



# Truth, Power, Responsibility

CONFERENCE PROGRAM



heterodox academy

*June 23-25*

[heterodoxacademy.org](https://heterodoxacademy.org)

# Welcome to HxA 2025

Dear Colleagues,

**A**s higher education faces increasing scrutiny and shifting landscapes, our theme for the 2025 Conference — **Truth, Power, and Responsibility** — challenges us to examine the forces shaping the academy and our role in upholding its core values. Over the next three days, we'll grapple with pressing questions:

Who holds the power to define what is taught and researched in universities? How do leaders navigate growing political pressures while maintaining institutional statement neutrality?

What responsibilities do we bear as educators and scholars in fostering open inquiry?

Through thought-provoking plenary sessions, we'll hear

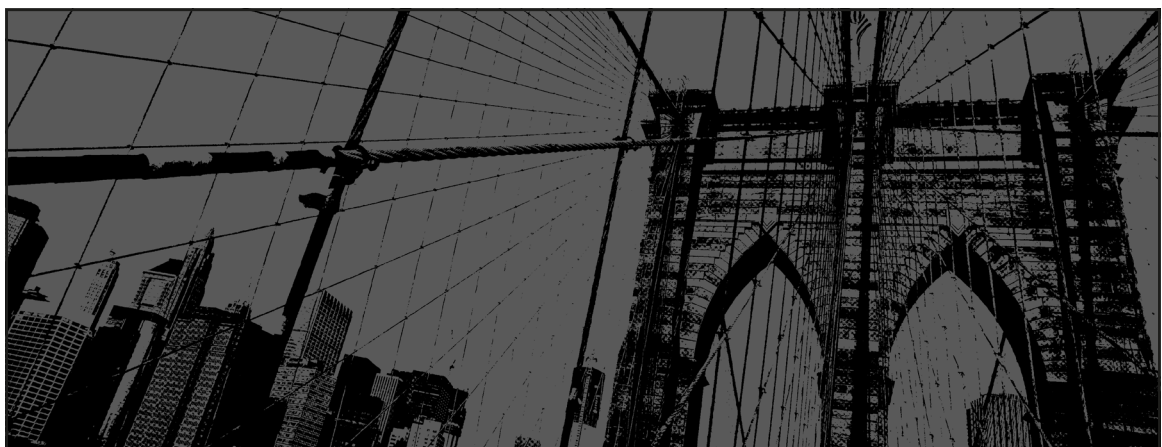
from esteemed academics and university leaders on the future of academic freedom and the responsibilities that come with it. Our keystone Heterodox Conversation™ will focus on how government action, through court decisions, legislation, and policy, is impacting open inquiry on campus. Panels, workshops, and presentations will explore challenges to free expression, the impact of intellectual diversity policies, and strategies for creating rigorous, open learning environments.

Beyond the sessions, this conference is an opportunity to connect. Whether during coffee breaks, in the exhibit hall, or at our Unconference Networking Reception, we encourage you to engage with fellow attendees, share ideas, and build lasting professional relationships. Some of the most productive conversations happen in

these informal moments. We are also proud to celebrate this year's Open Inquiry Award winners, recognizing individuals and institutions that have demonstrated exceptional commitment to fostering academic freedom, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement.

As you participate in discussions and connect with fellow attendees, we encourage you to approach each conversation with curiosity and intellectual humility. Challenge ideas constructively, exchange perspectives generously (including by listening well), and consider how we can collectively model and uphold the principles of open inquiry in our institutions and beyond.

Sincerely,  
Team HxA





## Who We Are

Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit membership organization of thousands of faculty, staff, and students committed to advancing the principles of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement to improve higher education and academic research. The HxA membership is made up of more than 7,700 faculty, staff, and students who come from more than 1,800 institutions, ranging from large research universities to community colleges.

## Our Mission

*To advance the principles of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement to improve higher education and academic research.*

We aspire to create college classrooms and campuses that welcome diverse people with diverse viewpoints and that equip learners with the habits of heart and mind to engage that diversity in open inquiry and constructive disagreement.

We seek an academy eager to welcome professors, students, and speakers who approach problems and questions from different points of view, explicitly valuing the role such diversity plays in advancing the pursuit of knowledge, discovery, growth, innovation, and the exposure of falsehoods.

## Here's Where You Come In

This work is ambitious — and urgent. It doesn't move forward without people stepping up. To change higher education, we need more than ideas. We need action — and people willing to fuel it. If you believe in this mission, make a gift today. Your support helps us reach more campuses, support more members, and shift the culture of higher ed.



Scan the QR code to donate now!

heterodox  
academy

Monday, June 23

1:00 - 7:00 P.M.  
*Promenade*

Check-in and Registration

3:00 - 4:00 P.M.  
*Grand Ballroom*

Welcome and Opening Keynote

JOHN TOMASI, Heterodox Academy

HxA President John Tomasi will kick off the conference by reflecting on HxA 's history over the past decade and sharing major achievements since the 2024 conference, key priorities for the year ahead, and our vision for the future of open inquiry in higher education.



For the latest and most comprehensive  
conference details, scan the QR code.

4:20 - 5:40 P.M.  
*Greenpoint*

*Monday, June 23*

WORKSHOP

**Become an ‘Honest Broker’: Learn Communication Strategies that Resist Political Pressures and Restore Trust in Research**

BRYAN GENTRY, University of South Carolina  
MATT BURGESS, University of Wyoming

Americans’ trust in scientists and other researchers is decreasing and becoming polarized, similarly to trust in universities. The politicization of universities and other scientific organizations has led to pressures on scholars from both sides of the political spectrum—often internally from the left and externally from the right. This lack of trust, the politicization of scholarship, toxic polarization and political scrutiny risk marginalizing facts and expertise and pushing talented scholars out of research careers. How can we turn the tide? How can researchers and universities present their findings and engage in public policy discussion in ways that inspire trust? How can we teach ourselves and our students to navigate controversial topics with courage, rigor, and professionalism? This workshop will provide a hands-on approach to answering these questions, focusing on the concept of “the honest broker” (popularized by Roger Pielke Jr.’s 2007 book by the same name). Honest brokers may make policy proposals, but they clearly distinguish their expertise from their personal opinion, and aim to present a menu of facts and options. A recent study (Post & Bienzeisler, 2024, *Political Communication* 41, 736) found that the honest broker approach increases trust in science and decreases polarization of trust in science, compared to an ‘epistocrat’ approach which blurred science and advocacy.

Led by a university communications professional and a scholar who studies polarization of environmental issues, participants will learn about different science communication styles: epistocrat, science arbiter, issue advocate, and honest broker. Participants will then explore politically charged science communication challenges, based on real examples, reflecting the diversity of political pressures researchers face. Finally, participants will discuss science communication challenges from their own work and experience, and then work together to devise and practice strategies for navigating these challenges in public writing, news interviews, policy discussions, and other communication settings. The challenges and strategies will be applicable to science and other disciplines as well.

4:20 - 5:40 P.M.  
*Navy Yard*

*Monday, June 23*

PANEL DISCUSSION

**STEM Strikes Back: How Elevating STEM Voices Can Restore the Academy's Reputation – and How to Get Them in the Room**

IAN HUTCHINSON, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

FRANK LAUKIEN, Bruker Corporation and Harvard University

LUANA MAROJA, Williams College

Moderated by: WAYNE STARGARD, MIT Free Speech Alliance

STEM faculty are naturally and uniquely poised to lead their institutions in restoring a culture of free inquiry and making the campuses hospitable environments for free expression. Bringing a scientific approach to universities' handling of fraught issues can induce universities to steer toward consistent, neutral principles that maximally benefit the academic community while avoiding entanglement in unwinnable political and cultural disputes. Unfortunately for too many institutions—including STEM institutions—STEM faculty are underrepresented in governance and on influential advisory committees. Their peers in the humanities and social sciences have been all too happy to pick up the slack, and often end up encouraging universities to double down on their own worst impulses, such as involving themselves in political and cultural matters wholly removed from their academic missions. The humanities and social sciences have, of course, produced many outstanding champions of the liberal values animating the university. Moreover, the STEM fields are far from immune to the groupthink and degraded, relativistic standards that have threatened the legitimacy of other academic fields. Even so, it is not too much of a stretch to say that if more STEM voices were in the room at pivotal moments, higher education could be in a much better place, enjoying greater public support and lessened scrutiny from politicians and pressure groups who don't always have its best interests at heart. The question, then: How do we get more STEM voices in the room? At this panel discussion convened by the MIT Free Speech Alliance, an independent alumni organization promoting free expression and academic freedom at MIT, we'll hear from STEM faculty at MIT and other institutions on the challenge of STEM faculty involvement. How do we induce more STEM faculty to take an active role in university affairs? What does a scientific approach to problem solving have to teach university leaders looking to exit the culture war battlefields on which they've become unwitting players? And how do we keep the STEM fields from further falling prey to the unscientific, anti-intellectual mindsets that have befallen so many other disciplines?

4:20 - 5:40 P.M.  
Ballroom F

PANEL DISCUSSION

**The Left-Wing Case for Open Inquiry, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Disagreement in Higher Education**

CHRIS CUTRONE, School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
BENJAMIN STUDEBAKER, University of Cambridge  
JAMES LIVINGSTON, Rutgers University  
Moderated by: EDWARD REMUS, Northeastern Illinois University

During recent years, the concept of viewpoint diversity in general, and the organization Heterodox Academy in particular, have been accused by some progressives of amounting to little more than an academic “trojan horse” through which to propagate right-wing ideas on college and university campuses. At the same time, as nationwide political polarization gives way to political realignment, support for HxA’s mission and values has increasingly come from unexpected and surprising political quarters among scholars. This panel discussion will convene explicitly left-wing scholars who support open inquiry and viewpoint diversity in higher education. Panelists will be invited to address the following questions. From a left-wing perspective, on what basis should scholars support values and practices such as open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement? Furthermore, given the theoretical richness of various intellectual traditions on the historic left, how should we theorize, historicize, and critically analyze contemporary illiberal forms of progressivism on campus and beyond? Panelists will be informed by diverse and sometimes differing intellectual-political viewpoints, including classical political theory, Marxism, social democracy, the Frankfurt School, and pragmatism.

4:20 - 5:40 P.M.  
Ballroom G

SYMPOSIUM

**Beyond the Constraints: Protecting and Promoting Heterodox Thinking**

Moderated by: ALICE DREGER, Heterodox Academy

**Lessons Learned from Soviet/Russian Political Overreach in Universities: Parallels to Modern Western Academia**

ALEXANDRA LYSOVA, Simon Fraser University



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The increasing political overreach in modern Western universities resembles Soviet Russia's suppression of intellectual discourse and ideological control. This presentation explores the rise of cancel culture, DEI-driven suppression of inquiry, and rejection of diverse viewpoints—echoing Soviet practices. In Soviet academia, ideological purity was prioritized over scientific inquiry, as seen in the rejection of Mendelian genetics in favor of Lamarckist theories, which aligned with Marxist-Leninist ideology. Fields like mathematical logic and cybernetics were also suppressed for their perceived bourgeois or capitalist associations. The Communist Party controlled not only what ideas could be studied but also how research was conducted, resulting in systematic suppression of dissent and intellectual stagnation. Today, Western academia faces similar pressures. Cancel culture and DEI-driven orthodoxy create an environment where discussions on topics like gender, race, Indigeneity, and biological differences—especially in fields like criminology—are limited. Microaggression policies and ideological purity tests further restrict open inquiry, leading to intellectual conformity. The parallels to Soviet Russia highlight the dangers of allowing political and ideological agendas to dominate academia. In line with the Heterodox Academy's 2025 Conference theme, Truth, Power, and Responsibility, this presentation argues that universities must resist these overreaches to protect open inquiry and viewpoint diversity. Only by doing so can they fulfill their mission as bastions of free thought rather than becoming tools of ideological control.

**Is GenAI the Best Adversary When No Adversary Will Come Forward? Discussing Indigenization at Wilfrid Laurier University**

MICHAEL PAVLIN, Wilfrid Laurier University

This talk is motivated by a discussion held at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) featuring a controversial speaker, Dr. Frances Widdowson, on the topic of 'Indigenous Ways of Knowing' and its place in a university hosted by the Laurier HxA Campus Community. This event was first envisioned as a Heterodox Conversation between Dr. Widdowson and a proponent of university Indigenization. However, despite extensive efforts, we failed to find a proponent amongst the administration and faculty who was willing to participate. Note that WLU has an "Indigenous Strategic Plan" advocating introduction of "Indigenous ways of knowing throughout the university". To avoid a one-sided event, we decided to explore the use of generative AI (GenAI) to enrich the discussion by challenging the speaker. When developing



our methodology, we considered ethical and practical questions related to impersonation, our personal biases and biases in the GenAI’s background knowledge. We settled on a very limited and prescribed use of the technology. We used ChatGPT4 to develop a single set of discussion questions with a minimal set of prompts. We provided the GenAI with transcripts of two public lectures respectively from Dr. Widdowson and an advocate of university Indigenization. In the talk we will discuss the event and the challenge of developing a dialogue when one side uniformly disengages. We will also discuss in detail the technical and ethical issues around the use of these technologies and our methods.

**Galileo’s Other Fingers: Moving Towards Truly Freed Inquiry**

ALICE DREGER, Heterodox Academy

When Galileo’s Middle Finger was published ten years ago – just as Heterodox Academy was being founded for many of the same motivations as for that book – I hoped that it would function as a warning and corrective. Instead, the book has reasonably come to be seen as an early history of what came to be known as “cancel culture.” And today, rather than things being better, scholars suffer not just from false accusations, mostly leftist political constraints, and censorious mobs, but also coordinated assault from government entities and politicized media. So, what are we to do? This talk will take the perspective of a (politically progressive) historian of science to consider where we’ve come from, where we are, and where we might go. Emphasis will be placed on the kinds of interventions recommended by Heterodox Academy for promoting and protecting open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in higher education.

4:20 - 5:40 P.M.  
Ballroom H

SYMPOSIUM

**Sharing Actionable Tools for Achieving Better Scholarship and Teaching**

Moderated by: QUENTIN LANGLEY, Fordham University-New York

**Reflexivity Toolkit to Open True Dialogue: Enhancing Educator’s Self-Awareness, Self-Inquiry and Responsibility in Higher Education**

ANDREA VALENTE, York University

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*Monday, June 23*

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The objective of this presentation is to provide an introduction, explanation, and dissemination of a reflexivity toolkit to assist college or university instructors in enhancing their self-awareness and accountability for their responsibilities as educators. The creation of a reflexivity toolkit is in response to recent concerns about how diversity, inclusion, and equity have been incorporated into the mainstream ideologies in North American institutions with the danger of potential indoctrination. The focus is on the Canadian higher educational context, where self-censorship and conformity are prevalent attitudes observed in the classrooms as a result of the country's intricate socio-political dynamics. These dynamics encompass not only the mandate of five decades of multiculturalism but also the fragile support for freedom of expression and speech, which has resulted in society's inclination towards silence. The principles of cognitive behavior theory (Beck, 2011), active inference (Friston, 2022) and the Socratic method served as the foundation for the development, design, and direction of this reflexivity toolkit, despite the fact that reflective activities have been common in formative assessments in teacher's colleges and educational development programs where a variety of models emphasize experiential and emotional learning. This reflexivity toolkit is intended to motivate instructors to engage in self-inquiry and reasoning regarding their beliefs and ideologies, which may impact their communication, interactions, and pedagogical choices in the classroom. Last, from an epistemological point of view, the reflexivity toolkit is grounded in Biesta's (2014) scholarship. In it, the author rethinks John Dewey's theory of knowing and idea of pragmatism by putting them in the context of "'transactional realism'" to deal with the difficult task of defining truth and how it relates to curriculum.

### **Three Tools for Protecting the 'Heterodox Way' in Academia**

JUSTIN KALEF, Rutgers University

Academic freedom has long been under attack by intolerant politicizers within the university. A growing politicized backlash from outside of academia is now pushing back. Predictably, agitators on both sides tend to see only their political opponents' moves as threats to academic freedom, and relatively few of us seem genuinely committed to the ideal of academia as a neutral place of fair and genuine intellectual exploration. It is natural to wonder whether all that is best in academia will be torn apart by these political squabbles, reducing the quest for truth to the quest for power and domination. In this presentation, I will argue that there is hope. I will suggest that our best strategy is to promote

three principles that have received little attention so far -- what I call the golden rule of inquiry, the distinction between pressure and meta-pressure, and an application of intellectual modesty - that can be presented appealingly to political partisans on both sides but that also seem sufficient to defend academic values.

**Moral Values Education: A Framework for Ethical Responsibility in Higher Education**

JILLIAN MEYER, Indiana University Bloomington

In a time of growing polarization and ideological division—Democrats vs Republicans, religious differences, even cultural preferences like country vs rock ‘n’ roll—the fragility of academic freedom and the weight of ethical responsibility in higher education have never been more apparent. While we often develop negative perceptions of opposing groups, research shows that we are less polarized than we think (Iyengar et al., 2012; Yudkin et al., 2019). This highlights the need for a robust moral values framework that not only recognizes diversity of viewpoints but also fosters constructive dialogue and open inquiry within our educational institutions. This presentation proposes an interdisciplinary moral values framework rooted in the “Big Three” of Morality (Shweder et al., 1997)—autonomy, community, and divinity—drawing from disciplines like philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, religious studies, and more. By developing a collaborative model that bridges these disciplines, we can chart a path forward for character education initiatives that prioritize both ethical responsibility and institutional neutrality, two key pillars in protecting the core values of higher education. As higher education grapples with questions of truth, power, and responsibility, this framework will empower educators and students alike to engage in meaningful discourse while upholding the values of viewpoint diversity and intellectual freedom in their academic and professional roles.

4:20 - 5:40 P.M.  
Ballroom I

PANEL DISCUSSION

**Sociopolitical Bias in Medical and Mental Healthcare: Emerging Threats to Patients and Practitioners**

ANDREW HARTZ, Open Therapy Institute

SALLY SATEL, Yale University School of Medicine

MICHAEL STRAMBLER, Yale University School of Medicine

Moderated by: DEAN MCKAY, Fordham University

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Surveys of the public suggest rising levels of stress year over year for the past decade. One of the contributors to this rise in stress has been the infusion of charged and polarized political discourse. Politically-driven policies have seeped into professional training in medical and mental healthcare. Medical and mental health professionals have increasingly asserted their political views in patient-facing spheres. This has ranged from wearing politically-tinged attire to rejecting Zionist patients to equity-based provisions of services up to professionals and training faculty leading students in political protests. Dr. McKay will discuss how the emphasis on social justice models of training have led to discrimination against patient groups, and chilled discourse by professionals around the risks and benefits of this model. A foundation of the discussion for all speakers is the implicit abandonment of universalism in favor of relativism in medical and mental health training and treatment delivery. Dr. Hartz will discuss a myriad of issues that are overlooked in mental health care because of socio-political bias in the field. Issues include: treating patients with diverse views, self-censorship, masculinity, anti-white racial aggression, faith issues, and the impact of an increasingly politicized culture on mental health. These issues are experienced by countless people in universities and beyond, but they are often missing from research, training, and clinical practice. He will also discuss a path forward for mental health care and other fields: the systematic documentation of issues overlooked because of bias. Dr. Satel will discuss the intrusion of social justice imperatives into medicine. Under the approving eyes of major medical entities, a risky natural experiment is taking place. One in which advocates are trying to shift the primary mission of the medical profession away from patient care and towards social activism. A deeply worrisome side effect of that project -- which the AMA describes as a campaign to "dismantle white supremacy, racism, and other forms of exclusion and structured oppression in medicine" -- is the erosion of excellence in the profession. The potential threat to the professional development of future doctors and patients must be taken seriously. Dr. Strambler will discuss how the growing essentialization of identities in psychology has resulted in counterproductive approaches to mental health. He focuses on two outgrowths of such essentialization: relational pessimism, or the deep skepticism about the possibility of individuals relating across identities, and revenge pathologizing that denigrates members of "oppressor" groups as psychologically unfit.

<p><b>7:00 - 8:30</b> P.M. <i>Grand Ballroom</i></p>	<p><b>Open Inquiry Awards Dinner and Ceremony</b></p> <p>HOSTED BY JONATHAN HAIDT, New York University</p> <p>Join us to celebrate our working together to create a healthier culture of higher ed! Presentation of all five awards will follow a plated dinner. Black tie optional.</p>
<p><b>8:30 - 9:30</b> P.M. <i>Grand Ballroom</i></p>	<p><b>Networking Reception</b></p> <p>Open Bar and live entertainment by Intrinsic Groove.</p>



Tuesday, June 24

7:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.  
*Promenade*

Check-in and Registration

7:45 - 8:30 A.M.  
*Grand Ballroom Foyer*

Coffee Service & Light Breakfast

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Greenpoint

WORKSHOP

**What’s Emotion Got To Do With It? Critical Thinking  
AND Emotional Intelligence as Tools for Open Inquiry**

CATHERINE JOHNSON, University of Wyoming  
WHITNEY GRAFF, University of Chicago

Sentiments like “facts don’t care about your feelings” or the emphasis on “lived experience” point to a cultural confusion in society about the role of emotions in how we think through challenging topics and engage in meaningful conversations across different perspectives. Learning to think critically necessarily invites emotional discomfort. Are we placing too high an expectation on rationality without appreciating how emotions will inevitably intrude on and influence our thinking? How do we teach students to be strong critical thinkers—drawing on sound evidence and logical reasoning—without siloing or ignoring emotions? This workshop will lead participants in a two-part, hands-on classroom learning exercise that explores the role of emotions in critical thinking. By cultivating the practices of emotional awareness, openness, and metacognition, students and teachers alike are better prepared to engage in productive discourse and learning. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature about critical thinking pedagogy and the psychology of emotions, and our own teaching experience, this workshop will provide participants with an engaging, effective, and fun activity that can be employed immediately in their classrooms and provide a foundation for open inquiry and the pursuit of truth.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Navy Yard

PANEL DISCUSSION

**Persuading Universities to Take Free Expression  
Seriously**

LAURA BELTZ, Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression  
SEAN STEVENS, Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression  
NATHAN HONEYCUTT, Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression  
Moderated by:  
NADINE STROSSEN, Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression

Free speech advocates, like many at HxA, are familiar with the problems facing higher education, particularly related to speech, expression, and academic freedom. But how do we effectively present data driven, informed solutions to these problems, particularly to university stakeholders who are not as familiar with the issues? A panel of experts, informed by their experience



and groundbreaking data, will further diagnose problems facing higher education — particularly issues related to expression and self-censorship among students and faculty — and why they matter. The panel will articulate how such data can be used to motivate those in positions of authority on college and university campuses to reform the policies or climate for free expression on campus. They will further share how such data has been a successful tool for persuading many campuses to change their policies and practices to be more supportive of free speech and expression, and offer practical recommendations.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
*Ballroom F*

SYMPOSIUM

**The Uses (and Abuses) of Psychology in Academic Settings**

Moderated by: LAWRENCE AMSEL, Columbia University

**Post Traumatic Post Truth Disorder (PTPD): How the Politicized Appropriation of Traumatic Experiences Interferes with Open Inquiry**

LAWRENCE AMSEL, Columbia University

A notable feature of recent campus political discourse is the language of trauma, including self-representation of hyper-vulnerability and sensitivity to microaggressions. Moreover, the discourse of trauma has taken on an aura of epistemic privilege. The appeal to a personally experienced trauma, or trauma to one's affiliation group, preempts other forms of discourse. This may underly the language of Derald Wing Sue, that individualism trumps universalism, objectivism and empiricism as a modality of knowing. For those who have experienced no trauma, the appropriation of others' trauma by means of identification, in other words a voluntary, vicariously experienced trauma becomes a badge, not only of virtue but of knowledge and judgement. Any attempt to argue with positions so formulated are taken to be a form of re-traumatization and rejected. An example is the college encampments that superficially mimicked the lives of actually displaced people. In our 2014 article, "There is nothing to fear but the amygdala," we argued that the insights from the re-integration of economics and psychology (e.g. Behavioral Economics) about the cognitive distortions involved in fear learning and in trauma's cognitive distortions, are underappreciated by policy makers. Those included the insights of Prospect Theory on the cognitive differences in processing gain and loss (fear), as well from Trauma Studies, about the potential for cognitive distortions. Thus, far

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from having epistemic privilege, trauma is more likely to distort judgements, and, even more troubling, these distortions are not amenable to traditional modes of talk therapy that rely largely on frontal-lobe mediated discourse, as the fear-based distortions live in the amygdala. We will discuss the implications of that work for promoting open discourse in the face of trauma-based rhetoric. We will discuss clinically informed approaches that might both help us understand and counteract this rhetoric more effectively than traditional academic discourse.

**Investigating the Impact of a Psychology-Based Online Educational Tool for Improving Constructive Dialogue in a University Classroom**

DANE MAUER-VAKIL, Viewpoints Project  
KELLY ANTHONY, University of Waterloo

There exists a growing literature demonstrating the impact of university students' self-censoring in the classroom amid fear of speaking out. In an American survey, students reported significant fear of making a 'mistake' when speaking in class and there is no reason to believe that this is unique to the United States. When students are fearful of 'making mistakes' or 'saying the wrong thing,' the very foundation of learning is significantly hindered largely because student engagement is reduced. Students must feel that classrooms are welcoming, engaging spaces for respectful, diverse discussions. In this Canadian study, we conducted an empirical investigation into the impact of the innovative tool, 'Perspectives,' developed by the Constructive Dialogue Institute (CDI), for fostering constructive dialogue on student learning experiences. CDI strives to translate rigorous behavioral science research into online educational tools that are evidence-based, practical, engaging, and scalable for equipping students with skills for constructive communication. In this session, we present survey results from our pre-post, quasi-experimental design study examining student experiences using the 'Perspectives' tool in an undergraduate public health course focusing on the key outcomes of affective polarization, intellectual humility, conflict resolution skills, and self-censorship. Our results suggest that this tool has strong utility in lowering affective polarization and self-censorship, increasing intellectual humility and improving conflict resolution skills. Thus, we conclude that the 'Perspectives' tool can foster deep learning by aiding students in cultivating intellectual humility, welcoming and exploring diverse perspectives and worldviews, and managing emotions to obtain mastery in challenging conversations. Through this work, educators, researchers, and the broader public are provided key insight into the impact of 'Perspectives,' which can be leveraged

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for wider scale implementation in university classroom settings across North America. This report is authored by Dane Mauer-Vakil, Christoffer Dharma, & Kelly Anthony.

**Embracing Empowerment as a Theory to  
Reconceptualize Issues in School Psychology**

MIRIAM THOMPSON, University of California, Santa Barbara

School psychology is concerned about the mental, cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral functioning of school-age students. School psychologists have specialized training in assessment, intervention and prevention, and diagnosis, and they work closely with parents, administrators, teachers, and other professionals in determining how to support students in achieving the best possible outcomes. As to be expected, a broad range of issues impact school age children. According to the Pew Research Center (2024), the most reported issues impacting school age children are emotional and behavioral regulation challenges, anxiety and depression, academic underperformance, absenteeism, and poverty. In school psychology research, the increase in the number of publications addressing culture, race, and ethnicity does not thoroughly or accurately capture many of the aforementioned issues. Instead, these publications prioritize “primacy of identity” (p. 22, Smith, 2020), indicating that one’s race, ethnicity or culture sufficiently explains the troubles that they face. Notably, within the last 10 years, most of the school psychology literature on race, ethnicity, and culture is focused on the impact of racism, racial disparities, racial bias, and cultural competency has on school age children. Critical theory is the common framework used to examine these issues, but these issues have not been examined through a framework that is not deficit-based. Researchers have responsibility to the field of school psychology to consider the different ways in which issues can be conceptualized. Certainly, racism, discrimination, and prejudice exist, however empowerment theory reconceptualizes these issues as real, yet surmountable challenges (Smith, 2020; Zimmerman, 2000). Empowerment theory frames issues through an asset-lens, describing individuals as capable agents of self-empowerment and change. This presentation will discuss the results of a systematic review of school psychology literature conducted within the past 10 years on culture, race, and ethnicity and how it can be re-conceptualized via empowerment theory.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Ballroom G

Tuesday, June 24

SYMPOSIUM

**Freeing Science Amid Conflicting Values**

Moderated by: NICOLE BARBARO, Heterodox Academy

**Breaking the Social Feedback Loops that Constrain Climate Science**

PATRICK BROWN, The Breakthrough Institute

In the realm of high-profile climate science publications, social and career incentives within academic and research institutions have led to the formation of self-reinforcing feedback loops that constrain scientific inquiry and limit the diversity of perspectives. Through a literature review, specific examples, and first-hand experience, I will examine how these social feedback loops operate to shape research agendas and influence and affect the dissemination of findings. I will argue that these dynamics ultimately reduce the value of climate science to society. To break these social feedback loops within research communities, I propose both top-down structural changes in journals and bottom-up cultural shifts. These include 1) Implementing sturdier guardrails against self-reinforcing research themes and fostering institutionalized disconfirmation of predominant narratives; 2) Accepting papers based on research questions and methodologies before results are known; 3) Separating research groups that design studies from those that conduct them and commissioning multiple groups to investigate the same question; 4) Encouraging journals to embrace audits of publishing practices to identify and correct biases in methodology scrutiny; and 5) Encouraging journal editors to explicitly solicit papers that challenge predominant narratives. Aligning with the conference theme “Truth, Power, and Responsibility,” this presentation calls for a collective effort to uphold the core values of higher education. By implementing these measures, we can foster a more honest and complete scientific literature that ultimately serves society better. This approach not only enhances the robustness and credibility of climate science but would also hopefully serve to increase public trust in academic institutions by demonstrating more openness and intellectual humility. This presentation will overlap substantially with a piece I wrote in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/does-climate-science-tell-the-whole-truth>) and a presentation given at my institution of Johns Hopkins (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCnmIPznCD8>)

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*Tuesday, June 24*

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**Open Science and Social Responsiveness: Conflicting Values in Psychology**

BENJAMIN LOVETT, Teachers College, Columbia University

In recent years, two clear trends have spread across psychology research. The first trend is “open science”--increasing transparency and replicability in research. The second trend is “social responsiveness”--using psychology in the service of social justice. Professional associations endorse both trends, and the trends have overlapping goals, including reducing bias in psychology. However, there are also deep sources of conflict; this presentation discusses three such sources. First, open science often undermines empirical claims that are used to support social activism. I consider work on stereotype threat and implicit bias as examples, and I show that socially responsive psychologists consider societal consequences to be as important as empirical evidence when evaluating claims. Second, open science promotes equal standards for all research and researchers, whereas socially responsive psychologists often argue for a kind of affirmative action that gives targeted assistance to certain researchers and their work. I examine recent activities by the American Psychological Association and by a variety of journals as examples of this. Finally, open science has fairly narrow ideas of acceptable research methodology, steeped in positivism and falsifiability, whereas socially responsive scholars have defended methods based on subjective lived experience, “indigenous knowledge,” and the like. I conclude the presentation by considering options for moving forward, given these conflicts, and I argue that viewpoint diversity and intellectual curiosity are threatened by demands for social responsiveness, whereas they are not threatened by open science requirements.

**Does Privileging Liberationist Sociology Constitute Pedagogical Malpractice?**

ANTHONY HAYNOR, Seton Hall University

Contemporary sociology has largely policed out long-standing conservative and liberal traditions within the discipline. It is argued that a liberationist sociology that centers around inequality has achieved a preeminent status within the field, to the exclusion of a conservative tradition that focuses on the erosion of community and a liberal tradition that emphasizes threats to social integration. The discipline would gain much by spirited dialogues among egalitarians, conservatives, and liberals in its pursuit of the truth and, ultimately, human well-being. Put forward is the argument that three polarities are central to our social nature--pluralism

vs. community (the conservative “problem”), differentiation vs. integration (the “liberal” problem), and hierarchy vs. equality (the “radical” problem). These analytical projects are rooted, it is argued, in three kinds of sociological ethics--viewing community, integration, or equality as fundamental human goods that are in a Haidtian vein rooted in our evolutionary development as a species. The privileging of “equality” as the only legitimate value, has stultified the sociological enterprise, with traditions valuing community and integration either ignored entirely or demonized in most sociology classes. The discipline of sociology needs to treat each of the sociological/ethical traditions as deserving of charitable, steelmanning treatment in pursuit of truth and human flourishing. Not only should the discipline be having robust conversations about how to best realize the legitimate needs of community, integration, and equality in particular socio-historical circumstances, but these conversations should be brought into our classrooms. The three traditions should be presented as tapping legitimate aspects of social ontology. Sociology will thus be seen less as a univocal field that focuses exclusively on the equality problem and more as a multivocal discipline that addresses problems that are complementary and requires collaborative efforts among sociologists. Sociology classes need to be taught with this imperative in mind.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
*Ballroom H*

SYMPOSIUM

**The Skeptics’ Panel**

Moderated by: ALICE DREGER, Heterodox Academy

**Sign Up or Get Out? How “The HxA Way” Undermines Open Inquiry and Viewpoint Diversity**

MICHAEL VEBER, East Carolina University

Heterodox Academy requires anyone interested in joining to take a loyalty oath. In it, prospects swear to “support open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in research and education.” For those (like me) who wonder what is meant by these terms, the organization explains further in “The HxA Way”. Heterodox Academy insists that the norms laid out in The Way be adhered to by all who participate in their events and publish on their platforms. Anyone wishing to join one of the many “Heterodox Communities” must also swear to adhere to those same norms. I refuse to take the Heterodox loyalty oath in any of its guises. As I will argue, it is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the organization’s own key ideals of open

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inquiry and viewpoint diversity. By way of background, I point out how, given the history of loyalty oaths in academia and their recent resurgence in the form of Anti-Racism pledges, it is very surprising/embarrassing that an organization such as this one would have such a practice. But more importantly, I will argue, the injunction to “Be Constructive”, as elaborated in *The Way*, is flatly inconsistent with a proper understanding of academic freedom. And therefore, it also undermines open inquiry and viewpoint diversity.

### **Kalven’s Complicit Executioners: A Critique of the Kalven Committee Report**

IRFAN KHAWAJA, CorroHealth LLC

Over the past decade or so, critics of political activism on college campuses have revived a conception of “institutional neutrality” designed to discredit and impede such activism. The locus classicus of these arguments is the so-called Kalven Committee Report on the University’s Role in Political and Social Action issued at the University of Chicago in November 1967. Though much has been said on the subject since 1967, the Committee’s arguments have proven remarkably durable, and contemporary arguments inevitably echo its themes. In this paper, I offer a critique of the Kalven Committee’s Report intended not just to rebut the Report as written, but to rebut those of its underlying assumptions that have found their way into contemporary discourse. The Report argues that because “the university’s mission is teaching and research in the service of the discovery, improvement, and dissemination of knowledge,” this mission requires maximization of intellectual diversity; since the diversity in question requires neutrality, the university’s mission requires institutional neutrality. Though vulnerable to several obvious objections, the deepest problem with the Report’s argument is an omission, namely, whether the university can be held accountable for complicity in atrocities facilitated by the university itself. Imagine that a university is complicit in serious injustices, e.g., torture or genocide. In that case, while the process of holding-accountable violates neutrality, a commitment to institutional neutrality both conceals and excuses complicity. Suppose that it’s possible to have genuine knowledge of the existence of such complicity. Then institutional neutrality demands that we commit evil while flouting our knowledge of its evil. Ultimately, despite the ostensibly humanist rhetoric of its advocates, the Kalven Committee’s defense of institutional neutrality reduces to an Eichmann-like ethos of compartmentalization that in practice,



actively encourages institutional complicity in evils of enormous magnitude and turpitude.

HxA’s Approach to Advocacy and Collaboration

ALICE DREGER, Heterodox Academy

The presentation will explore Heterodox Academy’s approach to advancing its values within institutions and the public sphere while engaging constructively with the arguments presented at the symposium.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Ballroom I

PANEL DISCUSSION

Promoting Pluralism in Practice: Social Work at the Intersection of Truth, Power, and Responsibility

NAFEES ALAM, University of Nebraska  
MATTHEW WATSON, ProSocial Workers  
TIFFANIE JONES, Howard University  
Moderated by: ELIZABETH SPIEVAK, Bridgewater State University

As social work navigates the complexities of truth, power, and responsibility in education and practice, fostering viewpoint diversity and open inquiry is critical to addressing today’s social challenges. This panel brings together leaders from the Heterodox Social Work Community, ProSocial Workers, the Institute for Liberal Values, and the Open Therapy Institute to explore how pluralistic approaches can transform social work. Panelists will discuss innovative strategies for promoting intellectual humility, resisting ideological orthodoxy, and empowering practitioners to uphold ethical principles in the face of polarization. By sharing tools such as ProSocial Workers’ continuing education courses, the Institute for Liberal Values’ resources for fostering liberal principles, Open Therapy Institute’s overlooked issues in mental health care, and Heterodox Academy’s emphasis on constructive disagreement, this session will demonstrate how fostering dialogue across diverse perspectives strengthens the profession’s capacity to meet its ethical responsibilities.

9:50 - 10:10 A.M.  
Grand Ballroom Foyer

Coffee Service

10:10-11:30 A.M.  
Greenpoint

WORKSHOP

**Cultivating Pluralism in the Classroom**

MIKE WHITENTON, Interfaith America

Free speech, open inquiry, and academic freedom are foundational to the learning experience, yet diversity of thought alone—without mutual respect, authentic relationships, and cooperation toward shared goals—can lead to isolation and fragmentation. (Research by Putnam, Varshney, and others underscores the risk of diversity without connection and cooperation.) Pluralism, by contrast, harnesses intellectual, ideological, and identity diversity to foster positive outcomes and transformational learning. The challenge we address in this workshop is: How can we intentionally cultivate pluralism in the classroom? This interactive workshop will focus on practical skills for cultivating pluralism in the classroom using Interfaith America’s Respect, Relate, Cooperate model. Participants will delve into real classroom scenarios where instructors have succeeded and struggled to cultivate pluralism. Through small and large group discussions, thought experiments, and role-playing, participants will gain hands-on experience with strategies for advancing pluralism in diverse settings, including tactics for “pre-escalation” and redirecting class discussion back toward Respect, Relate, Cooperate norms. Participants will leave this workshop equipped with actionable tools and refined skills to integrate into their teaching regardless of the discipline and a clear understanding of why pluralism matters, how to cultivate it, and what specific techniques they can apply in their courses.

10:10-11:30 A.M.  
Navy Yard

PANEL DISCUSSION

**How Should We Respond to the Cancellation of Sociology by the State of Florida?**

BRADLEY CAMPBELL, California State University, Los Angeles  
ROSEMARY HOPCROFT, University of North Carolina, Charlotte  
FABIO ROJAS, Indiana University  
Moderated by: JUKKA SAVOLAINEN, Wayne State University

In January 2024, the Florida Board of Governors removed sociology as a core course option for general education at public universities in the state. This decision is a high-profile and timely example of the issue at the heart of the 2025 HxA conference theme (Truth, Power, and Responsibility), which seeks to

interrogate political overreach in the tension between academic freedom and responsibility. Consisting of four sociologists with heterodox bona fides, this panel (1) describes the context of the Florida decision, (2) evaluates how the American Sociological Association responded to this challenge, and (3) suggests alternative ways for the discipline to engage with those – inside and outside the academia – who question the legitimacy of this field of instruction and inquiry. At the conclusion of the discussion, we’ll invite audience members to share their views on the role of government intervention in situations where an academic discipline has experienced ideological capture.

10:10-11:30 A.M.  
Ballroom F

SYMPOSIUM

**The Intellectual Journey: Helping Students Learn to Think Like Scholars**

Moderated by: MATT RECLA, Boise State University

**Inviting Undergraduates to the Scholarly Conversation**

CRAIG GIBSON, The Ohio State University

Renewing undergraduates’ engagement in deep learning and critical inquiry is a current challenge for higher education. Various “high impact practices” are well-known as opportunities for fostering this kind of engagement. One of the most rewarding high impact practices is undergraduate research. Students need specific opportunities for understanding scholarly processes to grasp the full complexities of research; to transcend binary thinking; to gain confidence in speaking, writing, and presenting in a viewpoint-diverse way to peers, faculty, and community members; and to “join the scholarly conversation” as apprentice scholars. The Ohio State University Libraries has developed a two-tiered model for undergraduate research: (1) the Undergraduate Research Library Fellowship Program, a ten-week summer fellowship for individual students of all majors to explore a research question; and (2) the Arts & Humanities Fellowship Program, an academic-year program for upper-division undergraduates working on senior theses and independent studies projects in arts and humanities disciplines. Developed with campus partners, both programs aim to shape the emerging scholarly identity of undergraduates as they research complex and contested questions and engage in open inquiry and ongoing investigations that propel their curiosity into the future. In addition, both programs introduce students to methodological diversity as a key facet of their emerging understanding of

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intellectual pluralism and critical inquiry in the academy. This two-tiered approach developed promises to engage a wider range of students in scholarly inquiry, to promote deeper reading and questioning, and to build larger cohorts of new scholars at a large public university.

### **Heterodox Pedagogy for Science Graduate Students**

GEOFF HORSMAN, Wilfrid Laurier University

Many students begin graduate studies without a clear understanding of science. Although they may have passively absorbed the importance of objectivity and reproducibility, rarely have they thought carefully about these ideas. I hypothesize that, by introducing: (i) foundational philosophy of science, and (ii) the concept of seeking out heterodox views, students will be better equipped to resist anti-science ideological incursions. Here I will describe a course I developed for MSc Chemistry graduate students. Beyond the usual general skills-based topics (writing, scholarship applications, etc), the course begins discussing philosophy of science. In particular, we highlight Jonathan Rauch's definition of liberal science with its two rules (nobody has the final say, and nobody has personal authority). In later modules of the course, I intentionally introduce students to heterodox viewpoints that they would not normally encounter. For instance, we read persuasive essays challenging axiomatic beliefs in science. Examples of such beliefs include that peer review is effective, DEI benefits science, or that governments should fund basic science. By prioritizing curiosity, this approach leads to many delightfully surprising discoveries for students and professor alike. However, it is also fraught with challenges that can be difficult to navigate in a politically uniform academic environment.

### **Preparing for Practice: Fostering HxA Values in Today's Cautious Students**

MATT RECLA, Boise State University

How can students discuss challenging ideas with one another when they are fearful of criticism from fellow classmates, or even their instructor? How do we promote open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement when students won't say what they think, or say anything at all? In this increasingly common classroom environment, I've found that by intentionally scaffolding preparation for and practice in dialogue as a key element of course design (and being willing to sacrifice some course content in the process), I've seen greater student

engagement and confidence in dialogue across difference. I'll share an example of one successful class I've taught entitled "Democracy in an Age of Identity Politics." Students prepared for dialogue using the Perspectives program and then read and discussed two texts: Liberalism and Its Discontents and the well-known Coddling of the American Mind. They honed their dialogue skills in small groups and as a whole-class using topics from the Coddling text before proceeding to discussions based on topics chosen by the students, including abortion. Students reflected greater self-efficacy in sharing their views through scaffolded practice, and greater appreciation for hearing diverse perspectives. Buoyed by the success of this course, I promoted a pilot program to incorporate Perspectives into fifteen sections of a required second-year course in our university's general-education program, "Foundations of Ethics and Diversity," a course that had previously come under fire from conservative groups. Based on the success of the pilot, exposure to viewpoint diversity through dialogue will soon be part of every section of this course. Today's college students may be less willing to engage in open inquiry and constructive disagreement in the classroom than before, but they are also open-minded and just as hungry to learn from each other (and from us!) given the right preparation. We just have to provide it.

10:10-11:30 A.M.

Ballroom G

SYMPOSIUM

The Battle to Remove Political Intentions from the Road to Scientific Truth: Three Physician Perspectives

Moderated by: KRISTOPHER KALIEBE, University of South Florida

Truth in Crisis: The Silenced Resistance to School Closures During the COVID-19 Pandemic

CAROL VIDAL, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Efforts to decrease viral transmission during the COVID-19 pandemic led to the closure of public and private schools in most U.S. states and countries worldwide. There was varied speed in school reopening, which took months in some states and involved a heated political debate about whether the risks for viral transmission outweighed the risks of learning loss and poor mental health outcomes from isolation. However, much of the discussion ignored previous knowledge on the effects of school absenteeism and closures on academic achievement and social isolation. Four years after the pandemic and with record numbers of school absenteeism, a severe decline in academic

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scores, and more evidence of the little impact that school closures had on decreasing mortality (given the specific behavior of the SARS virus) have solidified the experiment of prolonged school closures as a societal failure. From a developmental perspective, this physician will frame the school closure debate during the COVID-19 pandemic on Western medicine's four medical ethical principles. These principles: promotion of the welfare of children and adolescents, minimizing harmful effects (non-maleficence), autonomy, and justice will be discussed in the contexts of previous knowledge about school absences and technology and public discourse in social media during the pandemic. This presentation will be followed by a discussion of the risks of public debate on social media impacting policy decisions and silencing pediatric and mental health professionals.

**From Politics to Truth: Leading the Charge for Scientific Integrity**

DAVID ATKINSON, University of Texas Southwestern

Polling has shown substantial reductions in societal trust in scientists and medical institutions since the spring of 2020, falling from 51% to 34% and registering at only 29% for those 18-25. Confidence remains higher among people whose demographics resemble modal clinicians and scientists. In contrast, minoritized groups, people making under \$100,000, all those who lean Republican, and people under 35 have lost trust in these institutions. This has created a context where many within the establishment are unaware of increasing skepticism. Loss of trust is partially a result of choices made by medical institutions and public health officials, beginning with researchers and bureaucrats prematurely dismissing the lab leak theory and the delay in acknowledging that SARS-CoV-2 spread was primarily airborne. They have yet to present an open and honest review of what was well done and what could have been done better. Further reductions in trust in science and medicine may be coming. A recently released NIH Scientific Integrity policy altered the definition of science to include "Indigenous knowledge"—despite it being entirely independent of the scientific method. The NIH modified its definition of "political interference" by clarifying that it pertained to "inappropriate political interference," noting that there could be "appropriate ways to interfere with science." Begging the question of whether it is ever appropriate for politics to interfere with science. The NIH also declared that a Science Integrity Officer is responsible for disputes among scientists concerning "public health or policy." With trust in the government

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currently sitting at 20%, this approach seems unlikely to be effective for increasing faith in science. This presentation will call on scientists, physicians, professional organizations, and regulatory bodies to prioritize open exchange and reinvigorate basic scientific principles to help restore trust.

**Power, Responsibility, and Truth: Increasing Open Expression Regarding Race and Gender in Medicine**

KRISTOPHER KALIEBE, University of South Florida

This presentation discusses the issues of gender and race in medicine and how honest discussion on these topics has been rendered difficult in the current environment. A recent history will show how institutional medicine has embraced a critical social justice narrative within the last decade. The consequences of this stance will be reviewed, as will alternative frameworks and critiques of critical social justice ideology. The discussion will include a call for balance when describing societal challenges such as health disparities, as overstating risk can contribute to anxiety, create inaccurate perceptions of physician prejudice, and turn attention away from addressing the underlying cause of the disparities. This discussion will review how medical professional organizations and their associated journals have used their power to promote political and ideological stances rather than to search for the truth. Even with our human tendency toward groupthink, confirmation bias, and other cognitive distortions, physicians can take evidence-based, humane stances without using divisive rhetoric or demeaning those with different opinions. Given the overlap of mental health and social determinants of health, discussions regarding race, gender, and the role of advocacy within medicine are examples where more voices are needed to improve the quality of constructive disagreement. The presenter will provide a framework for promoting thoughtful discussion that considers all viewpoints and explain how a “call in” culture can be created to improve debate and understanding.

10:10-11:30 A.M.

Ballroom H

SYMPOSIUM

**Interrogating DEI Presumptions and Practices**

Moderated by: PAUL MUELLER, American Institute for Economic Research

**Meritocracy or Inclusion? Unpacking the Tensions and Missteps in DEI Practices in Academia and Beyond**



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PAOLO GUADIANO, New York University

In recent years, the discourse around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has become polarizing, particularly within academia, where DEI is often perceived as a threat to meritocracy, academic freedom, and intellectual rigor. Simultaneously, advocates of DEI argue that it addresses historical inequities and expands opportunities to those systematically excluded. This presentation draws on a blend of academic research and insights from extensive projects with domestic and global organizations to examine the polarized viewpoints surrounding DEI, proposing that the division is exacerbated by misinterpretations, misinformation, and oversimplified rhetoric that frames DEI as inherently opposed to Merit, Excellence, and Intelligence (MEI). The presentation offers a novel viewpoint on DEI, aiming to spark a nuanced, solution-oriented dialogue that challenges assumptions on all sides. Rather than viewing DEI and MEI as mutually exclusive, this session advocates for an integrative approach that recognizes both the strengths and limitations of these seemingly opposing views. On one hand, the presentation will highlight some of the structural inequities that shape access to opportunity and common misconceptions about diversity and inclusion. On the other hand, the presentation will explore the unintended consequences of DEI initiatives, including university-wide training mandates and DEI statements, which, while well-intentioned, impact academic freedom and create a sense of reverse discrimination. The presentation will introduce a methodology that shows how DEI, when designed and implemented thoughtfully, can align the societal goals of DEI with the meritocratic ideals embraced by the Heterodox Academy, while reinforcing the foundational values of academia. Attendees will be encouraged to critically assess DEI's role within their institutions, contemplating how bridging these perspectives can foster a more inclusive, intellectually diverse academic environment.

**Diversity for What? Interrogating Ten Rationales for Diversity in Faculty Hiring**

AZIM SHARIFF, University of British Columbia

Diversity is much discussed in faculty hiring. During the 2020 hiring season, 68% of posted job ads mentioned diversity--a figure that rose to 78% at elite institutions. More rarely discussed—indeed typically not even recognized as something that needs to be addressed—is the rationale for pursuing diversity in the first place. Questions of what type of diversity to pursue, in what proportion, and at what level, are all downstream of this more

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fundamental question of why. While diversity is generally assumed to enhance fairness, improve student outcomes, and foster innovation, these motivations are often left implicit and, when they are openly discussed, frequently conflated. I have carved a taxonomy of ten of the most common diversity rationales, grouped into five overarching categories: Social Justice, Heterodoxy, Role-Modeling, Hidden Merit and Institutional Signaling. In addition to outlining these rationales and discussing the evidence that bears on them, I will present survey data from over 300 department heads across various disciplines, highlighting their priorities and motivations regarding diversity in faculty hiring. Both the quantitative and open response results reveal a set of highly variable and equivocal views on how and why diversity ought to be pursued. Although these involve complex debates about the proper mission of a university and the prioritizing of different values, my hope is that the taxonomy allows us to have these debates with more clarity and rigor.

**DEI and Child Clinical Psychology Programs:  
Implications for Graduate Student Recruitment and  
Clinical Training**

KELLY SHWARTZ, University of Calgary

As universities engage with their institutional efforts to comply with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles, the impacts of such actions are not similarly experienced across all faculties, departments, and programs. Professional programs like education, nursing, and clinical psychology must consider how student recruitment and training are impacted by the various elements of DEI that are to be employed, particularly in the areas of diversity (i.e., efforts to increase representational or numerical diversity) and inclusion (i.e., norms, practices, and intentional actions to promote participation, engagement, empowerment, and a sense of belonging for members of historically underrepresented groups). This talk will explore how applied psychology programs, namely school and child clinical psychology, are experiencing unique pressures when they are “encouraged” to consider matters of diversity and inclusion in their student application processes. This includes self-identifying as an Indigenous person, as a visible/racialized minority person, and/or as a person with disability in their statements of interest. In addition to the pressure of advantaging applicants based on ethnicity, culture, and visible minority, several clinical training elements are strained due to complexities of language, religion, and culture. As an example, standardized cognitive and academic testing that requires precision in language can be compromised by trainees with an English language learner or speech delay,

and programs are then required to significantly modify teaching protocols and practicum settings to accommodate. Discussion will include consideration of how applied child psychology programs can participate in DEI principles and practices AND adhere to the rigor of their accredited programs in preparing graduates for clinical professions.

10:10-11:30 A.M.  
Ballroom I

COMMUNITY MEETING

**HxArts & Culture Community Meeting**

The Arts and Culture Heterodox Community will explore how viewpoint diversity and open inquiry can support creativity and strengthen cultural work. We look forward to connecting, exchanging perspectives, challenging our own assumptions, and discovering new ways to collaborate and learn from one another.

11:45 A.M.- 1:00 P.M.  
Grand Ballroom

**The View from the Top: University Presidential Panel**

SIAN LEAH BEILOCK, Dartmouth  
MICHAEL ROTH, Wesleyan University  
JEREMY HAEFNER, University of Denver  
BRIAN W. CASEY, Colgate University  
Moderated by: NADINE STROSSEN, New York Law School

Hear how university presidents understand and manage academic freedom, political pressures, campus crises, and more.

1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

**Afternoon Break**

1:15 - 2:30 P.M.  
Greenpoint

COMMUNITY MEETING

**HxCanada Luncheon**

All Canadian attendees are invited to join for an overview of HxCanada, updates from Canadian Campus Communities, and a small group activity on goals for 2025–26 and beyond. A lunch buffet will be provided.

3:00 - 4:20 P.M.  
*Greenpoint*

WORKSHOP

**Breaking the Fourth Wall: Improvisational Theater as a Catalyst for Authentic Academic Discourse**

ASHLEY PRYOR, University of Toledo

This workshop explores an innovative approach to fostering genuine trust and open inquiry in higher education classrooms through improvisational theater techniques. As academia grapples with challenges to intellectual diversity and academic freedom, this methodology offers practical tools for educators to create environments where heterodox opinions can be voiced and debated. Drawing from my experiences teaching and performing improv, I will present a series of exercises designed to build trust, enhance listening skills, and normalize intellectual risk-taking in the classroom. Participants will experience hands-on demonstrations of five key activities, including “Controversial Opinion Hot Potato” and “Steel Man Debate,” which can be immediately implemented in seminar-sized classes across disciplines regardless of the instructor’s familiarity with improv. The workshop emphasizes shifting from superficial notions of inclusion to cultivating spaces where diverse ideas are rigorously examined. By framing intellectual discourse as collaborative improvisation, we move beyond zero-sum arguments to collective exploration of complex issues. Through interactive demonstrations and discussions, this workshop equips educators to enhance trust and intellectual diversity in their classrooms, contributing to the broader defense of academic freedom and the core values of higher education. And best of all, educators and students can have a lot of fun in the process!

3:00 - 4:20 P.M.  
*Ballroom F*

SYMPOSIUM

**Cultivating Freer Speech on Campus**

Moderated by: SHIRA HOFFER, Viewpoints Project

**Frameworks for Fostering Discourse: Implementing Free Speech Instruction in Different Contexts Across Campus**

MATT MOREALI, Southern Oregon University

This presentation will examine three approaches to free speech instruction recently implemented at an Oregon public liberal arts university: first-year student workshops, a campus community

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lesson, and an upper division pre-law course. The first-year free speech workshop is for students in Bridge, a support program designed to provide underrepresented students with resources critical to their college success. The free speech curriculum includes a summer workshop that orients Bridge students to campus life and subsequent sessions throughout the year. The campus community lesson was part of a series on how to engage in discourse around the presidential election. This lesson was open to the broader campus community and communicated basic knowledge of what constitutes protected speech and sanctionable conduct. Finally, the upper division free speech course is for students seeking a more detailed and intellectual understanding of free speech. This course is part of a pre-law program but is available to students across majors. These different approaches to instruction target the needs of various populations to promote a culture of free speech on campus. Free speech instruction should be available to help students understand their rights and limitations when engaging in discourse on and off campus. This presentation will reflect on the implementation process, instructional experience, and reception of these different approaches to instruction. Attendees will receive access to instructional materials for first-year workshops, campus community lessons, and upper division courses. The presenter will offer any individual input, consultation, or other support to enable audience members to implement different types of free speech instruction on their campuses.

### **Willingness to Self-Censor: A Meta-Analysis**

JAMES SHANAHAN, *Indiana University*

What do we know about why people self-censor? How much do they do it? What are the factors that influence self-censorship? This project gathers all studies that have used the willingness to self-censor (WTSC) scale (Hayes, Glynn & Shanahan, 2005). I analyze WTSC as an independent variable, showing how individual differences predict willingness to express opinions or to communicate in various situations. I also look at WTSC as a dependent variable, showing how other characteristics relate to WTSC across a variety of research domains. I present implications for opinion expression in higher education. Reference Hayes, A. F., Glynn, C. J., & Shanahan, J. (2005). Willingness to self-censor: A construct and measurement tool for public opinion research. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 17(3), 298-323.

### **Campus Speech Behavior by Religious Identity and Observance**

SHIRA HOFFER, Viewpoints Project

It is severely detrimental to the goals and outcomes of US higher education that many students report a high frequency of withholding their views, fear of and participation in social punishment for different views, and protesting for controversial perspectives. These three phenomena comprise what I will call “campus speech climate,” alongside a yet-unmeasured fourth: willingness to play devil’s advocate, as defined by “introducing or arguing the opposite perspective for the intellectual exercise.” The health of campus speech climate can be measured on four spectra; healthy climates are marked by low frequency of hiding perspectives and social punishment, and high tolerance for controversial speakers, and willingness to play devil’s advocate. Significant data breaks down speech climate trends by school, race, gender, and political ideology, but little research has been done into the specific role of religious students in contributing to these climates, nor into the effect these climates have on them. 66% of incoming freshmen reported some religious affiliation in 2019, and yet we do not understand how they impact speech climates (CIRP 2019). In 2014, a larger percentage of Mainline Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and members of the Church of the Latter Day Saints reported at least some college than the religiously unaffiliated, but we still do not understand how these climates affect them (Pew Religious Landscape Survey 2014). In addition, studies defend the exercise of devil’s advocate for its ability to prevent groupthink, introduce new questions and ways of thinking, challenge assumptions, and foster understanding of complexity (MacDougall et al 1997; Akhmad et al 2021; Davis 2013). My senior honors thesis, completed in fulfillment of my degree in Social Studies and Religion from Harvard College, explores these relationships, in-depth, for the first time.

3:00 - 4:20 P.M.  
Ballroom G

SYMPOSIUM

**Academic Freedom Under Pressure: Strategic, Legal, and Institutional Responses**

Moderated by: RACHEL ALTMAN, Simon Fraser University

**Encoding Open Inquiry and Academic Freedom in a University Strategic Plan**

CHRIS YOUNKIN, Southern Utah University

Open inquiry and academic freedom are cornerstones of higher education, but in an increasingly polarized culture we can

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no longer take them for granted. Attacks on open inquiry and academic freedom are intensifying, and often come from groups outside our institutions. As a member of the university's strategic planning committee, one librarian at Southern Utah University sought to encode the strengthening of these principles in the strategic plan. As a result, the University made a commitment to fostering a culture of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and civil dialogue among its students and faculty.

**Universities, Faculty Unions, and States in the System of Academic Freedom**

MARK CRAWFORD, Athabasca University

The move toward greater statutory regulation of academic and professional freedom in several jurisdictions is likely to reduce reliance upon collective bargaining to guarantee academic freedom, and carries the potential to reduce the institutional autonomy of colleges and universities as well. This paper argues that academic freedom is a public good that is best protected by a decentralized system of interdependent and countervailing institutions, rather than by a statutory framework of regulation based upon the premise that "[o]ur only way out is to use elected, constitutional, government power to break the grip of wokeness in our institutions and schools, steering them toward neutrality and classical liberalism" [Kaufman, 2024]. Joan Wallach Scott and Henry Reichman are leftist intellectual historians who generally see the principal threat to academic freedom as coming from either right-wing groups, government austerity or the corporatized university--whereas conservatives and classical liberals such as Eric Kaufman and Niall Ferguson see the tightening grip of illiberal woke culture in the academy as the biggest threat. A comprehensive approach to the question of institutional design for academic freedom and viewpoint diversity takes both kinds of threat equally into account, recognizing (1) the role of power and inequality in the shaping and production of truth, knowledge and understanding; and (2) steadfast insistence upon self-governing disciplines as intellectual authorities that are instrumental to the public good. We need to visualize a positive-sum game and modify collective bargaining approaches so as to obviate a legislative framework that is likely to have unintended consequences, compromise institutional autonomy, and have ambiguous implications for the overall quality of academic freedom. In particular, this means improving trust by disincentivizing aggressive, uncollegial and zero-sum thinking; and showing leadership by reconstructing academic freedom as a positive-sum game.



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Using the Law to Restore the Purpose of Canadian Universities

RACHEL ALTMAN, Simon Fraser University  
ALEXANDRA LYSOVA, Simon Fraser University

The purpose of a university is, first and foremost, the generation and transmission of knowledge. To fulfill that purpose, administrative bodies must protect and foster academic freedom, viewpoint diversity, and the full participation of faculty members and students in the academic forum. In recent years, however, such bodies have increasingly taken sides in political issues that have no direct relationship to their mandate — creating a chilling effect on academic freedom and creating feelings of exclusion among those who dissent. In this talk, we discuss how Canadian law is being used to challenge this sort of inappropriate political activity. We focus on a lawsuit against the Simon Fraser University Faculty Association, whose purposes are to act as a collective bargaining agent for faculty members and to advocate for the well-being and academic freedom of faculty members, but which engaged in unrelated political activity in 2024 by adopting an anti-Israel position. We also discuss a lawsuit against the University of British Columbia that alleges that the university has violated provincial law by engaging in political activity, for example by allowing mandatory equity, diversity, and inclusion statements in job advertisements, by making statements about political issues unrelated to its functioning, and by making repeated land acknowledgements. These lawsuits are both examples of how the law can be used to protect our universities’ ability to fulfill their mission.

3:00 - 4:20 P.M.  
Ballroom H

SYMPOSIUM

Making Change: Live Possibilities in Hiring, Training, and Campus Policy

Moderated by: MAX SCHANZENBACH, Northwestern University

Viewpoint Diversity and Law School Faculty Hiring

BYRON STIER, Southwestern Law School

The law is rife with policy disagreements that stem from varying political perspectives, and the United States Supreme Court has lauded the benefits of a diversity of viewpoints to law schools and higher education. But law school faculty are overwhelmingly politically liberal or progressive, with relatively few conservatives

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and libertarians. Moreover, increasing societal political polarization and political activism on campuses may pose a risk of a further reduction in hiring for a viewpoint-diverse law school faculty. To increase viewpoint diversity in law school faculties, should law schools prefer candidates who bring political viewpoint diversity to their faculties? If not preferring viewpoint-diverse candidates, what best practices can law schools use to minimize political viewpoint discrimination in hiring while focusing on a candidate's merit in scholarship, teaching, and service? Law schools still broadly adapting to the overturning of racial affirmative action in admissions in the Supreme Court's 2023 Harvard decision are unlikely to adopt a preference for hiring of professors who bring political viewpoint diversity stemming from conservative or libertarian perspectives. Amidst the emphasis on merit arising after the Supreme Court's Harvard decision and the American Bar Association's recent adoption of Standard 208 protecting academic freedom and freedom of expression, law schools may be willing to adopt best practices that seek to avoid viewpoint discrimination in faculty hiring. Such best practices should include (1) for evaluating scholarship, the use of objective criteria that do not discriminate based upon political viewpoint, and (2) for evaluating teaching and service, whether in the context of a diversity-and-inclusion hiring statement or not, willingness to consider a faculty candidate's commitment and ability civilly to consider and explore varying policy and political perspectives in the classroom and to mentor and support students bringing varying political perspectives to the law.

**Truth, Power, and Responsibility in the Training of Mental Health Practitioners**

ANNEMARIE SLOBIG, The Chicago School  
GRACE MANNIX-SLOBIG, Psychotherapist

Universities, programs, accreditation bodies, and professional organizations tout the importance of training mental health practitioners to develop competencies in diversity. Cultural competence/cultural humility/diversity competency for practitioners ensures good care and meets the ethical principle of do no harm. Training students to practice cultural humility must prepare them to welcome all clients, regardless of their political stances, religious beliefs, or culture. However, diversity training in mental health training programs often frames the enterprise around oppressor/oppressed narratives emphasizing therapists' role in reducing oppression. Coupled with the increasing polarization in the U.S., classroom discussion around complex issues that intersect with identity has become fraught. Students frequently feel reluctant to share perspectives that

might be perceived as out of alignment with their peers and professors (Jones, Price, Barbaro & Arnold, 2024). Consequently, groupthink and polarization threaten to silence dissenting voices, and students (along with many faculty) fall vulnerable to the “settled question fallacy” (Redstone, 2024) making it incredibly difficult to explore the experiences of others and develop some comfort in living with disagreement. The resultant classroom climate robs students of the opportunity to think critically about what it means to provide mental health care to those who are different, especially when they hold diverging viewpoints on contentious issues. Downstream, this constraint on open inquiry can distort clinical practice as some therapy providers seek to challenge, indoctrinate, or “enlighten” clients on matters of politics and progressive causes. Trainees unable to challenge their own thinking do not recognize their vulnerability to dehumanizing those who hold opposing political or religious views. This presentation describes this crisis in clinical training and suggests alternatives in which clinicians in training could be invited to be curious about the individuals they serve without judgment. Trainees need to learn to examine their thinking and develop comfort in uncertainty.

### **Promising the First Amendment: (De)Regulating Speech in Higher Education**

MAX SCHANZENBACH, Northwestern University

KIMBERLY YURACKO, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

The war between Hamas and Israel has caused havoc in higher education. Amid student unrest, alumni pressure, congressional hearings, civil rights investigations, and student lawsuits, universities stand at a crossroads. The current situation, in which most private universities unevenly regulate student speech under ambiguous student codes, is not sustainable politically or legally. A tsunami of litigation and regulatory actions has already begun. One increasingly favored response is for private universities to more vigorously enforce existing codes or expand their scope. An alternative is for private universities to deregulate student expression and commit by contract to the First Amendment. This paper argues for the latter approach largely on pragmatic grounds. In essence, our argument is grounded in the realities of university organizational behavior which make it difficult for universities to enforce speech codes in a manner that complies with their regulatory and contractual obligations. Ambiguous codes, informal process, and political homogeneity among decision makers inevitably results in inconsistent regulation of speech. These problems can be mitigated by committing to the First Amendment, which would both clarify and constrain

university speech regulations by incorporating a large body of caselaw, some of which bears directly on higher education. Such clarity would limit the scope of university action, provide a basis for legally required consistency, and be more readily amenable to external review by courts and federal regulators. Experience with the First Amendment in public universities suggests that such a commitment will not have deleterious consequences for campus life.

3:00 - 4:20 P.M.  
Ballroom I

PANEL DISCUSSION

Academic Freedom Without Responsibility? Social Justice in the Aftermath of the Flint Water Crisis

SIDDHARTHA ROY, Rutgers University  
MARC EDWARDS, Virginia Tech  
HERNAN GOMEZ, Hurley Medical Center and University of Michigan  
Moderated by: SIDDHARTHA ROY, Rutgers University

In 2015, Siddhartha Roy and Marc Edwards helped expose the Flint Water Crisis, by collecting citywide data with residents that showed elevated lead in water and federal law violations. We obtained and published emails revealing government malfeasance in real time. That work helped create a media sensation, declaration of a federal emergency, criminal indictments, class action lawsuits, and Congressional hearings, which led to over \$1.2 billion in relief funding. Thereafter, social justice academics engaged in the Flint federal emergency, with a “data justice” model that seeks “ways of collecting and disseminating data that have invisibilized and harmed historically marginalized communities.” These advocates assert “there’s no such thing as raw data,” and openly invite residents to “cook” data in order “to have your story validated.” This panel will discuss several examples of arguably unethical “cooking of data” by academics and residents under the banner of social/environmental justice that may have created harm, including: 1) Inserting lead fishing sinkers into home plumbing to artificially increase water lead levels, causing severe lead poisoning, to claim Flint water was getting worse. 2) Asserting that Flint children were permanently brain damaged by lead exposure to help raise more funding via lawsuits and donations, even though the health records show they always had less than half the lead exposure of nearby Detroit children and were comparable to the average for Michigan overall. This may have harmed children via the pernicious “nocebo” effect, by reducing expectations of learning capabilities and creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. 3) Concluding

that off-the-shelf water filters provided by FEMA killed half of Flint residents studied to support resident assertions that Flint water is still unsafe even though it met all standards. 4) Publicizing a statistically insignificant increase in fetal deaths as “horrifically large” in a preprint, but was nonetheless trumpeted by the media and cited by Flint residents as evidence of serious health harm. We will reflect on broader reasons why the social justice academics were applauded for validating residents’ fears and stories, whereas we and others were attacked for pointing out dubious science. HxA conferences appropriately, have a heavy focus on academic freedom in relation to the humanities and social science. Discussing academic responsibility and freedom affecting STEM may be increasingly important. The perverse incentives for academics engaged in Flint, can illustrate how hyperpolarization, funding, politics, media, and class action lawsuits might sometimes harm the communities advocates assert they are helping.

3:00 - 4:20 P.M.  
Sunset Park

COMMUNITY MEETING

**HxSociology Community Meeting**

The HxSociology community will be meeting to discuss our collective response to the decision by Florida to remove sociology from the general studies curriculum, and — by extension — our statement for bringing sociology back on track.

4:20 - 4:40 P.M.  
Grand Ballroom Foyer

Coffee Service

4:40 - 6:00 P.M.  
Grand Ballroom

Intervention or Interference: The Role of Legislation in Reforming the Academy—A Heterodox Conversation

MARK BAUERLEIN, New College of Florida  
STEVEN BRINT, University of California, Riverside  
Moderated by: MARTHA MCCAUGHEY, University of Wyoming

From court decisions protecting the First Amendment to state legislation that seeks to tell us what we can't or must do on campus, there's a lot happening legislatively on the higher ed front. Come hear experts in dialogue on the question of what governments are doing to help and hurt open inquiry in higher ed.

6:00 - 7:30 P.M.  
Grand Ballroom

Unconference Networking Session

Light appetizers and a wine & beer bar will be available at this participant-driven networking session where attendees get to decide the topics of discussion by adding their ideas on a board with designated tables for each discussion in the ballroom on a first come first serve basis.





7:45 - 8:30 A.M.  
Grand Ballroom Foyer

Coffee Service and Light Breakfast

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Greenpoint

WORKSHOP

**When Conversations Go Wrong, What Do We Do?**

CARLA SILVER, Leadership+Design  
DIEGO DURAN-MEDINA, Leadership+Design

In building an inclusive classroom culture that supports viewpoint diversity, there is an inherent risk that conversations will be difficult and messy. Students may say uninformed and hurtful and even inflammatory comments that can quickly derail the conversation and disrupt the learning. During this interactive session we will present, explore, and practice strategies that educators, practitioners and students can use to reestablish norms that are conducive to learning while not censoring differing opinions or views or placing blame on those we may not agree with. This workshop is helpful for anyone that has to manage or participate in difficult conversations inside and outside the classroom. Leadership+Design will provide proven protocols and strategies for pausing in a moment of conflict, ongoing group maintenance, and repairing, if possible, when norms have been violated. In this learning laboratory, while working in small groups, we will use scenarios and case studies and practice applying these protocols and also strategize other ways to respond to messy and possibly volatile conversations that go awry. We will also help participants to anticipate these inevitable situations and feel more at ease and prepared when they occur. Good classroom teaching and campus conversations are both the rights and the responsibilities of everyone in a learning community. This workshop can help frame the work based on being proactive, inclusive and well prepared to handle difficult conversations in ways that support inclusion, treats conflict as inevitable and useful and allows for space to disagree.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Navy Yard

PANEL DISCUSSION

**Creating a Student-Led Culture of Free Speech at Universities Nationwide**



Wednesday, June 25

DOUG SPREI, American Council of Trustees and Alumni  
 CONNOR MURNANE, Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression  
 Moderated by: MARY KATE CARY, University of Virginia

What can we do to promote more student-facing programs to encourage viewpoint diversity, open inquiry, and constructive disagreement? As reluctance to question and speak up grows on campuses, the decline in civil discourse threatens democracy, truth-seeking, and the university experience while deepening national polarization. A wide variety of free speech organizations across the nation are endeavoring to meet the challenge. With students as well as faculty increasingly seeking meaningful debate, now is the time to strengthen higher education's role in shaping the next generation of leaders. This panel, moderated by UVA's Think Again Director Mary Kate Cary, will introduce the Campus Discourse Project, a new initiative to promote best practices in campus dialogue. Connor Murnane (FIRE) will discuss polling on student attitudes, Doug Sprei (ACTA, College Debate and Discourse Alliance) will outline the project's practical vision, and Virginia Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera will explain its impact on our democracy—inviting HxA members to join the movement.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
 Ballroom F

SYMPOSIUM

**Professors Speak Out: The Truth About Campus Investigations**

Moderated by: NICHOLAS WOLFINGER, University of Utah

**Weaponizing the Academic Bureaucracy**

LEE JUSSIM, Rutgers University

Rutgers University psychologist Lee Jussim tells the story of how he was victimized by a mob on Twitter for tweeting that someone's "[anti-white] racist sneer is cut from the same cloth as the sexist sneer '#bropenscience.'" Hundreds of people, largely other academics, denounced him as a bully engaged in "punching down," with many indicating that they had contacted his employer. Rather than simply ignoring these denunciations, Jussim's dean threatened to relieve him of his position as the chair of Rutgers's psychology department. Jussim's story is an example of how even prominent academics at research universities can be punished as a consequence of public pressure. He'll also recount an episode of how academic bureaucracies can be weaponized

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to suppress academic freedom, describing how frivolous anonymous complaints triggered a series of audits by the Rutgers institutional research board (i.e., its human subjects committee). The complainants raised questions about the scientific validity of their survey designs, and about their survey questions being “biased” or “offensive” or being used to “draw conclusions or to support a political agenda.” These audits required Jussim to produce over 3,000 pages of documentation, and entailed hours of meetings (the audits turned up no problems with their research projects). The upshot is that the current bureaucratic landscape in higher education allows malevolent actors excessive power to interfere with scholarly research, creating an environment where scholars face undue scrutiny for conducting legitimate research that challenges prevailing ideologies.

### **Stomp on Jesus: The True Story of What Happened**

DEANDRE POOLE, Florida Atlantic University

Deandre Poole is a long-time non-tenured instructor in the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies at Florida Atlantic University. On February 25th of 2013, Poole used a classroom exercise aimed at exploring the significance of symbols in various cultural contexts. It involved students writing the name “J-E-S-U-S” on paper, placing it on the floor, and deciding whether to step on it. One student’s umbrage at the exercise escalated into a confrontation, with the student threatening Poole. The incident drew significant media attention, mischaracterizing the activity as “stomping on Jesus.” Soon Poole, a devout Christian himself, was denounced by Florida governor Rick Scott and Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL). Poole details the subsequent fallout, including administrative leave and the toll on his personal life. Despite the adversity he faced, Poole received support from students and colleagues. His story serves as a case study on how political pressure can impel a university to investigate its faculty members.

### **Dreams from My Father**

NICHOLAS WOLFINGER, University of Utah

My late father taught political science for 45 years, but what I learned from him about higher education didn’t serve me well at the University of Utah. A difficult tenure case and a failed bid for promotion to full professor set the stage for three investigations between 2016 and 2021. These investigations bore all of the depressingly familiar hallmarks of higher education inquests: Title IX sexual misconduct allegations based on twenty-year

old conversations at faculty happy hour, an attempt to fine me a month's salary after I'd already been exonerated, and a three-hour hearing and an official reprimand because of a single social media post. These investigations ultimately consumed hundreds of hours and cost tens of thousands of dollars in attorney fees.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.  
Ballroom G

SYMPOSIUM

**Frontiers in Viewpoint Diversity**

Moderated by: QUENTIN LANGLEY, Fordham University-New York

**Has Business Education on CSR Gone Too Far**

KIMBERLEE JOSEPHSON, Lebanon Valley College

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been widely embraced within academic business programming since the early 2000s. The trendy appeal of Bono's Buy (Red) Campaign and the One for One® model of TOMS shoes made cause-related campaigning an area of interest for universities who were eager to embrace terms that gave a softer connotation to business studies. Academic programs promoting social responsibility have expanded over time but the implication of steering student focus away from fundamental business strategies (ie operational efficiency) toward realms of social responsibility seems to have been given little consideration. Research regarding CSR is still underdeveloped and the impact of business involvement with social matters is far from being clear-cut or easily understood. By promoting social purpose strategies rather than profit-oriented approaches, universities can dull interests for understanding and applying foundational business principles and developing core competencies. To be sure, learning about accounts receivables or quality assurance is not as intriguing to students when they can aspire to be a social entrepreneur. The focus academic programs have placed on social performance downplays the benefits of wealth creation and its spill-over effects. And the obsession with having a social impact that universities promote to students misses the vital social impact already accomplished by the for-profit realm. Financial performance improves opportunities and funding streams for addressing social matters, not the reverse, and innovative for-profit organizations raise our standard of living and provide access to a variety of products and services as well as employment opportunities. Economic productivity is a

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noble pursuit in and of itself, and the ways for-profit businesses benefit our economy should not be minimized or marginalized, especially on campus -- and more attention should be drawn to this fact.

**Broadening Perspectives: The Need to Champion  
Viewpoint Diversity in Criminal Justice Education**

VIRGINIA GLEASON, *Seattle University*

The dynamic relationship between public safety and criminal justice often ignites intense emotions, political grandstanding, and subjective research. In a landscape where political and academic factions firmly entrench themselves at the ideological extremes, the needs of the majority of Americans—who desire constitutional, effective, and unbiased public safety—are frequently overlooked. Given that safety is among the most fundamental human needs, the policies born from this polarization are often ineffective and detrimental to the quality of life for many citizens. To rebuild public trust and ensure a fair, just, and effective approach to public safety, we must embrace a balanced methodology rooted more in facts than rhetoric. This presentation will introduce a framework designed to enhance critical thinking by broadening instructional practices within criminal justice education. By incorporating the perspectives of a wider range of stakeholders, we can cultivate more effective public safety leaders and policymakers. Key topics will include defining and engaging with diverse viewpoints across the criminal justice system, employing tools such as system mapping to stimulate discussion, and evaluating the impact of public safety policies on various stakeholders. The aim is to foster a more inclusive and well-rounded understanding of public safety, ultimately leading to policies that better serve our communities.

**The Question Remains: Philosophy, Heterodoxy, and  
the Role of Bartleby in Modern Universities**

ASHLEY PRYOR, *University of Toledo*

Drawing inspiration from Bartleby's famous refrain "I would prefer not to" in Melville's short story, this paper argues for revitalizing philosophy departments as spaces of critical inquiry in an increasingly conformist academic landscape. While philosophy has traditionally served as a bastion of heterodoxy, many departments have regrettably lapsed into advocacy and activism, abandoning their crucial role in fostering open inquiry. I contend that philosophy departments should recommit to the Socratic method of elenchus - the art of questioning - rather than

promoting specific ideological positions. Like Bartleby’s polite refusal, philosophical questioning creates a necessary pause in the rush towards ideological conformity, allowing for critical reflection and the exploration of alternative possibilities. The paper examines the growing influence of consultancy firms like Huron and Deloitte on university campuses, which often prioritize efficiency over spaces for deep reflection. This trend, coupled with increasing pressures for ideological conformity, threatens the diversity of thought fundamental to higher education. I argue that philosophy departments should refocus on their function as sites of rigorous questioning and analysis. By doing so, academic philosophy can provide a crucial counterbalance to unexamined dogmas and hasty conclusions proliferating in academia. This approach not only maintains intellectual diversity but also equips students with the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate complex issues. Preserving and reforming philosophy programs is about safeguarding spaces within universities dedicated to questioning the status quo - including the very metrics and ideologies by which other programs are judged. By cultivating a “Bartleby space” of intentional hesitation, resistance and inquiry, philosophy can once again play a vital role in fostering the heterodoxy essential for higher education to fulfill its broader mission of pursuing knowledge and truth in our rapidly changing world.

8:30 - 9:50 A.M.

Ballroom H

SYMPOSIUM

Engaging Across Divides: Civility, Authority, and Responsibility in Higher Education

Moderated by: ALLISON WU, 1636 Forum

Don’t Do It, Jimmy: James Baldwin & the Duty to Engage

NICHOLAS BUCCOLA, Claremont McKenna College

In late 1962, James Baldwin - the novelist, playwright, essayist, and activist Malcolm X called “the poet of the revolution” - was invited to debate James Jackson Kilpatrick - nation’s leading “salesman for segregation” - on national television. “Don’t do it, Jimmy,” is what Baldwin’s friend Norman Podhoretz said to him when he learned of the invitation. Your presence on television with Kilpatrick, Podhoretz argued, will dignify the segregationist’s position. Podhoretz was not alone. No one around Baldwin thought appearing with Kilpatrick was a good idea. And yet, Baldwin did. In this essay and presentation, I explore why

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Baldwin insisted he had a duty to engage Kilpatrick that night. I bring Baldwin's philosophy of love - the central components of which are radical empathy and radical confrontation - to bear on what Baldwin said that night in order to explore the duty to engage one another across deep disagreement.

### **Civil Discourse, Judgment, and Institutional Authority**

MARIE NEWHOUSE, University of Surrey

The idea of civil discourse contains inherent tension in that "civility" refers to normative constraints on ways in which participants ought to contribute to a particular discourse. Civility constraints can be substantive, directly limiting claims that can permissibly be advanced in a discourse. Alternatively, civility constraints can directly constrain only the tone or style in which claims may be expressed, although such constraints may increase the difficulty of advancing some substantive claims. Because civility norms necessarily constrain discourse, proponents of civil discourse face a problem: insisting upon "too much" civility can stunt or even silence socially valuable discourses. But if civility norms are absent, a discourse may dissolve if some participants perceive that they and their contributions are not accorded adequate respect by others. Civility norms therefore represent a line-drawing challenge for any institution that endeavors to foster socially valuable conversations. This challenge has two main elements. First, the institution must draw the line in a place that will foster productive conversation. Second, the institution must demonstrate to discourse participants that it has legitimate authority to make the judgment call that it has made about where to draw the line. This paper will illustrate how institutions might fruitfully tackle these challenges by considering the example of a university that must determine what civility constraints should limit discourse on campus. I will argue that a university has legitimate authority to promulgate civility norms in the service of its institutional mission, whereas it lacks such authority to enact civility norms to promote liberal democracy writ large. A university should meet the first, substantive challenge by determining which civility norms best serve the institutional mission of the university. In doing so, a university also meets its second challenge by acting within its domain of legitimate authority, entitling its judgment calls to respect.

### **Antisemitism, Title VI, and the Need for Civil Discourse on College Campuses**

SONJA WENTLING, Concordia College

Wednesday, June 25

Since the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel and the subsequent war in Gaza, many college campuses have faced protests, encampments, violence, and the marginalization, harassment, and discrimination of Jewish students. These incidents have sparked intense debates about freedom of speech, academic freedom, and the role of student activism. Inspired by the immersive Summer Institute on Countering Antisemitism in Higher Education at Brandeis University, this presentation will provide a forum to address critical questions about the nature of antisemitism, the guidelines from the Department of Education and its Office for Civil Rights, and the interpretation and application of Title VI. Additionally, it will offer strategies for fostering a campus culture that is both respectful and inclusive.

9:50 - 10:10 A.M.  
Grand Ballroom Foyer

Coffee Service



10:10 - 11:30 A.M.  
Greenpoint

WORKSHOP

**Curious Approaches to Difference and Disagreement in Educational Settings**

DANE MAUER-VAKIL, Viewpoints Project  
SHIRA HOFFER, Viewpoints Project

In this workshop, Shira Hoffer (founding Executive Director of The Viewpoints Project, formerly the Institute for Multipartisan Education) and Dane Mauer-Vakil (Viewpoints Project Director of Research and Evaluation) will deliver a hands-on, interactive session centered upon maintaining integrity and trust in relationships with students despite differing views, and facilitating intentional controversial conversations. Through group activities, workshop attendees will develop skills in active listening, intentional questioning, and emotional regulation. Shira and Dane will focus on the key concepts of interests versus positions, the idea of multiple truths, stereotypes and assumptions, and the importance of language. This workshop will consist of three parts: Learn, Reflect, and Practice. In ‘Learn,’ we will share our research into the psychological and pedagogical underpinnings of curious disagreement, exploring what happens in the brain that makes engagement with new ideas so challenging, and how we can combat these processes. In ‘Reflect,’ participants will have the opportunity to consider and share where challenging conversations feel easy and difficult in their lives, and why, learning from each other’s successes and difficult moments. We will also explore common sources of pushback to open inquiry, and how to combat them. Finally, in ‘Practice,’ we will facilitate a hands-on exercise on curious listening and facilitation, equipping participants with tangible tools to use in difficult conversations in their own lives. This interactive session is designed to provide attendees with evidence-based, practical advice and tools for improving curious approaches to dialogue in educational settings.

10:10 - 11:30 A.M.  
Navy Yard

PANEL DISCUSSION

**Positioning Anthropology for a Heterodox Academic Future**

DAVID STOLL, Middlebury College  
RACHEL ADLER, University of Texas Health San Antonio  
MICHAEL JINDRA, Boston University  
Moderated by: ANDREW GARDNER, University of Puget Sound

In this panel, anthropologists delineate a set of concepts, perspectives, and approaches that together help illuminate how the discipline might contribute to rebuilding the heterodox academic landscape that some contemporary scholars hope to steward back into existence in the near future. Speaking from various positions in the four subfields that together comprise the discipline, panelists in this session draw on their experiences as teachers, practitioners, scholars, administrators, and researchers. Each panelist begins with an articulation of one of the most substantial issues or problems they perceive or have otherwise encountered in contemporary American academia. Concomitantly, the panelists then elaborate some of the pathways and disciplinary traditions by which anthropology might help constructively address or even transcend those issues or problems. By connecting with some of the enduring principles found in the heartland of our discipline’s history, this conversation envisions anthropology’s central role in helping to steer an increasingly global academia toward a vibrant and heterodox future. These panelists concur that our discipline — built around the reverent study of diversity and human difference — provides a constellation of useful weapons by which we might better defend the core ideals of the university and the core values of the higher education system.

10:10 - 11:30 A.M.  
*Ballroom F*

SYMPOSIUM

**Challenging the Challengers of Free Speech**

Moderated by: JOSEPH YI, Hanyang University

**From Mill to Marcuse? Responding to the ‘Postliberal’ Challenge to Academic Freedom**

JACOB WILLIAMS, University of Oxford

The ‘postliberal’ movement -- represented by thinkers like Patrick Deneen, Adrian Vermeule, and Yoram Hazony -- hopes to influence future Republican administrations (J. D. Vance publicly identifies with the movement). It is also deeply hostile to academic freedom. Postliberals observe the undeniable evidence (Lukianoff & Schlott 2023; Kaufmann 2024) of increasing censorship of academics who challenge certain progressive orthodoxies, and conclude that this censorship is a feature, not a bug, of the (‘classical’) liberal worldview that informs the ideal of academic freedom. They argue that the drift of some progressives away from tolerance (cf. Chong et. al. 2024), and towards expansive conceptions of equality,

autonomy, or emotional safety that leave little room for the freedom to expound ‘offensive’ ideas, “results directly from the wholly intended purposes of ‘academic freedom.’” (Deneen). For postliberals, J.S. Mill’s famous defense of free expression figures as the precursor to Herbert Marcuse’s notorious argument for censoring conservatives: academic freedom and other negative liberties were always subordinated to the progressive promotion of Millian ‘experiments in living’. Postliberals bide their time until a right-wing administration can turn the tools of censorship in their favor. Could the postliberals be right? My presentation (which draws on my thesis, ‘Postliberalism and its Discontents’) takes their arguments seriously, but concludes that they rely on the unwarranted pessimistic assumption that academics and policymakers are unable to devise and act on better rationales for academic freedom that avoid the troubling implications that Deneen identifies in Mill’s. Nevertheless, the postliberal critique draws attention to a very real ‘concept creep’ whereby some progressives redefine ‘academic freedom’ and other liberal ideals to accord less and less negative liberty to their opponents. Postliberal arguments alert us to the importance of insulating our rationales for, and conceptions of, academic freedom from this dangerous dynamic.

### **Responding to Campus Opponents of Free Speech**

AEON SKOBLE, Bridgewater State University

People who are active in the academic freedom/viewpoint diversity/free speech space need to articulate a conception of why free speech is valuable. But they also need to find a way to specifically engage with the members of the campus community who either don’t share or explicitly repudiate these values. As a tactical matter, there’s some reason to think that constructive engagement will yield greater benefits than defensive or hostile approaches. In this paper, I argue that there are at least \*five\* distinct types of anti-free-speech forces one finds on campus. I examine what they are, what their rationale or agenda is, and use that as the basis for devising engagement strategies. I also discuss the problem of faculty who are allies in spirit but who won’t say so in public. There are different reasons for this phenomenon as well, suggesting the need for different strategies for cultivating mutual benefit. By combining well-informed responses to opponents that are tailored to their rationales with the positive case for free speech, we can make greater strides towards realizing the goal of a freer academy.

**Comfort Women and Communist Spies: Transnational Networks for and Against Open Discourse in South Korea and North America’s East Asian Studies**

JOSEPH YI, Hanyang University

Historically, anticommunist conservatives threatened open discourse in South Korea and the US. In recent decades, conservative censorship is eclipsed by a progressive, transnational network, which adapts European-style memory laws (e.g., Holocaust denialism) and US-style cancel culture to censor discourse in South Korea and among East Asia-oriented scholars in North America. Professors and pundits who argue for (secret) North Korean involvement in South Korea’s democratization movement or that (some) Korean comfort women knowingly volunteered for the Japanese military are legally prosecuted in South Korea and socially ostracized in American academia. Conversely, another transnational network of procedural liberals (e.g., Human Rights Watch, Heterodox Academy—East Asia Community) challenge these threats to free speech, but are less mobilized/resourced and are burdened by the stigma of defending controversial conservatives. We discuss these competing networks, and how HxA members and other principled liberals can support free speech and academic freedom in East Asia and among EA-oriented scholars.

**10:10 - 11:30** A.M.  
*Ballroom G*

SYMPOSIUM

**Pedagogical Tools for Meaningful Student Engagement in the Classroom**

Moderated by: LINDSAY HOFFMAN, University of Delaware

**Executing Campus-Wide Surveys as Both a Climate Report and a Pedagogical Tool for College Students**

LINDSAY HOFFMAN, University of Delaware

Public opinion—both the theories and measurement of—is essential to a healthy democracy, ensuring space for public deliberation and participation (Dahl, 1989). Although there are myriad definitions public opinion, many of those classic utilitarian conceptualizations evoke some sort of efficacy on the part of citizens in having their voices heard, such as Bentham’s idea that common opinion serves as social pressure, or Rousseau’s visualization of public opinion as an expression of common will

(Price, 1992). Combining both the theoretical and empirical aspects of public opinion polling, this presentation will provide a resource for how to help students learn about public opinion not simply by reading about it, but by generating topic ideas, designing questions, and analyzing actual data from students on their own campuses on issues that matter to them. This combined theoretical and practical approach provides a holistic understanding of one of the central ways of understanding and assessing public opinion. Results from previous campus polls, as well as tools for executing your own campus survey, will be covered. Ultimately, this combined teaching/research presentation helps attendees provide the opportunity for students to engage in thoughtful, critical discussions on the efficacy of public opinion polling as well as the scientific mechanisms behind it.

### **Using Behavior Analysis to Increase Student Engagement in the Classroom**

WHITNEY GRAFF, University of Chicago

As university professors, how we respond moment-to-moment in classroom dialogue can have a large impact on how students participate in learning. Functional behavior analysis, which extends from B.F. Skinner's work on operant conditioning, assumes that behaviors are developed and maintained through reinforcement. This has informed a number of psychotherapeutic models aimed at shaping more effective behaviors at the individual level. When applied to relationships, which has been developed and studied as Functional Analytic Psychotherapy, we interpret interpersonal and relationship behaviors by how they function, and we can influence how people relate to others through differential application of reinforcement. When used clinically, patients develop closer interpersonal bonds, increase effective vulnerability, and improve participation in the social spheres of their lives. This is easily translated to the context of a classroom environment. (And indeed, teaching this methodology has provided me with a great deal of practice over the past 5 years using the strategies in vivo at the same time they are being taught didactically.) This presentation will consider how professors can more deeply understand their students' classroom behavior through functional behavior analysis. Attendees will consider how they can shape and influence the classroom environment, guide students to the most effective ways of engaging with new ideas, and strengthen active and respectful classroom discourse.

**Fostering Student Capacities for Civil Discourse: The Empirical Results of a Debate Across the Curriculum Program in Cultivating Intellectual Virtues and Decreasing Affective Polarization**

DARRIN HICKS, University of Denver  
 STEVE JOHNSON, University of Denver

In response to the signs of deepening political polarization on college campuses we created a “Debate Across the Curriculum” program (DAC). To date, we have held over 90 debates involving over 1500 students. In this presentation, after outlining the program’s design, we report the results of our program evaluation, focusing on how the program affects student’s intellectual dispositions, attitudes towards sharing views, and degrees of affective polarization. The program’s design: We work with instructors to incorporate debate into their pedagogy. Their students engage in an in-class debate on a topic tailored to explore course material. We use a custom model of debate, which differs in four important respects from debates with which students may be familiar. First, the debates are non-competitive. There are no winners or losers; rather, debate is conceived as a collective search for truth. Second, the debates involve the entire class; all students present arguments and ask and answer questions about them. Third, the debates are moderated by one of the dedicated DAC faculty members to ensure rigor and civility. Finally, we return to the class to lead a deliberation session regarding the topic, with students moving from the role of advocates to that of citizens working with others to reach a decision on the controversy. The program has been rigorously evaluated, including pre- and post-debate surveys measuring student’s political attitudes and capacities. Beyond their reports of higher motivation towards learning about the topic and engaging with their peers about it, we have found statistically significant increases in intellectual curiosity and humility. We have also found statistically significant increases in their willingness to share their views in the face of disagreement from peers and instructors. And, finally, students report more empathy for positions differing from their own and, correspondingly, statistically significant decreases in affective polarization.

**10:10 - 11:30** A.M.  
*Ballroom H*

SYMPOSIUM

**Tensions of Truth: Diversity, Open Science, and Gatekeeping in Peer Review**

Moderated by: JORDAN BECK, Concordia University Wisconsin

**Gatekeeping in Peer Review: Is Beneficial Knowledge Being Suppressed?**

ANDREA CLEMENTS, East Tennessee State University

Peer review typically serves the science community well; however, it is not without its limitations. Bias (Tvina et al., 2019) and conflicts of interest (Resnik et al., 2018) are common concerns in the peer review process; however, policies to protect against these are inadequate. This is a case report of the experiences of Central Appalachian researchers conducting research and attempting to publish theory in a controversial area: questioning the current guidance around use of medication assisted treatment (MAT) for substance use disorder. Addiction treatment is an extremely lucrative field for multiple sectors (e.g., medicine, pharmacy, residential treatment, outpatient treatment). There is power in money. It influences policy through lobbying. It also may influence what research is allowed to be shared due to the threat of a loss of money and its accompanying power. Over the past five years, researchers in Central Appalachia have conducted research on MAT and have proposed a testable, non-pharmacological alternative to MAT. What appears to be gatekeeping has prevented the dissemination of both empirical research findings and theory proposal. Two of the most vivid examples will be described, one in the arena of research dissemination and one in the area of theory publication. Authors will propose possible reasons for gatekeeping, including economic threat, threats to perceived best practice, resistance to change, and others. They will then expand more exhaustively on the potential negative impacts of gatekeeping on the knowledge base in this specific field and other fields of inquiry. In the addiction treatment arena, we have the responsibility to seek and share the truth about what is most beneficial. Gatekeeping prevents that.

**AI, Campus Culture and Commoditized Peer Review**

DANIEL COFFING, OpenVetting.ai

While HxA advocates for open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement, their progress is hard to measure beyond surveys, anecdotes and policy events. Worse, academia (and humanity) is facing an exponential flood of an exponential flood of scientific, political, and public claims—all awaiting sorting and response. Naturally, this content deluge accelerates tribalism and publishing shortcuts. While adversarial vetting is rightly lauded (a la John Stuart Mill), in a wildly complex world this is no longer realistic without augmentation, let alone doing so at sufficient scale. An AI-based peer-review model could standardize evaluation metrics across disciplines, focusing on



cognitive rigor rather than ideological alignment. By using AI to assess argument validity, bias indicators, and evidence quality, reviewers could benefit from data-driven insights, reducing subjective tendencies that often influence the critical processes. This technology would also make reviews more transparent and objective, empowering researchers to challenge orthodoxies and explore diverse perspectives without fear of misrepresentation or exclusion. Such a tool would also promote the careful reasoning HxA champions, encouraging academics to engage with complex, diverse ideas openly. Over time, an AI-driven peer-review system could foster a culture where ideas are debated on merit alone, diminishing ideological tribalism and strengthening public trust in academic findings. OpenVetting.ai is creating this new model for public credibility-- expert vs. expert, point by point, gamified with AI in the loop, vetting each claim for its cognitive strength. While its core use is the contest of ideas, it also enhances content engagement, decision-making, negotiation, and red-teaming. Our thesis is that a tiered, visual mapping will draw out the reasoning everyone assumes is present and better tame the exponential flood of content.

### **Does Diversity Increase Scientific Productivity?**

JORDAN BECK, Concordia University Wisconsin

In the past decade, funding agencies in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the US have taken to promoting diversity through “diversity, equity and inclusion” (DEI) in all aspects of the scientific projects they fund. Diversity is promoted through DEI in knowledge creation on the basis that it is “good for science” and leads to better scientific outcomes. Closer inspection of this claim is typically not backed up or justified by scientific literature but is for the most part presented axiomatically. The purpose of this systematic review is to examine the academic literature to evaluate the degree to which a) this claim has been researched, and b) whether the claim itself is justified based on existing literature. Undertaking such a systematic review requires: a) a clear definition of diversity and how it can be characterized, b) a reproducible approach to determine how to quantify scientific outcomes. As such, this systematic review examines the evidence in support of the claim that demographic diversity (of individuals and groups) leads to improvements in measurable (non-theoretical) indicators of a scientific or academic nature, particularly, number of academic papers, paper citations, patents, awards and funding. It is based on an extensive search of academic databases and follows the PRISMA approach to systematic reviews. In this presentation, we will present the preliminary results of this review.

**10:10 - 11:30** A.M.  
*Ballroom I*

PANEL DISCUSSION

**Civil Fights: Courageous Conversations on Israel & Palestine on Campus**

TOM SCOTT, The Nantucket Project  
SIMON GREER, The Nantucket Project

Tom Scott and Simon Greer believe the real heroes are the bridge builders. In that spirit, they launched a groundbreaking dialogue-based course on the Israel-Palestine conflict this semester at UNC-Chapel Hill. Tom and Simon will premiere a short film that captures the key moments and insights from their journey, followed by a candid conversation on what worked, what they learned, and how they plan to bring this model to campuses across the country.

**11:45** A.M. - **12:30** P.M.  
*Grand Ballroom*

**Plated Luncheon**

**12:30 - 1:50** P.M.  
*Grand Ballroom*

**The Duties and Responsibilities of Scholars**

JERRY COYNE, University of Chicago  
JENNIFER FREY, University of Tulsa  
LOUIS MENAND, Harvard University  
JOHN MCWHORTER, Columbia University  
Moderated by: COLLEEN EREN, William Paterson University

Are there universal norms of scholarship that exist — or should exist — regardless of discipline? Where are today's faculty getting their ideas about their duties and responsibilities? Join us as our esteemed panel discuss these and related questions.

**1:50 - 2:00** P.M.  
*Grand Ballroom*

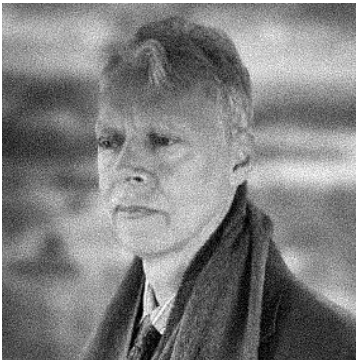
**Conference Closing Remarks**

JOHN TOMASI, Heterodox Academy

**2:00 - 2:30** P.M.  
*Promenade*

**Resource Table and Meet Team HxA**

# Our Speakers

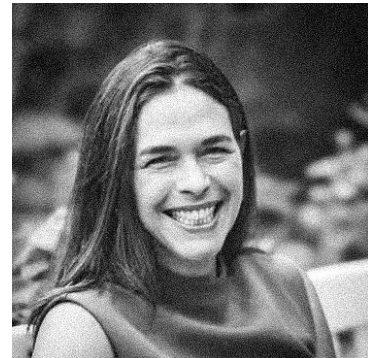


**Mark Bauerlein**

Trustee,  
New College of Florida

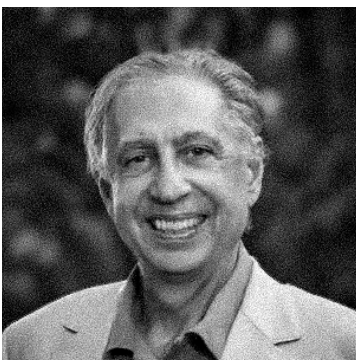
Mark Bauerlein earned his doctorate in English at UCLA in 1988. He taught at Emory from 1989-2018, with a two-and-a-half-year break in 2003-05 to serve as the Director, Office of Research and Analysis, at the National Endowment for the Arts. Apart from his scholarly work, he publishes in popular periodicals such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The Washington Post*, *TLS*, and *Chronicle of Higher Education*. His latest book, *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future; Or, Don't Trust Anyone Under 30* was published in May 2008. He recently co-edited a collection of essays entitled *The State of the American Mind: 16 Leading Critics on the New Anti-Intellectualism*, published in 2015.

Dr. Sian Leah Beilock is the 19th President of Dartmouth. She has positioned Dartmouth as a global leader on critical issues including cold weather climate and the energy transition, affordability for middle-income families, and mental health and wellbeing. Under President Beilock, Dartmouth launched the “Dartmouth Dialogues” initiative to foster conversations and skills bridging political and personal divides. In 2024, she led the school’s adoption of a first-of-its-kind policy of ‘institutional restraint’ — promoting freedom of expression for all Dartmouth community members. A leading cognitive scientist focused on performance under pressure, she is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. She has authored 120 papers and two acclaimed books, *Choke* and *How The Body Knows Its Mind*, and her 2017 TED talk has over 2.7 million views.



**Sian Leah Beilock**

President,  
Dartmouth

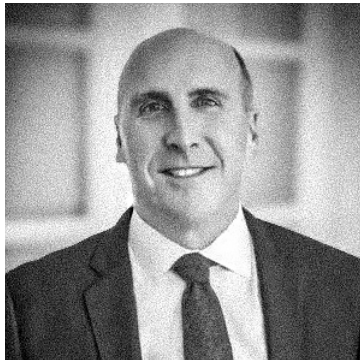


**Steven Brint**

Distinguished Professor of  
Sociology and Public Policy,  
University of California, Riverside

Steven Brint is Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Public Policy at the University of California, Riverside and Director of the Colleges & Universities 2000 Project. He is a faculty associate at the Center for Studies in Higher Education at the University of California, Berkeley and the Stanford University Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality. His studies of higher education have been funded for a quarter century by the National Science Foundation and four philanthropic foundations. He is the author of five and editor of three books and has published more than 100 journal articles and book chapters. He has also written for *The American Prospect*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education Review*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, and *The Washington Post*, among other publications. His most recent book, *Two Cheers for Higher Education*, won honorable mention for the American Sociological Association’s Pierre Bourdieu Award, was co-recipient of the Emory Elliott Book Prize, and was named one of the top 10 books on higher education for 2019 by *Forbes*. He is an elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Sociological Research Association. A native of Albuquerque, NM, Steven Brint received his BA with highest honors from UC Berkeley and his PhD in sociology from Harvard University.

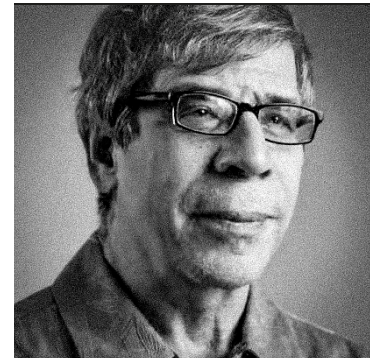
# Our Speakers



**Brian W. Casey**  
President,  
Colgate University

President Casey earned a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and economics at the University of Notre Dame, where he graduated summa cum laude and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. At Notre Dame Casey was elected captain of the varsity swim team and was awarded the Scholar Athlete of the Year award. Casey then went on to earn a law degree from Stanford University where he was an editor of *The Stanford Law Review*. He joined Davis Polk & Wardwell and practiced law in New York City and London. After several years of practicing law, President Casey attended Harvard University, where he earned a PhD in the history of American civilization. Casey spent four years as assistant provost at Brown University, and in 2005 he returned to Harvard as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. He served in that capacity until he was appointed president of DePauw University in 2008 serving as that school's 19th president. Casey was then appointed Colgate University's president on July 1, 2016.

Jerry Coyne is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Ecology and Evolution at the University of Chicago, where he worked on diverse areas of evolutionary genetics and was a member of both the Committee on Genetics and the Committee on Evolutionary Biology. The main focus of his research has been on the original problem raised by Darwin, the origin of species and on understanding this process through the genetic patterns it produces. He is also interested in speciation, ecological and evolutionary genetics, particularly if they involve *Drosophila*. He has written 125 referenced scientific papers and 180 other articles, book reviews, and columns. He is the coauthor (with H. Allen Orr) of *Speciation*, the author of the book and blog, *Why Evolution is True*, and *Faith Versus Fact: Why Science and Religion are Incompatible*.



**Jerry Coyne**  
Professor Emeritus,  
Ecology and Evolution,  
University of Chicago



**Colleen Eren**  
Professor and Director of the  
Criminology and Criminal Justice  
Program, William Paterson University

Dr. Eren is a Professor and Director of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Program at William Paterson University. She holds a PhD in Sociology from the City University of New York, The Graduate Center, and currently teaches courses on law, white-collar crime, criminology, and inequality in the justice system. A Faculty Fellow at the Segal Center for Academic Pluralism and Senior Fellow at both the Niskanen Center and Reason Foundation, she researches white-collar crime, media, criminal justice education, and reform movements. Dr. Eren is the author of *Reform-Nation* (Stanford, 2023), exploring the bipartisan coalition behind criminal justice reform, and *Bernie Madoff and the Crisis* (Stanford, 2017), analyzing public discourse on capitalism during the 2008 financial crisis. She also co-authored *The Impact of Supreme Court Cases on U.S. Institutions* (Routledge, 2021). Her work has been featured in the New York Times and documentaries on the Madoff case.



# Our Speakers



**Jennifer A. Frey**

Dean of the Honors College,  
University of Tulsa

Jennifer Frey is currently the Dean of the Honors College at the University of Tulsa, with a secondary appointment as professor of philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Religion. Previously, she was an Associate Professor of philosophy at the University of South Carolina, where she was also a Peter and Bonnie McCausland faculty fellow in the College of Arts and Sciences. Frey is also a faculty fellow at the Institute for Human Ecology at the Catholic University of America, and a Newbigin Interfaith Fellow with The Carver Project. Prior to coming to the University of South Carolina, she was a Collegiate Assistant Professor the Humanities at the University of Chicago, where she was also a member of the Society for the Liberal Arts. Frey earned her PhD in philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh, where she studied under John McDowell and Michael Thompson, and earned her BA in Philosophy and Medieval Studies (with a Classics minor) at Indiana University-Bloomington.

Dr. Jeremy Haefner is the University of Denver's 19th chancellor, and he brings to DU over three decades of leadership experience in higher education. Previously, Chancellor Haefner served as DU's provost and executive vice chancellor. He has also served in other leadership positions such as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and, at University of Colorado and Colorado Springs, as dean of engineering and applied science, associate vice chancellor for research and dean of the graduate school. He has also held fellowships with the American Council on Education, the National Learning Infrastructure Institute, and the University of Murcia in Spain. As a mathematician, Chancellor Haefner studies integral representation and module theory, and his research has been supported by the National Security Agency, the National Science Foundation, the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, and the government of Spain. He graduated from the University of Iowa with a B.A. in mathematics and has a PhD and an MA in mathematics from the University of Wisconsin.



**Jeremy Haefner**

Chancellor,  
University of Denver

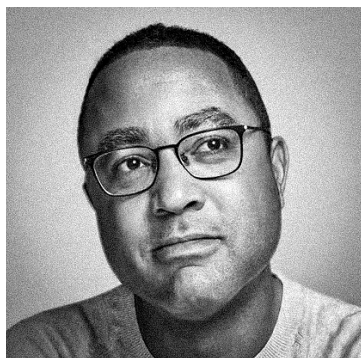


**Martha McCaughey**

Special Assistant to the President,  
University of Wyoming

Martha McCaughey enjoys helping groups articulate their purpose and value and find opportunities for impact. A sociologist who has studied and taught in the areas of gender, technology, and violence, McCaughey earned MA and PhD degrees in sociology from the University of California at Santa Barbara. She served as a tenured faculty member at Virginia Tech and later at Appalachian State, where she directed three campus-wide university programs and served as a leader in both the Faculty Senate and the American Association of University Professors. At the University of Wyoming, she has served as a visiting researcher in the Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology, an instructor in the Honors College and a co-chair of the Working Group on Freedom of Expression, Intellectual Freedom and Constructive Dialogue. Most recently, she was the director of member and campus engagement at the Heterodox Academy, supporting initiatives in open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement.

# Our Speakers

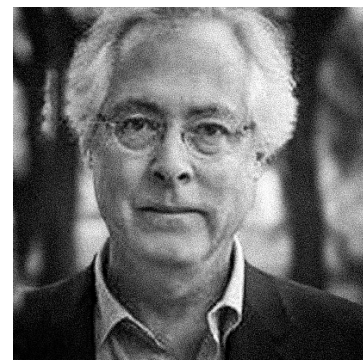


**John McWhorter**

Associate Professor of Linguistics,  
Columbia University

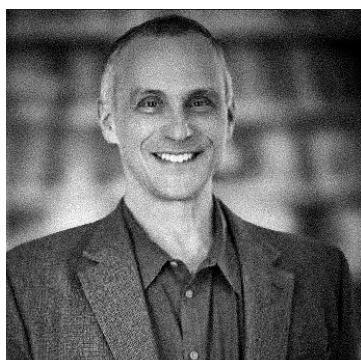
John McWhorter, Associate Professor of Linguistics at Columbia University, earned his BA from Rutgers University, his MA from New York University, and his PhD in linguistics from Stanford University. He is the author of more than 20 books, including *The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language*, *Losing the Race: Self Sabotage in Black America*, and *Our Magnificent Bastard Tongue: The Untold History of English*. In 2016 he published *Words on the Move: Why English Won't - and Can't - Sit Still (Like, Literally)*, while in 2021 he published *Nine Nasty Words* and *Woke Racism*. The host of the language podcast Lexicon Valley, Prof. McWhorter has written countless articles and commentaries that have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *Reason*, *Time*, and *The New Republic*, among other venues. He writes a biweekly newsletter for *The New York Times*.

Louis Menand is the Lee Simpkins Family Professor and Arts and Sciences and the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of English at Harvard, where he also holds the title Harvard College Professor, in recognition of his teaching. His books include *The Metaphysical Club*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for History, the Francis Parkman Prize from the Society of American Historians, and the Heartland Prize from the Chicago Tribune. He has been associate editor of *The New Republic* (1986–1987), an editor at *The New Yorker* (1993–1994), and contributing editor of *The New York Review of Books* (1994–2001). Since 2001, he has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, which he began writing for in 1991. In 2016, he was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Barack Obama. He has taught at Princeton, Columbia, Queens College, the University of Virginia School of Law, and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, where he was Distinguished Professor of English. At Harvard, he co-founded, with Stephen Greenblatt, Humanities 10: An Introductory Humanities Colloquium, a year-long team-taught course for freshmen, with readings in literature and philosophy from Homer to Gabriel García Márquez. He was co-chair, with Alison Simmons, of the Task Force on General Education, which produced a new general education curriculum at Harvard.



**Louis Menand**

Anne T. and Robert M. Bass  
Professor of English,  
Harvard University



**Michael Roth**

President,  
Wesleyan University

Michael S. Roth became the 16th president of Wesleyan University in 2007. He has overseen the launch of academic programs at Wesleyan such as the Allbritton Center for the Study of Public Life and the Shapiro Center for Writing, as well as five new interdisciplinary colleges emphasizing research and cohort building in the areas of the environment, film, East Asian studies, integrative sciences, and design and engineering. An intellectual historian, Roth has published several books centered on how people make sense of the past. Since returning to Wesleyan, he has published three books (all with Yale University Press) bearing on liberal education, the most recent being *The Student, A Short History* (2023). His *Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters* (2014), was recognized with the Association of American Colleges & Universities' Frederic W. Ness award for a book that best illuminates the goals and practices of a contemporary liberal education. Roth's 2019 book, *Safe Enough Spaces: A Pragmatist's Approach to Inclusion, Free Speech, and Political Correctness*, addresses some of the most contentious issues in American higher education, including affirmative action, safe spaces, and questions of free speech. Roth continues to teach undergraduate courses at Wesleyan and online.

# Our Speakers



**Nadine Strossen**

John Marshall Harlan II  
Professor of Law,  
New York Law School

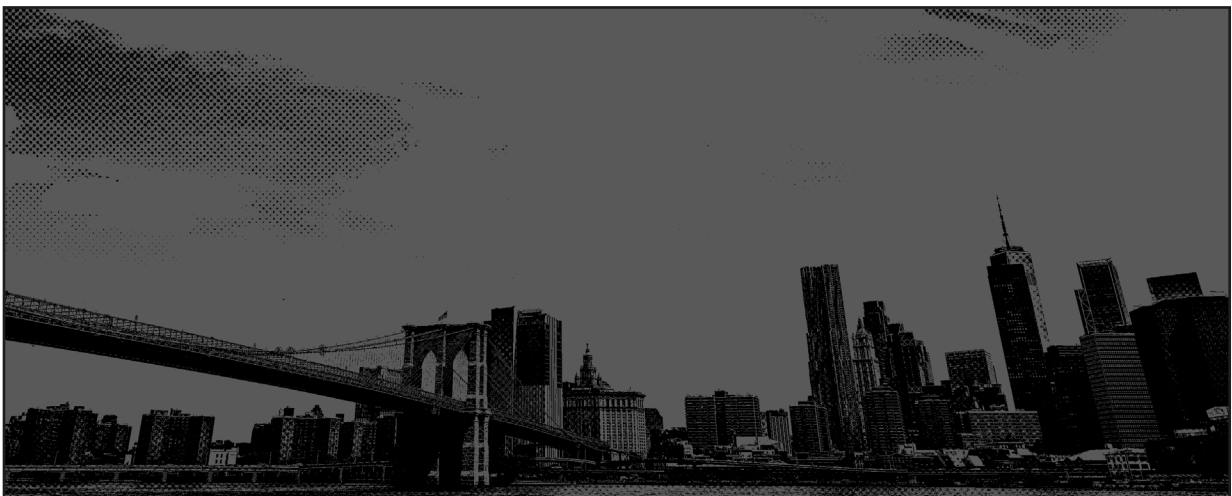
Nadine Strossen is the John Marshall Harlan II Professor of Law at New York Law School. She is also a leading scholar, advocate and frequent speaker/media commentator on constitutional law and civil liberties issues, who has testified before Congress on multiple occasions. The *National Law Journal* has named Strossen one of America's "100 Most Influential Lawyers." The immediate past President of the American Civil Liberties Union (1991-2008), Strossen serves on the national advisory boards of the ACLU, Electronic Privacy Information Center and FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights in Education). Her acclaimed 2018 book *HATE: Why We Should Resist It with Free Speech, Not Censorship* was selected by Washington University as its 2019 "Common Read."

John Tomasi is the inaugural president of Heterodox Academy. Prior to joining HxA, Tomasi held the position of Romeo Elton 1843 Professor of Natural Theology at Brown University and taught and wrote about political theory and public policy. At Brown, Tomasi was twice awarded university prizes for excellence in undergraduate teaching. He founded and directed the Political Theory Project, an independent research center at Brown that supports scholarship and encourages political dialogue on campus. Tomasi earned his bachelor's degree from Colby College and did his graduate work in political philosophy at the University of Arizona (MA) and Oxford University (BPhil, DPhil). He has held positions at the University Center for Human Values at Princeton, the Department of Philosophy at Stanford, and the Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard. Tomasi is the author of *Liberalism Beyond Justice: Citizens, Society and the Boundaries of Political Theory* (Princeton University Press, 2001) and *Free Market Fairness* (Princeton University Press, 2012).



**John Tomasi**

President,  
Heterodox Academy

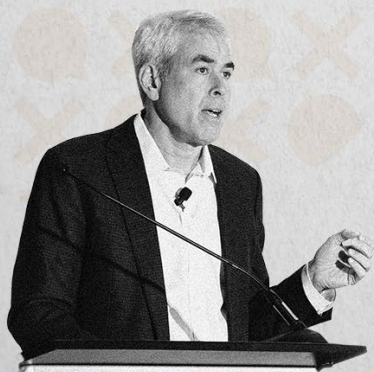




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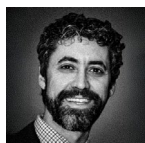
## Alexandra Lysova

*Changing campus policy; ideological threats to universities; parallels between Soviet/Russian and current western approaches to suppressing freedom.*



## Mary Kate Cary

*Free speech in higher education today; the George Bush I knew; persuading others in a polarized world; the greatest speeches in American history.*



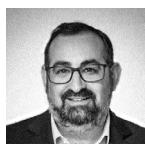
## Andrew Hartz

*Navigating polarization in mental health care; dialectical thinking for faculty; "splitting" in politics, race, and group identity.*



## Matt Burgess

*Depolarizing climate change in the US; climate change and the economy; guided civic revival: how students and administrators can create a healthy campus conversation.*



## Joe Cohn

*Institutional and public policy in higher education; higher ed legislation; civil liberties and freedom of speech.*



## Nadine Strossen

*Freedom of speech; academic freedom; civil discourse.*



## Martha McCaughey

*Scholar-activism vs. scholar optimism; establishing campus free expression principles; faculty experiences with student complaints; faculty governance.*



## Paolo Guadiano

*Doing DEI right; measuring Inclusion: higher profits and happier people; DEI for the white guy; setting DEI targets without discrimination; managing complexity in business and society.*



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