On Thursday, June 14 at the Heritage Foundation, Mal Kline, executive director of Accuracy in Academia (AIA), engaged in a friendly debate with John K. Wilson of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) over the issue of bias in colleges and universities.

“The political orientation of professors should not matter,” Kline said at the event. “The military, until very recently, voted Republican by about the same proportions as academia went Democratic.”

“But here’s the distinction,” Kline told the capacity crowd. “You usually don’t get asked your position on gun control when going through Parris Island. Your drill instructor does not particularly care.”

By way of contrast, Kline said, “But say a word in favor of the second amendment in a college or university job interview and what are your chances?” The event was held at the Van Andel Center at the Heritage Foundation. “I would love to see a chart showing, on the one side, military commanders who have ordered their troops to attend TEA party rallies, and on the other, professors who have sent their students to occupy Wall Street,” Kline said to the audience, which was composed overwhelmingly of Capitol Hill interns.

“We cover about 300 professors a year from about as many colleges and universities and no, not usually favorably,” Kline said. He asserted that many college professors use their authority to preach their own left-leaning agenda and exploit the classroom as their pulpit. Wilson, however, did not view this classroom bias necessarily as a bad thing.

“Everyone is biased,” Wilson said. “We need more bias.” He claimed that objectivity should not be the point of
July 2012

Dear Reader,

The author’s night featured in this issue marked something of a first for Accuracy in Academia, and a well-attended one at that. We usually try to give Capitol Hill interns access to speakers they are unlikely to hear on their campuses, or, for that matter, one the congressional committees they work for.

We have some interesting events in which authors will come to AIA’s author’s nights to discuss their newly published books:

- Veteran journalist John Fund will chat about his book on election fraud;
- Author and commentator M. Stanton Evans will talk about the book he co-authored with espionage historian Herbert Romerstein on the influence communists working in the U. S. government had on the conduct of American foreign policy during and after World War II;
- And Dan Flynn, former executive director of AIA, will discuss the *Blue Collar Intellectuals* who helped shape American culture and politics.

We try to give consumers what they can’t get anywhere else. On our website, [www.academia.org](http://www.academia.org), we feature thousands of professors from about as many schools.

We dare say it is a data base that is hard to match, for anyone who wants to see the particulars on bias and accuracy in college classrooms. Our goal is to provide a resource for our readers and supporters that they cannot duplicate anywhere else.

This work would not be possible without your support, for which we are most grateful.

All the best,

Mal Kline,
Executive Director
universities and colleges, but rather there should be a respect for the rights of others to form their own biases. Wilson observed that the arts and the media were also biased to the Left. Kline argued that consumers can find alternatives to the arts and media reports more quickly than college students can to a left-wing professor who is liberal in name only: “You can change the channel in a minute and a half but it takes a lot longer than that to transfer out of a class.”

Kline was not convinced that the bias present on college campuses was as healthy as Wilson believed, and called for an immediate solution to address the problem. His idea of an “asterisk for accreditation,” similar to the concept of side effect warnings in drug commercials, was his suggestion for holding professors accountable for not teaching in accordance with the campus mission statement.

“There is no point in a mission statement,” Wilson countered. “Teachers should not be fired for violating the mission statement.”

This debate marked a rarity for Accuracy in Academia, as many “left-of-center lecturers” do not normally attend AIA events. “The reason is, we try to give interns speakers and information they are not likely to get on campus,” Kline explained. Both the favorable outcome and the speakers’ decorum were suggestive of more debates of this sort occurring in the near future.

This event was part of The Frank A. Fusco Conservative University Lecture Series this year, made possible by a generous grant from The Frank A. Fusco and Nelly Goletti Fusco Foundation

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Excerpt from Mal Kline’s opening remarks at AIA Author’s night.

Indeed, just about any breakdown of the political viewpoints of professors shows that liberals outnumber conservatives by anywhere from three-to-one to nine-to-one. We have done our own little survey of presidential cabinets dating back to the Carter Administration.

We found that half of the Carter and Clinton cabinets found academic berths when their government service ended. By comparison, usually a minority of Republican cabinet members—three to six—actually retire to academe. The situation does not improve markedly for presidential appointees below the Cabinet level, no matter how much prestige they carry with them.

Even the ones who came from academia find, like Diane Ravitch, that it is hard to go back to. It’s a little like Toyland that way, at least for Republicans. Ravitch had worked in the U. S. Department of Education.

Ravitch said nearly a decade ago that “There is a price to be paid for being politically independent and being outside the mainstream consensus. I paid the price 10 years ago after I had served as assistant secretary in the first Bush Administration.”
As bureaucracies go, the National Science Foundation may rank near the top in the waste and fraud department. That’s saying something, since their location in our nation’s capital means they have plenty of competition.

“A couple of months ago, the House of Representatives passed the Flake Amendment, which would ban the National Science Foundation from funding projects in political science,” noted Mark Bauerlin, writing in Minding the Campus.

This prompted Sen. Jeff Flake to offer his opinions about the NSF on the House floor. He observed that while it was not the original intent to dole NSF grants out to schools that didn’t need it, the fact is that three quarters of the political science awards were doled out to schools with endowments of more than $1 billion.

Flake continued: “So what kind of research is NSF charging to our credit card? $700,000 to develop a new model for international climate change analysis; $600,000 to try to figure out if policymakers actually do what citizens want them to do.

“$301,000 to study gender and political ambition among high school and college students; $200,000 to study to determine why political candidates make vague statements. $200,000 to study why political candidates make vague statements. That’s what we’re paying for here.”

The gender project Flake mentioned is a case study in waste. On May 11th, insidehighered.com reported on it this way:

“Neither was that fact lost on Jennifer Lawless, an associate professor of government at American University and principal investigator on one of the grants cited by Flake. The $301,113 grant, on the topic of ‘Understanding the Origins of the Gender Gap in Political Ambition,’ will survey 4,000 high school and college students about their potential interest in running for office, she said, to try to figure out ‘why young people are not getting involved in politics.’”

“Lawless said she hoped that it was not the title’s focus on gender that drew Flake’s attention to her study (though she noted that Congress is 83 percent male). But regardless of what attracted his interest, she said, Flake’s attack on competitively awarded social science research (and its support by a majority of members of the House) both ‘undermines the legitimacy of that process’ and provides ‘evidence to suggest that there’s a general disregard for things that can produce new knowledge.’”

This is not the first time that NSF projects have been the target of public scrutiny.

Last year, Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla), one of the chamber’s top waste watchdogs, “issued a shocking report that exposed the billions of dollars NSF lost to fraud and mismanagement or spent on bizarre experiments,” according to the New York Post.

“The report found that at the Antarctic McMurdo research station, which part of a $451 million a year polar research project, NSF employees organized a Jell-o-wrestling event and nude ‘polar bear plunge’ party.

“After the organizer of the wrestling matches was fired, he complained in an email that the NSF were ‘fun Nazis’ and fired him for ‘having harmless jello wrestling,’ according to the report.

“Back in the United States, as much as $58,000 in taxpayer funds were blown by a senior executive who spent at least 331 days looking at pornography on his government computer and chatting online with nude or partially clad women.

“The report also showed that the foundation blew...
wads of cash on harebrained research project, including:

— Having shrimp walk on tiny treadmills to measure the impact of sickness on crustaceans;

— An $80,000 study on why the same teams always dominate March Madness;

— A $315,000 study suggesting playing FarmVille on Facebook helps adults develop and maintain relationships;

— $1 million for an analysis of how quickly parents respond to trendy baby names;

— $50,000 to produce and publicize amateur songs about science, including a rap called ‘Money 4 Drugz,’ and a misleading song titled ‘Biogas is a Gas, Gas, Gas’;

— $2 million to figure out that people who often post pictures on the internet from the same location at the same time are usually friends; and

— $581,000 on whether online dating site users are racist.”

Coburn, who is a physician, noted the important work done by the NSF, including shepherding advances such as the Internet, cloud computing, bar codes and magnetic resonance imaging technology.

“Unfortunately,” he lamented, “in some ways NSF has undermined its core mission through mismanagement and misplaced priorities.”

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IMPERIAL ACADEMIA

The following is taken from an article, Reign of Ignorance by Stephen Daisley that appeared in the June 2012 issue of Commentary magazine.

Why is the American academy so monolithically left-wing? David Gelernter, himself a tenured professor of computer science at Yale, attempts an answer in his new book America-Lite: How Imperial Academia Dismantled Our Culture (and Ushered in the Obamacrats). For Gelernter, a postwar cultural revolution saw America’s elite colleges laid low by the double punch of the “Great Reform” and the rise of “Imperial Academia.”

Institutions that had served the WASP elite found themselves transformed into pseudo-intellectual salons. The old establishment, through a combination of naïveté and upper-class manners, stood aside and made way for the revolutionaries storming the gates.

The change agents hacked away at the idea of college as an inculcator of knowledge and virtue and asserted instead the primacy of theory, “substituting for the intractable bloody mess called reality a seamless, silken tapestry of pure ideas.”

History departments were seized by the ideologues of post-colonialism and anti-Occidentalism, political-science courses by antagonists of the United States and Israel, and law schools by activist theorists for whom the Constitution was to be understood through its emanations rather than its plain meaning.

The principled opposition to bigotry was diverted into radical victimologies: critical race theory, gender studies, and sexual identity politics. Empiricism was deposed in favor of the epistemic dead end of post-structuralism and its showy progeny, postmodernism.

Critical thinking, which is to say thinking critical of America, was encouraged. Ideas that had been orthodoxy became heretical ciphers for racism, sexism, and homophobia and were dissuaded, forcefully. Hiring practices and speech codes formalized the boundaries of this new closed-shop of left-liberalism.

The result is the replacement of the WASPs by the PORGIs—post-religious globalist intellectuals. Gelernter says they have remade universities into production lines churning out an army of leftist drones trained on the
battlefield of ideology and now occupying the newsrooms, classrooms, and social institutions and saluting one of their number who made it all the way to commander in chief. He writes:

Everyone agrees that President Obama is not only a man but a symbol. He is a symbol of America’s decisive victory over bigotry. But he is also a symbol, a living embodiment, of the failure of American education and its on-going replacement by political indoctrination. He is a symbol of the new American elite, the new establishment, where left-liberal politics is no longer a conviction, no longer a way of thinking: It is built-in mind furniture you take for granted without needing to think.

There is no conspiracy, no collusion, merely a new politics of vacuity: “All former leftist movements were driven by ideology. Obama is driven by ignorance.” If that seems harsh, remember that Obama, the Harvard-educated law professor, said there was no precedent for the Supreme Court to strike down unconstitutional statutes. The closing of the American mind has been followed by the opening of the post-American mind, a process whose first concrete political achievement was the election of a post-American president.

Gelernter contends that Obama’s reign of ignorance portends implications far beyond the current president’s term (or two). Those who care about the future of the academy, the culture, and the country cannot claim they haven’t been warned. Obama is not a blip but a blueprint for the future direction of the American left, and he could also be the trajectory of America for the next generation. Where the old-style Democrats won power by dominating labor unions and immigrant organizations, the Obamacrat ascendency will be guaranteed by their monopoly over the education cartels, chief among them the universities and graduate schools.

What is to be done? “The true university of these days is a collection of books,” Thomas Carlyle believed. Gelernter’s “one-point plan” updates this. Given that the Internet represents the world’s largest “collection of books,” Gelernter says our salvation from Imperial Academia is to move the American educational system onto broadband networks as a remedy for political indoctrination.

Gelernter’s critique is in the great tradition of William F. Buckley Jr.’s God and Man at Yale and Allan Bloom’s The Closing of the American Mind. His citations run from statistics to philosophy to history, and you can almost hear the sucking of teeth from social scientists when he turns to novels and movies for evidence (a brief detour on silver-screen intellectuals, from Cary Grant’s bumbling professor in Bringing Up Baby to Fred Astaire’s tap-dancing psychiatrist in Carefree, is insightful and entertaining). Gelernter is an intellectual in the truest sense of the term: He is an educated man but also a lettered one, boasting a frame of reference far beyond his professional field of expertise.

America-Lite is lean, incisive, convincing, delightfully indelicate, and, in a break from the conventions of the literature on education, honest. It is a fine dissection—deconstruction, if you must—of the corruption of higher education and the resulting debasement of political culture. If it makes its way onto a single college reading list, Hell will have frozen over.

Give the Asterisk a Chance*

By Malcolm A. Kline

In my proposal, conceptually I call for Truth in Advertising in academia. Start at the gate, colleges and universities rarely discuss the employment rates of their graduates. Colleges and universities, conversely, are happy to talk about the number of their graduates who have gone on to pursue advanced degrees especially if they’re getting them at the same university where they were undergraduates. Whether there is a market for them after they attain these distinctions is another story. You know better than I how may job openings there...
are in academia, which is what you’re usually destined for with an advanced degree.

Accrediting agencies could merely add an asterisk to their accreditation of a college or university if a given number of students and parents complain that the institution of higher learning is not living up to its advertising. One thousand seems a good ballpark number.

This proposal is not a call for new laws, fines, or federal regulations. In this proposal, accrediting agencies do not even have to pull the credentials from colleges and universities that they have already credentialed.

This should not involve extra time: Credentialing agencies already hear plenty of complaints. They would only have to keep track of them until they hit four digits and then add a punctuation mark and footnote to their reports, and the colleges and universities to their websites, catalogues and press releases.

Moreover, this should not even require a promotional campaign. Groups such as Accuracy in Academia are already doing that.

Indeed, the asterisk is quite common in commercial advertising. There is no reason why colleges and universities cannot employ it as frequently as the corporations which make large contributions to higher education.

Please note that the proposal does not come with an enforcement mechanism. By the way, neither did the academic bill of rights devised by author and activist David Horowitz. He, in turn, admits that the bulk of his proposal came from the AAUP.

Similarly, we do not even call for any action by any level of government—federal, state or local.

We do not even seek sense of the Senate nor sense of the House resolutions at the federal or state level. Incidentally, this is about as close to enforcement as the academic bill of rights ever got.

We certainly do not want to get the U. S. Department of Education involved in our little project. Look at what a great job they did with No Child Left Behind.

The closest thing to enforcement we could come up with is groups like ours, and yours, pointing out to colleges and universities that we got 1,000 complaints on them urging them to add the asterisk. Of course, we’ll write about it either way. We report, you decide.

All we are asking is give the asterisk a chance.

*as delivered to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and at Accuracy in Academia’s author’s night on June 14, 2012.
To show what college and university English Departments are really teaching, Accuracy in Academia compiled *The REAL MLA Stylebook*, filled with quotes from a recent convention of the Modern Language Association (MLA) where thousands of English professors gather to push their politically correct, radical agenda. Outsiders who attend this event expecting to learn more about Chaucer, Milton and Shakespeare are in for a rude awakening when they discover that panels are more likely to focus on topics such as “Marxism and Globalization;” “What's the Matter with Whiteness,” and “Queering Faulkner.”

This book is must-reading for anyone interested in learning more about the mindset of faculty members who are tasked with teaching the great works of the English language to our nation's students.