

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

# CAMPUS REPORT

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## IVORY TOWER OCCUPATION

*By: Malcolm A. Kline*

Noted academics seem to view the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations as a means of recapturing the 1960s, particularly if they missed the latter decade on the first go-round.

There is an odd sort of ying-yang going on between the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) protests and institutions of higher learning. “Academics have become frequent visitors to Zuccotti Park, the 33,000-square-foot pedestrian plaza in the heart of New York City’s financial district that is now the site of a nearly monthlong protest, Occupy Wall Street,” Dan Berrett wrote in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* on October 21, 2011. “Famous scholars like Cornel West, Slavoj Zizek, and Frances Fox Piven have spoken to the crowd, with their remarks dispersed, word-for-word, from one cluster of people to the next through a ‘human megaphone.’”

“Many others, such as Lawrence Lessig, have lent their support from farther away, as the demonstrations have spread to cities and college campuses nationwide.” The scholars who have showed up to bond with the protestors include not only West, Zizek and Piven but also **Michael Hardt**, of Duke, as well as **Jeffrey D. Sachs and Joseph E. Stiglitz**, of Columbia University.

One wonders if the politically connected Stiglitz, who serves on a UN panel, exhorted the demonstrators to “fight the power.” Stiglitz co-authored a book called *The Trillion Dollar War*, which blamed the sub-prime mortgage crisis on the Iraq War. Far-fetched a proposition that that might seem to be, it is even more dubious when laid against Stiglitz’s paper, from earlier in this decade, claiming that Fannie Mae would not leave taxpayers on the hook for the risky loans it was underwriting.

“The movement has repeatedly been described as too diffuse and decentralized to accomplish real change, and some observers have seen the appearances by academic luminaries as an attempt to lend the protest intellectual heft and direction,” Berrett writes of OWS. “Certainly, its intellectual underpinnings and signature method of operating are easier to identify than its goals.”

“Economists whose recent works have decried income inequality have informed the movement’s critiques of capitalism.” They include Hardt, a professor of literature at Duke, and Antonio Negri, former professor of

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# Director's Corner

By Malcolm A. Kline, Executive Director of AIA

November 2011

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## CAMPUS REPORT

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Editor: Malcolm A. Kline

Contributing Editor: Deborah Lambert

4455 Connecticut Ave, NW #330  
Washington, DC 20008  
202-364-3085 | [www.academia.org](http://www.academia.org)

Dear Reader,

As you can see by our cover, we didn't have to look far to find the links between the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations and academia. As it happens, we will be interacting with our subjects in the Ivory Tower quite a bit next year.

In January, we will be covering the Modern Language Association (MLA) at the annual MLA convention in Seattle. This is the largest association of English professors in the world, numbering in the thousands, many of whom attend the yearly conclave.

In June, we will be trading debate appearances with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). We are submitting a proposal to the AAUP which will meet here in Washington, D. C., while the organization, in turn, will send a representative to debate academic bias with us at one of our author's nights.

Between times, we will try to cover as many professors as we can. We do this in order to give you the best database on academic bias that we can offer you. We daresay you may have a hard time finding such a complete directory anywhere.

In our next issue, we will feature many of the professors we have covered this year, in a study which we entitled "100 Arguments for Tenure." It was this study, by the way, which led to our dialogue with the AAUP.

We are engaged in this constructive engagement and, for that matter, our daily chores, because we view ourselves as your servants. In that capacity, we try to give you information on higher education that the mass media is not likely to.

We could not continue this work, in turn, were it not for your generous support for which we are most grateful.

All the best,

Mal Kline,

Executive Director

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political science at the University of Padua. “They have anticipated some of the central issues raised by the protests,” Berrett notes. “Most recently, they linked the actions in New York and other American cities to previous demonstrations in Spain, Cairo’s Tahrir Square, and in Athens, among other places.”

By the way, Hardt’s *positive* ratings on Rate My Professors.com make for interesting reading:

- “Thinks he’s Engels. Knows Antonio Negri. Is really nice and lets you take your time with exams. Is really cute when he tries to be authoritarian.”
- “Hardt is the most interesting person here at duke.[sic] His ideas are original and thought-provoking, his down-to-earth socialist perspectives makes class a learning experience not a regime.”
- “The Marxism readings were dense-lecture was usually helpful in clarifying.[sic] he can ramble and not make sense but the review sessions and having open note tests made up for it.”

Noted academics seem to view the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations as a means of recapturing the 1960s, particularly if they missed the latter decade on the first go-round. For one thing, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has endorsed them.

“The AAUP’s Council and Collective Bargaining Congress endorsed the Occupy movement last week—a move that, judging from the volume and intensity of e-mail responses, evoked strong feelings among our membership,” Gwendolyn Bradley wrote on the Academe Blog on October 21, 2011. “For many reasons—including the fact that student access to higher education is increasingly threatened by mounting costs and loans and the fact that faculty

themselves have become predominantly low-wage workers with few protections for academic freedom—faculty at more and more institutions are issuing statements of support for or participating in the movement.”

“To name just those that crossed my computer screen in the last day or two: Oberlin College, Temple University, Columbia University, the New School, the City University of New York, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of California, the Cal State system.” Bradley is a senior program officer at the AAUP.

“What are faculty at your institution doing?,” she asks, challenging her audience of academic insiders.

Oddly, the denizens of both the street occupations and the institutions they object to sprang from roughly the same place. For example, our last two presidents, who arguably anted up the government-sponsored gambling that led to the current crisis, went through Harvard.

*Malcolm A. Kline is the Executive Director of Accuracy in Academia.*



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# SQUEAKY CHALK



by Deborah Lambert

## THE STEVE JOBS LEGACY

The death of Steve Jobs served as a reminder not only of his creative genius but of the way that high achievers are punished for their success, and America's near-paralysis from regulations that stifle business growth.

Jobs's passion for innovation was not limited to iPads and cell phones. He was also passionate about school choice, and suggested to the Smithsonian Institution in a 1995 interview that if the country initiated a nationwide voucher system, it would provide schools with the incentive to become a competitive marketplace of ideas.

While Jobs's success as a wealth creator defined the best of American capitalism, the qualities of risk-taking and innovation necessary for achieving great goals like those of Steve Jobs are "virtually non-existent in higher education," according to economist Dr. Richard Vedder, a professor at Ohio University. Dr. Vedder pointed out that it is tragic that the "federal government is hostile to the one part of higher education that has the same motivations that produced creators of so much good . . . persons like Steve Jobs and Bill Gates, both college dropouts."

Dr. Vedder, who also directs the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, believes that while a company like WalMart "has done more to help poor people than most federal poverty programs," schools like Harvard are "insulated from failure by an obscenely large endowment and literally hundreds of millions in government research grants. The same is true for dozens of other top schools. This has all led to a lack of innovation, a complacency, a disdain for risk, and an insolence and contempt for the 'real world' that is not healthy, either for higher education or for America."

Dr. Vedder believes there are two reasons for today's skyrocketing jobless figures: First, investors and consumers are afraid to take risks, because of the anti-business climate. Second, there are powerful incentives created by government to NOT work — such as 99 weeks of unemployment benefits, a major cause of the persistence of an unemployment rate over 9 percent."

One long-term approach to the unemployment problem is to build more Steve Jobs-like concepts

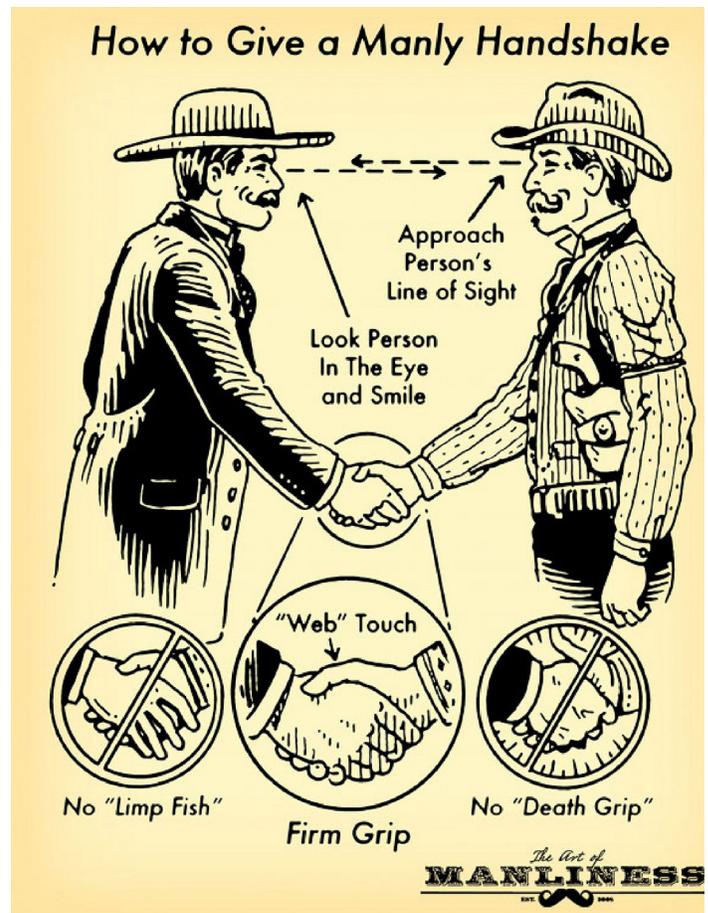
into higher education, with "more innovation, more risk-taking, more private-sector involvement, fewer government subsidies, and more productivity enhancement."

"We need to level the playing field among participants, we need to radically change accreditation rules, etc. Why should accrediting organizations have the right to prevent new entrants into higher education unless there is a very large possibility that they are fraudulent? No one 'accredits' Apple, the Mac, or the iPad. Is the quality of the iPad any less than that of, say, Slippery Rock State University or Chicago State because the iPad is not accredited but the latter schools are?"

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## AMERICA'S MANLIEST CITY

### How to Give a Manly Handshake



These days, Nashville Tennessee has a lot more going for it than the Grand Old Opry and the Country Music Hall of Fame. A recent survey honored the city as America's top "Mecca of Manliness," thanks to the

high percentage of NASCAR fans, hunters and fisherman – and the popularity of barbecue restaurants.

Nashville moved up from the number four slot last year, when Charlotte, North Carolina won the manliest city title followed by Oklahoma City, Cincinnati and Denver.

Cities at the bottom of this year's list included New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco, home to

metrosexuals, minivans and foreign cars.

The survey, issued by the Sperling Report, gives negative ratings to cities that are overrun with sushi restaurants, home furnishing stores, and cupcake shops, which might explain why Washington, D.C. weighed in at number 42 on this year's manliness scale.

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## The George Soros Octet

Cliff Kincaid of our sister organization, Accuracy in Media, combed through the records of the Open Society founded by left-wing billionaire George Soros. On Cliff's list of the Open Society's top 150 grantees, eight institutions of higher learning appear:

1. Bard College
2. New York University
3. Johns Hopkins University
4. Georgetown University
5. The Carter Center at Emory University
6. The Kirwan Institute at Ohio State University
7. The University of Wisconsin George Mason University
8. George Mason University



## AIA Honor Roll

Occasionally we actually get to cover professors whom we like. In fact, we calculate that of the 149 professors who we have covered so far this year, we've had nice things to say about a fifth of them.

That's higher than the fraction of conservatives in academia. What follows are Accuracy Academia's honorable mentions for 2011 so far:

1. John Allison of Wake Forest University, for getting the financial crisis right at BB&T and in the classroom.
2. Don Boudreaux, George Mason University—an economist who actually teaches economics.
3. Eva Brann, St. John's College (Annapolis) emeritus, for issuing warnings about the humanities that we all should heed.

4. Glenda R. Carpio and Werner Solors, Harvard, for resurrecting the works of unfairly forgotten author Zora Neale Hurston.

5. James W. Ceaser, University of Virginia, for actually using his academic freedom to say provocative things on record.

6. Nicolle and Mark Crain of Lafayette College, for actually calculating the cost to business of government regulations.

7. Lennard J. Davis of the University of Illinois-Chicago, for daring to question academic assumptions.

9. Claudia Dreifus of Columbia, for breaking with her allegedly liberal colleagues to question just about everything academia is doing these days.

10. Vance Fried of Oklahoma State University for

*continued from page 5*

daring to suggest that universities provide “a first-class undergraduate education for \$6,700 a year instead of the average \$25,900 charged by public research universities, or the \$51,000 charged by their private peers.”

11. Martin Gaskell of the University of Kentucky, for suing his employer when he thought he was passed over for a job due to his Christianity.

12. Thomas B. Gold, a Berkeley sociologist who actually used the “c” word—communist—to describe Mainland China.

13. Robert Klein Engler of Roosevelt University, for trying to inject politically incorrect humor into a lecture, at risk to his career.

14. J. David Hunger, scholar-in-residence in the management program at the College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University, for saying, “At the big public universities, the administrations need us to be credible, but I’m not sure that they need us to be very good.”

15. Paul Kengor, Grove City College, for doing his level best to set the record straight about the Reagan years.

16. Roberet Lichter of GMU, for his painstaking surveys in which he has investigated media and academic biases.

17. Paul Mason, a University of North Florida economist who said of business students that “many of them don’t read their textbooks, or do much of anything else that their parents would have called studying.”

18. Eric Nelson of Harvard for pointing out that the Christian tradition supports religious tolerance.

19. Martha C. Nussbaum of the University of Chicago, for drawing attention to deaths caused by sex-selective abortion.

20. Dr. Kyle Pruett of the Yale Medical School, for highlighting the importance of fathers.

21. Thomas Rawski, University of Pittsburgh, for making a greater leap forward than many of his colleagues in admitting the scale of atrocities that went with the history of Chinese communism.

22. David Rubinstein, University of Illinois-Chicago,

for his candor, upon retirement, in giving the details of the lush life many tenured academics enjoy.

23. R. J. Rummell, University of Hawaii, for his tireless effort to set the record straight about the genocide committed by dictators.

24. Emad Shahin of Notre Dame, for correcting The New York Times.

25. Willie Soon of Harvard, and Roy Spencer of the University of Alabama, for actually trying to examine so-called global warming scientifically.

26. Nadine Strossen, New York University law school, for being genuinely liberal.

27. Sandra Stotsky of the University of Arkansas, for taking a hard look at what passes for academic standards.

28. Robert Templin, president of Northern Virginia Community College, for stating that “More than half of those who come to my college are not prepared.”

29. Richard Vedder of Ohio University, for starting the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, and all of the other accomplishments in his life.

30. John Yoo, a former attorney general in the Bush Administration, who is at but not of Berkeley Law.

31. R. V. Young of North Carolina State University, for trying to keep composition alive.

**Malcolm A. Kline** is the Executive Director of Accuracy in Academia.

If you would like to comment on this article, e-mail [mal.kline@academia.org](mailto:mal.kline@academia.org)



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# ADMISSIONS ROULETTE

Parents and students engaged in the time-consuming and costly process of applying to colleges might be startled to find out what the national price tag for this activity is. “College admissions is a \$40 billion a year industry,” veteran journalist Andrew Ferguson told the audience at Accuracy in Academia’s October 2011 author’s night.

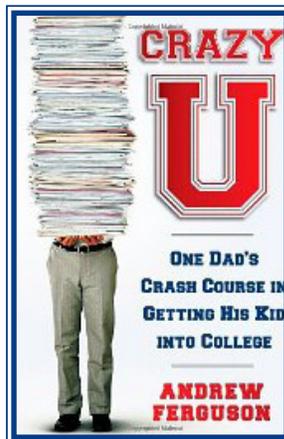
Ferguson is the author of *Crazy U: One Dad’s Crash Course In Getting His Kid Into College*. His book has been translated into Chinese and Korean because China and Korea face a similar phenomenon.

In the U. S., Ferguson found a college admissions consultant who charges \$40,000 per family in order to aid them in getting their children into the college of their choice.

“If you had an industry that has failed in the way that higher education has, it would collapse,” Ferguson asserted. College graduation rates as well as proficiency exam scores, where available, give a indication of the extent of that failure.

Yet and still, colleges themselves are reluctant to chart their own progress. “They refuse to test kids from freshman year to senior year,” Ferguson said.

Ferguson is a senior editor at *The Weekly Standard*.



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# AIM Special Report

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**Headlines and Breadcrumbs:**  
Reaganomics and Obamanomics  
in the Media and in Reality

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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