

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Puja Sangar

Tel: (650) 724-4211

Fax: (650) 736-1784

Email: puja.sangar@stanford.edu

Academic Freedom at the Dawn of a New Century **How Terrorism, Governments, and Cultural Wars Impact Free Speech**

Edited by Evan Gerstmann and Matthew J. Streb

“This outstanding book will be invaluable to anyone interested in the issue of academic freedom. Gerstmann and Streb have assembled some of the leading scholars and advocates in the field, and they confront the issue in balanced, thoughtful, and interesting ways.”

—Nadine Strossen,
President, American Civil Liberties Union, and Professor, New York Law School

“The essays in this book examine the notion of academic freedom in a nuanced and controversial manner. Given the controversies over academic freedom since 9/11, this volume will receive attention from both academics and interested lay readers.”

—Philip A. Klinkner,
Hamilton College

Conservative activist David Horowitz recently founded the organization Students for Academic Freedom in order to “challenge professors who the organization believes are promoting their personal beliefs in the classroom.” He published a list of 101 of the most dangerous academics, faulting them for “indoctrinating” students with their radical political beliefs. Critics of Horowitz’s group counter that his and similar organizations “are engaging in a witch hunt to stifle thought and limit speech.” Clearly, this debate is one that lies at the center of the struggle for academic freedom.

Academic Freedom at the Dawn of a New Century explores such recent debates. It also discusses current debates over education versus indoctrination, self-censorship, and recent affronts to academic freedom that seem to be growing more threatening every day, such as the seizing of library records by the government, the withering of tenure, university ties to private industry, the persistency of mandatory loyalty oaths for faculty,

the expansion of institutional review boards, restrictions on access to information, and barriers to foreign students.

The 1915 Declaration of Principles was the foundation for protecting freedom of speech in academia. But since then, academics have not been immune to censorship of their free-expression. The McCarthy era of the late 1940s and 1950s saw a great erosion of academic freedom and civil liberties brought on by governmental intimidation. More recently, this assault has been renewed since the attacks of September 11th.

This volume broadly explores the state of academic freedom in the United States and abroad. How has the renewed emphasis on patriotism affected the “culture wars” that aroused so much controversy on American campuses? And how does academic freedom in the United States compare to that of other nations? In Latin America, academics who conduct research on controversial subjects may face threats of violence, while private institutions provide few protections upholding free speech. The liberal democracies of Western Europe are struggling with maintaining civil liberties and academic freedom in the face of terrorist threats. And then there are countries, such as Iraq and Iran, where academics have had to flee abroad due to untenable repression and censorship.

To engage these crucial questions, the editors have assembled some of the nation's leading experts on academic freedom, from a broad range of disciplines including law, political science, and the history of science.

Despite these troubled times, the book is cautiously optimistic. Academic freedom in its most traditional sense—speech in the classroom—has been protected, and yet often only after a vigorous fight. Despite the subtle tools the government uses to undermine freedom, independent judges, organizations, faculty and students retain the ability to fight for and uphold the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Evan Gerstmann writes, “The potential threats to academic freedom are many, and complacency is far from warranted. Thomas Jefferson’s admonition of “eternal vigilance” remains as true as ever and even more so in our nervous age.”

Evan Gerstmann is associate professor and chair of the department of political science at Loyola Marymount University. He has published two books on constitutional law, *The Constitutional Class: Gays, Lesbians and the Failure of Class-Based Equal Protection* (1999) and *Same-Sex Marriage and the Constitution* (2003).

Matthew J. Streb is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Northern Illinois University. He is the author of *The New Electoral Politics of Race* and coauthor of *Law and Election Politics*.

Forthcoming in **September 2006**

260 pp.

\$50.00 (cloth)

0-80475444-6

To schedule an author event or interview, please contact Puja Sangar by telephone at (650) 724-4211 or by email at puja.sangar@stanford.edu.

