

The History of Academic Freedom and Activism at UF

28 January 2013, 6:00-7:30 pm, Smathers Library (East) 1A

This panel and audience discussion will address the history and legacy of academic freedom and activism at the University of Florida in the 1960s and 1970s. Participants in the round-table will offer their thoughts on the nature of activism of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students at UF and in Gainesville, particularly during the period of the civil rights movement, Vietnam protests, the Johns Committee, and Roe vs. Wade. They will measure the implications of involvement in political causes on freedom of expression on campus, faculty tenure, the creation of faculty and graduate student unions, the viability of a student-led campus newspaper, and life in Gainesville more generally. Following four ten-minute presentations, there will be time for a question and answer period and more broad discussion of these issues.

Moderator:

Malini Johar Schueller, Department of English (University of Florida)

Panelists:

Michael Falcone, Department of History (Northwestern University)

Deeb Paul Kitchen II, Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences (Florida Gulf Coast University)

Paul Ortiz, Department of History (University of Florida)

Ron Sachs, Ron Sachs Communications (a Florida-based public relations firm)

- **Refreshments will be served.**
- This event is free and open to the public.
- For more information, contact humanities-center@ufl.edu.

Links of Interest

- "[Academic Freedom at the University of Florida](#)," by Christopher Crenshaw, Michael Falcone, Sarah Kleinman, Josh Krusell, Elizabeth McNeill, and Peter Sanders. A special section in *Alpata: A Journal of History* 9 (Spring 2012): 1-19.
- "[Alternative UF: Counterculture through the Decades](#)," an online exhibition on campus activism at the University of Florida during the Age of Protest. Presented by UF Smathers Libraries, selected from an exhibition displayed April 20 - May 31, 2009.
- "[Academic Freedom at the University of Florida](#)," by Richard R. Renner and John V. Godbold. In *The Educational Forum* 35,2 (1971): 167-71.

About the Discussants

Michael Falcone (Panelist) is a PhD candidate at Northwestern University. He received both the BA and MA from the University of Florida, where he researched local radicalism, the dissemination of alternative cultures, and the development of regional antiwar organizing during the Vietnam period. His current research explores the political left's relationships to military-industrial technology in the 1960s and 70s. He lives in Chicago, Illinois.

Deeb Paul Kitchen II (Panelist) is an instructor at Florida Gulf Coast University. He received his PhD in sociology from the University of Florida, where his dissertation entitled “The Union Makes Us Strong: A Case Study in the Graduate Labor Movement” examined organizing work in the UF Graduate Assistants United organization. While in graduate school, he served as co-president of UFGAU from 2006-2009, a grievance officer, and member of the bargaining team. His article entitled “On Graduate Unions and Corporatization” was published in *The Journal of Collective Bargaining in the Academy*, and a second article entitled “A Critical View of Graduate Unions” is forthcoming in *Societies Without Borders*.

Paul Ortiz (Panelist) serves as director of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program and associate professor of history at the University of Florida. He is the author of the book *Emancipation Betrayed* (2005) and co-author of *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Talk about Life in the Jim Crow South* (2008). He is the recipient of the Lillian Smith Book Prize awarded by the Southern Regional Council, the Carey McWilliams Book Prize awarded by the Multicultural Review, and the Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Book Prize awarded by the Florida Historical Society. Prof. Ortiz is a veteran of the United States Army, faculty adviser for the UF Student Farmworker Alliance and the Venezuelan Student Association, and a member of the United Faculty of Florida’s executive committee.

Ron Sachs (Panelist), a Tallahassee-based media veteran, is an Emmy-Award-winning newspaper, magazine, and television journalist. The former chairman of the highly regarded Leadership Florida, Mr. Sachs has served two Florida governors as senior communications counsel and worked in corporate and non-profit work. His current firm, Ron Sachs Communications, works actively in public affairs issues and crisis work. In late 1971, when Ron Sachs was a University of Florida student and editor at *The Alligator* newspaper, he approved the printing of an insert with the addresses of known abortion counseling agencies (when abortion was illegal in Florida). After a public controversy and legal battle with then UF-President Stephen C. O’Connell, the university president took action to force the newspaper off campus -- with some ensured initial subsidies in advertising contracts -- thus giving birth to *The Independent Florida Alligator*.

Malini Johar Schueller (Moderator) is a Professor of English at the University of Florida, where she has been member of the faculty since 1986. She is the author of several books examining postcolonial and critical race theory and U.S. empire studies, including *The Politics of Voice: Liberalism and Social Criticism from Franklin to Kingston* (1992), *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790–1890* (1998), and *Locating Race: Global Sites of Post-Colonial Citizenship* (2009). She has co-edited three essay collections, including *Exceptional State: Contemporary U.S. Culture and the New Imperialism* (2007), and *Dangerous Professors: Academic Freedom and Labor* (2009).

Humanizing Conversations

Following the 2011-2012 speaker series “[Rehumanizing the University: New Perspectives on the Liberal Arts](#),” the Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere invites UF faculty, students, and members of the public to join in this series of panel discussions on academic freedom and activism; racial, gender, and ethnic integration; sexual freedom; dialogues between sciences and humanities; and the impact of market forces at the University of Florida (and North Florida more generally).