

# Jackboots in the Canadian Academy. Freedom of Expression and Inquiry Under Threat ... Again.

University of Lethbridge, Alberta

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Global Research, December 04, 2017

Region: [Canada](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [Police State](#)  
& [Civil Rights](#)

*Featured image: Professor Anthony Hall (Source: [Defending Professor Anthony Hall's Facebook Page](#))*

*Freedom of Speech battles in universities often mirror problems in the larger community, and the one being fought at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, is no exception. It is conducted, on one side, by convinced believers as a response to alleged Anti-semitic positions which have surfaced there and which, the believers think, need relentless, radical, extreme responses.*

*Conversely, the conflict looks, to some others, perhaps, as a program to create a huge smokescreen behind which representatives or friends or sympathizers of the State of Israel can attempt to cut off any examination of that State's activities which might bring it into disrepute. And the quickest method is to brand any adverse references to the accounts of history held by the State of Israel as well as to any of its actions and policies as acts of Anti-semitism.*

Forces wishing to dominate and to dictate inquiry and to control "freedom of expression" *always* seek to repress certain kinds of knowledge, investigation, and expressions of opinion.

In the late 1980s I was proposed for a year's exchange with a professor in Simon Fraser University's English Department - at the time dominated by U.S. immigrants holding U.S. citizenship. They rejected my presence at SFU - and were backed belligerently by SFU's Canadian president who was quoted in the Vancouver Sun saying that he wouldn't have Robin Mathews on his campus and he didn't know a university president in Canada who would! (Amusing slander, but slander nonetheless.)

(If William Saywell's comment sounds like an utterance by present University of Lethbridge president Michael Mahon it may be because both men appear to have fallen to thinking they could dispose of human persons in any way a passing whim suggested ... and to make no bones about it!)

The U.S. citizen chair of the SFU English Department wrote me a letter saying that many people in the Department disliked my views on literary and cultural nationalism in Canada and did not want to give me a place at SFU to utter them. That was a ban on free (scholarly) expression. I took it to mean, also, that U.S. citizens intended to decide what Canadians could say to Canadians in British Columbia.

There was a battle. It was long ... months and months. The national faculty body (the CAUT) was strong. It declared SFU in violation of academic freedom. At that point, SFU admitted it had lost. The intensity of the battle is hard to think of now - the basis of it is so *apparently* minor. Reports, however, were that “grown men” at SFU interviewed on the matter almost burst into tears. And, indeed, passions were running so high the SFU Administration asked me if I would teach from the Centre for Canadian Studies rather than from the bent, bleeding, and discountenanced English Department.

*That* battle was won at SFU for freedom of expression and inquiry! But the personal victory was muted because president Saywell and a few of his closest underlings, I believe, did everything they could in the next years to limit my effectiveness. No surprise. “The fortunes” one might say “of (academic) war”.

At the University of Lethbridge twenty-six-year professorial veteran of Native American Studies, Liberal Arts, Globalization Studies ... and more ... Anthony Hall has responded with invention, far-reaching research, and creativity to the hugeness of the body of knowledge he has taken as his province. In two large, scholarly, and fascinating works (*The American Empire and the Fourth World* (2003), and *Earth Into Property* (2010)) Hall traces the oppression and exploitation of the globe’s indigenous peoples since the historic voyage to “the new world” of Christopher Columbus in 1492.

As a result of his wide-ranging research (and travel) Anthony Hall couldn’t fail to see the power and to observe the participation of the U.S.A. in what he names “imperial globalization”. Nor could he evade the intimate ties between the State of Israel and the U.S.A. Nor, of course, could he fail to see the huge influence the State of Israel has upon U.S. policy in the Middle East (a region populated with indigenous peoples, like the Palestinians).

He is, moreover, a scholar who believes genuinely that no subject worthy of study can be declared ‘off limits’ - whether Canadian culture and literary nationalism or the complex “Holocaust” in Nazi Germany operated preceding and during what we choose to call The Second World War (1939-1945). Donning the apparel of true scholars everywhere, Professor Hall accepts that there is no historical, scientific, or cultural fact - however apparently sunk in concrete - that cannot be revisited, re-opened, re-weighed, re-examined, reassessed.

Closer to home, professor Hall has paid attention to the rising tide of voices in the U.S.A. and Canada which claims the “official” account of 9/11 (of, that is to say, the destruction of the Trade Towers in New York on September 11, 2001) was, has been, and is the product of a huge Conspiracy by complex powers (involving U.S. government) producing a Conspiracy *Theory* created to mislead everyone and to place the blame for the event on people of Islam, especially in the Middle East ... people, incidentally, who have become, it would seem, ‘by the accident of history’, enemies - in fact - of both the U.S.A. and the State of Israel.

And so ... if more and more authentic voices are saying “the official account” of 9/11 was created by government and Secret Intelligence Conspiracy Theorists wanting to pin onto Islam the guilt of 9/11 ... a question forces itself forward. If the formally accused did not ... *then who did organize and carry out* the destruction of the buildings of the World Trade Centre (and of the building which, a little later, simply appeared to collapse into rubble without any apparent cause)?

Also, since September 11, 2001 an increasing number of so-called “terrorist” events and

attacks have occurred all over the Western World and have (by persistent and often careful and scholarly non government-approved examination) been called by investigators arising in the population “faked events” or what is called “False Flags” undertaken (it is alleged) to terrify innocent Western populations and to condition them to accept “Islam” (in a hundred different forms) as the over-arching enemy of the peace-loving and (mostly) Christian West. In answer to the very active, very numerous, and wholly ‘un-government’ on-going operations and investigations into those “terrorist” events, Anthony Hall has found himself a co-host of “The False Flag Weekly News”.

It is hugely relevant to the whole subject (and especially to Canadians) that in July, 2016, Madam Justice Catherine Bruce in the B.C. Supreme Court declared that an attempted “Islamic Terrorist Event” at the B.C. legislature grounds on July 1, 2013, was, in fact, wholly the work of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, [a major False Flag event] entrapping socially challenged converts to Islam, counselling them, coaching them, assisting them, giving them money, and delivering them to the terrorist site ... and then arresting them as terrorist criminals ... caught in the act! *For all those who say that people questioning terrorist events are ‘conspiracy theorists’ making up lies – the highly organized RCMP criminal action proves absolutely that at least one State – Canada – has engaged in a major False Flag event* in order to slander Islam. It did so employing hundreds of RCMP and millions of dollars of Canadian taxpayers’ funds (during the Conservative government led by Stephen Harper).

Subsequently, in answer to a call for a Public Inquiry into the RCMP, (Liberal) Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Ralph Goodale, responding for the Liberal, Justin Trudeau cabinet, expressed, in effect, approval of organized criminal activity on the part of the RCMP... what he calls in his letter the RCMP’s “major crime technique”. Nowhere in the letter does he refer to the request for a Public Inquiry, instead urging understanding and support for the Force he gives evidence of accepting as a criminal organization....

If the officially declared Islamic men did not plan, organize, and carry out what we call 9/11 ... then who did? All possibilities are open for consideration. One of them was that the State of Israel could have been involved. While that claim may be completely false, the hosts running The False Flag Weekly News, Kevin Barrett and Anthony Hall, would nonetheless air the possibilities (among many others) on their weekly program. And they did ... and, apparently Professor Hall was not unsympathetic to the idea that the State of Israel could have had a hand in the events of 9/11.

Then: in an astonishing event on Friday, August 26, 2016 when Anthony Hall was out of Canada, *someone* placed a despicable, violently Anti-semitic cartoon on his Facebook Page ... completely unknown to Hall. With truly remarkable speed, organizations and individuals, some apparently supporting the State of Israel went to work *as if Anthony Hall was wholly guilty of the posting on his Facebook Page*. People from outside the University, a few who would normally be thought of as related to the State of Israel in one way or another, pressed upon the University Administration, the police, officers of the Alberta government...and more. (The Alberta government, it seems, has insisted upon keeping secret some of the names of those complaining.)

If one were to suggest the possibility that a carefully staged campaign was unleashed against Anthony Hall, one might not be wrong to so suggest. The University Administration filed a complaint against Hall with Alberta Human Rights. The complaint was rejected. And so the University Administration filed another one.

In an action (some believe) marked by intemperance and folly - without having exchanged a single word with Professor Hall, a senior academic colleague - president Michael Mahon of the University of Lethbridge ordered Hall off every University of Lethbridge campus and suspended him without pay. He did those things while completely ignoring ALL carefully constructed processes within the university for managing complaints against professorial staff. The processes are written into almost every university faculty/administration agreement in Canada and have been honed and improved over many decades.

Slander and libel filled the Lethbridge air to match the wholly unacceptable actions of the University of Lethbridge Administration and Board of Governors. Nonetheless, the national faculty body, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and the local Faculty Association held firm - the CAUT naming the University of Lethbridge in Violation of Academic Freedom, not a light designation in the university world in Canada. In a court procedure weighing the actions, a little later, the Administration of the university won over neither the judge presiding nor the Alberta government represented at the process.

And so on November 23, 2017, the University of Lethbridge Administration reinstated Professor Hall, lifting all sanctions against him and announcing it would also withdraw its complaint against him to Alberta Human Rights. After fifteen months of attempted Jackboot Justice, the Administration at the University of Lethbridge agreed to use the processes long set up to provide fair and impartial judgments of complaints against faculty members. At one level the return to civility by the University of Lethbridge Administration is a victory for democratic forces in Canada. But at another level its long hold-out, a period filled with injustice to Anthony Hall as well as being filled with violent language and slander, will long remain a scandal in the Canadian Academy.

On the same day - November 23, 2017 - a top B'nai Brith official declared that B'nai Brith is "outraged" at Professor Hall's full reinstatement which is coupled with the move to due process in the examination of complaints against him.

***Robin Mathews*** is renowned Canadian poet and university professor

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