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## Politics in class erodes public trust

The Boston Globe

August 7, 2006

ACADEMIC FREEDOM is not freedom from criticism or freedom from responsibility. That is what the American Council of Trustees and Alumni has been saying since well before Sept. 11. But you wouldn't know that reading Globe correspondent Neve Gordon's misguided review ([Living/Arts, Aug. 2](#)) of the book "Academic Freedom After September 11," which accuses ACTA of attempting to impose a political orthodoxy on the academy.

In truth, ACTA is the true defender of academic freedom, calling the academy back to first principles. As we document in our latest report, "How Many Ward Churchills?", course catalogs and faculty websites nationwide indicate that professors are pushing a political agenda in their classrooms.

This flies in the face of seminal statements such as the American Association of University Professors' 1915 "Declaration of Principles," which condemns "taking unfair advantage of the student's immaturity by indoctrinating him with the teacher's own opinions."

Contrary to what Gordon suggests, the threat to academic freedom today actually comes from the continuing defense by so many in the academy -- in the name of "academic freedom" -- of classroom politicization and ideological homogeneity.

Such tactics are rapidly eroding the public's trust, without which the special autonomy granted to higher education will not long survive.

**ANNE D. NEAL**  
President  
American Council of Trustees and Alumni  
Washington ■

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