

*"It is an affront to treat falsehood with complacency."* Thomas Paine

# CAMPUS REPORT

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## AIA FEATURES AIM AT AUTHOR'S NIGHT

*By: Michael Watson*

While coverage of Reagan's economy focused on the "misery index" (the sum of the inflation and unemployment rates), coverage of Obama's has not despite the fact that the index is at its highest level since 1982.

On July 20, Accuracy in Academia hosted Accuracy in Media Chairman Don Irvine, his son Spencer Irvine, who works as a researcher at AIM, and Cliff Kincaid of the AIM Center for Investigative Journalism at its Authors' Night. The speakers addressed the differences in media coverage of the first two years of President Obama's and President Reagan's administrations and the ongoing debate over the national debt. AIM is the sister organization of AIA. Don and Spencer Irvine are the son and grandson, respectively, of Reed Irvine, the founder of AIM.

Spencer Irvine addressed AIM's special report on the coverage of President Reagan's and President Obama's similar economic conditions in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* during their first two years. Spencer Irvine noted that both newspapers tended to de-link President Obama from the economic conditions and used the term "Reaganomics" as a pejorative descriptor for President Reagan's policies. The newspapers also spun on behalf of President Obama both in analyzing the effects of the poor economic conditions and in assessing the nation's future economic prospects.



Chairman Don Irvine also spoke on the different styles of coverage Presidents Obama and Reagan received early in their terms. Chairman Irvine noted that while coverage of Reagan's economy focused on the "misery index" (the sum of the inflation and unemployment rates), coverage of Obama's has not, despite the fact that the index is at its highest level since 1982.

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Cliff Kincaid spoke mostly on the ongoing debt ceiling debate criticizing the approach of Congressional Republicans. Kincaid, claiming that there are very few “Reagan Republicans” left in elective office, argued that the “Cut, Cap, and Balance” proposal which passed the House of Representatives was not sufficient as it raises the statutory debt ceiling by \$2.5 trillion.



AIA executive director Mal Kline, who introduced the speakers and edited the special report, pointed out that a famous one-liner of Ronald Reagan’s turned out to be quite factual. “President Reagan once famously said, ‘I knew it [his economic program] was working when they stopped calling it Reaganomics.’”

“That turned out to be literally true,” Kline said. “The last recorded use of the term ‘Reaganomics’ in the Washington Post during the Reagan years occurred in 1983 before the unemployment rate dropped, in a story by Juan Williams.” Williams is now widely recognized as a commentator on Fox News.

**Michael Watson** is an intern at the American Jour-

*nalism Center, a training program run by Accuracy in Media and Accuracy in Academia.*



This event, like all of AIA’s public meetings, was part of the 2011 Frank A. Fusco Conservative University lecture series, which is made possible by a generous grant from the Frank A. Fusco and Nellie Goletti Fusco Foundation. You can order the report, *Headlines and Breadlines: Reaganomics and Obamanomics in the Media and in Reality*, by using the coupon on the back of this newsletter or on the web at [www.aim.org](http://www.aim.org)

## **The Gipper & The One**

*By Malcolm A. Kline*

On a superficial level, comparing the charismatic Republican to the charismatic Democrat has a surface logic. Nonetheless, it is one that does not hold past a very thin veneer.

“Mr. President, you used President Bush and Dick Cheney’s methods to track and kill Bin Laden,” bombastic radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh declared in the first week of May. “Please use President Reagan’s policies to rescue the country.”

As Limbaugh hinted in this, for him, nuanced message, President Obama’s policies do not bear much of a resemblance to President Reagan’s.

The same media outlets that make the Obama-Reagan comparisons gloss over this key distinction. As well, they glide over their vastly different coverage of “Obamanomics” and “Reaganomics.”

Representative Lamar Smith, R-Texas, has estimated that during President Reagan’s first year in the White House, media stories about him were 90 percent negative compared to the 10 percent critical coverage of President Obama’s maiden year in office. He may not be far off.

# FEDERAL SPEECH CODES

by Malcolm A. Kline

The federal government is poised to adopt or at least preside over something politically correct college administrators have yet to achieve—national speech codes.

A recent Dear Colleague letter from the U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) set the tone. The letter orders college presidents to ignore normal due process when sexual harassment is at issue.

Moreover, the letter, from the current Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at DOE, Russlynn Ali pretty much orders schools to conduct “in conjunction with student leaders, a school or campus ‘climate check’ to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that the school is free from sexual harassment and violence, and using the resulting information to inform future proactive steps that will be taken by the school.”

Ali, the daughter of boxing champ Muhammad, has not always been so “proactive” about enforcing OCR rules. In a July 2009 letter to U. S. Rep. Brad Sherman, D-Calif., she claimed that OCR policy under Title VI did not cover anti-Semitic harassment, intimidation, and discrimination.

Flash forward to May 5, 2011: “When OCR finds that a school has not taken prompt and effective steps to respond to sexual harassment or violence, OCR will seek appropriate remedies for both the complainant and the broader student population,” Ali warned university administrators. “When conducting Title IX enforcement activities, OCR seeks to obtain voluntary compliance from recipients.”

“When a recipient does not come into compliance voluntarily, OCR may initiate proceedings to withdraw Federal funding by the Department or refer the case to the U.S. Department of Justice for litigation.” The regulations have already had a chilling effect on free speech, one organization which advocates for first amendment rights for students claims.

“Indeed, the letter has already prompted several institutions to curtail the procedural due process rights afforded students accused of sexual harassment or sexual violence; given OCR’s regulatory authority and

influence, all institutions of higher education accepting federal funding are likely to follow,” Will Creely of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) noted in FIRE’s response to the OCR rule. “While it is of course necessary for colleges and universities to address allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence with all requisite purpose, seriousness, and speed, the rights of those accused cannot be sacrificed simply as a function of the accusation itself.”

FIRE is keeping a running tally of such institutions of higher learning acting proactively to enforce the federal rules before they go into effect. The schools include:

- Yale
- Stanford
- Brandeis
- The University of Massachusetts
- The University of Virginia
- Washington University
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Tech

Federal guidelines are nothing new in higher education. They are usually advisories.

Nonetheless, university administrators tend to ignore the advice of Republican presidents and follow the guidance of Democrats in the White House. Thus, when a Bush Administration appointee in 2003 urged administrators not to hide behind civil rights laws when crafting speech codes, Ivory tower bureaucrats everywhere kept the speech codes in place.

“In summary, OCR interprets its regulations consistent with the requirements of the First Amendment, and all actions taken by OCR must comport with First Amendment principles,” Gerald A. Reynolds, then the Assistant Secretary of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the Department of Education wrote in a dear colleague letter dated July 28, 2003. “No OCR regulation should be interpreted to impinge upon rights protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or to require recipients to enact or enforce



# FEDERAL SPEECH CODES

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codes that punish the exercise of such rights.”

“There is no conflict between the civil rights laws that this Office enforces and the civil liberties guaranteed by the First Amendment. With these principles in mind, we can, consistent with the requirements of the First Amendment, ensure a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for students that is conducive to learning and protects both the constitutional and civil rights of all students.” The FIRE, which tallies and

mounts legal challenges to university speech codes, reports that several hundred of them remain in place to this day.

By way of contrast, colleges have been quick to follow any quota plans from Democratic presidents to get more women into sports whether they want to be there or not. Incidentally, the latest Department of Education missive is under Title IX.

## SQUEAKY CHALK

*by Deborah Lambert*



### BLACKBOARD JUNGLE

While some educators and minority protectors still claim that they are in existence to help “the children,” more and more examples surface to show that exactly the opposite is true. Recently the NAACP joined forces with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) “in a lawsuit against New York City to keep 22 of its worst schools from closing,” according to the New York Post.

These schools clearly have issues. At the Academy for Collaborative Education in Harlem, “only 3 percent of students performed at grade level in English last year, and 9 percent in math.” Meanwhile, “Columbus High School in the Bronx, has a graduation rate of 40 percent, a good deal worse than the abysmal citywide average of 63 percent.”

Dubbed the “School from Hell,” the Academy for Collaborative Education – or MS 344 – lives up to its reputation. “Books and supplies fly out the windows. Mouse droppings are everywhere, even on the computers. It’s a hellhole where teachers should get combat pay — they are cursed, assaulted and sometimes groped.”

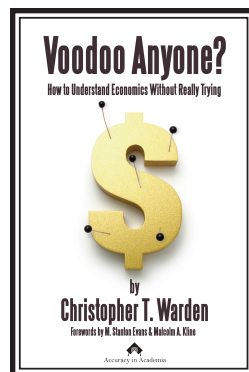
“It was literally war,” said a teacher who once found a used condom in her purse. “I was pushed, shoved, scratched, thrown against the wall, spit on and pick pocketed. I just wanted peace.”

The Department of Education has tried twice during

the past year to shut down MS 344, the city’s worst-performing middle school, which also appears on the state’s list of “persistently dangerous” schools. Last year, only two out of 88 eighth-graders passed the state math or reading exams.

However, the UFT and the NAACP went to court to block this closure and 21 others, arguing that the DOE did nothing to fix the ailing schools. A Manhattan judge heard arguments last week and is expected to rule soon.

Meanwhile, letters from the school staff to ex-Chancellor Joel Klein have begged for Principal Rashaunda Shaw’s removal. They complain she’s a tyrant who does nothing to impose discipline and respect. They charge she’s always late, barely leaves her office “except for the bathroom.” Among those hired by Shaw, 35, is “former Staten Island Assistant Principal Odufuyi Jackson, a friend who was busted in 2009 on felony charges that he conspired to steal more than \$100,000 in Social Security benefits.”



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# SQUEAKY CHALK

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After he pleaded guilty last year to attempted fabrication of business records, the DOE demoted Jackson to teacher, but Shaw apparently has him doing double duty as a dean.

Insiders provided The Post with examples of the crime and lack of punishment at this school:

- “A teacher was transferred after a student threatened to rape his wife.
- “A math teacher who tried to stop a student from hitting him was accused by Shaw of using “corporal punishment.”
- “A scrawny boy pulled out his wallet while surrounded by tough kids in the hall. A teacher learned the kid was robbed by the same gang every day for a month. Shaw reprimanded the teacher for phoning the victim’s mom.”

Not surprisingly, the current lawsuit and others like it are aimed at saving the dysfunctional schools and closing down good charter schools, like the Harlem Success Academy.

When “thousands of concerned black parents protested that the lawsuit that would keep their kids trapped in these atrocious schools, the NAACP responded with complete indifference. . . Lawsuit critics can march and have rallies all day long . . . We will not respond,” said state NAACP President Hazel Dukes.

The children who attend these schools “are not hope-

less cases. Those given the chance to attend charter schools or private schools under voucher or scholarship programs do better than their equally qualified counterparts who apply and don’t get in, because of the lottery system. . . The fact that these programs use lotteries tells you all you need to know about whether parents are to blame for burdening their children with low expectations.”



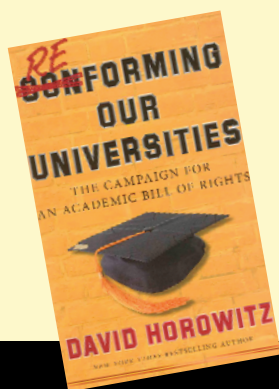
## BOYS NEED NOT APPLY

What can you say about a summer camp that promotes diversity and excludes it at the same time? That’s what’s happening at the University of Virginia where a group called the Center for Diversity in Engineering is sponsoring a “Discover the Joy of Engineering” summer camp to which boys are not invited, according to [mindingthecampus.com](http://mindingthecampus.com).

The program description says that camp Enjoy Engineering “provides hands-on-activities, lab tours and creative engineering design projects in a variety of engineering fields.

But those who read on discover that although the activity is open to 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders, all applicants must be girls.

Although UVA receives less federal funding than other schools, it would still have to adhere to Title IX standards, but maybe they interpreted the “No person shall be excluded” part to mean that “Some people may be excluded.”



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# COGNITIVE DISONANCE ON CONSERVATISM

by Malcolm A. Kline

Since they don't really want to encounter any, academics keep striking out when they attempt to figure out conservatives. Berkeley's George Lakoff is the latest scholar to miss the boat, and the dock is getting crowded.

"Conservatives don't dislike science or expertise inherently, Lakoff says—but for them, these are not the chief source of authority," Chris Mooney, who interviewed the professor, writes in the July/August 2011 issue of *The American Prospect*. "Instead, conservatives have a moral system based on a 'strict father' model of the family, which is then exported to various other realms of society—the market, the government."

Lakoff is a "cognitive linguist." "Liberals, to Lakoff, are just different," Mooney writes. "Science, social science, and research in general support an Enlightenment ethic—finding the best facts so as to improve the world and society and thus advance liberals' own moral system, which is based on a caring and 'nurturant' parent-run family."

Wait until you see what Lakoff views as a liberal weakness. "Here also arises a chief liberal weakness, probably amplified by an academic training: constantly trying to use factual and reasoned arguments to make the world better and being amazed to find that even though these arguments are sound, well researched, and supported, they are disregarded or even actively attacked," Mooney writes.

I asked Dr. Lakoff how the push for campus speech codes by the academic Left fits with his portrayal of liberals as "nurturing." As we go to press, he has not responded.

Lakoff's [ratemyprofessors.com](http://ratemyprofessors.com) ratings show that his students don't find him very "nurturing." Here are a few of them:

- "Went in with high interest, now completely disenchanted," one reviewer wrote. "Has huge ego, doesn't know how to teach. Calls on anyone raising hand, but instead of addressing question, will go on to talk about whatever he likes (often based on some keyword), sometimes even interrupting student to do so. Doesn't accept other points of view"; and
- "He's self-important in the extreme: an ego to match his girth; dismissive of students who question his bias"; and
- "So unprofessional (eats, answers phone in class), class is all 'discussion' he skirts tough questions, v. boring, vague, lots of political ranting btw he and his acolytes."

Lakoff's favorable ratings are not much better:

- "Big ego...but so what"; and
- "I admit, he is very stubborn, but the GSI's grade your papers anyways, so if you have opposite views its fine." And, from 2007
- "If this is what a left intellectual looks like then we will have George W forEVER — George is boring, circular, self-important, & can NOT hear ANY view beyond his own liberalism LITE."

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The AJC is a joint project of Accuracy in Media and Accuracy in Academia

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

*By Malcolm A. Kline*

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August, 2011

Dear Reader,

On the face of it, the Accuracy in Academia author's night we feature in our cover story may seem a bit of a departure. We chose to showcase a special report by our sister organization, Accuracy in Media, because the subject—the Reagan and Obama presidencies—do get more than a once-over in the classroom, and the treatment they get is not all that accurate.

Partly, this is because the source many in the Ivory Tower rely upon is the paper of record—the New York Times and the Gray Lady is still getting the Reagan era wrong. In a February 24, 2011 column in The New York Times, Bob Herbert asserted that Reagan “was a tax-cutter who raised taxes in seven out of the eight years of his presidency.” I e-mailed Herbert and asked him where I could find these tax hikes in primary source government documents.”

Herbert never responded to my inquiry, but Reagan biographer Steve Hayward did. “He [Reagan] did agree in most other years to small changes in tax-related things like business depreciation schedules and narrow excise tax rates that count as ‘tax increases,’ but aside from TEFRA [(the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982)], he never allowed either new taxes or raised income tax rates,” Hayward claimed. “A typically superficial liberal distortion.” Yes it is.

Hayward also spoke at a couple of AIA author's nights in the past half-decade. Those of us fortunate enough to have lived through the Reagan years owe it to those who haven't the opportunity to know what really happened.

With your help we try to do just that.

The AIA event was part of the 2011 Frank A. Fusco Conservative University lecture series, which is made possible by a generous grant from the Frank A. Fusco and Nellie Goletti Fusco Foundation. You can order the report, *Headlines and Breadlines: Reaganomics and Obamanomics in the Media and in Reality*, by using the coupon on the back of this newsletter or on the web at [www.aim.org](http://www.aim.org).

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mal Kline'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Mal' being more prominent and the last name 'Kline' written in a more compact, cursive style.

**Mal Kline**  
Executive Director



# AIM SPECIAL REPORT



“In our study of stories available online from The Washington Post and The New York Times, we found that during President Reagan’s first two years in office, the stories on “Reaganomics” were 13 percent favorable in The Post and 17 percent positive in The Times. The coverage of “Obamanomics” during President Obama’s first two years in office was nearly exactly the reverse with the treatment of his economic policies being overwhelmingly positive.”

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