

Dr. Clarence Y. Lo planning an in-depth study of emergence of a "new right" in the country

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Last year Californians overwhelmingly approved Proposition 13, after soundly rejecting similar tax slashing measures in years past. Currently, the Equal Rights Amendment runs into constant hurdles from organized groups while others organize to fight the SALT talks, the Panama Canal Treaty and legalized abortions for women.

There seems to be an emergence of a "new right" in the country, a phenomenon about which Dr. Clarence Y. Lo, a lecturer in sociology at the University of California, San Diego, is planning an in-depth study.

"What we're trying to understand is how the movements of the late 70s, the tax protest, for instance, becomes something almost commonsensical, a bandwagon that everybody jumps on," says Lo, who will move to UCLA as an assistant professor in the fall.

"A few years ago these notions that Howard Jarvis and the tax protesters are raising were considered irrational, and the people who raised them were considered 'kooks'," Lo said.

"Even on a number of other issues there is a resurgence of conservative thought and ideas," he continued. "For example the 'Right to Life' movement and the anti-ERA sentiment seems to be gaining a fair amount of popular support. In the late 60s there was concern about improving the situation of minorities, but now the emphasis seems to be on limiting them."

To try to understand the apparent shift in attitudes from liberal to conservative, Lo has organized a series of four seminars at UC San Diego during the next three months.

The first seminar is scheduled for Wednesday, May 16 with Dr. Andrew Feenberg, professor of philosophy at San Diego State University. Dr. Harry Gene Levine with the Social Research Group at UC Berkeley will speak on May 30; Dr. Michael P. Rogin, professor of political science at UC Berkeley, will speak on July 25, and Dr. Barton J. Bernstein, professor of history at Stanford University, will speak on July 25.

"Basically, the idea that we are working on in this project is that conservative protest is moving from something that has been isolated from the mainstream of American society to something that really does have resonance in popular currents," said Lo. "And what we are trying to understand are the reasons for the sudden shift."

The seminar series has been funded by the California Council for the Humanities in Public Policy, a state based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Lo attributes the rise of the "New Right" in part to the breakdown of classic liberal approaches to problems including Keynesian economic policy "where you just expand government spending and hope to keep the economy going on this basis.

"What we are going to be looking at is some of these liberal economic policies and how they produce conditions around which some of the conservatives are mobilizing."

Lo earned his bachelor's degree at Harvard University and attended the London School of Economics and Political Science before graduating from UC Berkeley last year with his Ph.D. in sociology.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The seminars are open to the press. Please see attached schedule for specific times and locations.

MEETINGS OF THE STUDIES OF THE RIGHT SEMINAR

Meeting will be held on alternate Wednesday nights, at 7 p.m. in room 7077, Humanities and Social Sciences Building, Muir campus.

May 16, 1979 - Dr. Andrew Feenberg, Philosophy Department, San Diego State University. "Laissez Faire Ideology and Capitalist Planning: The Politics of Blame in Contemporary America." Professor Feenberg is an editor of the journal, Theory and Society and is the author of articles on Lukacs, technology, and on French politics.

May 30, 1979 - Dr. Harry Gene Levine, Social Research Group, University of California, Berkeley. "Middle Class Culture in America". Dr. Levine has written extensively on the history of the temperance movement and the development of middle class culture.

June 27, 1979 - Dr. Michael Rogin, Political Science Department, University of California, Berkeley. "Punishment and State Worship in the Novels of Herman Melville". Professor Rogin wrote The Intellectuals and McCarthy, a critique of the pluralist views of the radical right, and Fathers and Children, a psycho-historical study of Andrew Jackson and the treatment of Native Americans.

July 25, 1979 - Dr. Barton J. Bernstein, History Department, Stanford University. "Conservative Opposition to Liberal Foreign and Economic Policies in the U.S., 1945-1953". Professor Bernstein is a leading revisionist historian of twentieth century America and has authored many works about the Truman administration.

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