

**Ending College**  
**Putting a Halt to Indenturing our Kids and Making them Ill-Prepared for Life**  
**By**  
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My first four-year college experience transformed my mind, shaped the man I would become, and made my life far better than it would have been without it. Since earning my undergraduate degree in philosophy in 1986, I have also earned another undergraduate degree in communications, a Master of Arts in Religious Studies, and a Doctor of Ministry. Over the years I have also attended the University of Creation Spirituality and Singularity University, and have earned certification in Philosophical Counseling and, most recently, in Extended Reality (XR) Development. I love higher education, am a lifelong learner, and enjoy learning new skills and about new ideas as much as I enjoy deepening my understanding of the areas that I'm already passionate about.

Clearly, I am not anti-intellectual and hold no grudge against academia. I am pro-education and think the greatest problem with our society today is that most people could use more of it, by which I mean our society would be enriched if more of us learned *how* to think rather than *what* to think. How to think involves learning to be open-minded, which not only requires us being exposed to new, strange, foreign, and challenging ideas and beliefs, but also learning not to be afraid of hearing and studying things we may disagree with. How to think requires us to learn logic and critical thinking so we can consider the soundness and faults of our own ideas and of those imposed upon us. Learning how to think enables us to let go of false beliefs and to receive those of others with kindness and humility. If this is no longer among the larger purposes of college educators and administrators, then academia, by and large, no longer serves the interests of its students, nor those of our greater society.

Education's primary purpose should be about providing us with the essential skills to fully unfold as human beings by better enabling us to discover our own meaning and purposes. It should be about individual unfolding, not ideological indoctrination. For many years, anti-intellectuals have railed against educators for indoctrinating students with liberal ideology, when, in reality, they were troubled that college students were learning to think for themselves. As Sigmund Freud wrote in *The Future of an Illusion*, "every individual is virtually an enemy of civilization,"<sup>1</sup> and, "civilization has to be defended against the individual, and its regulations, institutions and commands are directed to that task."<sup>2</sup> So, when societies gravitate more toward authoritarianism than toward freedom, educational institutions become more about teaching us *what* to think rather than *how* to think. They become institutions defending society against the individual.

For example, the first thing that happens when a country is overtaken by a foreign occupier is *linguistic colonialism*, also called *language imperialism*, which makes speaking the native tongue all but illegal. Authoritarians innately realize that controlling what their subjects say is the first step in controlling what they think. The other thing that often happens in authoritarian takeovers is the removal, jailing, and killing of intellectuals, including educators, for the purpose of eliminating academic freedom to discourage political dissent. Such has occurred from the time Christianity became the official Roman religion in the 4<sup>th</sup>

century, when it's estimated that as much as 90 percent of the literature of antiquity was destroyed by zealots, to the 20<sup>th</sup> century intellectuals and educators who were disappeared or executed as dictatorships emerged in places like Russia, China, Cambodia, Czechoslovakia, Argentina, and so forth. Educational institutions in these places were transformed into state-controlled institutions for the purpose, as Freud said, of defending civilization against the individual. Schools then served the purpose of indoctrinating students with the State's official ideas and language, training them to be obedient citizens, while teaching them to become its enforcers and informants.

Today, it is not exaggeration to say this is occurring in American and other Western universities through a slow-moving ideological cue that began in the 1980s and, as of late, has been expanding into the whole of our society. In *The Once and Future Liberal*, Mark Lilla explains this began shortly after the Democrats lost political control for the first time in seventy years after the Republicans won control of the Whitehouse with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, and control of both Congress and the Senate in the 1990s. Liberals responded by retreating into and taking over the cloistered realm of academia. In *The Coddling of the American Mind*, Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt tells that in the early 1990s the ratio of liberal to conservative college professors was 2 to 1, which it had been since the 1930s. "By 2011," they tell us, "the ratio had reached five to one,"<sup>3</sup> and by 2016, it was seventeen to one.<sup>4</sup>

"You may have thought, faced with the dogma of radical economic individualism that Reaganism normalized," Lilla says, "liberals would have used their positions in our educational institutions to teach young people that they share a destiny with all their fellow citizens and have duties toward them. Instead, they trained students to be spelunkers of their own personal identities and left them incurious about the world outside their heads."<sup>5</sup>

In recent years there have been numerous instances in which demonstrations, sometimes violent, have occurred on college campuses to protest the presence of conservative speakers by students who feel they have a right not to hear or allow others to hear those with whom they disagree. These have included places like Middlebury College, Claremont McKenna College, College of William and Mary, University of Oregon, Reed College, Rhodes University, University of Tennessee, University of Pennsylvania, and, fairly close to home, Evergreen State College. Such violence, for the purpose of disinviting or shutting down a speaker, has even occurred at U.C. Berkeley, where the Free Speech movement was born. "Something began changing on many campuses around 2013," Lukianoff and Haidt say, "and the idea that college students should not be exposed to 'offensive' ideas is now a majority on campus."<sup>6</sup> According to a 2017 survey, "58% of college students said it is 'important to be part of a campus community where I am not exposed to intolerant or offensive ideas.'"<sup>7</sup>

As "spelunkers of their own personal identities" who are "incurious about the world outside their heads," many college graduates, as they are being taught, reject the concepts of objective reality. All truth is subjective and can, therefore, be fashioned into whatever they want—a solipsistic mindset that should be considered delusional. Let's look at a recent example you may have already heard about. Just last month the *New York Times* reported on

a continuing controversy that began at Smith College in 2018 after a student reported on social media that she had been unfairly target by campus security and staff while eating her lunch in a dorm lounge. “All I did was be Black,” the student wrote. “It’s outrageous that some people question my being at Smith College, and my existence overall as a woman of color.”<sup>8</sup>

Many who saw her post were understandably outraged. The ACLU said the young woman had been profiled for “eating while black,” and the college President apologized profusely for the incident and immediately put the janitor who had reported the student to campus security on paid leave. What may surprise you is that an independent law firm that specializes in discrimination investigations later issued a 35-page report saying there was no evidence of discrimination. According to the *Times* report, the student was eating lunch in an area that had been closed to students for the summer and was being used for a children’s summer camp. Any adults in the area were required to have a background check and the janitor who was placed on leave had been instructed to notify security if he saw anyone out of place. He did, saying nothing of the student’s color when reporting the incident. In fact, the 35-year employee’s eyesight had become so bad that he couldn’t even say whether the individual was male or female, for which she also accused him of misgendering her.

The restricted area had also been mentioned to the student by a longtime cafeteria worker who decided not to push the matter because, as the report states, “Staff members dance carefully around rule enforcement for fear students will lodge complaints.”<sup>9</sup> The next day the employee got a surprise call from a reporter wanting to know why she had profiled a student for “eating while black.” She would soon learn that the aggrieved student had posted her name, email address, and photo on Facebook, along with that of the janitor involved, after which both received harassing messages calling the low paid working-class employees, racists. “Who would do this,” the cafeteria worker said. “The student called me a racist and I did nothing.” Even without any evidence to the contrary, the ACLU disagreed with the report, saying it’s impossible to rule out “subconscious bias.” Without evidence on their side, the ACLU chose to mindread. The article goes on to talk about how detrimental the accusations had become to the custodians, including one who wasn’t even working at the time, and to the cafeteria worker’s health and livelihoods. The college president, according to the article, never offered apologies, nor has even spoken, to the employees who were impacted.

This is an example of how, when obsessed with identity politics, everything becomes about identity. It is an extreme case of confirmation bias. As in this case, doing so often minimizes real and serious expressions of racism in the process. As social scientist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva says, “[When] Racism, which is or can be almost everything, is proven by anything done (or not done) by whites... [then] any action done by whites is labeled as racist.”<sup>10</sup> This isn’t only faulty reasoning that diminishes the impacts of real racism, but can be so off-putting that, as Bonilla-Silva says, “there is little room for coalition-building with white progressives.”<sup>11</sup> It is a dangerous game that is driving us apart instead of pulling us together.

This mindset’s rejection of objective reality and substantive facts is also increasingly resulting in a student body that expects to get good grades no matter what answers they give on their exams. Some suggest it is unfair and unjust to expect everyone to give the

same answers, no matter how precise the material. Can you imagine what might happen if medical students are no longer expected to have a firm grasp on biology, diseases, and medicine? Or if a structural engineer doesn't understand how to construct a building that won't collapse? If this sounds like hyperbole, consider an article just last week, written by Sergiu Klainerman, a Princeton University mathematics professor who specializes in the mathematics of black holes and is member of the National Academy of Sciences. "I had naively thought that the STEM disciplines would be spared from this ideological takeover," he says. "I was wrong. Attempts to 'deconstruct' mathematics, deny its objectivity, accuse it of racial bias, and infuse it with political ideology have become more and more common."<sup>12</sup>

As one who attributes his love of math to his escape from the government of former Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, Klainerman is particularly troubled by what he is seeing on American campuses. "Being skilled in math was a source of great societal prestige for school children," he says. "And it was a great equalizer: those from socioeconomically disadvantaged families had a chance to compete on equal footing with those from privileged ones." He says the woke ideology dominant on college campuses, "on the other hand, treats both science and mathematics as social constructs and condemns the way they are practiced, in research and teaching, as manifestations of white supremacy, euro-centrism, and post-colonialism."<sup>13</sup> As a result, there is a serious move afoot that would prevent teachers from expecting their students to not only provide the right answers to math problems, but to show their work to prove they understand the math. Klainerman says, "The program argues that 'white supremacy culture shows up in the classroom when the focus is on getting the 'right answer' or when students are required to show their work, while stipulating that the very 'concept of mathematics being purely objective is unequivocally false.'"<sup>14</sup>

The program he's talking about, "A Pathway to Equitable Math Instruction,"<sup>15</sup> sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is an 81-page workbook that is more about convincing teachers they are racially biased than teaching kids about math. In addition to encouraging teachers to use it to "identify next steps in their anti-racist journey," it calls for monitors, whom the program calls "leaders and coaches," to conduct walkthroughs while "annotating" teachers' behaviors and "providing targeted feedback;" and for school Administrators to "hold teachers accountable for completing the activities of this workbook." So we're not just talking about higher education here, but a move to infiltrate public grade-school with this same ideology.

This is happening now precisely because this ideology has been present in academia long enough that many of its graduating adherents have grown old enough and established enough to gain leadership position in many of our progressive institutions, turning them inside-out in the process. Referring to this phenomenon as "The Great Awakening," Klainerman says, "the ideology incubated in academia, where it indoctrinated plenty of bright minds. It then migrated, through those true believers, into our important cultural, religious and political institutions."<sup>16</sup> In short, it's everywhere, including, as we know, within our own liberal religion.

Speaking of religion, Linguist Professor, John McWhorter has a new book out entitled, *The Elect: Neoracists Posing as Antiracists and their Threat to a Progressive America*.<sup>17</sup> McWhorter is a black man who identifies as a liberal democrat, although the anti-racists

have labeled him a member of the alt-right, just as they have yours truly. I don't believe it is anymore true of him than it is of me. In *The Elect*, which I hope is widely read, McWhorter refers to the disturbing mindset we've been discussing as "A new religion . . . preached across America," further labeling it, "nonsense posing as wisdom." After explaining how this new religion of the woke, which they consider "incontestably good," is costing people their jobs for not going along, while exploiting modern American fears, McWhorter says it is not good: "It is not altruism; it is self-help. It is not sunlight; it is fungus. It's time it became ordinary to call it for what it is and stop cowering before it, letting it make people so much less than they—black and everything else—could be."<sup>18</sup>

This is precisely why I am giving this sermon, to name what's happening for what it is, a social evil that is based on fear, and shame, and dogma, and everything ugly we are supposed to be against. But to be absolutely clear, I am not talking here about all educators or college professors, most of whom live in fear for their livelihoods if they don't go along, and who often experience routine anxiety about unintentionally offending a student by saying something they might disagree with, or of facing retribution for giving them a bad grade, even if they deserve it. The problem, as I see it, has more to do with college administrators who have stopped backing their professors and their staff, either because they are among "The Elect" or because they are, understandably, afraid to do otherwise.

The president of Smith College did so by immediately agreeing with the offended student, even before a proper investigation had occurred, while punishing innocent, poor, working-class, loyal employees who were the real victims of injustice in this circumstance. According to the previously mentioned report, "Some professors [at Smith] worry the administration is too deferential to its increasingly emboldened students."<sup>19</sup> Lukianoff and Haidt say, "A hallmark of campus protests that began in 2015 was irresolute and accommodating responses by university leadership."<sup>20</sup> Or, as Sergiu Klainerman succinctly says, "In my position as a professor of mathematics at Princeton, I have witnessed the decline of universities and cultural institutions as they have embraced political ideology at the expense of rigorous scholarship."<sup>21</sup>

In addition to universities being on the wrong side and a major cause of the cancel culture that, as Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Chris Hedges recently said, "is not the road to reform. It is the road to tyranny," there is another, much simpler reason, getting a college education is no longer in the best interest of our kids or our society. It has become more expensive than it is worth. In most cases students graduate with more debt than most jobs will enable them to repay, in addition to all their other costs of living. In the last twenty years alone, the average cost of a college education has tripled to almost \$36,000 per year.<sup>22</sup> That's nearly \$150,000 for a degree, the equivalent of a small mortgage before a graduate even has a job.

Yet, in today's world of fast changing technologies, it's not possible for college to adequately prepare most students for a particular job. Most work is learned from on-the-job training—from the experience of actually doing the job—which is costly for employers who have to bear the additional time and expense it takes for a new hire to learn their work. In other cases, where employers can't afford to let a new hire make the mistakes necessary for learning, students take years more of specialized education in order to learn the work before working, as is the case with medical school, and law school. So it doesn't make sense

to me that most desirable jobs, and even some that aren't so desirable, require a college degree just to get a foot in the door, even if that degree has little to do with the work one will do, and the employer must still pay the employee while providing them with additional time and resources to learn the job. In many cases, we have employers who require a college degree, which has already put an employee in tremendous debt, yet won't pay them enough to cover their college debt, let alone enough to make an adequate living.

Instead, it makes more sense for employers to help bear the cost of employment-oriented education up front by partnering with companies that can use modern technologies to train employees to do their precise jobs a lot quicker and a lot cheaper than earning a college degree. Today, thanks to the abundance of information on the Internet, each of us has access to precision education, instruction, and training for free. Employers can partner with companies that provide precision training, tailored for their specific needs, that properly prepares employees to do their job on day one. Rather than requiring employees to have costly, time-consuming, four-year degrees, employers need only require them to have the necessary training to do their specific jobs. Instead of being based on a one-time, expensive, general-at-best, college degree, the basis of employment would be based on short-term, inexpensive certification that can be routinely upgraded with additional certification as technologies change or as employees want to move into better positions.

Currently, many companies that require a college degree are only adding to an unjust system that can best be described as a modern form of indentured servitude. For many, a college degree is just an expensive document that gives a person a right to work, often in a job they are over-qualified and underpaid for, so long as they are willing to pay a lender a chunk of their paycheck for decades to come.

All of this is why I say college has run its course—pun intended. In short, academia has become an institute for the indoctrination of citizens to become intolerant, authoritarian, and punitive—the opposite of the open-minded, curious, and caring citizens we want. And it has lost its cost/benefit advantage. For many, if not most, a college degree guarantees tremendous debt, not a successful career. Academia is destroying our society and the lives of our children. By switching to precision learning and affordable certification, we can also afford to increase public education by two years so students can concentrate on studying the Humanities that have little directly to do with becoming a good employee but everything to do with becoming a whole person. Let employers prepare employees to do their jobs, and let society prepare students to be civil, openminded, curious, courageous, reasonable members of our communities by teaching them not *what* but *how* to think.

<sup>1</sup> Freud, Sigmund, *The Future of an Illusion*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 1961, 1989, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Lukianoff, Greg, and Haidt, Jonathan, *The Coddling of the American Mind*, Penguin Press, New York, NY, 2018, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> Lilla, Mark, *The Once and Future Liberal*, HarperCollins Publishers, New York, NY, 2017, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Lukianoff & Haidt, *ibid.*, p. 48.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Powell, Michael, "Inside a Battle Over Race, Class and Power at Smith College," *New York Times*, Feb. 24, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo, *White Supremacy & Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, CO, 2001, p. 27f.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Klainerman, Sergiu, "There Is No Such Thing as 'White' Math," *Common Sense with Bari Weiss*, March 1, 2021 (<https://bariweiss.substack.com/p/there-is-no-such-thing-as-white-math>)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> [https://equitablemath.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/11/1\\_STRIDE1.pdf](https://equitablemath.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/11/1_STRIDE1.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> <https://johnmcwhorter.substack.com/p/the-elect-neoracists-posing-as-antiracists>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Powell, Michael, *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Klainerman, *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> <https://educationdata.org/college-enrollment-statistics>