



Los Angeles Times

LETTERS

'This is an attack on all Americans.'

Lectures on politics and academics

Re "Witch hunt at UCLA" and "Ideologues at the lectern," Current, Jan. 22

A scholar's worldview influences his politics and the kind of work he does. Politically liberal departments are more interested in the kind of research done by liberal scholars, and they are more comfortable with the assumptions that support these scholars' work. These are the scholars they vote to hire and whose articles they endorse for publication when serving as journal referees.

David Horowitz's "Academic Bill of Rights" is well intentioned, but giving state legislatures standing in curriculum matters is not a recipe for success. Andrew Jones' effort at UCLA seems less well intentioned, but I value the attention he and Horowitz have managed to focus on the objectivity deficit in social science departments.

It is a problem I know well. I am a Libertarian swimming in a politically liberal academic sea. I left a career in applied social science and transitioned to engineering because objectivity is not optional in engineering literature and scholarship.

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 and Systems Engineering*

I have been an academic for 35 years. In that time I have participated in hundreds of evaluations of students and prospective and current faculty members, and thousands of discussions about those evaluations, in meetings of a committee or of the department as a whole, and in private conversations in faculty offices. In none of those discussions was the candidate's politics ever mentioned.

The vast majority of corporate executives are Republicans; does that indicate a conspiracy to keep Democrats out of the boardroom?

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