



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 9, 2024

Does Claudine Gay Perfectly Reflect a Morally and Intellectually Bankrupt Academia?

It's now well known that disgraced ex-Harvard president Claudine Gay scammed her way into higher education's upper echelons, engaging in plagiarism and benefiting from prejudice. But far from an anomaly, says one observer, Gay merely reflects an academia so morally and intellectually bankrupt that it is itself a scam.

Making his case today at [American Thinker](#), commentator [Mike McDaniel](#) takes us on a trip back in time, starting with something called "the Sokal Hoax." Quoting [National Review](#) from 2017, [he relates](#):



AP Images
Claudine Gay

In 1996, Alan Sokal, a New York University physicist and self-described "academic leftist," composed an essay that was a word salad of solemn academic jargon. He said he strove to be "especially egregious," by maundering on about "the dialectical emphases" of "catastrophe theory" becoming a "concrete tool of progressive political praxis." His essay's gaudy title was: "Transgressing the Boundaries: Toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity."

He sent it to the left-leaning "cultural studies" journal *Social Text*, which swooned, perhaps in part because Sokal larded his nonsense with political tropes that are catnip to lettered leftists — "emancipatory mathematics," "demystify and democratize the production of scientific knowledge," "the crisis of late-capitalist production relations." Soon after *Social Text* published his faux scholarship, Sokal [revealed](#) in another journal, *Lingua Franca*, that it was a parody.

To reiterate, this esteemed journal *published his pure and utter nonsense*, thinking it actual scholarship. And McDaniel points out that while academia did have a conniption, there was no self-reflection. Thus could Powerline [write](#) in 2018:

Everyone is buzzing today about the revelation of the three academics — James Lindsay, Helen Pluckrose, and Peter Boghossian — who placed over a dozen complete hoax articles with various premier 'cultural studies' or 'identity studies' academic journals. All three professors, it should be noted, consider themselves left of center, as does Alan Sokal, the New York University physicist who placed a hoax article about the supposed subjectivity of physics in the postmodernist journal *Social Text* 20 years ago. (Yet somehow *Social Text* stayed in business instead of closing down in embarrassment, as they should have.)

McDaniel elaborated, [having written in 2019](#):



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What's remarkable about this is they set out to prove the editors and peer reviewers — professors with doctorates in their respective fields — could not tell the difference between actual scholarship and absolute nonsense couched in contemporary social justicey eduspeak. One of the papers was a rewrite of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. The paper was titled: *Our Struggle is My Struggle: Solidarity Feminism as an Intersectional Reply to Neoliberal and Choice Feminism*. They made up the names and affiliations of the "authors." Another was *The Conceptual Penis: A Social Construct*, which blamed climate change on penises (That one's probably true; there's nothing they can't do). My favorite, however, was *Human Reactions to Rape Culture and Queer Performativity in Urban Dog Parks in Portland, Oregon*.

Thesis: That dog parks are rape-condoning spaces and a place of rampant canine rape culture and systemic oppression against "the oppressed dog" through which human attitudes to both problems can be measured. This provides insight into training men out of the sexual violence and bigotry to which they are prone.

Of course, presented with the above, any normal person would suspect he was being "[punked](#)." But "normal" and "academia" only infrequently collide in the same sentence today.

Moving on, Lindsay, Pluckrose, and Boghossian [related their methods](#), too. "What if we write a paper claiming that when a guy privately" pleasures himself "while thinking about a woman (without her consent — in fact, without her ever finding out about it) that he's committing sexual violence against her?" they [wrote](#). "That gave us the ... [self-gratification] paper."

There also was a "dildos" paper, which, to summarize, asked "Why don't normal men engage in auto-eroticism with a dildo?" (use your imagination — or don't). "Hint: according to [our paper in *Sexuality and Culture*](#), a leading sexualities journal, they will be less transphobic and more feminist as a result," the three professors stated.

It gets better still, though (read: worse). McDaniel [relates](#) the following praise of the Dog Park research:

"This is a wonderful paper — incredibly innovative, rich in analysis, and extremely well-written and organized given the incredibly diverse literature sets and theoretical questions brought into conversation. The author's development of the focus and contributions of the paper is particularly impressive. The fieldwork executed contributes immensely to the paper's contribution as an innovative and valuable piece of scholarship that will engage readers from a broad cross-section of disciplines and theoretical formations. I believe this intellectually and empirically exciting paper must be published and congratulate the author on the research done and the writing." — Reviewer 1, *Gender, Place, and Culture*

Note here that the "'fieldwork' was supposedly examining the genitals of 1000 dogs while asking their owners about the dog's sexuality," McDaniel explains. "The Dog Park paper was lauded as one of the 12 leading works of 'feminist geography.'"

It's easy to laugh at this (or cry), but the joke is on us. Parents spend billions yearly on university tuition (sometimes in the vain hope their children are being educated), as a college degree has become a ticket to higher pay. Media, entertainment, and corporate America often take their lead from academia,



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embracing the ideological and language innovations it disgorges. In truth, the “educatocracy” corrupts the soul of our society and could rightly be regarded as a threat to national security.

There’s a simple reason, too, why academia won’t “learn its lesson”:

Its minions couldn’t care less.

Disconnected from and usually hostile to Truth, today’s academics are useful idiots in a game. To them, it matters not if something is illogical and irrational, if it “doesn’t make sense.” For it’s all about illusion: using intellectual-sounding jargon, favoring or flaying the right groups, attacking tradition, portraying vice as virtue, polishing up your scholar street cred, and praising the entropy as evolution.

These academics won’t learn moral lessons, either, because morality is irrelevant to them. They’ll only change when they lose what they really care about: power, position, pocketbook, prestige, and privilege.

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