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Roschel Performing Arts Center

MEMORIES OF
McCARTHYISM

IN THE AGE OF TRUMP

ELLEN SCHRECKER
Professor Emerita, Yeshiva University

Author of Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America; No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities; and The Lost Soul Of Higher Education: Corporatization, The Assault On Academic Freedom, And The End Of The American University

Moderator:
J. RICHARD GRAY, Mayor of Lancaster

From 1947 to 1960, the United States experienced the sustained repression of free speech and the right to dissent in the name of national security. Thousands of Americans who belonged to organizations deemed “un-American” lost their livelihoods, and hundreds were jailed or driven into exile. Self-censorship and the threat of FBI investigations enforced a narrow consensus on issues of war and peace in schools, universities, and the press.

Sixty years later, in an increasingly polarized country, are we at risk of again calling some Americans “un-American?” Will new demagogues arise to label their political opponents “traitors,” as Senator Joseph McCarthy did with great success and the support of many other leading politicians in both parties? What are the moral and historical consequences of staying silent in an age of fear?

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