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## **STRANGERS IN THEIR OWN LAND: ALLEGORY, EMOTION AND THE AMERICAN RIGHT**



**PUBLIC LECTURE BY**

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BUILDING, GELLNER ROOM**

**ABSTRACT** | In much of the world, the gap between rich and poor has widened. Yet, across Europe and the U.S. many rising right-wing groups oppose the very idea of equality. Why? Based on new fieldwork on the U.S. Tea Party –embraced by some quarter to a third of all voting Americans, I ask: How does emotion underlie political belief? In answer, I propose the concept of the “deep story.”

This is a collectively-shared, honor-focused, “feels-as-if” story. In it, a man is standing in line for a ticket – one which confers much deserved honor and monetary reward. At the front of the line, someone behind a dark glass window hands out tickets. In front and in back are fellow applicants in line. To the side, is an official supervisor, apparently fair to all in the line. Then intruders “cut into” the front of the line. Others follow. They are cheating and the supervisor is their ally. Who’s line is this? If not mine, who am I? The story moves from there. Tickets are for the American Dream -- now at a stand-still, and feared to be fading away. The supervisor is the American president. Those cutting in line are immigrants, blacks, public sector workers. Behind the Deep Story is what I call an “honor squeeze.” It is this crisis of honor which motivates peoples to so actively protect their waiting-in-line story. The story itself comes to determine what they want to feel, and want to know. Members of the American Tea Party re-affirm their story with politically pre-strained news and fend off sympathy appeals from those guided by other allegories.

Liberals have their “deep story” too. Each story – that of conservative and liberal, local and cosmopolitan– implies its own blind spots and its own sphere of “not-seeing.” Paradoxically, both are struggling with the same dilemma, albeit by different strategies - the latest challenges of global capitalism.

**BIO** | University of California, Berkeley sociologist, Arlie Russell Hochschild is the author of the eight books, including *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home* and *The Time Bind, When Home Becomes Work and Work Becomes Home*. Other books include *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Intimate Life* and *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers* (co-edited with Barbara Ehrenreich.) In *The Outsourced Self : Intimate Life in Market Times*, she examines the ways we keep personal life “personal” even as we turn over increasing parts of it to the market . In *So How’s the Family? And Other Essays*, she lays out the powerful links between government policy, social class and family. She’s at work on a book on the emotional appeal of the Tea Party. She has received many awards, most recently the Ulysses Medal from the University College Dublin Three of her books have been named to the New York Times “Notable Books of the Year” list and plays have been based on two. She has spoken at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland and at a seminar hosted by Pope John Paul II at Castel Gandolfo. Her work appears in sixteen languages.