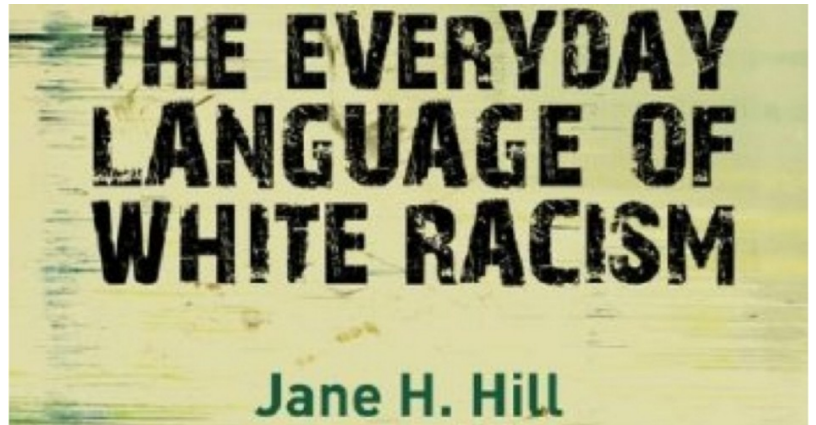




Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 27, 2015

Crazy on Campus: U.S. Colleges — Where Truth Is Always Stranger Than Fiction

“There are some ideas so absurd that only an intellectual could believe them,” noted 1984 author George Orwell. Yet even he might be surprised at what passes for scholarship at today’s American colleges. And many parents certainly would be shocked to learn what their \$35,000 to \$120,000 — the current average public/private cost of four-years’ college tuition and fees — is buying.



A good example is a new course offering at Arizona State University concerning the “Problem of Whiteness.” While the class syllabus isn’t available online, Campus Reform’s Lauren Clark [tells us](#), “According to the class description on ASU’s website, students will be reading *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, *Critical Race Theory*, *Everyday Language of White Racism*, *Playing in the Dark*, and *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*.”

Clark also appeared in a Friday segment of *Fox and Friends*, where she spoke to co-host Elizabeth Hasselback. As TalkingPointsMemo.com [wrote](#) of the exchange:

“All of these books have a disturbing trend and that’s pointing to all white people as the root cause of social injustices for this country,” Clark said.

Hasselback then asked Clark whether ASU would dare offer a course called “The Problem With Blackness” or “The Problem With Being Female.”

“I don’t think that would fly at the university,” Clark responded.... “Having a class that suggests an entire race is the problem is inappropriate, wrong, and quite frankly, counter productive.”

The “class” is taught by Assistant Professor Lee Bebout, who is white. He “declined to comment Friday,” [reported](#) AZCentral.com, “writing in an e-mail that ‘the last 24 hours have been stressful with some of the vitriolic hate-mail that I have received.’” Ah, the problems of a white guy teaching the Problem of Whiteness.

Then we have the problem of dead white maleness. This is again an issue, this time at the University of California, Berkeley, where two students [wrote](#) an op-ed in the *Daily Californian* “calling for an occupation of syllabi in the social sciences and humanities.” The students, Rodrigo Kazuo and Meg Perret, complain:

The course syllabus employed a standardized canon of theory that began with Plato and Aristotle, then jumped to modern philosophers: Hobbes, Locke, Hegel, Marx, Weber and Foucault, all of whom are white men.

... The white male canon is not sufficient for theorizing the lives of marginalized people.

... The classroom environment felt so hostile to women, people of color, queer folks and other marginalized subjects that it was difficult for us to focus on the course material. Sometimes, we were so uncomfortable that we had to leave the classroom in the middle of lecture.



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... We must dismantle the tyranny of the white male syllabus. We must demand the inclusion of women, people of color and LGBTQ* authors on our curricula.

The students close with, “Is it really worth it to accumulate debt for such an epistemically poor education?” That’s debatable — but many would suspect that the money spent on Kazuo’s and Perret’s education certainly has been wasted.

Of course, there are men — even if they are white — who aren’t out of fashion: men who identify as women.

And students and alumni at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, are taking up the cudgels for them, pressuring their all-women’s institution to accept them as students. As Campus Reform’s Yvonne Dean-Bailey [reports](#), “Smith students have created a Tumblr blog called [Smith Q and A](#) that advocates for transgender-friendly admissions policies.”

Students and alumni at Smith are also raising money for a scholarship specifically for illegal migrants. The college already allows illegals to apply, but that’s apparently not enough because they “are placed into the pool of international students, which can be ‘twice as competitive’ as the pool of domestic students,” [writes](#) Bailey. She also tells us, “Currently, New York University [offers scholarships](#) to illegal immigrants, and [Harvard University](#) recently gave a full ride to a student when he informed them that he was residing in the country illegally.”

As for the men identifying as women, several women’s colleges now already accept them, “including Mount Holyoke College, Simmons College, Scripps College, and Mills College,” [reports](#) Bailey.

So the idea today is that no matter who you are, what you are, or what you think you are, you should get special treatment — unless you’re a white-guy-identifying white guy. Then you should be called on last in class discussions, in the name of fairness, [according](#) to panel of professors and activists at Dalhousie University in Canada.

Then again, old leftists could be passé, too — if they don’t stay on the cutting edge of societal devolution. Sixty-one-year-old feminist Eve Ensler is learning this the hard way. It was announced recently that students at the aforementioned all-female liberal arts school Mount Holyoke College will no longer put on her play *The Vagina Monologues*. Explaining their break with the decade-long tradition of showing the work every Valentine’s Day (traditions don’t last long among the situational-values set), the students say, [reports](#) *The Guardian*, that it’s “inherently reductionist and exclusive” and just not “as relevant now as when it was first written” — way back in the Dark Ages of 1996. The paper continues:

“At its core, the show offers an extremely narrow perspective on what it means to be a woman,” an email circulated among members of the college’s Project [Theatre](#) group states.

The note ... continues: “Gender is a wide and varied experience, one that cannot simply be reduced to biological or anatomical distinctions, and many of us who have participated in the show have grown increasingly uncomfortable.

And when leftists become uncomfortable, to the gulag you go.

For Ensler’s part, she defended her play against the accusation it was “transphobic,” [saying](#) that it “never said, for example, the definition of a woman is someone who has a vagina.”

But out with the old and in with the new. And this brings us to Florida State University (FSU) senior Lena Weissbrot, who Campus Reform’s Maggie Lit [tells us](#) “has become an Internet sensation for her



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rap videos and artistic works about menstruation, rape culture and feminist issues.”

Oh, yeah, this is funded with FSU grant money.

As Lit writes:

Weissbrot received a \$4,000 academic grant and was the recipient of FSU’s Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award her sophomore year for her 50-page digital creation of “[Maybe She Likes It: A Web Comic Exploring Internet Technology and Gender Equality](#),” which uses nude images to discuss female body issues, gender equality, and the depiction of teen models.

Weissbrot’s work features sexually erotic displays, “misogynist-undertones,” and frequent images of menstruation to combat the historical male-instituted taboo of feminine functions.

Weissbrot also created a flash game called “F*** Everything.” And she has won great praise. Lit also reports, “‘She’s doing almost graduate-level work,’ Carrie Ann Baade, a professor of painting at FSU and the grant work supervisor told [HuffPo](#).... ‘She’s the right artist to be responding to outrageous and scandalous trends in culture.’”

Speaking of scandalous trends, the above examples are neither unusual nor all that new at the modern university. As I [wrote](#) in “Diploma Disaster?” citing information from “The Dirty Dozen: America’s Most Bizarre and Politically Correct College Courses” (12/9/2006), “academia has descended into course offerings such as ‘The Phallus,’ ‘Queer Musicology,’ ‘Border Crossings, Borderlands: Transnational Feminist Perspectives on Immigration,’ ‘Whiteness: The Other Side of Racism,’ ‘Native American Feminisms,’ ‘Sex Change City: Theorizing History in Genderqueer San Francisco,’ and ‘Lesbian Pulp Fiction,’” as the truth gets stranger and stranger all the time.

And with all this is going on, Brandeis University professor of politics Donald Hindley has [announced](#) he’s fed up and will be retiring after 52 years in his position. Expressing his disgust, he says, “I just could not tolerate any more.” The problem?

Hindley says there are too many conservatives on campus.



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