

# The Self-Inflicted Irrelevance of American Academics

By Loïc J. D. Wacquant



**M**ORE SO THAN IN ANY OTHER ADVANCED COUNTRY, THE TERMINOLOGY used to designate intellectuals in America is almost exclusively pejorative. Derogatory, ironic, or insulting vocabulary abounds, while positive terms are far and few (as documented in the glossary beginning on page 19). Over the past decade, the self-assured anti-intellectualism that is one of the distinctive traits of American culture has grown more biting still.<sup>1</sup> Hardly an electoral season passes without a candidate finding an opportunity to nail the "cultural elite" to the cross, to denounce some "profscam," or to censure the putative "immorality" of one or another artist whose work is said to threaten the integrity of the societal fabric. Recently, Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole summarily condemned a proposal for social policy intervention on the sole ground that it seemed to have "come right out of a sociology department." This virulence of misologistic sentiment in present-day America can be traced to four causes.

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## The Dollar Is King

**T**HE FIRST IS THE UNQUESTIONED SUPREMACY OF economic over cultural capital in the American field of power, a supremacy that is arguably more pronounced today than at any time in the past half-century. Few modern societies abide by rules of social competition and access to positions of authority that so strongly favor money over knowledge, the wallet (*porte-monnaie*) over the pen (*porte-plume*), and give such abrupt precedence to big business over big ideas. The hegemony of the haves is virtually complete when the paradigm of the market imposes itself upon the totality of human activities and needs, from the arts to the media, publishing, health, and education (the fact that these are referred to as “industries” testifies to this), and is elevated to the dignity of a collective ideal at the highest reaches of a state exhorted by its head to transform itself into a mere service provider for taxpayers.<sup>2</sup>

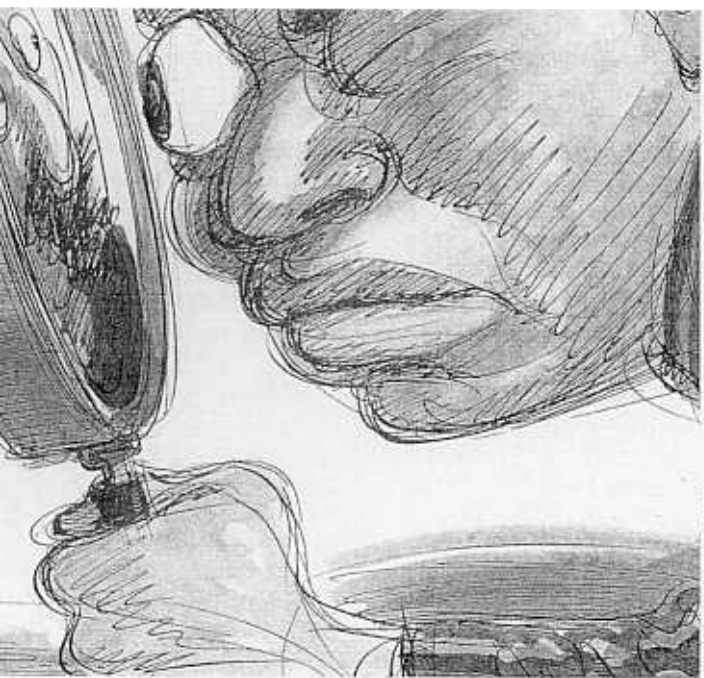


ILLUSTRATION: VICTOR ZUBAZ

Today, it is no exaggeration to maintain that the political field itself is threatened in its very existence as a self-regulated sphere of public decision as moneyed interests eat away at what little semblance of autonomy it retains. When the cost of running for a party's presidential nomination exceeds a dozen million dollars, when major lobbies buy themselves custom-made laws in full public view and with full impunity in the manner of wealthy consumers in a legislative department store, when cabinet members and senior government officials come straight from the boards of directors of leading financial and multinational corporations (to which they promptly return when their stint in government ends), what remains of the pretense to serve the common good?<sup>3</sup> The forces of wealth overwhelm and mock those of civic virtue with an ease and an arrogance that explain better than any political science treatise why fewer than one of every two Americans bothers to go to the voting booth—and one in seven among the poor, amounting to the *de facto* reinstating of the antiquated regime of the poll

# From Bean Counters to Theorists: An Ethnological Glossary of American Academics

**ACADEMIC.** Professor and assimilated university profession. The term is technical and neutral in its broadest sense, but it can take on a pejorative ring in some left-wing circles (who oppose it to the engaged, critical researcher concerned with the sociopolitical implications of her or his work). Close to **scholar**. Its derivative **academician** is frankly mocking.

**BLUE-STOCKING.** Label traced to the high society of 18th-century England where it designated a woman with (illegitimate) scholarly ambitions, involved in matters of the mind that need not concern her or that exceed her capacities. The term has retained its original derogatory meaning in common parlance, but its semantic valence has been inverted among many women academics in the wake of the feminist movement.

**BOOKWORM.** An individual known to lose himself or herself in books and to suffer from an excess of mental activity supposed to render one idealistic, out-of-touch with reality, pedantic, and plain boring. A germane adjective is **bookish**, which applies to a person approaching matters from a purely scholarly (or scholastic) standpoint.

**BEAN COUNTER.** Demeaning nickname applied to those who ply trades linked to finance and accounting, by opposition to the arts and sciences. It implies pettiness and narrowness of mind and serves to discredit arguments based on numerical or statistical data (it was recently interjected by President Clinton in response to criticisms that his administration does not comprise a sufficient number of “minorities”).

**BRAIN** (more rarely **brainworker**): An exceptionally knowledgeable or intelligent individual (used more in the realm of science and technology than in the humanities), person responsible for the conception and coordination of a complex collective task (also **mastermind**).

**BRAINIAC.** Two divergent meanings: 1) someone consumed with an overwhelming passion for a particular domain of thought or culture, to the point where she devotes all her time and energy to it (“No need inviting him to the game; he’s a real brainiac”), close to **hondo**, a person exceptionally gifted for some activity of the mind; 2) an excessively cerebral individual or person obsessed with thought, research, and aca-

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tax. Not to mention that, among those who are not yet alienated from the electoral system, the main mode of participation, individual monetary donation, reinforces the intermittent, private, and unequal character of political action and thereby the cynicism that permeates the public sphere.<sup>4</sup>

## The Splintering and Muffling of Revolt

A SECOND CAUSE FOR THE RENEWED VIGOR OF MISLOGISM in America is that those intellectuals who wish to contribute to progressive social change and public debate are severely handicapped by the debilitation of the organizational vehicles liable to enable them to do so. In addition to the perennial absence of left-wing parties and the congenital weakness of labor, they have to contend with the growing fragmentation (ethnic, sexual, geographical, and bureaucratic) of oppositional cultures that causes each to seek above all to promote its pet grievance, even when that means battling to push aside the grievances of others so as to capture a chunk of public sympathy. Nowadays the logic of contestation operates as if one could gain a full hear-

ing only by first establishing one's ranking in the hierarchy of oppressions (whose endless multiplication and "democratic" pluralization leads to a strange flattening of all social divisions and demands).

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The retreating battalions of the social movements that shook the very foundations of America's socioracial order in the Sixties are now reduced to a rag-tag band of snipers who threaten no one but themselves, when they do not play into their opponent's strategy by serving as emblematic foil for the delusionary projections of the law-and-order and "family values" ideology embraced by the media and established politicians of all stripes.

## Puppet "Intellectuals"

THIRD, NOT ONLY ARE AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS DEPRIVED of realistic perspective and efficient relays within "civil society" and the political field, but they also must face the unfair competition—amounting to outright "intellectual dumping"—of the policy institutes and foundations that have arrogated themselves a preeminent role in the national debate over the past two decades.<sup>6</sup> Who needs independent thinkers when the hundred-some think tanks that prosper in Washington produce on demand or, better yet, on *command*, those impeccable scholarly compilations (for want of being scientific), thick technical documents (preferably quantitative), and other dry "evaluation reports" expressly designed to buttress the accepted wisdom of the moment and to give a veneer of rationality to measures adopted on completely different grounds?

The new advisers to the Prince salaried by the Manhattan Institute and the Heritage Foundation possess all the trappings—the hexis, the language, and the credentials—of the academic, but they lack the one attribute that makes (or made) the latter troublesome: the capacity to formulate his or her own questions and to seek answers with total freedom, no matter where this leads her. Henceforth, the think tanks and the schools of public policy that serve as their transmission belt within the academic institution are there to stand guard and protect the American dominant class from the impertinent questioning of critical reason.

When it comes to the ubiquitous "power-knowledge" nexus, it is here, in this unprecedented expansion of this "bastard"<sup>7</sup> sector of semi-scholarly production geared to and constricted by political-administrative ends, an expansion and dominance unparalleled in any other capitalist democracy, that one finds the major recent transformation of the American intellectual field—not, however one might wish it, in the creation of academic programs devoted to teaching and research turned toward the rehabilitation of dominated identities (Women's Studies, Afro-American Studies, Latino Studies, Asian American Studies, etc.). While they fulfill the always welcome function of challenging more established forms of knowledge production and bequeathal, such programs are inevitably in danger of contributing in spite of themselves to

perpetuating the “exceptional status” and thereby the marginal if not anomalous position of the groups whose presence within the university they rightly seek to increase. And they set themselves up for failure whenever they play into the naïve expectation that they somehow will resolve social contradictions and inequities that originate and reverberate outside of academia but have been displaced onto it.

## Between Surrender and Escapism

**T**HE FOURTH AND LAST CAUSE OF THE PRESENT BURST of anti-intellectualism in the United States is endogenous to the intellectual milieu: it lies in the sickly self-absorption of the university microcosm, its closing onto itself, its palace wars (or muggings) and intestinal controversies whose sound and fury are matched only by their inconsequentiality—in all senses of the word. Today this involutive movement takes two forms, the one familiar, the other more novel and paradoxical.

It is well-known that American academics have instituted as the regulative norm of their practice the figure of the *professional*—physician, lawyer, or expert possessed of a neutral body of knowledge reduced to its technical dimension—in preference to that of the European-style *intellectual* as crystallized around the Dreyfus Affair at the close of the 19th century and defined by the unstable alloying of (scientific or artistic) autonomy and (political) engagement.<sup>8</sup> In accordance with this model, the mass of academics feel justified to cast aside any and all civic or moral engagement beyond their narrow domain of expertise by invoking the professional imperative of neutrality, for which the precepts of positivist epistemology serve as a convenient philosophical G-string.

This model always had its dissidents who, fed by the traditions of populism and New York Jewish progressivism, used to rally around the persona of the “public intellectual.” Lately, however, university radicalism has assumed a quite different cast: opposition to the professional is expressed chiefly by the denigration of reason, the rejection of “foundations” (for reasons of elitism) in favor of “standpoints” (considered more democratic), and by the strident assertion of the primacy of “fractured, plural, and porous identities,” identities which are invariably absolutized even as they are proclaimed to be historical constructs. The mantric invocation of the gender-class-race triad (whose second component is more often than not discretely dropped out even though it is the most potent and rising vector of inequality) and the beatific celebration of “the values of individuality, difference, heterogeneity, locality, and pluralism” can thus serve as a substitute for the hard work of empirical research and collective reflection, on the pretext that “knowledge” is, all things considered, no more than a deceitful and arbitrary emanation of “power.”<sup>9</sup>

It is no surprise that the theories popular in the more humanistic disciplines are those that depict society as an ongoing, fluid if not fleeting, social or linguistic “construction” that is perpetually being called into question (on paper, that is). This is to be expected when the political space of academia’s dissidents has shrunk to disputes over positions, grants, fellowships, journals, and other means of access to the cenacle that are diminishing as the rampant privatization of institutions of higher learning marches on. To become “postmodern,” as the most intrepid of our new classroom radicals like to call themselves, is to try to

democratic success. It can be said of African American teenagers in the ghetto who are considered bookish and accused of “acting white” by their less academically inclined friends (however, the term is less pejorative than *geek* and *nerd*).

**COGNITARIAT.** Rare and precious term, constructed as an analogical derivation of “proletariat,” to refer to the new overexploited class of intellectual laborers and kindred marginal, temporary, underpaid workers of the teaching “industry” (such as graduate students, adjunct professors, etc.).

**CULTURAL ELITE.** This term of denunciation, generally used by politicians (usually Republicans), encompasses higher-level intellectual occupations such as producers of mass cultural goods (movies, television), but also university professors (thereby characterized as haughty and nihilistic minds), held as responsible for the moral decline of the country.

**EGGHEAD.** This pejorative term designates intellectual occupations as a whole. It appeared in the political field in the Fifties in reference to the head shape of Adlai Stevenson (during the presidential election campaign that pitted him against Dwight Eisenhower) and was later extended to the totality of the academic field, where it can take on a humorous meaning (it is also the name of a chain of computer software stores). A lower-class derivative is **pointy-head**.

**EXPERT.** Specialist in technological or scientific matters whose competence is attested by advanced diplomas; polite technical term often used for political advisers and assorted professional analysts of social problems, close to **scholar**. A derogatory derivative is **know-it-all** (“*Monsieur-je-sais-tout*”).

**GEEK.** Insulting label that likens the intellectual to a popular circus character, a cross between the clown and the satyr, whose pock-marked appearance and bizarre actions evoke simultaneous fascination and revulsion (the classic picture shows him sniggering as he bites off the head of live chickens).

**IDEOLOGUE.** Said of an intellectual suspected of propagating (leftist) political doctrines under cover of academic theories, or whose arguments appear dogmatic and without basis in fact. Species residing mainly in Europe and presumed nearly extinct.

**INTELLIGENTSIA.** Intellectual elite; this term is rarely employed outside of the university microcosm because too affected, even a bit snobbish (the same applies to **literati** and **illuminati**).

**HIGHBROW.** Scornful label that associates intellectual activity with bourgeois culture held up as stilted and exclusive, as well as scornful of so-called mass or popular culture. On the Eastern seaboard, one also says **Brahmin** (a haughty and conservative members of high society).

**LIBERAL.** Term borrowed from political vocabulary difficult to translate in European political lingo; designates progressive or left-of-center reformist intellectuals attached to the great founding national myths (equality of opportunity, individual autonomy, etc.) and committed to working “within the system” to make them a reality. Liberals are op-

posed both to **neo-conservatives** and **radicals**. The semantic register of the term has narrowed and darkened over the past decade to the point where many consider it a dirty word ("You shall not say the L-word").

**-MONGER.** Suffix attached to an intellectual activity, current of thought, or particular author employed to expose its followers to public criticism and condemnation (e.g., theorymonger, Adornomonger).

**NEO-CONSERVATIVE.** In the European political spectrum, the term is more accurately translated as **reactionary**; said of an actively rightist academic, writer, or journalist, issued from the erstwhile intellectual left (most acquired their political skills in socialist circles and some among the "radical" protest groups of the Sixties), who supports the positions and policies advocated by the Republican party and by the centrist (that is, Republican) wing of what remains of the Democratic party.

**NERD.** Term of ridicule taken from the novel by Theodore Seuss Geisel, *If I Ran the Zoo*; it evokes the comic character of the inept intellectual; devoid of personal charm and *savoir-vivre*, of feeble physical build and ungracious looks (skinny and hunched over, he wears bifocals, an ill-fitting shirt of dubious cleanliness with a bunch of pens in his pocket and a calculator in hand). His laughable awkwardness in interpersonal relations is the counterpart of an imbecile devotion to matters of the mind. Kindred terms: **neb**, **dweeb**, **square**, **moron**, and **bonthead**.

**NUMBER CRUNCHER.** He is the first cousin of the **bean counter** in the social sciences; he devotes himself to the mindless statistical processing of standardized surveys. The two distinctive characteristics whereby he can be identified are the fetishism of data and of quantitative techniques and the contented submission to the methodological and theoretical orthodoxy of the day. He is the living negation and the sworn (but distant) enemy of the **theorist**, who glides untouched in the stratosphere of pure ideas.

**POMO.** Diminutive designating so-called "postmodern" theories and their fans (whose numbers are fast growing in disciplines influenced by the litero-philosophical theories born from the decomposition of structuralism and imported from France after they had gone out of fashion there). Advocates of "PoMo" have created a vast lexicon of weakly codified and rapidly changing derogatory or derisive labels, built mainly by attachment to the names of the authors praised or denigrated, e.g., to inveigh against followers of Derrida, "Derridan drones" or "Branch Derridians" (by analogy to the Branch Davidian sect made sadly famous by the siege of Waco, Texas).

**PUNDIT.** Political or academic commentator or critic whose opinions are widely distributed because they are supposed to be authoritative. Originally the term was respectful (it also means Brahminical sage); today it often implies that the opinions vented are ill-informed, arbitrary, and devoid of influence and value.

**RADICAL.** Left-leaning critical intellectual, most often used in self-labeling to distance oneself from Marxists (considered sectarian or anachronistic) and from **liberals** (held as naïve or complicit with the political-intellectual status quo). Under the pen of journalists, the term

make a (professorial) virtue out of a (social) necessity by concealing one's political impotence behind a discourse that is as grandiloquent as it is unreal—for those who still believe in the existence of a reality that reason would be capable of grasping, however imperfectly.<sup>10</sup>

## Academia's Odd Couple

**B**EYOND THEIR APPARENT DIVERGENCE, THE SCHOLASTIC self-castration of the devotees of academic prudence and respectability and the pseudo-political oneirism of the advocates of the new *gauchisante* campus rhetoric are in synch; indeed they mutually reinforce one another. Brother enemies, the positivist professional and the postmodern professor support each other in their common bad faith and social futility. Each in its own way, these two teratological derivatives of the intellectual ideal contribute to the self-closure of the university intelligentsia and thus to the indifference and scorn of which it is the object.

Caught off-guard by the increasingly brutal intrusion of the profit motive into the cultural sphere, obsessed with their internal divisions and squabbles (disciplinary, ethnic, sexual, etc.), cut off from society to an extent such that they no longer even realize their extreme degree of isolation, never have American intellectuals seemed so impotent as today. And never has their progressive wing been so unaware of this impotence and of its causes—at the front rank of which stands this very lack of awareness or, worse, the illusory belief that acts of language in the classroom are "interventions" into the political struggles of the day. The smothering of their voice no doubt figures among the factors that account for the extraordinary revival of American imperialism in the planetary cultural field. ☞

*This is the slightly revised and expanded version of a text originally written for a special issue of Liber: The International Review of Books on "Intellectuals" (March 26, 1996) and intended for a European audience (Liber is published in the national languages simultaneously in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary, Romania, and Turkey). We have retained both the tone and the glossary to entice the American reader to look at his or her own universe through "the eyes of a Persian" [as in Montesquieu's classic novel]. Translated by Kirsten Halling and the author.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> As was shown by Richard Hofstadter in his classic study, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Knopf, 1963).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the best-seller by David Osbourne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit Is Transforming the Public Sector* (New York: Plume, 1993), which features, barring its front cover, the following enthusiastic endorsement from President Clinton: "A must-read book for every elected official in America" as "it gives us the blueprint" for reforming in depth the management of the country. For an influential indigenous critique of this tendency, Robert N. Bellah *et al.*, *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, new ed. 1996).

<sup>3</sup> On this topic, read Dan Clawson, Alan Neustadt, and Denise Scott, *Money Talks: Corporate PACS and Political Influence* (New York: Basic Books, 1992); Jeffrey Birnbaum, *The Lobbyists: How Influence Peddlers Work Their Way in Washington* (New York: Times Books, 1993); and Kevin Philips, *The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

<sup>4</sup> Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Scholzman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice*

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and Equality (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> James A. Smith, *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite* (New York: The Free Press, 1991) and, to measure the spectacular progression of the organic intellectuals of the new reactionary technocracy in charge of America's economic and social policies, Joseph Peschek, *Policy-Planning Organizations: Elite Agendas and America's Rightward Turn* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> "Bastard" in the sense defined by Everett C. Hughes, *The Sociological Eye* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1980) of an institution that satisfies illegitimate or unspeakable needs by seemingly legitimate means.

<sup>8</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, "The Corporatism of the Universal: The Role of Intellectuals in the Modern World," *Telos*, 81, Fall 1989, pp. 99–110, and Christophe Charle, *Renaissance des "intellectuels," 1880–1900* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1990).

<sup>9</sup> One must read the caricatural, and for that very reason quite useful, book by Steven Seidman, *The Postmodern Turn: New Perspectives on Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), out of which the expressions quoted above are excerpted. It catalogues the rhetorical devices and ideological clichés that pass themselves off as "postmodern theory" and offers a representative sample of the texts that form the new academic canon of a certain university left (the most astounding aspect of which is that it claims to take its cue from Michel Foucault).

<sup>10</sup> It would be easy to show that the theoretical "advance" of American postmodernism (the expression is redundant since it is in the United States that this current was invented, by the reinterpretation of a philosophical posture that is hardly novel since it is contemporaneous with the Enlightenment) in fact marks an immense intellectual regression, a return to the "era of philosophical constructions and synthesis" made of "brilliant generalities wherein all questions are reviewed but none tackled" that Durkheim deplored in his preface to the first edition of *Suicide* (in *Textes*, Vol. 1: *Elements d'une thorie sociale*, [Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1975, p. 44]).

serves to cast suspicion and is akin to a denunciation on grounds of extremism.

**SCHOLAR.** Learned or erudite person, expert, or specialist in a given field of knowledge. Generally respectful or neutral, this term may insinuate a measure of derogation when it implies that those who bear it are vain, effeminate, and their occupations frivolous and socially useless (the philosopher Henry Thoreau wrote in 1854, "The success of great scholars and thinkers is commonly a courtier-like success, not kingly, not manly").

**SOCIAL ENGINEER.** Scholar who aspires to transform society through political intervention guided by a scientific blueprint. Contemporary usages of the term are tinged with a totalitarian flavor (more Stalinist than Comtian) and are nearly always derisive; they serve mostly to underline the lack of realism and arrogance of those thus labeled.

**STAR.** A major figure of intellectual life, possessed of extraordinary or extra-scholarly renown and whose drawing power is recognized throughout the academic world (as measured for instance by the size of audiences attracted at conferences, but also by speaking fees for above-normal honoraria, large book sales, and the profusion of disciples). A star signs books reviewed (and book reviews) in such all-purpose intellectual publications as *The New York Review of Books*, holds a prestigious chair (named after a great scientist, a famous public servant, or the donor of the funds) that gives him relief from normal teaching duties, and accumulates honors, fellowships, and sojourns at elite research centers (such as the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton and the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Palo Alto). Any self-respecting top university must have a phalanx of them.

**THEORIST.** Exegete who specializes in the canonical texts of a discipline (such as the Marx-Weber-Durkheim triumvirate in sociology) and/or spokesperson of a paradigm either bequeathed by history or fabricated from scratch. Since theory is more often than not considered an autonomous domain of inquiry, the theorist (or theoretician, a precious derivative with a negative resonance) is defined first by the refusal of empirical research and by opposition to the empiricist (a researcher devoid of theoretical ambition or, depending on one's point of view, a mere research technician lacking in imagination). Europe, and particularly France and Germany, is said to be the cradle of "grand" (or high) theory and of "genuine" theorists.

**THINKER** (less common and more laudatory still **master thinker**). Term employed preferably to refer to the great intellectuals of the past, implying in particular independence of thought and the capacity to transform a domain of inquiry; for contemporaries the sarcastic term **guru** is occasionally used. In daily life, the term denotes a person with a pensive or meditative disposition (one says also, but less frequently, **cogitator**).

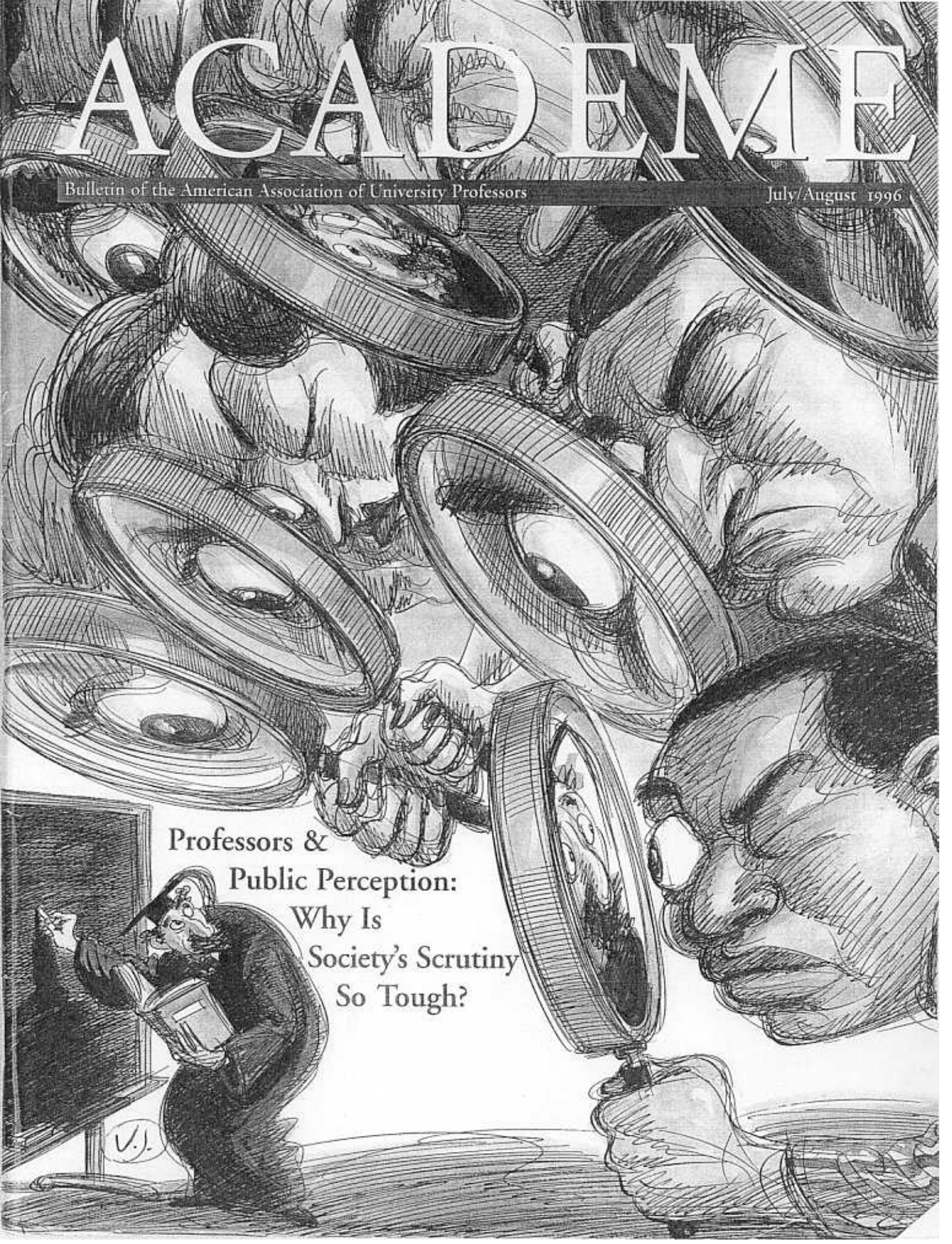
**WUNDERKIND** (also **wiz kid**). Prodigy or genius, used with extreme parsimony to refer to younger students or scholars who are exceptionally brilliant or influential, with achievements and a reputation disproportionate to their age; connotations range from admiration to jealousy.

—Loïc J.D. Wacquant

# ACADEME

Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors

July/August 1996



Professors &  
Public Perception:  
Why Is  
Society's Scrutiny  
So Tough?

V.J.

# ACADEME

Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors July–August 1996

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## FEATURES

### Public Perceptions of Universities and Faculty

MICHAEL BÉRUBÉ

Spurred by the PC wars of the '80s, the public's perception of universities and faculty is on a downward spiral. Improving that perception is a matter of survival, and it will require reconciling the tensions between academic professionals and the publics they serve.

### The Self-Inflicted Irrelevance of American Academics

LOÏC J.D. WACQUANT

A French academic traces the reasons why American professors, unlike their counterparts in Europe, are ravaged with scorn and contempt. He furnishes a glossary of popular terms, many quite pejorative, used to label American academics.

### Professors, the Media, and the Balance of Power in Higher Education

DENNIS M. CLAUSEN

When the *Wall Street Journal* called, a faculty member thought his perspective would be reported fairly. Instead, he got stung—and began to look critically at how the media covers higher education.

### Confessions of a Talking Head

ABE PECK

So you want your 15 minutes of fame? Before you talk to the media, read these tips from someone who has been there.

### Spinning to Win: Some Frank Advice from Behind the Headlines

JON MARCUS

An Associated Press reporter describes what he needs from the faculty when covering higher education and what professors can do to make sure their side of the story is reported.

### It Came from Hollywood: Popular Culture Casts

#### Professors in a Negative Light

CYNTHIA D. LONG

This summer's remake of *The Nutty Professor*, as well as two new TV sit-coms, underscore an unsettling trend: when professors are portrayed in movies and TV shows these days, they are either fools or pompous jerks. Why does Hollywood, and the viewing public, take such delight in mocking academics?

### Free Speech and Religious Expression:

#### One Year After *Rosenberger*, Questions Remain

Legal experts Robert O'Neil and Michael McConnell interpret the ramifications of last summer's Supreme Court decision, which held that a state university acted unconstitutionally when it refused to fund a student religious publication.

### Good Governance

ALAN WARREN FRIEDMAN

The former chair of AAUP's Committee T on College and University Government relates strategies for building governance structures that reinforce principles of the academic profession.

### Memo to the Board of Trustees: Please Meddle

ROBERT BING AND LINDA DYE

While board members are often criticized for being too hands-on, there are times when board intervention is vital to maintaining balance between a college's administration and faculty.



Cover illustration by Victor Juhasz

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**MEMBERSHIP  
INFORMATION**



**1996 ANNUAL NATIONAL AND STATE DUES\***

State	Full-Time	Entrant II** Public/Associate	Entrant I** Joint†	Part-Time Graduate/Emeritus✓
GA, IL, OH	\$127	\$97	\$65	\$32
AR, NY, TN, TX, WA	\$119	\$91	\$60	\$30
IA, IN, KS, LA, MA, MO, MN, NE, NC, OK, PA, SC, VA, WV	\$115	\$87	\$58	\$29
Other States††	\$106	\$81	\$54	\$27

- \* National Dues are tax deductible as a charitable contribution except for \$26.00 attributable to *Academe*.
- \*\* Entrant membership is offered to *non-tenured faculty*, new to the AAUP for up to seven years, or until tenured. Entrant I: first 4 years at ½ dues; Entrant II: up to 3 years at ¾ dues.
- † Joint membership: Couples with one Full-Time member may enroll a second member at a reduced rate.
- †† Some states use a dues model based on a percentage of salary, i.e., Nevada has ¾ of 1% of salary, with a cap of \$30/month.
- ✓ An *active* or an *associate* member retiring for age may request transfer to *emeritus* membership. *Emeritus* members may not vote in elections or at meetings.

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