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December 1, 2001

Ambivalent Academe

To the Editor:

Re "On the Lookout for Patriotic Incorrectness" (Arts & Ideas pages, Nov. 24):

Our report, "Defending Civilization," documents academe's disturbingly ambivalent response to the Sept. 11 attacks. You assert that we accuse professors of anti-American statements, unpatriotic behavior and disloyal acts — but these words are never used in the report.

You quote a professor as saying there is a "whiff of McCarthyism," but we say free speech should be "passionately defended." You say others talked of a blacklist, though the only "list" is the citations that document the campus response.

As you noted, our major recommendation is restoring requirements in American history and Western civilization.

This country is in a life-or-death struggle. The enemy may strike at any place, with any weapons. We need to have the moral clarity to call evil by its name. And we need to understand the civilization we are defending. That was the point of our report.

JERRY L. MARTIN

ANNE D. NEAL

Washington, Nov. 28, 2001

The writers are, respectively, president and vice president, American Council of Trustees and Alumni.

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[Arts & Ideas: An Organization on the Lookout for Patriotic Incorrectness](#) (November 24, 2001)

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