



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on June 11, 2025

Claim: “Intellectual” Academics Are Fleeing Trump’s “Anti-intellectual” America. The Reality?

“There are some ideas so absurd that only an intellectual could believe them,” noted legendary author George Orwell. What might be an example? Try this on for size:

You’re a college professor who flees your country, claiming you fear loss of Academic Freedom™. This is even though it’s a place where you can’t be arrested for expressing opinions. And your solution?

You move to a country where you *can* be arrested for expressing opinions.

If you don’t quite get the logic, well, sorry, I guess you’re just not an “intellectual.” Suck it up.



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Regardless, this is precisely what has been happening in the United States this year, the media claim. College professors have been leaving for Europe.

The Telegraph, for example, recently ran a headline sentence [reading](#), “Academics are fleeing Trump’s anti-intellectual America.”

Earlier, on March 31, the *Financial Times* [claimed](#), “American academics seek exile as Trump attacks universities.”

The same day, *The Nation* [warned](#), “Trump’s Academic Purge Will Make America Stupid and Provincial Again.”

And on April 9, *Politico* [proclaimed](#), “The US brain drain has begun.” (Untrue — I’m still here.)

(Sorry, I couldn’t resist!)

The Scale of Our Loss

Now, hearing, “If _____ (enter Bush, Trump, etc.) wins the presidency, I’m leaving the country!” is nothing new. It’s usually heard from Hollywood types who, poor dears, might have to retreat to a sixth home in Saint-Tropez, Côte d’Azur, Tuscany, or Lake Como. Oddly, though, they almost never seem to take that terrible plunge and depart. (There are exceptions. Rosie O’Donnell, for example, did move to Ireland. She seeks a “[better life](#)” with her “nonbinary” 12-year-old child and their autism service dog Kuma.) They instead usually muster up the intestinal fortitude, intrepid dears, to somehow soldier on and persevere through the tribulations.

Interestingly, too, it appears no different with those acting as intellectuals at universities (minus the home in Saint-Tropez). Grok AI estimates that “fewer than 100 academics publicly reported leaving or avoiding U.S. positions” during Trump’s first term. Grok also states, fewer “than 50 academics are likely to have left” since 1/20 “explicitly due to an ‘anti-intellectual’ climate.”



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“This is a tiny fraction of the roughly 1.5 million” U.S. higher-education faculty (per 2020 data from the National Center for Education Statistics), Grok adds.

In fairness, though, there’s quantity — and then there’s quality. Maybe we’re losing the next Einstein.

The Brains Draining

So let’s assess our losses with a few anecdotes. *Politico* writes that one of the departed

was Timothy Snyder, one of the best-known experts on authoritarianism, who has left Yale for the University of Toronto. Snyder has described Canada as “the Ukraine of North America,” with Trump’s America looming over the border.

Evaluating this “intellectual” claim, we may note that Canada arrests people for “[hate speech](#).” (Criticizing sexual devolutionary agendas and Islam are no-nos.) It’s so bad, in fact, that even the left-wing *Atlantic* [editorialized](#) against the country’s iron-muzzle tendencies last year.

Next there’s Tim Quigley, formerly a management professor at the University of Georgia. The *Financial Times* related his angst:

“All the guardrails came off, and it became pretty clear it was best for us to leave,” he said. “I have a 10-year-old daughter and I don’t want to live in a country which cares more about Teslas being vandalised than kids being shot in schools.”

So he moved to Europe. Ironically, do note, Austria just had a [school shooting](#) Tuesday that left 11 innocents dead. Know, too, that Quigley’s new home is Switzerland, which may boast its continent’s most lenient gun laws. (In fairness, Switzerland *does* have a very low crime rate. But the reason is one the woke Quigley would likely fear acknowledging.)

Then there’s history professor Marci Shore, also formerly at Yale, and also an “expert on authoritarianism.” “I could feel the reign of terror spiraling,” she [told](#) the *Kyiv Independent* April 1. (Amazingly, this was not an April Fool’s joke.)

“My impulse was to take my kids and get out of the situation that seemed very dark and very frightening to me,” she added. “Dark” and “frightening” — that sounds very intellectual.

Oh, Shore just happens to be Professor Timothy Snyder’s wife.

Oh, the Humanity!

Now, among other things, these frightened academics worry about darkness such as research funding cuts. Federal emphasis on campus free speech is an issue, too. The irony here is that a simple solution should perhaps suggest itself to an intellectual. To wit:

If you don’t want federal intervention, stop accepting federal money.

One also might suppose that an intellectual would know a bit of history. And the reality is that federally imposed rules for academia didn’t begin with Trump. Rather, Washington has been thus mandating for more than *half a century*.

Just consider the two main aspects of the current controversy: the feds’ use of anti-discrimination law (over anti-Semitism) and of Title IX (the “trans” issue).



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Quite famously, the feds [forcibly integrated](#) the University of Alabama way back in 1963 already. And Title IX [has been used, for decades](#), in a way that has unfairly decimated certain men's college sports. As far as I know, too, no academics fled the country over this matter.

Now, though, that the Trump administration is using Title IX to keep men masquerading as female out of women's sports, the cry "Tyranny!" is heard.

So what can be concluded upon seeing academics exhibiting this double standard and fleeing to nations with hate-speech laws? Their concern isn't "authoritarian" use of the big-government cudgel.

It's that this cudgel is no longer being used (at the moment) to advance *their* agenda.

A somewhat more intellectual response would be to oppose federal funding and legislation such as Title IX as unconstitutional. But this is a lot to ask from today's academia, and that brings us to the "brain drain."

What We're Losing

What may we be missing if academics flee? Some food for thought:

- 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.'..."
- The University of Louisville in Kentucky [hosted a lecture](#) some months ago titled "Swamp Tales, Trans Ghosts, and Nonbinary Magical Realism."
- Princeton University has an LGBT center that recommends using the pronouns "'ze, zie and hir,' 'they and theirs,' and 'Ey, em, eir and emself,'" reported the *College Fix* in 2016.
- Arizona State University [offered a course](#) in 2015 concerning the "Problem of Whiteness." One work read was *Everyday Language of White Racism*.

The above is just the iceberg's tip, too. And that is what's so tragic: It's far easier identifying academics who've left sanity than finding those who've actually left the country.



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