

# PERSPECTIVES

## On the Professions

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### "Academic Boycotts"

Michael Davis, Editor, CSEP,  
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In 1967, I was a teaching assistant for Mihajlo Markovic, then a wine-loving Yugoslav philosopher visiting the University of Michigan. The course was "Foundations of Communism, Fascism, and Democracy" -- nicknamed "darkness at noon." Markovic's version omitted fascism, concentrating on democracy and that gentle form of communism called "worker management." Today Yugoslavia has gone the way of Camelot, Markovic is vice-president of Serbia's ruling party, and fascism rather than democracy or communism seems to inform his discourse.

What should I do if, say, I met Markovic at a philosophy convention? What claim should his status as a philosopher, former colleague, and former teacher have on me? What claim should his status as participant in crimes against humanity have? Should I treat him as I treat most academics with whom I disagree? Or should I treat him differently, as I might, in 1940, have treated an officer of the Nazi Party?

#### Our Subject

Those questions are not actually the subject of this issue of

*Perspectives*. They are, however, closely related. Our subject is academic boycotts, coordinated undertakings by some academics to avoid certain contacts with other academics, friends as well as strangers. A boycott may be undertaken as political action, for example, to discourage certain objectionable conduct on the part of the boycotted academic's government. The boycott may also be undertaken as political expression, a (merely) symbolic action, for example, a way of showing solidarity with those whom the academic's government is wronging (whatever effect the boycott might have on policy). A boycott may even be undertaken for moral reasons, for example, because the alternative, contact with the boycotted academic, is itself morally problematic. Probably, most boycotts are undertaken for a combination of these reasons.

An individual's decision to avoid contact with another individual belongs to the sphere of (private) morality, but the decision of any group of academics to boycott other academics raises issues of professional ethics. Academics as such have a commitment to open debate among all those competent to participate; criticism, not boycott, is ordinarily the means for correcting error. Boycott as such is not only foreign to academic ethics; it is, at least on the surface, inconsistent with it.

How then can academics justify an academic boycott? Are all academic boycotts, by definition, unethical? Such questions define our subject.

#### Prejudgments

I must admit that I initially thought that I knew how to answer these questions. Of course one should support an academic boycott of South Africa (in the 1980s) or of Serbia (today); an academic boycott is an exceptional response to an exceptional situation; and circumstances in South Africa were, and those in Serbia are, exceptional enough. Moral decency trumps academic freedom.

Now I am not so sure. Even the simplest of acts can have consequences contrary to the agent's purpose. An academic boycott, a complex social undertaking where harm is immediate and benefit comparatively far off and uncertain, might well have enough unwanted consequences to outweigh its political or moral justification. The South African boycott helps us to see how.

#### South Africa

F. W. Lancaster and Lorraine Haricombe conducted a large survey of South African academics just as the academic boycott was coming to an end. Their report here begins with an

important clarification. They list some of the academic activities a boycott can affect, everything from honoring another library's request for a book to choice of a visiting professor. The list is surprisingly long and various, suggesting how many possibilities the single term "boycott" covers everything from "total boycott" to highly selective shunning. The proper answer to the question, "Should we boycott?" will seldom be "yes" or "no."

While we might expect total boycott to be hardest to justify, Lancaster and Lorraine suggest that justifying some selective boycotts may be at least as hard. If, for example, English physicists set out to shun only those South African academics who support apartheid, the resulting selective boycott would require them to use political criteria (rather than address) to decide whom to allow at a conference. Imagine physicists planning a conference in London having to write a South African colleague that consideration of her paper on quarks has been deferred pending receipt of convincing evidence of her opposition to apartheid. Most academics associate such political criteria with politically oppressive regimes. Few want their professional society imitating the very regime they are boycotting.

If Lancaster and Haricombe offer an aerial survey, Neville Alexander reports from the ground. What Alexander reports is not a single boycott but a disorderly, confused, and evolving attempt at some sort of resistance to apartheid. The original "total boycott" became increasingly selective in part because total boycott proved impossible, and in part because much of the harm it did was to the boycott's friends.

Even in its final form, the boycott seems to have had little effect on the government or the academic friends of apartheid. Its primary effect seems to have been to retard slightly the very academic research the post-apartheid regime would need. Justification of the academic boycott in South Africa cannot, it seems, rely on its contribution to bringing down an unjust regime.

#### **The Next Boycott?**

Lancaster, Haricombe, and Alexander give us a post-mortem. Igor Primoratz makes a proposal: boycott Serbian academics. What does South Africa teach us about undertaking this new boycott? Two lessons seem clear: first, we should boycott selectively when possible, shunning only those who deserve it; and, second, we shouldn't rely for justification on the effect the boycott will have on government policy.

Primoratz's justification is consistent with these two lessons. He argues only for a boycott of Serbian academics who do not speak out against the nationalist project of an "ethnically purified" Greater Serbia. And he argues for this selective boycott not as a means of changing what the Serbian government will do but (primarily) as a means of symbolic opposition. We must (he argues) boycott Serbian academics to express our emphatic condemnation of the moral outrage to which they are contributing.

Primoratz's argument does not, however, take into account unintended consequences of the sort Lancaster, Haricombe, and Alexander report. We are therefore left to answer many subsidiary questions before reaching a final judgment on

Primoratz's proposal. We must, for example, consider whether the boycott should require that each interlibrary loan request from the University of Belgrade include a statement of the patron's position on Greater Serbia.

But, whatever we decide about the boycott, Primoratz's arguments do help us to understand why I should now refuse to exchange pleasantries with Markovic.

-M. D.

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#### **"The Academic Boycott of South Africa: Symbolic Gesture or Effective Agent of Change?"**

F.W. Lancaster, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Lorraine Haricombe, Northern Illinois University

From the early 1960s until very recently, scholars in South Africa were subjected to various forms of boycott within the international academic community. The academic boycott, strongly supported by the African National Congress and agencies of the United Nations, was part of a much broader sanctions campaign including political, economic, cultural, and sports elements designed to express condemnation of the policy of apartheid and to force change in the racial policies of the South African government. The academic boycott was intended to "isolate" scholars in South Africa by depriving them of the formal and informal sources of information needed to further their research and of the conduits through which they could bring

their own work to the attention of the international community.

### **Manifestations and Levels of the Boycott**

At least eight manifestations of this boycott can be recognized:

1. Scholars refusing to travel to South Africa or to invite South Africans abroad;
2. Publishers, journals, and the like, refusing to publish South African manuscripts;
3. Scholars abroad refusing to collaborate with South African scholars;
4. Publishers abroad refusing to provide access to information (for example, books or computer software);
5. International conferences barring South Africans;
6. Institutions abroad denying South African academics access;
7. Institutions abroad refusing to recognize South African degrees;
8. Scholars abroad refusing to act as external examiners for theses presented at South African universities.

Elements of such a boycott can exist at national, institutional, or personal levels. At the national level, for example, some countries including Japan, India, Finland, and the Soviet Union routinely denied visas to South Africans. At the institutional level, scholarly bodies prevented South Africans from attending their conferences, rejected manuscripts submitted for publication, or otherwise put obstacles in the way of scholarly discourse with South Africans. Trinity College, Dublin, provides an extreme example: it forbade its

faculty to collaborate with South Africans, threatening those who disobeyed with censure or dismissal.

### **Views on the Boycott**

The ethical and other issues surrounding the academic boycott deeply divided the academic community, both within and outside South Africa. Boycott proponents argued that academics should not be treated as an elite detached from the political and social environment in which it functions, especially since some of the South African universities seemed to be tools of the Nationalist government.

Opponents of the boycott argued that ideas and knowledge should be treated differently than tangible commodities, that obstacles to information access could actually hurt the victims of apartheid (for example, retard medical research and, ultimately, reduce the quality of health care), and that an academic boycott (in contrast to economic, trade, or political boycott) would not even be noticed by the South African government. Change is much more likely to occur by providing information than by withholding it.

A compromise position, advocated by some, was that of "selective boycott" or "selective support"-organizations in South Africa should be boycotted if they practiced apartheid and supported if they opposed it. This approach was also severely criticized both because of the practical problems of implementation and because it implicitly endorsed the idea that political views are valid determinants of who should attend scholarly meetings, whose work should be published, and so on.

### **A Book Boycott**

A particularly controversial element in the academic boycott of South Africa was the "book boycott." Books, journals, and other scholarly materials were not included in the trade boycott enforced by the United States under the terms of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986, but some countries, such as Denmark, applied an absolute embargo. Elsewhere individual publishers, booksellers, or other vendors were free to adopt their own policies.

Both the Association of American Publishers and the Association of American University Presses opposed an embargo on scholarly materials. Nevertheless, several major U.S. publishers imposed their own boycott. One was University Microfilms International, which cut off the supply of dissertations to South Africa, causing one South African librarian to point out that getting materials from the Soviet Union had become easier than getting them from the United States.

A large and vocal element within the American Library Association (ALA) favored an absolute boycott and some public libraries (and their parent entities) refused to do business with any publisher, bookseller, or other vendor that continued to trade with South Africa. A resolution introduced at an ALA conference in 1987 to oppose the book boycott on the grounds that it violated First Amendment rights was labeled "racist" and decisively defeated. Individual libraries, in the United States and elsewhere, refused to supply photocopies or other materials to libraries in South Africa. In some cases, requests were returned with anti-apartheid slogans scribbled across them.

### Impact of the Boycott

During the year 1990-1991, we surveyed a random sample of faculty in all disciplines in twenty-one South African universities to determine what effect the boycott had on their scholarly activities. (There are actually twenty-two such institutions, excluding those in the homelands, but we accidentally omitted one.) The survey used both questionnaires and interviews.

Of the 900 questionnaires mailed (300 in the sciences, 300 in the humanities, 300 in the social sciences), 513 (57%) were completed. Forty-two faculty members were subsequently interviewed in their faculty offices in South Africa.

A second questionnaire was mailed to twenty-eight research libraries in South Africa, to determine the effects of the boycott on their acquisitions and services. Twenty-three responded. Eight of the librarians were subsequently interviewed in South Africa.

Since the survey results are extensive, we can give only highlights here. (For more detail, see Haricombe and Lancaster, *Out in the Cold: Academic Boycotts and the Isolation of South Africa*, Arlington, VA, Information Resources Press, 1995.)

About 57% of the respondents had experienced some boycott effects. A higher percentage of scholars in the humanities and arts reported effects than in the other disciplines, but scholars in the sciences were more likely than the others to consider the effects severe. Faculty at the English universities were more likely to

report effects than those at the Afrikaans universities. Faculty at the "Ethnic" (mostly Black) universities were least likely to report effects. Refusal of scholars to visit South Africa and difficulty in obtaining information resources were the boycott effects reported most frequently (155 scholars affected by the former and 153 by the latter). Of the 513 respondents to the questionnaire, 76 (15%) reported denial of attendance at conferences abroad, 48 (9%) reported problems in collaborating with scholars abroad, and 31 (6%) reported manuscript rejection by foreign publishers.

Comments on the questionnaires, together with the results of the interviews, lead us to the following general conclusions:

1. The numerical results of the survey are likely to underestimate the extent of the boycott effects because some scholars applied "self boycott" (for example, not applying to conferences abroad, not submitting to certain journals).
2. The academic boycott was more of an irritation than a true obstacle to scholarly progress.
3. In most cases, scholars and libraries were able to circumvent the boycott one way or another—for example, by using "third parties" in less antagonistic countries although with delays and at greater expense.
4. The academic boycott actually had some effects that could be considered beneficial. Lacking convenient access to foreign textbooks, some faculty members wrote

their own, more appropriate to the South African situation; some departments moved from the study of Dutch literature to the study of the domestic literature.

5. The boycott had intangible, psychological effects that are difficult to assess. Many scholars felt left out, isolated, unjustly discriminated against. Suspicions were created—for example, that a submission was really rejected for political reasons, not the reasons claimed, or that the high incidence of inactive research materials, such as biological agents and antibodies, received by South African institutions was not a mere coincidence. Barriers to the free exchange of information with foreign scholars seem not to have improved collaboration at the local level. Indeed, scholars frequently felt that the isolation brought more local acrimony than local harmony.

Writing in 1986 (*Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 3: 59-72), W. H. Shaw pointed out that a boycott can have actual effects or it can be merely "symbolic" (for example, serve to assuage the conscience of individuals who are otherwise passive). That most of the scholars in our study judged the boycott to be an irritant or inconvenience, rather than a significant barrier to scholarly progress, suggests that it proved more a symbolic gesture than an effective agent of change.

## "Academic Boycotts: Some Reflections on the South African Case"

Neville Alexander, University of Cape Town

In the mid-eighties, the academic community in South Africa was rocked by a totally unexpected debate concerning the morality and purpose of an academic boycott of South African universities (and other tertiary educational institutions). The debate began with the "O'Brien Affair". Connor Cruise O'Brien, the Irish academic and politician, in South Africa at the invitation of the University of Cape Town, declared that the academic boycott, viewed in isolation, was ineffective ("Mickey Mouse stuff" in his words !) and that a much more comprehensive approach to the isolation of the "racist Pretoria regime" was called for (without shooting oneself in the foot, as it were).

Even at the best of times, such a "complex" message would have been difficult to communicate. Given the insurrectionist climate among the black youth of South Africa at the time and the defensiveness of white students and some academics, the messenger and the message were bound to be misunderstood. O'Brien was interpreted as saying that the equivocating university authorities who had invited him were "good guys". The students, convinced that the authorities were all unreconstructed "baddies" in league with the evil empire of the apartheid regime, responded with militant rejection. The university authorities and most of the faculty agonized in the cross fire.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of that particular event, the debate expanded until the entire intellectual community of South Africa was involved to one degree or another. We can, I believe, derive some useful observations from these events and their aftermath.

### The Trajectory of Boycott

States usually justify application of economic and diplomatic sanctions as an alternative to settling international disputes by violence. Inevitably, the cultural boycott of the target state follows and the academic boycott is, clearly, a subset of the cultural. This was the trajectory in the South African case. The national liberation organizations saw the isolation of the South African regime as one of an ensemble of strategies which would compel it to move towards the negotiating table. In retrospect, I have no doubt that they were right.

It is, therefore, all the more interesting that they seemed not to notice that differences in the terrain of struggle might require different approaches. For example, it was possible to make out a case if merely at the level of propaganda for so-called universal mandatory economic sanctions as a foolproof tactic for strangling the regime into submission. But, even at the time, many publicists in the labor movement pointed out that, because it inevitably increased already severe unemployment, such a "total boycott" would have devastating consequences for the urban and rural poor. A "total boycott" assumed that human beings-working people especially-were willing instruments in a political game played by elites that had absolute control over them.

At the time, such control seemed not to exist; events since have, I believe, confirmed that it did not. "Total boycott," though popular as slogan, was in practice completely at variance with the immediate interests of most people. The demand that "the people" be "willing" to accept more suffering for a little while longer (Bishop Tutu) is a textbook example of middle-class presumption and of the remoteness of the "leaders" from their "flock"!

### Long-term Assessment

This observation is important because it suggests a longer-term view, planning the boycott on the assumption of victory. The fatal malaise of the South African economy at present is in no small measure the result of the cumulative distortions occasioned by, among other causes, sanctions against the apartheid state, including the academic boycott. If the purpose of sanctions were purely destructive, any sanction could be justified. The boycott would then be the economic equivalent of modern warfare's saturation bombing. But destruction is hardly ever the stated purpose of those who advocate sanctions. Indeed, choosing sanctions rather than warfare implies a constructive, albeit punitive, approach to relations between nations. The advocates of sanctions are necessarily interested in resuming normal relations either with a reformed, if chastened, regime or with a new regime (the former opposition).

In South Africa, the debate over the academic boycott was between broadly liberal academics, on the one hand, and radical academics and activists, on the other. The liberals opposed the academic boycott completely,

arguing both that it transgressed the principles of academic freedom and university autonomy and that it would shut off essential communication between South African scholars and their international counterparts. South Africa would suffer a catastrophic drop in academic standards and an erosion of its economic and technological capacity. The more radical groups insisted that the academic boycott was correct in principle but that it should not punish the robber and the robbed at the same time. They argued for a selective boycott rather than the simpler but impracticable "total boycott" (the slogan of the students in particular).

The practical problem was obvious. Those favoring an academic boycott had no way of monitoring the comings and goings of foreign scholars. They could not prevent racist and even fascist scholars from teaching or doing research at some of the institutions concerned.

Debate over the boycott also raised deep questions concerning the morality and political point of only excluding scholars coming from outside the country when the majority of scholars who supported apartheid were South Africans employed by the very institutions that were to carry out the boycott.

#### **Consensus**

Eventually, consensus was attained, at least in the more left-leaning academic community. All anti-apartheid academics and intellectual activists should band together in academic staff associations explicitly opposed to the regime and committed to the eradication of apartheid. These associations would be mandated, as appropriate, to invite foreign

scholars to South African universities or to prevent them from coming. The boycott should not be a suicidal weapon cutting off all communication between the progressive academic community in the rest of the world and ourselves living in South Africa.

In my view, this understanding came too late. Some of the scholarly backwardness of South Africa today is, I am sure, due to the marooning of much of our scholarship in the 1980s. Take, for example, my own field, education: we were almost completely ignorant of the work that was being done in the 1980s on the question of multilingual pedagogy in such countries as Australia, Belgium, and Canada, not to mention India, Nigeria, Tanzania, and the like. Similar examples from all fields are legion, the direct result of an indiscriminate academic boycott. The boycott was too blunt an instrument for too long.

The question of academic freedom was treated as an aspect of the democratic principle of free expression. Many scholars argued that the universities could not luxuriate in the illusion that they were somehow different from the rest of the country's institutions. The response that the academic boycott was a form of self-censorship was countered by the question why the universities had not taken a principled stand against censorship before the O'Brien Affair spotlighted the issue in the mid-1980s. In short, the self-seeking and elitist nature of the "pure" liberal argument for academic freedom and university autonomy was exposed and, at least for a while, laid to rest.

#### **Final Assessment**

I have no doubt that when a state deliberately and systematically abuses human rights, a case can be made for academic boycott as part of an ensemble of punitive strategies to compel the state to right the situation. But sanctions and boycotts are always two-edged weapons. They should never be instituted without careful consideration of the likely effect on those whom they are supposed to help. Due attention should be given to the probable effects of a successful campaign so that the boycott does not become the proverbial cure worse than the disease.

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#### **"Case for Discussion: Ethics Boycott"**

It is 1990. CSEP has just received a letter from a professor of chemistry at Witwatersrand University, Union of South Africa, asking that he be added to CSEP's mailing list so that he can receive Perspectives (free of charge). Should CSEP treat this request as it would any other and add him to the mailing list? Or should CSEP treat his request differently, should CSEP refuse it outright, ask the chemistry professor his views on apartheid, or in some other way seek to boycott selectively? Does it matter that Witwatersrand is the premier Afrikaner university, a stronghold of apartheid? Would your answer be different if the time were now (rather than 1990) and the letter came from the University of Belgrade (rather than Witwatersrand)? Would it

matter if the letter came from a politician-philosopher like Mihajlo Markovic (rather than from a political chemist)? What role, if any, should the content of Perspectives have in determining what to do?

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### **"Boycott of Serbian Academics"**

Igor Primoratz, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

By now, the basic facts about Serbia's war on its western neighbors are well known-especially, the war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide. What is much less known outside the Balkans is that Serbian intellectuals, and academics in particular, have played a major role in all that.

The latest dispensation of the Greater Serbian ideology, the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (1986), had a crucial role in converting Slobodan Milosevic, originally a Communist apparatchik, to the nationalist cause. Countless Serbian academics (and intellectuals generally) have articulated and promoted the ideology of a greater and ethnically pure Serbia, to be set up in a part of the world extremely mixed ethnically. They have incited to racism, war, "ethnic cleansing", and genocide at home, and engaged in propaganda abroad. Prominent academics have held high political office in the Belgrade government. Almost all the important opposition parties-none

of which opposes the Greater Serbian project, but only some of the details of its realization-are led by well-known academics.

### **Silence that Condone**

To be sure, there are many others who have taken no active part in all that. But they-meaning almost all the remaining Serbian academics-have also failed to oppose the war and the crimes in any way, or even to dissociate themselves from them. Given the nature of Serbia's war on its western neighbors and the character and dimensions of the crimes it has committed and is still committing daily, I think every citizen of Serbia has a moral duty to oppose what is being done in his or her name, or at least to dissociate himself or herself from it. This can be said with particular force of academics. For they deal in words, representations, and ideas, and are particularly well placed to take a public stand and make their views, values, and principles known to their compatriots.

It might be argued that nothing they might have said, written, or done, would have prevented the war, or affected its course in any palpable way. Their protests could only expose them to unpleasant consequences, to no good purpose. But this argument assumes that dissociation and protest have a point and can be a duty only when there is a good chance of affecting things for the better. However, sometimes symbolic protest and dissociation may be appropriate and even morally required. When serious evil or injustice is committed by someone associated with me in a significant way, and in particular when it is committed in the name of the group to which I too

belong, I may protest the evil or injustice, dissociating myself from it and from those perpetrating it, in order to show that it is not perpetrated in my name too. I thereby say something of critical importance about who and what I am, what my beliefs and values are. I also prevent the perpetrators from pretending any longer that they are doing it in my name too. In the words of T. E. Hill, Jr., I protest against their crimes or dissociate myself from them "not so much to keep [my] own hands clean as to avoid white-washing the bloody hands of others" ("Symbolic Protest and Calculated Silence," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 1979). It seems to me that the greater the evil or injustice one should protest or distance oneself from, the more stringent the duty to do so.

### **Role of Academics**

Serbian academics, with very few exceptions, have either taken part in the shaping, promoting, and even carrying out the genocidal Greater Serbian project, or have failed to take any significant steps to dissociate themselves from it. Those who did nothing could, and should, have dissociated themselves. They have a particularly weighty moral duty to do so, since the evil and injustice involved is of the most serious kind: what is being perpetrated in their name too are war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide. Moreover, as academics, they are particularly well placed to make their stand known. I therefore believe that academics the world over should dissociate themselves from their Serbian colleagues. The way to do that the only appropriate way is a comprehensive boycott. We should not collaborate with them in any way, in any framework.

Their research and creative work should not receive any financial assistance from abroad. There should be no exchange of visits. They should not be invited to conferences or given visiting appointments at our colleges, universities, or research institutions. They should not be able to publish their works abroad. Nor should we travel to Serbia, take part in scholarly conferences there, or the like.

### **Rationale for Boycott**

Why? Is this going to exert any influence on them? It might. Some of them, at least, do appreciate the opportunities bound up with being part of a wider academic and cultural community. But even if we cannot be confident that the boycott will have any great influence on Serbian academics, we should boycott them nevertheless. We should do so in order to express our moral repugnance at the deeply racist and genocidal project of Greater Serbia, and the war crimes and crimes against humanity that have been committed, and continue to be committed, in the course of its realization and of all those who devised it and took part in its realization, or have failed to dissociate themselves from it, although they could, and should, have done so. To do anything less, to carry on "business as usual" with Serbian academics, would be tantamount to saying to them that we do not find them at fault in any serious way. And by saying that, we would be compromising our own commitment to the most elementary moral principles, the most basic values of our civilization, which the Serbs have flouted for five years now. We would also be displaying a total lack of concern for, and sympathy with, the hundreds of thousands of

murdered civilians in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the millions of non-Serbs who have been dispossessed and expelled from their ancestral homes, or subjected to a regime of apartheid, in those two countries and within the internationally recognized borders of Serbia itself.

While this boycott should be as comprehensive and thorough as possible in terms of what it covers, it should also be selective in terms of whom it covers. It should cover the overwhelming majority of Serbian academics but there are also those who ought to be exempted. There are Serbian academics who have publicly condemned and protested Serbia's war on its western neighbors and the crimes committed in its course, and dissociated themselves from the Greater Serbia project. It took courage to do so, for they live in an atmosphere of intolerance and outright hostility, and have been declared "bad Serbs," traitors, and the like by almost everybody else in their country. Most of them are members of the Belgrade Circle, a group of some four hundred academics and other intellectuals. They deserve our sympathy, respect, and support. But they are, sadly, such a tiny and conspicuous minority, that it should not be difficult to distinguish them from the rest.

Since its point is to express our emphatic moral condemnation of, and dissociation from, our Serbian colleagues, the boycott cannot infringe their academic freedom or freedom of expression. As J. S. Mill says in a different context, "we have a right...in various ways, to act upon our unfavorable opinion of anyone, not to the oppression of his individuality,

but in the exercise of ours."

### **An Exceptional Case**

Still, academics might find it particularly difficult to boycott other academics. For they are committed to reason and dialog, and are normally expected to carry on a dialog with other academics, even when the collaboration and communication between countries and nations get damaged or completely broken off because of a clash of economic interests or deep political differences. However, the differences the international community has with Serbia are no mere differences of economy or politics. They concern the worst war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide. The differences the international community has with Serbia are over the most basic moral values, values that help define our civilization. When these values are flouted, academics should not fail to take a stand.

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### **"Letter to the Editor"**

Tony Leisner, Tarpon Springs,  
Florida

What a delight to read your coverage of "The Imperial Presidency" ["Journal Ethics", August 1994]. I am the author of the would-be article that caused Tom Gaughan so much trouble. You might be interested in a follow-up.

The American Library Association executive board, for the first time in the association's 125 years, now has a conference-spending budget and guidelines.

From my perspective, it is mission accomplished. No more librarians in limos at the membership's expense. A further result of my efforts was the creation of a self-study committee to examine the structure, power, and relationship of the board to the ALA's goals. The committee recommended a substantial decrease in the role of the board. So, as far as I am concerned, the issue is over. Tom and I are still friends.

To clarify the information you based your article on, let me add some detail. No one from the board ever told me that I might be sued. I told Tom that I would welcome a suit and was looking for the headline in USA Today that shouts "ALA sues member for criticizing them." Recall that this took place just as the United Way scandal broke. Since I was so obviously anxious to be sued and take the issue public, the board decided to focus on the weak link. They went after poor unsophisticated Tom Gaughan. He buckled under quickly. Even though I was an elected member of the ALA governing council, sat on the publishing committee of ALA, and had contributed a \$25,000 scholarship to the ALA, no one was willing to stand up for my intellectual freedom in this instance. I never intended to get Tom sued.

The board's reference to the untruthfulness of the document in question was due to an insignificant error in questionable spending by board members (less than \$500 in a three-year span covering nearly \$125,000). So truth was not really the issue and the board was guilty of pressuring, coercing, and intimidating an editor and the staff. They had been caught with

their hands in the cookie jar and would have gotten away with it had I not faxed my summary of the events to many other council members.

How do I feel about "journalistic integrity" now? I think the term is almost an oxymoron. Most of the mightier-than-thou journalists who decry business people's interest in money sure give up their principles in a hurry when it's their money that's involved.

*Tony Leisner  
Tarpon Springs, Florida*

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**"At the Center"**  
Vivian Weil, CSEP, Illinois  
Institute of Technology

What is it at an academic ethics center that attracts media attention?

Writers from the *Chicago Tribune* and *Fortune Magazine* called more than once for help as they tried to frame their stories dealing with the recently exposed whistleblower at Archer Daniels Midland. The whistleblower, one of that company's rising stars, had begun three years earlier to reveal information about price-fixing to the FBI.

As someone who has studied whistleblowing, I am struck by an unusual feature of this case, an employee cooperating with authorities to disclose information from inside the organization over an extended period of time. For the reporters, it seems, the intriguing discovery is the moral complexity of whistleblowing.

*Science* magazine's issue of June 23, 1995 featured a 14-page special report on ethics in science, covering researchers who have been involved in ethical conflicts and highlighting five institutions including Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) where work on research ethics is in progress. One of the activities at IIT that impressed the *Science* reporter was a voluntary Faculty Scientific Research Ethics Sack Lunch Group that has been meeting for three years. Made up of about 20 regular attendees from across IIT, the group meets at the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions (CSEP) each month of the academic year to discuss an ethics problem.

A recent discussion concerned the trend in certain areas of physics to produce compact papers with 200 to 400 authors. Participants suggested that the terms "paper" and "author" had changed their meaning in these domains.

In connection with the report, *Science* arranged a follow-up interactive discussion on the Internet of cases contributed by the five selected institutions. The case from CSEP concerned a scientist reviewing a proposal for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The scientist, free to consult with her research group to get the best advice for NIH, at the same time risks giving a junior colleague in the group a useful insight from the proposal. The Internet case discussion elicited contributions from scientists who had encountered the problem. They made suggestions for mechanisms to prevent taking advantage of the grant seeker, to give credit, and even to propose collaboration. Interestingly, the title of the report in *Science* did

not mention ethics. It was "Conduct in Science".

Ethics Bowl is a competition created at CSEP, modeled on College Bowl, but featuring special rules allowing for the openness of ethics problem-solving. An intercollegiate event this year, with teams from Loyola and DePaul Universities in Chicago and Western Michigan University, the competition attracted a *Chicago Tribune* reporter. On her mind was the alleged cheating by a Chicago high school team in a recent Illinois Academic Decathlon. The reporter was intrigued when one Ethics Bowl team revealed it had studied the questions in advance, but then she investigated and had to admit that all the teams were given the questions in advance. The rules provided for all the teams to receive a set of possible questions from which the actual questions would be selected.

A project on privatization of local government activities-under development at CSEP for several years-recently received funding from the Joyce Foundation. With the National League of Cities as partner, CSEP formed a project group of academics and practitioners who will examine instances of privatization to produce case profiles of successes and failures and a handbook for local elected officials. This undertaking, titled 'Doing Privatization Right: Practical and Ethical Guidelines for Government Officials,' gets underway just when privatization is grabbing more headlines in the media.

The medium itself inspired a new National Science Foundation supported undertaking at CSEP to

study professionalization of software developers. A combined effort by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE) to develop educational standards, technical standards, and ethical standards for software developers is proceeding by way of deliberations on the Internet. CSEP's study will concentrate on Internet discussions. The unusual access to the deliberative process that this medium affords promises a better understanding of pressures toward professionalization and of obstacles that slow it down.

The final media item is the news that CSEP has its own homepage on the World Wide Web. The address is <http://www.iit.edu/~csep>. We hope that readers of Perspectives will now connect with CSEP through the Internet.

Vivian Weil  
Director, CSEP

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## "Announcements"

**CALL FOR PAPERS:** The fifth Annual Meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics will be held in Saint Louis, Missouri, February 29-March 2, 1996. Open to members and nonmembers from any discipline or profession concerned with practical or professional ethics, the Association invites submissions on ethical concerns in such fields as public administration, law, the environment, accounting,

engineering, computer science, research, business, medicine, journalism, or the academy. Demonstrations in ethics teaching, discussion of moral education, and curriculum development are welcome. Deadline for submissions is October 31, 1995. Contact: APPE, 410 North Park Avenue, Bloomington, IN 47405 (ph. 812-855-6450, fx. 812-855-3315, internet APPE@INDIANA.EDU).

**The 24th Conference on Value Inquiry, *Inherent and Instrumental Values***, will be held at D'Youville College, Buffalo, New York, April 18-20, 1996. Papers and abstracts of papers that address that subject, whether practical or theoretical, are welcome. Early submission advised. Contact: John M. Abbarno, Coordinator, Department of Philosophy, D'Youville College, 320 Parter Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14201 (ph. 716-811-3200 x6540, fx. 716-811-7760).

**The Seventh Annual National Conference on Applied Ethics, *Facing the Challenge: The Ethical Stretch***, will be held in Long Beach, California, March 8-9, 1996, to promote continuous improvement in the practice and theory of ethics across the professions. Contact Delona Davis, Conference Coordinator, California State University, 6300 State University Drive, Long Beach CA 90815 (ph. 310-985-8446, e-mail ddavis@sculb.edu).

**The Seventh International Corruption Conference** will be held in Beijing, China, October 6-10, 1995. Contact Mr. Tao Hao, CICCST/IACC'95, 44, Kexueyuan Nan Lu, Shuang Yushu, Beijing 100086, China.

**The Ethics Officer Association will hold its Third Annual Conference, *Meeting the Challenges of the Job—Workshops for Ethics Practitioners*, in Toronto, Ontario, October 18-20, 1995. Topics include positioning the ethics office, coordinating investigations, keeping ethics a priority, dealing with people in crisis, health care fraud, ethics and the securities industry, international ethical issues, and moving senior management. Contact: Dr. W. Michael Hoffman, Executive Director, Ethics Officer Association, Center for Business Ethics, Bentley College, Waltham, MA 02154 (ph. 617-891-3434).**

**The Second Annual International Conference Promoting Business Ethics, *From the Universities of the Market Place: The Business Ethics Journey*, will be held at St. John's College, Jamaica, New York, November 3-4, 1995. Contact: Prof. Mary Maury, Ethics Coordinator, College of Business Administration, St. John's University, 8000 Utopia Parkway, Jamaica, NY 11439 (ph. 718-990-6161 x7356, fx. 718-990-1868).**

**The Second International Conference for Business Leaders, *Building a Global Ethic for Business in a Global Economy*, will be held in Columbia, Ohio, November 8-10, 1995. Contact: Lauren B. Grandall, Membership and Corporate Relations Officer, Council for Ethics in Economics, 125 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43215-3605 (ph. 614-221-8661, fx. 614-221-8707).**

**The Kellogg Environment**

**Research Center and the Kellogg Center for Ethical Issues in Business will co-sponsor a conference, *Psychology Perspectives to Environmental Ethical Issues in Management*, December 8-10, 1995, in Evanston, Illinois. Contact: Katie Shonk, KGSM-OB, 2001 Sheridan Road, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60208-2011 (ph. 708-491-8065, fx. 708-467-2153, e-mail kshonk@merle.acns.nwu.edu).**

***PASE'96: Professional Awareness in Software Engineering* will be held in London, England, February 1-2, 1996, to provide an interdisciplinary platform for discussion of such topics as the structure of the software industry as a profession, working practices, ethical and legal responsibilities and liabilities, and equal opportunities. Contact: PASE'96, School of Computer Science, University of Westminster, 115 New Cavendish Street, London W1M 8JS (ph. 0171-911-5000, fx. 0171-911-5089).**

**SPECIAL OFFER From CSEP's Publications *Beyond Whistleblowing: Defining Engineers' Responsibilities*, edited by Vivian Weil, published by CSEP under a grant from the EVIST program of the National Science Foundation, is now available from CSEP for \$5.00. The original cost was \$7.00. This volume derives from the proceedings of the 1982 Conference on Engineering Ethics, which was hosted by CSEP. Papers by Kenneth Alpern,**

Thomas Donaldson, Albert Flores, John Ladd, Heinz Luegenbiehl, Martin Malin, and Larry May are among those published in journals and brought together here in one volume. Included are additional papers not published elsewhere, commentators' replies to papers, an introduction by the editor, and a bibliography.

The papers focus on individual moral choice for engineers, and ethical aspects of institutional practices and public policy decisions with relevance for engineers. Topics covered include protection for whistleblowers, engineers' rights and responsibilities, implications of government regulation for the responsibilities of engineers, risk assessment, the use of cost-benefit analysis in decision making, creating an ethical work environment, and the responsibilities of professional societies. The volume contains additional essays geared to teaching and to engineering education.

The Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions (CSEP) was established in 1976 for the purpose of promoting education and the scholarship relating to ethical and policy issues of the professions. *Perspectives on the Professions* is one of the means the Center has of achieving that purpose

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