

The State of Free Speech on College Campuses



BY MYLIE BIGGS (/USERS/MBIGGS) 03/23/2022

What if you couldn't speak your mind or express your opinion? What if you were punished for disagreeing with others around you? On college campuses across America, this is a reality.

The Big Picture

The right of freedom of speech, enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution, is vital to protect individualism and freedom. America is a country that protects God-given rights to think and speak freely. Colleges and universities, in particular, have historically been places where people could be exposed to new ideas, examine different philosophies, and learn to engage intelligently. Over the years, free speech on college campuses has been stripped away by tyrannical administrators and hyper-sensitive student activists. Professors and students are being targeted specifically for using their first amendment rights, when they express opinions that are outside what the mainstream narrative allows.

The Details

- In 2021 alone, there were over 100 reports (<https://www.thefire.org/report-at-least-111-professors-targeted-for-their-speech-in-2021/>) of college professors being targeted on campuses due to something they said, did, or posted online. Keep in mind this number reflects only what is reported.
- Several guest speakers had lectures canceled (https://www.thecollegefix.com/cancel-culture-database/?gv_search=&filter_4=Guest+Speaker&filter_6=&filter_7=&mode=all) because of unrelenting protests from students opposing the speaker's political views.
- Countless students across the nation have been targeted and punished for expressing their views or opinions. Some are politically motivated; others are just ridiculous.
- At Virginia Tech (<https://www.thefire.org/virginia-tech-student-punished-for-booming-at-a-soccer-game/>), after a group of students booed and yelled at the referee for a bad call (one might say this is common behavior at American sporting events), an athletic director attempted to quiet them down. One student questioned her motives and called her a "glorified PE teacher." Her hurt feelings led to the student being banned from all women's soccer games and being found guilty of disorderly conduct by the school.

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Point Park University (https://www.campusreform.org/article?id=18319&_gl=1*d26gys*_ga*MjAzODM4MzQ5NS4xNjQ2ODM3MzI1*_ga_52173W50DL*MTY0Njg0MDc0Ni4yLjEuMTY0Njg0MTYwOS42MA)

sent out an email to students stating that "action could be taken" against any student who "misgenders" or misuses the preferred pronouns of another student.



CANCEL CULTURE DATABASE

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Search by Keyword

Target

Confederate?

Protested / Canceled?

SEARCH

CLEAR

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|---|--------------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Obama Homeland chief, accused of 'violence on marginalized peoples,' withdraws as grad speaker | Vassar College | 03/05/2022 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Aggressive activists shut down campus event critical of child gender transitions | University of North Texas | 03/03/2022 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Hostile law students shout down constitutional law scholar who criticized affirmative action | UC Hastings College of the Law | 03/01/2022 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Christian college cancels speaker who told students to avoid sexual immorality | Gordon College | 02/28/2022 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Students demand Milo Yiannopoulos be disinvited, 'Pray The Gay Away' posters be removed from campus | Pennsylvania State University | 10/15/2021 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Journalist declines invitation after uproar over his 'racism,' i.e. being against making snap judgments on cops | DePaul University | 10/09/2021 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| MIT cancels science lecture by Professor Dorian Abbot, a DEI critic, after cancel culture campaign | Massachusetts Institute of Technology | 10/04/2021 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| College rejects demands that controversial bioethicist Peter Singer be disinvited | Rhodes College | 09/30/2021 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Elizabethtown College bars anti-CRT speaker | Elizabethtown College | 09/27/2021 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Activists flex muscles to stop Biden from speaking at Notre Dame graduation | University of Notre Dame | 05/26/2021 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|--|----------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Wisconsin college cancels VP Mike Pence as commencement speaker | Wisconsin Lutheran College | 08/27/2020 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| University disinvites antiracism author after student government calls him 'antithetical to anti-racist work' | Tulane University | 08/06/2020 | Guest Speaker | Yes | Canceled |
| University censors ex-Antifa invited speaker Gabriel Nadales hosted by College Republicans | Southern Oregon University | 06/03/2020 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Chinese dissident told Harvard event must be canceled to please powerful people in China | Harvard University | 04/28/2020 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Syracuse student gov votes to block 'white supremacist' Ben Shapiro visit | Syracuse University | 04/22/2020 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| University bans taxpayer advocate because of unspecified 'safety and security' fears | University of Victoria | 03/13/2020 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Politically incorrect comedian shut down by students | Bryant University | 11/27/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| VIDEO: Shouting protestors restrict access to Heather Mac Donald speech at Holy Cross | Holy Cross College | 11/25/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| I'm a queer Jew of color. Woke college students tried to shut me down at Vassar. | Vassar College | 11/23/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Arrests, injury amid aggressive left-wing protest against Ann Coulter speech at UC Berkeley | University of California Berkeley | 11/22/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Panel with Chinese human rights activist canceled | Columbia University | 11/20/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| VIDEO: Unruly campus activists shut down YAF speech by 'father of supply-side economics' Arthur Laffer | SUNY Binghamton | 11/19/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Scholar Stanley Fish disinvented from speaking at Seton Hall University | Seton Hall University | 11/17/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| College Republicans called 'Hitler Youth' as outrage brews over Ben Shapiro YAF guest lecture | Stanford University | 10/17/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Protestors shut down Trump official DHS speaker event | Georgetown University | 10/07/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Some at Christian university balk at upcoming Ben Shapiro speech | Baylor University | 09/25/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| U.S. Army War College disinvites speaker critical of Islam | U.S. Army War College | 07/01/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Activists protest George Will's commencement address | Princeton University | 06/03/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Obama's homeland security chief withdraws from graduation speech after protests | University of Southern California | 05/03/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Smoke bomb attack fails to silence black pro-life speaker at University of Texas | University of Texas Austin | 05/01/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Black Christian speaker disinvited from abortion debate thanks to the heckler's veto | Cornell University | 03/27/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Students, professors protest producer of movie 'Green Book' as commencement speaker | University of Minnesota | 03/27/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Iranian ex-Muslim speech for Atheist group canceled in the aftermath of ChristChurch shooting | Mount Royal University | 03/23/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| University rescinds Dr. Jordan Peterson's fellowship offer | Cambridge University | 03/21/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Legal scholar disinvited from lecture over answer to polarizing legal question | Harvard University | 03/05/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| University blocks the appearance of pro-life speaker Star Parker | University of Northwestern St. Paul | 03/05/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Dozens of students attempt to disrupt Dinesh D'Souza Speech | Dartmouth College | 02/12/2019 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|---|--|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Student protestors drown out debate between Turning Point USA leader and his critics | University of Texas Austin | 11/02/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| NYC mayor requests postponement of Milo Yiannopoulos speech | New York University | 10/31/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Demonstrators disrupt David Horowitz speech | Dartmouth College | 10/28/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Antifa aggressively protests Turning Point USA event with Candace Owens and Charlie Kirk | California State University Long Beach | 10/25/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| University postpones speech by critic of radical Islam | Rutgers University | 10/16/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Professors protest and object to Trump rally on campus | Eastern Kentucky University | 10/12/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| USC students decry Ben Shapiro speech as threat to minorities' safety, attempt to sabotage event | University of Southern California | 09/28/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |

| Incident | School Name | Date | Target | Confederate? | Protested/Canceled? |
|---|---|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Antifa pledges to drive off pro-life speaker | California State University Los Angeles | 04/05/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Protesters demand pro-Brexit politician Nigel Farage be disinvited to campus debate | University of Maryland | 04/04/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Leftists plan to protest upcoming Christina Hoff Summers appearance | Suffolk University | 03/31/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| Heckler's veto: 100 students book seats then walkout of Ann Coulter speech for Turning Point USA | University of Colorado Boulder | 03/23/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |
| College denies request for Ben Shapiro talk, says he's too divisive in time of racial healing | St. Olaf College | 03/22/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Canceled |
| Students demand university ban immigration skeptic after professors refuse to debate her | Wilfrid Laurier University | 03/20/2018 | Guest Speaker | No | Protested |

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Amazon slammed after banning books it says frames transgenderism as mental illness

By Brian Flood

Published March 12, 2021

Fox News

Liberal billionaire Jeff Bezos's behemoth online retailer Amazon is receiving fierce criticism after announcing it would no longer sell books that it says frame transgender and other sexual identities as mental illnesses.

Amazon announced the decision in a letter sent to Republican lawmakers that was obtained and published by the Wall Street Journal. Sens. Marco Rubio, Mike Lee, Mike Braun, and Josh Hawley had inquired why the online retailer pulled Ryan T. Anderson's bestselling book, "When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment," which has been characterized by the Bezos-owned Washington Post as anti-transgender.

REPUBLICAN SENATORS SEND LETTER TO JEFF BEZOS ASKING WHY AMAZON PULLED BOOK BY CONSERVATIVE AUTHOR

"As a bookseller, we provide our customers with access to a variety of viewpoints, including books that some customers may find objectionable. Amazon works hard to ensure customers have a great shopping experience, and access to the widest and most diverse cross-section of written and spoken word in retail today," Amazon wrote to the lawmakers. "We reserve the right not to sell certain content. All retailers make decisions about what selection they choose to offer, as do we."

The letter continued, "As to your specific question about 'When Harry Became Sally,' we have chosen not to sell books that frame LGBTQ+ identity as a mental illness."

Amazon will no longer sell books that frame transgender and other sexual identities as mental illnesses. (REUTERS/Mike Segar)

Amazon did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"Amazon is using its massive power to distort the marketplace of ideas and is deceiving its own customers in the process," Anderson and Encounter Books publisher Roger Kimball told the Wall Street Journal.

AMAZON ACCUSED OF 'ABSURD AND UNACCPETABLE' CENSORSHIP AFTER BOOK QUESTIONING TRANSGENDER MOVEMENT VANISHES

The author further addressed the decision in a series of tweets.

"Amazon has finally responded. Everyone agrees that gender dysphoria is a serious condition that causes great suffering. There is a debate, however, which Amazon is seeking to shut down, about how best to treat patients who experience gender dysphoria," Anderson wrote.

"Gender dysphoria is listed in the APA's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, which Amazon sells. So the real deciding factor seems to be whether you endorse hormones and surgery as the proper treatment or counseling," he continued.

"Amazon appears to have never read my book, but relied on hit pieces. As I pointed out before: 'Please quote the passage where I call them mentally ill.' You can't quote that passage because it doesn't exist."

Critics have long pointed out that Amazon has a history of censoring books that don't coincide with the company's liberal political views. "When Harry Became Sally," which has previously been on Amazon's bestseller list, aimed to provide "thoughtful answers to questions arising from our transgender moment" and offered a "a balanced approach to public policy on gender identity, and a sober assessment of the human costs of getting human nature wrong."

A search of Amazon for "When Harry Became Sally" on Friday didn't find Anderson's now-banned book, instead suggesting books with the opposite view such as "The End of Gender: Debunking the Myths about Sex and Identity in Our Society," "Understanding Gender Dysphoria: Navigating Transgender Issues in a Changing Culture" and "Let Harry Become Sally: Responding to the Anti-Transgender Moment."

Critics of Amazon's decision took to Twitter, with some accusing it of mischaracterizing the nature of Anderson's book.

ELIZABETH WARREN
MASSACHUSETTS

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www.warren.senate.gov

September 7, 2021

Andy Jassy
Chef Executive Officer
Amazon.com, Inc.
410 Terry Ave N
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Jassy:

I write regarding concerns that Amazon is peddling misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines and treatments through its search and “Best Seller” algorithms. This is the second time in six months that I have identified Amazon practices that mislead consumers about COVID-19 prevention or treatment: earlier this year, I wrote regarding concerns that the company is providing consumers with false and misleading information about FDA-authorized KN95 masks.¹ This pattern and practice of misbehavior suggests that Amazon is either unwilling or unable to modify its business practices to prevent the spread of falsehoods or the sale of inappropriate products—an unethical, unacceptable, and potentially unlawful course of action from one of the nation’s largest retailers.

On the heels of the FDA’s full approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine² and amidst the rapid spread of the Delta variant, it is vital that Americans have access to accurate information about COVID-19 prevention and treatment—and about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines in particular.³ The highly infectious Delta variant is now responsible for over 90% of all COVID-19 cases in the United States,⁴ leading to surges in hospitalizations and deaths

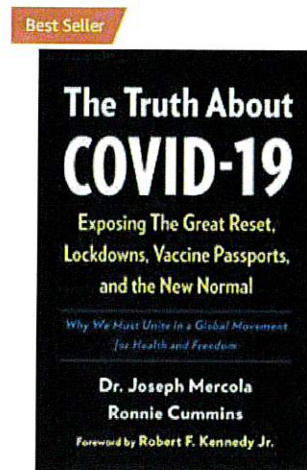
¹ Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Amazon CEO Andy Jassy, March 30, 2021, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2021.03.30%20Letter%20to%20Amazon%20re%20Kn95%20masks%20sold%20on%20its%20site.pdf>.

² New York Times, “F.D.A. Fully Approves Pfizer-BioNTech’s Vaccine, a First for a Covid-19 Shot,” Sharon LaFraniere and Noah Weiland, August 23, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/health/pfizer-vaccine-approval-fda.html>.

³ In addition to full approval for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, the FDA has granted emergency use approval for the Moderna and Janssen COVID-19 vaccines. U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “COVID-19 Vaccines,” <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-vaccines>.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Variant Proportions,” <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#variant-proportions>.

it was tagged as a “Best Seller” by Amazon and the “#1 Best Seller” in the “Political Freedom” category.



The Truth About COVID-19:
Exposing The Great Reset,
Lockdowns, Vaccine Passports,
and the New Normal
by Doctor Joseph Mercola, Ronnie
Cummins, et al.

★★★★★ ~ 2,124

Hardcover

\$14.⁹⁹ ~~\$24.95~~

The book perpetuates dangerous conspiracies about COVID-19 and false and misleading information about vaccines. It asserts that vitamin C, vitamin D, and quercetin—supplements sold on Mercola’s website—can prevent COVID-19 infection,¹² a claim with such little scientific basis that the FDA sent a letter instructing Mercola to cease selling these supplements for the unapproved and unauthorized treatment of COVID-19.¹³ And the book contends that vaccines cannot be trusted,¹⁴ when study after study has demonstrated the overwhelming effectiveness and safety of COVID-19 vaccines.¹⁵

It should come as no surprise that the book is rife with misinformation. One of the authors, Dr. Mercola, is one of the “Disinformation Dozen,” a group responsible for 65% of anti-

¹² McGill, Office for Science and Society, “The Upside-Down Doctor,” Jonathan Jarry, June 4, 2021, <https://www.mcgill.ca/oss/article/covid-19-health-pseudoscience/upside-down-doctor>.

¹³ Letter from U.S. Food & Drug Administration to Dr. Josepha M. Mercola, February 18, 2021, <https://www.fda.gov/inspections-compliance-enforcement-and-criminal-investigations/warning-letters/mercolacom-llc-607133-02182021>.

¹⁴ McGill, Office for Science and Society, “The Upside-Down Doctor,” Jonathan Jarry, June 4, 2021, <https://www.mcgill.ca/oss/article/covid-19-health-pseudoscience/upside-down-doctor>.

¹⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines,” <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/safety-of-vaccines.html>.

To its credit, Amazon does not appear to have any “sponsored” search results for pandemic-related terms, as it did for KN95 masks, although it does rely heavily on the “Best Seller” tag. The company also places a banner at the top of its search results page for these terms that links directly to the CDC website. But the results of my staff’s review are nevertheless deeply troubling. As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise, Amazon is feeding misinformation loops through its search and “Best Seller” algorithms, potentially leading countless Americans to risk their health and the health of their neighbors based on misleading and inaccurate information that they discover on Amazon’s website.

Other major technology companies have recognized their role in propagating misinformation about COVID-19 and have taken steps to address the issue. In response to concerns about COVID-19 misinformation on its platform, Facebook has removed pages, groups, and accounts spreading such misinformation and adjusted its algorithms to either remove misleading posts or display them less prominently.²³ Similarly, Twitter has published a COVID-19 misinformation policy that prohibits users from using its services “to share false or misleading information about COVID-19 which may lead to harm.”²⁴ The policy includes detailed procedures for identifying COVID-19 misinformation and penalizes sharers of such misinformation, leading Twitter to recently ban Alex Berenson—whose books appear prominently in Amazon searches—from its platform.²⁵

In fact, Amazon itself has removed books trafficking in misinformation from its platform in recent years. In March 2019, Amazon removed books pushing pseudoscientific cures to autism and debunked theories linking autism to childhood vaccines.²⁶ Earlier this year, Amazon publicly stated its policy to refuse to sell “books that frame LGBTQ+ identity as a mental illness” and removed books in violation of the policy.²⁷ Amazon has even reportedly removed books containing COVID-19 misinformation in response to prior inquiries, though there has been little transparency around the company’s policies.²⁸

Given the seriousness of this issue, I ask that you perform an immediate review of Amazon’s algorithms and, within 14 days, provide both a public report on the extent to which Amazon’s algorithms are directing consumers to books and other products containing COVID-19 misinformation and a plan to modify these algorithms so that they no longer do so. In order to

²³ Facebook, “How We’re Taking Action Against Vaccine Misinformation Superspreaders,” <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/08/taking-action-against-vaccine-misinformation-superspreaders>.

²⁴ Twitter, “COVID-19 Misleading Information Policy,” <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/medical-misinformation-policy>.

²⁵ The Hill, “Twitter Bans Conservative Author Alex Berenson,” Olafimihan Oshin, August 29, 2021, <https://thehill.com/homenews/media/569908-twitter-bans-conservative-author-Alex-Berenson>.

²⁶ NBC News, “Amazon Removes Books Promoting Autism Cures and Vaccine Misinformation,” Brandy Zadrozny, March 12, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/internet/amazon-removes-books-promoting-autism-cures-vaccine-misinformation-n982576>.

²⁷ Wall Street Journal, “Amazon Won’t Sell Books Framing LGBTQ+ Identities as Mental Illnesses,” Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg, March 11, 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/amazon-wont-sell-books-framing-lgbtq-identities-as-mental-illnesses-11615511380>.

²⁸ WIRED, “Amazon Quietly Removes Some Dubious Coronavirus Books,” Louise Matsakis, March 11, 2020, <https://www.wired.com/story/amazon-quietly-removes-coronavirus-books>.

Amazon, Apple and Google Cut Off Parler, an App That Drew Trump Supporters

Three companies pulled support for the “free speech” social network, all but killing the service just as many conservatives are seeking alternatives to Facebook and Twitter.



By Jack Nicas and Davey Alba

Published Jan. 9, 2021 Updated Jan. 13, 2021

Parler, a social network that pitches itself as a “free speech” alternative to Twitter and Facebook, is suffering from whiplash.

Over the past several months, Parler has become one of the fastest-growing apps in the United States. Millions of President Trump’s supporters have flocked to it as Facebook and Twitter increasingly cracked down on posts that spread misinformation and incited violence, including muzzling Mr. Trump by removing his accounts this past week. By Saturday morning, Apple listed Parler as the No. 1 free app for its iPhones.

But, by Saturday night, Parler was suddenly fighting for its life.

First, Apple and Google removed the app from their app stores because they said it had not sufficiently policed its users’ posts, allowing too many that encouraged violence and crime. Then, late Saturday, Amazon told Parler it would boot the company from its web-hosting service on Sunday night because of repeated violations of Amazon’s rules.

Amazon’s move meant that Parler’s entire platform would soon go offline unless it was able to find a new hosting service on Sunday.

“Big tech really wants to kill competition,” John Matze, Parler’s chief executive, said in a text message. “And I have a lot of work to do in the next 24 hours to make sure everyone’s data is not permanently deleted off the internet.”

In a statement online, Mr. Matze added that the tech giants had acted in a “coordinated effort” to “completely remove free speech off the internet.” Parler, he said, would probably be unavailable on the internet for up to a week, starting at midnight on Sunday. But, he went on, the company had “prepared” by not relying on Amazon’s proprietary infrastructure and was looking for a new hosting provider.

A day earlier, Parler appeared poised to capitalize on growing anger at Silicon Valley in conservative circles and was even a logical choice to become Mr. Trump’s next megaphone after he was kicked off Twitter. Now its future is looking bleak.

In a letter to Parler on Saturday, Amazon said that it had sent the company 98 examples of posts on its site that encouraged violence and that many remained active. “It’s clear that Parler does not have an effective process to comply with” Amazon’s rules, the company said in the letter. Amazon “provides technology and services to customers across the political spectrum, and we continue to respect Parler’s right to determine for itself what content it will allow on its site. However, we cannot provide services to a customer that is unable to effectively identify and remove content that encourages or incites violence against others.”

On Friday, Apple gave Parler 24 hours to clean up its app or face removal from its App Store. Parler appeared to take down some posts over that period, but on Saturday, Apple told the company its measures were inadequate. “We have always supported diverse points of view being represented on the App Store, but there is no place on our platform for threats of violence and illegal activity,” Apple said in a statement.

“This is very huge,” Amy Peikoff, Parler’s policy chief, told Fox News after Apple gave its warning on Friday. Without access to the App Store, she said, “we’re toast.”

Several Parler executives accused the tech companies’ moves as being politically motivated and anticompetitive.

Mr. Matze pointed to the fact that Twitter had recently promoted the phrase “Hang Mike Pence” as a trending topic. (The majority of the discussion on Twitter was about rioters chanting the phrase about the vice president on Wednesday.) “I have seen no evidence Apple is going after them,” Mr. Matze said. “This would appear to be an unfair double standard as every other social media site has the same issues, arguably on a worse scale.”

The actions against Parler were part of a wider crackdown by tech companies on President Trump and some of his most extreme supporters after Wednesday’s deadly riot in Washington. But unlike Twitter and Facebook, which make decisions about the content that appears on their own sites, Amazon, Apple and Google weighed in on how another company was operating.

Technology

Screenetime

DirecTV to Drop One America News in Blow to Conservative Channel

- Contract between satellite service, OAN owner expires in April
- OAN has been criticized for spreading misinformation



One America News Network (OAN) is being dropped by DirecTV. *Photographer: Dan Brouillette/Bloomberg*

By Gerry Smith

January 14, 2022, 6:44 PM EST

DirecTV, one of the largest U.S. pay-TV providers, plans to drop One America News Network, dealing a major blow to the conservative channel that's been criticized for spreading misinformation and had a loyal fan in former President Donald Trump.

Why Cable and Satellite Providers Should Drop One America News Network

Programming created by major corporations will not reward creativity, give a voice to marginalized groups, or help foster informed public debate.

By **John Bergmayer**
November 9, 2021

Public Knowledge has long sought to support independent programmers because a media landscape dominated by programming created by major corporations will not reward creativity, give a voice to marginalized groups, or help foster informed public debate.

This is why the story of One America News Network (OAN) is sad. There are some murky details about how it was founded, but it was **clearly founded** to be a right-wing outlet. Regardless, even **some liberal commentators**, while criticizing its opinion pieces, saw its news coverage as reasonable. And, at a high level, there's nothing wrong with a pay TV company looking for more content that might appeal to a range of differing ideological audiences, or even looking to create a competitor to Fox News. In the past, Public Knowledge worked with conservative outlets such as OAN and Newsmax **to oppose Sinclair's effort to buy Tribune Media**,

make uncontroversial theoretical points that do not reflect the reality of the actual channel bundles on offer, where people who do not like sports or watch broadcast networks nevertheless have to pay substantially more on their bills to subsidize those who do. The situation was less a Food Network fan not wanting to pay for SyFy and vice versa so they could save at most pennies each month, but more like cutting your monthly bill by \$20 or \$30.

But another strong case for a la carte came not from consumers and consumer advocates who were looking to save people money, but from people who did not want to pay for objectionable content. So, the [Parents Television Council](#) and other more socially conservative groups have long advocated for a la carte.

OAN is a special case. Pay TV companies generally structure their offerings based on commercial considerations, not editorial ones. I don't view Cox or Comcast as trying to express themselves in their channel lineups, nor as endorsing the viewpoints expressed on one channel or another. But merely carrying a channel does inevitably endorse it to a certain extent, and even that is too much in the case of OAN. For OAN, a la carte is not the answer.

More broadly though, the fact is that the conservative groups who objected to paying for content that *they* found morally objectionable were right. Beyond OAN, why should a liberal pay for NewsMax or Fox News? This isn't just about news, but news and opinion programming is the clearest case. Yes, people should be open to hearing thoughtful points of view they disagree with, but I might suggest that cable TV "news" is not the best avenue for that kind of engagement in the public sphere. Similarly I would not suggest that a conservative watch MSNBC talking head shows to engage with the best of what the left has to offer.

With this context, we support the call for AT&T to drop OAN, and think that other pay TV providers that carry it should, as well. Pay TV companies

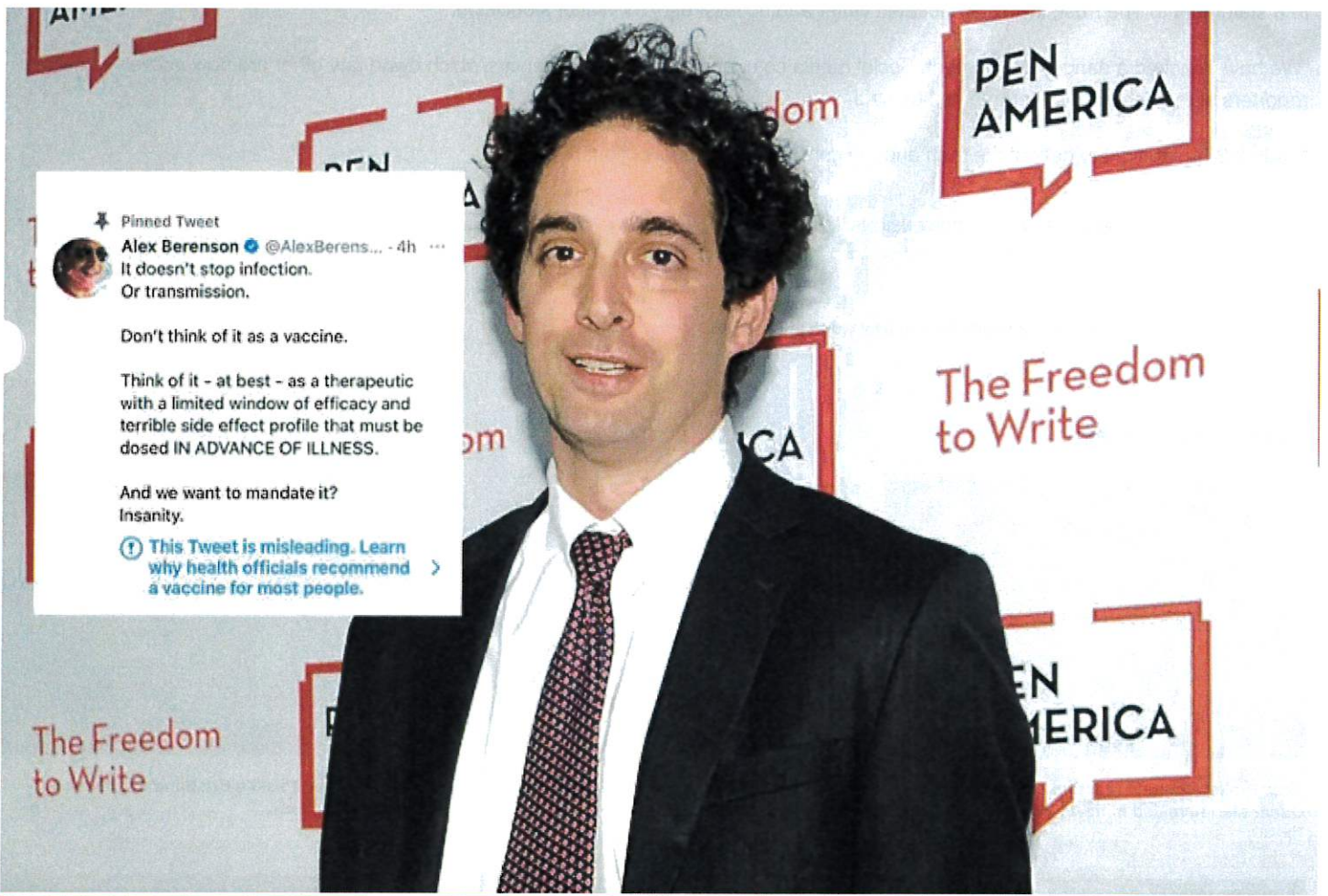
GET 30 DAYS FREE

MEDIA

COVID vaccine doubter Alex Berenson permanently banned from Twitter

By [Jon Levine](#) and [Kenneth Garger](#)

August 28, 2021 11:39pm Updated



Alex Berenson is considering "all legal action" after Twitter banned him for violating its misinformation rules.

Desiree Navarro/WireImage; Substack

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College students protested a Border Patrol presentation. Now they're going to face criminal charges.

By Antonia Noori Farzan

April 2, 2019

To conservative commentators, they were proof of a "snowflake culture" that thrives on college campuses, guilty of harassing people whose views they disagreed with and blocking their constitutional right to free speech.

Now, two students at the University of Arizona who protested Border Patrol agents at a campus event on March 19 are going to face criminal charges, the university's president said.

"The student club and the CBP officers invited by the students should have been able to hold their meeting without disruption," University of Arizona President Robert C. Robbins wrote in a letter to the campus community on Friday. "Student protest is protected by our support for free speech, but disruption is not."

Videos of the confrontation, which were published in conservative media outlets in late March, show two officers in green uniforms standing at the front of a classroom, where they were giving a presentation to students interested in criminal justice careers. Earlier that day, Border Patrol agents had been recruiting on the Tucson campus during a career fair, according to the Daily Wildcat, the university's student newspaper.

"They allow murderers to be on campus, where I pay to be here," a young woman, who appears to be filming the officers through a door that has been left slightly ajar, says loudly. She continues, "This is supposed to be a safe space for students, but they allow an extension of the KKK into campus."

One Border Patrol officer looks up, but doesn't respond. "How about you talk about slashing water? How about you talk about taking the shoes off migrants, letting them walk through the desert barefoot?" the young woman asks. "How about you talk about all the graves of unidentified folks?"

The president of the Criminal Justice Association, the student group that organized the event, informs the woman that she's welcome to sit in on the presentation. She responds that she doesn't feel safe and that they should hold their meetings elsewhere. The club leader then says she is going to call the campus police.

A second clip shows the agents leaving the classroom. Multiple students can be heard following them down a hallway and into a parking garage, chanting "Murder Patrol" over and over again, and yelling, "You're not welcome here," as the agents get into their car and drive away. It's unclear how much time elapsed between the two videos.

“Her right to free speech only goes so far,” she said of the woman who was filming. “She has every right to scream and yell all she wants outside the building, but the moment she’s inside a building and interfering with our education . . . our rights were violated.”

into told the Daily Wildcat that she was the woman in the video who had invited Denisse to come in, then called the police after Denisse declined. Her goal had simply been to try to defuse tension, she said. She added that the club is strictly apolitical and invites representatives from different law enforcement agencies to speak to members about career opportunities and their hiring processes.

The reaction split along similar lines after Robbins announced last week that university police would press charges. The National Border Patrol Council’s Local 2544, which represents agents in the Tucson area, wrote on Facebook that it wasn’t enough, and that they wanted a public apology. Meanwhile, a coalition of DACA recipients at the university described the forthcoming charges as evidence of “the swiftness with which institutions criminalize people of color,” saying in a statement that protesters had already been “bombarded with threats to their physical and emotional well being.”

The two students who will face charges are “being persecuted,” they wrote.

More from Morning Mix:

A Colorado sheriff would rather go to jail than seize firearms under state’s red-flag law, he says

A drama student got ‘into his character.’ Then, he stabbed two people, police say.

He dunked a crucifix in his own urine. His next artistic subject: Donald Trump.



March 29, 2019

Dear Campus Community,

// I want to update you on developments regarding last week's incident with the Border Patrol officers on campus and to reaffirm the University of Arizona's relationship with the leadership and the women and men serving in U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

The incident between the protesting students and the Criminal Justice club members was a dramatic departure from our expectations of respectful behavior and support for free speech on this campus.

University police determined today they will be charging two of the students with interference with the peaceful conduct of an educational institution, a misdemeanor.

The UA Police Department will continue to investigate the incident for additional criminal violations, and the Office of the Dean of Students is reviewing potential violations of the student code of conduct. There also will be a probe into actions involving UA employees.

The University has policies and protocols for behavior and expression, and we are following those. However, I have assigned university staff to examine our processes to ensure we are working effectively to help prevent similar incidents in the future while maintaining the 1st Amendment right to free speech and protest.

At the core of these inquiries is the University of Arizona's commitment to free speech. The student club and the CBP officers invited by the students should have been able to hold their meeting without disruption. Student protest is protected by our support for free speech, but disruption is not.

As a community of scholars, we need to be more thoughtful and deliberative in how we approach these issues and work together to sustain vigorous conversations to find better solutions.

Sincerely,



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Building 19, Rm. 325W
Tucson, Arizona 85721-0001

Tel: 520-621-2782

Fax: 520-621-6147

<http://asua.arizona.edu>

Wildcat Family,

Earlier this week, U.S Border Patrol (USBP) was present at a career fair hosted at the University of Arizona. Although we recognize their attendance was solely to recruit students to join their workforce, the presence of uniformed USBP agents on our campus, especially without warning was, is, and will always be immensely harmful to our DACA and undocumented community.

As the Associated Students of the University of Arizona, we have an obligation and a responsibility to protect, support and speak out for all Wildcats, including our DACA and undocumented students. Simply put, unannounced visits by the U.S. Border Patrol are unacceptable. The same day USBP agents were present on campus, a Tucson family was arrested and detained by USBP only mere miles from the UA. The concerns students have of USBP presence on campus are real, they are valid, and they need to be heard.

We want to stress the importance of notifying students, especially our DACA and undocumented students, in advance of visits by USBP. It is also necessary to understand the mere presence of USBP on campus creates an environment which negatively impacts our DACA and undocumented community.

Every single UA student, faculty, and staff deserves and has the right to feel safe within our campus community. ASUA will work with the UA Administration as well as the entire campus community to take the necessary steps to ensure all Wildcats feel safe and supported on campus. These steps include assessing changes to UA policy and procedures that better support our students.

We want to thank every single student and campus member who has raised their voices for our incredible community of DACA and undocumented Wildcats.

In solidarity,

Natalynn Masters
ASUA Student Body President

Matthew Rein
ASUA Executive VP

Kate Rosenstengel
ASUA Administrative VP



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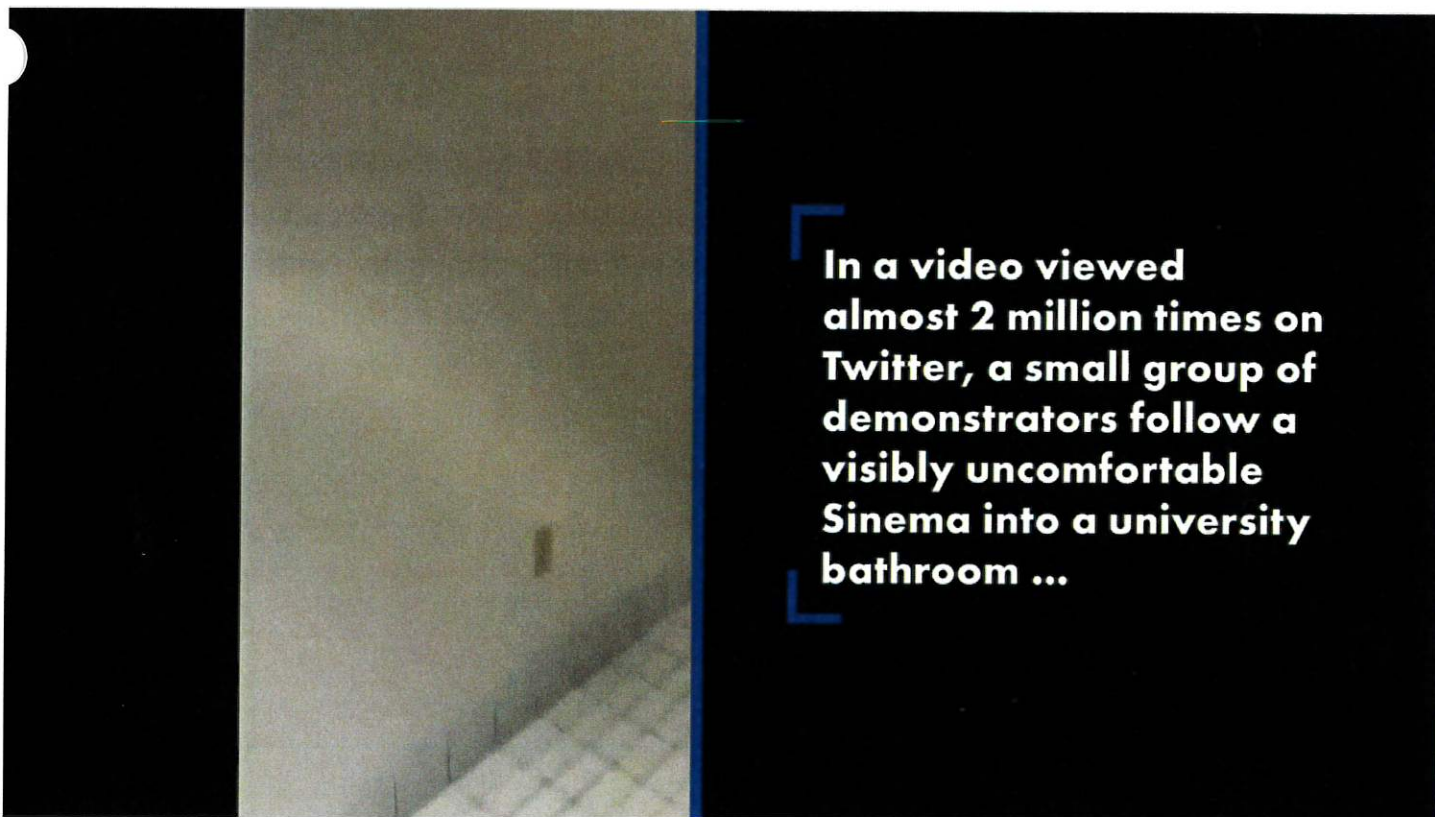
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NEWS

Kyrsten Sinema berated by activists in bathroom at Arizona State University

By Patrick Reilly

October 3, 2021 9:13pm Updated



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Activists hounded Sen. Kyrsten Sinema when she delivered a lecture at Arizona State University.

Getty Images

One of the activists, who identified herself as Blanca, told the senator that she had been brought to the US when she was 3 years old. She said her grandparents were deported in 2010 as a result of Arizona's controversial SB1070 law, one of the strictest anti-immigration laws in the country.

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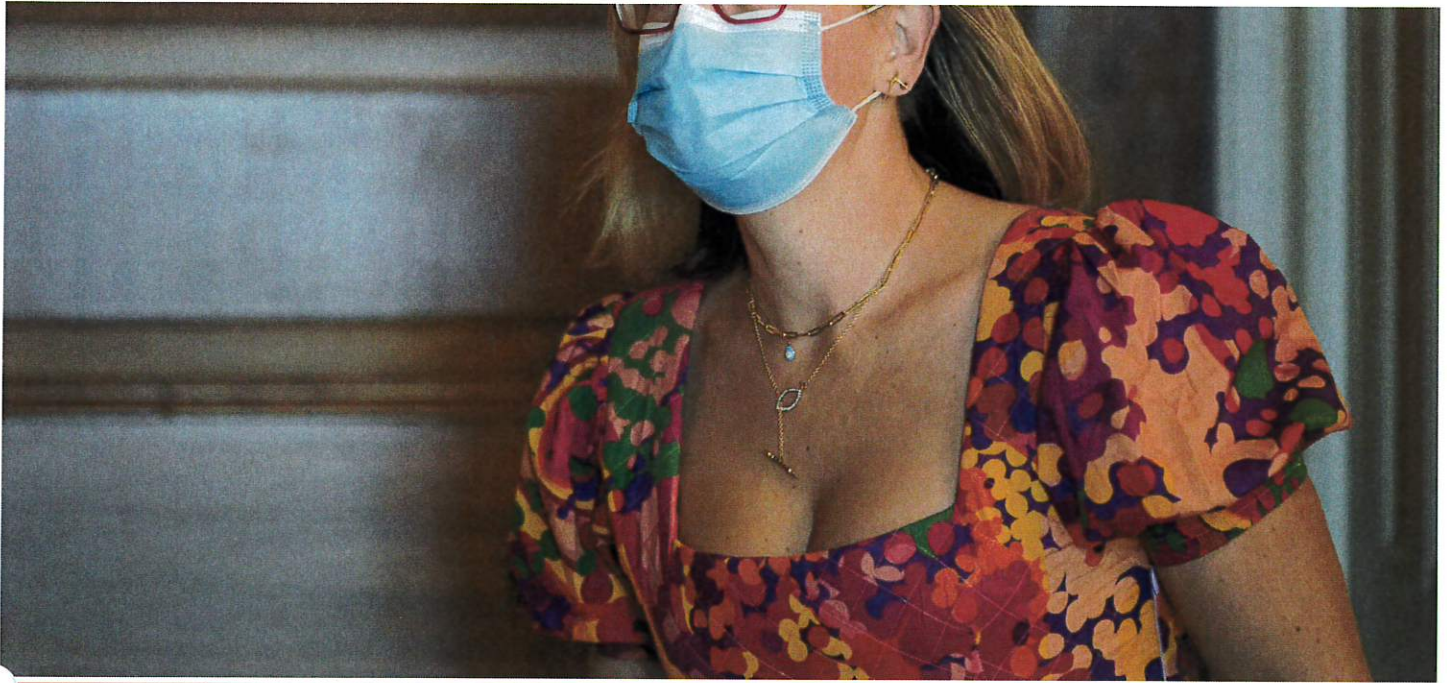
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Protesters called out Sen. Kyrsten Sinema for immigration reform.

Drew Angerer/Getty Images

On Saturday, Sinema **slammed Democratic Party leadership** for the House's "inexcusable" failure to hold a vote on a \$1 trillion bipartisan public works bill on Friday.

Sinema joined many moderates who criticized Democratic leadership's **decision to pull the bill** from the floor on Friday in order to gain additional time to negotiate Biden's sweeping, \$3.5 trillion social spending bill.

Just days earlier, a group of activists on kayaks **confronted fellow moderate Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) on his yacht in Washington, DC**, for also opposing the massive infrastructure bill, foiling Democrats' plans.

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KTAR: ASU police to investigate activists' bathroom confrontation with Sen. Kyrsten Sinema

Oct 4, 2021, 8:02 AM | **Updated:** 8:18 pm

BY KTAR.COM

PHOENIX – Police at Arizona State University said Monday they were investigating an incident that involved young activists confronting U.S. Sen. Kyrsten Sinema in a campus bathroom about her opposition to the size of a \$3.5 trillion spending bill filled with President Joe Biden's priorities.

Sinema called Living United for Change in Arizona's action Sunday in downtown Phoenix "wholly inappropriate."

[Video](#) posted on social media by LUCHA showed the Democratic senator being followed from a classroom down a hallway and into the restroom, where the group told Sinema she hadn't followed up on promises she made during her campaign.

"We knocked on doors for you to get you elected and just like how we got you elected we can get you out of office if you don't support what you promised us," one of the protesters said.

"We need a pathway to citizenship," the young woman said.

The group followed Sinema, an adjunct professor, out of the bathroom chanting, "Build Back Better, back the bill."

"We wouldn't have to resort to confronting Sen. Sinema ... if she took meetings with the communities that elected her," LUCHA said in a [tweet](#).

Sinema said Monday she and her team have met with LUCHA "several times" since she was elected to the Senate in 2018.

"Yesterday, several individuals disrupted my class at Arizona State University," she said in [press release](#). "After deceptively entering a locked, secure building, these individuals filmed and publicly posted videos of my students without their

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki sought to emphasize that Biden supports people's fundamental right to speak up. But in Sinema's case, boundaries were crossed.

"That's inappropriate and unacceptable," Psaki said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Vice President Kamala Harris applauds President Biden at the State of the Union (Getty)

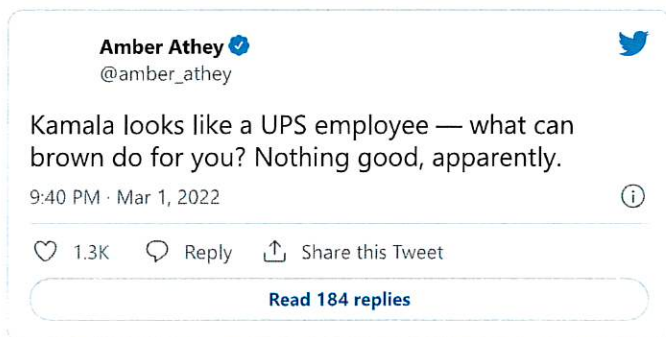
I am no stranger to cancel culture — or what we know more commonly (and accurately, in my opinion) as censorship.

When I was one of a handful of conservatives on a liberal college campus, my peers on the left reported me to our resident advisor for “creating an unsafe environment” and demanded the administration step in to cancel speaker events I hosted through the College Republicans. They later would ask the university to revoke my degree. Throughout my six years as a political journalist and commentator, left-wing activists have tried every trick in the book to drive me out of the industry: digging up [old tweets](#), demeaning my appearance and harassing my employers.

None of it has worked... until now.

About a month ago today, I posted a tweet during the State of the Union address poking fun at Vice President Kamala Harris’s outfit. Harris wore a chocolate brown business suit that was [panned](#) on social media — some users compared her to a [Hershey’s chocolate bar](#), while others wondered why she wore the [same color](#) as her chair. I went for a UPS joke, featuring the company’s [now retired](#) slogan:

“Kamala looks like a UPS employee — what can brown do for you? Nothing good, apparently.”



No one had a problem with the tweet until a few days later, when I spoke critically of protests in favor of “trans kids” at the University of North Texas. A group of maniacal left-wing activists who want to chemically castrate children in the name of “gender affirmation” came after me. All of a sudden, the Kamala tweet was being [re-framed](#) as racist and dozens of Twitter

I am sick and tired of conservatives apologizing to the left, staying quiet because they're afraid of burning bridges, or complaining incessantly without taking action. We will only defeat the left's bad faith attempts at censorship if we fight back.



By Amber Athey.

Amber Athey is *The Spectator's* Washington editor and a senior fellow at the Steamboat Institute. Amber was previously White House correspondent for the *Daily Caller* and a co-host of *O'Connor & Company* on WMAL.



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March 17, 2022



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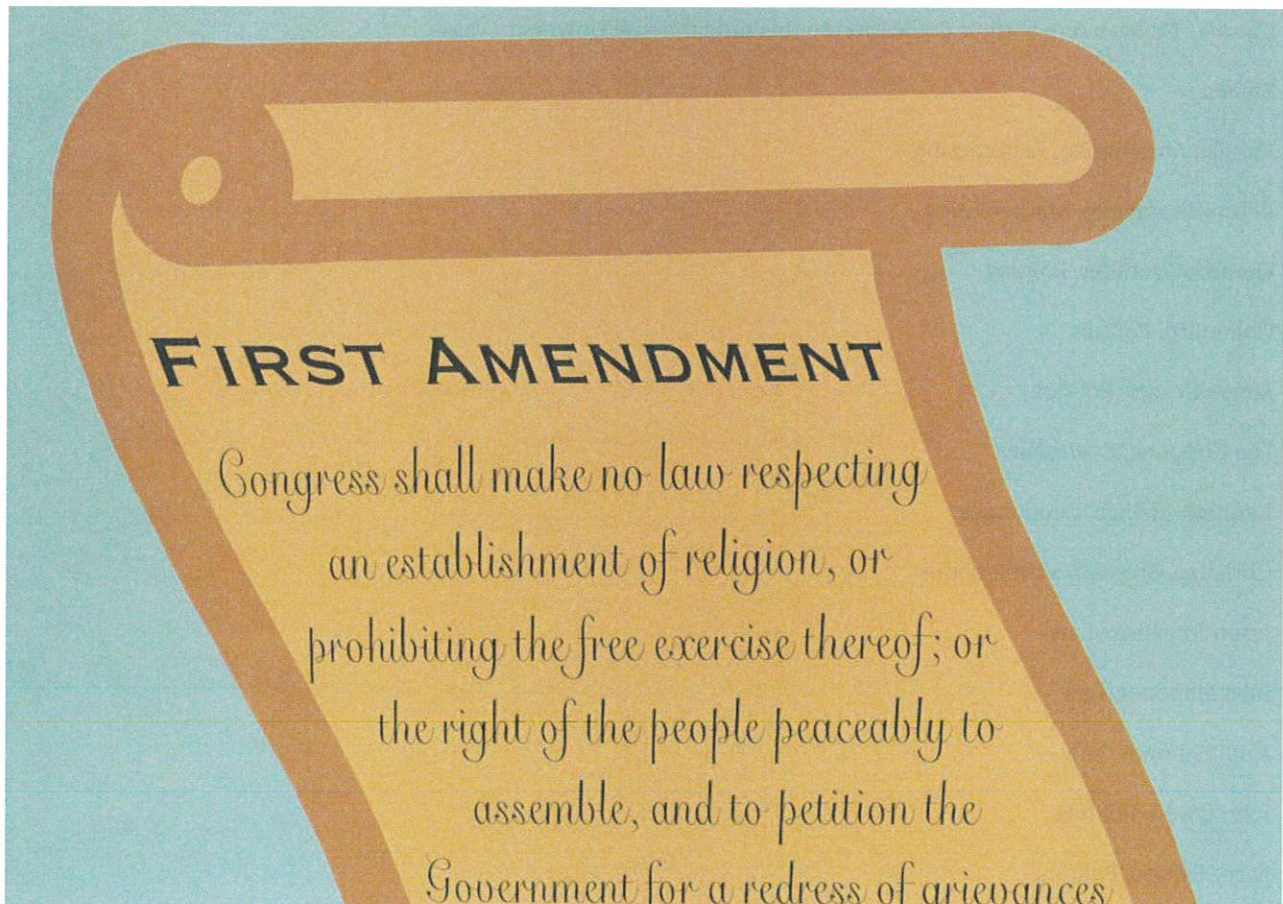


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

METHODOLOGY

FINDINGS

FOOTNOTES

Executive Summary

Over the past seven years, **537 incidents** targeting a scholar for some form of professional sanction over constitutionally protected speech have occurred.[1] Almost two-thirds of these targeting incidents have resulted in a sanction, and just over one-fifth have resulted in a scholar's termination. Our initial report covered targeting incidents from 2015-20, with minimal discussion of the targeting incidents which occurred in 2021. This report primarily focuses on the targeting incidents that occurred in 2021. Key findings include:

- In 2021, 111 scholars were subjected to a targeting incident.
- Scholars were most often targeted for expressing a personal view or opinion on a controversial social issue (65 incidents; 59%).
- Over one-third of targeting incidents occurred because of a scholar's scientific inquiry (20 incidents; 18%) or teaching practices (27 incidents; 24%).
- Almost half of scholars were targeted for expression regarding race or racial issues (54 incidents; 49%).
- Scholars were also likely to be targeted for their expression on hot-button issues such as partisanship (28 incidents; 25%) or gender (26 incidents; 23%), or for their views on institutional policy (28 incidents; 25%).
- Targeting incidents occurred most often in the disciplines of law (12 incidents), English (12 incidents), political science (11 incidents), and medicine (9 incidents).
- More than 60% of targeting incidents resulted in some form of sanction being leveled against the scholar, including 28 investigations, 18 suspensions, and 14 terminations.
- Almost two-thirds of the incidents (76 incidents; 68%) came from individuals and groups to the political left of the scholar, compared to less than one-third (33 incidents; 30%) that came from the right of the scholar.
- Although more male than female scholars were targeted, 75% of targeted female scholars were sanctioned, whereas 57% of targeted male scholars were sanctioned. A similar pattern was evident when comparing white scholars, who were targeted more often, to nonwhite scholars, who were more likely to be sanctioned.

About Us

The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to defending and sustaining the individual rights of students and faculty members at America's colleges and universities. These rights include freedom of speech, freedom of association, due process,

Overview

In a previous report we documented how, since 2015, scholars have been investigated for pedagogical decisions; faced calls to have their peer-reviewed research retracted; been targeted for sanction because of their political views; and been the subject of petitions with more than 10,000 signatories which demand some kind of administrative condemnation of their off-campus speech.[2] That report primarily focuses on a span of six years from 2015-20.

This report contains two sections. The first documents the “best and worst” of 2021 by identifying 10 of the worst targeting incidents, as well as the most egregious and the most laudable responses by university administrators. We then explore the 2021 data in more detail, focusing on why scholars were targeted, the frequency of the different outcomes that occurred, and how the 2021 data helps inform our understanding of longer term trends in targeting incidents since 2015.

The Best and Worst of 2021

A handful of the 111 targeting incidents scholars faced in 2021 were particularly notable. These include the halting of a research project on political tolerance,[3] numerous controversies about race,[4] administrative censorship of multiple professors during legal proceedings,[5] the cancellation of a prestigious guest lecture on geophysics because the invited speaker wrote an op-ed critical of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts,[6] and the termination of a tenured professor who criticized their university for not doing enough to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.[7] In this section we first identify 10 of the worst targeting incidents of 2021. Then we identify three of the most egregious institutional responses to these 10 targeting incidents. This section concludes by identifying three of the most laudable institutional responses where the college or university not only refrained from sanctioning the targeted scholar, but actively defended their academic freedom or freedom of speech.

10 Worst Targeting Incidents of 2021

In this section, we begin by identifying 10 incidents when scholars were targeted for being critical of institutional policy, or for expression that involved scientific inquiry, pedagogy, or pro bono work. In some of these cases the “offensive” content was not intended to be seen or heard publicly. Regardless of the context of expression, in each incident the targeted scholar or scholars expressed something considered unacceptable, or perhaps even heretical, to those who targeted them for sanction.

The institutions represented in these 10 incidents include four “red light” schools (Fordham; Georgetown; Harvard; University of Illinois, Chicago) and four “yellow light” schools (Bridgewater State, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Michigan, University of Rhode Island). Just one “green light” school made the list (University of Florida); This incident involved administrative censorship of scholars and was not instigated by outcry from students and/or other scholars. Finally, one school on the list (Linfield University) has not received a FIRE speech code rating.[8] The table below lists each of these incidents and provides a brief synopsis of each one:

| University | Scholar(s) | Synopsis of Event(s) |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Bridgewater State University | Elizabeth Spievak | Spievak was forced to terminate a study on clashing political views following student complaints over the inclusion of a vignette that described a hypothetical speaker who describes Black Lives Matter as a “wild beast preying on your local community.” |

| University | Scholar(s) | Synopsis of Event(s) |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| University of Michigan | Bright Sheng | Sheng resigned from teaching amid student backlash over showing the 1965 film version of "Othello," in which a white actor appears in blackface. He was subsequently reinstated. |
| University of Rhode Island | Louis Kwame Fosu | Fosu was suspended and later terminated after criticizing the university's success at promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and saying that the university practiced "de facto Jim Crow racism" in its hiring and promotion. Fosu was subsequently reinstated. |
| * = These are two separate targeting incidents, but both involve administrative censorship of faculty participation in legal proceedings. | | |

Most Egregious Institutional Responses

Here we identify three of the 10 worst incidents where university administrators faced a conundrum: protect a targeted scholar's academic freedom and/or free speech, or give in to mob-like demands to penalize them. Two of these incidents occurred at red light schools (Georgetown; University of Illinois, Chicago) and the third occurred at a yellow light school (Bridgewater State). All three of these institutions unfortunately chose to penalize the scholar, and in doing so have risked chilling other scholars' expression on their campuses:[9]

| University | Scholar(s) | University Response |
|--|---|--|
| Bridgewater State University | Elizabeth Spievak | University President Frederick W. Clark and Provost Dr. Karim Ismaili issued a statement saying that the university "firmly stands" with the Black Lives Matter movement and is "deeply sorry for the pain and harm this has caused our students and other members of our community." They also explained, "Both the researchers and the university strongly condemn the viewpoint articulated through the hypothetical vignette." |
| Georgetown University | Sandra Sellers and David Batson | Bill Treanor, Dean of the Georgetown University Law Center, issued a series of statements condemning Sellers and Batson, then pledged his commitment to DEI. |

We now turn to a more quantitatively descriptive analysis of the targeting incidents we documented in 2021. In this section we will explore what factors made it more likely for a scholar to be targeted in 2021, and what outcomes occurred in response to these attempts. We then conclude by placing these findings from 2021 alongside those we previously recorded from 2015-20 to document emerging trends in the suppression of scholars' expression.

Why Were Scholars Targeted?

Scholars have many reasons for expressing their views and many forums in which to express them. For instance, they may cover a topic in a course, offer a hypothesis about a phenomenon based on their area of expertise, or express their views — political or otherwise — as a private citizen in public, on social media, or in an opinion piece. For instance, Sally Satel — a psychiatrist at Yale University — was targeted for sanction by Yale psychiatry residents. Why? Because she presented research concluding that although socioeconomic status, geographic location, and race *all* have an impact on health disparities, socioeconomic status and geographic location have a *greater* impact than an individual's race.^[10] In academia, when individuals disagree with a scholar's research conclusions, the appropriate response is to critique the methodology or the data analysis decisions, and/or collect one's own data on the topic; It is *not* appropriate to call into question the scholar's academic affiliation with their university, as doing so represents nothing more than an ad hominem attack.

Another notable targeting incident from 2021 involved University of Illinois, Chicago law professor Jason Kilborn. On a final exam in his Civil Procedure course Kilborn described a hypothetical employment discrimination scenario, which presented expurgated racial and misogynistic slurs:

Employer's lawyer traveled to meet the manager, who stated that she quit her job at Employer after she attended a meeting in which other managers expressed their anger at Plaintiff, calling her a "n____" and "b____" (profane expressions for African Americans and women) and vowed to get rid of her.

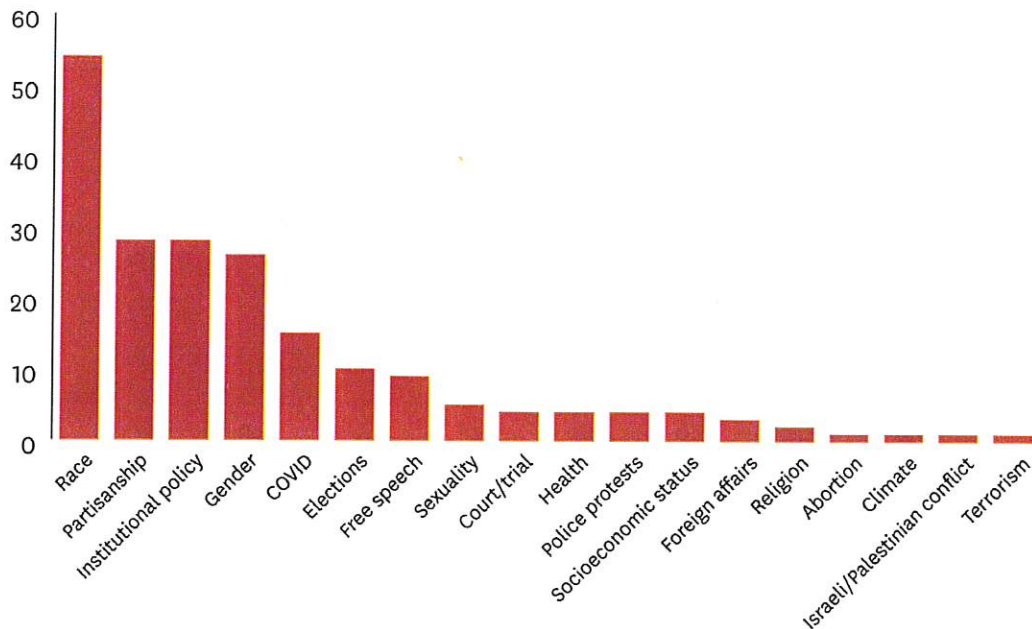
Despite the fact that he did not use the actual slurs in the example, law students called for him to be sanctioned and his university opened an investigation.

Whether it is appropriate to present the terms — even in their censored state — can be debated. What is not up for debate, however, is the fact that this hypothetical scenario is something a lawyer could easily encounter while working on an employment discrimination lawsuit.

Overall, roughly three in five of the incidents in 2021 (65 in 111 incidents; 59%) involved scholars targeted for expressing a personal view or opinion on a controversial social issue. Although this finding is concerning, we find it even more alarming that almost a quarter involved a scholar's teaching practices (27 incidents; 24%), and almost a fifth occurred because of a scholar's scientific inquiry (20 incidents; 18%). In these incidents, scholars — like Satel and Kilborn — discussed scholarship, conducted research, and/or offered testable hypotheses, or presented sensitive, controversial, and/or difficult content for purposes of encouraging discussion and learning. Such targetings undermine the primary function of academic freedom: ensuring the furtherance of knowledge in American institutions of higher education.

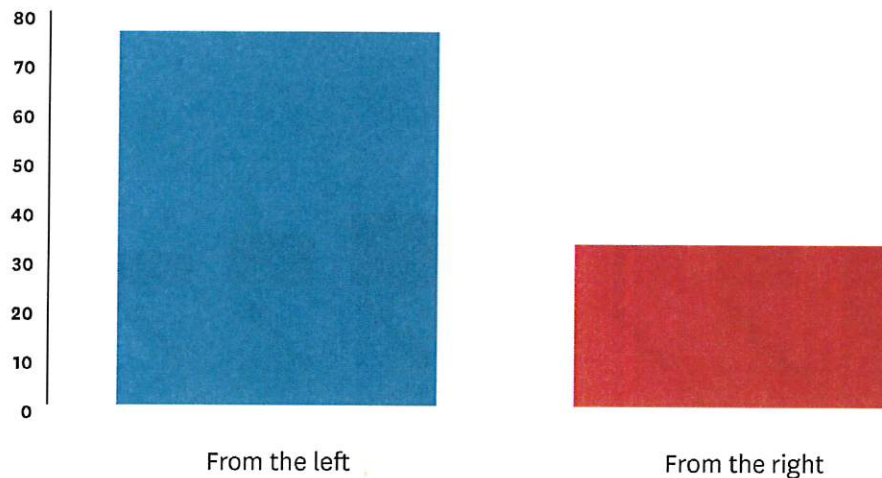
Scholars are targeted most often for expressing their views on race.

Number of scholars targeted for expression about the following topics:



When it comes to where the expression occurred, the most common contexts were in the classroom (28 incidents), in an op-ed or blog (21 incidents), or in public comments (21 incidents). Expression “in the classroom” includes in-person and/or virtual sessions, assignments, exams, syllabi, and/or course descriptions. Expression “in an op-ed/blog” includes articles written by scholars for non-academic outlets or on a personal blog. Finally, “public comments” occur during interviews, speeches, or podcasts directed at non-academic audiences.

Scholars are targeted more often by individuals and groups to their political left than to their political right.



Outcomes

So far we have primarily focused on the frequency of targeting incidents, documenting the sheer number of *attempts* to sanction scholars. This section explores the *outcomes* of these attempts. It is important to note that regardless of whether a scholar is ultimately sanctioned, the experience of being targeted can have a chilling effect not only on their own willingness to express themselves, but also on the willingness of *others* on campus to do so.[13] When a scholar is sanctioned or even terminated, this chilling effect can be amplified.

In 2021, more than 6 in 10 incidents (69 incidents; 62%) resulted in some form of sanction. The most common outcomes were investigations, suspensions, and terminations. In 28 incidents, the scholar was subjected to a formal investigation by the institutional administration. In 18 incidents, the scholar was suspended, meaning that the scholar was placed on leave and/or temporarily relieved of their teaching duties. In 14 incidents, the scholar was terminated, meaning that the scholar's contract was terminated or not renewed, the scholar's contract extension or tenure was revoked, the scholar was forced to resign, or the scholar was not hired.[14]

sanctioned (61%). Finally, university administrators were almost three times more likely to publicly support the scholars who were targeted from their right compared to those scholars targeted from their left (21% vs. 8%).

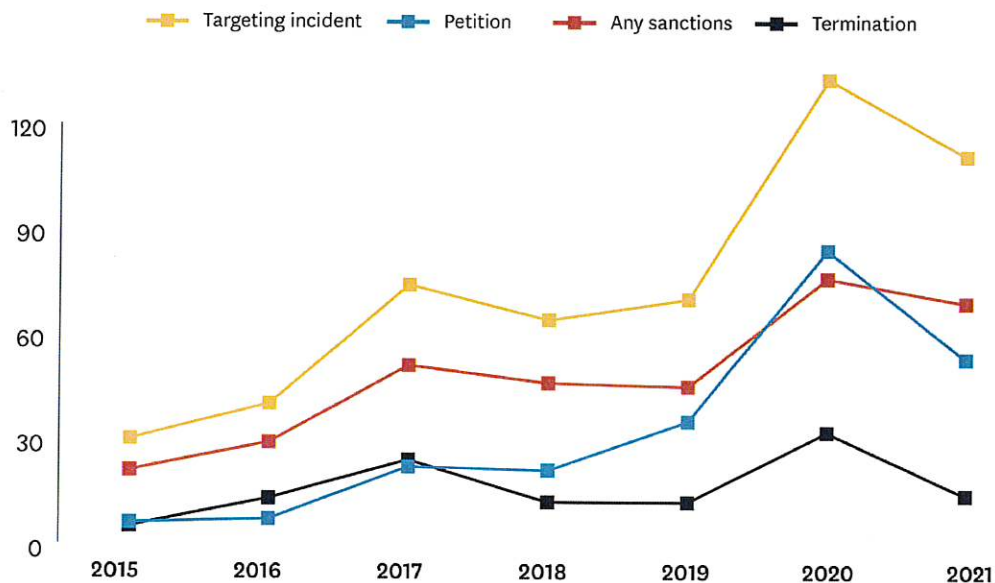
Trends Over Time: 2015-2021

Perhaps the most concerning findings from our initial report are that the number of professors targeted for sanction in 2020 is over four times greater than the number targeted in 2015 and that these targeting incidents are increasingly being initiated from within academia. The use of online petitions targeting a scholar has also increased, from six in 2015 to 53 in 2021, peaking at 84 in 2020. These petitions frequently include a list of the sanctions demanded and are typically shared widely on social media, with some amassing tens of thousands of signatories.

For now, 2020 appears to be an outlier year with regards to the number of targeting incidents and the number of petitions. Even though the frequency of these events declined in 2021, they still occurred at a rate considerably higher than that of 2015. Indeed, when it comes to the number of targeting incidents, petitions, and opened investigations, 2021 trails only 2020. This past year also represents the peak for the number of times a scholar was successfully censored, the number of retractions, and the number of demotions.

Scholars Under Fire 2015 to 2021

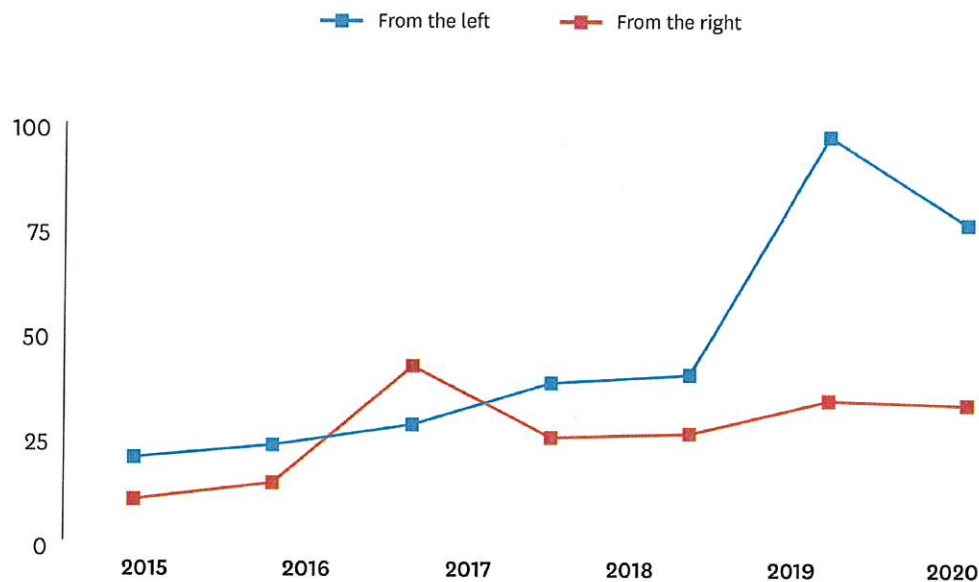
Number of Incidents Per Year



Since 2015, undergraduate students have initiated almost half of all targeting incidents (250 in 537 incidents; 46%), more than any other group on or off campus. In terms of politics, 8 in 10 incidents initiated by undergraduate students came from the left of the scholar (200 in 250 incidents; 80%), compared to less than 1 in 5 incidents initiated by undergraduates from the right of the scholar (47 in 250 incidents; 19%). This pattern is not surprising considering that undergraduate students predominantly identify as liberal.[19] The number of undergraduate-initiated incidents hit its current peak in 2020, with 76 incidents (64 from the left, 11 from the right).

Scholars Under Fire 2015 to 2021

Number of Targeting Incidents From the Left or Right Per Year



The number of targeting incidents initiated because of partisan statements has increased since 2015. That year, four scholars were targeted for their partisanship-related expression — two from the left and two from the right. Attempts from the right of the scholar peaked in 2017 with 19 incidents, whereas attempts from the left of the scholar peaked in 2020, with 26 incidents.

Between 2015 and 2021, university administrators were almost two times more likely to publicly support the free speech and academic freedom rights of scholars who were targeted from the right than the rights of those targeted from the left (24% vs. 13%). This was especially true when the scholar's intent was malicious/hateful (i.e. the scholar's words or actions were intended to offend, upset, show contempt for, and/or show support for violence against a person or group). In the past six years, university administrators publicly supported the free speech rights of only 7% (1 in 15) of scholars targeted by the left for engaging in hateful/malicious expression, whereas they supported 42% (14 in 33) of scholars targeted by the right for engaging in such expression.

This partisan difference in institutional support was even more stark in 2021, when university administrators were almost three times more likely to publicly support the free speech and academic freedom rights of scholars who were targeted from the right than the rights of those targeted from the left. Whether the scholar advocated for social change, engaged in malicious/hateful expression, expressed a personal view, or presented sensitive material for pedagogical purposes, institutions were more likely to publicly support them if they were targeted by the right than if they were targeted by the left. The one exception is scientific inquiry, wherein institutions publicly supported 1 in 17 scholars targeted by the left, and none of the 3 targeted by the right.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of scholar targeting is alarming yet understudied, and the goal of the ongoing Scholars Under Fire project is to provide scholars and journalists with a clearer, more complete understanding of how targeting incidents — a form of attempted censorship — occur at two-and-four-year colleges and universities across the country. It is designed to be a resource for those interested not only in broad patterns, as discussed in this report, but also in specific details regarding individual incidents. Thus, in the database, viewers will find additional important information not included in this report, such as the

| University | # of Incidents 2015-2021 | # of Sanctions 2015-2021 | Types of Sanctions |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Rutgers University | 6 | 4 | Demotion Investigation 2 Terminations |
| University of Michigan | 6 | 4 | Demotion Resignation (reinstated) Suspension (reinstated) Termination |

Our nation's colleges and universities can take a number of steps to protect scholars' rights. Administrators can make their stance on academic freedom and freedom of speech clear to everyone on their campus. They can do this by removing any vague and subjective language from their school's speech policies, making clear public pronouncements in support of academic freedom and freedom of speech, and actively defending scholars when there are calls to sanction them for protected expression.

Institutions can also adopt a free speech policy statement in the model of the Chicago Statement, which defends academic freedom by asserting that "the University is committed to free and open inquiry in all matters," and that "it guarantees all members of the University community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn." Since the Chicago Statement was released in 2015, over 80 institutions have publicly committed to free speech in this way, signaling to faculty, students, alumni, and the public that freedom of expression is of paramount importance on campus.

Institutions can also promote academic freedom and freedom of speech by offering freshman seminars and orientation programs that teach incoming students the value of free speech and the principles behind the First Amendment. FIRE, in partnership with New York University's First Amendment Watch, has developed a series of free-to-use modules, videos, and other resources that staff can incorporate into their programming.

In addition to formal policies and programs, institutions can launch campus-wide campaigns that spread awareness of what is, versus what is not, protected by the First Amendment, and can encourage students to adopt free speech idioms (e.g., "Free speech makes free people," "Civilization was created by the first person who hurled an insult rather than a stone," "More speech, not enforced silence"). This may also involve hosting outside speakers to discuss the value of free speech from various discipline-specific lenses. Such efforts would help students and faculty realize that every time they deploy censorial tactics in their own interest, they enable and empower the use of such tactics against themselves. Students can be encouraged to question not whether they want scholars to say particular things, but rather whether they want to grant their institution the power to *prevent* scholars from saying those things.

The reason individuals and groups attempt to professionally sanction scholars for ideological reasons is that it works. Every time an institution yields to pressure, thereby compromising its commitment to free speech and academic freedom, they increase the likelihood of future sanctioning attempts. Therefore, the incentive system needs to change. Here is a "how-to" guide for responding to attempts to professionally sanction scholars for constitutionally protected expression:

Step 1: A campus representative (e.g., administrator, department chair) who is well versed in the First Amendment determines whether the scholar's expression is constitutionally protected.

Step 2: If the expression is constitutionally protected, an institutional leader (e.g., dean, provost) issues a formal statement explaining that the expression is protected by the First Amendment and thus will be protected at X university/college.

- [9] Hudson, D. L. (February 15, 2017). Chilling Effect Overview. *The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education*. Available online: <https://www.thefire.org/chilling-effect/>.
- [10] Satel, S. (January 8, 2021). "My Year Abroad: Ironton, Ohio and Lessons from the Opioid Crisis." *Yale School of Medicine*. Available online: <https://medicine.yale.edu/psychiatry/education/grand/2021/0108/>.
- [11] The high prevalence of targetings among scholars in medicine is unique to 2021. In no other year between 2015 and 2021 were these scholars disproportionately targeted. This surge is likely due to COVID-19, which has placed a spotlight on medical researchers.
- [12] Often, scholars are targeted by individuals or groups who are not ideologically dissimilar from them (e.g., the scholar is "slightly liberal" and those targeting them are "very liberal"). Political motivations are therefore classified as relative, coming "from the left" or "from the right" of the scholar.
- [13] Stevens, S. (September 25, 2020). Faculty report from University of Southern California's business school reveals deep concerns about academic freedom. *The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education*. Available online: <https://www.thefire.org/faculty-report-from-university-of-southern-californias-business-school-reveals-deep-concerns-about-academic-freedom-a-recent-internal-report-from-the-university-of-southern-california/>
- [14] The Scholars Under Fire Database lists 15 terminations in 2021, however one of these cases involved termination from an editorial position at a journal and not termination by a university.
- [15] Scholars were also terminated for expressing their views on other topics. Three scholars were terminated for expression regarding gender, 2 for COVID, and 1 each for abortion and partisanship. The totals add up to more than 14 because the topic of expression is not mutually exclusive and can overlap (e.g., gender and institutional policy).
- [16] In 2021, 4 out of 6 tenure-track, but untenured, assistant scholars were sanctioned, compared to 28 out of 41 non-tenure track, untenured scholars. Furthermore, 1 out of 6 tenure-track, untenured assistants were terminated, compared to 12 out of 41 non-tenure track, untenured scholars.
- [17] Among non-white scholars, all 4 of the targeted Asian scholars were sanctioned, 3 of the 6 targeted Black scholars were sanctioned, all 5 of the targeted Hispanic scholars were sanctioned, 1 of 2 Middle Eastern scholars were sanctioned, and 1 of 2 targeted multiracial scholars were sanctioned.
- [18] German, K.T. & Stevens, S.T. (2021). Scholars under fire: The targeting of scholars for constitutionally protected speech from 2015 to present. *The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education*. Available online: <https://www.thefire.org/research/publications/miscellaneous-publications/scholars-under-fire/>.
- [19] Stevens, S.T. & Schwichtenberg, A. (2021). 2021 College Free Speech Rankings: What's the Climate for Free Speech on America's College Campuses? *The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education*. Available online: <https://rankings.thefire.org/>.
- [20] Gross, N., & Fosse, E. (2012). Why are professors liberal?. *Theory and Society*, 41(2), 127-168.; Langbert, M. (2018). Homogenous: The political affiliations of elite liberal arts college faculty. *Academic Questions*, 31(2), 186-197; Ladd, E. C., Liset, M. (1976). *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company; Zipp, J. F., & Fenwick, R. (2006). Is the academy a liberal hegemony? The political orientations and educational values of professors. *International Journal of Public Opinion Quarterly*, 70(3), 304-326.
- [21] Lutchen, K. R. (2018). Why companies and universities should forge long-term collaborations. *Harvard Business Review*, 24.
- [22] In 2018, gender was the topic most likely to result in a targeting incident (28 incidents), followed by race (17 incidents) and institutional policy (14 incidents). In 2020, race was the topic most likely to result in a targeting incident (80 incidents), followed by partisanship (38 incidents), and police protests (36 incidents).
- [23] Stevens, S. (September 25, 2020). Faculty report from University of Southern California's business school reveals deep concerns about academic freedom. *The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education*. Available online: <https://www.thefire.org/faculty-report-from-university-of-southern-californias-business-school-reveals-deep-concerns-about-academic-freedom-a-recent-internal-report-from-the-university-of-southern-california/>