

This week

Mond	The free speech agenda and the free speech bill
Tue	Making a difference on student housing
Wed	Improving the experience for international students
Thu	The secrets of political thinking
Fri	Hidden costs and student costs campaigns



WONKHE
SUs

Free Speech

What is the agenda and why does it matter in the year ahead?



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Donelan

- Number 10 contradicted the Minister, saying: “Holocaust denial is not something that the government would ever accept.”
- Asked if Boris Johnson agreed with Donelan, his spokesman said: “No.”
- And asked if holocaust denial was anti-Semitic, he said: “Yes.”



Debate time!



SUs



Politics

Tom Slater

Beware the university campus
microaggression monitors

15 January 2020, 8:09am

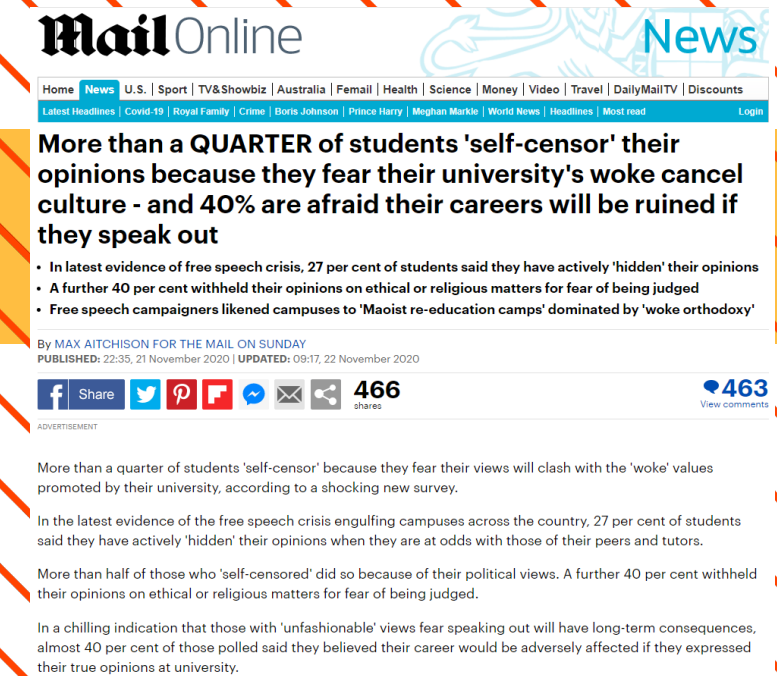


Or...

1. More than a QUARTER of students 'self-censor' their opinions because they fear their university's woke cancel culture

2. More than a third (36 per cent) of students hold views that are legal to express but that would be considered 'unacceptable' by their student union

- Savanta poll of 526 students and 502 graduates, where the latter group have graduated in the past five years
- In Q2 the actual question was "I hold some views that are legal to express, but my university, student union or peers consider these views unacceptable".
- In Q1 the actual question only 13 per cent of students have hidden political views, 9 per cent have hidden religious views and 7 per cent have hidden ethical views.
- Savanta ComRes for Reclaim: Afraid to speak mind at work 38%,



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More than a QUARTER of students 'self-censor' their opinions because they fear their university's woke cancel culture - and 40% are afraid their careers will be ruined if they speak out

- In latest evidence of free speech crisis, 27 per cent of students said they have actively 'hidden' their opinions
- A further 40 per cent withheld their opinions on ethical or religious matters for fear of being judged
- Free speech campaigners likened campuses to 'Maoist re-education camps' dominated by 'woke orthodoxy'

By MAX AITCHISON FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY
PUBLISHED: 22:35, 21 November 2020 | UPDATED: 09:17, 22 November 2020

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More than a quarter of students 'self-censor' because they fear their views will clash with the 'woke' values promoted by their university, according to a shocking new survey.

In the latest evidence of the free speech crisis engulfing campuses across the country, 27 per cent of students said they have actively 'hidden' their opinions when they are at odds with those of their peers and tutors.

More than half of those who 'self-censored' did so because of their political views. A further 40 per cent withheld their opinions on ethical or religious matters for fear of being judged.

In a chilling indication that those with 'unfashionable' views fear speaking out will have long-term consequences, almost 40 per cent of those polled said they believed their career would be adversely affected if they expressed their true opinions at university.

Student Loonion: Colleges revolt against hat-banning killjoy body waging barmy ‘war on fun’

EXCLUSIVE INVESTIGATION: Universities cutting ties with National Union of Students over extreme PC rulings

EXCLUSIVE INVESTIGATION by MATT QUINTON
22nd May 2016, 11:01 pm | Updated: 27th May 2016, 1:38 pm

LIFE as a university student is perceived by many as one long party.

But now a new breed of hyper-politically correct scholars is threatening to end the festivities — with killjoy rulings banning fancy dress, watching sport, innuendoes and even clapping.

Students are increasingly being “protected” from things that might cause them offence.



Academic freedom in the UK



Thomas Simpson and Eric Kaufmann



Academic freedom in the UK



Protecting viewpoint diversity

Remi Adekoya, Eric Kaufmann, and Thomas Simpson

Foreword by Ruth Smeeth



State of the Unions

How to restore free association and expression, combat extremism and make student unions effective

By Maximilian Young and Lucky Dube

BRIEFING PAPER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Student unions are student-led groups that are supposed to represent students on campus to university administrations, provide useful services, and support clubs and associations.
- Student unions cost taxpayers and students £165 million per annum, an average of £75 per student per annum or £225 over a three year degree course. This is evenly split between taxpayers and students. They employ 600 full-time student sabbatical officers.
- Student unions are perceived as ineffective by students, lack democratic legitimacy, and undermine freedom of association and expression.
- This has little to do with money available: student unions that receive higher block grants from universities tend to be poorer performing in the National Student Survey.

The state of the union

Iain Mansfield argues that the practices of some students' unions mean that radical reform is required.

comment | 20/09/20

Author

Iain Mansfield
Senior Lecturer in Law
University of Exeter

When the current Home Secretary Sajid Javid took the NHS to the European Court of Human Rights to argue that forced enrolment into the union breached his right to freedom of association, he lost.

This was in the early 1990s, when university was free. Whether the case would be resolved in the same way today, when a student's tuition fees are a principal source of funding for their union, is a matter that cannot be known. However, what is certain that the current situation requires full and systematic reform.

No meaningful opt-out

Across the UK, there are many hard-working union officers trying to do their best for the students at their university. However, there are far too many for whom a

WONKIE

ANALYSIS

20 September 2020

THE STATE OF THE (STUDENT) UNIONS

Matt Kilcoyne

- Student unions cost taxpayers and students £165 million per annum, £225 per student over a three year degree course.
- Student unions employ some 600 full time sabbatical officers
- Just 1-in-10 students participate in student union elections

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Archive

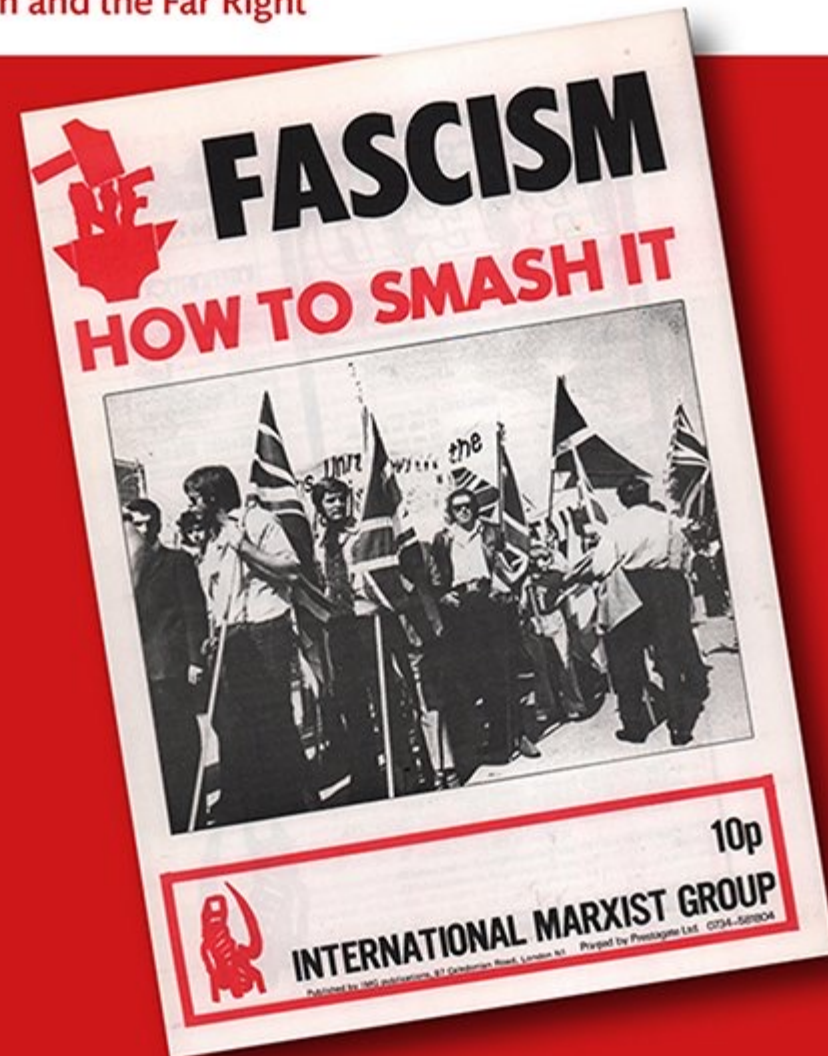
No Platform

A History of Anti-Fascism, Universities and the Limits of Free Speech

Evan Smith



Fascism and the Far Right



WONKHE

ABOUT US• EVENTS LATEST• JOBS• SUBSCRIPTION• SUS•



Freedom to speak or freedom from harm? The history of the No Platform debate

Jim Dickinson and Mike Day take the long view of the debate over the No Platform Policy - from the tumultuous debates of the 80's and 90's to today's battles over free speech on campus and Government initiatives to crack down to extremism.

This article is more than
5 years old
ANALYSIS | 17/02/16



wonkhe-no-platform-microphone-small



Jim Dickinson
Jim is an Associate Editor at Wonkhe



Mike Day
Mike Day is Director of Nations at the National Union of Students

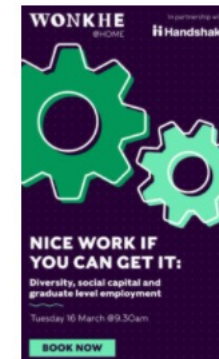
Tags
FREE SPEECH
FREEDOM OF
SPEECH
HISTORY
STUDENTS' UNIONS

The publication of the *Spiked!* freedom of speech index, the Government's Prevent Agenda and almost weekly battles over No Platform at universities across the UK indicate that the debate over freedom of speech on campus is firmly back on the agenda. And so it seems an appropriate time to take a look back at the debates over No Platform and campus free speech: where current rules and precedents came from and the debates that led us directly from the 1970s to 2016.

Regulations relating to freedom of speech on campus form part of the Education (No2) Act 1986: Section 43 places a duty upon the institution to have a code of practice in place that will, as far as is reasonably practical, ensure that all members of the institution and visiting speakers enjoy freedom of speech and further that the use of premises is not denied to groups on the basis of the views they hold. This bit of legislation has been both sidelined and tempered - sidelined by legal advice that suggests SUs can sidestep it, and tempered by the Charity Commission and now legislative pressure from recently passed terrorism law that focusses more on managing risk.

Why did all of this come about in the mid-80s?

Under the 1986 Act, if it is thought likely that a meeting may be controversial then it becomes a designated event, and as a consequence subject to additional costs and organisational requirements to ensure that a university fulfils its obligations. But where did the Act come from? Students have always demonstrated about controversial speakers and university authorities, and governments have often been less than happy about it. Some of the debates and demonstrations of the late sixties and seventies went to the very heart of the argument over which groups should be able to influence the way in which universities were run. The 1986 Act finds its antecedents in what became known as the No Platform Policy.



A little history

- SUs & NUS history of curtailing of free speech
- NUS Conference April 1974: “no platform” policy; backdrop of increased racial tension; Enoch Powell/National Front polled 4.7% in Newham South by-election; increases in overseas fees seen as discriminatory
- June 75: John Randall attacks Press for way in which they had misrepresented NUS discussions, “blatant lies of the Daily Mail... witch-hunting by the Guardian....Telegraph sounds like the apocryphal Hampstead Liberal”
- Fascists/Racists/Conservatives (Charles Clarke)

Randall Closing Speech to EX74

- “To achieve this general freedom [of speech on campus] it became necessary on many occasions to constrain some of the absolute freedoms of individuals. What was the greater freedom? An abstract notion of absolute freedom of speech, or a right to live in freedom from fear of persecution?”



Meanwhile:

Kevin Gately, student at Warwick, killed on demonstration trying to prevent a National Front rally from taking place.

NUS denounced the subsequent enquiry by Lord Scarman as a whitewash, and the net result was to stiffen the resolve of those who supported “no platform”; it was seen as a crucial tool in the fight against racism and one’s position on the issue was, for some, a definitive guide to one’s anti-racist credentials.



1977-mid 80s

- Some ignore NUS and seek to include Conservative and Jewish groups
- Sue Slipman successfully argues change in emphasis from “no platform” to “no invitation” (and back again)
- Lots of local incidents- ie John Carlisle MP, Tory apologist for apartheid visited various campuses prompting NUS President Phil Woolas to claim that he and others were deliberately trying to “provoke incidents”
- Demonstrations and boycotts resulted in negative headlines for NUS and students’ unions and demands for action by the press
- 1985 Green Paper “The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s”. Amongst other issues freedom of speech was highlighted along with an indication that if institutions took no action legislation would follow



1985

- Shortly after a protest against Leon Brittan at the University of Manchester, a Green paper listed freedom of speech at British universities under the government's 'main concerns', stating:

All institutions, at all times have a responsibility to ensure that their affairs are conducted as befits a liberal institution. In particular, they have a responsibility to protect freedom of speech within the law, even for those with widely unpopular views: this is essential as part of a free society, for critical thought and the liberal education which it underpins.

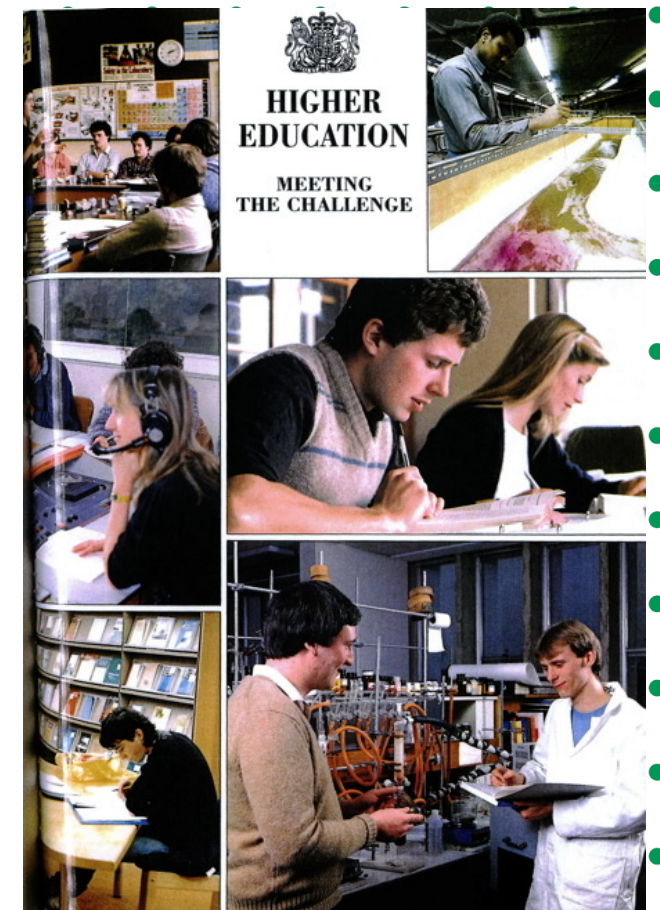
- Said that if institutions took no action legislation would follow.
- Taxpayer's money should not be used “to fund unions that refuse a platform to speakers whose views are objectionable to some students although others wish to invite them”, or “to fund unions that prevent invited speakers from gaining a hearing, or that permit violence or the threat of violence to that end”.



The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education and Science,
the Secretary of State for Scotland,
and the Secretary of State for Wales,
in accordance with the Statutory Orders
1985

LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
2000 001



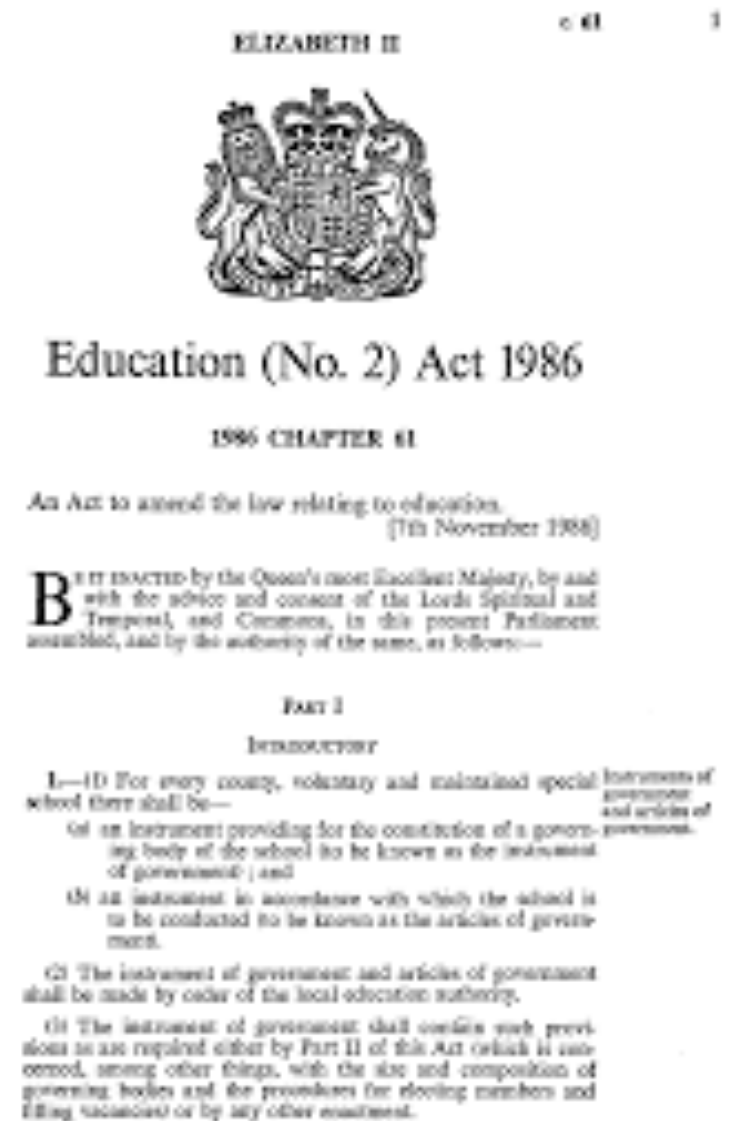
1986 Act

- CVCP and CDP produced codes of practice that indicated that lawful freedom of speech should be upheld.
- Fred Silvester, MP for Manchester Withington February 1986 moved a Private Member's Bill on "Freedom of Speech".
- The codes, he said, "had too many doors through which the activist can bolt"
- Issue taken up by Baroness Cox in the Lords who withdrew her amendment having received assurance by government whips that the issue would be addressed



1986 Act

- The government amendment caused a furore and, after strong pressure in the Lords, was withdrawn and a revised amendment devised with the CVCP.
- NUS argued that their “no platform” policy was complementary and supportive of the Public Order Act of 1936 which made it an offence to use abusive and threatening language or stir feelings of racial hatred, but the government were in no mood to listen.
- At the final stage of the Bill John Carlisle spoke in support, “It is a message to the vice-chancellors that they must put their own house in order . . . it is a message to the students and students’ union. The House and British tax-payer will not tolerate no-platform policies... it is a message for those extremists – who are intent on putting their views across and preventing others from putting forward views with which they disagree”



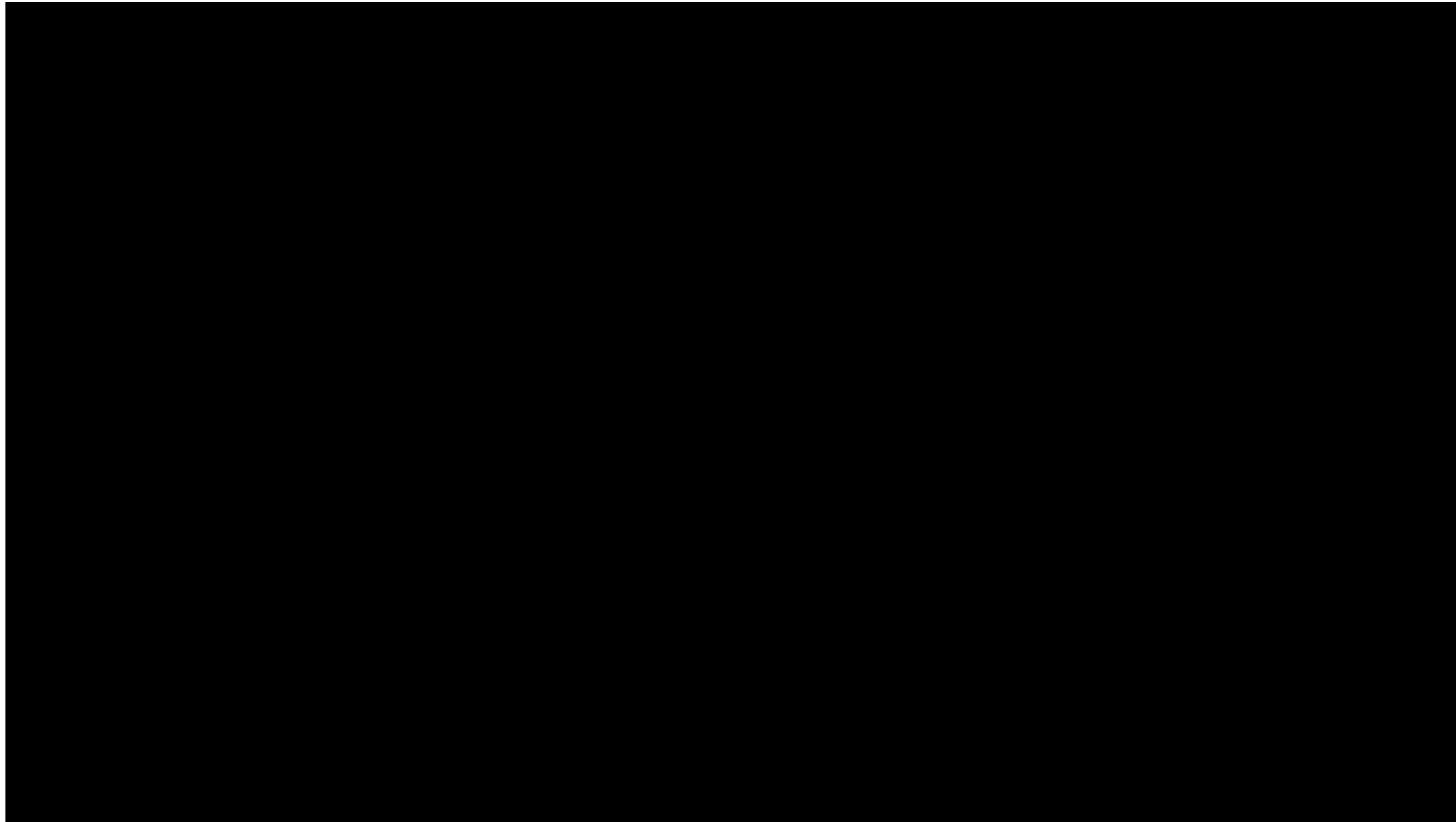
1986 Act

- Slow chilling effect
- BB overtly racist Tories die out post Apartheid
- BNP extremism “OK” to dislike
- Public order used as backdoor when EA86 a challenge

Into the 90s

- GUPS/FOSIS
- Labour Students/UJS
- Successive NUS Conferences in the 90s recognised an anti-semitic thread to some on campus activity, and groups such as Al-Muhajiroun, Hizb-ut-Tahrir and (for some more controversially) the Muslim Public Affairs Committee came to sit alongside the BNP and EDL on NUS' lists.
- “No Platform” converted from a policy to a constitutional provision within NUS at an extraordinary conference in Leicester in December 2007, where free speech zealots from UEA that had won an anti No Platform referendum in Norwich (and were closely linked to the revolutionary communist party) lost against a leadership determined to give permanence to the position.

NUS debates



Into the 00s

- NUS legal advice on uselessness of EA96
- Charity law, SUs as registered charities, and “risk”
- 2009 Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab
- 2010 NUS Conference resolved that “No Platform” was a “blunt tool” for making decisions about speakers
- Guidelines to help newly registered students’ union charities balance all speaker request risks on a ‘freedom to speak’ versus ‘freedom from harm’ basis-arguing that students’ unions had the right to set moral standards for speech that went beyond the law.
- Development included UJS and FOSIS

Late 00s

- These widely adopted guidelines went on to be endorsed by Conservative ministers in both HE and FE- a sharp turnaround from the position they had held in the 80s.
- John Hayes as BIS Minister:
- *"It is my pledge, that while we must not stifle academic debate, neither should we despicable evil fester unchecked."*
- *We simply cannot afford to have our Universities, the very spaces in which ideas mix so freely corrupted by ideologies rooted in hatred.*
- *I ... stand with the Union of Jewish Students, the NUS, and parliamentarians of all colours in the struggle against extremism"*



Charity Commission

- Charity Commission took over regulation of SUs in July 2010
- Within three days they had launched regulatory compliance casework on a students' union in relation to an external speaker and “non violent extremism” issues
- ISOC event & Guest Speaker
- Trustees of Students' Unions as charities are acting both in the best interests of their members and in the best interests of their charities
- (These are not necessarily the same as the best interests of the HEI!)

- “The 1986 Act does not place duties on the Charity Trustees of a Students’ Union”
- SUs must take into account duties to the University alongside other duties
- They may curtail when speakers
 - Infringe rights of others
 - Discriminate
 - Commit an offence
 - Act in a way contrary to rights of individuals
- Trustees must act in the best interests of the charity at all times and would be wrong if they were to consider that the Education Act overrides these factors

CC Message

- “Trustees must act in the best interests of the charity at all times and would be wrong if they were to consider that the Education Act overrides these factors
- At the moment we understand that the cancellation of an event would only be considered on safety grounds. This approach fails to take into consideration the factors listed above.”

2010s

- Prevent politically discredited
- NUS 2015: “Publicly oppose the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, for the NUS President to issue a public statement condemning the PREVENT Strategy and the Government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, and alongside civil liberties groups including CAGE, lobby the government to repeal it immediately”

Competing SU Tradition

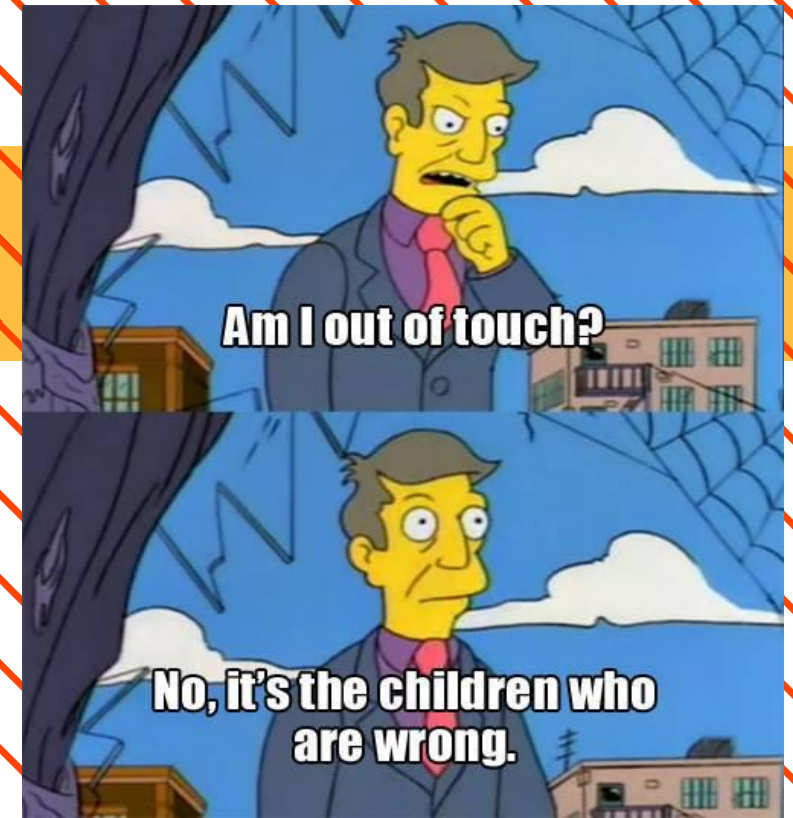
- No direct application- legal advice
- “No Platform”
- Refusal to share a platform with certain individuals
- Traditionally targeted at the “far right” with open membership lists
- Hated by many social liberals
- “Open debate” versus “Stop the Spread”
- Students have the right to collectively decide to not invite people into their meetings and structures
- Freedom to speak v Freedom from harm

So three “waves”

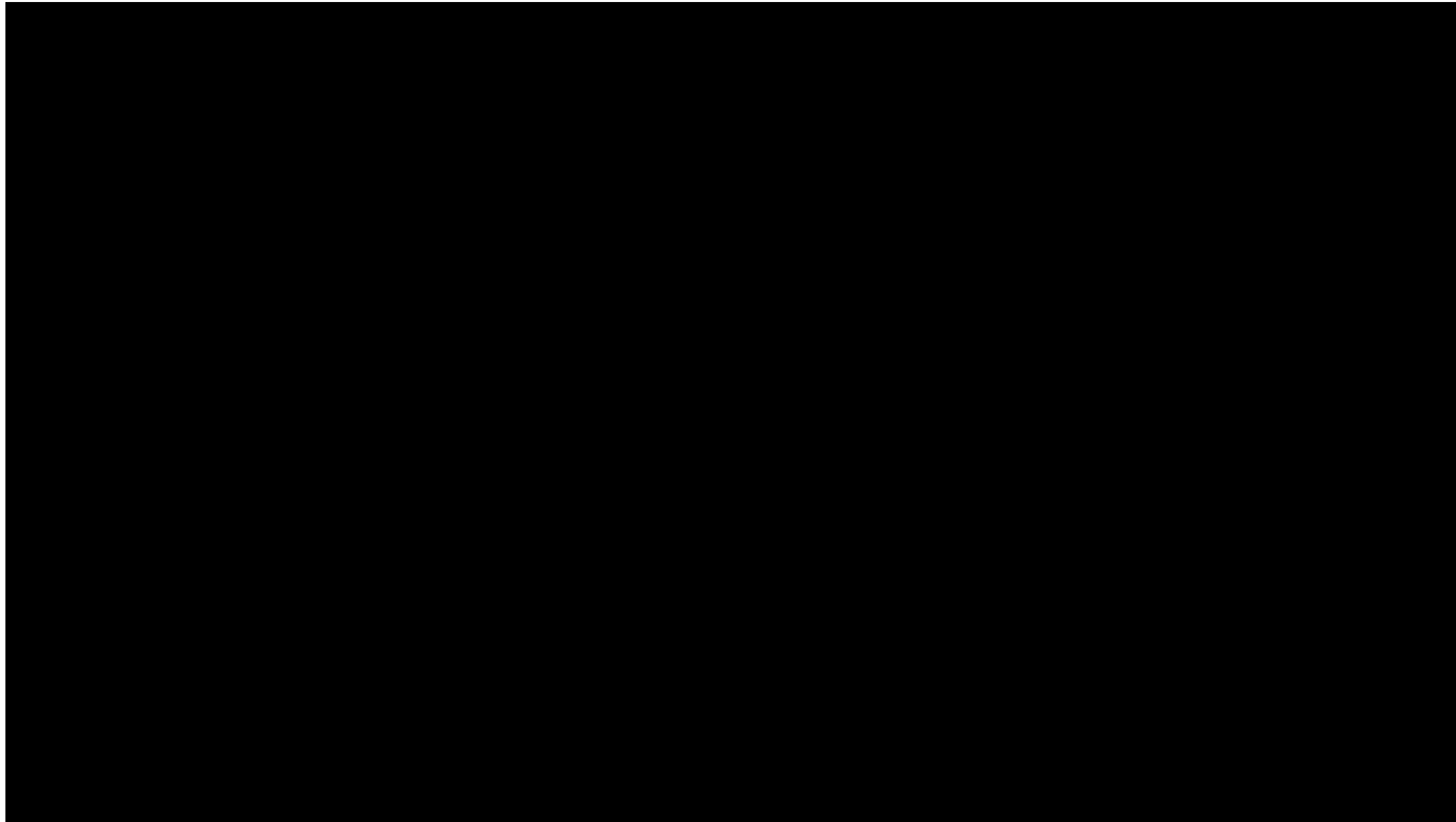
- 70's & 80's- Anti Fascism
 - Worry about alignment to Tories
- 80's & 90s- Anti Racism
 - Worries about silencing of anti Israel gvt sentiment
- 90s and 00s- Anti Extremism and Anti antisemitism

Waves

- All the waves are complex
- All waves opposed- Skinner syndrome
- All waves hijacked by those opposed to “loony left”
- All involve the classic frames
 - Silly
 - Naive
 - New Elitists
 - Mollycoddling



Brendan O'Neill



Spiked Framing

Framing as the key tactic of the sect

- “They don’t like being offended”
 - Framing oppression as offense
- “They are banning our things”
 - Student leaders framed as other not as us- as the “elites”
- “Progressives would have been banned”
 - Examples of good being restricted to oppose bad. Past and future.
- “We don’t need them to keep us safe”
 - Safe spaces and special snowflakes
- Offence, Othering, Progressive Banning, Don’t be a victim

Our Framing

- “Lad mags are part of rape culture”
 - Behaviour as a way of continuing oppression. Understanding power.
- “We have decided democratically”
 - Collective decision making of a generation- setting own standards- us versus the elites
- “Only 10 years ago blacking up was OK”
 - Students at the vanguard of progressive behaviour
- “Liberation groups should identify and fight their oppression”
 - Converting victimhood to leadership

2016 free speech UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

- HOME
- RESULTS
- ANALYSIS
- HOW WE RANK
- MEDIA COVERAGE
- ABOUT US
- EVENTS
- SIGN UP TO THE NEWSLETTER
- SIGN UP!
- FOLLOW THE CAMPAIGN!



THE EPIDEMIC OF CAMPUS CENSORSHIP

The Free Speech University Rankings (FSUR) is back. The first-of-its-kind analysis of the state of free speech on Britain's campuses has published its second, annual set of findings – and things are not looking good. Our survey, ranking 115 UK universities using our traffic-light system, shows that 90 per cent of universities censor speech – up from 80 per cent in 2015. Read the **2016 results**. And, if you want to join the campaign against campus censorship, **contact** the FSUR team today.



Tom Slater
coordinator

To find out more about the FSUR, or to request further comment, contact [Tom Slater](#).



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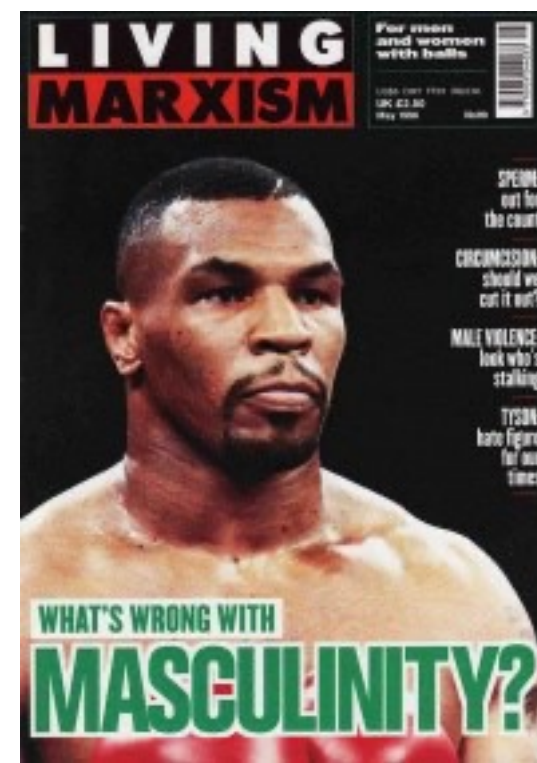
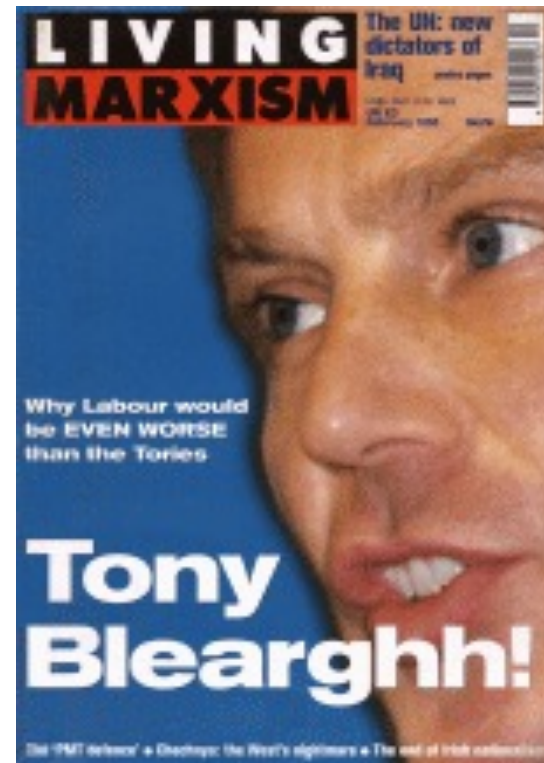
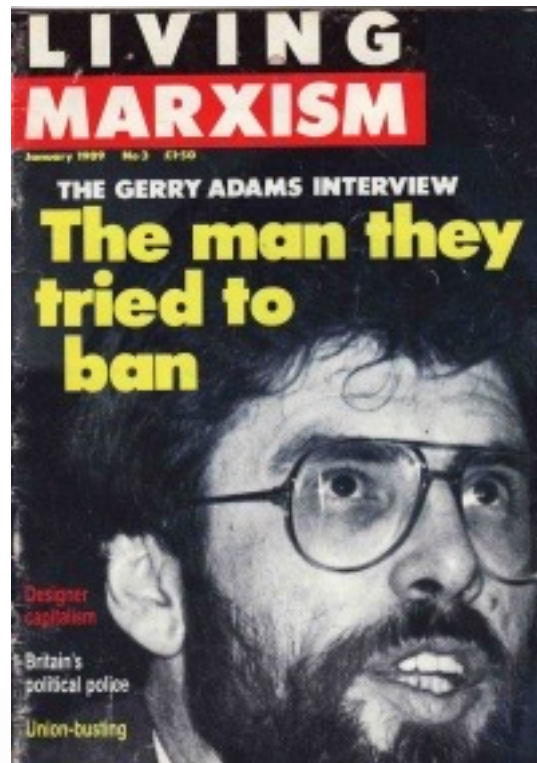
Down the rabbit hole

- Brendan O'Neill edits Spiked!
- Internet magazine focusing on politics, culture and society from a “humanist and libertarian viewpoint”
- Founded in 2000 after the bankruptcy of predecessor Living Marxism (LM).



Living Marxism

- Journal of the British Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) launched in 1988
- Ceased publication in 2000 following a successful libel lawsuit brought by ITN (Bosnian War)
- Inner and outer core of key players



WONKH

SUs

Key Players

- Frank Furedi (Intellectual Head)
- Claire Fox (Moral Maze, IOI)
- Brendan O Neill (Runs Spiked!)
- Mick Hume (Editor LM)
- Joanna Williams
- Tom Slater. Ella Whelan.
- Frequently appear on panels together pretending to not know eachother
 - The Manifesto Club
 - WorldWrite
 - Audacity.org
 - Modern Movement
 - Parents with Attitude
 - Institute of Ideas





LM HobbyHorses

- Free speech, not me speech
- The crisis in authority
- Condemnation of 'greenthink'
- Meddling policymakers
- Campaigns against gun control, against banning tobacco advertising and child porn
- Campaigns in favour of global warming and freedom for corporations

Furedi

- The content of what children are learning is ‘pretty sordid’: too much ‘soft social engineering’ –healthy-eating propaganda, eco-spying, anti-bullying
- Against meddling control freaks, ignorant teachers, the craven obsession with health and safety,
- Grand-looking historical generalisations – ‘in the 21st century, conservation of the past is a radical act’
- Anecdotes that make people start going on about political correctness gone mad: ‘They’re even expelling two-to-four-year-olds in nurseries for racism, for homophobia, for inappropriate sexual behaviour.’

LM Frames and Students

- Special snowflakes
- Trigger warnings
- No Platforming
- Banning Ideas
- Banning Costumes

free speech UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2016

a spiked project

[HOME](#) • [RESULTS](#) • [ANALYSIS](#) • [HOW WE RANK](#) • [MEDIA COVERAGE](#) • [ABOUT US](#) • [EVENTS](#)

[SPIKED HOMEPAGE](#)

• FOLLOW THE CAMPAIGN!



• SIGN UP TO THE NEWSLETTER

SIGN UP!



WONKHE
SUs



The university – AMBER

Policies

- ◆ Policy Statement and Guidelines on Bullying, Harassment and Abuse, Assault and Stalking, and the Use of Social Media**
- ◆ Leaflet and Poster policy**

The students' union - RED

Policies

+ Cultural Appropriation

Actions



12 FEBRUARY 2015
NUS

Bans Page 3



20 OCTOBER 2015
TAB

Hockey Team suspended
for playing 'gay chicken'



29 SEPTEMBER 2015
GUARDIAN

Bans sombreros

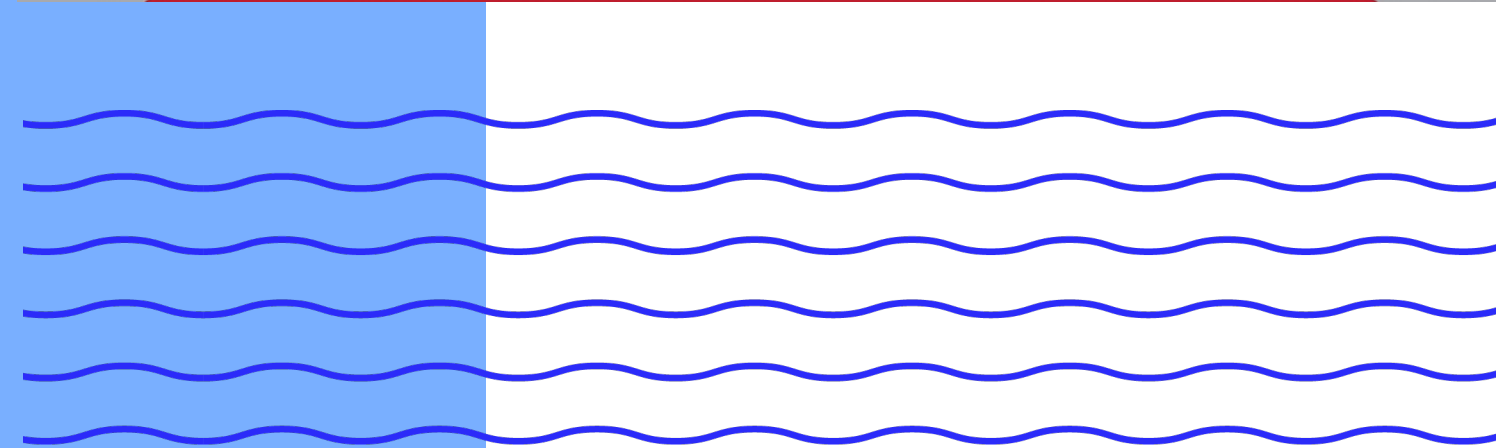


28 NOVEMBER 2014
EXPRESS

Cancelled UKIP meeting,
later rescheduled

It's legislation time

Higher Education (Freedom of
Speech) Bill and its implications
for students unions



WONKHE
SUs

Donelan



“ To ask the Secretary of State for Education

Durham University Student Union to (a) vet its speakers or require that additional speakers exercise such powers against speakers who made of whether universities are meeting the necessary restrictions on speaker invitation on campus; and what assessment he has received from Durham University regarding the proposals by The Education Act 1986 imposes a legal duty on those involved in the government of universities to secure lawful free speech. If it has been accurately reported in the press, the decision by Durham University is gravely disappointing and not in line with our high expectations for universities in this area. To give a student union this power over external speakers is wholly inappropriate: no university should ever grant a student union any authority or role in vetting, limiting or otherwise overseeing which external speakers may be invited to speak on campus, or under what circumstances they may do so.

Although it is true that when considering external speakers under the Prevent strategy,

Although it is true that when considering external speakers, higher education providers should, under the Prevent duty, consider the risks that the event may pose in drawing students into terrorism, this must be balanced against their duty to secure freedom of speech; it is only rarely that speakers will form into this category, and applying intrusive procedures on a blanket basis, such as asking all speakers to submit their speeches in advance, is unnecessary and inappropriate. In the vast majority of cases these risks can be mitigated without shutting down speech. In any case, to outsource such decisions to a Student Union, giving them de facto control of who can speak on campus, is completely unacceptable.

At my request, officials have asked the Office for Students, the independent regulator, to investigate this matter and have also contacted the Vice Chancellor of the university to express my concerns.

Queen's speech

State opening of parliament:

- “My Government will strengthen and renew democracy and the constitution. Legislation will be introduced to ensure the integrity of elections, protect freedom of speech [in universities] and restore the balance of power between the executive, legislature and the courts”
- Plus Online Safety Bill, Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill and a Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Bill



Context

- Builds on manifesto commitment
- Two policy exchange reports
- “If the sector doesn’t act to protect free speech I will take action”
- DfE policy paper February 2021
- Backbench (David Davies) Bill 1 earlier this year
- IHRA antisemitism letter
- Endless press coverage



The Bill

- Amending legislation:
 - Higher Education and Research Act 2017
 - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
 - Higher Education Act 2004
 - Education (No. 2) Act 1986
- Duties on universities and students' unions
- Powers to OfS and a new Director of Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech
- New rights to redress for those affected by a failure of duty

Duties on universities

- Duty on the governing body of a registered (as in, OfS registered) provider to secure freedom of speech for staff, members, and students of the provider along with visiting speakers.
- Specifies that the use of premises (or terms of use) cannot be denied to an individual or group on the basis of their “ideas, beliefs, or views”
- Freedom of speech is defined as:
 - Freedom to express ideas, beliefs and views without suffering adverse consequences. [within the law]
- Academic freedom, in relation to academic staff means
 - Their freedom within the law and within their field of expertise to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves at risk of being adversely affected in any of the ways described
- Those ways are
 - Loss of their jobs or privileges at the provider; the likelihood of their securing promotion or different jobs at the provider being reduced.

Duties on universities

- Must issue a code of practice that includes a statement of the provider's values relating to freedom of speech and an explanation of how those values uphold freedom of speech.
- It also has to set out the procedures to be followed by staff and students when organising meetings and activities, the conduct required in relation to such meetings and activities, and the criteria for specified decisions.
- Reasonably practicable steps, "including where appropriate the initiation of disciplinary measures", to secure compliance with said code of practice.

Students unions

- Same duty over freedom of speech (but not academic freedom)
 - “duty to take reasonably practicable steps to achieve the objective of securing freedom of speech within the law for members and staff of the students’ union, students, members and staff of the provider, and visiting speakers.”
- Same premises duty plus affiliation to the students’ union can’t be denied to any student society on those grounds.

Students unions

- Own code of practice
- Statement of the students' union's values relating to freedom of speech
- Procedures to be followed when organising meetings and activities
- Conduct required in relation to such meetings and activities
- Criteria for specified decisions
- Reasonably practicable steps, including disciplinary measures, to secure compliance with the code of practice.

Hmmm

- Much of the above was covered in TTDF
- Charity law hasn't evaporated
- Wider legislation also not gone
- “Legal harms”?
- IHRA / antisemitism
- SU corporate conclusions and speakers and societies

Taking the debate forward:

A new code to secure and champion freedom of speech and political diversity on campus



February 2021

Office for students

- Separate condition of registration
- OfS will spell out what compliance and non compliance will look like (as it does now)
- HE providers will still hold the registration but will inform OfS of any recognised SU
- No power to deregister SUs but a bespoke power to fine SUs
- An ongoing monitoring duty over SUs

Redress

- Creates a legal tort – the right for someone who's been harmed by a failure in the duties of providers or SUs to take civil action
- Complaints scheme run directly by OfS – a bit like OIA but only for free speech and academic freedom issues
- Complainants have to exhaust internal routes first
- Relationship between complaints procedures gets very messy (both bodies and procedures)

Welcome the woke warden

- Director of Free Speech and Academic Freedom on the OfS board.
- Similar powers to the OfS Director of Fair Access.
- Not clear what happens if they disagree with the rest of the board or senior staff.
- Sets down guidance to be issued (are curriculum decolonisation and bystander training in scope as problems?)
- All paid for via provider fees (no direct cost to SUs)

Government set to fine universities who 'cancel' people due to their views as ministers 'defend British history and culture'

- Education Secretary Gavin Williamson is set to unveil the 'free speech champion'
- They will have the power to defend students and academics at college campuses
- Institutions trying to cancel people due to their views will be penalised with fines
- Ministers also told heritage groups not to use public funds for political purposes

By JAMES GANT FOR MAILONLINE

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Universities and colleges will be fined for suffocating free speech on campuses, ministers have warned.

Education Secretary **Gavin Williamson** will this week unveil a 'free speech champion' who will have the power to defend students and academics.

Institutions which try to cancel people due to their views will be penalised as part of the government's 'war on woke'.



Compliance costs?

- a) ensure that students with a range of views are represented in student engagement work;
- b) train staff and educate students on the importance of debate;
- c) demonstrate how democracy works by actively promoting democratic processes in HEPs and holding Democracy Days (as some HEPs currently do);
- d) affirm frequently and publicly the importance of freedom of speech, particularly where individual staff and students have faced criticism for expressing lawful views;
- e) ensure that there is a process in place for staff and students to report actions/behaviours that they see, not just to make complaints about where they consider their own freedom of speech has been unlawfully infringed.

Amendments

- Exempting Oxbridge college MCRs and JCRs
- Foreign funding
- Security costs

What's next?

- Lords
- OfS consultation and creation of register
- Capacity to comply
- Chilling effects (breadth and range)
- Getting ready (Complaints, Code of Practice)
- Separating political/officer/voter views from decisions on affiliation and bookings

Tricky areas

- Elections?
- Complaints that span discipline and general (and elections)
- Complaints cross over with universities
- Cancel culture pile ons that the union isn't really involved in (but is a bit?)



Tricky areas

- Speaker or speech? (David Irving speaking on cheese manufacturing?)
- Buckingham/Cranfield? East Sussex College SU
- Student groups/societies outside of SU/university control, Student groups/societies under control of university
- Vexatious claims and costs to SUs
- If you separate out uni and SU duties like this it's LESS LIKELY that events will go ahead because security costs would be more of an issue for SUs
- Chilling effect of risk management
- Behaviour standards - who imposes (SU or uni) and on externals too?



Issues for SUs

- Act now to “clear up” (TTDF)
- Establishing the right culture
- Working with universities
- Anti racism work
- Proactive and rarity protection
- Competing priorities:
 - Equality and diversity (opportunity v outcomes)
 - Decolonisation / Harassment / Race equality
 - Students in all their diversity

Free Speech

What is the agenda and why does it matter in the year ahead?



WONKHE
SUs

Free Speech

What is the agenda and why does it matter in the year ahead?



WONKHE
SUs