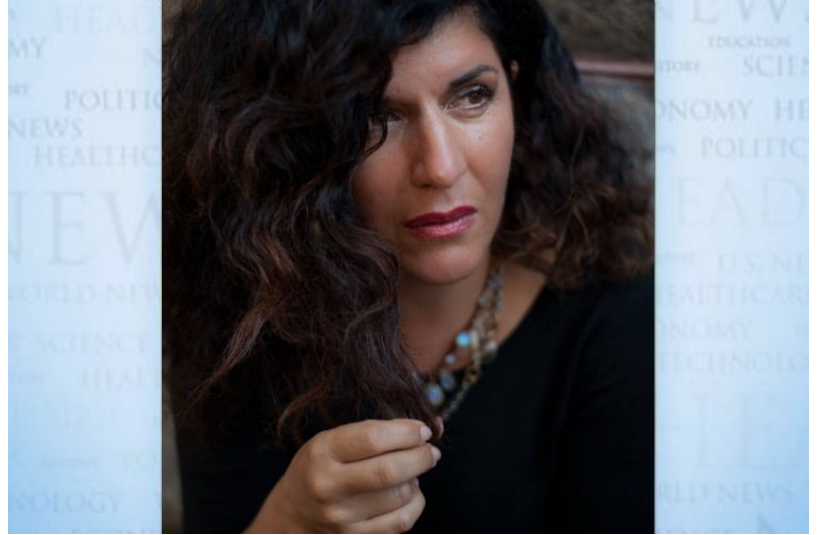




Community Colleges and Trade Schools Are Largely Void of Israel-Hamas Protests

TV host Mike Rowe said that eight years ago, he was switching the news channels on his television and saw several college students setting fire to the American flag and dancing around a pile of burning flags. They were telling reporters in interviews they were disgusted with Old Glory and “fearful” of the flag.

“It wasn’t lost on me in the moment that all of these events were happening at what is considered the best of the best elite universities across the country,” Rowe told me. Among supposedly non-elite students, though, the situation wasn’t and isn’t as bad.



Salena Zito

Rowe said it didn’t take long for him to figure out why those “elite” students drew those conclusions about Old Glory: The idea of associating fear with the flag came from the very people who were supposed to be instructing these privileged students.

Rowe said the evidence was crystal clear when Jonathan Lash, then the president of Hampshire College, chose not to assure the students that no country offers more liberties to their people and therefore there was nothing to “fear” from the flag. Instead, he spoke up in ways they understood to validate their fears.

“Lash actually removed any traces of the American flag from the campus and said in a statement that removing the flag from the campus ‘will better enable us to focus our efforts on addressing racist, misogynistic, Islamophobic, anti-immigrant, antisemitic, anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and behaviors,’” Rowe explained.

Lash, a former Peace Corps volunteer, federal prosecutor, Harvard graduate, and president of a Washington-based environmental think tank, left the college in 2018. Hampshire College, under Lash in 2015, was one of the first elite schools in the United States not to accept SAT scores from applicants, in part because Lash said SATs were strongly biased against students of color.

Rowe said that if people are shocked by the blatant antisemitism among college students and by the students’ clear lack of understanding of history, they haven’t been paying attention to the ethos of (supposedly) elite universities for at least two generations.

Higher education, for decades, has been trending not liberal but radically left. Phillip Magness and David Waugh wrote earlier this year in the *Independent Review* that 60% of faculty in universities across this country identified as “hard left.”

Magness and Waugh wrote that while the modal college professor has been at the political left of the public since the 1960s, it wasn’t until very recently that this overall skew obscured an underlying stability in the political composition of faculty.



Written by [Salena Zito](#) on November 21, 2023

Their data showed it was in 2001 that faculty majorities went from liberal to hard left and now are nearing a supermajority in the academic world.

It is not lost on Rowe that the two places of higher education where you don't see campuses erupting in violence and destroying the safety of Jewish students are trade schools and community colleges.

"In 2016, I was feeling very proud to have a scholarship fund that was earmarked for trade schools when everywhere I looked, I saw people burning the flag at elite universities," Rowe said, adding, "Maybe it happened then, or maybe it is happening now, but I looked, and I couldn't find a single incident of a trade school or community college burning the American flag."

"These schools simply don't go there," he said of the trade schools and community colleges nationwide whose certificate programs and two-year degrees are designed around filling this country's skills gap.

The typical financial aid package is huge at Harvard University, in which pro-Palestinian rallies have cost the school financial support from alumni. The total budget for a student this year is \$80,600, with federal scholarship amounts set at \$64,500.

Over 55% of the students attending Harvard received federal grants or loans.

Rowe said if you want to throw a little gas on the fire of the psyche of the American sitting at home, shaking her head, wondering what these students are up to, "Just remember you're paying for it."

The Department of Education tallies show there are nearly 4,000 colleges and universities across this country with 40% of their students holding some type of job while attending school.

In contrast, there are just a little over 1,000 community colleges and 7,407 trade and technical schools as of 2022 with 80% of those students employed while attending school in the former.

Rowe said that when the protests at the elite universities started to unfold after the Oct. 7 massacre, he wondered what seemed so familiar. "And the answer isn't because it's familiar in terms of bad behavior. It was familiar because it's another thing that never happens at schools where people go to learn a skill."

Salena Zito is a CNN political analyst, and a staff reporter and columnist for the Washington Examiner. She reaches the Everyman and Everywoman through shoe-leather journalism, traveling from Main Street to the beltway and all places in between. To find out more about Salena and read her past columns, please visit the Creators Syndicate webpage at www.creators.com.

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