

# Petulant Students Do Not a Utopia Make

For several years, tantrums over allegedly unacceptable speakers were par for the course on college campuses. While the pandemic quelled the noise of these protests for a while, the recent revival of classes and extracurricular activities on campuses promises to kick the canceling back into high gear.

In fact, it has already begun. Exhibit A happened in early March, when a featured speaker, Jeff Younger, [was shouted down at an event](#) held at the University of North Texas. The event, sponsored by Young Conservatives of Texas, was focused on children attempting to transition to a gender other than the one they possess, a topic with which Younger has personal experience, as he fought his ex-wife's efforts to transition their young son into a female.

After students chanted obscenities and insults at Younger, he was finally grabbed by the elbow and escorted out by a masked student dressed in black. The rest of the hecklers cheered loudly in triumph over his ousting.

Such childlike behavior will likely continue in the fantasy land of "higher education," so it might help those of us who still believe in rational behavior and common sense to understand what's behind these temper tantrums. Philosopher George Santayana lends some help with words found in [\*Little Essays Drawn from the Writings of George Santayana\*](#). He writes, "It is for want of education and discipline that a man so often insists petulantly on his random tastes, instead of cultivating those which might find some satisfaction in the world and might produce in him some pertinent culture."

It seems fair to say that the students who shouted down

Younger over gender transitions were acting quite petulantly. And although the mainstream media and other public figures want us to believe that transgenderism is quite normal, it still qualifies as a [deeply](#) disordered preference or taste.

As Santayana noted, the remedy to such petulance is education and discipline. It would be easy to argue that today's students have been to school—for years and years. But has their schooling been education ... or propaganda? In any case, it seems fair to say that feelings-oriented education and sexual propaganda have taken preeminence in the classroom.

The good news is that if Santayana is right, simply removing such propaganda and replacing it with true educational instruction will go a long way towards remedying the petulance of the up-and-coming generation. Returning to the basics—math, reading, history, and science—untainted by woke propaganda and combined with teachers and parents who train with a firm but loving hand are just what the doctor ordered to produce respectful and intelligent young people.

Unfortunately, students who are left to choose their own paths, to follow their feelings unrestrained by discipline and the guidance of those who are wiser, will only reap personal disappointment and disillusionment. "Untutored self-assertion may even lead him to deny some fact that should have been patent, and plunge him into needless calamity," Santayana wrote. "His Utopias cheat him in the end, if indeed the barbarous taste he has indulged in clinging to them does not itself lapse before the dream is half formed. So men have feverishly conceived a heaven only to find it insipid, and a hell to find it ridiculous."

Today's students who proudly escort an individual like Jeff Younger off the podium in their attempts to build a utopia are unfortunately hurtling toward a brutally rude awakening. The anger and hatred they demonstrate now will never create the perfect world they think it will—it will only create a more

miserable and more ridiculous one.

Today's secondary and post-secondary students may be too far past their formative years for us to help them to steer away from such misery, but the younger ones aren't. Taking time to teach and train the young ones in sound, basic principles of virtue and true knowledge will help us ensure that the next generation of college students isn't like the one we see today.

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