

Society for Academic Freedom & Scholarship NEWSLETTER

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PURPOSES of the SAFS

1. Maintaining freedom in teaching, research and scholarship.
2. Maintaining standards of excellence in hiring and promotion of university faculty.

Dues Reminder

Annual dues are due at the beginning of the calendar year. Please send them promptly!

First Annual SAFS Conference and Annual General Meeting: May 7, 1994

The first annual SAFS Conference and annual General Meeting will be held May 7, 1994, 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., St. George Campus, University of Toronto. (Place to be announced later.)

Theme: University in Jeopardy: Canadian Concerns

The first conference, *University In Jeopardy*, held in Toronto in March, 1993, was an inaugural event to draw attention to the concerns of SAFS. Through the efforts of our founding President (Doreen Kimura) and others, the conference was successful, but it was expensive, supported in part by funds not in control of the SAFS.

The first annual conference is primarily to be about issues of concern to Canadian universities and will also serve as the Annual General Meeting of the SAFS. The starting time should allow participants from as far as London and Trent to avoid having to stay overnight, while the day (Saturday) will allow the conference site to be rented at minimal to no cost. Except for the lunch and the postlunch talk by Jack Granatstein, Professor of History, York University, sessions will be open only to SAFS members. Lunch session only registration, \$20, and full registration, \$25.

Tentative program

1. Professors and the University (10:15-11:45 a.m.)
Panelists (Chris Essex, UWO, John Furedy, UT, David Smith, PEI): Dealing with "political correctness."
2. Lunch: postlunch talk by Jack Granatstein,

Professor of History, York University.

3. Departmental Chairs and the University (2:15-3:45 p.m.): Panelists (Tom Adamowski, English, UT, Clive Seligman, Psychology, UWO, Marin Wall, Psychology, UT): The principles of the SAFS in current Canadian universities.

4. Workshops (4:00- 5:00 p.m.).

5. Annual General Meeting (5:15-6:15 p.m.). The agenda will include reports by Chapter co-ordinators from UWO, Greater Toronto area, and PEI.

Please reserve this day in your schedule, if possible. Further details to follow.

UNB Suspension of Professor: SAFS Board of Directors Statement

The Board of Directors of the Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship view with the utmost concern the suspension by the University of New Brunswick (UNB) of mathematics professor Yaqzan on November 11, following the publication in a student newspaper of an opinion piece.

SAFS takes no position on the content of what Prof. Yaqzan wrote. What is of grave concern is the fact that no evidence was produced that his piece in any way interfered with his academic duties of teaching mathematics and doing research. An enquiry into the matter by the UNB may well be appropriate, but by immediately suspending Prof. Yaqzan UNB has prejudged the matter unfairly (i.e., without due process), threatened his livelihood, and, most importantly, has brought into question whether UNB's administration is clear about its obligations to uphold academic freedom. Accordingly, we recommend censure of the UNB administration by all groups and organizations that have a concern for academic freedom.

Professor John J. Furedy, University of Toronto, President; Professor Doreen Kimura, University of Western Ontario, Past President; Professor Ian Hunter, University of Western Ontario, Director; Professor Philip Sullivan, University of Toronto, Director; Professor Judy Wubnig, University of Waterloo, Director

The University of New Brunswick lifted the suspension conditionally on November 19. The SAFS Board then issued a further statement summarizing the previous statement and saying:

More recently, the UNB announced, on November 19, that it had lifted the suspension, but that the terms of lifting the suspension include a prohibition on Prof. Yaqzan to meet his original students, and an agreement by both sides not to discuss the terms under which the suspension was lifted. Even if the suspension had been lifted unconditionally by UNB, the original Nov. 11 invoking of the suspension by the Administration would have remained a serious problem. As it stands, the conditional lifting of the suspension by the UNB Administration continues to cast serious doubts about its commitment to academic freedom. We therefore maintain our recommendation for censure of the UNB Administration by all groups and organizations who appreciate the importance of academic freedom for all members of the university.

Black Thursday, Academic Freedom, and the Comfort Criterion in Canadian Universities: The UNB and McGill Cases
by John Furedy

The official reaction of the SAFS Board of Directors to the assault on academic freedom by the administration of the University of New Brunswick (UNB) appears above. Here I reflect on what I think the significance is of the two "Black Thursday" (November 11) events are for Canadian higher education. On that day at UNB, the administration suspended Dr. Matin Yaqzan, a professor of mathematics, for writing a controversial opinion piece on "date rape" in the student paper; at McGill, protestors disrupted a lecture by Dr. Harold I. Lief, professor emeritus of psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania, on the subject of false memory syndrome, sponsored by the department of psychiatry.

These are among the two most disturbing events in Canadian universities in the last decade. The UNB case is a gold-medal performance: to my knowledge, no other instance has occurred where a faculty member was suspended before any investigation, for an assertion made outside the classroom, in an area unrelated to his discipline. The McGill case is also a Canadian "first," since Dr. Lief was able to speak at numerous American universities without his hosts' cancelling the event. (Such incidents have been occurring for many years in the United States, however. Ed.)

One striking feature of both these cases is that the two administrations lack commitment to protect free speech. One of the reasons given for Prof. Yaqzan's immediate suspension was that students he had "offended" were

following him down the halls and accosting him. But the solution to such a problem would have been to discipline students (or anyone else) whose behavior went beyond the bounds of civil conduct, and to provide security for Prof. Yaqzan to carry out his duties. At McGill, another talk could have been organized with measures to ensure that Prof. Lief could speak without interruption.

Another feature of these cases is an implicit acceptance of the "comfort criterion" for evaluating views expressed in universities: if a view makes some uncomfortable, then it has to be withdrawn, and those presenting the view must be prosecuted and/or "re-educated." The "chilly climate for learning" criterion is a version of this. But comfort is not relevant to higher education. (See D. Kimura, SAFS Newsletter, #4, October 1993.)

The events of Black Thursday, 1993, together with other similar incidents, indicate that many Canadian university administrators seem to have accepted the comfort criterion. It's time that they heard from the side that still remembers what universities are for.

Matin Yaqzan and the UNB Administration
A colleague's account
by David Murrell

On Remembrance Day, November 11, 1993, the University of New Brunswick announced that it was suspending Matin Yaqzan, an assistant professor of mathematics, for writing an opinion article in the *Brunswickan*, the student newspaper. The vice-president academic cited unwanted attention that was being directed at the university by the news media, and that the university's lawyer found evidence that the opinion article violated the university's sexual harassment policy. Mr. Yaqzan would still receive his salary, but he would no longer be allowed entrance onto university property.

The tenured mathematics professor has always been seen as eccentric -- he has been a strong defender of

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holocaust-denialist Malcolm Ross, and the professor has regularly written letters to the student and daily newspapers to the point where he has become well known to New Brunswick readers. The long-standing controversy over his writings partly explains the exaggerated reaction to the date-rape piece.

His opinion article in the *Brunswickan* was typical of his previous writings. It was extreme to the point of being outrageous. Its main thesis was that society should protect young women from pre-marital sex, but that young men do need a "natural outlet" for sex, and that any (promiscuous) young woman who accepts an invitation to a man's dormitory and gets "date raped" should not express "moral outrage," but merely demand "monetary compensation."

In my opinion, the article was a mishmash of Camille Paglia, conservative Muslim views, and provocative social commentary -- all written in a hamfisted way. Except for the "date rape fulfilling normal male needs" statement, the article could be seen as unintended self-parody that would have found a home in *Frank* magazine or in one of the old SCTV comedy reruns.

The opinion piece kindled the interest of local CBC radio news. It ran stories on the weekend immediately following the *Brunswickan* article. CBC-TV news quickly followed -- and soon the rest of the New Brunswick and national media decamped onto the university to interview students and professors.

During the media blitz, many alumni and students demanded that the university administration take action against the professor. "The phone was ringing off the hook" was how one administrator put it.

The student leadership circulated a petition calling for the removal of the professor. They argued that the professor's presence in a classroom created an atmosphere uncondusive to learning. They claimed that a woman student could feel uncomfortable seeing Professor Yaqzan in his office, given what he had written. The student petition was in general supported by the campus feminists.

So Robin Armstrong, the university president, and Thomas Traves, the vice-president academic, decided to suspend Professor Yaqzan. The suspension was supported not only by the student leaders and the feminists, it was also backed by Premier Frank McKenna, Fredericton Mayor Brad Woodside, the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner*, and the influential columnist Don Hoyt of the *Telegraph Journal*. But up to that point, and as of now, no formal complaint against Yaqzan -- as an ostensible purveyor of a hate crime, sexual harasser, or human rights violator -- has been made by anybody.

The union representing the university's professors threatened to file a grievance against the suspension. They cited Article 14 of the 1991-1995 collective bargaining agreement, which grants professors the right to discuss issues unhindered, including "those which may be considered by some elements of society to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable."

So on Friday, November 19th, two weeks after the article came out, the university lifted Professor Yaqzan's suspension. The university now claims that the original suspension "was not a disciplinary action" and was done to create a "cooling off period so that public safety and an orderly academic environment on campus could be maintained." The university announced a conference to be held in the spring to discuss the supposed conflict between academic freedom and the rights of students to study in a "positive atmosphere for learning and study at the university."

But the administration cannot resolve the issues raised by its action simply by reversing the suspension and announcing a conference. This case has caught the attention of Canada, and especially of academics who see it as an example of the negation of principles of academic freedom. A professor's academic reputation has been compromised, his shortcomings as a teacher publicized in a biased way all over Canada. The message sent is that in Canada people can muzzle those whose views they dislike if they create enough disruption. The reversal of the suspension is not the end of this case.

**Educational Equity and Its Intellectual
Baggage: CAUT Bulletin Supplement On The
Status of Women**
by Philip G. Davis

In April 1993, the Canadian Association of University Teachers *Bulletin* published its annual Status of Women Supplement. This year's edition was on the theme of Educational Equity. It was probably an exercise in preaching to the converted: I know of few professional colleagues outside the politically correct camp who admit to having waded through even part of it with any sustained attention. Past experience shows, however, that the sort of thinking represented in the Supplement does not go away when it is ignored -- it fills any vacuum available. For those who take academic freedom seriously, it is important to know not only what is being proposed but also what fundamental values underlie it and will shape its next manifestations.

The simplest way to see the view of the Supplement is to peruse the fifty-four criteria which are supposed to characterize a "woman-friendly" university. (pp. 4, 5,

12). The list illustrates well the radical demands of the extreme forms of feminism encountered in a modern academic setting. In addition to support services like daycare and women's centres, the Supplement calls for an extensive overhaul of the university's *raison d'être* - the curriculum and the faculty. Established disciplines should be subject to "a university-wide policy emphasizing a balance in course content with regard to male and female scholarship, perspectives and concerns" (#12) and their progress in this area monitored (#14). Women's Studies programmes should be established and expanded (#17), and all students should be compelled to take at least one such course before graduation (#16). Gender balance in the faculty should be achieved within five years (#50), with punitive measures for units not following suit (#52). The speech and behaviour of faculty members should undergo major retooling through mandatory workshops on sexual harassment (#27), violence against women (#33), and the "negative effects . . . of subtle . . . discrimination" (#13), as well as a policy requiring the use of "gender-neutral" language in all oral and written communication, university-related or not (#19-20). It adds up to a call for intervention and coercion on a breath-taking scale, which fully merits the term "totalitarian" in its literal sense.

In the late 20th century, to mention totalitarianism is to evoke the spectre of National Socialism, and the politically incorrect have not been slow to point out similarities between programs like that of the *Supplement* and certain developments in higher education during the Third Reich. Where we see ideology affecting traditional disciplines in the form of "feminist science" and the like, they pursued "Aryan physics." Where we have programs in Women's Studies which are explicitly designed as academic manifestations of feminism, they had programs in Racial Science to promote the National Socialist worldview. Where we concern ourselves with the sexual makeup of university faculties, they acted on the racial composition of their teaching bodies. Now, as then, even casual speech is politicized.

Nobody wants to be likened to the Nazis, of course, and many such comparisons today are nothing more than noxious attempts to denigrate one's adversaries rather than making the effort to debate the real issues. Radical feminism and Nazism seem like polar opposites in many ways. On the face of it, "gender balance" is a very different goal from "Aryanization," and everything from the Nazis' hierarchical structure to their militant machismo sets them against some basic feminist values. So, are those alleged parallels nothing more than a slander based on superficialities?

When one presses beyond the obvious to examine the philosophical roots of these two phenomena, the

paradox begins to resolve itself. As Jerry Martin showed in a recent issue of *Academic Questions*, the whole postmodernist crusade to turn universities into agents of social change is rooted in a specific ideological theory of knowledge. People are not to be regarded as free individuals engaged in discovering the truth about the world around them; rather, their identities are shaped decisively by their race, class, and sex, and their capacity to know is governed and limited accordingly. There is, in short, no objective truth. There is only a series of different perspectives which correspond to the different human groups involved, and our effort to know the world is really an exercise in relativism and group subjectivity.

In this light, it comes as no surprise that Joyce Forbes, on the first page of the *CAUT Supplement*, has this to say about the past fruits of intellectual endeavor: "Hardly recognized and hence unacknowledged as partial frames of reference, these 'socially constructed ideas' strut about to parade as absolute concepts in academic robes . . . they were framed by a patriarchal power structure that is also white, able-bodied, heterosexual and middle-class." People of other groups occupy "parallel worlds" which have been unjustly ignored because those groups have been under-represented on university faculties. The call to reconstitute the makeup of faculties and to overhaul curricula is rooted in this group-defined, subjectivist theory of knowledge.

What takes the comparison between academic radical feminism and Nazism beyond mere sensationalism is that the National Socialist view of the world was very similar. When the two groups address similar issues, particularly the composition of faculties and the design of curricula, they are doing it for the same reason: the belief that the group to which one belongs defines one's "truth." The Nazis eliminated Jewish professors and teachers to ensure that German students were trained in the Aryan perspective; they rejected Einstein's theories because he was Jewish, not because he might have been objectively wrong.

When moved to give an intellectual explanation, pro-Nazi scientists accused their Jewish counterparts of being too abstractly logical and materialistic, whereas "Aryan science" proceeded on the basis of an intuitive approach to the interconnectedness of all things. Again, this evokes the radical feminist complaint that male knowledge, especially in the natural sciences, is overly rational and "logocentric." The epistemology of group subjectivity, anti-rationality and relativism underlies the specific activities of both Nazi academics and contemporary radical feminists, even if their actual goals differ. As I have argued elsewhere, this common epistemology probably reflects the influence of the

nineteenth century occult revival on precursors to both of these ideologies.

If this sort of theory of knowledge is actually correct, then there can be no real difference between teaching and propaganda. The Nazi Minister of Propaganda, Josef Goebbels, said flatly that propaganda has nothing to do with truth. If an educator forswears objective truth at the outset, doing propaganda may appear to be the most viable and exciting of the remaining options.

Such a choice bodes ill for debate in the academic community, however. Those of us who remain committed to the quest for truth will try to prove that we are right by appealing to verifiable evidence and logic. Those who believe in "multiple truths" really have no such recourse. The only way they can promote their "truth" against other "truths" is by some form of force, whether personal pressure, administrative coercion, or even disruptive behaviour and violence.

Unreadable as it may be in parts, the CAUT *Status of Women Supplement* provides an invaluable insight into the challenge facing traditional scholarship.

Ontario's Bill 79 and "No White English-Speaking Men Need Apply"

by John Furedy

Recently, the Ontario Public Service publication, *Job Mart*, contained an advertisement for a director of information technology, paying between \$74,000 and \$111,000 a year, saying: "This competition is limited to the following employment equity designated groups: aboriginal peoples, francophones, persons with disabilities, and racial minorities." On November 11 the *Toronto Star* published an editorial "White men need not apply," which trenchantly opposed the hiring policy implied by that now infamous advertisement. However, the later withdrawal of that particular advertisement does not solve the problems of Ontario's "employment equity" Bill 79. The offending advertisement at least had the merit of being honest about its discriminatory character. It is, on the other hand, at least misleading to suggest that policies that are not absolutely but only partly discriminatory constitute a "worthy goal" or are, in any sense, a genuine contribution towards the elimination of prejudice.

The November 12 *Globe and Mail* editorial "Employment Equity's true colours," was more to the point. "In politics, a gaffe is when you tell the truth. On Tuesday [November 9], Brian Charlton made a whale of a gaffe on employment equity, slicing the great beast open, allowing its putrescent vapours to fill the air. . . . When reporters questioned Mr. Charlton, the Management

Board Chairman, he said [he] couldn't see how anyone could be troubled by such blatantly discriminatory techniques. And why not? 'It's no different than employment equity,' he bluntly announced. Give him points for honesty, however unintentional."

To give a personal and older example. My father graduated from highschool in the twenties in Hungary. Jews at that time were "over-represented" in the universities (15%) relative to their population percentage (5%), whereas Christian Hungarians were "under-represented." It could also be argued, to use the lingo of supporters of Bill 79, that this was evidence of "systemic discrimination," because Jewish homes tended to provide a more favorable intellectual/academic environment than Christian homes. The Hungarian government restricted the competition for university positions by raising the entrance standards for Jewish applicants, in the name of "fair" representation. My father did not make it to university because of this early attempt to eliminate "systemic discrimination" against Christian Hungarians. This institutional (really systemic) discrimination fed anti-Semitism in Hungary.

Had Jews not been allowed to apply to universities, that would have been equivalent to "white men need not apply." Hungarian policy merely loaded the dice against Jews. Similarly, Bill 79, which requires hiring people in designated groups in proportion to their percentage in the population, loads the dice against people not in these groups, even if it allows them to apply for jobs. It is therefore discriminatory in the invidious sense.

What all this shows is that there is only one way to eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, sex, ancestry, or other irrelevant criteria: do not discriminate on the basis of them.

If our institutions, like the government of Ontario and all Canadian universities indulge in such discrimination, why should we expect individuals not to follow suit? In this way so-called "employment equity" policies not only destroy the principles of merit and fairness in institutions, but also promote angry prejudice among individuals, a few of whom are unbalanced enough to turn their twisted thoughts into vicious action.

An Engineer Discusses Relativism

by P. A. Sullivan, UT Aerospace Studies

A characteristic feature of twentieth century Western thought is the growing influence of the doctrine of relativism, which asserts that there are no absolutes in morals, values, or knowledge. Originally welcomed as a liberating influence that promoted understanding of other cultures, it has acquired interpretations many

consider to promote narrow mindedness and intolerance. For example, relativists regularly claim that, because all thought is "culture bound," objectivity is impossible, even as an ideal. Some assert that an individual cannot transcend his own identity. It is usually taken as axiomatic by those claiming that universities exhibit racist and sexist bias in their institutional practices, and in the knowledge they teach. Standards of scholarship are criticized as simply reflecting the interests of the dominant group, which in Canada is white heterosexual males. It has even been claimed that such individuals cannot legitimately teach in ethnic or women's studies programs. Relativist philosophers and sociologists have also mounted attacks on the sciences. Opponents of relativism in university scholarship fear its anarchistic consequences; development of knowledge is seen as being reduced to political struggle amongst special interest groups. I argue here that, for the sciences at least, relativist claims are based on inadequate or even shoddy scholarship. I also suggest that appropriate scrutiny of relativist writings in the social sciences and the humanities reveals similar weaknesses.

Scientists invariably in practice accept the doctrine of realism. They believe that a scientific theory, the currently accepted explanation of a group of phenomena, is the equivalent of a map. Although in one sense obviously a human invention, it also contains objective information about the real world, and is viewed as a discovery. In contrast, having studied the hypothesis-laden, convoluted, and frequently incompetent ways in which scientists manipulate the results of their observations and experiments, an influential group of relativists assert that scientific "knowledge-claims" are no different in essence from other forms of human expression, can never be value-free and have meaning only in relation to the culture in which they were derived. Some argue that one cannot legitimately distinguish between science and pseudoscience, and that alternative "sciences" can be developed. Given the huge investment in science by the modern state, others have advocated much closer political control of scientific activities.

One must acknowledge that evidence of the self-serving and incompetent activities that are the basis of relativist arguments is endemic to scientific practise; Newton sometimes fiddled his data.¹ Worse still, philosophers seem unable to agree on a succinct definition that enables scientific knowledge to be easily set apart from other human learning; as one has noted,² scientists transform their methods and standards from time to

¹ E.g., see R. S. Westfall, *Never At Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton*, pp. 733-36.

² A. Chalmers, *Science and Its Fabrication*, p. 20.

time as they deem expedient.³ Hence, superficially at least, relativism is plausible. The problem is that realism and relativism are both metaphysical doctrines that can be neither proved nor disproved; the evidence can only be circumstantial.

Nevertheless the puzzles that science addresses are clearly objective; those concerned to defend science, and in particular to set it apart from pseudoscience, have identified three characteristics of the kind of activity that is universally acknowledged to have been successful.⁴ The first is that scientists spend considerable effort in manipulating the consequences of hypotheses to make predictions having very specific content. They can then falsify them in confrontations with observation and experiment. The second is that the conclusions they draw are always provisional and open to criticism. Finally science makes progress; indeed, successful theories know no cultural boundaries. In contrast, pseudoscience usually lacks independently testable hypotheses capable of supporting proponents' claims, makes no progress, and invariably formulates ideas so as to make them immune to criticism.⁵

It is important to realize that the process of validation of a hypothesis can be exceedingly complex; in many ways it is akin to the assembly of an elaborate jig-saw puzzle. Data obtained from any individual investigation is at best ambiguous, and its ultimate meaning is dependent on other investigations. In the initial assembly stages the available puzzle-pieces may suggest many interpretations and may provoke much controversy, so that subjectivity can play a major role. However, as additional investigations are undertaken, a consensus on interpretation can emerge. This often has such compelling consistency or can allow such spectacular predictions that it becomes increasingly difficult to deny that the consensus does not reflect objectivity. To cite but one example from my own discipline: Newton's laws of gravitation are routinely used to make the accurate predictions required for space missions. Furthermore, contrary to popular notions, Einstein's theory of gravitation has not rendered Newton's laws obsolete; it has confirmed them by incorporating them as a special case. To my colleagues, Newton's data-fiddling has long ago become irrelevant.

In the face of successes such as this, what evidence have relativists produced in support of their claims? The literature is voluminous; but apart from certain unpersuasive philosophical arguments I believe that relativist studies only illustrate the role of three

³ P. Kitcher., *Abusing Science; The Case Against Creationism*, see pp. 45-50.

⁴ J. W. Grove, *In Defence of Science*, see pp. 147-148, 22-23.

⁵ *Ibid.*

extraneous factors. Firstly, as nobody disputes, social pressures influence the choice of puzzles and the progress made in solving them. Secondly, the hypothesis validation process is in its early stages. Finally, scientists are attempting to solve problems which have perceived social value but which are so complex that they must be simplified in some way in order to obtain a solution, thus forcing the reintroduction of subjective factors. Furthermore relativists have failed completely to address satisfactorily a question that I believe succinctly captures the issue: Are there any documented cases in successful science where theoretical propositions have been shown to embody social factors?

In general, relativist arguments exhibit two characteristics. The first is the tendency to presume that, once the process of acquiring knowledge is understood, nothing more is to be learned. As Queens' political scientist J. W. Grove has observed: "this is only half the story, and totally misleading in the absence of the other half."⁶ Science writer Martin Gardner describes the example of a lecture given by a young sociologist on the history of the asteroid impact theory of dinosaur extinction. She was very good at describing the manoeuvring amongst geologists advocating various ideas, but displayed no interest in the evidence. Eventually a frustrated paleontologist in the audience challenged her, asking "Is it really news to sociologists that evidence counts?"⁷

The second tendency is that relativist tactics seem uncannily reminiscent of those used by religious pseudoscientists who seek to discredit the theory of evolution. They divert attention from the "big picture" by pointing to the inevitable ambiguities in individual investigations and by focussing on hypotheses still being validated. Relativism is at best controversial, yet they state it as fact. "Science is totally within culture," claims one well-known feminist critic of science, Sandra Harding.⁸ "Value-neutrality in science is at best a pipe-dream, at worst a myth,"⁹ declares a recent CAUT Bulletin editorial. They accept or reject evidence as credible according to its consistency with relativist ideas. They attempt to make their arguments immune to criticism: Harding has complained that scientists are not "socialized" to value psychoanalysis and other interpretive techniques she uses.¹⁰

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Martin Gardner, "Relativism in Science," *Skeptical Enquirer*, Vol. 14, Summer 1990, 353-357.

⁸, "Feminists Find Gender Everywhere in Science," *Science*, Vol. 260, 1993, pp. 392-393.

⁹, *CAUT Bulletin*, Editorial response to a letter in October 1992 issue.

¹⁰ Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism*, pp. 33, 41, 50, 113.

Even more disturbing is the standard of argument used in some texts. I cite four examples from Harding's "Science Question in Feminism".¹¹ What, for example, is one supposed to make of her suggestion that one should improve science by "creating 'reciprocal selves' that are federated in solidarities" Without explanation, she claims that "Aristotle was an experimentalist," a view that many deny and about which there is much dispute. She asserts that the distinction between number as integer and as distance along a line is "similar to what we do when we exclude patriotic killing in wartime from the moral and legal category of murder." Finally, because Sir Francis Bacon used various metaphors, including that of rape, to describe his view of the scientific method, Harding asks, "Why is it not illuminating and honest to refer to Newton's laws as 'Newton's rape manual' as it is to call them 'Newton's mechanics'?" (sic!)

Time art critic Robert Hughes scornfully observes that this kind of absurdity is "de rigueur" in much current academic cultural criticism. Typically, a professor of English at a large American university has written:

"narrow canons of proof, logical consistency and clarity of expression have to go. To insist on them imposes a drag on progress. Indeed, to apply strict canons of objectivity and evidence in academic publishing today would be comparable to the American economy's returning to the gold standard; the effect would be the immediate collapse of the system."¹²

This suggests one approach to discrediting relativists in other disciplines: focus on their product, and appeal to elementary notions of accuracy, logic, and fairness.

References and Further Reading

"Feminists Find Gender Everywhere in Science," *Science*, Vol. 260, 1993, pp. 392-393.

CAUT Bulletin, Editorial response to a letter in October 1992 issue.

CAUT Bulletin, "Annual Status of Women Supplement," April 1993.

.. "The Politics of Political Correctness: A Symposium," *Partisan Review*, vol. LX, no. 4, 1993.

Barbara J. Culliton, "Critics condemn NIH women's study," *Nature*, 4 November 1993, p. 11.

Philip G. Davis, "The Goddess and the Academy," *Academic Questions* 6:4 (1993), 49-66.

Martin Gardner, "Relativism in Science," *Skeptical Enquirer*, Vol. 14, Summer 1990, 353-357.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Robert Hughes, *Culture of Complaint: The Fraying of America*, see p. 77.

Paul R. Gross, "On the 'Gendering' of Science," *Academic Questions* 5:2 (1992), 10-23.

J. W. Grove, *In Defence of Science*.

Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism*.

Robert Hughes, *Culture of Complaint: The Fraying of America*.

P. Kitcher, *Abusing Science; The Case Against Creationism*.

Jerry Martin, "The University as Agent of Social Transformation: The Postmodern Argument Considered," *Academic Questions* 6:3 (1993), 55-72.

George L. Mosse, *Nazi Culture*.

Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*.

Jonathan Rauch, *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks On Freedom of Thought*.

Richard S. Westfall, *Never At Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton*.

Publications

Academic Questions (National Association of Scholars, 575 Ewing St., Princeton, NJ 08540). Your library should get this. If your library has financial troubles, you may be able sponsor a subscription.

Measure (University Centers for Rational Alternatives, 570 Seventh Ave, New York, N.Y. 10018).

Campus Report (Accuracy In Academia, 4455 Connecticut Ave., Suite 330, Washington, D.C. 20008)

Heterodoxy, 12400 Ventura Blvd., Suite 304, Studio City, Cal. 91604.

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The SAFS Newsletter

The editor welcomes case studies, comments, articles, news items, references, local chapter news, etc.
Address: Judy Wubnig, Philosophy, University of Waterloo. FAX (519) 884-7560, Tel. (519) 885-1211, ext. 3548

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