

Thought police are controlling America's college campuses

Fredrick Spiegel, an emeritus professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia, has felt the lash of the modern Inquisition. In the course of a lecture on political science, Prof. Spiegel made a critical remark about an opinion by Justice Thurgood Marshall. A black student rose and demanded to know why the professor did not, in the same breath, criticize white justices who had issued opinions unfavorable (in the student's view) to civil rights?

In a conversation that continued after class, Prof. Spiegel observed that racism is not an exclusively white phenomenon, and that "if the minority/majority



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roles were reversed, it is quite possible that blacks might treat whites just as badly," as Spiegel later recounted in the Columbia Daily Tribune.

In the current climate on campuses, such opinions are enough to alert the thought police. The student filed a formal complaint with the vice provost for minori-

ty affairs. K.C. Morrison, Morrison phoned Spiegel and without investigating the matter simply informed Spiegel that his services would no longer be required at the University of Missouri.

Nor was this an isolated bit of academic bullying. The prevailing intellectual/political fashions on campus include multiculturalism, which, roughly translated, means any culture is better than Western culture; oppression studies, which encourages every minority group to revel in its disadvantages; and radical feminism, which preaches that the whole world is one large conspiracy to offend women.

At Hampshire College in Mas-

sachusetts, two literature professors were denied reappointment for failing to strike the correct political tone in their courses. Jeff Wallen, who taught European literature, was excoriated by colleagues for failing to present an adequate Third World perspective. Wallen is a leftist himself and has attempted to fight accusations of political incorrectness. But when he protested that the works of Richard Wright and Jorge Luis Borges were part of his curriculum, a colleague wrote contemptuously, "I seriously question his understanding of the Third World expectation." In other words, Wallen told me, "I failed to teach that the story of Western Civilization is the history

of imperialism, racism, and oppression."

Wallen also ran into trouble for raising questions about the search for a professor of African-American literature. When months had dragged by and no suitable candidate was found, Wallen inquired whether the search was "targeted," meaning only blacks would be considered. That thought crime later came back to haunt him. Explaining his reasons for voting not to reappoint Wallen, a colleague wrote, "I had hoped for someone ... less prone to polarizing issues in our school meetings, in ways that suggest to me, not an independent thinking about the issues."

"That's the Stalinist formula," Wallen cries. "When you don't toe the ideological line, they accuse you of not being able to think independently."

Another Hampshire professor, a teacher of Latin American literature who is half Panamanian, has been denied reappointment on grounds that he lacks proper Third World sensibility. His crime? He cited European critics of Latin American writers.

While most faculty and administrators find the influence of the Third World, deconstructionist, feminist, post-modernist radicals absurd, they're intimidated. And that's why the shielded cloister must be exposed.

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