal

has always been to promote the University of Colorado as a place where

intellectual debate flourishes and students graduate with the critical thinking skills

necessary for them to thrive. The hallmark of a well-educated person is the ability

to consider all side of an issue and then reach an independent, well-reasoned

conclusion, and I have consistently advocated that the Board of Regents should

use its authority to ensure that the University of Colorado provides an education

that exposes students to the broadest spectrum of the intellectual community.

3. What made you feel it would be a beneficial change?

The Board of Regents is the governing body of the University of Colorado, and

one of its most important roles is to help define the university's core values.

Having the Board of Regents formally adopt a law that protects people of all

political affiliations and political philosophies establishes non-discrimination as

one of the University of Colorado's core value. It allows everyone in the

University of Colorado to understand that the Board of Regents respects all
political affiliations and political philosophies and that it expects the same from
everyone within our community.

4. What was the discussion or debate over the change like?

With the regents, our discussion focused less on whether we should make this
change, but upon whether the amendments were broad enough. As I described
above, during the course of the discussion, the regents also added gender identity
and gender expression to the protected characteristics because it was consistent
with our entire board's belief that the University of Colorado should be
welcoming and inclusive to all. We also needed to be clear, however, that the
amendments to the Laws of the Regents were not intended to prohibit people from
holding their own viewpoints or passionately expressing them. The Board of
Regents has not endorsed any particular political affiliation or political
philosophy. Nor would it ever want a student, employee, or faculty member to be
either promoted or punished because of their affiliations or beliefs. We should
always seek to hire and promote those faculty members who are the best in their
fields.

5. And what, if any, pushback has there been in regard to the change?

The pushback has been very limited, and, for the most part, any pushback really
doesn't understand what the amendments to the Laws of the Regents were
intended to accomplish. Since the amendments, the Board of Regents has not
demanded that the campuses hire or promote any faculty members because of
their political affiliations or political beliefs. Nor would we. What we hope, and

expect, is that well-qualified scholars of all political affiliations and political viewpoints will recognize that the University of Colorado is committed to a robust and engaging intellectual environment. If the University of Colorado embraces a culture that promotes and encourages critical thinking, it will best serve the State of Colorado.

Best Regards,

Sue Sharkey

<div align="center">Follow-up Email Sent to Sue Sharkey – January 26, 2016</div>

Regent Sharkey,

Thanks for getting back to me. Below are a few follow up points and questions.

1) These changes seem to be inspired by David Horowitz' Academic Student Bill of Rights, which has been heavily criticized by the academic community as an effort to restrict academic freedom and insert political ideology into (among other areas) the hiring process at universities. This impression is bolstered by reports that you met with Horowitz prior to the changes to discuss them, and the fact that you received an award from Horowitz after the addition. How would you respond to this?

2) During the Sept. 14 meeting Jim Geddes suggested that the university "takes action" to increase diversity in a number of areas, but not political affiliation/beliefs, and that this should be changed. In your last email you said, "Since the amendments, the Board of Regents has not demanded that the campuses hire or promote any faculty members because of their political affiliations or political beliefs. Nor would we." Although Regent Geddes' proposal wasn't passed, it seems this is an effort to change the hiring practices to include some sort of mechanism to expand the diversity of political belief/affiliation of

professors on campus. How would you respond to this? And why didn't you choose to second the motion?

3) Finally, one of my own concerns regarding these changes to our non-discrimination policy is that knowledge production and transformative educational processes like those that take place in universities should, by their very nature, challenge our core ideological and political beliefs. It seems to me that this policy suggests to students that this isn't the case, and that when their core political beliefs are challenged they have grounds to feel discriminated against. I feel like this could restrict educational growth and intellectual development as it gives protected status to belief systems that may or may not match up with reality or the research coming from particular scientific communities, e.g. a partisan disagreement about the reality of climate change doesn't change the overwhelming scientific consensus on certain aspects of this phenomenon. Under the new policy a student who disagrees with that scientific consensus might feel discriminated against when there is little serious attention given to the arguments that climate change is not real, which seems problematic. Under the new policy would a professor making a joke about "climate deniers" be seen as the equivalent of a professor making a joke about homosexuality? The job of professors is not to cater to sensitive partisan debates, rather scientific ones. This new policy seems to favor the former at the expense of the latter. How would you respond to this?

My point is that political affiliation and philosophy, unlike or at least to a greater extent than many of the other identities included in the non-discrimination policy, are fluid, voluntary, and ideologically informed. This leaves them open to being challenged in uncomfortable ways that aspects of our identities like race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.,

are not. This new policy seems like it could stand in the way of this critical educational

process, and hamper the goal of the university to foster a more critical and engaged

citizenry. The more you can elaborate on this (number 3) point the better.

As always thanks for your time.

Best,

Jesse

<u>Final Response from Sue Sharkey – February 9, 2015</u>

Dear Jesse,

Thank you for your interest. As a regent, It's important to me that student and

constituents understand my positions, but I am concerned with the nature and tone of

your questions, which seem adversarial. I have taken positions as a regent because I

believe they are in the best interests of the University of Colorado, not to advance an

ideological agenda, and I believe the bipartisan support for the amendments to Article 10

of the Laws of the Regents demonstrates that my colleagues' belief in the same principles

of non-discrimination. With that being said, I will briefly answer the questions that

you've posed, but I don't plan on continuing a back-and-forth discussion about Article

10.

1)   These changes seem to be inspired by David Horowitz' Academic Student Bill of

Rights, which has been heavily criticized by the academic community as an effort to

restrict academic freedom and insert political ideology into (among other areas) the hiring

process at universities. This impression is bolstered by reports that you met with

Horowitz prior to the changes to discuss them, and the fact that you received an award

from Horowitz after the addition. How would you respond to this?

I do not agree with the statement that the amendments to Article 10 were inspired by David Horowitz's Academic Student Bill of Rights. After Regent Geddes and I had defined the potential amendments to Article 10, I spoke with Mr. Horowitz, as someone whose opinion I respect, but I did not propose the amendments at his suggestion or in response to anything he had previously written. I also disagree with the notion that the amendments to Article 10 have been drafted to restrict academic freedom or to insert political ideology into hiring processes at the University of Colorado. Under the Laws of the Regents, which I support, "the appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty members should be based primarily on the individual's ability in teaching, research/creative work, and service, and should not be influenced by such extrinsic considerations as political, social, or religious views . . ." The concept that I support is that every qualified applicant should be free to seek employment at the University of Colorado, that the campuses will take whatever steps are necessary to create diverse candidate pools, and that the candidates with the greatest merit will emerge from the search process. The University of Colorado should be taking steps to ensure that the best and brightest candidates of all political affiliations and political philosophies are welcome at the University of Colorado.

2)   During the Sept. 14 meeting Jim Geddes suggested that the university "takes action" to increase diversity in a number of areas, but not political affiliation/beliefs, and that this should be changed. In your last email you said, "Since the amendments, the Board of Regents has not demanded that the campuses hire or promote any faculty members because of their political affiliations or political beliefs. Nor would we." Although Regent Geddes' proposal wasn't passed, it seems this is an effort to change the

hiring practices to include some sort of mechanism to expand the diversity of political

belief/affiliation of professors on campus. How would you respond to this? And why

didn't you choose to second the motion?

I respect Regent Geddes's desire to ensure that diverse political perspectives exist

on the campuses, but I believe that diversity has to come from faculty-led efforts. After

the Board of Regents passed the amendments to Article 10 of the Laws of the Regents

and commissioned the Social Climate Survey, the Faculty Council and other faculty

groups have indicated that the will take the reins in proposing how our hiring processes

can be strengthened to improve diversity of all types. The Social Climate Survey

demonstrated that there were a number of areas, including gender, age, and religious

tolerance where the University of Colorado can improve. The Board of Regents has the

ability to create policy, but the people who work and teach on the campuses have the

greatest ability to create a welcoming environment at the University of Colorado, and I

am eager to see what the Faculty Council proposes.

3) Finally, one of my own concerns regarding these changes to our non-discrimination

policy is that knowledge production and transformative educational processes like those

that take place in universities should, by their very nature, challenge our core ideological

and political beliefs. It seems to me that this policy suggests to students that this isn't the

case, and that when their core political beliefs are challenged they have grounds to feel

discriminated against. I feel like this could restrict educational growth and intellectual

development as it gives protected status to belief systems that may or may not match up

with reality or the research coming from particular scientific communities, e.g. a partisan

disagreement about the reality of climate change doesn't change the overwhelming

scientific consensus on certain aspects of this phenomenon. Under the new policy a student who disagrees with that scientific consensus might feel discriminated against when there is little serious attention given to the arguments that climate change is not real, which seems problematic. Under the new policy would a professor making a joke about "climate deniers" be seen as the equivalent of a professor making a joke about homosexuality? The job of professors is not to cater to sensitive partisan debates, rather scientific ones. This new policy seems to favor the former at the expense of the latter. How would you respond to this? My point is that political affiliation and philosophy, unlike or at least to a greater extent than many of the other identities included in the non-discrimination policy, are fluid, voluntary, and ideologically informed. This leaves them open to being challenged in uncomfortable ways that aspects of our identities like race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., are not. This new policy seems like it could stand in the way of this critical educational process, and hamper the goal of the university to foster a more critical and engaged citizenry. The more you can elaborate on this (number 3) point the better.

I understand your argument, but I think you misunderstand the premise of the amendments to Article 10. I agree with you that universities classrooms need to be places where debate can freely occur, but that debate cannot occur if some of the participants in the debate are afraid to express their thoughts. The Social Climate Survey demonstrated that significant numbers of students are intimidated to share their thoughts in the classroom, and that's not a dynamic that lends itself to a fully engaged discussion. We need to encourage an environment where the best arguments will emerge from the marketplace of ideas, rather than have a marketplace where some ideas are off limits. If

an idea is refuted by other research, evidence, or logic, that refutation is an important and

necessary part of the teaching process, but it should occur in a way that respects the

dignity of the those participating in the discussion. The concepts that I endorse are also

held by the University of Colorado's faculty, which passed a statement of Principles of

Professional and Ethical Responsibilities, which states that "Professor demonstrate

respect for students and individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides

and counselors. . . . They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment

of students."

[Redacted personal information.]

Good luck on your thesis, I hope this has been helpful to you.

Regent Sue Sharkey

Final Email to Sue Sharkey – February 9, 2015

Regent Sharkey,

Thanks for the response. Of course I would like to follow up but it doesn't sound

like you're willing to continue any discussion.

I had a great conversation on the phone with Dr. Geddes today regarding very

similar questions.

If my questions seem adversarial that's because part of my job as a researcher is to

rigorously question the subjects I'm studying. I don't know how my tone came across in

an email, but I apologize if it came across as disrespectful or another way that would

make you want to end our dialogue. That certainly wasn't my intent.

I'm also looking at this from the perspective that this change is a positive and

necessary addition.

There's a recent example at Marquette with a professor losing tenure that I believe illustrates that side of things pretty well. Here's a link to an article about it: http://m.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/02/stripping-a-professor-of-tenure-over-a-blog-post/385280/

[Redacted personal information.]

Thanks again for your time. If you're ever willing to talk more let me know. After all, I thought this was all about discussing different ideas and perspectives openly. And we do share a common concern and goal of improving the welfare of CU.

Lastly, please let me know if there's anything you've shared with me that you would not like me share publicly - either through my academic research or otherwise.

Best,

Jesse

*I have omitted several emails I sent to Sharkey that were basic follow up emails encouraging a response to previous emails. E.g. "I just wanted to follow up on my last email to make sure you received it. I also wanted to offer to talk over the phone if that's easier for you," sent February 6, 2015.

<u>First Email to Jim Geddes – January 14, 2015</u>

Dr. Geddes,

Hello, my name is Jesse Benn. I'm a graduate student in the Journalism and Mass Communication program at CU Boulder. I had some questions about the recent changes to the non-discrimination policy at CU that you and Ms. Sharkey initiated involving political belief and affiliation. Is this something you'd be able to talk about? I'm interested personally just as a student at CU, but my thesis research is also interested in changes to

university structures in the modern era and considering we are the first university to implement this type of policy it seems we are at the forefront of these changes. Thanks for your time.

Best,

Jesse Benn

Jim Geddes Email Response Number One – January 15, 2015

Yes, I am willing to talk with you on these subjects. I can also give you additional publicly available information I have authored or been involved with.

I would recommend you start by examining the CU.edu website under the "Regents" tab. Then access the Board of Regents Guiding Principles (#6).

Then take a look at the transcript of the June 20th, 2013 Board of Regents Meeting in Boulder. Finally, I proposed a (failed) resolution at our September 2014 meeting, again in Boulder.

Please contact me once again after you have reviewed these items. I agree we are at the forefront of these issues, perhaps as a result of being one of only 4 elected board of trustees among all the US Universities and Colleges.

Jim Geddes

Second Email to Jim Geddes – January 23, 2015

Dr. Geddes,

Thanks for the quick response and the suggested reading. That was really helpful. Below are some questions and concerns I have after having gone through the minutes from those meetings.

1) Have there been any complaints of discrimination filed under the new categories regarding political philosophy/affiliation that you know of?

2) These changes seem to be inspired by David Horowitz' Academic Student Bill of Rights, which has been heavily criticized by the academic community as an effort to restrict academic freedom and insert political ideology into (among other areas) the hiring process at universities. This impression is bolstered by the fact that Regent Sharkey received an award from Horowitz after the addition. How would you respond to this?

3) During the Sept. 14 meeting you suggested that the university "takes action" to increase diversity in a number of areas, but not political affiliation/beliefs, and that this should be changed. But you don't seem to clearly state what action you would have the university take to do this. Can you elaborate on what that would be (ideally and in your view), and how it would avoid applying a political litmus test of some kind? It sounds like you are suggesting we create some sort of affirmative action policy to hire more conservatives; but if we are trying to hire more conservatives, how do we do so without knowing who is conservative, and basing our hiring selection to some extent on that requirement? Which brings me to another sticking point in the debate from the meetings regarding how to define "conservative" - can you elaborate on how you would define conservative?

4) Finally, one of my own concerns regarding these changes to our non-discrimination policy is that knowledge production and transformative educational processes like those that take place in universities should, by their very nature, challenge our core ideological and political beliefs. It seems to me that this policy suggests to students that this isn't the case, and that when their core political beliefs are challenged they have grounds to feel

discriminated against. I feel like this could restrict educational growth and intellectual

development as it gives protected status to belief systems that may or may not match up

with reality or the research coming from particular scientific communities, e.g. a partisan

disagreement about the reality of climate change doesn't change the overwhelming

scientific consensus on certain aspects of this phenomenon. Under the new a student who

disagrees with that scientific consensus might feel discriminated against when there is

little serious attention given to the arguments that climate change is not real, which seems

problematic. The job of professors is not to cater to sensitive partisan debates, rather

scientific ones. This new policy seems to favor the former at the expense of the latter.

How would you respond to this?

My point is that political affiliation and philosophy, unlike many of the other identities

included in the non-discrimination policy, are fluid, voluntary, and ideologically

informed. This leaves them open to being challenged in uncomfortable ways that aspects

of our identities like race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., are not. This new policy seems like it

could stand in the way of this critical educational process, and hamper the goal of the

university to foster a more critical and engaged citizenry. The more you can elaborate on

this (number 4) point the better.

Thanks for your time.

Best,

Jesse Benn

Jim Geddes Email Response Number Two – January 27, 2015

Your questions are valid and worthy of an answer. I am happy to respond to them

by an interview, trusting you will accurately record my answers.

Regarding the discrimination question, I would point out that "feeling" discriminated against and actually being discriminated against are not necessarily equivalent.

If an allegation of discrimination is made (for any class), that allegation must be investigated and verified by a fair process before we would consider the consequences to the offending party.

My Pager number is 303-580-6555. Place your number, and I will get back to you.

Regards,

Jim Geddes

Jim Geddes Phone Interview – February 11, 2015

Introduction: Geddes and I had emailed, as seen above, before the interview and decided to talk over the phone instead of via email. While Geddes had some questions ahead of time and knew the general direction I was going, the interview was unstructured and more of a discussion than a traditional interview. The interview recording I used to transcribe our conversation does not include the first few moments we were on the phone, during this time I said who I was (I had paged Geddes, who called me back) and that we had been talking through email about the nondiscrimination policy, at which point he launched right into our discussion. At the end of the interview I ask Geddes if there's anything he does not want me to print, he makes a particular request, which I honor. The interview has not been edited for punctuation or to remove vocalized pauses in an effort to convey as much tone as possible.

Phone Interview

JG: "Um I think there is an interest in, really it was passed by all the regents you know I think in a 9-0 vote that we would do a climate survey and that we would add political

affiliation political philosophy if you will to our um to our nondiscrimination law of our regents and raise it if you will to the same level of concern that we would hold a case that might involve racial discrimination."

JB: Right that's interesting…

JG: "We're the only university that's done that to my knowledge."

JB: And it seemed like there wasn't too much controversy or discussion even among the board when you made that – it seemed like the discussion was more about how to implement than if you should implement it. Is that impression correct?

JG: "Well I think that a lot of steps that led to that decision by the board and I think there were a lot of conversations that occurred that of course aren't necessarily recorded in the public record but occurred in settings where the Board of Regents is at a meeting or among one-two regents if you will. And I have to be a little careful about how I describe it to you only because there are the Sunshine Laws, so called Sunshine Laws, because of the state that if you hold it to the exact meaning of the word would suggests is that if there's three regents or more that are ever talking to each other that becomes a public conversation. And I have no problem with that policy but when we're sitting together there may be one or two regents, two, three, regents, three, four regents you know, I don't think that you know—sometimes it's in the setting of an informal discussion. But there was a lot of communication that, uh, occurred amongst the nine regents over these issues, yes."

JB: And would you say there was much um pushback? Or, it seemed to be – Geddes interrupts

JG: "No. No. Not with you know you've read some of the important documents…"

JB: (Overlapping) I sure tried to.

JG: (Continuing) "And I think after the assembled BOR and the most important record of all this for you I'd think would be the um fact that we did four or five years ago describe the mission of the university and came up with 12 guiding principles and guiding principle number six says you know we *will* promote intellectual diversity and it says other things but intellectual diversity and political and philosophical and geographic diversity and so forth. And then, so that was one step that occurred. And then I think um that as we progressed through this process it became apparent that the university goes to great measure I think to address racial diversity and racial discrimination and gender diversity and gender discrimination and you can just fill in the blanks and list all the protected classes all the federally protected classes. Plus in our case we began to understand that it was probably prudent to also include manifestations of intellectual diversity in which someone who might hold a view, or a philosophy dear to uh, who was not in step with the majority philosophy or view would also be protected. Does that make sense?"

JB: Sure. I guess my concern—and I kind of state this—it seems like scientific and political debates are sometimes at odds with each other and the university's job as I see it isn't to really cater to the political debates but the scientific ones. So I guess with this policy I'm curious what happens when those two things conflict? It seems like the policy would now kinda defer to the political debate being a more sensitive area rather than the discussion on knowledge production and the scientific process. Is that a valid concern or am I misunderstanding?

JG: "Well I'm not sure if I understand that exactly. Let me just see if I can understand it better by trying to ferret out the two differences [between scientific and political debates]. A scientific debate might uh occur around um certain principles or beliefs particularly as they relate to theories that are as yet unproven. I think the obvious example would be the current debate over global warming *theory* (he emphasizes the word). It's certainly not been proven. Nobody, nobody that's the least bit objective would say 'yeah it's been proven.' There's a great controversy raging over the actual scientific part of that. Whether or not the measurements that we're taking are accurate or not. Whether or not the measurements of global ice change are accurate or not or whether the trend is up or down or not I mean that's debated amongst the scientific community as a scientific physical finding sort of conversation."

JB: Well I think just to clarify scientific communities are still discussing how gravity works that doesn't change some of…

JG: (Overlapping) "No. They're not."

JB: (Continuing) the things they agree on.

JG: "No they're not discussing the basic things we accept as the as the um as the description of gravity."

JB: Right so there are certain things that get accepted and in climate change it seems that the scientific community has overwhelmingly accepted that it – Geddes interrupts.

JG: "Well I don't agree with that."

JB: Well it's statistically true.

JG: "No it's not. There are over 1300 scientists that I know of that hold PhDs you know that have been counted that don't agree with the global warming theory."

JB: But overall at least from what I've seen is around 97% of climate scientists agree on – Geddes interrupts.

JG: "You hit it exactly on the nose. This is what I'm talking about. Um. what if somebody at CU made it clear that they didn't agree w/global warming theory, should they be ostracized? Should they be discriminated against? Of course not."

JB: No but they should have to ground that in scientific theory, though, not political theory. That's the distinction I'm trying to make.

JG: "Well but it's been politicized."

JB: Exactly, but politicizing something doesn't mean that it's debatable amongst the scientific community.

JG: "You know I'll send you something else that's an observation I've seen a letter to the university. We're kind of off subject here but I think we've picked an area that is particularly interesting. From my perspective though, if somebody wants to, a student let's say in a class, wants to express his um reservations about the theory of GW or come right out and say he doesn't believe in that theory of GW and whether or not he's obligated to prove he's right and they're wrong I think is another issue but let's just say that he simply expresses the fact that he prefers the theory of oscillation in the sun's intensities which some people believe is the explanation for not only present day temp changes but reaching back into the earliest phases of earth that there's an oscillating about 300 year or 250 year cycle of intensity changes in the sun that some people say is manifests in sun spots. I'm not trying to explain to you the details of this because I don't claim to be an expert but I'm trying to point out that there is another theory at this point. Now, let's go back to that student, should that student then be ostracized in his classroom,

should he be put into a position of embarrassment should he feel he's being um in some way punished for holding that view, perhaps or should he feel that he's obligated to conform with the professors' point-of-view if he doesn't agree with it? And suffer some sort of adverse consequences because he doesn't? That's discrimination for the wrong reason. It's intellectual discrimination."

JB: And I think this is great in that it brings us back to the point. Is that something that's happening? Is that something that was happening on campus?

JG: "Well yes according to our social climate survey there were 29 – I don't have it in front of me so please don't hold me to this – I'm pretty sure it was 29% of students on the Boulder campus felt that they were um let's see if I can find it so I'm not misquoting. Um. I actually produced a letter. It's sort of an open letter. And I just sent it yesterday to the university as a whole. I'm no longer a regent … But do you see the distinction I just made between um somebody who might be a victim of some sort of intellectual discrimination. Do you understand that distinction?"

JB: I do. And I guess to me it seems there's a difference between a professor challenging a student who's presenting um an opinion that's based on theories than it would be for a professor to challenge a student on their racial or ethnic identity. Those seem like really different things.

JG: "Well I don't. Well we, the BORs said it's not different. In other words he can challenge a student on his factual uh representation I suppose and he can even challenge him on his theory, just like the student should be allowed to challenge the professor on his theory. The difference is if the student receives some sort of injury from the professor because of that. And that's when it becomes discrimination. And the BOR has said that

kind of action by a professor if it should occur is just as bad as sexual harassment is just as bad as levying a racial slur or something of that nature."

JB: But do you think that's true here's my – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Yes I absolutely do. I think there's nothing that puts a pale and a cold chill on the academic environment than an intolerance of a person's intellectual views and opinions. Nothing. Nothing worse."

JB: Here's what feels different to me at least. Marginalized groups and communities like say minorities or someone who identifies as transgender, if they're discriminated against or made fun of they're already an at-risk community. So that might lead to suicide or self-harm or other types of things that it feels like our nondiscrimination policy, from what I thought, was meant to prevent and it doesn't seem like political class is – Geddes interrupts

JG: "You're confusing the end result of what might happen with whether or not it's an important discrimination or not."

JB: Well, you said it's about the injury and so to me it feels like – Geddes interrupts

JG: "No I said it is an injury. If an injury occurs we have said as a Board of Regents that that is discrimination against that person for that reason. We've raised that intellectual and political and philosophical discrimination if you will to a level of concern equal to other sorts of protected classes."

JB: Right, and I'm just saying – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Now you can argue yourself if you want whether or not that should have been done. But that's what has been done."

JB: Right and so I'm just trying to understand why. With racial and marginalized classes I understand why, I understand the injury we're trying to protect against and with political affiliation I just don't understand what the injury would be other than someone saying your opinion or your perspective or your facts are not scientifically based.

JG: "Did you happen to read what professor Nagel said? Go back and read. You're gonna have to pull the original transcript."

JB: I did.

JG: (Continuing) "And go to the question and answer portion and he talks about the chilling effect on the academic environment within the law school. Where students are forced almost to comply with what they know their professors opinion to be. How can anything be worse than that?"

JB: And I don't think any professors should force anyone to comply – Geddes interrupts.

JG: "Now how can anything be worse, than that at the University of Colorado?"

JB: Well to me a marginalized group who's at-risk of committing suicide is a greater harm than someone's political affiliation being insulted.

JG: "That may be true. But that doesn't affect the importance of this. You're building a straw man. Because another is very serious and I agree with you 100%."

JB: And I'm not trying to argue I'm just trying to understand how these things are in the same class.

JG: "Well you see in my mind it's true but unrelated. I mean both are serious. They may have different consequences. I suppose you could say 'Well some kid that's been embarrassed and ostracized and humiliated by his professor might go and commit

suicide.' Now so what? I mean that'd be terrible if it happened no matter who it was or why. Do you see what I'm getting at?"

JB: You're saying I guess that the point is there is potential harm and they don't have to be the same types of harm as a marginalized class.

JG: "Yes. I think the harm could be not just to the individual student but to the quality of education at our university."

JB: I think I understand what you're saying.

JG: All right. Well that's where I end this conversation. Let me just send you this thing. You know I more or less sent it as a public letter. You know I've just got to spot it here in my outgoing emails. No I see what the problem is I didn't actually send it a secretary did."

JB: Do you mind if I just ask one more question?

JG: "No go ahead." (talks about looking for the email to send me)… "Let me just find it before I answer."

JB: What's the connection with these changes and David Horowitz and the Academic Bill of Rights?

JG: "Well David Horowitz, you know who he is obviously, played no role whatsoever in any of this process. There was a point at which I think that about 18 months ago when he became aware of what was going on and he lended [sic] his support. Let me put it that way. He felt it was a good process. But did we consult him at any point? No we didn't."

JB: And you didn't use any of the literature from his website? The language is very similar.

JG: "Well nothing I wrote. I didn't look at anything Horowitz wrote. But you know he has advocated some concepts very similar to what we did."

JB: Yeah I mean I think you could almost say he advocates for exactly this process.

JG: "Well you know I'd have to go back and look but as I recall I'm not sure he took the discrimination approach but he might have. Not that that was an approach it kind of evolved spontaneously."

JB: They use very similar language regarding intellectual diversity and protecting –

Geddes interrupts

JG: "Yeah but he's not the only one. Dr. Sowell has said things very similar. And the whole organization called let's see what's their name here. Write this down. It's the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. If you really want to do a lot of research they're something I'd look into. They're very responsible organization. Some people who disagree with em would try to throw rocks at them. But they're above board. Honest people. And they've got a different opinion about how we're doing our higher education. We're not doing um the quality of our education right now, so their emphasis is on what's being taught, the cost, stuff like that. They have a large amount of information available and I think they're in line with what they're doing. In fact they gave Sue Sharkey an award."

JB: Well it was actually Horowitz' group that gave her an award.

JG: "Yeah but it was at one of these meetings after that he sponsored."

JB: I got ya. It was the Annie Taylor Courage Award or something like that.

JG: "Yeah it was about the time we launched that thing to Mars."

JB: And I guess maybe this is a question for Sue. There were media reports that said Sue met with Horowitz before the changes.

JG: "She may have. I don't know. I didn't meet with him. I've never met him. But she may have in the process of that and what I recall she was contacted by them. Because she and I were sort of partners if you will in doing this. The two regents that were sponsoring this the most."

JB: Okay. Another question. In the September 14th meeting you talked about or suggested that I look for your failed proposal that talks about taking action.

JG: "Yeah. That's in that thing I just sent you by the way."

JB: Oh okay. You talk a little bit more about what that proposal would be?

JG: "Well it's a summary letter and the reason I'm writing it now is because the environmental studies department on the Boulder campus wants to create a new degree program called Masters of the Environment and they presented to us in Colorado Springs here in November and interestingly prior to that discussion the divest people came in. Are you familiar with that?

JB: You mean the BDS? [I'm referencing the boycott, divest, sanction movement directed toward Israel – this is not what Geddes was talking about. He was talking about some CU students who encouraged divestment from fossil fuels].

JG: "An interesting event occurred if you will. So I asked the Masters in Environment people if they'd been there and heard the conversation. And they said 'yeah' and I said 'Well I'm interested to know about the faculty you're going to assemble to teach this very important course which gets back to our discussion a bit about global warming and the other environmental controversies. And and do they have a diverse faculty? Do they

have people on both sides of the argument? Uh. Of course I don't think they do. And I

can't tell you if that's true so don't print that. (Laughs). I really don't know but we've

asked them to describe their faculty to us. And they're gonna come back and I think

request that we – the Board of Regents won't be we anymore but the people that are

regents now – to agree to the formation of a degree program called Masters of the

Environment. And that's going to occur in February I think it's 20th roughly at the next

meeting in Boulder. So you'll be able to go probably."

JB: So you're opposed to the new program?

JG: "No. No I'm in favor of them having this new degree program as long as the faculty

is diverse intellectually and there are representatives on the faculty that promote some of

the other views of the environment rather than having a homogeneous faculty that all feel

the same way. And if that's the case no I would not be in favor of them having that

program. Why are you gonna – how are you gonna graduate experts in the environment if

all they've heard is one side of the story? How irresponsible is that?"

JB: I guess I just wonder if posing it as two sides as though there's a partisan – Geddes

interrupts

JG: "Well you know there may be three sides. You're nitpicking here. You're dodging

the concept."

JB: No just that it's a partisan or political sides to this scientific debate is odd to me.

JG: "No it's not. You just pointed out earlier there's also scientific differences. We could

probably find an issue in the hard physical sciences. I don't know what it would be. But if

we talked to a couple of professors we could probably find some controversy some

disagreement over some theory. And we could find that within that narrow discipline that

there's a pretty active uh congress going on. I would represent to you that if CU could reasonably acquire one or two physicists on the other, you know, on both, on opposite sides, let's just say CU had eight physicists all on one side, I would say it would strengthen their department substantially if an opening comes available for them to look specifically for somebody that would bring diversity to their department. Somebody who's otherwise qualified with a full academic qualifications and all the positives that we look for in professors. To bring somebody that doesn't agree with them would strengthen that dept."

JB: Right I guess I just feel like we're conflating different scientific debates or scientific sides of an argument as if they're all also political sides of an argument and that's not always the case.

JG: "Well I think in the case of some of the disciplines and the most obvious right now I think is environmental studies, they have been politicized. So people have even, even the professor sometimes are active in the politicization of those controversies."

JB: But largely it feels like you're saying teach to the controversy, though rather than teach to the science. Does that make sense?

JG: "I think I think both. I think the science is obviously the most important being a scientific subject but how bout, let's switch gears for a minute let's talk about something else. How bout economics."

JB: Sure. I think that's a great area.

JG: "What if all the economists in your department were Keynesian? You don't think there's a room for another opinion if somebody that feels that the market system free markets are the best way to go? What if everybody was Keynesian? Now I don't know if

they are at CU I just don't know. I do know one economist that I think would be on the other side. So they may be adequately balanced. But if I'm the chairmen of any department and have that great responsibility here at CU, I am going to be interested in one thing and one thing only. And that is creating the finest educational environment I can for the students who we teach. And part of that is being sure that the professor across the hall might feel differently from the professor that's you know, that's teaching a course and the students and those two profs deliberately enter into debate and enrich the educational environment of all the students and the department."

JB: But if we're talking about political affiliation as one of the measures for balancing that diversity how would we decide – Geddes interrupts

JG: "We don't do that. No. No we never said that."

JB: Okay.

JG: "We never said political affiliation. And obviously that's a that's a pitfall you could take. You know it's not how many Democrats or how many Republicans there are. Although, being a Democrat and being a Republican does sorta describe people to some degree. Right?"

JB: To a small degree I think.

JG: "Yeah so. What would be the responsible way? Lets say in the school of law let's say that – and I'm not an attorney – but let's say in constitutional law. There's an obvious area where you might want somebody who's a proponent of the US Constitution vs. somebody who thinks it's a living document that can be modified to meet the you know, modern day political environment let's say. Well that's certainly what the founders were exactly were trying to avoid. They wanted our founding principles cast in stone."

JB: The writers of the Constitution?

JG: "Absolutely. They wanted those founding principles cast in stone to the point where it took a tremendous agreement of the citizens to change it. And there are people today who would love to just modify it uh with little resistance. So I mean that's a basic schism in how we think about our foundation of our government."

JB: And you can acknowledge what you've just said is not an accepted view of everyone. You're sharing a pretty particular political perspective that's a Constitutionalist conservative perspective when you say that the Founders meant for our Constitution to be set in stone.

JG: "Well there's no question that's what they meant. Go read the Federalist Papers.

JB: I have.

JG: "That's exactly what they meant."

JB: I don't want to get distracted, but I have read the Federalist Papers and they don't say what you just said.

JG: "I don't want to get into an argument about that but I can tell you though there are large numbers of people in this society who believe what I just said. There are maybe some people who believe what you think. But I'm not talking about who's right and who's wrong in this conversation I'm trying to tell you that both sides should be represented in a high quality educational environment. Our job is not to mold our students to any way of thinking. Any particular way of thinking. Our job is to of course teach em how to think critically and originally and responsibly and so forth and to have good logic, all those sorts of things but when they get done with their formal education that we should've instilled in them a good understanding of the uh the dynamics of the

major controversies that uh face our society today and going forward and in the past. And

allow them to hear it from people who are knowledgeable and passionate about different

perspectives and let them decide as they enter the real world if you will or their adult

careers where they stand and what principles and concepts they're going to advance. And

how they vote and so forth that's our job as a university."

JB: And as you see it that's not happening effectively as far as conservative point-of-

view.

JG: "No I don't think it's happening anything like it ought to be happening and by the

way my criticism would not be just of a left leaning university but also of the right

leaning ones. Same thing applies. If I were, most people think Hillsdale is pretty

conservative right leaning. If I were somehow able to affect who they hired and so forth

I'd make sure they had enough folks on their faculty we might describe as liberal or quote

en quote progressives for their students."

JB: I guess the question is how. How would they do that without a political litmus test?

JG: "Well because again the chairmen of the dept. is key in selecting new faculty. You

agree with that?"

JB: Mm hmm.

JG: "And there's a process that occurs and one way is that they generate a candidate pool.

And so at CU there are two factors again in this letter I just sent you. There are two

factors the university is supposed to use and one is the needs of the university. So if the

needs of the university, and we all agree – and we already have agreed, the Board of

Regents has – that we will have a diverse faculty intellectually, so that becomes a need of

the university. So if the professor is abiding by that guiding principle and also buys in if

you will to the concept of creating the richest possible educational soup for his students then he would then design a um a some sort of description of the new candidate that would not in any way violate anybody's um concerns but would more or less describe that we're looking for somebody who has published and has expressed interest in the following concepts. And so then it becomes obvious to people who would love to come teach at CU that might be out of step if you will with the existing faculty that they want somebody like me."

JB: So you mean they'd describe like concepts that were – they'd say we want a Constitutionalist who's gonna teach in the – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Yeah yeah. I wouldn't be, I might be, I couldn't describe that for them but somebody who's a chairmen of the department should sure be able to."

JB: So you're more interested in sort of describing traits than saying we want a conservative.

JG: "Absolutely absolutely. So and and by the way like I said awhile ago it could also apply to a subject in which there's really no politics at play you know except the colloquial politics around that subject. And the same thing would apply. You know if you've got a homogeneous faculty of physicists and indeed there are you know there's an array of responsible views out there. Okay. That have the best possible physics department you're going to want your faculty to reflect that array. Because there are two jobs for the physicists, they're researchers but they're also teachers. Okay. And I personally feel their number one job is to be teachers. And so you know I want my kid if he comes to the physics department there to come away from the with a good understanding of the controversies within physics. Because he's heard it from people that

believe or really are proponents of all the reasonable responsible uh views and theories in physics. And the same thing applies in environmental science, economics, the same thing applies to history. Are you familiar with how the history's being sort of manipulated by some?"

JB: You mean like the Jeffco school board?

JG: "Well that kind of stuff. Yeah. But like AP US history. You may not agree with me but it's much different than it used to be. So the point is um the history hasn't changed what really happened hadn't changed and I'm not saying the way we used to write about was the right way or not but the point is there's now a controversy that's arisen. You see."

JB: Well that's risen or been manufactured?

JG: "If you're gonna get a PhD in history you oughta hear from all the reasonable responsible sides."

JB: Right but I feel like there's a difference between controversies arising scientifically and controversies arising politically and the job of the scientific community is – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Well I'm having a lot of trouble with that distinction because when you say politics maybe you just mean partisan politics."

JB: Well take global warming. There was a relative consensus until a lot of think tanks an industry of climate denialism came into play in the late '70s that's really shaken that up. Now that's a manufactured controversy. That's not a scientific controversy.

JG: "Well it is scientific. No no. It is. It is. Because when they look at they say first of all that all the you know again this is this is um something you can really get your teeth into.

All the global warming predictions made in the mid-90s, there are 104 of them, the average of them has at the best tremendously underestimated the warming that was to occur over the next 15 years now that's a fact."

JB: This doesn't change the fact though that industries with cards in the game invested in think tanks to create an industry of climate denialism.

JG: "That could be. That could be. But then that doesn't mean there aren't legitimate responsible professors out there."

JB: Well no but legitimate responsible professors – Geddes interrupts

JG: "And by the way the same thing's happen on the other side. You don't think this carbon credits stuff, you don't think all this the manipulation and expense, governmental expense that's been thrown at the alternate energy, which by the way a lot of which I agree with by the way, but you don't think that's been manipulated?"

JB: I'm not suggesting the right or the left is absolved from any of this I'm just suggesting that I think there's a difference between legitimate discussion in the scientific community over climate change and an industry that's been bought and paid for by oil magnates to create climate denialism…

JG: (Overlapping) "Well, yeah but that"

JB: (Continuing) I think the job of the university is to teach to the scientific debates not the political debates that were brought in by big industry.

JG: "Well I think that's fine. If you brought in scientists that truly were on the other side of the scientific debate that would satisfy me. That would satisfy my concern. Okay. But guess what? Near as I can tell they have not been invited in. So then you have to say well, this particular masters of the environment by the way is gonna be taught by an

amalgamation of related fields like I'm sure there will be some astrogeophysicists in the teaching and so forth. Does that make sense?" (Uh-huh) "And as far as you know as far as I know ummm the other side of the scientific debate is not represented. Now I could be wrong. They could come back and say 'well we have professor so and so and he's published this that and the other thing and we feel he's on the, he's there and we can debate with him and it's a healthy interjection of controversy and responsible scientific um contribution to our department. Alright. Then you can start arguing how many of those guys do you need and then things start to get kind of sticky. And by the way I don't think it has to be very many. We have a last count I think there were 14 – no excuse me – 32 history professors at UCB and umm as of last count, and this has been studied, there weren't anybody on the, you know there all on the liberal side. Now. You know. I don't have a problem uhh with the liberals what they're saying but they need to be balanced. And so when you have all 34 professors on one side that's not balanced do you agree?"

JB: Sure but what do you mean by that…

JG: (Overlapping) "All right now wait a minute"

JB: (Continuing) What do you mean by 'they're all liberal'?

JG: "So how many does it take to bring in that's on the other side to erase that tremendous imbalance? It's not 50/50."

JB: Well hold on though.

JG: "You may only need two-three."

JB: Let's get back to what do you mean by they're all liberal.

JG: "All right."

JB: That seems like a pretty large statement.

JG: "Cause you look at what they've published and I haven't done that myself but I've seen reports of people that have. And um. There was a time uh I think it's been about ten years. When they actually looked at their political affiliation and so forth and I don't agree with doing that. But it was done. So the faculty has denied for a number of years that they have this problem of homogeneity and um and this problem of you know like thinking. And again you must go back and really study what Robert Nagel said. I cannot articulate it nearly as well as he has. But they are now I think somewhat accepting that yes indeed, they do have this homogeneity. And it's a matter of changing the ethic a little bit I think at the university to where you know we put first what should be first and that's the quality of education. And when any practice is being carried out that diminishes the quality of education that should become a target for us."

JB: I guess just the implication – Geddes interrupts

JG: "And you can quote that."

JB: The implication that one that they're all liberal and two that that means the same thing.

JG: "I didn't say they're all liberal but I think predominantly for example there's, if you do look at this survey, this campus survey that was done. It was university wide but if you just look at the Boulder campus part of it, which is again in that thing I just sent to you, um, 60, I think it was 68% of the faculty volunteered that they were somewhat liberal or quite liberal."

JB: Right but that doesn't imply homogeneity.

JG: "And eight percent said that they were somewhat conservative or quite conservative."

JB: And I'm sure among both those groups there are a host of disparate opinions, making neither of them homogeneous, right?

JG: "Well but that's sort of sort of a measurement of what you asked me whether they were all liberal or not and I gave you that as an answer."

JB: Right and I'm just saying that to say that – Geddes interrupts

JG: "That was stuff that was volunteered by the faculty it's very statistically significant because there were a large number of faculty. So nobody's throwing stones at this study. And that's what it said."

JB: Right and I'm just saying that to jump from that they identify as liberal to meaning that makes them homogeneous in what they're teaching, that feels like a leap to me that we're making. That I don't necessarily see.

JG: "Well no I didn't say it's what they're teaching I said they were homogeneous in how they, in their beliefs and their philosophies that they hold dear or support however you want."

JB: And so is that in itself a problem?

JG: "Yes. Absolutely." (Answers immediately and eagerly)

JB: Just that they, even if they're teaching – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Because if you go back and read Nagel, uh he says you know they focus on small differences and those small differences become exaggerated. So who loses in all this? Now I don't care if they all get together on Saturday night and argue about the difference between some shade of, you know, I won't even try to make it up, but you know some very small insignificant difference of of how they feel about some abstract theory. I don't care. But what I do care about is when the students are robbed of the rich interchange and

debate that would occur if they had just one guy, or maybe 2-3 guys in their midst that

didn't agree with much of what they believed in."

JB: Right but we're assuming because the profs themselves identify as liberal that that's

not happening in classrooms and that's what I'm saying is the gap – Geddes interrupts

JG: "It's not happening according to the survey. And it's not happening according to the

gestalt of observations of that campus now for some years. By many of us."

JB: I thought the survey just got their affiliations and didn't talk about what they're

teaching necessarily.

JG: "Well it it um it asked the questions in a number of ways like a lot of good surveys is

it did it ask all the perfect right questions? No. I don't imagine that's the case. But. And it

was the first survey. So subsequent surveys I hope will be designed to hone in with more

detail."

JB: Right but you're saying that it identified the profs as liberal themselves, and the

problem is whether or not kids are getting robbed of a different opinions, but all it did

was identify – Geddes interrupts

JG: "No they're not being robbed! Of a different opinion! Hell they can. The professor

will say, you know a good professor will say you know the other opinion is X, and a good

professor will do that and by the way I think most of em are. By the way I'm not being

critical of the individual integrity of our professors. We have a few bad ones obviously.

But on balance I'd say 95% of em are great. And they will responsibly um be sure that

the students uh at least know what the alternative view is. But that's a big difference

between that and having uh a mixture within your department of professors that *really*

really wanna want to promote or want to uh explore and uh debate…"

JB: Somebody who's committed to a particular ideology?

JG: "Well they all are. Anybody that tells you otherwise is lying. Now c'mon. You are. I can tell you are. You can tell I am."

JB: I guess I just disagree that what happens in the university has as much to do with ideology as it seems you feel like it does.

JG: "Well you know again my focus is on what's best for the teaching environment. If CU were to actually do this would actually uh take some time and would embark upon balancing the faculty with high quality academics, who who, you know high quality academicians who have good records in no way are they flawed but feel differently than the majority of the faculty that was already there. CU would truly become the finest university in the world. Bar none."

JB: Well I appreciate that goal and I think we definitely share that.

JG: "And that's why that's what I've thought all these years for that reason alone."

JB: Do you feel like the Conservative School of Thought is along the lines of helping? I don't know if helping's the word but.

JG: "Well yeah I do. I think it's a healthy influence and by the way [redacted]. But you know the kinda the the the influence on the students if you will or the exposure to the students is a better way to say it to that program will be very minimal because you know first of all it's only one guy and secondly you know he has a blog and I guess great but he won't reach many of the students. He'll reach the students maybe that are that graduate level like yourself that are in areas where politics if you will is at play. And he'll reach some of them but the mass large numbers of students in our university that are taking

100/200 and even 300 level courses you know will have little if any exposure to this. So I see it as being helpful but just a drop in the bucket of what's needed. Okay."

JB: That is kind of the idea of what you'd like to see more of, though, yeah?

JG: "Well he's not you know each guy is a little different and each take on a teaching position of some sort it depends who the person is and so forth. And we're actually just early on in that experience. But he can only teach you know a couple of classes at the most. Right? And then he can design with what funds he has available some visiting speakers and bring in a couple people to debate each other or something of that nature. And um the other thing he needs to do is raise money to see that the thing goes on. And so he's a busy guy so he can only do so much and I don't think, if you asked my real opinion on it I think it's positive there's no question but if we focus on that and that alone we have failed to create the intellectual diversity we need to in our university."

JB: Since it's so secluded?

JG: "It's limited it's limited in its ability to reach the majority of our students. So it ah in other words again if you look at an individual department let's say how bout political science. Now we happen to have a professor or two in political science that lend some balance to that department but it's not really balanced yet. And but let's just say that in political science all the guys were on one side or the other, you pick the side I don't care. Do you think that one visiting professor in conservatism or if it were the other way around one visiting professor in liberalism or progressivism would make a big difference?"

JB: Well I guess I would go back to why it is that – Geddes interrupts

JG: "No answer my question!"

JB: I am.

JG: "No answer my question first."

JB: I am answering your question.

JG: "All right. Okay. Well it's kind of a yes or no."

JB: Well it's not because what matters is why was that department all one affiliation, what happened – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Well that's another subject it really is and I think there's an answer to that."

JB: Right so if there's a reason for that then my answer is different than if it's because there's a liberal head of the department and they hired all liberals just because that's a problem but if there are other reasons we have – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Well it goes to a natural sort of human comfort. It can be summarized in birds of a feather flock together. And if you look at even private enterprise, you will find companies, I think, that are people who are working together that are comfortable with each other. And they're homogeneous in that regard. And really good progressive companies have to deliberately work to avoid that. I don't see any difference between that and academics. I mean it's comfortable for the professors in let's say the sociology department to bring in people that think like they do. They're not challenged by their colleagues. It's a comfortable setting. They don't agree with people on the other side they don't want them around. They don't wanna have to you know debate with them. They don't wanna associate with em maybe. I don't know. But it's it's naturally observed. It's something that's been observed in many other settings not just academia. So we have to be deliberately sure that doesn't happen."

JB: But it may also be a self-sorting on the selective side as well as on the hiring side, don't you think?

JG: "What do you mean by that?"

JB: Well certain types of people are more prone to go into an academic career.

JG: "Yeah that's an argument that I think's absolutely fallacious."

JB: Really?

JG: "Oh absolutely."

JB: Have you read Matthew Woessner at all?

JG: (Continues previous point) "You know there are you know if if, except for this aspect. If you do end up with a preponderance of say liberals then the young students that that end up getting PhDs are going to be working under those people and again they're gonna be comfortable they're gonna be uncomfortable. And those who are working under the predominant makeup are going to be probably a lot like who they're working under. So from that stand point I agree there's a natural selection."

JB: Right and I mean it in like the business community too – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Where I disagree though there are many very qualified academics who can't get a job CU for that reason and I think that's wrong and I think it's harmful to the quality of education."

JB: When you say for that reason what do you mean specifically?

JG: "Because they're different."

JB: Because they're conservative?

JG: "Yeah. That would be one. One that would be the most obvious description we could use. One segment at least or I'm sure there are perhaps there are again getting back to the

sciences perhaps there's people within the discipline of physics that would, were, and again this is all hypothetical I don't really know about physics I'm just using that as an example, that where because they're all kinda grouped together in how they think they're not really interested in bringing somebody in that's different."

JB: And do you think that's a discriminatory thing though or more along the lines of –

Geddes interrupts

JG: "Now don't get back to that we've had that discussion. I think it's harmful to education. And if discrimination actually occurs in our university then that should be dealt with to the same level of concern that any other kind of discrimination of the protected classes should be dealt with."

JB: Right. Okay. Well I feel like I should let you go… Is there anything you don't want me to include in the paper or if I write – Geddes interrupts

JG: "Well for example I said [redacted] I don't want you to print that."

JB: Okay.

JG: "[Redacted]."

JB: Could I say that that [redacted] – Geddes interrupts

JG: "[Redacted]. You can certainly discuss the fact that I certainly support it [the School of Conservative Thought] and the fact that it's occurring and I'm pleased with it. But it does not in of itself solve the important issue of lack of philosophical – political philosophical and intellectual diversity at CU."

JB: Okay. Any questions for me?

JG: "I'd like to see what you're gonna write."

(I tell him to remind me to send him the relevant portion of my thesis… before getting off the phone he adds…)

JG: "You know at the end of the day I just think that we can make some important intellectual mistakes if we don't keep our mind open to how others feel that aren't in step with us. And well toned intellectuals and I, most of us that reach advanced degree levels should be well trained intellectuals regardless of whether you're gonna be a doctor like me or a reporter or whatever your goal is or an author. Regardless, we should um be able to recognize a responsible opinion that has been well developed and based on a concrete quality foundation. That disagrees with ours and we should respect it number one and number two we should be very open in our thinking to the possibility that there may be some correctness in that theory. That at the least would modify how we feel. And when we deprive the university, particularly university students of those of of people like that because they're not in the mainstream of that particular university at that time and I would apply that again to Hillsdale, who's on the other extreme from the Boulder campus let's say. Then that's not what's best for our students. Now be sure and print that. Because that's how I really feel. And you know I gave a little vignette in that one I sent you about a thing that occurred in Madison that was thought to be well understood and how academia slowed down a major improvement in care. Now if those guys are not welcome at CU our, you know we got a problem. Okay."

JB: Thanks for your time.