

There's a Reason the Names of These Great Thinkers are Etched in Stone

I'll trade you one queer theorist, one native American novelist, a Chinese writer, and five feminists for six Greeks and two Romans.

Homer. Herodotus. Sophocles. Plato. Aristotle. Demosthenes. Cicero. Virgil. These are names that strike fear in the hearts of our cultural elites. Unfortunately for the elites at Ivy League schools like Columbia University, these are the names that decorate the pediments on some of their buildings. Since they are etched in stone, they are kind of hard to get off.

But that is not stopping [a group of students from pitching a fit about it](#).

On the pediment of Columbia's Butler Library, these names – Greece's greatest poet, the world's first historian, Greece's greatest playwright, the world's two greatest philosophers, its two greatest orators, and Rome's greatest poet – are now competing with a list of eight female thinkers on a 140-foot banner that has been hung above it.

It is all part of the Butler Banner Project, which began in 1989 when a student tried to hang a similar banner on the library before she was stopped by security police. The same attempt is repeated annually during Women's History Month.

But today the security police – as well as pretty much the entire teaching staff and administration – are on the side opposed to Western Civilization. This is the thing about student radicals today: They pretend to be rebelling against their schools, when, in fact, their schools are even more radical than they are.

Who are the eight females which they propose we class with the eight great thinkers whose names are etched in stone?

Toni Morrison, Diana Chang, Zora Neale Hurston, Ntozake Shange, Maya Angelou, Leslie Marmon Silko, Gloria E Anzaldúa and A. Revathi. Previous year's banners have included names such as Sappho, Marie de France, Christine de Pizan, and Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz.

Now if you have never heard of some of these individuals, don't worry about it. Neither has anyone else.

These are the women we are supposed to believe are worth being listed with Homer. With Plato. With Cicero. It is hard to imagine what standard would have to be employed to justify this, but one thing is certain: Anyone who has actually read the classic authors will know immediately that that there is no comparison.

A few of these names would certainly make a list of important modern writers – Toni Morrison, Zora Neale Hurston, Maya Angelou. But it isn't even fair to them to compare them with the greatest Western thinkers.

But Diana Chang? Ntozake Shange? Leslie Marmon Silko? A. Revathi? Sounds like the short list for the Nobel Prize for Literature, the winner of which, in case you didn't know, is now chosen by a search party of gender and women's study professors sent out into unexplored regions of the undeveloped world looking for someone whom no one has ever read before.

Notice who is missing from the banner of great female writers: Flannery O'Connor, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, Emily Dickinson, Edith Wharton, Harper Lee, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Elizabeth Gaskell. Maybe they don't make the cut because every one of them would have thought the Butler Banner Project was silly.

In fact, a couple of these names have made previous lists,

only to be later pushed out by ever more exotic and radical figures – figures like Gloria E Anzaldúa. Never heard of her? She was the feminist and “queer theorist” who has said she feels an “intense sexuality” toward her father, animals, and even trees.

Move over Homer.

—

[Image Credit: Flickr-Columbia Admissions, [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)]