

---

# SOCIETY FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SCHOLARSHIP

---

Number 27

NEWSLETTER

January 2001

---

[www.safs.niagara.com](http://www.safs.niagara.com)

## PURPOSES OF SAFS

- *Maintaining freedom in teaching, research and scholarship.*
- *Maintaining standards of excellence in academic decisions about students and faculty.*

## SAFS WINS DONNER GRANT FOR LEGAL DEFENCE FUND

*Clive Seligman, SAFS President*

The Board of Directors of SAFS is pleased to announce that we have received a \$100,000 grant from the Donner Canadian Foundation for a legal defence fund to support individuals to defend their academic freedom and the merit principle. The title of the grant is: Defending Academic Freedom, Scholarship, and the Merit Principle: Legal Research and Defence Fund.

As you know, SAFS was founded in 1992 in response to threats to both academic freedom and the merit principle in Canadian universities. As our web page ([www.safs.niagara.com](http://www.safs.niagara.com)) makes clear, we focus on promoting reasoned debate on issues of academic freedom and scholarship, through activities including encouraging the formation of local university chapters, distributing information to the media, speaking out publicly in support of our goals, and writing to appropriate officials when our principles are in jeopardy.

One activity that we have not had the resources to undertake is *supporting individuals with material*

*aid in those cases where there has been a clear abuse of academic freedom and/or the merit principle.* We have been constrained by lack of funds to supporting individuals with collegial advice and moral support only. In many cases, our organization would be more effective in championing our goals, if we could directly help individuals to pursue their rights to academic freedom or to defend the merit principle by being able to fund legal research and, if necessary, the retention of legal counsel. Now, because of the grant, we will be able to move in this direction. We believe that the Society has enough experienced senior members with the judgment to select those individuals and cases for support that will have the greatest ultimate impact in setting precedents for safeguarding academic freedom and the merit principle in Canadian universities. We thank the Donner Canadian Foundation for their support and encouragement.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 SAFS Letter to Dawson College**
  - 3 Nominees for SAFS Board of Directors**
  - 4 Birgeneau Responds to SAFS**
  - 5 Birgeneau's Open Letter**
  - 6 Provincial Politics and Equity**
  - 7 Spousal Hiring**
  - 9 The Power of Paranoia**
  - 10 Letters to the Editor**
-

**LETTER FROM SAFS TO DR. PATRICK  
WOODSWORTH, DIRECTOR-GENERAL,  
DAWSON COLLEGE**

August 22, 2000

Dear Director-General Woodsworth:

Thank you for your August 9, 2000 reply to my June 26, 2000 letter regarding our Society's concerns about Dawson College's treatment of Professor Jeffrey Asher. I am well aware that negotiations between the College and Professor Asher have led to an employment-termination settlement since I last wrote to you. However, I must point out that you did not respond to any of the serious concerns I raised about possible violations of Professor Asher's academic freedom and right to due process. As I informed you in my previous letter, it our policy to consult all parties before commenting publicly on the academic freedom aspects of a dispute. I therefore ask once again that you respond to these concerns without unnecessary delay.

According to an article by Neil Seeman in the *National Post* on August 16, 2000, Professor Asher believes he was forced out of his job because of pressure from feminists, and not because of any academic misbehavior.

Professor Asher's statements are at odds with your assurance to me that the matter was resolved "to the satisfaction of both parties". Clearly, it is not in the interests of Dawson College for the public to have the impression that professors can lose their jobs at the College if their beliefs do not conform to feminist (or any other) dogma. And, indeed, if Asher's statements have any basis in fact, the College's actions are violations of his academic freedom. Do you deny Professor Asher's claim?

In my previous letter to you, I pointed out a number of procedural problems with the process used to decide Professor Asher's courses. First, Professor Asher was not invited to defend himself or to respond in any way. Second, apparent complaints against him were accepted at face value. Third, at least two members of the four person committee that ruled on Professor Asher's case, Professors Nemiroff and Powers, appear to have been biased or unsympathetic to Professor Asher, even before hearing evidence on the current matter.

*Continued on page 4...*

Published by the **Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship**, a society open to all (whether in a university or not) who accept the principles of freedom in teaching, research and scholarship and maintaining standards of excellence in decisions concerning students and faculty.

ISSN 1203-3197

**Editor:** Dr. Nancy K. Innis

**Assistant Editor:** Dr. Chris Furedy

**E-mail:** [SAFSNEWS@NIAGARA.COM](mailto:SAFSNEWS@NIAGARA.COM)

**Fax for newsletter submissions :** (519) 661-3961

**Mail for newsletter submissions :**

Dr. Nancy K. Innis,  
Psychology Department  
University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, N6A 5C2  
**Annual Subscription: \$25**

**SAFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2000-2001)**

Clive Seligman, Ph.D., (UWO) President  
Doreen Kimura, Ph.D, FRSC, (SFU), Past President  
Dale Beyerstin, M.A. (Langara, BC)  
John J. Furedy, Ph.D., (U. Toronto)  
Paul Marantz, Ph.D., (UBC)  
Murray Miles, Dr.phil., (Brock University)  
Harvey Shulman, M.A., (Concordia U.)  
Peter Suedfeld, Ph.D., FRSC, (UBC)

**E-mail addresses**

Clive Seligman: [safs@niagara.com](mailto:safs@niagara.com)  
Dorren Kimura: [dkimura@sfu.ca](mailto:dkimura@sfu.ca)  
Dale Beyerstin: [dbeyerst@langara.bc.ca](mailto:dbeyerst@langara.bc.ca)  
John J. Furedy: [furedy@psych.utoronto.ca](mailto:furedy@psych.utoronto.ca)  
Paul Marantz: [pmarantz@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:pmarantz@unixg.ubc.ca)  
Murray Miles: [mmiles@spartan.ac.brocku.ca](mailto:mmiles@spartan.ac.brocku.ca)  
Harvey Shulman: [hshulman@videotron.ca](mailto:hshulman@videotron.ca)  
Peter Suedfeld: [psuedfeld@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:psuedfeld@psych.ubc.ca)

## NOMINATIONS FOR SAFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2001

The Nominations Committee consisting of the President (Clive Seligman), Past-President (Doreen Kimura), and two non-director members (Ken Hilborn and Stewart Page) have nominated the following individuals for consideration for election to the Board at the next Annual General Meeting of the members. Brief biographical sketches are provided for nominees who are not currently serving on the Board.

The five nominated current Directors are: **Dale Beyerstein, Murray Miles, Clive Seligman, Harvey Shulman, and Peter Suedfeld.** The three additional nominees are:

**Tom Flanagan** is Professor of Political Science at the University of Calgary and a member of the Royal Society of Canada. He is best known for his books on Louis Riel, the North-West Rebellion, and aboriginal land claims. For two years in the early 1990s, he was director of research for the Reform Party of Canada; and he continues to provide media commentary on Canadian party politics as well as on aboriginal issues. He writes regularly for the *National Post*. Dr. Flanagan's participation in politics, along with the controversial nature of many of the topics on which he has published, has made him particularly concerned about issues of academic freedom in Canada. In the spirit of John Stuart Mill, he advocates the right of all Canadians, not just university professors, to speak on all matters of public concern without fear of coercion from government authorities. Just as strongly, he supports the right of all Canadians to disagree with, to denounce, and to dissociate themselves from people with whom they disagree.

**Steve Lupker** is Professor of Psychology at the University of Western Ontario. He is a cognitive psychologist, and his research interests center on information processing, with specific interests in reading, attention, and mathematical modeling. For several years, Steve was the coordinator of the local SAFS' organization at Western. He has been a campus leader on issues relevant to SAFS' twin goals of academic freedom and the merit principle. As a member of the university Senate, he was a determined and vocal critic of the university's policy on learning disabilities. In large part due to his efforts, the current policy on learning disabilities is much improved. Steve was also a leading opponent of the Faculty Association's attempt to introduce preferential faculty hiring at Western. After forcing the Faculty Association to hold a mail ballot on the issue, preferential faculty hiring was defeated by a margin of almost 2-1.

**Phil Resnick** is Professor of Political Science at UBC. His work has had a significant interdisciplinary component, and has concentrated on national identities in multinational states. He has written eight books, on Canadian politics and political theory, and has held a variety of research grants, fellowships, and visiting appointments. He received the Harold Innis Award of the HSSFC for the best English-language book in the social sciences in Canada (1991). He was one of the most vigorous critics of the McEwen Report and the precipitate and unfair action taken in its wake against the Department of Political Science. Elected to the Board of Governors of UBC by the faculty, Resnick was instrumental in turning the university away from the conventions of political correctness. He was the prime mover in removing demographic preferences from our job advertisements in favour of a clear emphasis on merit, and has been a supporter of academic freedom throughout his service on the Board.

Any member of SAFS may nominate individuals for election as Director. These nominations must be received at the SAFS Office by April 15, 2001. Each member nomination shall contain the following information: (i) the signature of the person nominating and the signatures of two (2) seconders; (ii) the full name and address of the person nominated; (iii) a statement of the status and attributes of the person nominated, showing each person's qualifications to be a director; (iv) a written consent signed by the person nominated agreeing to be nominated for election and to serve, if elected.

For your information, John Furedy, Doreen Kimura, and Paul Marantz are stepping down from the Board.

SAFS LETTER...continued from page 2

These problematic procedures are troubling and constitute a prima facie violation of Professor Asher's right to due process. Do you deny that these procedural flaws existed?

Accordingly, I would like to ask you to respond specifically to the following questions:

- 1) Were the decisions affecting Professor Asher made in the context of his academic freedom and with regard to due process?
- 2) What are your institution's policies to safeguard academic freedom of faculty and students and guarantee due process in academic decision-making?

To save time I am faxing this letter to you, with a hard copy to follow in the regular mail. I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Clive Seligman, President

*Note: To date Dr. Patrick Woodsworth, Director-General of Dawson College, has not answered any of the questions posed to him in the above letter. See SAFS website for additional information.* □

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESIDENT  
ROBERT J. BIRGENEAU  
RESPONDS TO SAFS**

October 6, 2000

Dear Professor Miles:

I am responding to the Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship letter of October 2, 2000 which identifies you as the contact person. As you probably know, I have reported on the Dr. Chun matter extensively at various forums at the

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
MAY 19, 2001**

**ADVANCE NOTICE**

SAFS' Annual General Meeting will be held at the University of Western Ontario on *May 19, 2001*. Details of the program and keynote speaker will be provided later. Suggestions for presentations, panel discussion, symposia, and the like are encouraged. Members wishing to participate as speakers at the AGM should contact the President. Please mark this date on your calendar, and we hope to see you in May at the meeting.

University of Toronto, including our Academic Board of which Dr. Furedy is a member. I draw your attention to the excerpt of my report at the September 14, 2000 meeting of Governing Council as well as my open letter to the University community. Both these documents can be viewed on the University's website ([www.utoronto.ca](http://www.utoronto.ca)). As you are aware, Dr. Chun's appointment is not to a faculty position in the tenure stream, but is rather under the policies for senior research associates.

Like you and the members of your organization, I am deeply committed to the principles of academic freedom. Accordingly, I look forward to your continuing support in the months and years ahead. Thank you for writing.

Best regards

Yours sincerely,

Robert J. Birgeneau, President, University of Toronto

*Note: Our SAFS letter to Dr. Birgeneau was published in SAFS Newsletter 26, September 2000. See SAFS website for additional information.* □

## PRESIDENT BIRGENEAU'S OPEN LETTER TO THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

September 25, 2000

Dear Colleagues:

Many of you have expressed satisfaction and relief that the University of Toronto and Dr. Chun have reached an agreement whereby, after a prolonged and public dispute, Dr. Chun will return to a research position, having withdrawn his allegations and all outstanding litigation. Your support throughout this difficult period has been greatly appreciated.

I write to you now to clarify some details of both the terms of the agreement and the university's reasons for reaching it. Quite simply, the agreement was offered in response to the 1994 Yip report which found that Dr. Chun had been exploited in his position as a self funding research associate. The appropriate remedy has always been a return to research under the relevant policies of the university. The agreement reached is consistent in its aim and structure with earlier offers of settlement, and preserves the university's integrity in its appointment policies.

That said, I want to make three points. First, this agreement was possible only because the allegations of racial discrimination were decisively and conclusively dismissed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission ruling in July. The Yip report had declared that there was no evidence of racial discrimination in the searches in question conducted by the physics department. The decision of the Ontario Human Rights Commission vindicates Dr. Yip's report and the physics department. The university's defence of its members named in the human rights complaint was vigorous and successful and these members have been completely exonerated by the process. Nevertheless, these allegations have been hurtful to a number of individuals and their families and to the department of physics. I express my deepest

regrets to them as well as my unequivocal support for their good names and reputations.

Second, the research position to which Dr. Chun returns is not a professorial position in the tenure stream. His primary appointment is pursuant to the policy on research associates and senior research associates, with adjunct associate professor status, to enable application for research funds and possible graduate student supervision. The agreement also provides adequate time and resources to enable Dr. Chun to recommence his research, again consistent with the aim of the agreement.

Finally, the agreement provides the basis for a new beginning but that beginning will require continued effort and support so that the negativism of the past will not overshadow our future. I am confident that our colleagues who are directly involved in the reconciliation process will do their very best to ensure that the University of Toronto distinguishes itself in this difficult transition period. I thank you for your interest and your continuing support of this university and its values of academic excellence, freedom and equitable respect for all.

The draft minutes of my report to Governing Council on this matter on September 14, 2000 are available on the university website ([www.utoronto.ca](http://www.utoronto.ca)).

With my very best regards and gratitude.

Robert J. Birgeneau, President, University of Toronto. □

### BEQUESTS TO SAFS

Please consider remembering the Society in your will. Even small bequests can help us greatly in carrying on SAFS' work. In most cases, a bequest does not require rewriting your entire will, but can be done simply by adding a codicil. So please do give this some thought. Thank you.

*Clive Seligman, President*

## PROVINCIAL POLITICS FAIL TO AFFECT EMPLOYMENT EQUITY COMMITMENT IN UNIVERSITIES

*John J. Furedy, University of Toronto*

The wording of a university's tenure stream advertisement is an indirect indication of the institution's relative commitment to the conflicting principles of employment equity as against merit. The degree of this commitment can vary considerably even if, as is the case on Canadian campuses, all universities have an employment equity policy (if only to ensure that they are eligible for federal funding, and are seen as conforming to the 1986 federal employment equity law). For example, as Stewart Page reported in his "On the daily vicissitudes of equity-based hiring" in the SAFS Newsletter 22 (June 1999, pp. 2-5), in some universities the equity officers can exert quite direct pressures on departmental chairs regarding job advertisements and decisions on appointments. Again, there are federal awards for a university's commitment to equity, and York University retains the distinction of the only Canadian university that has won a federal Equity Award (in 1994). In other universities, the "balance" is tilted more in favour of merit, which is said to be the primary criterion. Still, for example at the University of Toronto, the Status of Women equity officer meets with every hiring committee, and asks pointed questions if, for instance, the short list does not have any women on it.

Funded by the Donner Canadian Foundation and the Horowitz Foundation, some students and I have been engaged in what I have called "judgmental content analysis" of the wording of advertisements for Canadian tenure-stream arts and science positions in *University Affairs*, the bulletin of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, which carries all academic job ads.

We have used factorial analysis of variance techniques to examine the effects of factors like *time* (e.g., 1971-75, 1976-80, 1981-85), *location*

(Eastern Canada, Ontario, Western Canada, Quebec), *discipline hardness* (physical science, social sciences, and humanities), and *university mission* (using the *McLean's* 3-level categorization of universities: medical/doctoral, comprehensive, and undergraduate. This study has included the interactions of these factors on both merit and equity wording.

Our studies allow one to identify latent influences on the way in which universities achieve the right "balance" between merit and equity considerations. The influences are latent in the sense that we assume that the advertisements are not consciously worded to be different according to time, location, discipline hardness, or mission.

In this note I report on the impact of political change on the employment equity policies of universities.

There was a quasi-earthquake in Ontario politics when, after a three-year NDP government headed by Bob Rae, the Progressive Conservatives under Mike Harris took over in 1995. Whereas the NDP had strengthened employment equity regulations during the Rae years, Harris abolished the requirements, at least for private industries. Admittedly, the federal employment equity law of 1986 was still in place, and the provincial government said nothing about equity policies in universities as against private industries. So it would be too much to expect Ontario's universities to revert to considering only merit in appointing its tenure-stream faculty. Nevertheless, given that the major source of public funding for universities is provincial rather than federal, one would expect the Ontario political shift on employment equity to have at least some effect on the hiring policies of its universities.

To test for this predicted effect, we used our factorial judgmental content analysis method on some 500 tenure-stream advertisements, and looked at *time* as a two-level factor with the years 1992-1994 and 1996-1998 as the two 'levels.' After several months of discussion about our

rating system, our three research-assistant judges (Sean Fidler, Yaniv Morgenstern, and Wendy Tryhorn) rated each advertisement (with names and places removed) on 7-point scales of merit and of equity. To the extent that the Rae-to-Harris shift in Ontario affected universities' commitment to employment equity, one would expect an interaction between *time* and *location*, such that in Ontario alone (in contrast to the three other locations, where no such political shift against employment equity had occurred) there would be a significant drop in equity ratings from the Rae (1996-98) to Harris period. (Students of experimental design will note that the three other non-Ontario locations provide quite a sound basis of control for looking at the "experimental" effect of the Rae-to-Harris shift, even though there has not been any experimental manipulation in the normal sense of that term).

Contrary to prediction, no such interaction emerged, with the *F* value for that effect being less than one. Nor was this result due to any insensitivity of our measurement. The *F* values for a number of other significant main and interaction effects (which will be communicated later in a more extensive report) ranged from 9.0 to over 60.

Probably because of the large sample size involved, the data were considerably less noisy than the "objective" psychophysiological data with which I usually work.

The fact that a major political shift of the sort that occurred in Ontario appears to have had no effect at all in universities' commitment to employment equity suggests to me that those who are committed to advancing merit over equity aims in higher education have to work independently of the political changes that occur outside the universities. This study also shows that, in addition to conceptual analyses, it is also possible to do meaningful empirical work on the effects of political correctness on Canadian campuses. □

## SPOUSAL HIRING

*Excerpts from an e-mail exchange between  
Harvey Shulman, Concordia University and  
John Furedy, University of Toronto*

October 2000

*Shulman* : Spousal hiring is increasingly an issue in universities. Universities have several approaches from no special programs to designated funds to allow appointments with tenure for married academics. As faculty hiring is at its highest in years (and will increase), and there is competition to recruit for Canada Research Chairs, spousal hiring has become a means to entice a scholar to accept an appointment. It seems to me that this practice raises major issues re hiring processes and the use of academic positions.

*Furedy*: I don't think this is an issue of academic freedom and scholarship, because in many cases it is possible to make a valid argument for spousal hiring. That is, if one can get a real "star" by also providing a position for a competent but not star-quality spouse, then in terms of overall departmental merit, this is a sound decision.

*Shulman*: John, your position seems to allow for "star" hiring as a reason to compromise fair hiring for others.

*Furedy*: I was thinking of situations where both wife and husband are in the same discipline, so that a single department is making a decision, and looking to the needs of the department as a whole. Getting a top academic is very difficult. The decision to offer a position to a spouse could still be a decision for merit, overall.

*Shulman*: What about the situation where a position is arranged for the spouse in another department?

*Furedy:* When it comes to getting another department to take someone who is not the best, this is probably not permissible and, if it is done, the spouse has to be at least quite close to the best for the other department to go along. Otherwise that department loses out in maximizing the merit of *its* faculty. I would think that no self-respecting department will agree to take a star's spouse simply to accommodate the department that wants to hire the spouse, if only because departments are usually in competition with one another for resources.

*Shulman:* But surely spousal hiring practices go well beyond your circumscribed example of two positions in one department? I think it would be rare for one department to need two positions corresponding to spousal competence. Most cases I've heard of involve two departments where special pleadings take place to privilege a candidate for the good of another unit's priorities. In other words, academic priorities are revised to adjust for spousal hiring. I think that Queen's has a contingency fund for this through which spouses can be hired, with departmental approval. I am not an ideologue on this, but I think it is a matter for concern.

*Furedy:* All this shows, Harvey, how complex this issue is. Another downside to spousal hiring that can interfere with overall departmental academic performance is that on controversial issues where a department has to make choices, the spouses do, or are perceived to, form a political voting bloc.

*Shulman:* Yes, the bloc vote, which could even be a factor in other arenas in the institution, is a major downside. And even if matters are ideal in practice, there are awkward possibilities: one day, both may stay or both may leave (at the same time), and even if they stay, the department might not get another appointment in a needed area because they got a "twofer" to begin with.

*The editor invites further comment on this topic.* □

### NOMINATIONS FOR THE FUREDY ACADEMIC FREEDOM AWARD

Nominations are solicited for this award, which will recognize outstanding contributions to academic freedom.

- Deadline for receiving nominations is March 1, 2001.
- Nominees need not be SAFS members.
- Current members of the Board are ineligible.
- Final decisions will be made by the Board.
- Please send your letter of nomination, along with an additional supporting letter, a short vita, and any supporting documents that may be pertinent to:

*Clive Seligman*  
1673 Richmond Street, #344  
London, Ontario, Canada  
N6G 2N3

The award will be presented at the next AGM, and will be represented by a certificate, a small gift, and a contribution the travel expenses of the of the recipient to the AGM.

### SAFS OFFICE

Mailing Address:  
1673 Richmond Street, #344  
London, Ontario, Canada  
N6G 2N3  
E-mail: [safs@niagara.com](mailto:safs@niagara.com)

Secretary: Daniella Chirila  
Department of Psychology, UWO  
E-mail: [dchirila@julian.uwo.ca](mailto:dchirila@julian.uwo.ca) or at  
[safs@niagara.com](mailto:safs@niagara.com)

## THE POWER OF PARANOIA

*Ian Dowbiggin*

Almost immediately after my book *Suspicious Minds : The Triumph of Paranoia in Everyday Life* was published in the fall of 1999 it made headlines. In it I alleged that Quebec nationalism was rooted in paranoid thinking, a remark that prompted Bernard Landry, the Deputy Prime Minister of Quebec, to denounce both me and the book. But for members of SAFS the book will mostly be worth reading because of my comments about how paranoia has come to dominate life on the modern day university or college campus.

The thesis of my book is that in recent years paranoid tendencies have increasingly shaped thought, rhetoric, and behaviour in Canadian and American society. By paranoid I mean the temptation to indulge delusions of persecution, grandeur, and hypochondria, the classical symptoms of clinical paranoia (or "delusional disorder," as it's now called). I cite recent research which has argued that the elementary emotions of fear, suspicion, hatred, and resentment are products of millennia of evolution and can be localized in the limbic system of the brain. In most people these feelings lie dormant. But in a society that likes to celebrate paranoid thinking they surface with stunning and dangerous regularity.

The most obvious examples of this kind of paranoia are the many conspiracy theories circulating throughout society, including theories about JFK's assassination and the tragic death of Princess Diana. Then, too, there are the conspiracy theorists, the various militia and neo-Nazi hate groups who like to air their views on the world wide web. But I contend that the most disturbing sign of cultural paranoia is its increasing popularity among society's elites in government, business, labour, the arts, the entertainment industry, and especially academia.

It's been my experience as a university teacher for

fifteen years that more than anything else inspired me to write this book. Nowhere else, I write in *Suspicious Minds*, does paranoia thrive more robustly than on university campuses. Critical race theory, gender, feminism, deconstructionism, affirmative action admissions and hiring, gay/lesbian studies, "zero tolerance," Foucauldian experientialism--the list could go on longer, but SAFS members know what I'm talking about. They are the campus causes supported by the people author Tom Wolfe called recently the "rococo Marxists."

Why do I call these trends paranoid? Because what unites them is their debt to a paranoid world-view that divides the world up into two neat categories: the totally innocent oppressed and the all-powerful oppressors. The former imagine themselves locked in a titanic, literally life and death struggle with an absolutely malevolent power that seeks to oppress them by hoodwinking them into thinking they are actually free. They take immense pride, in typical paranoid fashion, in being able to see what others cannot, and believe that this knowledge sets them apart from the masses. As this impression sets in, they believe they are a charmed and privileged elite. Hence, they fall prey to delusions of grandeur and persecution.

All this would mean little, of course, were it not that university administrators either tolerate these views or are simply too afraid to challenge them when they are used to extort concessions. The more concessions they obtain, the more their views gain official currency. At the same time, the inevitable institutional response is to increase university bureaucratization by hiring counselors, equity officers, harassment officers, or conflict resolution mediators. Or more visible minorities. Or more role-models. But this only exacerbates the atmosphere of suspicion, creating an even greater "need" for more bureaucracy.

Most tragically, a fashionable consensus forms on campus, one that stifles debate and free inquiry, as

SAFS members well know. Those who champion this consensus behave like clinical paranoids, first trying to browbeat critics through *ad hominem* arguments directed against an opponent's sex, class, or skin colour. If that doesn't work they condemn open debate, alleging that it's merely a tool wielded by a dominant class to further silence them. Whatever the result they retain their paranoid attitude toward the world; if they win, they go on to other, reality-defiant demands; if they lose (which is rare) it merely reinforces their self-perception as a persecuted yet privileged minority.

My book actually ends on a hopeful note. While it documents the many instances of fashionable paranoia on campus, it argues that most who support this trend do so out of opportunism, guilt, or simple fear. They are the ones who let the paranoids dictate the agenda. It is the campaign to change *their* minds and restore a sense of civility and candour that matters, not the effort to convert the paranoid minority. The former in their infinite tolerance for paranoid ideology are the ones really responsible for the epidemic *Suspicious Minds* describes, not the latter who will nurse their grievances and sense of victimization indefinitely.

And the soft majority can be won over, in the academy at least, by the power of persuasion, by the unrelenting effort to publicize the virtues of rigorous scholarship, free speech, and freedom of conscience, by the unremitting attempt to expose the errors of fashionable thinking. In other words, their minds can be changed by following the example set by SAFS, the voice of civilized and informed reason.

Dowbiggin, I., *Suspicious Minds: The Triumph of Paranoia in Everyday Life*, Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross, 1999. □

#### NEW NEWSLETTER E-MAIL ADDRESS

The Newsletter e-mail address has been changed to  
SAFSNEWS@NIAGARA.COM

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *Role Models*

I read with interest the exchange of letters, reprinted in your September edition, between Dr. Thomas Brzustowski, president of NSERC, and two critics of NSERC's gender-restricted University Faculty Awards. In his reply to the second critic, Dr. Brzustowski admits something quite damaging to his case, evidently without realizing how damaging the admission is. He writes of the "Council's strong belief that the appointment of first-class women scientists and engineers will provide excellent role models for future generations of students of both genders." But if, as he says, female scientists can serve as excellent role-models for male students, then surely male scientists can serve as excellent role-models for female students. In that case, however, the entire role-model justification for a women-only UFA program breaks down. Dr. Brzustowski says he hopes that his letter "clarifies NSERC's position." Indeed, it does, and the position looks pretty shaky once clarified.

Stephen Maitzen

Department of Philosophy, Acadia University □

\*\*\*

### *To Coin a Term*

'Affirmative action' is used less among analysts of university affairs in the USA nowadays, and the franker term 'racial preferences' appears more often.

Perhaps the term 'identity preferences' would be appropriate for the Canadian context, since the pursuit of designated-group preferences is an application of 'identity politics.'

Chris Furedy

Professor Emerita, York University □

### CHANGE OF NEWSLETTER EDITORS

The Board of Directors expresses its deep gratitude to **Dr. Chris Furedy**, who is stepping down after 6 years of editing the *SAFS Newsletter*. Chris has done an outstanding job as editor, providing stimulating reading for our members, and producing a written record of SAFS accomplishments over the years. Her dedication, skill, and good sense will be missed. Good luck, Chris, in your future endeavors.

We are pleased to welcome **Dr. Nancy Innis** as the Newsletter's third editor. Nancy is a professor in the Psychology Department at Western. Her research interests are in the history of psychology and in animal learning and memory. Nancy has written about the loyalty oath controversy at Berkeley in the 1950s. We wish Nancy well in her stewardship of the Newsletter, and feel very fortunate that she has agreed to take on this role.

*Clive Seligman, SAFS President*

#### HAVE A LOOK AT OUR REDESIGNED WEB PAGE: [www.safs.niagara.com](http://www.safs.niagara.com)

Our current issues section is updated regularly to keep you abreast of our society's activities in defending academic freedom and the merit principle.

### SUBMISSIONS TO THE SAFS NEWSLETTER

The editor welcomes short articles, case studies, news items, comments, readings, local chapter news, etc. Longer items are preferred on a 3.5" (MS-DOS) disk in Word Perfect or Word 95, or by e-mail attachment.

*Mailing Address:*

**Dr. Nancy K. Innis**  
Psychology Department  
University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario  
N6A 5C2  
Fax: (519) 661-3961  
*E-mail: [safsnews@niagara.com](mailto:safsnews@niagara.com)*

#### Pro And Con: Political Correctness In Academia

[www.cpa.ca/Psynopsis/tc-cpnov97.html](http://www.cpa.ca/Psynopsis/tc-cpnov97.html)

is the url for the issue of Canadian Psychology for November 1997, containing the proceedings of the symposium "Political Correctness in Academia." The site includes the full text of the convener's introduction, abstracts of the six papers, and comments and rebuttals. This is the most systematic published debate of this topic in North America.

You can get to this site by going to [www.cpa.ca](http://www.cpa.ca), then clicking: English, Publications, Canadian Psychology, November, 1997.

**SAFS MEMBERSHIP FORM**

To join **SAFS** or to renew your **SAFS** membership, please complete this form and return to:

**SAFS**  
 1673 Richmond Street, #344  
 London, Ontario, Canada  
 N6G 2N3

Please make your cheque payable to **SAFS**.  
 Regular member: \$25; students and retirees: \$15; sustaining member: \$100-\$299; benefactor: \$300 or more annually.

**I support the Society's goals:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- Renewal                       Sustaining Member  
 New Member                 Benefactor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please specify preferred address for the Newsletter*

Ph (W): \_\_\_\_\_

Ph (H): \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



**REMEMBER: 2001 DUES ARE DUE IN JANUARY 2001.**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**

**Receiving Memberships On Time Is Important For The Society**

For those of you who still have not paid your 2000 year dues, please do so as soon as possible. The costs of producing and mailing the newsletter are high and we are unable to continue sending copies to past members beyond a courtesy mailing. Please check your status and send in your dues if you have forgotten!

**SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS**

**Sustaining Member: \$100-\$299 annually**

**Benefactor: \$300 or more annually**

Special memberships are inclusive of the current annual dues, but payment of back dues cannot count towards them. Names of members in these special categories will be circulated at the AGM.

*(Because SAFS is not a registered charity, memberships cannot be considered charitable contributions for income tax purposes.)*