
Academic Freedom in Post- September 11 America

A Research Guide

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One only has to pick up a newspaper to learn of the continuing implications of September 11 on our political lives, but the terrorist attacks have had far reaching cultural and academic consequences as well. In her guide to academic freedom in a post-September 11 America, Janet Beuthe Anderson surveys the resources that inform the growing debate surrounding this topic. As librarians and academics struggle to navigate the newly besieged information world, her guide will be of great use to all of us wondering what new lines have been created, how we can work to eradicate some of those new lines, and how we can shore up the lines that protect our daily work.

As a recent graduate of the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University, Bloomington, Anderson is in a unique position to create this guide as she is both a researcher on the topic and immersed in a world affected by the very issues she researches. A member of the American Library Association and the Progressive Librarians Guild, Anderson has long been interested in the topic of censorship and free speech and spent part of her time at Indiana researching literature related to academic freedom after September 11.—*Editor*

Academic freedom has long been an important issue to those in the academic profession, yet few fully grasp what academic freedom entails. Does it protect only the faculty of a university? What about other employees or officials? Is there a difference between public versus private colleges? Do students have the right to academic freedom, and, if not, should they? What exactly is protected under academic freedom? How is this freedom ensured? Many more questions and concerns may arise when the topic of academic freedom is discussed, which illustrates both the importance and uncertainty surrounding this subject.

The aspects involved with this issue have become ever more uncertain as well as more disputed, controversial, and significant since two commercial passenger jet airliners flew into the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001. Much like the Cold War in the 1950s, the new War on Terror has brought with it an examination of what is being taught and what information is available to citizens of America. Also, similar to the McCarthyism of the Cold War era, many in the field of academia are crying out in anger at what some see as invasions of privacy and witch-hunt tactics aimed at weeding out potential terrorists.

With such practices and questions arising, it only made sense that academic freedom policies be reexamined in a way

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that allows the public to take part. While there is much written on this often controversial topic generally, there is not as much available about the role of academic freedom in a post-September 11 America, and when resources are unearthed, it is often hard to extract the unbiased, educational resources from the editorialized and politically charged materials. This research guide attempts to do precisely that—allow those in academic settings (including librarians, faculty, students, and staff) to discover the available sources addressing this issue. The need for this research guide is due in part to the need to define and clarify the questions surrounding academic freedom and to the fact that no such guide has been compiled since the events of September 11. The most recently published bibliography on this topic was Stephen Aby and James Kuhn's *Academic Freedom: A Guide to the Literature* (Greenwood Press) in 2000. Their guide, which covers more than 480 sources and is organized into 11 categories, provides essential information on the topic, including detailed annotations ranging between 150 and 300 words for each source, but lacks information that is pertinent since September 11. Therefore the aim of this guide is to encourage librarians to broaden their collection of recent resources on this topic, both for scholarly research as well as to provide support to those who may have concerns about academic freedom as it affects them directly.

For the purposes of this research guide, *academic freedom* is defined as “a right claimed by the accredited educator, as teacher and as investigator, to interpret his findings and to communicate his conclusions without being subjected to any interference, molestation, or penalization because the conclusions are unacceptable to some constituted authority within or beyond the institution.”¹ The majority of monographs selected are recent and valuable sources pertaining to present-day issues surrounding academic freedom, but a core collection of books of historical importance are also included as it is necessary to understand the history of academic freedom. Web resources have been selected on the basis of impartial and useful information provided and include a variety of perspectives on academic freedom that provide valuable information as well as links for further sources. This guide will serve as a tool for education professionals and prove useful for collection development purposes, encouraging librarians to continuously add to their collections and to seek out resources of varied aspects and views while maintaining key historical sources.

ENCYCLOPEDIAS, DICTIONARIES AND HANDBOOKS

Abowd, Tom, et al. *Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility after 9/11: A Handbook for Scholars and Teachers*. Task Force on Middle East Anthropology, 2006, www.meanthro.org/Handbook-1.pdf (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

Written in large part because of the events on September 11, this handbook aims to prevent the silencing of those who teach Middle East and Islamic Studies. However, the writers and researchers clearly point out that it is not just those who study these topics who are affected. The intention of this

handbook is to support those who may encounter attacks on or for their work. The overall tone is optimistic, though, as the collaborators point out, “the commitment to thoughtful, critical, and engaged teaching and scholarship that sometimes makes academics targets of attack also produces important skills that can help in a response.”

Brown, Christopher M. and Benjamin Baez. “Academic Freedom.” In *Higher Education in the United States: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. J. F. Forest and Kevin Kinser. Vol. 1, 8–12. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2002 (ISBN: 978-1-576-07248-6).

In this entry the authors clearly define academic freedom and how it pertains to higher education. Including statements by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Association of American Colleges on the topic as well as legal matters such as the case of *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, this resource will be valuable to anyone interested in academic freedom within higher education. Though there is no direct mention of the events of September 11, the authors do discuss the economic and political influences on academic freedom as well as how this freedom is affected by modern-day conservatism.

Haydel, Judith and Henry B. Sirgo. “Academic Freedom.” In *The Encyclopedia of Civil Liberties in America*. Ed. David Schultz and John R. Vile. Vol. 1, 4–7. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe Reference, 2005 (ISBN: 978-0-765-68063-1).

The first volume of this three-volume set includes excellent historical background on academic freedom. In a concise yet comprehensive manner, the topic is covered from its beginnings in Ancient Greece to the current controversy over the USA PATRIOT Act. Also included are important case accounts as well as government acts that have affected academic freedom in America.

Ritchie, Daniel E. “Academic Freedom.” In *American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. Bruce Frohnen, Jeremy Beer, and Jeffrey O. Nelson, 4–7. Wilmington, Del.: ISI Books, 2006 (ISBN: 978-1-932-23644-6).

Looking at academic freedom from the position of a conservative, Ritchie examines important cases and policies involved with the issue. Ritchie claims that knowledge is the key in determining academic freedom rather than politics or religion. An interesting perspective is laid out in his essay, and he illustrates that, although views of academic freedom may differ between the conservative and the liberal, both sides understand its importance.

BOOKS OR FREQUENTLY MENTIONED TEXTS

Aby, Stephen H., ed. *The Academic Bill of Rights Debate: A Handbook*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2007 (ISBN: 978-0-275-99244-6).

Written on the controversial topic of an Academic Bill of Rights (ABOR), these essays tell both sides of the story. As

conservatives attempt to curb liberal radicals in academia, the ABOR is an ongoing debate seemingly between the right and left. However, this collection manages to remain reasonably neutral and is able to point out the similar stances between those for and against the ABOR (such as the principle that no faculty member's employment status should be affected by his or her political, social, or religious views). Also included are an in-depth annotated bibliography and appendixes that contain the ABOR, the 1940 statement by the AAUP, and various statements on the issue.

Doumani, Beshara, ed. *Academic Freedom after September 11*. New York: Zone Books, 2006 (ISBN: 978-1-890-95162-7).

This collection of essays serves as an excellent overview of how the events of September 11 have affected academic freedom. In the first essay, the editor states that academic freedom is facing its most serious threat since the McCarthy era, with Islamic terrorism taking the place of Russian communism. Discussing the USA PATRIOT Act and various other attempts to oust any “un-American” faculty or administrator in education, this book attempts to go beyond pointing fingers and placing blame. In detailed essays, writers discuss the history and politics of academic freedom and how it relates to a post–September 11 America as well as what changes may need to occur to ensure this freedom continues.

Gerstmann, Evan and Mathew J. Streb, eds. *Academic Freedom at the Dawn of a New Century: How Terrorism, Governments, and Culture Wars Impact Free Speech*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Pr., 2006 (ISBN: 978-0-804-75444-6).

Gerstmann and Streb have put together a collection of works concentrated solely on academic freedom in the new millennium. The book is broken down into four sections: an introduction expressing the renewed importance of the topic, essays on how academic freedom affects American universities, its consequences for other countries, and a conclusion that includes remarks and reflections.

Horowitz, David. *Indoctrination U: The Left's War Against Academic Freedom*. New York: Encounter Books, 2007 (ISBN: 978-1-594-03190-8).

Horowitz, the controversial scholar behind the Academic Bill of Rights, is a leading voice for the conservative right. He believes that faculty in today's universities are pushing their political agendas into the curriculum and are not receptive of students who may disagree. He has thus written *Indoctrination U* to shed light on what he believes are the policies and actions that discriminate against conservative scholars while outlining how he has fought to diminish such discrimination. Though hotly debated, this book provides interesting insight into a view that is less commonly held by those in academia.

Johansen, Bruce E. *Silenced! Academic Freedom, Scientific Inquiry, and the First Amendment under Siege in America*. Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2007 (ISBN: 978-0-275-99686-4).

Dealing directly with the concerns brought about

through the administration of George W. Bush, Bruce Johansen draws a rather bleak portrait of what's become of civil liberties in post–September 11 America. Spurred by the controversy surrounding Ward Churchill (a University of Colorado professor who called the martyred victims of September 11 “little Eichmanns”) and the encompassing cries of outrage aimed at academics, Johansen began documenting the surrounding event. Likening the media circus and death threats Churchill and others learned to live with to the Salem Witch Hunts, the author passionately depicts a world where educators and researchers are under siege. Focusing much of the book on specific incidents and the laws and policies that impede education and research, the author has compiled a contemporary portrait of the dark side of academic freedom in America.

O'Neil, Robert. *Academic Freedom in the Wired World*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Pr. 2008 (ISBN: 978-0-674-02660-5).

O'Neil relies on his expertise as a professor, AAUP member, and advocate of academic freedom to put together this comprehensive record of what academic freedom means in today's world. Full of modern-day examples, the book aims to serve as a foundation allowing academics to protect this freedom. The author discusses legal issues involving academic freedom while also emphasizing how technology, the arts, and times of crisis affect academia.

Sides, Charles H., ed. *Freedom of Information in a Post 9-11 World*. Amityville, N.Y.: Baywood, 2006 (ISBN: 978-0-895-03302-4).

In this collective work, nine scholars discuss the effects September 11 had on issues of freedom involving technology. In an attempt to answer the question of whether or not there is a time when information can be too available, these essays analyze many characteristics of freedom, including legal, intercultural, and business aspects. By using both historical evidence and present-day illustrations, the authors give readers a best-case and worst-case scenario regarding the future.

Turk, James L. and Allan Manson, eds. *Free Speech in Fearful Times: After 9/11 in Canada, the U.S., Australia, & Europe*. Toronto: James Lorimer, 2007 (ISBN: 978-1-550-28986-2).

This book is a comprehensive collection of essays discussing how academic freedom has changed or become more important since September 11. Though the title indicates that the coverage is limited only to the twenty-first century, many of the entries include apt historical comparisons that aid in better understanding of the subject. Primarily focusing on legislative effects, this book questions the antiterror laws that put civil liberties at risk and suggests ways to better protect these liberties.

Wilson, John K. *Patriotic Correctness: Academic Freedom and its Enemies*. Boulder, Colo.: Paradigm, 2008 (ISBN: 978-1-594-51193-6).

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Addressing academic freedom issues of the past five years, this book deals specifically with issues that have arisen since (and in many cases because of) September 11. The book itself is divided into chapters covering varied topics such as David Horowitz's Academic Bill of Rights, technology, religion, and sex. Wilson uses media reports and university documents and studies to highlight the threat academic freedom is facing. With such detailed accounts of cases where academic freedom has been violated, this book is sure to be a valuable resource for years to come.

BOOKS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

Hofstadter, Richard and Walter P. Metzger. *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*. New York: Columbia Univ. Pr., 1955 (ISBN: 978-0231021012).

Providing documentation as well as an arrangement and analysis of academic freedom starting with the European history of the twelfth century and continuing to the 1950s when the book was written, this book is one of the preeminent resources on the subject. Focused on the history and evolution of academic freedom, this book dissects crucial events and people involved while tackling the questions of why freedom exists and why it has been limited. Divided into two parts (the first written by Hofstadter and the second by Metzger) the book is an essential resource for those researching academic freedom.

MacIver, Robert M. *Academic Freedom in Our Time*. 1955; repr. New York: Gordian Pr., 1967 (ISBN: 978-0-87752-065-8).

This book, prepared for the American Academic Freedom Project at Columbia University, provides concrete cases where the author believes academic freedom has been violated. The author begins with an introduction that discusses what academic freedom is and why it's important. Subsequent chapters detail various aspects of academic freedom, such as the academic government and freedom for the student. Originally published in the latter years of the McCarthy Era, this source gives researchers key insight into what was happening in academia and the effect it had on academic freedom.

Schrecker, Ellen W. *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*. New York: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1986 (ISBN: 978-0-195-03557-5).

Focused on academic freedom as inhibited by McCarthyism during the Cold War, this extensive book includes more than 140 oral interviews as well as FBI materials. Schrecker specifically details faculty members who were known communists and lost their jobs because of their political leanings. This raises the question of whether or not an instructor's politics should affect his or her job security as well as the concern over what can and cannot be said in a classroom. Originally published in 1986, the book incited much debate over incidents occurring more than twenty years prior and it remains a valuable resource today.

PERIODICALS

Academe. Washington, D.C.: American Association of University Professors, 1915-. Bi-monthly (ISSN 0190-2946). www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

This periodical regularly publishes articles on how academic freedom influences tenure, appointments, and other related aspects.

Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom. Chicago: American Library Association, 1952-. Bi-monthly (ISSN 0028-9485). <https://members.ala.org/nif> (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

This periodical reports threats to First Amendment rights by tracing what is in danger of being removed from libraries. With legal information and success stories, this is an essential part of every library's collection.

Times Higher Education. United Kingdom: TSL Education, 1971-. Weekly (ISSN 0049-3929). www.timeshighereducation.co.uk (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

Although this periodical is published in the United Kingdom, many of its articles remain pertinent to the United States as they focus on free speech, equal rights, technology, and union issues.

WEB RESOURCES

American Association of University Professors. www.aaup.org (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

The purpose of the AAUP is to advance academic freedom, and this site provides a variety of useful resources. Included are publications and research, policy information, and tips on how to get involved. As a highly respected professional organization, this Web resource is invaluable.

American Civil Liberties Union. www.aclu.org/about/index.html (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

The ACLU is dedicated to ensuring the rights of individuals, and included among these rights is the freedom of speech. Members consider themselves guardians of freedom, and in that role they frequently take stands against those who threaten academic freedom. The site's archives include letters to government officials, information about court cases, and articles documenting current infringements against academic freedom as well as links to other pertinent sites.

American Federation of Teachers. *Academic Freedom in Higher Education*. www.aft.org/topics/academic-freedom (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

This section of the American Federation of Teachers' website offers insight into how educators view academic freedom. The site clearly states the importance of academic freedom and also addresses the topic of how these issues pertain to students.

Bowdoin College. Intellectual Freedom Project. <http://library.bowdoin.edu/news/intellectual-freedom.shtml> (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

This page was developed as a part of the Intellectual Freedom Project Display at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, initiated in reaction to the attacks on September 11. The site provides links to websites and e-articles relating to academic freedom and other issues related to the First Amendment.

Students for Academic Freedom. www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

This site, and the group for which it's named, is the brainchild of David Horowitz, who authored the Academic Bill of Rights to ensure intellectual diversity is passed on to students.

Wilson, John K. College Freedom. www.collegefreedom.org (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).

Collegefreedom.org was originally developed in 2002 by a PhD candidate finishing a dissertation on the history of academic freedom. The site has very clear historical information as well as links to related sites.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

U.S. Congress. House and Senate. Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT Act) Act of 2001. HR 2975, 107th Congress, 1st session. Public Law 107-56, 115 Stat. 272.

Approved forty-five days after the September 11 attacks, this is a monumental law affecting academic freedom. Within the community debating these issues, it is considered the bill that single-handedly brought the War on Terror (and in turn the loss of privacies and freedoms) to the forefront of education. "Title II—Enhanced Surveillance Procedures," which allows for the interception of "questionable" communications as well as the increased surveillance of communication and records (including library records) bears the most consequences for academic freedom. The legality of this bill is still a much-debated issue, but its effects on academic freedom and education in general (while still yet to be fully determined) is nevertheless an important consideration.

U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. *Higher Education for Freedom Act*. HR 2004 IH, 110th Congress, 1st Session. H.R. 2004.

This bill, which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, attempts to "strengthen postsecondary programs and courses in the subjects of traditional American history, free institutions, and Western civilization" in order to protect the American heritage in a time when traditional ideals are being threatened. Spurred by the fact that most institutions of higher education no longer require such courses, Congress recommends that college students, especially those entering the field of education, must take courses that will allow them to better understand the history of America. In addition, Congress proposes that institutions enacting such requirements will be eligible to receive grant money. Though there is no direct relation to academic freedom, the bill itself serves as an example of why some colleges and universities may be less willing to support nontraditional courses.

Superintendent of Documents. U.S. Senate. *Is Intellectual Diversity an Endangered Species on America's College Campuses?* Hearing before the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. First Session, October 29, 2003.

This hearing outlines the concerns senators had regarding the lack of diversity in higher education, specifically regarding "traditional" courses in American history and literature. In his opening statement, Senator Judd Gregg explicitly states that this hearing is not intended to restrict academic freedom, but rather evaluate the quality of education students are receiving. With testimony by the president of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, the director of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, and others within academia, the hearing provides excellent insight into what our government officials think of higher education and how they propose students should be prepared by this education.

Reference

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16. American Library Association, I love Libraries, <http://ilovelibraries.org> (accessed Apr. 20, 2009).
17. Reference and User Services Association, Business Reference and Services Section, Best of the Best Business Websites, www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/sections/brass/brassprotools/bestofthebestbus/bestbestbusiness.cfm (accessed June 19, 2009); Reference and

User Services Association, Machine-Assisted Reference Section, Best Free Reference Web Sites 2009, www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/sections/mars/marspubs/marsbestfreewebsites/marsbestfree2009.cfm (accessed June 19, 2009).

18. For a complete list of RUSA Guidelines, see www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/index.cfm (accessed Apr. 27, 2009).
19. Rich, "Recession Fuels Readers' Escapist Urges."