

# **Cry bullies have taken command of the academy**

**Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune**

Does anyone doubt that liberals exercise unfettered control over our system of higher education? For decades, liberals have exerted unchallenged authority over colleges and universities and have exploited them as social laboratories. If liberal theories were at all valid, then higher education would stand a scintillating example of utopia. And yet, liberals themselves tell us that higher education is an uninhabitable cesspool.

The Obama regime and its allies insist that college campuses are hotbeds of rape and sexual assault where no woman is safe. Colleges are also simmering cauldrons of racism. And colleges are also rapacious beasts that burden young people with crushing debt. To hear liberals tell it, there's no worse place on Earth than the citadels they have created.

The University of Missouri has become the latest focal point for this leftist grievance theater. The Missouri football team threatened to boycott all activities, including games, unless the university's top two administrators quit. Their sin, according to the activists, was a failure to act on claims that there was a Ku Klux Klan chapter on campus, that somebody had scrawled a swastika in human feces on a bathroom wall and that the administration had failed to exhibit adequate sensitivity to the false "hands up, don't shoot" narrative that had arisen in nearby Ferguson, Mo.

Let's get this straight. In Ferguson, a drugged-up, 300-pound thug named Michael Brown assaulted a convenience store clerk half his size in the course of a robbery. He was confronted by a police officer responding to the call and encountered Brown walking in the middle of the street. The officer shot Brown in self-defense after Brown attacked him.

This isn't speculation. It was all documented on security cameras, toxicology reports and an investigation conducted by Barack Obama's highly politicized Justice Department, led by an attorney general who made it quite clear that he wanted a different conclusion. And the failure of the university president to salute the demonstrably false narrative proved that he needed to go.

As for the Ku Klux Klan story, that was spread by the student body president who quickly admitted that he made it up. He also claimed that some knucklehead had screamed a racist epithet at him from a pickup. We have only his word on this. And considering that he had already confessed to lying about the KKK presence on the Missouri campus, no one should consider his testimony reliable. How much sensitivity did this deserve?

I apologize for my generation and what we have done to higher education. In the 1960s and '70s, we overthrew the world's greatest system of higher education and handed its administration to sniveling whiners. We have come of age and those of us who trashed the old system are now in charge. And our instinct to indulge every little complaint has turned the academy from a crucible of intellectual development into an incubator of perpetual immaturity. In doing so we have created generations of cry bullies who demand that universities transform into "safe spaces" where their every complaint is indulged and where their prejudices are never challenged.

Permit me to give you an example of the absurdity that grows out of indulging spoiled children. The University of Ottawa has banned yoga classes because yoga is culturally insensitive. "Yoga has been under a lot of controversy lately due to how it is being practiced," and which cultures those practices "are being taken from."

The office that administered the yoga classes noted that those cultures "have experienced oppression, cultural genocide and diasporas due to colonialism and western supremacy ... we need to be mindful of this and how we express ourselves while practising (sic) yoga."

We have seen colleges forced to remove tacos from dining halls because they represent cultural appropriation. Although it's worth noting that the cultural left has completely embraced Cinco de Mayo, Cinco de Mayo is a thoroughly fabricated "holiday," not celebrated in Mexico. It was the creation of the marketing department of a brewery. As phony holidays go, it is rivaled only by Kwanzaa.

I'm old enough to recall when higher education viewed itself as a place where young people came to be challenged. But colleges are places where cry bullies demand safe spaces where they won't have to hear trigger words or truths that upset their preconceptions. Too many people who attend college these days do so to postpone adulthood.

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