

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910865240803321
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Titolo	Culture Wars, Universities, and the Political Unconscious / / by Robert Samuels
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cham : , : Springer Nature Switzerland : , : Imprint : Palgrave Macmillan, , 2024
ISBN	9783031612275 9783031612268
Edizione	[1st ed. 2024.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (0 pages)
Disciplina	150.195
Soggetti	Psychoanalysis Critical psychology Ethnopsychology Personality Difference (Psychology) Social psychology Cultural policy Critical Psychology Cross-Cultural Psychology Personality and Differential Psychology Cultural Psychology Cultural Policy and Politics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	1 Culture Wars and the Political Unconscious -- 2 The Centrist History of the Culture Wars -- 3 Allan Bloom and the Origins of the Contemporary Culture War -- 4 A Well-Funded Political Conspiracy -- 5 Cancel Culture, Free Speech, and the Center-Right -- 6 Ben Shapiro, Higher Education, and the New Cold War McCarthyism -- 7 Ted Cruz, Paranoia, and the Cultural Marxism Conspiracy -- 8 Walter Benn Michaels and the Leftist Case Against Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion -- 9 Left-Wing Educational Racism and Anti-Racism -- 10 Antisemitism, Free Speech, and the Political Unconscious -- 11 Beyond the Culture

Sommario/riassunto

This book argues that whenever we are talking about cancel culture, identity politics, political correctness, antisemitism, conspiracy theories, or the alt-Right, we are dealing with a culture war, which often pits two sides against each other in a split world of good and evil. These political representations rely on a set of unconscious processes best understood through psychoanalysis. As this book argues, if you want to comprehend the rhetoric of the Right, the Left, conservatives, and centrists, it is necessary to see how these ideologies rely on unacknowledged defense mechanisms, fantasies, fears, and desires. In fact, if we do not employ psychoanalytic concepts to examine our political investments, we will be unable to get to the root causes driving these social productions. Each chapter of this book looks at a specific writer's or politician's take on contemporary culture wars. One of the reoccurring themes concerns the way free speech has been weaponized by different ideological formations, and this battle over free expression is often centered on the role that universities play in balancing the demands among competing social interests. This book will not only clarify what universities should be, but it will also help us to move beyond our polarized political world. Robert Samuels is a Senior Continuing Lecturer at UC Santa Barbara, USA. He holds doctorates in Psychology and English, and he is the author of twenty books, including *Viral Rhetoric*, *The Psychopathology of Political Ideology*, and *Freud for the Twenty-First Century* (Palgrave, 2021).

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