

## THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VIEWS OF AMERICAN PROFESSORS

Neil Gross  
Harvard University  
[ngross@wjh.harvard.edu](mailto:ngross@wjh.harvard.edu)

Solon Simmons  
George Mason University  
[ssimmon5@gmu.edu](mailto:ssimmon5@gmu.edu)

Working Paper, September 24, 2007

Comments and suggestions for revision welcome

In 1955, Columbia University sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld received a grant from The Ford Foundation's newly established Fund for the Republic – chaired by former University of Chicago President Robert M. Hutchins – to study how American social scientists were faring in the era of McCarthyism. A pioneering figure in the use of social surveys, Lazarsfeld employed interviewers from the National Opinion Research Center and Elmo Roper and Associates to speak with 2451 social scientists at 182 American colleges and universities. A significant number of those contacted reported feeling that their intellectual freedom was being jeopardized in the current political climate (Lazarsfeld and Thielens 1958). In the course of his research, Lazarsfeld also asked his respondents about their political views. Analyzing the survey data on this score with Wagner Thielens in their 1958 book, *The Academic Mind*, Lazarsfeld observed that liberalism and Democratic Party affiliation were much more common among social scientists than within the general population of the United States, and that social scientists at research universities were more liberal than their peers at less prestigious institutions.

Although *The Academic Mind* was published too late to be of any help in the fight against McCarthy (Garfinkel 1987), it opened up a new and exciting area of sociological research: study of the political views of academicians. Sociologists of intellectual life, building on the contributions of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Karl Mannheim, and others, had

long been interested in the political sympathies of intellectuals (see Kurzman and Owens 2002), but most previous work on the topic had been historical in nature and made sweeping generalizations on the basis of a limited number of cases. In the wake of *The Academic Mind*, however, a number of studies appeared that aimed to chart the distribution of political beliefs among college and university professors, to do so using systematic surveys, and to leverage from the effort not simply a better understanding of the academic intelligentsia and its political proclivities, but as well broader insights into political processes. Such studies were given special urgency by the contentious politics of the 1960s, which often centered on college and university campuses and raised the question of the allegiances of professors. Everett Carl Ladd and Seymour Martin Lipset's book, *The Divided Academy* (1976), based largely on a nationally-representative survey of the American faculty carried out in 1969, and Albert Halsey and Martin Trow's *The British Academics* (1971), which analyzed data from a similar survey in the United Kingdom, were the most prominent of these investigations. But as Michael Faia noted in a 1974 article, some half a dozen others were published during the same period (Faia 1974). While Faia himself charged that Lipset, in *The Divided Academy* and other works, had overestimated the liberalism of professors, these studies generally confirmed Lazarsfeld and Thielens's original finding that professors are more liberal than members of many other occupational groups, and concluded that insofar as this was so, professors "represent a negative case to the traditional equation of high socioeconomic status and political conservatism" (Finkelstein 1984:169).

This was important research into an occupation of growing social significance in the post-World War II period, given the tremendous expansion of higher education that took place during this time (Schofer and Meyer 2005) and the associated transformation of college from an "elite" to a "mass" phenomenon (Trow 1973). Much of it was carried out with methodological rigor and theoretical sophistication, and although some of the researchers and funding organizations involved might have hoped that the findings could eventually make their way into debates over the future of higher education, the core agenda was the advancement of social science.

In the 1990s, a few sociologists continued to produce high quality work on the topic (e.g., Hamilton and Hargens 1993; Nakhaie and Brym 1999). But an unfortunate

tendency became evident: increasingly, those social scientists who turned their attention to professors and their politics, and employed the tools of survey research, had as their goal simply to *highlight* the liberalism of the professoriate in order to provide support for conservatives urging the reform of American colleges and universities. Indeed, the last decade in particular has witnessed a concerted mobilization on the part of conservative activists, think tanks, foundations, and some professors aimed at challenging so-called “liberal hegemony” in higher education (Doumani 2006; Messer-Davidow 1993; Slaughter 1988; Wilson 1995), and much recent research on faculty political views – what we term second wave research to contrast with the first wave work of Lazarsfeld, Lipset, and others – has been beholden to this agenda.

With this essay we take a step toward moving the study of professorial politics back into the domain of mainstream sociological inquiry. We report on a major new survey of American college and university professors and their social and political attitudes. In subsequent pieces we will use the survey data to help evaluate some of the claims that have been made about the social mechanisms and processes that account for faculty political views, and to develop new, empirically-grounded theories about the role that higher education institutions, and the professoriate, play in American society. Here our aims are more basic: to survey the terrain of previous research on the topic, introduce our study and its methodology, and use it to paint a preliminary portrait of faculty political opinion that other researchers can use as a starting point in their investigations. Where other recent studies have characterized the American college and university faculty as not simply extremely liberal, but nearly uniformly so (Klein and Stern 2004-5; Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte 2005; Tobin and Weinberg 2006), we show that while conservatives, Republicans, and Republican voters are rare within the faculty ranks, on many issues there are as many professors who hold center/center-left views as there are those who cleave to more liberal positions, while the age distribution indicates that, in terms of their overall political orientation, professors are becoming more moderate over time, and less radical.

Our essay proceeds in three steps. We first tell the story of previous research on professorial politics, pointing out along the way the methodological shortcomings of several recent studies. In our view, these shortcomings are not so great as to warrant

rejecting the studies out of hand – indeed, we find some consistency between the findings of such studies on certain questions and our own. But the problems do reflect a tendency in recent research to privilege the scoring of political points over methodological care or theoretical acumen. In the second step of the essay, we describe our own methodology. Third, we proceed through the core findings of our study with regard to political self-identification, political party affiliation, voting, a range of social and political attitudes, pedagogy, and views of the university environment, attending where helpful to the distribution of professors' views across disciplines, types of institutions, age, and other variables. A unique feature of our analysis is that, with regard to social and political attitudes, we show how professors' views within different substantive domains – socioeconomic issues, attitudes toward race, gender, and so on – cluster together. We conclude by briefly outlining what we see as the important next steps for sociological research on professors and their politics.

#### RESEARCH ON PROFESSORIAL POLITICS

Some historical background must be filled in before sense can be made of the most recent waves of research on professors and their politics. In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, American colleges functioned as quasi-religious institutions (Marsden 1994; Smith 2003). Although they may have prepared as many students for careers in law or business as for the ministry, most colleges were affiliated with religious denominations, and had as their primary pedagogical goal to instill in members of the American elite those values and character traits – not least religious piety – thought necessary for the proper functioning of the republic. Higher learning was not entirely subordinate to theology, but many college presidents and professors were themselves ministers, and were expected to uphold orthodox views on religious, moral, and political matters.

The emergence of the institution of the American research university in the second half of the nineteenth century dramatically altered the professorial role. Professors at such schools were increasingly expected to advance the causes of knowledge and science, not merely recapitulate religious verities. Formal academic freedom remained nonexistent, and those professors who, in their research or personal pronouncements, offended powerful figures in the community often faced dismissal. But

the fact that scholars at research institutions were now being selected more for their scholarly or scientific aptitude than for their moral virtues – alongside the severing of ties between many schools and their founding religious denominations that was part and parcel of broader processes of secularization – opened the university up to a greater variety of opinion than had previously been possible. This political diversification continued around the turn of the twentieth century as many academic intellectuals became involved with the Progressive movement. Clashes between Progressive-era academics, such as economists Richard T. Ely at Wisconsin or E.A. Ross at Stanford, and those who controlled the purse strings at universities and who were sympathetic to business interests, occasioned the collective mobilization of the professoriate in the 1910s to institutionalize academic freedom protections (Metzger 1955; Post 2006). Such protections proved critical for the growth of social science fields like sociology for which scientific advance and social reform went hand in hand (Ross 1991). During the Depression years, many American intellectuals were radicalized. Although radical intellectualism never had its primary home in the university (Pells 1973), some spillover into the academic arena was inevitable. In the 1940s and 1950s, the mass entry of Jews into academe – many with liberal inclinations – pushed faculty political opinion further to the left, however much widespread commitment among them to the “ethos of science” (Merton 1979) may have minimized the influence of political values on academic work (Hollinger 1996).

It was in this context that McCarthy came to see the university as such a ripe target for attack (Schrecker 1986), and that Lazarsfeld’s survey was born. Three years after the 1952 presidential elections in which 55 percent of the American public had voted for Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lazarsfeld found that only about 30 percent of social scientists reported usually casting their ballots for Republican candidates, and that only 16 percent claimed a Republican party affiliation (Lazarsfeld and Thielens 1958). 46 percent were Democrats, and 36 percent were Independents. What’s more, just under half of the social scientists in Lazarsfeld’s sample scored high on an index he developed to measure “permissive” attitudes toward communism. Lazarsfeld found the liberalism of social scientists unsurprising. The academic mind, he and Thielens argued, is by nature critical and probing, a fact that leads professors to be suspicious of calls to

preserve the current social order at all cost, or return to some status quo ante. They hypothesized that social scientists were especially likely to embody these qualities, for a condition of their professional practice is that they must be “willing to entertain unorthodox ideas as to how a modern society can best function” (Lazarsfeld and Thielens 1958:162). Professors in the United States tend to align themselves with the Democratic Party not simply because it is seen as the party of progress, but also because professors here view themselves as an “occupational minority” in a business-oriented culture, and hence become inclined to vote “for the party which is traditionally the rallying place for protesting minorities” (Lazarsfeld and Thielens 1958:14). Whatever the value of these explanations, Lazarsfeld’s survey provided systematic empirical evidence that already by the mid 1950s, a substantial segment of the American social science community had liberal political leanings.

Other studies from the late 1950s and early 1960s, most limited to a few disciplines or universities, and employing smaller sample sizes, confirmed these findings for the social sciences, but also found that social scientists were the most liberal of all professors. Faia (1974:173) went so far as to conclude from a review of this research that “when professors are included [in survey samples] who are either in the natural sciences or professional schools, the percentage claiming a Democratic affiliation will drop accordingly and will be well below the proportion indicating a Democratic affiliation in the electorate generally.” Valid though Lazarsfeld and Thielens’s findings may have been in themselves, “one must *not* infer,” the authors of one of such study insisted, “that college professors in all disciplines tend to prefer the Democratic party” (Eitzen and Maranell 1968:151, emphasis in original).

More reliable evidence about faculty political opinion in the university as a whole, however, would have to await the publication of Ladd and Lipset’s research. Several of their core arguments and findings had been aired prior to the publication of *The Divided Academy* – for example, in Lipset’s book, *Rebellion in the University* (1972), which examined the student uprisings of the day and faculty response to them, or in a 1972 article about the politics of sociologists (Lipset and Ladd 1972), a sharp attack on the thesis of Alvin Gouldner (1970) that sociologists at elite schools, like Talcott Parsons at Harvard, tend toward conservatism (also see Ladd and Lipset 1973). But it

was in their 1976 book that a more unified thesis was advanced. Although “quantitative data derived from post-World War II attitudes surveys, plus associated other earlier reports of the political orientations of the American professoriate,” led them to the conclusion that “academics have consistently leaned to the left” (Ladd and Lipset 1976:15), in their view the 1960s represented a watershed moment in the history of faculty politics, a decade when a new generation of academics – “who knew neither Hitler nor Stalin” and “found no reason to hold back their criticisms” of American society (23) – entered the university. It was these professors who were instrumental in making American college campuses centers of anti-Vietnam War activity, and who lent their support to at least limited efforts to democratize the university. Examining data from the huge 1969 faculty survey they conducted on behalf of the Carnegie Commission, as well as data from a smaller 1972 followup survey, Ladd and Lipset found that 46 percent of professors described their overall political identity as left or liberal, 27 percent as middle of the road, and 28 percent as conservative, with younger faculty members more liberal than older ones. On average in recent years the professors in their sample reported voting between 20 and 25 percent more Democratic than the American electorate overall. In terms of disciplinary differences, Ladd and Lipset noted that in both the 1968 and 1972 elections, social scientists and humanists had thrown their support behind Democratic candidates Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern, respectively, in nearly equal measure, that of the remaining major disciplinary groups professors in the physical and biological sciences were the next most likely to vote Democratic (with physicists the most liberal of the hard sciences), and that the Republican Party had managed to command solid majorities among professors of business, engineering, and agriculture. What explained these differences, along with the finding, first noted by Lazarsfeld, that liberalism increases the higher one looks in the institutional status structure of academe? Ladd and Lipset argued that intellectualism – the general quality that defined the intellectual stratum, characterized by Edward Shils as involving a characterological tendency toward inquiry, and “penetration beyond the screen of immediate concrete experience” (Shils 1958:1) – is unevenly distributed among faculty members (for general discussion, see Lipset and Dobson 1972). It is more often, they claimed, found among social scientists and humanists, many of whom pursue far reaching reexaminations of

taken-for-granted truths about the human experience, and less often found among professors of business and engineering, whose investigations tend to be more technical and practical. Intellectualism, they further theorized, is also a quality found more in abundance among the most successful scholars – those most driven to pursue new knowledge, and who tend to find homes in top-ranked research schools. Insofar as “the ‘natural’ posture of the intellectual is critic, and currently that of the intellectual in the United States is [as] critic from a liberal-left perspective” (Ladd and Lipset 1976:134), it is variation in intellectualism that does the most to explain the distribution of political orientations across fields and types of institutions. Although Ladd and Lipset unsatisfactorily operationalized intellectualism with a measure of intellectual productivity, conflating disposition and achievement, their statistical analyses suggested that disciplinary and institutional affiliation were much stronger predictors of professorial liberalism than were professors’ class backgrounds, providing yet another reason to think that class theories of politics are problematic when applied to academe.

The patterns of political belief observed by Ladd and Lipset were undoubtedly shaped by the unique historical trajectory of intellectualism in the United States, but the survey of British professors by Halsey and Trow (1971) suggested that more general social processes may also have been at play. Analyzing data from two surveys, they found that in the 1962 elections, 38 percent of their respondents had voted Conservative, while 45 percent cast their vote for Labour and 15 percent for the Liberal Party – a somewhat higher Liberal Party vote than in the general population. Once again, social scientists were found to be the most liberal of professors – about 70 percent could be classified as holding “far left” or “moderate left” political positions – with professors in the humanities not far behind (58 percent left), followed by physical and biological scientists (49 percent), engineers (45 percent), and professors of medicine (44 percent). Those who had attended the most prestigious universities – Oxford and Cambridge – were more likely to hold liberal political views, though Halsey and Trow did not find that a professor’s current position in the institutional status structure correlated with his politics. Unlike Ladd and Lipset, Halsey and Trow also found strong effects of family background. On the one hand, consistent with a class theory of politics, professors whose fathers held professional jobs, and whose families belonged to conservative religious



denominations like the Church of Scotland, were less likely to be Labour supporters. On the other hand, and running in the opposite direction, professors whose fathers had completed more schooling, holding occupation constant, were more likely to be liberals. Indeed, it was the liberalizing effects of education that, according to Halsey and Trow, explained much of “the ‘leftism’ of academic men,” who had simply had more than their peers of “the experience of university life,” an experience that had “loosen[ed] the loyalties of their origins, and expose[d] them to the political values of the academic community” (401-2).

Although Faia (1974) was correct that Ladd and Lipset were somewhat tendentious in their insistence on the degree of faculty liberalism – their own data, as Faia noted, showed that some 43 percent of college and university professors nationwide had voted for Richard Nixon in 1972,<sup>1</sup> while careful analysis of a social and political attitudes scale they constructed revealed that “differences between social scientists and engineers computed as the difference between the percentage of the two most liberal and the two most conservative quintiles of academic opinion were a full *80 percentage points*” (Townsend 2000:745, emphasis in original), a fact they occasionally played down – there can be no question but that this was path-breaking social science. It may have departed from the conventions of contemporary scholarship in that it mobilized mostly descriptive statistics to identify possible explanatory mechanisms rather than using multiple regression techniques – not yet ubiquitous – to test for their effects, but it nevertheless represented serious inquiry into a key dimension of social life for an important occupational group. Beyond that, as we suggested in our introduction, first wave researchers concerned with the politics of professors often sought to transcend discussion of the immediate issue and examine the implications of their findings for understanding more general social processes. Work on professorial attitudes was especially important for political sociology. In the 1970s, a number of scholars began to advance the hypothesis that class politics was taking a new form in the advanced industrial

---

<sup>1</sup> In their book on the 1972 elections, Ladd and Lipset argued that this result was not anomalous: 56 percent of the faculty voted Democratic, as compared to 39 percent of the national electorate, a 17 percentage point difference, and well within the margin of the 20-25 percent lead they found the Democrats to usually have among the faculty. However, they did acknowledge that somewhat more faculty than usual had voted Republican in the election, which they attributed to the fact that some “normally Democratic professors... had reacted negatively to the activism of recent years and... its attendant manifestations” (88).

democracies, and among the evidence cited was the political proclivities of intellectuals. His harangue against Parsons aside, for example, Gouldner (1979), suggested that the liberalism of intellectuals in the post-World War II era heralded the arrival of a “new class” of knowledge workers that would profoundly alter the dynamics of class contestation. Taking a different tack, Lipset soon broadened his observation that class theories of voting don’t apply well to professors into the claim that, in the context of post-war affluence and the growth of new political alignments, class theories of voting were losing their explanatory power in general (see especially Lipset's discussion of professors and the new class in Bruce-Briggs 1979; also see Clark and Lipset 1991). Even critics of the new class and/or “death of class” theses readily acknowledged that “artists, writers, journalists, academics, and social scientists stand out for their liberalism,” comprising “the most liberal occupational wing of the professional-managerial class” (Brint 1985:401-2; for discussion, see Manza, Hout, and Brooks 1995) – a fact that had to be incorporated into new theoretical syntheses (Brooks and Manza 1997; Manza and Brooks 1999). In this way, discussion of the politics of professors fed into broader social-scientific concerns.

Little additional research on professorial politics per se was published in the 1980s, but in the 1990s two studies appeared that took up where Ladd and Lipset and Halsey and Trow left off. In a 1993 article, Richard Hamilton and Lowell Hargens examined faculty survey data gathered by the Carnegie Commission (and then the Carnegie Foundation) in 1975 and 1984, comparing them to the 1969 Carnegie data analyzed by Ladd and Lipset. Focusing on Ladd and Lipset’s political self-identification question, which asked respondents to locate themselves on a five point scale running from “left” to “strongly conservative,” Hamilton and Hargens found that over the course of the 1970s and early 1980s faculty political opinion – far from undergoing extreme liberalization as posited by conservative critics – actually grew somewhat more conservative in the aggregate. Although during this time the proportion of professors identifying themselves as leftist increased by about one percent, “liberal self-identifications declined by roughly seven points.... Middle-of-the-road positioning.... was unchanged. Conservative identifications, both moderate and strong, showed increases, these together being approximately equal to the liberal losses. The overall or

net tendency, clearly, was toward greater conservatism” (Hamilton and Hargens 1993:607). In the 1984 sample, 5.7 percent of professors identified themselves as being on the left, 33.8 percent as liberal, 29.2 percent as middle of the road, 29.6 percent as moderate conservatives, and 4.2 percent as strong conservatives. Aggregate growth in conservatism was found to be primarily a result of increasing conservative self-identification within the most conservative fields. In addition, whereas Ladd and Lipset had posited the existence of strong and enduring cohort effects stemming from campus activism in the 1960s, Hamilton and Hargens reported that the newest cohorts of faculty from the 1970s and early 1980s were the most likely to identify themselves as being on the left, a trend counterbalanced by the fact that faculty political sentiment seemed to moderate as academicians aged and acquired positions of greater responsibility in the university.

Unable to leverage these kinds of time-series comparisons, another interesting study – this one by Canadian sociologists M. Reza Nakhaie and Robert Brym (1999) – used data from a 1987 survey of Canadian professors to reexamine the Ladd and Lipset thesis that there are few effects of class background on faculty political views. Nakhaie and Brym found that while father’s occupation did not predict overall political self-identification, academicians from lower-tier institutions, in lower academic ranks, and who had lower pay were more likely to be liberals, while professors from working-class backgrounds were more likely to be supportive of faculty unions. They speculated that American prosperity during the years covered by the Ladd and Lipset survey may have masked similar class effects in the United States, and called for an approach to faculty political views that would be cognizant of the fact that “intellectuals are members of many groups, including classes,” and that would “explain.... their political attitudes” by “assess[ing] the cumulative lifetime impact of the institutional milieu through which they pass as these milieu are shaped by larger class and other group forces in particular historical contexts” (Nakhaie and Brym 1999:348).

As these studies were being carried out, larger social forces were in motion that would alter the intellectual terrain for investigations of faculty politics. We will not consider here the range of sociohistorical developments that abetted the rise of the New Right in this country, despite the increasingly liberal attitudes of its populace on a variety

of social issues, and that helped deliver a series of key electoral victories for the Republican Party in state and national elections in the closing decades of the twentieth century and beyond (Hacker and Pierson 2005). We do take note, however, of two phenomena germane to our study: on the one hand, the conservative strategy of attempting to influence public opinion on a wide variety of matters by starting think-tanks – most independent of academe – funded by conservative foundations that would build and then leverage ties to the increasingly consolidated mass media in order to get their message across (Ricci 1994; Smith 1991; Stefancic and Delgado 1996); and on the other hand, the rhetorical strategy that accompanied this institution-building effort of calling into question the legitimacy of intellectuals on the other side of the political aisle who would contest conservative claims. These were not the only factors to have led to a conservative targeting of liberal academicians in the late 1980s and 1990s, as expressed in texts like William Bennett’s *To Reclaim a Legacy* (1984), Allan Bloom’s *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987), Roger Kimball’s *Tenured Radicals* (1990), or Dinesh D’Souza’s *Illiberal Education* (1991). But the targeting of liberal professors should be seen as part of a wider mobilization strategy.

It was in this context that a new wave of faculty studies appeared. Where earlier studies had been thoughtful social scientific investigations, the new studies were closer to thinly disguised works of political advocacy intended to back up the charge of “liberal bias” in academe. The first to appear and grab headlines – columnist John Tierney devoted an entire *New York Times* piece to it (Tierney 2004) – involved two interrelated inquiries led by economist Daniel Klein that were initially published in *Academic Questions*, the journal of the conservative National Association of Scholars. For the first of these inquiries, Klein and a student coauthor examined voter registration records in Northern California to determine what proportion of faculty members at the University of California-Berkeley and Stanford were Democrats or Republicans (Klein and Western 2004-5). A parallel project, examining a larger number of campuses, had been undertaken a few years earlier by conservative activist David Horowitz (Horowitz and Lehrer 2002), but in Klein’s opinion Horowitz’s research was not up to “the standards of professional scholarship” (6). Klein described his own study as part of an effort at “ascertaining the basic facts about ideological lopsidedness in academia,” and noted that

it was motivated in large part by his desire, as a self-described libertarian, “to understand why our political culture does not more readily and thoroughly embrace libertarian ideas.” Of the 1497 faculty members investigated, party registration information was obtained for 67 percent. At Berkeley, 49 percent of faculty members were found to be registered Democrats as compared to 5 percent registered Republicans, while at Stanford the numbers were 46.8 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively. Despite the fact that, as economists Ethan Cohen-Cole and Steven Durlauf pointed out in a response, the high proportion of faculty for whom no registration information could be obtained meant that Klein could claim no more than that “the percentage of Democrats at UC Berkeley lies between 49.0% and 82.3%, the percentage of Republicans lies between 5.0% and 37.3%, and the percentage of nonpartisan/declined to state lies between 10.5% and 42.8%,” (Cohen-Cole and Durlauf 2005:4), with comparable numbers for Stanford, he nevertheless drew the conclusion that on the basis of his study it was now “established fact” that leading colleges and universities are “one-party campus[es]” (30).

Showing greater sensitivity at other moments to the obvious problems with this methodology – the fact that one could have relatively little confidence in the estimates, the inattention to Independents, the inability to distinguish liberals from conservatives within the ranks of each party, the exclusive focus on elite research institutions in one of the most liberal regions of the country – Klein also set out to conduct a national survey of professors in six fields: anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, political science, and sociology, reporting the results with sociologist Charlotta Stern (Klein and Stern 2004-5). Rather than identifying professors for inclusion in the sample through the institutions where they worked, Klein sent questionnaires to a random sample of members of the relevant disciplinary associations. This was so in every field except philosophy. The American Philosophical Association refused to provide him with a membership list, so instead he sampled from the roster of the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy, whose members, including many political theorists teaching in political science departments, may or may not resemble philosophers working in other subfields. He sent out 5486 questionnaires, and received back 1678, for a final response rate of 30.9 percent. He did not report any effort to assess non-response bias. Because he sampled members of disciplinary associations, many of his respondents –

more than half of economists, and about a quarter of those in other fields – were not academics, so he was forced to restrict his analysis to the approximately 72 percent who claimed academic affiliations (his questionnaire did not ask respondents what kind of academic position they currently held). Klein measured voting behavior by asking, “To which political party have the candidates you’ve voted for in the past ten years mostly belonged?” – a question that fails to specify type of electoral contest or to ask about the frequency of voting. 80.5 percent of his respondents marked Democratic and 7.9 percent Republican. On the basis of these data, Klein and Stern reported a Democratic to Republican vote ratio of 30.2:1 in anthropology, 28.0:1 in sociology, and between 3:1 and 13.5:1 in the remaining fields, and estimated that this meant in the social sciences and humanities as a whole that the ratio of Democratic to Republican voters was between 7:1 and 9:1. They interpreted this as evidence that on college and university campuses today “non-Left points of view have been marginalized,” and that current faculty politics are characterized by “groupthink.” The questionnaire also contained a number of items that attempted to measure respondents’ views on policy issues – for example, it asked them to indicate “your present views” on “minimum wage laws,” with no greater specificity. Klein and Stern asserted that analysis of these items showed “rather little heterogeneity of opinion among Democrats,” though the *Academic Questions* piece asked readers to take their word for this rather than providing the quantitative evidence to back up the claim.

The issue was taken up in more detail in an article they published in *Critical Review* in 2005 (Klein and Stern 2005). Here they acknowledged the possibility that “there may be a Democratic/left tilt in [the] memberships” of the disciplinary associations from which they sampled, but offered reassurances that such a tilt, if it did exist, is not “large” (262). Moving beyond restatements of their claims about voting patterns, which in their view showed that since the late 1960s “the Democratic preponderance” in the social sciences and humanities “has roughly doubled” (266), they now focused on the policy attitudes questions, looking at how Democratic and Republican professors in their sample scored on each. Their most general conclusion was that “Democrats and Republicans [in academe] generally fit the ideal types of liberals and conservatives,” with liberals “suspicious of private business and market forces... [and] permissive about

‘deviant’ lifestyles and choices,” and conservatives “friendlier to business” and “patriot[s]” who “believe... the government should protect the American people from external threats” (269-70). Klein and Stern noted that variance on the 18 policy attitudes items was greater for Republicans than for Democrats, an indication that there is “little diversity of opinion” (271) among Democratic professors. Just a few pages later, however, they reported a cluster analysis of these same items and noted significant differences between members of the two largest clusters of respondents – what they termed “progressives” and the “establishment left” – on issues ranging from laws against drug use and prostitution to gambling, government ownership of industry, and immigration, with the average scores on these items across the two clusters differing by as much as 1.4 points on a five point scale (in the case of views of legislation restricting drug use). Failing to note the tension between the magnitude of these differences and assertions of political homogeneity, they concluded with the blanket assessment that “there is now a ‘status quo left’ on campus,” and asked whether, in this climate, libertarians might not be “today’s social-science ‘critical thinkers’” (297).

The sampling and analytic problems here are painfully obvious, though again, we think their major implication is that it is hard to have confidence in Klein’s findings, not that those findings are necessarily wrong. Perhaps because others were also aware of the shortcomings of Klein’s research, there was considerable interest in conservative circles when, in 2005, respected political scientists Stanley Rothman and Neil Nevitte and professor of communications S. Robert Lichter published an article entitled “Politics and Professional Advancement Among College Faculty” in *The Forum*, a web-based social science journal started by Berkeley political scientist Nelson Polsby (Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte 2005). The article reported the American results of a survey of American and Canadian academics fielded in 1999 under the codirectorship of Lipset, who had since become incapacitated. Although the authors began with the recognition that there had once been a vibrant body of sociological research on the political views of professors, with Lipset’s own work at the center, it positioned itself as a contribution to the “national political debate” over whether “1960s radicals and activists had joined university faculties in numbers sufficient to tilt the balance of opinion in academia sharply to the left” (1-2). Rothman and his colleagues sampled 1643 professors teaching

in 183 American colleges and universities, and reported a 72 percent response rate. Although they noted that Hamilton and Hargens, in their 1993 study, “found only that two-year colleges housed the fewest liberal faculty” (2), they failed to include any community college professors in their sample. Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte measured overall political identity with a question that asked respondents to locate themselves on a 10 point scale running from “very right” to “very left,” and then recoded respondents on either side of middle of the road as “left/liberal” or “right/conservative.” Whereas in the 1984 Carnegie study, which they used as a baseline, 39 percent of respondents could be classified as left/liberal and 34 percent as right/conservative, Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte reported that in 1999, the figures were 72 and 15 percent, respectively – an apparently dramatic turn to the left, were it not for the exclusion from their sample of the typically more conservative community college professors, who *were* included in the 1984 data, making the comparison inexact. In terms of party affiliation, some 50 percent of their respondents identified themselves as Democrats, 33 percent as Independents, and 11 percent as Republicans. Rothman and his colleagues took the time to note that the distribution here looked very different than it did for the general U.S. population in 1999, when 36 percent of Americans identified themselves as Democrats and 29 percent as Republicans. But they neglected to point out that Ladd and Lipset’s own data showed that in 1972, when, as previously mentioned, Nixon received 43 percent of the professorial vote, only 14 percent of professors nationwide listed their political party affiliation as Republican (see Faia 1974:175). The net decrease in Republican Party affiliation between these two time points, in other words, was 3 percentage points, though the growth in Democratic Party affiliation relative to having no party affiliation was considerable.

Several other findings from the study also bear mentioning. First, again using the Carnegie surveys as a baseline, Rothman and his colleagues claimed that “the political differences across fields of study have narrowed considerably” (5), with professors in the natural and physical sciences and engineering coming to look more like their colleagues in the social sciences and humanities than had previously been the case. Second, they reported high levels of agreement among their respondents on six social and political attitudes items – those to do with homosexuality, abortion, nonmarital cohabitation,



guaranteed government employment, government efforts to reduce the income gap, and support for environmentalism – concluding that this indicated “an across the board commitment [among faculty] to positions that are typically identified with contemporary liberal ideals” (8). And third, they regressed a measure of institutional prestige on a variety of independent variables, including party affiliation, liberalism, and research productivity, and found that “conservatives and Republicans [teach] at lower quality schools than [do] liberals and Democrats,” a finding they said was at least “consistent with the hypothesis that political conservatism confers a disadvantage in the competition for professional advancement” (13). Rather than conclude the piece with a meaningful call to revivify social scientific study of the politics of professors, they closed on the same political note they sounded at the beginning of the article, stating that their results “suggest that conservative complaints of the presence and effects of liberal homogeneity in academia deserve to be taken seriously” (13). Given that the study appeared made for public consumption – it was financed by the conservative Randolph Foundation, which also gave sizable grants between 1998 and 2002 to the David Horowitz Freedom Center, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, and the National Association of Scholars – it is no surprise that its main findings were quickly trumpeted by conservative commentators. “Liberal Bias in the Ivory Tower,” proclaimed the headline for an op-ed piece about the study by columnist Cathy Young in the *Boston Globe* (Young 2005).

Even more obviously political was a study released the following year by conservative pollster Gary Tobin, head of the Institute for Jewish and Community Research in San Francisco. Tobin purchased from a marketing company a nationwide list of faculty teaching in bachelors, masters, and doctoral degree granting institutions, and then sampled, stratifying by discipline and region. Offering his respondents a \$20 gift certificate as an incentive for participation, he achieved only a 24 percent response rate. Tobin found that 46 percent of his respondents gave their current party affiliation as Democratic, 33 percent as Independent, and 16 percent as Republican – a similar distribution to that reported by Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte, though with somewhat more Republicans, and nearly identical to the distribution among social scientists reported by Lazarsfeld and Thielens in 1955. Unlike Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte, however, who collapsed the distribution on their political identity question, Tobin found

that 48 percent of his respondents described themselves as liberal, 31 percent as moderate, and 17 percent as conservative – representing an increase by 9 percentage points in liberal self-identification from the 1984 Carnegie sample (with the caveat that all comparisons to the Carnegie studies are potentially problematic in that Ladd and Lipset’s leftmost response categories were “left” and then “liberal” rather than different degrees of liberalism per se.) Tobin also asked a number of voting questions. He found that in the 2004 presidential elections, 72 percent of faculty who voted reported voting for Kerry and 25 percent for Bush. Not surprisingly, the social sciences and humanities were found to be strongholds of Democratic support, though Tobin reported that 72 percent of professors in science and mathematics fields cast their ballots for Kerry as well, as did half of those in business/management. Finally, Tobin’s questionnaire contained a number of attitudes items. To his credit, he noted at one point in the report that while “faculty certainly parrot one another in terms of political behavior,” these items revealed “a broader range of beliefs within certain boundaries than one might assume” (4). Elsewhere, however, he painted a picture of a relatively uniform faculty political culture revolving around four key themes: a tendency to “distrust and criticize America” (32) – though he insisted that “the vast majority of faculty do not fit the mold of the subversive anti-American”; criticism of business and the free market; support for international institutions; and a strict separation of church and state. The relatively high level of faculty consensus he found on these issues he glossed, like Klein, as an instance of “groupthink,” and he called on politicians, private grant makers, and university trustees to hold professors “accountable” for their views and to take steps to “construct an academic environment in which no political culture... dominates as pervasively as liberal culture does today” (v).

Given the political aims of these studies and the media attention they received, it was inevitable that their findings would be challenged. The least convincing of the challenges, which preceded the release of the Tobin study, came directly from the left in the form of a 2006 report from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) called, “The ‘Faculty Bias’ Studies: Science or Propaganda?” The AFT had recently banded together with the American Association of University Professors, the American Civil Liberties Union, and other groups to form an organization called Free Exchange on Campus,

intended to help counter conservative attacks on the professoriate. In the report, consultant John Lee reviewed a number of recent studies – among them those by Klein and Rothman et al. – and concluded:

“Taken together, these studies at best are able to suggest that college faculty members are probably more likely to be Democrats than Republicans. Even this conclusion has to be questioned because major groups of the higher education community are not included in the samples. No community college teachers, or even faculty in less prestigious institutions, are included in any of the samples... Given the low response rate, inadequate sampling and missing responses, it is not possible with any precision to calculate a ratio of Democrats to Republicans at the sampled institutions, much less to imply what might be the case in institutions outside the sampling frame... Among the more serious claims the authors make is that this liberal dominance results in systematic exclusion of conservative ideas, limited promotion opportunities for conservative faculty, and expression in the classroom of liberal perspectives that damage student learning. These claims, however, are not supported by the research” (Lee 2006:2).

Lee was certainly correct that there were major sampling problems with some of the studies, a criticism that applied all the more to “studies” done by conservative organizations like the American Council of Trustees and Alumni and David Horowitz’s Center for the Study of Popular Culture – some essentially compilations of anecdotes – which the report also reviewed (for example, one of the reports Lee considered was ACTA’s “How Many Ward Churchills?”). But however great the sampling problems might have been in the work of Klein, the preponderance of Democrats to Republicans in academe is surely a robust enough social fact that we are not justified in considering it unestablished simply because some research on the topic proceeds on the basis of imperfect methodology. The assertion that the methodological problems here are such that we must “question...” whether there are more Democrats than Republicans in academe is not credible, though we agree that the problems do make it difficult to have much confidence in the specific numbers Klein reported. As for the charge that many of these studies did not include community college professors in their samples: that is true, and highly significant given the important role that community colleges play in the American higher education system. Some 40.3 percent of American undergraduates at four year colleges and universities today have at one point been enrolled in a community

college, and hence have been exposed to the teaching of community college professors. But the observation that the studies did not include professors “in less prestigious institutions” in general obviously does not apply to Rothman and his colleagues: although their sample did not include community college professors, it is only because professors at less prestigious four year schools were included that they were able to claim that conservatives and Republicans typically wind up teaching at less prestigious institutions. The criticism that the studies revealed little about the relationship between faculty politics and pedagogy or research practices was more on the mark.

Somewhat more compelling was an article that appeared that same year in *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Zipp and Fenwick 2006). The authors – sociologists both – noted the data problems in the work of Klein and others. To answer more reliably the question of whether the professoriate had grown more liberal over time, Zipp and Fenwick analyzed data from faculty surveys conducted by the Carnegie Foundation in 1989 and 1997. These surveys contained no party affiliation or voting questions, and few social or political attitudes items, but they did ask respondents about their overall political identities. Between the two time points, small decreases were registered in the percentage of faculty describing themselves as liberal or moderately conservative, with commensurate increases occurring in the ranks of moderately liberal and middle of the road faculty, leading Zipp and Fenwick to conclude that the “best overall description of these trends is an increased movement to the center, toward a more moderate faculty” (309). They also examined the relationship between faculty political orientation and a variety of “educational values,” and found that conservative faculty members were more likely than their liberal or moderate counterparts to think of college as a matter of career preparation and to want to shape their students’ values, and were less committed to academic freedom and less supportive of the institution of tenure.

Zipp and Fenwick concluded their piece with the claim that “the American academy has not become a liberal hegemony” (320). Although the data they used to draw this conclusion are certainly more reliable than Klein’s, we are inclined to agree with Klein and Stern’s argument, in a forthcoming response (Klein and Stern forthcoming), that Zipp and Fenwick’s exclusive focus on political orientation on a continuum from liberal to conservative leaves them poorly positioned to issue any kind of

sweeping assessments of the political proclivities of the faculty. More problematic, from our point of view, is that the Zipp and Fenwick article – much like the recent studies from the other side of the aisle that it aims to counter – is more concerned to make a political point than to fully and impartially assess the distribution of political views within the academy with an eye toward understanding the social mechanisms and processes that might be responsible for it, or its sociological significance for higher education as an institution.

In light of the methodological and analytical shortcomings of second wave research on faculty political opinion, and the need to bring knowledge of the topic up to date, we decided that a new empirical study was needed. With support from the Richard Lounsbery Foundation, we fielded in 2006 a nationally-representative survey of the American college and university faculty, focused exclusively on professors' social and political attitudes. We describe the methodology we employed in carrying out the study before moving on to summarize its key findings.

## METHODOLOGY

In our view, the biggest methodological problems with second wave research on professorial politics concern definitions of the population of interest, sampling, and questionnaire design. Too often, as we have noted, such research has not included community college professors; has had a relatively low response rate and/or made no effort to assess nonresponse bias; and has employed ad hoc, nonstandard question wordings that raise concerns about construct validity and render difficult systematic comparisons to the general population.

The study we undertook, which we called the Politics of the American Professoriate survey, sought to avoid these problems. The study focused on professors teaching in fields where undergraduate degrees are awarded. Given the large number of such fields and our desire to have enough cases in each to make meaningful comparisons, we drew two thirds of our sample from the twenty largest disciplinary fields, as measured by the number of bachelors degrees awarded in 2004, with the remaining third drawn randomly from all fields. We decided to pay special attention to these twenty fields because they represent the main disciplinary venues in which undergraduate instruction is

being carried out today, and hence are fields where the politics of professors should matter most for the undergraduate experience. To construct our sample we first randomly sampled from the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) dataset on degree completions, locating a college or university where either bachelors or associates degrees in the relevant field were awarded. All colleges and universities report degree completion information to the NCES, so the dataset is presumably comprehensive. We stratified the sample, drawing field/school pairings from four institutional strata to ensure adequate representation of each: community colleges, four year colleges and universities, non-elite PhD granting institutions, and elite doctoral universities (defined conventionally as those in the top 50 in the latest *U.S. News and World Report* ranking.) Three graduate student research assistants were then employed to identify the department or program at that school most closely associated with the relevant degree. Next, we obtained, through an examination of websites or phone calls if necessary, a list of full-time faculty teaching in that department or program, and randomly selected one faculty member to include in the study. It is certainly possible that the faculty lists from which we sampled were not in all cases comprehensive or up to date; institutions and departments vary in how often they update their faculty rosters on the web. But the procedure we employed was far more efficient and economical than attempting to obtain a printed course catalogue from every school, and the odds that the omission of a few names here or there would produce a systematically biased sampling frame seemed to us low.

On the basis of this procedure, precontact and invitation letters were sent to 2958 professors, with the chance to win a \$100 gift certificate the incentive. The precontact letters were sent by David Cutler, Dean of the Social Sciences at Harvard, and the invitation letters were sent on behalf of one of the present authors (Gross) by the Center for Survey Research at Indiana University, which administered the survey on our behalf. Professors participated in the study by logging into a special password protected website and filling out a questionnaire online. The questionnaire contained about 100 items exploring a wide range of social and political attitudes and views of the university, as well as a full complement of sociodemographic questions. A unique feature of the questionnaire is that most of the items were taken verbatim from well-established surveys of the general population – in particular, the General Social Survey (GSS), the American

National Election Studies (ANES), and the Pew Values survey. Care was taken to minimize question order effects, and randomization of question and response category ordering was implemented where feasible.

In 76 cases, invitation letters turned out to have been sent to bad addresses, or to people who were not in fact on the faculty. The study closed eight weeks after the initial invitation letters were sent. After four follow-up contacts, one by postcard and three by email, we achieved a final response rate of 51 percent, with 1471 valid cases. (In the analyses that follow we restrict our sample to professors with full-time appointments, which reduces the sample size to 1417.) Where other samples of the American faculty employ a cluster design and contain many professors who teach at any one school, raising questions about the independence of individual cases, our sampling strategy yielded a sample in which 580 institutions are represented with only a single case, and no institution is represented with more than six cases. A total of 927 institutions are represented in the final sample. In a logistic regression model, type of institution was not a statistically significant predictor of response to our survey.

To better assess nonresponse bias, we conducted short phone interviews with a random sample of 100 nonresponders (we were able to interview all 100 nonresponders selected for inclusion). Nonresponders were slightly more conservative in terms of overall political orientation than responders, with a mean of 3.5 on a 7 point liberalism-conservatism scale, as compared to responders whose mean value on this question was 3.1. The difference between nonresponders and responders on a simple political party affiliation question was also relatively small, and in the same direction. Nonresponders were 4 percentage points more Republican than responders, and 4.5 percentage points less Democratic. When asked, in an open-ended question format, why they did not respond, the majority of nonresponders – 54 percent – said they had not had time to do so, 7 percent stated that they objected to some feature of the questionnaire design, and 7 percent said they were uncomfortable answering political questions, with the rest citing a variety of other factors. Although the differences between responders and nonresponders are small, it is probably the case that the figures we report below slightly *underestimate* the extent of conservative sentiment in the American academy. We are not sure why

conservative academicians would have been less inclined to participate in the study. It could be that they perceive their views to be academically marginalized, and, despite assurances of confidentiality, worried that revealing their political sentiments on a survey might harm them professionally. Alternatively, it could be that the study's affiliation with Harvard, sometimes treated in conservative discourse as a bastion of liberalism, or the authors' disciplinary affiliation with sociology, widely known as an extremely liberal field, made them suspicious of the project. One finding we report below, consistent with previous research, is that on average conservative academics are less politically active than liberal ones. Liberal professors might therefore also have participated at a slightly higher rate if they saw doing so as a form of political involvement, a chance to express their views about the direction the country is heading.

Once collected, the data were weighted to even out the effects of oversampling certain fields and institutions. They also received a post-stratification weighting based on NCES data to correct for the effects of having slightly undersampled women and African-Americans. We believe the final sample to be an approximate representation of the more than 630,000 professors teaching full-time in U.S. colleges and universities, with the important caveat that, as noted above, professors were only eligible to be sampled if they taught in departments or programs offering undergraduate degrees. Professors of law and medicine and those teaching in other professional fields were not sampled (though professors of business were, as many business schools offer undergraduate instruction, and as four business-related disciplines – business administration, finance, management information systems, and marketing – are among the top 20 BA granting fields.) Because many life scientists hold appointments in medical schools, natural scientists may be somewhat underrepresented in our sample.

One aspect of the study did not go as planned. Although our primary focus was full-time faculty members, we initially set out to also conduct a smaller, complementary survey of part-time faculty. We felt that doing so was especially important in light of the casualization of academic labor in recent years: today approximately 46 percent of faculty members in American higher education can be classified as contingent workers (though many of these work full-time on short-term contracts). Following a similar



procedure to the one outlined above, except relying more heavily on phone calls to departments to obtain lists of part-timers, we sent questionnaires to 475 part-time faculty. Due to logistical delays, this phase of the survey was not initiated until late in the spring 2006 semester, a grading crunch time for many part-time faculty members who have high teaching loads. Given the busy schedules of part-time faculty and their generally low pay, the incentive we offered may also not have been enough to entice participation, and we wound up with a relatively low 32 percent response rate for the part-time faculty sample. Our budget did not allow us to conduct followup phone interviews with nonresponders in the part-time sample, so we are not able to meaningfully assess nonresponse bias for this group. In light of this fact, we restrict the analyses that follow to respondents from the full-time sample, leaving for elsewhere the task of comparing the two samples. However, more or less consistent with national patterns, 21.5 percent of respondents in our full-time sample do not hold tenured or tenure track positions, with about half of these teaching in institutions that do not offer tenure, so we are able to compare the views of tenured/tenure-track faculty to full-time, non-tenure track faculty where it seems important to do so – for example, on views of tenure itself.

## RESULTS

### *Political Orientation*

Because so much prior research on faculty political opinion has been based around political orientation questions, we begin by considering the distribution of self-identified liberals and conservatives in academe. Our survey included an ANES question that asked respondents, “When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, or very conservative?” Table 1 gives the percentages for the weighted sample.

**Table 1**

Political orientation	Percent
Extremely liberal	9.4
Liberal	34.7
Slightly liberal	18.1
Middle of the road	18.0
Slightly conservative	10.5
Conservative	8.0
Very conservative	1.2 <sup>2</sup>

Several things about this table immediately stand out. The first is that respondents on the left side of the distribution outnumber considerably those on the right side. Only 19.7 percent of respondents identify themselves as any shade of conservative, as compared to 62.2 percent who identify themselves as any shade of liberal. By contrast, the last time this question was asked on the ANES survey, 31.9 percent of respondents in the general population identified themselves as any shade of conservative, while 23.3 percent identified themselves as any shade of liberal. Second, however, a high percentage of respondents are located between the center and the center left of the distribution. Collapsing the seven point scale into a three point one by recoding the slightly liberal as liberal and the slightly conservative as conservative, as Rothman and his colleagues have done, would thus tend to significantly underestimate the number of faculty respondents who do not feel comfortable locating themselves at the extremes of the political spectrum, flattening out a potentially important form of social variation. To avoid this problem in our analyses below, we code those who identify themselves as “slightly liberal” or “slightly conservative” as moderates. We would not be justified in doing so if it turned out that the “slightlys” were, in terms of their substantive attitudes, no different than their more liberal or conservative counterparts. But preliminary evidence indicates that they are different. We will consider below a large number of

---

<sup>2</sup> Here and in our other tables numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding.

attitudes items, but note for now that one set of such items was taken from the Pew Values survey, and asked respondents' views on a variety of policy matters ranging from environmental regulation to censorship to the fight against terrorism. In order to assess whether there were differences between the slightlys and their colleagues further at the extremes, we averaged scores on all twelve of the Pew items. In this exercise, a score of 1 would indicate the most liberal response possible on all of the items, a score of 3 would indicate an intermediary position, and a score of 5 would indicate the most conservative response possible on all items. The score of those who stated their political orientation as extremely liberal or liberal was 1.4, while the score of those who identified themselves as conservative or extremely conservative was 3.7. The scores of those respondents closer to the center of the distribution in terms of political orientation were different: the slightly liberal scored at 1.7, middle of the roaders at 2.2, and the slightly conservative 2.8. Although the differences here between the slightly conservative and their more conservative colleagues are greater than the differences between the slightly liberal and their more liberal colleagues, that there are differences at all provides further reason to think that the slightlys should not be treated as belonging to the extremes.

Collapsing the data accordingly to a three point scale, we find that 44.1 percent of respondents can be classified as liberals, 46.6 percent as moderates, and 9.2 percent as conservatives. Such a recoding thus reveals a moderate bloc that – while consisting of more liberal- than conservative-leaning moderates – is nevertheless equal in size to the liberal bloc.<sup>3</sup>

This reclassification also permits a meaningful comparison to the Ladd and Lipset data. Recall that in 1972, they found that 46 percent of professors were either left or liberal (about the same percentage that we find in the liberal camp, though our political orientation question does not include “left” as the leftmost response category), that 27

---

<sup>3</sup> We acknowledge that there is room for political interests to influence the choice of recoding schemes here. Conservatives, wanting to emphasize the liberalism of professors, may naturally want to group all liberals together, inflating the size of the liberal camp. Liberals, wanting to defend the professoriate against the charge of liberal hegemony, may naturally want to group all conservatives together, inflating the size of the conservative camp. Our solution seems to us a reasonable compromise, given the goal of painting a picture of faculty political opinion that is at once nuanced and parsimonious. However, our claim that there is a sizable center/center-left bloc in academe can only be fully cleared of the charge of ad hoc-ness below when we report the results of a factor model that combines several different measures of overall political orientation, and then when we report the results of our latent class analysis of the attitudes items, which show clearly the existence of distinct and sizable center/center-left groups.

percent were middle of the road, and that 28 percent were conservative. Consistent with the claims of Zipp and Fenwick (who were concerned with change over a more limited time period), our findings thus suggest that, looking only at political orientation, the biggest change over the last thirty years involves not a growth in the number of professors on the far left hand side of the political spectrum, but rather a substantial defection away from the right and movement into moderate ranks.

In Table 2, we utilize this same coding scheme to examine how professors in different broad disciplinary groupings score on our political orientation question (here and elsewhere we rely on the NCES classification of disciplines, departing from the NCES only by grouping psychologists and historians together with other social scientists).<sup>4</sup> The physical and biological sciences look the most like the sample overall, with about equal percentages of liberals and moderates. Consistent with previous research going back to Ladd and Lipset, we find that the social sciences and humanities contain the highest proportion of liberals, at 58 and 52 percent, respectively. The biggest concentration of conservatives is to be found in business, with the next biggest concentration located in the health sciences – which in our sample means mostly professors of nursing (again, our sample did not include professors of medicine). Computer science and engineering are notable for their high percentages of moderates.

**Table 2**

Field	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Phys/bio sciences	45.2	47.0	7.8
Social sciences	58.2	36.9	4.9
Humanities	52.2	44.3	3.6
Comp sci/engineering	10.7	78.0	11.3
Health sciences	20.5	59.0	20.5
Other	53.4	35.9	10.7
Business	21.3	54.3	24.5
Total	43.5	47.1	9.4

<sup>4</sup> In this paper, our discussion of differences across groups involves no more than the presentation of bivariate statistics. Only subsequent analysis, using regression techniques, will be able to determine whether any of the across-group differences we report are artifacts that reflect other underlying patterns in the data.

Table 3 examines the distribution of liberals, moderates, and conservatives across the different types of higher education institutions represented in our sample. For purposes of this analysis, we have disaggregated 4 year, BA granting schools into liberal arts and non-liberal arts colleges. Doing so reveals that a slightly higher proportion of liberals is to found on the faculties of liberal arts colleges than on the faculties of elite, PhD granting schools, while liberal arts colleges and non-elite PhD granting schools also contain the fewest conservative faculty members. Community colleges house the largest number of conservatives, at 19 percent, and also the fewest liberals. In every type of institution except liberal arts colleges and elite, PhD granting schools, moderates somewhat outnumber liberals.

**Table 3**

Institution type	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Community college	37.1	43.9	19.0
BA, non liberal arts	38.8	48.5	12.7
Liberal arts	61.0	35.1	3.9
Non elite, PhD	44.3	51.9	3.8
Elite, PhD	56.6	33.1	10.2
Total	44.1	46.6	9.3

We conclude our examination of the political orientation variable – in our view of limited analytic use by itself – by looking at the distribution by age and gender. Table 4 shows that the youngest age cohort – those professors aged 26-35 – contains the highest percentage of moderates, and the lowest percentage of liberals. Self-described liberals are most common within the ranks of those professors aged 50-64, who were teenagers or young adults in the 1960s, while the largest number of conservatives is to be found among professors aged 65 and older (though the age differences in terms of the number of conservatives are small, problematizing Alan Wolfe’s [1994:290] assertion that “the cultural war in the universities is a generational war.”) These findings with regard to age provide further support for the idea that in recent years the trend has been toward increasing moderatism.

**Table 4**

Age	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
26-35	32.5	60.0	7.5
36-49	41.5	49.9	8.6
50-64	49.4	42.7	7.9
65+	36.9	52.3	10.8
Total	44.4	47.2	8.4

As for gender, an examination of the sample as a whole reveals few differences between male and female professors in terms of their tendency to describe themselves as liberals, moderates, or conservatives. Further analysis, however, shows that significant gender differences exist *within* fields, as Table 5 indicates. In the physical/biological sciences, more men than women are liberals, and more women than men are moderates. In the social sciences, more women than men are liberals. There are few significant gender differences between liberals and moderates in the humanities, but more men are conservatives. In computer science and engineering, twice as many women than men are at either extreme of the distribution, while in business, there are many more conservative women than conservative men.

**Table 5**

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Physical/biological sciences			
Female	25.7	74.3	0.0
Male	53.8	35.0	11.3
Social sciences			
Female	73.0	24.3	2.7
Male	51.8	36.9	4.9
Humanities			
Female	51.6	46	2.4
Male	52.6	41.5	5.8
Computer science/engineering			

	Female	20.0	60.0	20.0
	Male	9.3	81.4	9.3
Health sciences				
	Female	21.7.	58.0	20.3
	Male	14.3	64.3	21.4
Business				
	Female	21.4	36.8	42.1
	Male	21.8	65.5	12.7
Other				
	Female	53.7	36.8	9.6
	Male	53.5	35.5	11.0

---

### *Political Party Affiliation and Voting*

Looking at overall political orientation gives us a first cut into professorial attitudes toward politics, but how exactly are professors positioned in terms of the major U.S. political parties today? To assess political party affiliation, we asked our respondents a series of questions drawn from the ANES. We first asked, “Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?” Those who chose one of the two parties were then asked whether they would call themselves a “strong” or “not very strong” affiliate of the party. Independents were asked to which of the parties they considered themselves closest. These questions yielded a seven category party affiliation variable. We report the percentage distributions in Table 6.

**Table 6**

Party Affiliation	Percent
Strong Democrat	32.4
Weak Democrat	18.6
Independent-Democrat	19.8
Independent	8.5
Independent-Republican	7.0
Weak Republican	8.7
Strong Republican	5.0

---

Collapsing this to a three point scale, we thus find that about 51 percent of professors are Democrats, 35.3 percent are Independents (with Democratically-leaning Independents outnumbering Republican-leaning ones by a ratio of more than 2:1<sup>5</sup>), and 13.7 percent are Republicans. These figures are very close to those reported by both Rothman et al. and Tobin, and should now be regarded as definitive.<sup>6</sup> In 2006, according to Gallup polls, 34.3 percent of Americans identified themselves as Democrats, 33.9 percent as Independents, and 30.4 as Republicans. By 2007, according to polls done by Pew, the percentage of Republicans had dropped to 25, while the percentage of Democrats remained nearly steady at 33. Our survey thus indicates that Democrats are doing better inside academe than outside it in terms of formal party affiliation by a margin of about 16 percentage points.

How do these numbers compare to Klein's estimate based on voter registration records of Berkeley and Stanford faculty? Our sample does not permit us to draw conclusions about individual campuses, but we find that at elite, PhD granting schools in general, about 60.4 percent of faculty members are Democrats, 30.1 percent are Independents, and 9.5 percent are Republicans. These numbers turn out to be quite similar to Klein's except that we find the number of Democrats at elite, PhD granting institutions to be about 10 percentage points *higher* than he found to be the case at Berkeley and Stanford, while the proportion of Republicans is also larger by a few percentage points. As discussed earlier, Klein's voter registration methodology did not permit him to estimate the number of Independents, so we can say – where he could not – that the ratio of Democrats to Republicans is no greater than we report. But the ratios he finds at Berkeley and Stanford appear very close to the actual ratio at elite institutions in general. Where he finds a “rank profile of lopsidedness” (Klein and Western 2004-5:26) at Berkeley and Stanford, however, with more Republicans among the untenured

---

<sup>5</sup> Pew surveys from 2007 showed that in the general population 11 percent of Independents leaned Republican, and 17 percent leaned Democratic.

<sup>6</sup> It is curious that the Rothman et al study, carried out in 1999, showed about the same percentage of Republicans in academe as did our 2006 study, given evidence that the percentage of Republicans, in both academe and the general public, declined between the two time points. It could be that because Rothman et al did not include in their sample community college professors, who tend to be more conservative, they underestimated the percentage of Republicans, which has now declined to the level we report.



assistant professors – who “quite possibly,” he speculates, “will not survive tenure,” implying that they may not in part *because* of their politics – we find that at elite schools, there are slightly more Republicans among full and associate professors (10.3 and 9.7 percent, respectively) than among assistant professors (7.4 percent). It is at every other type of institution that the rank profile Klein identifies actually obtains.

As Table 7 shows, Democrats, Independents, and Republicans are distributed in about the same way in the physical/biological sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. Consistent with the earlier observation that more conservatives are to be found in business and the health science fields, we find more Republicans teaching in these areas. Computer scientists and engineers also show a greater tendency to be Republican relative to professors in other fields.

**Table 7**

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Phys/bio sciences	53.6	32.1	14.3
Social sciences	55.7	37.7	6.6
Humanities	54.6	34.7	10.7
Comp sci/engineering	28.0	48.7	23.3
Health sciences	33.7	43.4	22.9
Business	38.9	36.8	24.2
Other	58.6	30.2	11.2
Total	50.3	35.8	13.9

Further traction on this issue can be gained by examining the distribution of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans in the top 20 bachelors degree granting fields, as we do in Table 8. The preponderance of Democrats over Republicans is particularly extreme in history and psychology; in these fields, nearly 80 percent of professors consider themselves Democrats. Independents comprise more than half of all professors in marketing (67.4 percent), mechanical engineering (65.6 percent), and computer science (58.1 percent). In five of the largest BA granting fields – elementary education, electrical engineering, economics, accounting, and finance – more than a quarter of professors consider themselves Republicans.

**Table 8**

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Communications	48.9	37.8	13.3
Computer science	32.3	58.1	9.7
Elementary education	40.5	21.4	38.1
Electrical engineering	13.2	55.3	31.6
Mechanical engineering	28.1	65.6	6.3
English	51.0	47.1	2.0
Biology	51.1	42.6	6.4
Psychology	77.8	15.6	6.7
Criminal justice	40.4	40.4	19.1
Economics	34.3	37.1	28.6
Political science	50.0	43.8	6.3
Sociology	49.1	45.5	5.5
Art	36.6	43.9	19.5
Nursing	60.4	17.0	22.6
Business administration	51.4	32.4	16.2
Accounting	33.3	18.5	48.1
Finance	25.0	39.3	35.7
Management information	33.3	47.2	19.4
Marketing	18.6	67.4	14.0
History	79.2	17.0	3.8
Other	50.7	35.2	14.1
Total	45.2	38.9	15.9

One of the problems with relying on either party affiliation or political orientation questions to gauge the politics of faculty members – or anyone else – is that there may be relatively liberal Republicans and relatively conservative Democrats, despite the fact that a consistent finding in prior research on professors’ political views is that they exhibit a higher level of what Philip Converse (1964) called ideological “constraint” than do other populations. As Ladd and Lipset put it, “professors’ opinions should be more highly structured and interrelated than those of most groups outside the university” (Ladd and Lipset 1976:39). So what is the relationship between political orientation and party affiliation in our sample? We answer this question in Table 9, which shows the

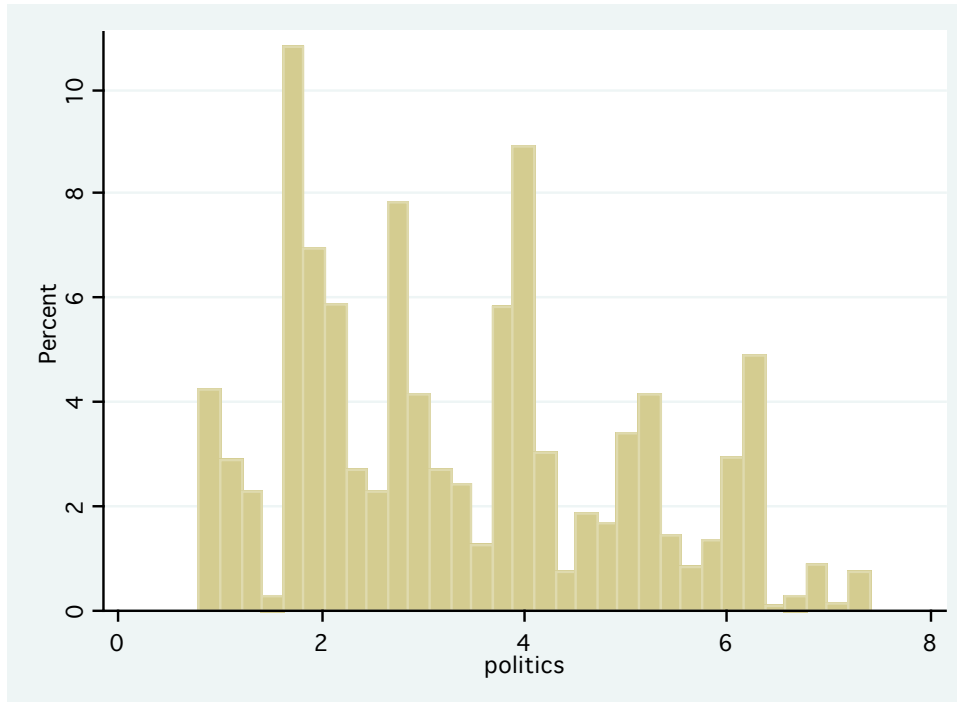
distribution of liberals, moderates, and conservatives within each party. About two thirds of Democrats are liberals, and about one third are moderates. These numbers are reversed for Independents. Among Republicans, about half consider themselves moderates, and the rest conservatives.

**Table 9**

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Democrat	65.1	33.7	1.1
Independent	32.7	61.5	5.8
Republican	0.0	51.6	48.4
Total	44.7	45.9	9.3

Despite the high level of constraint shown here – the correlation between these variables, in their original 7 point scales, is .725 – it is clearly the case that not all Democrats are liberals and not all Republicans conservatives. To get a better handle on the relationship between political orientation and party affiliation, we constructed a new variable by performing a factor analysis on three items from our survey: the political orientation variable, allowed to remain on a seven point scale; the party affiliation variable, also kept in its original seven point scale; and a question we wrote that asked respondents to locate themselves on a continuum ranging from “extremely left” to “extremely right.” The analysis extracted one common underlying dimension, accounting for nearly 85 percent of the variance on the three items, and in our view representing a more robust measure of overall political orientation than has typically been employed in faculty surveys. Figure 1 shows the distribution of this new politics variable. The further to the left a professor is, the lower her or his score. A score of four indicates the middle of the distribution, which may be interpreted as a moderate political identity. In line with the argument we advanced above about the size of the moderate bloc in academe, the figure indicates not simply that most respondents are located on the left hand side of the distribution, but also that significant numbers of them are located near

the center left, a fact too often ignored in discussions that treat the university as a site of uniform liberalism.



So much for party affiliation. Moving on, we ask: how do professors vote? Recall that the Tobin study reported that 72 percent of professors voted for John Kerry in the 2004 Presidential elections, and 25 percent for George Bush. Our study shows a more uneven vote than that: Of our respondents who reported voting in the election (96 percent), 77.6 percent said they voted for Kerry, 20.4 percent for Bush, 0.5 percent for Ralph Nader, and 1.5 percent for other third party candidates.

The most widely discussed recent figures about professorial voting come from Klein, so it is worth asking how the estimates from his survey of six disciplines stand up in comparison to our numbers. His survey in the social sciences and humanities asked respondents about the party affiliations of the candidates they usually voted for, whereas ours asked about specific presidential contests, so the comparison is necessarily somewhat inexact. What's more, his survey was conducted in 2003, whereas the numbers we report below are for the 2004 presidential elections. With that caveat having

been issued, it appears that his estimates of the ratio of Democratic to Republican voters in the social sciences and humanities as a whole were about right, while his estimates of the ratio in several specific fields were off in one direction or the other. Klein and Stern noted that in computing the ratio of Democratic to Republican voters in the social sciences and humanities, “7 to 1 is a safe lower bound estimate, and 8 to 1 or 9 to 1 are reasonable point estimates” (12-13). In Table 10, we show the distribution of Democratic, Republican, and other votes in the 2004 Presidential elections across broad disciplinary fields. Averaging the figures for the social sciences and humanities generates a ratio of Democratic to Republican voters of 8.1 to 1. It is in business and health-science fields that Bush fared better, though even in business Kerry did better than Bush by a margin of more than 2:1.

**Table 10**

	Kerry	Bush	Nader	Other
Phys/bio sciences	77.4	20.8	0.9	0.9
Social sciences	87.6	6.2	1.8	4.4
Humanities	83.7	15.0	0.0	1.3
Comp sci/engineering	61.9	33.3	0.0	4.8
Health sciences	48.1	51.9	0.0	0.0
Business	65.4	32.1	2.6	0.0
Other	81.6	17.5	0.3	0.6
Total	77.6	20.4	0.5	1.5

Our sample does not permit us to draw conclusions about all six of the disciplines covered by Klein’s survey, but we did sample economists, historians, political scientists, and sociologists in sufficiently large numbers that we can safely draw conclusions about them. Klein and Stern reported a Democratic to Republican voter ratio of 3 to 1 in economics, and this is right – we find it to be 2.97 to 1. In history they reported a ratio of 9.5 to 1, where we find much more support for the Democrats, with a ratio of 18.9 to 1. The same is true of political science, where Klein and Stern report a ratio of 6.7:1, and we find a ratio of 18.8 to 1. In sociology, however, their estimate appears to be inflated. They reported a ratio of 28:1 among sociologists, whereas we find it to be 19.5:1.

What are the social characteristics of those professors who voted for Bush in 2004? Evidencing the fact that the “what’s the matter with Kansas” phenomenon (Frank 2005) may be at work inside the university as well as outside of it, the most distinguishing characteristic of academic Bush voters is that they come from lower social class backgrounds on average than do non-Bush voters. To be sure, non-whites and Latinos in the academy, who tend to come from less privileged backgrounds than their white and non-Latino counterparts, voted for Bush in very small numbers. But leaving race and ethnicity aside, we find that 39.5 percent of academic Bush voters described their families as having below average incomes when they were 16 years old, as compared to 26.8 percent of non-Bush voters. What’s more, only 35.9 percent of professors who voted for Bush had fathers who completed a BA degree or higher, as compared to 51.1 percent of professors who did not vote for Bush. Perhaps as a result of these class differences, just 45 percent of Bush voters in academe hold doctoral degrees, as compared to 72.3 percent of non-Bush voters. Also consistent with national patterns, though magnified, 46.7 percent of academic voters for Bush consider themselves born-again Christians, as compared to 7.3 percent of non-Bush voters.<sup>7</sup> Although we will not pursue the point here, preliminary regression analyses suggest that it is the lower average levels of educational attainment, and lower social class origins, of conservative and Republican academics that may do the most to account for their underrepresentation in elite research institutions.

In Table 11, we report the voting histories of our respondents in presidential elections since 1984, restricting the sample for each year to those who were old enough to vote at the time. These retrospective data are surely not as reliable as data collected closer to the time of the elections, and we cannot know whether Democratic or Republican voting professors may have aged out of the population in unequal numbers, skewing our results. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that while the percentage of professors voting Republican has declined by about 12 percentage points since 1984, the percentage voting Republican in 2004, according to our data, was actually higher than the

---

<sup>7</sup> According to the Pew Research Center, exit polls from 2004 indicated that 36 percent of Bush voters were white evangelicals. See <http://peoplepress.org/commentary/display.php3?AnalysisID=103>. We explore the religiosity of professors elsewhere.

percentage voting Republican in 1992 and 1996 – a fact that calls into question claims that the professoriate is growing more Democratic by the year.

**Table 11**

	2000	1996	1992	1988	1984
Republican	23.5	14.7	17.2	31.7	32.0
Democratic	66.6	75.7	76.6	64.0	64.4
Other	9.9	9.6	6.2	4.3	3.6

On the basis of these retrospective data, we were also able to calculate the percentage of professors voting for one of the major parties in the 2004 presidential elections who, in a previous election, had voted for the opposing party. For Democratic voting professors, the figure was 14.3 percent; for Republican voting professors, 32 percent. Party switching when it comes to voting is thus relatively rare in academe, though by no means unheard of.

We conclude our discussion of professorial voting by considering how involved professors were in the 2004 campaign. To this end, we analyze a series of ANES questions about political activities. Our overall finding is that professors who voted for Kerry or some other non-Republican candidate were much more active in the campaign than were Bush voters. This may be evidence of a high level of political mobilization against the current administration, or of the fact that conservative academics have traditionally been less active politically than their more liberal counterparts. 68.3 percent of academic non-Bush voters said they talked to people about the candidates before the election and tried to convince them why they should vote one way or another, as compared to 34.4 percent of Bush voters. 33.4 percent of non-Bush voters said they attended political meetings, rallies, speeches, or dinners during the campaign, as compared to 12.6 percent of Bush voters. 42.7 percent of non-Bush voters said they wore a campaign button or put a bumper sticker on their car or put a sign in front of their house, as compared to 11.8 percent of Bush voters. 50.9 percent of non-Bush voters reported giving money to a political party or candidate during the 2004 election cycle, as compared to 24.0 percent of Bush voters. Finally, non-Bush voters were much more likely than Bush voters to report that they mentioned in class who they'd be voting for –

the numbers here are 9.3 and 2.7 percent, respectively. However, 92.0 percent of all professors said they did *not* mention in class for which candidate they would be voting. It was community college professors and professors teaching at liberal arts colleges who were especially likely to have revealed their voting intentions in class, perhaps reflecting the greater degree of intimacy that often obtains between professors at such institutions and their students.

### *Other Measures of Political Identity*

Before moving on to consider the substantive attitudes items, we consider three other political identities that professors may hold that would indicate something about their political views: whether they think of themselves as radicals, political activists, and Marxists. We queried respondents on these matters by presenting them with a series of labels – including “radical,” “political activist,” and “Marxist” – and asking them to indicate how well, on a seven point scale ranging from not at all to extremely well, the labels described them. Although the terms “radical” and “political activist” are typically associated with the left, in our sample some respondents who did not see themselves as having left sympathies also identified themselves as radicals or political activists. So as not to confuse apples and oranges, Table 12 shows the percentage of respondents in each broad disciplinary grouping who said these terms described them at least moderately well (giving a score of 4 or higher); for radical and political activist, we count only those who also consider themselves as liberals.

The table indicates that self-identified Marxists are rare in academe today. The highest proportion of Marxist academics can be found in the social sciences, and there they represent less than 18 percent of all professors (among the social science fields for which we can issue discipline-specific estimates, sociology contains the most Marxists, at 25.5 percent). In the humanities and social sciences, about one quarter of professors consider themselves radicals or activists. Consistent with our earlier claim that the number of moderates in academe appears to be growing, we find that self-described radicalism is much more common among professors who came of age in the 1960s than among younger ones, suggesting significant generational change. For example, 14.3 percent of professors aged 50-64 consider themselves liberal radicals, as compared to just



3.8 percent of professors aged 26-35. Similarly, whereas 17.2 percent of professors aged 50-64 consider themselves liberal activists, this is true of only 1.3 percent of professors in the youngest age cohort. Contrary to expectations of a clear institutional status gradient in professorial radicalism, we find that community colleges and liberal arts schools house the highest percentage of radicals (14.4 percent and 21.5 percent, respectively) and activists (22.6 and 21.3 percent, respectively), while it is liberal arts colleges that are home to the highest proportion of Marxists (12.0 percent, as compared to 3.0 percent in community colleges, 5.2 percent in other BA granting schools, 3.1 percent at non-elite, PhD granting institutions, and just 3.0 percent in elite, PhD granting schools).

**Table 12**

	Radical	Activist	Marxist
Phys/bio sciences	6.3	2.6	0.0
Social sciences	24.0	20.6	17.6
Humanities	19.0	26.2	5.0
Comp sci/engineering	2.0	0.6	0.7
Health sciences	0.0	1.2	0.0
Business	5.3	3.2	1.9
Other	7.2	11.1	1.1
Total	11.2	13.5	3.0

### *Social and Political Attitudes*

Knowing what proportion of professors consider themselves liberals, moderates, or conservatives, and what their party affiliations and voting tendencies are, is certainly helpful in gauging their politics. More helpful, however, is to understand their attitudes and views on the substantive policy and value issues that are at the heart of American political contestation today. Our survey contained a large number of attitudes items, most taken verbatim from the GSS, NES, and Pew Values study. Rather than report responses to all of these items here, we focus on six broad attitudinal domains: views of socioeconomic issues, sex and gender, race and ethnicity, military force, the Middle East, and attachment to and identification with American culture. Of course, these are not the only domains on which professors (or others) have political views. Yet they are among

the key domains over which the campus culture wars are being fought, so they merit special attention. For each domain, we selected a handful of relevant attitudes questions from the survey. In the section that follows, we report overall responses to these items, but, even more important, we show, for each domain, the major clusters into which our respondents fall when all the items in that domain are considered together. To do so, we employ a statistical technique called latent class analysis. Where traditional factor analysis assumes there are a number of underlying dimensions along which responses to a set of items may be arrayed, latent class analysis assumes that social reality has a more categorical structure, and employs an algorithm to reliably identify the underlying classes or types one finds with regard to a set of variables. The “groupthink” hypothesis advanced by conservative critics of the academy would suggest that for most of these domains, there are essentially two underlying clusters of respondents – a liberal cluster and a conservative cluster – and that the liberal cluster is much larger in size and composed of professors who teach at more prestigious institutions. We find, by contrast, that for all of the domains there are at least three distinct clusters; that while the liberal cluster is the largest for several domains, in others the center/center-left cluster is the largest; and that professors at elite schools do not always predominate in the liberal clusters.

### Socioeconomic Issues

A three cluster structure is clearly evident when it comes to views of socioeconomic matters. Here we analyze five questions from the survey. Two are from the Pew Values study. These ask respondents whether they think government should do more to help the poor, and whether businesses make too much profit. The other three are from the GSS, and ask whether government should do more to reduce income differences between the rich and the poor, “perhaps by raising taxes on wealthy families or giving income assistance;” whether the government should see to it that everyone has a job and a “decent standard of living;” and whether the government wastes money that it collects through taxes.

Table 13 shows the percentage distributions for responses to the Pew items and the GSS question about wasting money on taxes. The other two items ask respondents to

locate themselves on a scale from 1 to 7; we have recoded responses for these items into a three category scheme. For purposes of constructing the latent class models, we reduced the number of response categories for all variables as appropriate.

**Table 13**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The government should do more to help needy Americans, even if it means going deeper into debt <sup>8</sup>	41.2	18.8	11.6	16.0	12.4
Business corporations make too much profit	36.3	11.2	8.6	24.4	19.6
	A lot	Some	Not very much		
Do you think that people in government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it	54.9	41.8	3.3		
	Reduce Inequality	Neither	Don't Reduce		
Some people think that the government in Washington out to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing this income difference between the rich and the poor. Where would you place yourself in this debate?	46.8	39.5	13.6		
	Guarantee Job	Neither	Don't Guarantee		

<sup>8</sup> One of the unique and attractive features of the Pew Values items is that respondents are asked to select which of two oppositely-valenced statements comes closest to their views, and are then asked whether they feel strongly about the issue or not. This minimizes acquiescence bias, and permits responses to be recoded in a continuous fashion from 1 to 5 with “don't knows” coded as 3. For this item, the oppositely-valenced statement reads, “The government today can't afford to do much more to help the needy.” In this table and the ones below, we report only the liberally-valenced statement.

Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on her or his own. Which is closer to the way you feel?	21.4	61.3	17.4
---	------	------	------

---

As the table shows, on the whole professors favor government action to reduce income inequality. 60 percent agree that government should do more to help needy Americans (the comparable figure in the general population in 2007 was 54 percent), and 46.8 percent favor government action to reduce inequality. This does not mean, however, that professors generally favor making it the responsibility of government to ensure that everyone has a good job: only 21.4 percent of professors take this position. On views of corporate America, professors are about evenly split, and are actually somewhat more conservative than the general population. 47.5 percent of professors say that business corporations make too much profit (as compared to 65 percent of Americans in 2007 polls), with more than a third feeling strongly this way, while 44 percent say that business corporations make a fair and reasonable profit (as compared to 30 percent in the general population). Finally, despite their support for government intervention to reduce inequality, on the whole professors do not have much faith in government efficiency. A majority believe there is “a lot” of government waste.

Our latent class analysis sheds additional light on this spectrum of issues. It reveals that the largest cluster of respondents – about 53.9 percent – consists of those who fall into the center/center-left range on most of these items. A smaller cluster, comprising 29.2 percent of respondents, is made up of those with liberal views, while professors with conservative opinions compose about 15.1 percent of all respondents.<sup>9</sup> In both the liberal and conservative camps, between 10 and 30 percent of respondents give more moderate answers to one or more of the items. Interestingly, more professors with liberal views on socioeconomic issues say that government wastes a lot of money (57 percent) than do

---

<sup>9</sup> The preferred model also includes a fourth category, consisting of about 1.8 percent of professors. The distinguishing characteristic of this group is that its members failed to respond to several of the socioeconomic questions.

professors with center/center-left views (46 percent), which suggests that those with strongly left views have less faith in existing government structures. No doubt for different reasons, three quarters of professors in the conservative cluster say there is a lot of government waste. It is interesting to note that these clusters map only roughly onto our overall political orientation variable. Of respondents in the large, center/center-left cluster on socioeconomic attitudes, 38 percent describe themselves as liberal, 57 percent as moderate, and 4.8 percent as conservative. Of those in the liberal cluster, 74.8 percent describe themselves as liberal, 23.5 percent as moderate, and 1.7 percent as conservative. Of those in the conservative cluster, 4.4 percent describe themselves as liberals, 54.9 as moderates, and 40.7 as conservatives.

Tables 14 and 15 show how these clusters of respondents are distributed across types of institutions and age cohorts, this time treating members of the residual fourth cluster as missing cases. In terms of institutional differences, we once again find that professors at liberal arts colleges are the most liberal: 41.8 percent of them fall into the liberal cluster on socioeconomic attitudes. By contrast, only 20.3 percent of professors at elite, doctoral granting schools are members of the liberal cluster. This is not because they hold conservative views: only 9.8 percent fall into the conservative cluster. Instead, nearly 70 percent of such professors are part of the center/center-left cluster. Professors in the conservative cluster on socioeconomic attitudes are most common at community colleges and non-liberal arts BA granting schools, where they comprise about a fifth of all professors. In terms of age, we once again find evidence of increasing moderatism. Fewer professors in the youngest age cohort fall into the liberal cluster than in the next two age cohorts, while the youngest cohort also contains the highest proportion of professors who fall into the conservative cluster.

**Table 14**

	Liberal	Center/Center-left	Conservative
Community college	36.0	41.1	22.9
BA granting, non-liberal arts	30.0	46.9	23.1
Liberal arts	41.8	50.6	7.6
Non-elite, PhD granting	27.8	61.9	10.2
Elite, PhD granting	20.3	69.9	9.8
Total	29.7	54.9	15.3

---

**Table 15**

	Liberal	Center/Center-left	Conservative
26-35	21.5	59.5	19.0
36-49	31.0	51.2	17.8
50-64	31.0	56.6	12.4
65+	27.7	64.4	7.9
Total	30.2	55.3	14.5

Finally, Table 16 shows the breakdown of these clusters across broad disciplinary groupings. Predictably, the social sciences and humanities contain the highest proportion of professors who fall into the liberal cluster on socioeconomic attitudes, and the lowest proportion who fall into the conservative cluster. Even in the social sciences and humanities, however, liberals on socioeconomic issues are outnumbered by those who occupy the center/center-left camp. The physical and biological sciences contain the highest proportion of centrists – 79.6 percent – while computer science and engineering, business, and health contain the highest proportion of conservatives.

**Table 16**

	Liberal	Center/center-left	Conservative
Phys/bio sciences	12.2	79.6	8.2
Social sciences	42.1	47.6	10.3
Humanities	40.8	51.1	8.1
Comp sci/engineering	8.8	64.8	26.4
Health sciences	14.8	53.1	32.1
Business	10.5	52.6	36.8
Other	31.9	53.8	14.3
Total	28.9	55.4	15.7

### Sex and Gender

A similar three cluster solution obtains for our sex and gender questions, except here the liberal cluster is the largest. For this domain we consider five questions. Four are taken from the GSS. These ask about respondents' views of homosexuality, the gender division of labor in the household, whether preschool children are likely to suffer if their mothers are in the workforce, and abortion. A fifth question, which we wrote in light of the controversy surrounding the comments of former Harvard President Lawrence Summers, asked respondents whether they thought the underrepresentation of women in math, science, and engineering fields was mostly because of discrimination, mostly because of differences of ability, or mostly because of differences of interest. We report the overall responses to these items, along with specific question wordings, in Table 17 below before moving on to consider how these responses cluster together.

**Table 17**

	Always wrong	Almost always wrong	Wrong only sometimes	Not wrong at all
What do you think of sexual relations between two adults of the same sex?	17.2	2.6	11.3	68.7
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and the family	3.8	9.2	30.5	56.5
A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works	3.2	22.7	47.2	26.9
	Yes	No		
Should it be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if the woman wants it for any reason?	74.7	25.3		

	Because of discrimination	Because of differences in ability between men and women	Because of differences of interest between men and women
In many math, science, and engineering fields, there are more male professors than female professors. Do you think this difference is mainly:	24.5	1.0	74.5

On the whole, as the table shows, professors have very liberal attitudes toward sex and gender. About 70 percent think that homosexuality is not wrong at all, about 75 percent are firmly pro-choice, and nearly 60 percent strongly disagree with a “traditional” gender division of labor. There is more variation on the question of whether the pre-school age children of working mothers suffer: many more professors disagree with this statement than agree, but weak disagreement is more common than strong disagreement. A further indication of how progressive the professoriate is on sex and gender is that, in response to another GSS question we asked (but do not formally include in this domain of analysis because it refers to an identity rather than a substantive attitude), 56 percent of professors in our sample describe themselves as feminists. This is true for 62.6 percent of women and 50.8 percent of men. By contrast, the last time this question was asked on the GSS in 1996, 27 percent of women and 12 percent of men described themselves as feminists (Schnittker, Freese, and Powell 2003:611). On the question of the reason for the underrepresentation of women in math, science, and engineering, only about 1 percent of respondents support the “differences of ability” hypothesis. Surprisingly, only about a quarter blame discrimination, with the rest citing differences of interest. Cross-tabulations show that women are about twice as likely to blame discrimination as men (33.8 percent versus 17.1 percent).

Although the questions about pre-school mothers working and the underrepresentation of women in math and science show the most variation, our latent class analysis reveals that small differences on all the questions help to separate those in the liberal cluster from those in the center/center-left cluster – which in this domain is



really a center-left cluster. In the liberal cluster, which comprises about 54.2 percent of respondents, more than 90 percent give liberal responses to the questions about homosexuality, the gender division of labor, and abortion. About 62 percent of respondents in this cluster disagree that a pre-school aged child will suffer if her or his mother works, and about 36 percent cite discrimination as the reason there are few women in math and science, with the rest citing differences of interest. The center left cluster, by contrast, contains about 31 percent of respondents. In this cluster, about a third give moderate answers to the homosexuality question, about 18 percent agree that it's better if women stay home while men go to work, and a third express opposition to abortion rights. In contrast to the liberal cluster, almost no one in the center left camp cites discrimination with regard to women, math and science, citing differences of interest instead. Moreover, only about 12 percent of respondents in this group say that a pre-school aged child will suffer if her or his mother works, about 15 percentage points *lower* than in the more liberal cluster, perhaps a reflection of the fact that those farther to the left in their views of sex and gender embrace a less work centered version of feminism. Finally, the conservative cluster, comprising about 14.8 percent of respondents, is most unified around its opposition to homosexuality (99 percent) and abortion rights (78 percent). About 43 percent of professors in this cluster agree with a "traditional" gender division of labor.

Although differences by gender can be found for some of the individual items we used to conduct our latent class analysis, the only gender difference we find at the cluster level is that somewhat more women than men can be found in the liberal cluster (59.5 versus 50.6 percent), a difference made up for by the lesser presence of women in both of the remaining, more conservative clusters. Differences by institution type are more significant, and this time the status gradient runs in the expected direction, with more liberal professors the higher one ascends in the institutional status structure. Table 18 shows the proportion of professors in the liberal cluster on the sex and gender items who teach at different types of schools. Here liberal arts colleges occupy an intermediate position between non-elite PhD granting schools and elite doctoral institutions.

**Table 18**

	Liberal cluster	Center/center-left cluster	Conservative cluster
Community college	43.7	31.1	25.2
BA granting, non-liberal arts	44.8	28.6	26.5
Liberal arts	67.1	26.6	6.3
Non-elite, PhD granting	56.3	35.9	7.8
Elite, PhD granting	74.9	20.4	4.8
Total	54.2	31.0	14.8

Turning now to age, where on socioeconomic attitudes (and overall political orientation) we saw evidence of increasing moderatism, on sex and gender, as Table 19 shows, the youngest cohort is the most liberal, followed by the cohort of professors aged 50-64.

**Table 19**

	Liberal cluster	Center/center-left cluster	Conservative cluster
26-35	63.0	23.5	13.6
36-49	52.3	33.3	14.4
50-64	57.9	27.1	15.0
65+	45.9	47.7	6.3
Total	55.1	30.9	14.0

There are also significant differences on the sex and gender items across broad disciplinary groupings, as Table 20 reveals. Consistent with our findings on political orientation and voting, on sex and gender professors of computer science and engineering, health, and business are the most conservative, while social scientists are the most liberal. On these questions natural and physical scientists are actually slightly more liberal than humanists.

**Table 20**

	Liberal cluster	Center/center-left cluster	Conservative cluster
Phys/bio sciences	62.3	30.7	7.0

<b>Social sciences</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>7.1</b>
Humanities	57.9	34.6	7.5
Comp sci/engineering	26.4	46.5	27.0
Health sciences	47.0	25.3	27.7
Business	39.6	36.5	24.0
Other	58.0	23.7	18.3
Total	53.7	31.3	15.0

---

## Race

For both socioeconomic attitudes and sex and gender, then, professors cluster into three distinct groups: a liberal group, a center/center-left group, and a conservative group. On socioeconomic attitudes the center/center-left cluster was the largest, while on sex and gender attitudes the liberal cluster was the largest. What pattern obtains when it comes to professors' attitudes toward race? Here we consider three items from our survey, all concerned with steps that might be taken in the educational realm to reduce racial disparities in society. The first, which we constructed based on a GSS question, asked professors whether they favor affirmative action in college admissions for African-Americans and members of other racial/ethnic minority groups. The second, drawn directly from the GSS, asked whether lack of educational opportunity is a cause of racial disparities between blacks and whites. The third asked professors whether they agreed that the racial and ethnic diversity of the country should be more strongly reflected in the college curriculum. What do we find in response to these items?

Although the majority of professors favor affirmative action in college admissions, it is a slim majority. Excluding those who said they had no opinion on the matter, we find that 11 percent of our respondents strongly favor affirmative action in college admissions, and 39.7 percent favor it. 31.9 percent oppose affirmative action, and 17.4 percent strongly oppose it.

On the question of whether lack of educational opportunities is a cause of racial inequality between blacks and whites, we find much less variation: 84.6 percent of professors agree that it is, reflecting the high value that professors obviously place on education. Two other survey questions are also worth mentioning here, although we do not consider them in the latent class analysis we report below because they are less tied in

to attitudes toward race and education specifically: we find that only 53.6 percent of professors cite ongoing discrimination as a cause of racial inequality, while just 18.0 percent agree it's because "most African Americans just don't have the motivation or will power to pull themselves up out of poverty." (Respondents answered these questions separately.)

On the curricular diversity question – again excluding those who said they didn't know – we find strong but not overwhelming support. 28.2 percent of professors strongly agree that the racial and ethnic diversity of the country should be more strongly represented in the undergraduate curriculum, 43.5 percent agree, 21.3 percent disagree, and 7.1 percent strongly disagree.

Once again, the latent class analysis reveals three distinct clusters of respondents. As was the case with socioeconomic attitudes, the moderate or center/center-left cluster is the largest, comprising about 55.6 percent of the professors in our sample. Almost no one in this cluster strongly favors affirmative action; 51 percent favor it, though not strongly, and about 40 percent oppose it (with the rest giving no answer). Virtually all of those respondents in the center left cluster (95 percent) say that lack of education is a reason for racial inequalities between whites and blacks. While this group agrees that the undergraduate curriculum should reflect more racial and ethnic diversity, there is much more agreement (60 percent) than strong agreement (10 percent) with the sentiment, and 25 percent of respondents in the center-left cluster disagree.

On the race and education items, the liberal and conservative clusters are not as far apart in size as in other domains (25.6 percent versus 18.9 percent of respondents, respectively). Even in the liberal cluster, only 34 percent of respondents strongly favor affirmative action – but only 1 percent oppose it. Those in the liberal cluster look much like those in the center left cluster in terms of their belief that lack of education is a major cause of racial inequality. Where they differ most is that 77 percent *strongly* agree that there should be more curricular diversity. Unsurprisingly, 82 percent of professors in the conservative cluster oppose affirmative action, while 54 percent deny that lack of educational opportunity is a cause of inequality between whites and blacks. In this group, nearly 6 in 10 professors oppose the idea of curricular changes to reflect racial and ethnic diversity.

As with the socioeconomic attitudes clusters, with the race and education variables the youngest cohorts are the most moderate, as Table 21 shows. It is members of the cohort who came of age in the 1960s who are the least prevalent in the center left cluster, and the most prevalent in the liberal cluster.

**Table 21**

	Liberal cluster	Center/Center-left cluster	Conservative cluster
26-35	12.5	71.3	16.3
36-49	26.6	60.4	13.0
50-64	29.3	47.6	23.1
65+	13.5	64.9	21.6
Total	26.0	55.1	18.8

In terms of institutional differences on the race questions, as Table 22 shows, professors at elite, doctoral granting schools are most common in the center/center left cluster, while those at liberal arts colleges are most common in the liberal cluster.

Professors with conservative views on race and education are most common in community colleges and non-liberal arts, BA granting schools.

**Table 22**

	Liberal cluster	Center/center-left cluster	Conservative cluster
Community college	20.7	52.7	26.6
BA, non-liberal arts	24.6	52.1	23.4
Liberal arts	32.9	58.2	8.9
Non-elite, PhD granting	27.9	55.4	16.7
Elite, PhD granting	22.2	66.5	11.4
Total	25.5	55.6	18.9

We do not report in tabular form broad disciplinary differences on the race items because they are about what one would expect: social scientists and humanists are the most liberal, computer scientists and engineers, professors in health fields, and professors of business the most conservative. It is worth noting differences by race: we find that a

higher proportion of nonwhite professors than white professors can be found in the liberal cluster (32.5 versus 24.6 percent), that whites are more likely than nonwhites to belong to the center left cluster (42.4 versus 57.7 percent), and that a *higher* proportion of nonwhites than whites can be found in the conservative cluster (25.1 versus 17.7 percent).

### Military Force and the Mideast

The attitude domains considered thus far concern domestic issues. Does the story of three distinct clusters change when we turn to views of foreign policy? Consider first views of the use of military force. Here we examine responses to three Pew items: one that asks about the advisability of diplomacy versus military strength as strategies for achieving peace; one about the advisability of using “overwhelming military force” to defeat terrorism; and a third that asks respondents’ views on whether “we should all be willing to fight for our country, whether it is right or wrong.”

On these items, there is wide agreement among professors. 80.1 percent prefer diplomacy over military strength as a way to secure peace, with 63.9 percent feeling strongly about the matter (in 2007, the comparable figures in the general population were 47 and 17 percent). Professors are even more dovish in their views of the value of using military force to defeat terrorism. 86.5 percent agree that “relying too much on military force to defeat terrorism creates hatred that leads to more terrorism,” with 75.2 percent feeling strongly about it. (When this question was last asked of the general population by Pew in 2005, 51 percent of Americans said that relying too much on military force is problematic.) On the fight for country item, 79.1 percent of professors say that “it’s acceptable to refuse to fight in a war you believe is morally wrong,” with 68.4 percent feeling strongly this way. (In 2007, 45 percent of Americans said refusing to fight was acceptable.)

Not surprisingly, given this pattern of response, our latent class analysis of the military force items shows that the largest cluster consists of professors who hold liberal positions on all these items. This cluster comprises about 68.3 percent of all professors. Once again, however, a center-left cluster is also evident, comprising about 21.6 percent of the professorial population, while professors with conservative views on military force make up about 10.1 percent of all professors. Among professors in this conservative

cluster, the most agreement can be found on the questions concerning military strength versus diplomacy and the use of force to defeat terrorism: these professors strongly favor military strength and the use of force. Even in this conservative cluster, though, only about 50 percent of professors feel strongly that one must fight for one's country whether a war is right or wrong.

These questions concern military force in general. To probe foreign policy views more deeply we turn next to questions about the Middle East and the war in Iraq. Table 23 shows responses to two questions about the war, and one about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**Table 23**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
President Bush misled the American people about the reasons to go to war in Iraq	74.9	5.1	3.7	4.4	11.9
The current course cannot bring stability and we need to start reducing the number of US troops in Iraq	55.7	10.2	6.4	8.4	19.3
	Israelis	Palestinians	Both	Neither	
In the Middle East situation, are your sympathies more with the Israelis or more with the Palestinians?	20.9	10.7	51.3	17.1	

The table clearly indicates the professoriate's high level of opposition to the war. 80 percent of professors believe President Bush lied about the reasons to go to war, and 66 percent advocate drawing down troop levels. Among those who feel that President Bush lied, those who feel strongly about the matter outnumber those who do not by a ratio of nearly 15:1. At the same time, flying in the face of conservative charges that many professors express a pro-Palestinian, anti-Israeli bias, only about 11 percent of professors in our sample say their sympathies lie more with the Palestinians in the Middle

East conflict. Almost double that number side with the Israelis, while the largest group of professors – 51 percent – say they sympathize with both sides.

Again, our latent class analysis reveals three clusters. The largest group of professors – about 66.9 percent – feel vehemently that President Bush lied and advocate bringing the troops home. About three quarters of professors in this liberal cluster sympathize either with both sides in the Middle East conflict or with neither side, though of the remainder more side with the Palestinians (14 percent) than with the Israelis (8 percent). A second cluster, representing about 22.3 percent of professors, consists of those who generally agree that the President lied, hold more moderate views on the question of whether we should begin withdrawing troops, and are more sympathetic toward the Israelis (23 percent) than the Palestinians (2 percent), though the majority, 60 percent, are sympathetic toward both or neither. About 10.8 percent of professors hold conservative views on all these questions; within this cluster, nearly 80 percent side with the Israelis.

Looking at the distribution of these clusters, we find, as concerns institution types, that elite, doctoral granting institutions contain the highest proportion of respondents in the liberal cluster, at 77.1 percent, and that community colleges contain the lowest proportion of respondents in this cluster, at 60.0 percent. In terms of age, the youngest professors, those 26-35, are again the most moderate (27.6 percent versus 18.1 percent among those aged 50-64), and the least liberal (61.4 percent versus 72.1 percent among those aged 50-64). Overall, men are slightly more liberal than women on the Middle East items, and Jews display a greater tendency than non-Jews to fall into one of the clusters at the extremes of the distribution. In terms of disciplinary differences, we find a departure from the previously established pattern: the physical and biological sciences contain as high a proportion of respondents in the liberal cluster as do the social sciences (73 percent), with the humanities not far behind (70.7 percent). At the same time, nearly three times as many physical and biological scientists than social scientists can be found in the conservative cluster (13.1 versus 5.5 percent).

### Cosmopolitanism



Finally, we consider evidence for whether American professors are “locals” or “cosmopolitans.” This is an issue of longstanding importance in the sociology of intellectual life. On the one hand, theorists such as Gouldner (1965) have argued that, beginning with the philosophers of Ancient Greece, intellectuals in the West have tended to be cosmopolitans, identifying themselves more with abstract ideals like reason and truth – and with the broad community of others who are committed to the same ideals – than to the politics of which they may be members, a notion also implicit in Merton’s notion that the “ethos of science” is fundamentally universalistic. On the other hand, observers of late twentieth-century American intellectual life have noted that cosmopolitanism *qua* rejection of American identity was particularly characteristic of academicians in the United States in the post-1960s era (Kazin and McCartin 2006) – a fact sometimes said to be linked to the inability of the academic New left to achieve a mass following (Rorty 1998). We approach this issue empirically by considering four items: one that asks whether professors agree that the growing number of newcomers from other countries threatens traditional American customs and values; one that asks how proud respondents are to be Americans; one that asks whether Western civilization and culture should be the foundation of the undergraduate curriculum; and one – taken from the World Values Survey – that asks professors whether they identify more with their locality or town, their state or region, the U.S. as a whole, or the world as a whole.

The overall responses can be quickly summarized. Does the growing number of newcomers threaten traditional American culture? Only 16.6 percent of professors think that it does. Are professors proud to be Americans? Excluding those who are not American, we find that 44.5 percent of professors are very proud of their national identity, and 33.2 percent are somewhat proud. 18.2 percent are not very proud, and 3.9 percent say they are not proud at all. Do professors think Western civilization and culture should be the foundation of the undergraduate curriculum? About 44.4 percent say that it should. Finally, with which geographical group do professors most identify? 11.7 percent say the locality or town where they live, 18.6 say the state or region of the

country where they live, 32.1 percent say the U.S. as a whole, and 37.6 percent say the world as a whole.<sup>10</sup>

Looking at these items together reveals four distinct clusters. The largest cluster, comprising about 37.4 percent of respondents, consists of those who hold center-left views of immigration, who are very proud (73 percent) of being American, who agree that Western civilization and culture should be the foundation of the curriculum (77 percent), and who identify first and foremost with either the U.S. or their state or locality (89 percent). A second cluster, representing about 26.8 percent of professors, consists of those who do not think immigration poses any threat to American culture, who are somewhat less proud to be Americans (though 67 percent are either very proud or somewhat proud), and who identify slightly more with the world as a whole, though 75 percent identify with either the U.S. or their state or locality. What distinguishes this cluster from the first, beyond their more liberal views of immigration, is their strong disagreement with the idea that Western culture should form the basis for the undergraduate curriculum: 97 percent of respondents in this cluster disagree with this idea. A third cluster, representing about 21.8 percent of respondents, is more genuinely cosmopolitan. They hold roughly similar views to the second cluster on immigration and the undergraduate curriculum, but nearly half of them say they are not proud to be Americans, and 63 percent of them identify with the world as a whole. A fourth cluster, by contrast, representing about 14.1 percent of professors, is more cosmopolitan still in its identity (87 percent identify with the world), but simultaneously quite proud of being American (92 percent somewhat proud). Aggregating these clusters, we thus find that about 64 percent of professors fall into clusters whose members identify more with America or their region or town than with the world as a whole, while about 38.9 percent of professors belong to more cosmopolitan clusters.

These clusters correspond with other attributes of professors. We asked our respondents how many times, in the previous 24 months, they had traveled outside the

---

<sup>10</sup> When this question was last asked on the World Values Survey in the U.S. in 1999, with slightly different response options, 31.9 percent of Americans identified with their locality, 10.9 with their region, 34.9 with their country, 2.8 with their continent, and 19.5 with the world as a whole. Identification with the world as a whole was actually slightly lower (15.4 percent) among those who had completed BA degrees or higher, a better comparison group to the professorial population. Our survey thus provides systematic evidence that American professors have a more cosmopolitan, global identity than college educated Americans in general.

U.S., and how many languages they speak. With regard to travel, about 24.5 percent of professors had taken 3 or more international trips in the past two years. As concerns foreign language competency, we find that about 49.5 percent of professors speak a language other than English, and 19 percent speak two or more foreign languages. (Bear in mind that 11.4 percent of respondents in our sample were born outside the U.S.) Professors in the two cosmopolitan clusters were nearly twice as likely as those in the two local clusters to have taken at least three or more international trips (33.6 and 36.1 versus 18.5 and 19.4 percent, respectively). Moreover, whereas only 37.2 percent of professors in the most local cluster speak a language other than English, this is true of 82.6 percent of professors in the most cosmopolitan cluster.

### Professorial Attitudes and Voting

We round out our discussion of the attitudes clusters by examining the relationship between professors' views and a crucial aspect of their political behavior: voting. To do so, we conducted a latent class analysis on all of the latent classes we found for the six domains considered above. This meta-analysis revealed four major clusters into which respondents fall when all of the classes that can be found on the attitudes items are considered together – as well as one very small, somewhat anomalous cluster. A side benefit of conducting such a meta-analysis is that we can look to see what proportion of respondents in each cluster describe themselves as liberals, moderates, or conservatives, which gives us some sense for how these terms are associated with the actual attitudes professors hold.

The largest meta-cluster is a center left cluster, comprising about 37 percent of all respondents. Although respondents in this cluster hold very liberal views of the use of military force and the mideast situation, most hold center/center left views on socioeconomic matters and race, and the group is split between those who hold liberal and center/center left views of sex and gender. On the whole the group displays a high level of cosmopolitanism. 52.8 percent of respondents in this meta-cluster describe themselves as moderates, and 47.2 percent as liberals (here we are using the three category recoding scheme for political orientation described above). The second largest meta-cluster, representing about 27.9 percent of respondents, is a liberal cluster.

Respondents in this cluster hold very liberal views in all of the attitudes domains, but are actually somewhat less cosmopolitan in orientation than respondents in the center left cluster. 86.4 percent of respondents in this cluster consider themselves liberals, and 13.6 percent moderates. A third cluster, comprising about 21.6 percent of respondents, is a moderate cluster. This group consists of respondents who look much like those in the center left cluster when it comes to socioeconomic matters and race, but they are somewhat more moderate on sex and gender, and much more moderate in their views of military force and the mideast situation. They are also decidedly less cosmopolitan. 74.9 percent of respondents in this cluster describe themselves as moderates. The conservative cluster is next, comprising about 10.6 percent of respondents. Respondents in this cluster hold fairly conservative views on all domains, and are not cosmopolitan at all. 54 percent of respondents in this cluster describe themselves as conservatives, and 45.3 percent describe themselves as moderates. A final cluster – the anomalous one – comprising about 3 percent of respondents, consists of those who are overwhelmingly moderate on all the attitudes domains, except that they are hawks when it comes to the use of military force and the mideast situation.

Although we are leery of making too much of these meta-clusters, which might have turned out differently had we included different attitudes domains or used different items to construct the composite clusters, we note in passing that, according to this analysis, some 58.6 percent of respondents can be found in either the center left or moderate camps in terms of their attitudes.

To explore the connection between attitudes and voting, we next regressed vote choice in the 2004 elections for those respondents who voted for either Bush or Kerry on membership in these meta-clusters, also including in our model a variety of individual sociodemographic and institution-level characteristics. In a binary logistic regression, membership in the meta-clusters was a significant and powerful predictor of vote choice.

A model that included meta-cluster membership alone accurately predicted vote choice 95.2 percent of the time, whereas a fuller model that also included the control variables did so 98.5 percent of the time. This is to say that for professors – perhaps as for no other occupation – social and political attitudes are *highly* determinative of political behavior. We also ran a model in which we used as the key independent variables not membership

in the meta-clusters, but membership in the domain specific clusters. Here we found that views of the use of military force and the Mideast situation were the most robust attitudinal predictors of vote choice. Though the counterfactual is difficult to construct, in all likelihood, had the Republicans fielded a candidate for president in 2004 who not taken the country to war in Iraq, and not been such an aggressive unilateralist, that candidate would have garnered a larger share of the professorial vote.

What overall conclusion can be drawn from our analysis of the attitudes items? What we wish to emphasize is simply that there is more attitudinal complexity and heterogeneity in the professorial population than second wave researchers have attended to. It seems to us unlikely that a simplistic notion like “groupthink” – more of a political slur than a robust social-scientific concept – can do very much to help explain the specific configurations and distributions of attitudes our survey reveals.

#### *Attitudes Toward the Role of Politics in Teaching and Research*

Although conservative critics of American higher education worry about the overrepresentation of liberals on the faculty, of more concern to them is how this overrepresentation may be influencing teaching and research practices, especially in fields like the social sciences and humanities. More important for us, this is also an interesting issue from the standpoint of the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of higher education. On the one hand, there is a great deal of historical evidence to suggest that political commitments and identities among academicians, particularly in the social sciences and humanities (e.g., Rojas 2007) but also in the natural sciences (e.g., Frickel 2004), may help spur the creation of new intellectual movements or fields (Frickel and Gross 2005), influence topic selection and affiliation with intellectual traditions and theoretical approaches (Gross 2002), and exert a significant effect on one’s choice of methodology. On the other hand, it is well established in the sociology of higher education literature that college students between their freshman and senior years tend to undergo a “liberalization” in terms of “sociopolitical, religious, and gender role attitudes” (Alwin, Cohen, and Newcomb 1991; Pascarella and Terenzini 1991:559). What is not known is the precise mechanism or mechanisms through which this effect comes about. One that might be thought operative is that students become more liberal during college

through exposure to liberal professors, who open them up to new ways of thinking, or through exposure to a liberal campus culture to which professors and administrators lend their support. From either a knowledge-production or higher education in the social system perspective, then, it becomes important to understand not just what professors' politics are, but as well the social practices they enact that mediate the relationship between their politics, teaching, and research. Do professors inhabit disciplinary or institutional "epistemic cultures" (Knorr-Cetina 1999) that stress the importance of objectivity and/or political neutrality, or are they immersed in social environments where political engagement is seen as a moral obligation? Such questions are best addressed through qualitative research that allows the nuances, complexities, and ambiguities of meaning at the core of epistemic cultures to be captured, but some preliminary sense for how professors think about the issues involved can be gleaned from an analysis of a few survey items.

To assess respondents' views on these issues, we presented them with a series of statements, and asked them to tell us how much they agreed or disagreed with each.

Table 24 describes their responses to three of these statements. The table shows that when it comes to views of the proper relationship between politics and teaching, the professorial community is about evenly split, with half of professors believing that a teacher's politics have no place in the classroom, and the other half more open to pedagogical styles in which teachers feel free to express their own positions. About 55 percent of respondents express agreement with the statement that when politically controversial issues arise in class, professors should keep their personal opinions to themselves. Similarly, about 40 percent of respondents say that professors should not be allowed to voice their anti-Iraq war views in the classroom. In terms of research, the majority of respondents – 70.9 percent – endorse the view that it is acceptable for professors to be guided by their political or religious values in the choice of research topic.

**Table 24**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
--	----------------	----------------	-------------------	-------------------

Professors who oppose the war in Iraq should be

---

allowed to express their anti-war views in the classroom	22.5	37	20.1	20.3
When politically controversial issues arise in the classroom, college or university professors should keep their personal opinions to themselves	17.0	38.0	36.5	8.5
It is acceptable for college or university professors to be guided by their political or religious beliefs in the selection of research topics	26.3	44.6	16.3	12.8

---

To probe the issue more deeply, we constructed a new variable to measure whether a respondent is fervent in the belief that one's personal politics should play no role in teaching. We coded respondents as fervent advocates of neutrality if they strongly disagreed with the statement about speaking out on the Iraq war *and* strongly agreed with the statement about keeping one's personal opinion to oneself in the classroom. About 9.7 percent of respondents fit these criteria. In our sample, fervent neutrality was most common among professors teaching at elite, PhD granting schools (15.8 percent), and least common among professors teaching at liberal arts colleges (4.0 percent). In terms of broad disciplinary groupings, the insistence on neutrality is about four times more common among professors of the physical and biological sciences, computer science and engineering, health, and business (between 15.4 and 21.4 percent) than among professors of the social sciences (3.3 percent) and humanities (6 percent). There are also marked differences by political orientation. Perhaps reflecting support for the Iraq war and disdain for those who would criticize it in the classroom, 21.8 percent of conservative professors are ardent advocates of neutrality, as compared to 11.7 percent of moderates and 5.1 percent of liberals. Not surprisingly, fewer self-identified faculty radicals fall into this category (2.4 percent) than do nonradicals (10.7 percent).

What about that third of professors who say it is *not* acceptable to be guided by one's political or religious values in the selection of research topics? What are their characteristics? In terms of institutional location, the differences here are most extreme between elite, PhD granting schools and liberal arts colleges. In the former, 41.7 percent of professors reject the idea that a scholar's personal politics or religious values should influence the selection of research topics, whereas this is true of only 16.1 percent of professors in liberal arts schools. Disciplinary differences are also significant: only 15.0 percent of social scientists insist that personal values must not influence research topic selection, a figure that may reflect the epistemological legacy of Max Weber, as compared to 29.4 percent of humanists and 44.2 percent of natural and physical scientists. There are no significant differences on this question between liberals, conservatives, and moderates. We do, however, find stark differences by age: more than half of those professors 65 or older reject the idea that being guided by one's politics or religion in topic selection is acceptable, as compared to about 30 percent of those in the 36-64 range, and just 15.3 percent of those professors 35 and under. There are also modest gender differences: 38.6 percent of men say that topic selection should not be guided by personal values, as compared to 25.7 percent of women. In light of the growing number of women in higher education, both the age and gender differences suggest that norms about keeping personal politics or religious commitments out of the research process altogether, while perhaps always more part of the rhetoric of science than descriptive of actual practice, may be weakening.

### *Views of Tenure*

An undercurrent of recent conservative critique of American higher education is that politicized faculty members too often hide behind the institution of tenure, trading in their commitments to pursue original research and offer diligent instruction for partisan activity once they have been promoted. In the eyes of conservative critics, tenure means a guaranteed job for life, which equates with a lack of accountability to students, university administrators, trustees, and the public, and is rife with potential for abuse. While conservative politicians, particularly at the state level, have sometimes echoed these criticisms, so far they have not found great resonance with the public. Other



research we have done suggests that only about half of Americans have heard of tenure (Gross and Simmons 2006). When survey respondents who have not are presented with a neutral explanation of tenure, most express support for the institution in principle, recognizing that it is important in order to provide academic freedom protections. But the majority of Americans do not believe that tenure should protect professors who hold what are seen as extreme political views. What’s more, attitudes toward tenure within the public are politically polarized: conservatives and Republicans are less supportive of the institution, and hold more restrictive views of academic freedom, than liberals and Democrats. Largely independent of public opinion, recent decades have witnessed a steady erosion of tenure as an institution. This has occurred as universities, under pressure to save money, have come to rely more heavily on contingent faculty; and as college and university trustees at some schools – often business people who view tenure as a kind of protection afforded no other American worker – have worked behind the scenes to reconfigure or eliminate it (for discussion, see Chait 2002).

How do professors feel about tenure, and how do their views vary depending on their tenure status, institutional location, and politics? These are questions that have been addressed in other surveys of the professoriate (e.g., Sanderson, Phua, and Herda 2000), but we thought it important to take them up in our survey as well. Accordingly, we asked our respondents to tell us how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about tenure. The results are shown in Table 25.

**Table 25**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Tenure is a good way to reward accomplished professors	35.4	47.6	11.7	5.3
Tenure is essential so that professors can teach, research, and write without having to worry about being fired if some people disagree with their conclusions	49.4	33.6	11.9	5.1
Tenure sometimes protects incompetent faculty	41.4	53.1	3.5	2.0
Giving professors tenure takes away their				

incentive to work hard

5.0

31.6

31.4

32.0

---

On the whole, these responses suggest that professors are strongly supportive of the institution of tenure, but aware of its potential for abuse. On the one side, there is overwhelming support for tenure as a reward for a job well done, whatever this may mean at different institutions, and for the notion that tenure provides key academic freedom protections. On the other side, nearly all respondents know of at least some cases where tenure has protected incompetent faculty, and more than a third of respondents express agreement for the sentiment that tenure disincentivizes hard work. Perhaps reflecting these concerns, when we asked respondents to indicate which statement best described their attitudes toward tenure, 55.4 percent said the tenure system should be modified but not eliminated, 37.9 percent said it should remain as it is, and 6.7 percent said it should be phased out.

Some sense for how views about tenure are distributed in the professorial population can be had by looking at how different groups come down on the question of whether the tenure system should remain as is, be modified, or be phased out. Not surprisingly, professors who already have tenure are much more supportive of keeping the tenure system as it currently is than are those who do not have tenure. 48.5 percent of tenured professors say the tenure system should remain as it is, as compared to 21.2 percent of those who do not have tenure. This difference begins to take on greater meaning when we compare professors who are either tenured or in tenure-track jobs to those who are not. 44.2 percent of professors in the former group want the tenure system to remain as it is, as compared to 13.6 percent of professors in the latter group. While the tenured and those on the tenure track want to protect a key asset, those for whom tenure is not a possibility may feel that the system is unfair, and would like to see it modified. Whether the preferred modification would involve simply its expansion so as to cover those not currently eligible we cannot say. What we can say is that, whether they are speaking from experience or from the standpoint of sour grapes, professors who are neither tenured nor on the tenured track are twice as likely to feel that tenure

disincentivizes hard work: 60.6 percent of the former agree that this is so, as compared to 30.4 percent of the latter.

Returning to the question of what should be done with the tenure system, we find significant differences on this variable across types of institutions. The greatest support for keeping the tenure system as is can be found in elite, PhD granting schools, where professors earn the highest salaries, and at least in one sense have the greatest economic incentive to preserve the institutional status quo. At such schools, 58.6 percent of respondents favor keeping the tenure system as it is. By contrast, only 20.8 percent of community college professors favor keeping the tenure system as is. At the same time, and possibly reflecting greater confidence in their ability to prosper and thrive no matter the institutional conditions, more advocates of eliminating tenure can also be found at elite, PhD granting schools: about 11.0 percent as compared to about 6 percent at other types of institutions.

We find no significant differences on this question across political orientation. However, on several of the other tenure items conservative professors do differ from their liberal colleagues, though we caution that here especially observed differences across political position may actually reflect differences in institutional location. 21.7 percent of conservatives, as compared to 14.8 percent of liberals, disagree that tenure is a good way to reward accomplished professors. More significantly, and consistent with the findings of Zipp and Fenwick, 39.5 percent of conservative professors, as compared to 16.0 percent of liberals, disagree that tenure is essential to protect academic freedom. And whereas 28.7 percent of liberals agree that tenure takes away professors' incentives to work hard, half of conservative professors – 48.8 percent – feel this way. This is the first hint of the phenomenon we explore below: the fact that conservative professors express significant grievances with the current academic environment.

### *Perceptions of the University Environment*

Given that conservatives are an increasingly rare breed in academia, and given the potential for the political commitments of the faculty to shape research agendas, teaching, and campus culture, it is hardly surprising – independent of broader conservative

campaigns – to find outspoken conservative professors voicing complaints about the direction the university is heading, and about the extent and consequences of “liberal bias” in academe. Such professors are very much in evidence in the public sphere today. Some, like Emory’s Mark Bauerlein, have made a minor industry of authoring editorials expressing their complaints on the pages of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and in other venues. But how widely shared are their sentiments? Our survey shows that conservative professors, whether they are outspoken or not, register high levels of dissatisfaction with the current university environment in terms of its political valence. More surprising, perhaps, a high proportion of moderates do as well, at least in certain respects.

Our survey contained about a dozen questions on views of the university environment. For most, we asked respondents about their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements we constructed. Rather than run through all the findings here, we will focus on a select number of questions, collapsing the four point agreement/disagreement scale to two points, and pointing out the differences between liberals, moderates, and conservatives. We note that on some of these items, the proportion of respondents who marked “don’t know” as an answer was relatively high – sometimes as high as 15 percent. In the discussion that follows, we code the “don’t knows” as missing cases, as we have done throughout the essay, except in those sections that reported our latent class analyses.

One straightforward question we asked concerning the university environment was whether respondents agreed that colleges and universities tend to favor professors who hold liberal social and political views. Overall, 43.4 percent of professors agreed with the statement, and 56.6 percent disagreed. Conservatives were much more likely than liberals to agree: 81.0 percent of conservative professors expressed agreement, as compared to 30.0 percent of liberals. Nearly half of moderates, however – 48.7 percent – also agreed that liberals are favored, though it is important to note that the question did not ask respondents to give their opinion as to whether this situation was in any way unfair.

In light of conservative complaints that liberal orthodoxy has such a stranglehold on the university that certain issues – such as possible gender differences in scientific or

mathematical aptitude – cannot be discussed or debated, another question we asked was whether respondents agreed that professors are as curious and open-minded today as they have ever been. Overall, 79.9 percent said that professors are open-minded and curious. 46.3 percent of conservatives, however, said that professors are not as open-minded and curious, as compared to only 17.4 percent of liberals, and about the same percentage of moderates. Half of conservatives thus see a problem where liberals and moderates do not. Along similar lines, we asked respondents whether most professors are respectful when students voice opinions that differ from their own. The vast majority – 87.7 percent – said that they are, but conservatives were nearly four times less likely than liberals and moderates to agree that most professors are respectful.

What about views of political correctness on campus? We asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the statement, “The adoption of attitudes often labeled ‘politically correct’ has made America a more civilized society than it was thirty years ago.” Overall, 39.8 percent of respondents agreed. Where liberals expressed modestly high levels of agreement – 59.8 percent, a figure that should give pause to those who assume that academic liberalism necessarily means subscription to the canons of political correctness – only 23.8 percent of moderates, and 23.6 percent of conservatives, said they agreed. Likewise, we asked respondents if, in their opinion, too many professors these days are distracted by disputes over issues like sexual harassment or the politics of ethnic groups – major concerns of the academic New Left. Where only 18.4 percent of liberals said yes, too many professors are so distracted, 42.1 percent of moderates did, along with 64.5 percent of conservatives.

Together, these findings suggest that conservative professors are quite unhappy with the current campus environment, at least with regard to politics, and that some moderate professors share some of their complaints. Whether moderates, who, as we have argued, comprise a sizable bloc, will feel so moved by these complaints that they will throw their support behind conservative proposals for reform remains to be seen. Given that most moderates in academe fall in the center/center left of the political spectrum, it may seem unlikely. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that most professors say they *would* welcome a greater diversity of political views on campus. 68.8 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, “The goal of campus diversity should

include fostering diversity of political views among faculty members.” This question did not specify any particular kind of political diversity, and said nothing about concrete steps that might be taken to achieve it, but the high level of agreement suggests that internal campaigns to promote political diversity within the professoriate have at least some mobilization potential.

Having started this essay with reference to the work of Lazarsfeld on academic freedom, it seems appropriate to conclude the results section by considering briefly whether professors today feel their academic freedom to be secure or threatened, a crucial aspect of perceptions of the university environment. Borrowing a question from Lazarsfeld’s survey, we asked respondents, “In the past few years, how much have you felt that your own academic freedom has been threatened in any way?” At first glance, it appears that professors feel only modest levels of threat. In response to this question, 3.7 percent of respondents indicated, “a lot,” 24.0 percent indicated, “some,” and 72.3 percent indicated, “not very much.” Social scientists, professors of business, and humanists perceived the highest levels of threat. These findings take on a different, and more ambiguous meaning, however, when we compare them to the results of the Lazarsfeld’s survey. He found – in 1955, at the height of McCarthyism – that 20.6 percent of social scientists who gave an answer to this question reported some level of threat, whereas the figure from our survey among social scientists, combining those who said they felt either “a lot” or “some” threat, is 32.5 percent. Although the two samples are not strictly comparable – we include a broader spectrum of institutions, and define social scientists in a somewhat different way – we can still reasonably say that social scientists today perceive as much if not more of a threat to their academic freedom than during the McCarthy era. What we do not know from our survey is: (1) what kind of threat specifically they perceive (for example, is it from conservative critics of the American professoriate, from the erosion of tenure protections, or from inhibitions on free speech associated with the academic left?); and (2) whether perceived levels of threat to academic freedom vary over time, spiking during historical moments like the McCarthy-era (and perhaps today), or whether such levels are more or less constant, reflecting enduring tensions between the relatively liberal professoriate and more conservative segments of American society. Taking another cue from Lazarsfeld and

Thielens, we also asked respondents if any colleagues had ever given them advice on how to avoid getting into trouble at their college or university for their views about national politics. 14.6 percent said yes. This number was highest among professors of computer science and engineering (35.1 percent) and social scientists (22.4 percent). Comparison to the Lazarsfeld study is again intriguing, though equally hard to interpret. He found that 14.7 percent of social scientists who answered the question reported receiving advice on how to avoid getting into trouble. There thus appears to be somewhat more advice-giving to social scientists in this regard today than in 1955, though again, we don't know from our survey what form this typically takes, or what the baseline level of advice-giving is in American academic life. In our survey, there were few differences on this item across the liberal-conservative spectrum, but those on the far left reported receiving more advice on how to avoid getting into trouble for their political views: 28.6 percent of Marxists, as compared to 13.8 percent of non-Marxists, gave an affirmative answer to the question. This serves as one more reminder that while conservatives in academe may feel themselves to be marginalized, Kimball's "tenured radicals" are not hegemonic: they must forge careers for themselves in disciplines and institutions where there are often as many moderates or those in the center left as there are liberals, and where there remains considerable disagreement in many fields as to the value of explicitly politicized academic work.

## CONCLUSION

Our aim in this essay was to summarize the results of a new survey of the American professoriate, and make a preliminary effort to situate our findings against the backdrop of previous research on professors and their politics. Where first wave studies on the topic, carried out by sociologists like Paul Lazarsfeld and Seymour Martin Lipset, sought to identify relatively complex patterns of political belief among professors, the distribution of such patterns across fields and institutions, and some of the social mechanisms and processes that might account for them, second wave research, beholden to a political agenda, has had as its major goal to simply highlight the liberalism of the faculty. We have shown that there is more heterogeneity of political opinion among the

professoriate than second wave studies have recognized. Although we would not contest the claim that professors are one of the most liberal occupational groups in American society, or that the professoriate is a Democratic stronghold, we have shown that there is a sizable, and often ignored, center/center-left contingent within the faculty; that on several important attitude domains – and in terms of overall political orientation – moderatism appears to be on the upswing; that, according to several measures, it is liberal arts colleges, and not elite, PhD granting institutions that house the most liberal faculty; and that there is much disagreement among professors about the role that politics should play in teaching and research.

By lifting analysis of the political proclivities of faculty members once again out of the realm of partisan politics, we hope to help revivify serious social-scientific scholarship on the subject. In our view, such scholarship should address three interrelated questions. First, what are the social mechanisms and processes that account for the relative liberalism of the faculty, and in particular for the specific form of liberalism we find to be most prevalent, namely liberalism on sex, gender, and foreign policy combined with more center left views on socioeconomic matters and race? And what accounts for differences in political orientation across fields and institutions? We have reviewed some of the hypotheses offered by first wave researchers with regard to both questions, but efforts to test these hypotheses using empirical data have been extremely limited, and surely more robust explanations could be imagined. Second, what – if any – are the effects of professors' politics on the knowledge they produce, the dynamics of knowledge growth, the structure of intellectual fields, and on student learning and socialization? Sociologists of knowledge have addressed some of these matters, but much more work remains to be done. Third and finally, where does the contemporary professoriate fit within the political ecology of the American occupational and class structure, and to what extent do its political propensities both reflect and feed into broader social and cultural dynamics? We hope that all of these questions will be the subject of lively – and empirically informed – discussion and debate in the years to come.

## REFERENCES



- Alwin, Duane, Ronald Cohen, and Theodore Newcomb. 1991. *Political Attitudes over the Life Span: The Bennington Women after Fifty Years*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Bennett, William. 1984. *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education*. Washington D.C.: National Endowment for the Humanities.
- Bloom, Allan. 1987. *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Bohme, Gernot and Nico Stehr, eds. 1986. *The Knowledge Society: The Growing Impact of Scientific Knowledge on Social Relations*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel.
- Brint, Steven. 1985. "The Political Attitudes of Professionals." *Annual Review of Sociology* 11:389-414.
- Brooks, Clem and Jeff Manza. 1997. "The Social and Ideological Bases of Middle-Class Political Realignment, 1972-1992." *American Sociological Review* 62:191-208.
- Bruce-Briggs, B, ed. 1979. *The New Class?* New Brunswick: Transaction.
- Chait, Richard, ed. 2002. *The Questions of Tenure*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Clark, Terry Nichols and Seymour Martin Lipset. 1991. "Are Social Classes Dyning?" *International Sociology* 6:397-410.
- Cohen-Cole, Ethan and Steven Durlauf. 2005. "Evaluating Claims of Bias in Academia: A Comment on Klein and Western's 'How Many Democrats per Republican at UC-Berkeley and Stanford'." Working paper.
- Converse, Philip. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, edited by D. Apter. New York: The Free Press.
- D'Souza, Dinesh. 1991. *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*. New York: Free Press.
- Doumani, Beshara. 2006. "Between Coercion and Privatization: Academic Freedom in the Twenty-First Century." In *Academic Freedom after September 11*, edited by B. Doumani. Brooklyn: Zone Books.
- Eitzen, D. Stanley and Gary Maranell. 1968. "The Political Party Affiliation of College Professors." *Social Forces* 47:145-153.
- Faia, Michael A. 1974. "The Myth of the Liberal Professor." *Sociology of Education* 47:171-202.
- Finkelstein, Martin J. 1984. *The American Academic Profession: A Synthesis of Social Scientific Inquiry Since World War II*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- Frank, Thomas. 2005. *What's The Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Frickel, Scott. 2004. *Chemical Consequences: Environmental Mutagens, Scientist Activism, and the Rise of Genetic Toxicology*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Frickel, Scott and Neil Gross. 2005. "A General Theory of Scientific/Intellectual Movements." *American Sociological Review* 70:204-232.
- Garfinkel, Simson. 1987. "Radio Research, McCarthyism and Paul F. Lazarsfeld." Thesis, Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge.

- Gouldner, Alvin. 1965. *Enter Plato: Classical Greece and the Origins of Social Theory*. New York: Basic Books.
- . 1970. *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. New York: Basic Books.
- . 1979. *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class: A Frame of Reference*. New York: Continuum.
- Gross, Neil. 2002. "Becoming a Pragmatist Philosopher: Status, Self-Concept, and Intellectual Choice." *American Sociological Review* 67:52-76.
- Gross, Neil and Solon Simmons. 2006. "Americans' Attitudes Toward Academic Freedom and Liberal "Bias" in Higher Education." Working paper.
- Hacker, Jacob and Paul Pierson. 2005. *Off Center: The Republican Revolution and the Erosion of American Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Halsey, A.H. and M.A. Trow. 1971. *The British Academics*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Hamilton, Richard F. and Lowell L. Hargens. 1993. "The Politics of the Professors: Self-Identifications, 1969-1984." *Social Forces* 71:603-627.
- Hollinger, David. 1996. *Science, Jews, and Secular Culture: Studies in Mid-Twentieth-Century American Intellectual History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Horowitz, David and Eli Lehrer. 2002. "Political Bias in the Administrations and Faculties of 32 Elite Colleges and Universities." Center for the Study of Popular Culture, Los Angeles.
- Kazin, Michael and Joseph McCartin, eds. 2006. *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Kimball, Roger. 1990. *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Klein, Daniel and Charlotta Stern. 2004-5. "Political Diversity in Six Disciplines." *Academic Questions* 18:40-52.
- . 2005. "Professors and their Politics: The Policy Views of Social Scientists." *Critical Review* 17:257-303.
- . forthcoming. "A Short Reply to Zipp and Fenwick's 'Is the Academy a Liberal Hegemony?'" *Public Opinion Quarterly*.
- Klein, Daniel and Andrew Western. 2004-5. "Voter Registration of Berkeley and Stanford Faculty." *Academic Questions* 18:53-65.
- Knorr-Cetina, Karin. 1999. *Epistemic Cultures: How the Sciences Make Knowledge*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kurzman, Charles and Lynn Owens. 2002. "The Sociology of Intellectuals." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28:63-90.
- Ladd, Everett Carl and Seymour Martin Lipset. 1973. *Academics, Politics, and the 1972 Elections*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.
- . 1976. *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Lazarsfeld, Paul F. and Wagner Thielens. 1958. *The Academic Mind: Social Scientists in a Time of Crisis*. Glencoe: The Free Press.
- Lee, John. 2006. "The 'Faculty Bias' Studies: Science or Propaganda?" American Federation of Teachers, Washington, D.C.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1972. *Rebellion in the University*. Boston: Little, Brown.

- Lipset, Seymour Martin and Richard Dobson. 1972. "The Intellectual as Critic and Rebel: With Special Reference to the United States and the Soviet Union." *Daedalus* 101:137-198.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin and Everett Carl Ladd. 1972. "The Politics of American Sociologists." *American Journal of Sociology* 78:67-104.
- Manza, Jeff and Clem Brooks. 1999. *Social Cleavages and Political Change: Voter Alignments and US Party Coalitions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Manza, Jeff, Michael Hout, and Clem Brooks. 1995. "Class Voting in Capitalist Democracies Since World War II: Dealignment, Realignment, or Trendless Fluctuation?" *Annual Review of Sociology* 21:137-62.
- Marsden, George. 1994. *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Merton, Robert. 1979. *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Messer-Davidow, Ellen. 1993. "Manufacturing the Attack on Liberalized Higher Education." *Social Text* 36:40-80.
- Metzger, Walter. 1955. *Academic Freedom in the Age of the University*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Nakhaie, M. Reza and Robert Brym. 1999. "The Political Attitudes of Canadian Professors." *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 24:329-353.
- Pascarella, Ernest and Patrick Terenzini. 1991. *How College Affects Students: Findings and Insights from Twenty Years of Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Pells, Richard. 1973. *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Post, Robert. 2006. "The Structure of Academic Freedom." In *Academic Freedom after September 11*, edited by B. Doumani. Brooklyn: Zone Books.
- Ricci, David. 1994. *The Transformation of American Politics: The New Washington and the Rise of Think Tanks*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Rojas, Fabio. 2007. *From Black Power to Black Studies: How a Radical Social Movement Became an Academic Discipline*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Rorty, Richard. 1998. *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ross, Dorothy. 1991. *The Origins of American Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rothman, Stanley, S. Robert Lichter, and Neil Nevitte. 2005. "Politics and Professional Advancement Among College Faculty." Article 2 in *The Forum*, vol. 3.
- Sanderson, Allen, Voon Chin Phua, and David Herda. 2000. "The American Faculty Poll." TIAA-CREF, New York.
- Schnittker, Jason, Jeremy Freese, and Brian Powell. 2003. "Who Are Feminists and What Do They Believe? The Role of Generations." *American Sociological Review* 68:607-622.
- Schofer, Evan and John Meyer. 2005. "The Worldwide Expansion of Higher Education in the Twentieth Century." *American Sociological Review* 70:898-920.
- Schrecker, Ellen. 1986. *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Shils, Edward. 1958. "The Intellectuals and the Powers: Some Perspectives for Comparative Analysis." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 1:5-22.
- Slaughter, Sheila. 1988. "Academic Freedom and the State: Reflections on the Uses of Knowledge." *The Journal of Higher Education* 59:241-262.
- Smith, Christian, ed. 2003. *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests, and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Smith, James. 1991. *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite*. New York: The Free Press.
- Stefancic, Jean and Richard Delgado. 1996. *No Mercy: How Conservative Think Tanks and Foundations Changed America's Social Agenda*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Tierney, John. 2004. "Republicans Outnumbered in Academia, Studies Find." *New York Times*, November 18.
- Tobin, Gary A. and Aryeh K. Weinberg. 2006. "A Profile of American College Faculty: Political Beliefs and Behavior." San Francisco: Institute for Jewish and Community Research.
- Townsley, Eleanor. 2000. "A History of Intellectuals and the Demise of the New Class: Academics and the U.S. Government in the 1960s." *Theory & Society* 29:739-784.
- Trow, Martin. 1973. "Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education." Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, Berkeley.
- Wilson, John. 1995. *The Myth of Political Correctness: The Conservative Attack on Higher Education*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wolfe, Alan. 1994. "The New Class Comes Home." In *Our Country, Our Culture: The Politics of Political Correctness*, edited by E. Kurzweil and W. Phillips. New York: Partisan Review Press.
- Young, Cathy. 2005. "Liberal Bias in the Ivory Tower." *Boston Globe*, April 11.
- Zipp, John F. and Rudy Fenwick. 2006. "Is the Academy a Liberal Hegemony? The Political Orientations and Educational Values of Professors." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 70:304-326.