

The Purpose of the University: Critical Thinking for Civilized Coexistence



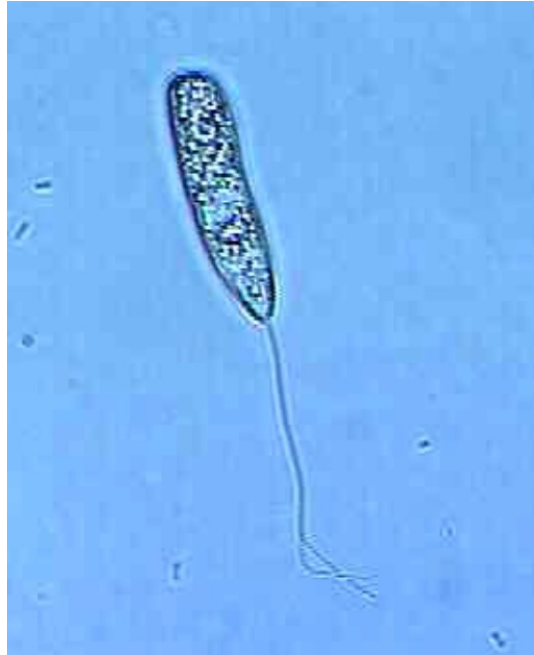
Jonathan Haidt, NYU-Stern

University of Navarra - Building Universities' Reputation

14 October, 2021

The most fundamental question in life:

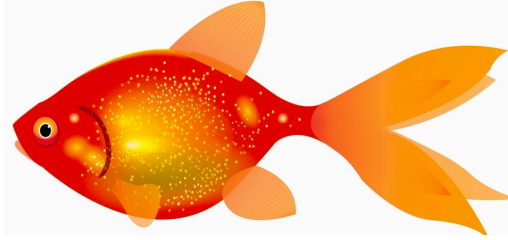
Approach?



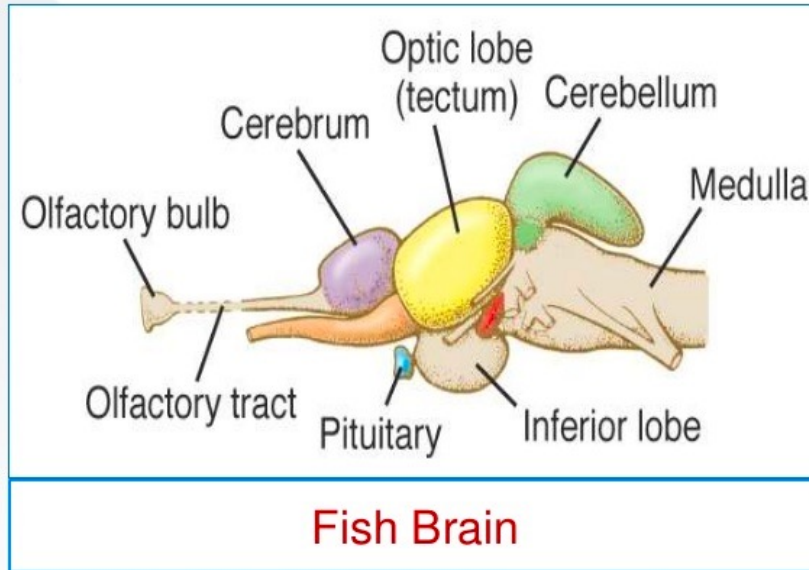
Avoid?

The most fundamental question in life:

Approach?



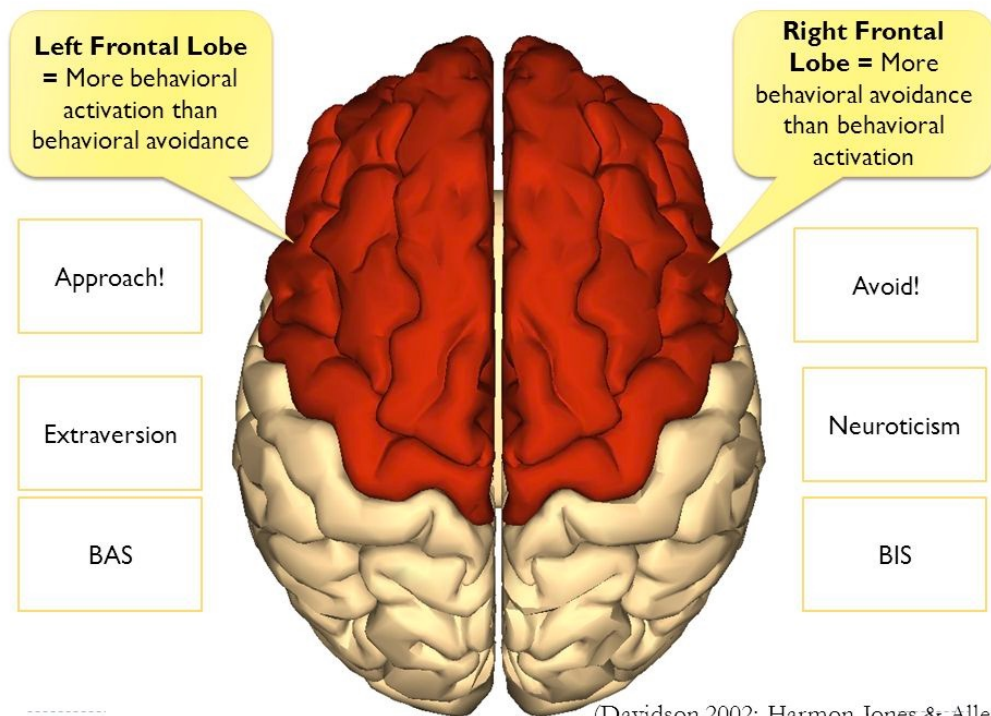
Avoid?



The most fundamental question in life:

Approach?

Avoid?



The two basic mindsets of daily life

Discover mode

Left Frontal Lobe
= More behavioral
activation than
behavioral avoidance

Approach!

Extraversion

BAS

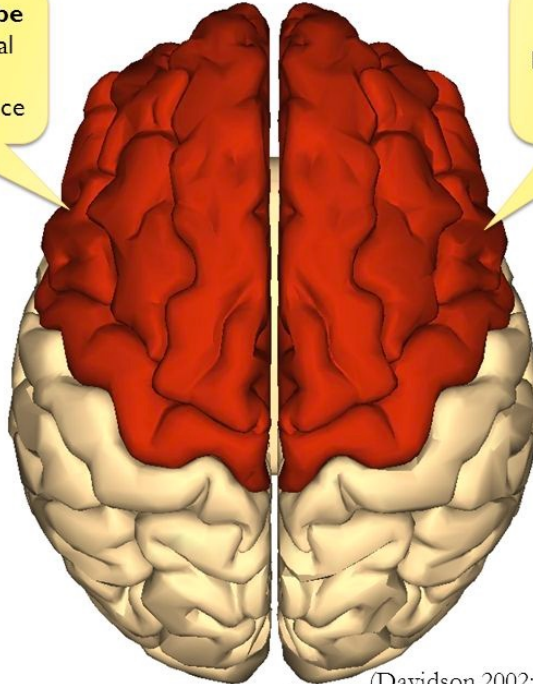
Defend mode

Right Frontal Lobe
= More
behavioral avoidance
than behavioral
activation

Avoid!

Neuroticism

BIS



The two basic mindsets of daily life

Discover mode

- Scan for opportunities
- Kid in a candy shop
- Think for yourself
- *Whoever grows the most by graduation, wins*

Defend mode

- Scan for dangers
- Scarcity mindset
- Cling to your team
- *If we defeat them, we win*

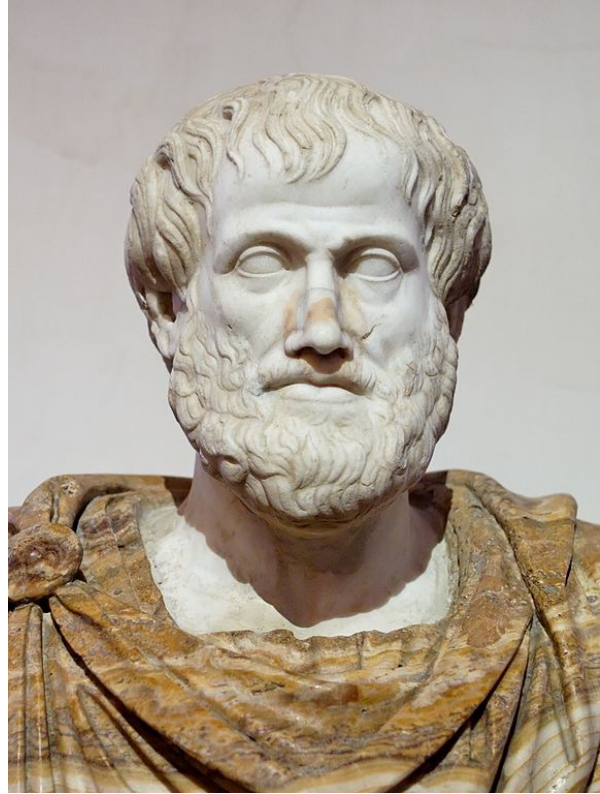
Telos

The end, purpose, or goal of an object, person, or practice

What is the telos of a knife?

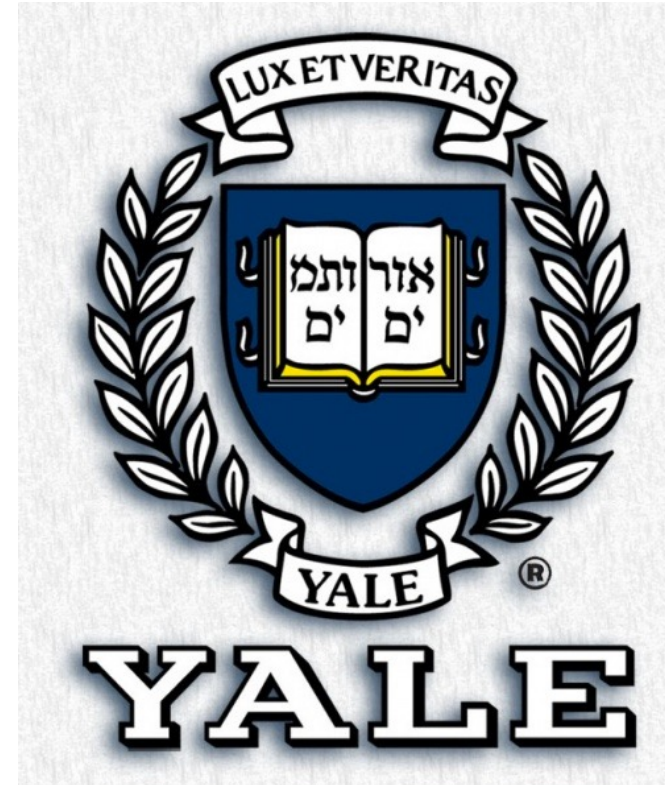
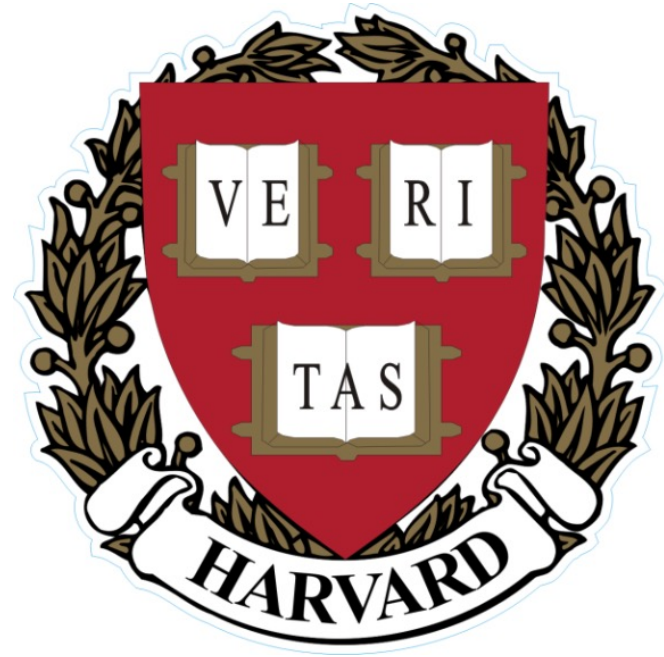
What is the telos of a physician?

What is the telos of a university?





Veritas/truth, Lux/light, Knowledge...





Discover mode

- Scan for opportunities
- Kid in a candy shop
- Think for yourself
- *Whoever grows the most by graduation, wins*

Mindset

Institution

Telos



THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2022 TOP 10

Rank 2022	Rank 2021	Institution	Country/ region
1	1	University of Oxford	United Kingdom
=2	4	California Institute of Technology	United States
=2	3	Harvard University	United States
4	2	Stanford University	United States
=5	6	University of Cambridge	United Kingdom
=5	5	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States
7	9	Princeton University	United States
8	7	University of California, Berkeley	United States
9	8	Yale University	United States
10	10	The University of Chicago	United States

Why did things start to
go wrong in 2014?

Why were so many college
students suddenly in
defend mode?

Defend mode

- Scan for dangers
- Scarcity mindset
- Cling to your team
- *If we defeat them,
we win*

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Shutterstock.com

Trigger Happy

The "trigger warning" has spread from blogs to college classes. Can it be stopped?

By **JENNY JARVIE** | March 3, 2014

March
2014

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

IMF's Lagarde Won't Speak at Smith, Part of a Growing List

Protests by Students, Faculty Have Derailed Several Commencement
Addresses This Spring



Defend mode

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May 2014

In College and Hiding From Scary Ideas

MARCH 21, 2015



Eleanor Taylor

KATHERINE BYRON, a senior at [Brown University](#) and a member of its Sexual Assault Task Force, considers it her duty to make Brown a safe place for rape victims, free from anything that might prompt memories of trauma.

So when she heard last fall that a student group had organized a debate about campus sexual assault between Jessica Valenti, the founder of [feministing.com](#), and Wendy McElroy, a libertarian, and that Ms. McElroy was likely to criticize the term “rape culture,” Ms. Byron was alarmed. “Bringing in a speaker like that could serve to invalidate people’s experiences,” she told me. It could be “damaging.”

Defend mode

- Scan for dangers
- Scarcity mindset
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Requests for “Safe Spaces”

A debate between two feminists could “invalidate people’s experiences...” it could be “damaging”

March 2015

Greg Lukianoff



FIRE

Foundation for Individual
Rights in Education

The Atlantic

SUBSCRIBE SEARCH MENU

August
2015



EDUCATION

The Coddling of the American Mind

In the name of emotional well-being, college students are increasingly demanding protection from words and ideas they don't like. Here's why that's disastrous for education—and mental health.

Yale's Halloween Advice Stokes a Racially Charged Debate

By LIAM STACK NOV. 8, 2015



Feb 2017



PROTEST AT UC BERKELEY OVER ALT-RIGHT SPEAKER



'Bell Curve' author attacked by protesters at Middlebury College



328

March
2017



THE CODDLING OF THE AMERICAN MIND

HOW GOOD INTENTIONS
AND BAD IDEAS ARE
SETTING UP A GENERATION
FOR FAILURE

GREG LUKIANOFF
JONATHAN HAIDT



JONATHAN HAIDT
GREG LUKIANOFF

LA TRANSFORMACIÓN DE LA MENTE MODERNA

INCLUYE UN
NUEVO PRÓLOGO
DE LOS AUTORES
A ESTA EDICIÓN
ESPAÑOLA



CÓMO LAS BUENAS INTENCIONES Y
LAS MALAS IDEAS ESTÁN CONDENANDO
A UNA GENERACIÓN AL FRACASO

TRADUCCIÓN DE VERÓNICA PUERTOLLANO

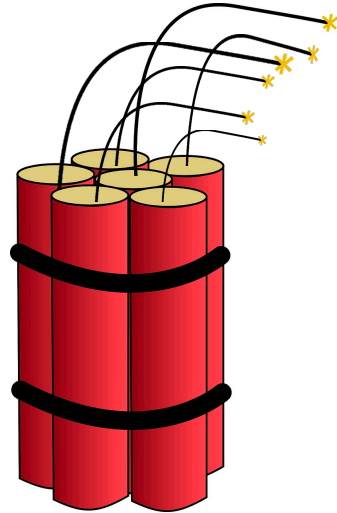
DEUSTO

WHAT: The sudden emergence of a new moral culture of “safetyism” around 2014

- Safe spaces
 - Trigger warnings
 - Microaggressions
 - Bias response teams
 - Speech is “violence”
 - Power becomes dominant analytic lens
 - Call-out culture, often for single words
- Defend mode dominates:
Some students think they are fragile, in a dangerous and hostile university; need protection from words, books, & speakers

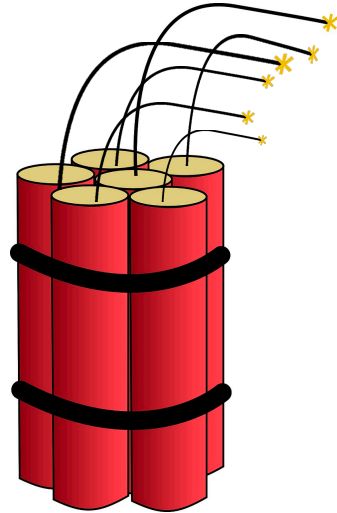
WHY 2014-16? Six Causal Threads (Fuses)

- 1) Gen Z Depression/Anxiety
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Students Flood College Mental-Health Centers

Colleges from Ohio State to Central Florida devise more programs to triage students; detern who may be fine with some peer counseling



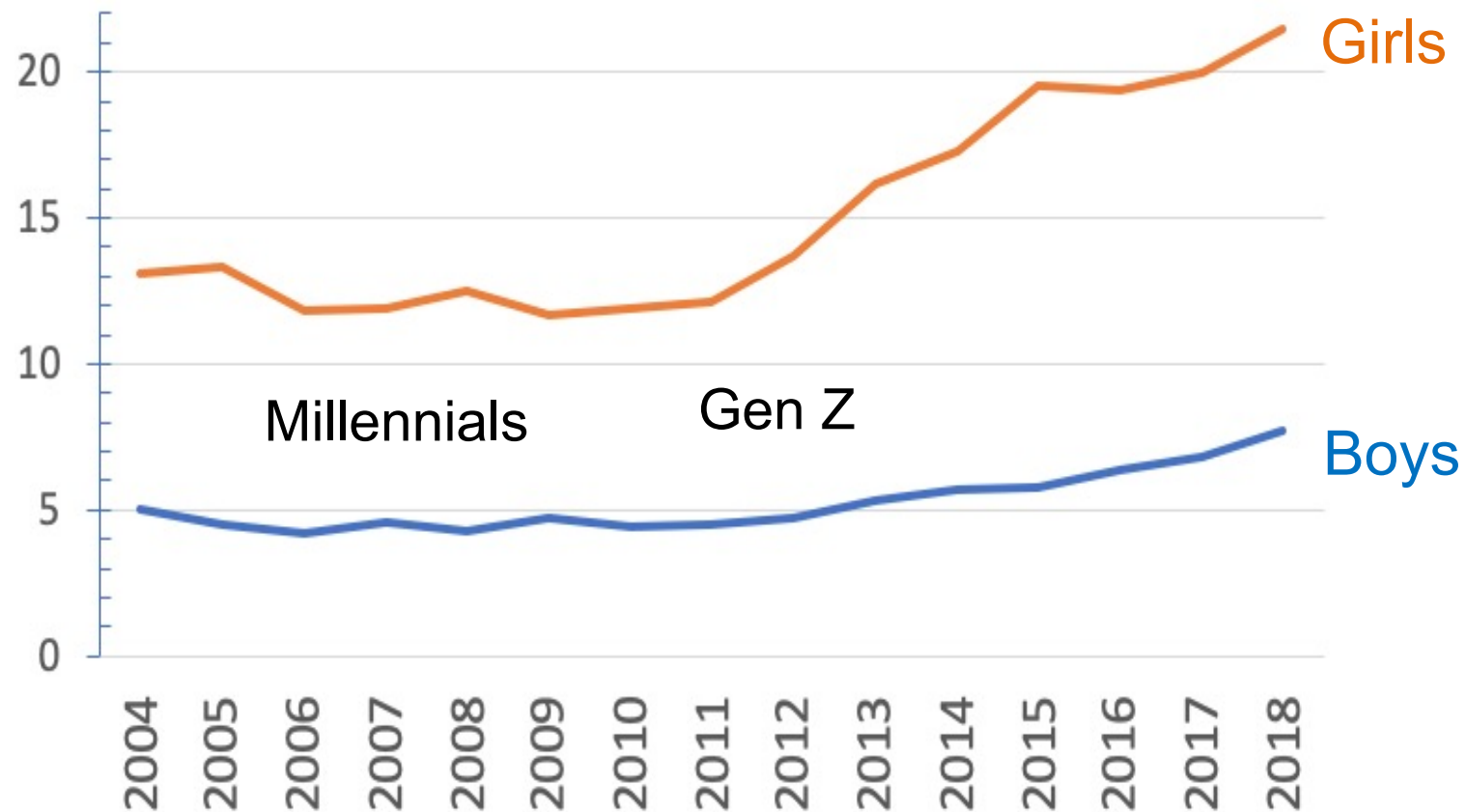
At Ohio State University, Tyler Hackmann, a graduate student, and Shiana Bookless, a junior, are peer counselors in the university's wellness-coaching program. They counsel students who seek help for adjustment issues. PHOTO: MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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Oct. 2016

% of US Teens who had a major depression in the last year

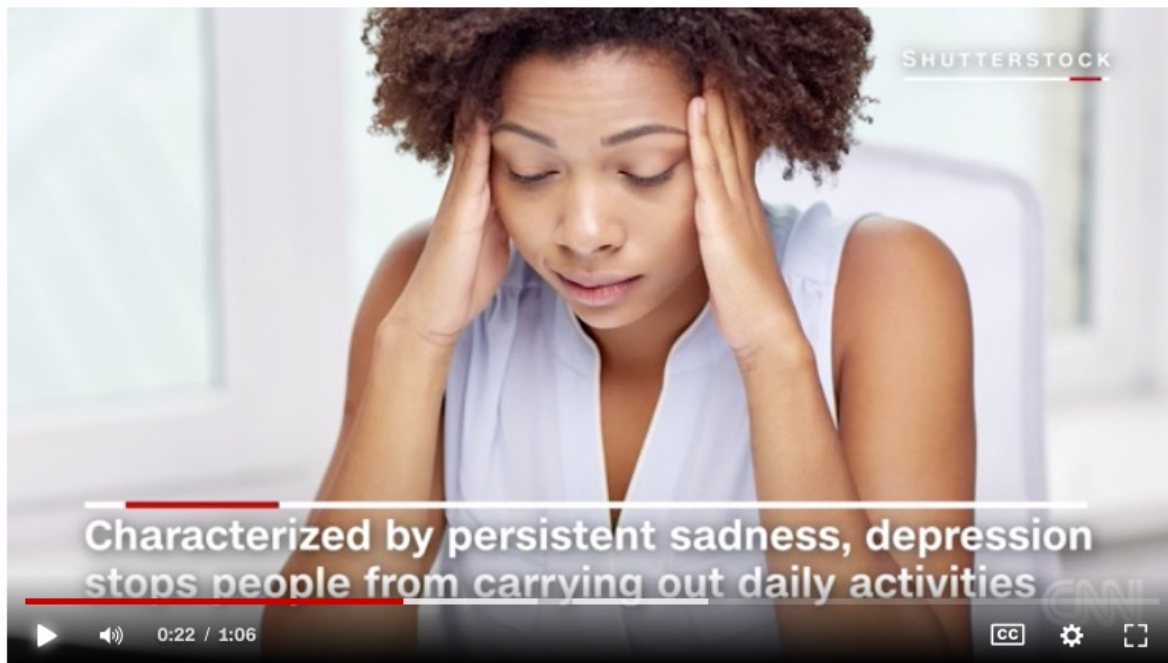


Source: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Suicide rate hit 40-year peak among older teen girls in 2015

By Susan Scutti, CNN

🕒 Updated 5:19 PM ET, Thu August 3, 2017



More from CNN



The Blockbuster MLB We Want to See This Offseason



Albright, Powell express disgust over incendiary rhetoric, Trump...

Paid Content

by Outb



TheCoddling.com

International Coddling

The book is called The Coddling of the AMERICAN mind, but does it apply in other countries? So far, we can say with some confidence that the trends we describe in the book are spreading throughout major English speaking countries. Here is what we have found:

The UK

- We have conducted two literature reviews examining trends in the USA and UK health and social media use. You can get to them, and (if you are a researcher) [this page](#).



Australia

- [The Coddling of the Australian Mind](#)

Note: Jon will be giving talks in Melbourne July 21, and in Sydney July 25. [Details here](#)



New Zealand

- [The Coddling of the Kiwi Mind](#)

Note: Jon will be giving a talk in Auckland on August 1. [Details here](#).



Canada

- [The Coddling of the Canadian Mind](#)



TheCoddling.com/international-coddling

The Coddling of the Spanish Mind?

Puede agregar comentarios y enlaces en inglés o español

A crowd-sourced answer to the question: Are the trends documented in [*The Coddling of the American Mind*](#) (COTAM) coming to Spain, with a delay? Overprotected kids, [rising anxiety/depression](#), callout-culture on campus, political polarization... or are Spanish universities, and Spanish Gen Z, different from their American counterparts? (For parallel documents about other countries, [see here](#).)

Una respuesta de fuente abierta a la pregunta: ¿Las tendencias documentadas en [La Transformación de la mente moderna](#) (The Coddling of the American Mind, o COTAM) llegan a España con retraso?



CAROLINA GARCÍA

Madrid - 21 MAR 2019 - 04:24 | ACT.: 21 MAR 2019 -

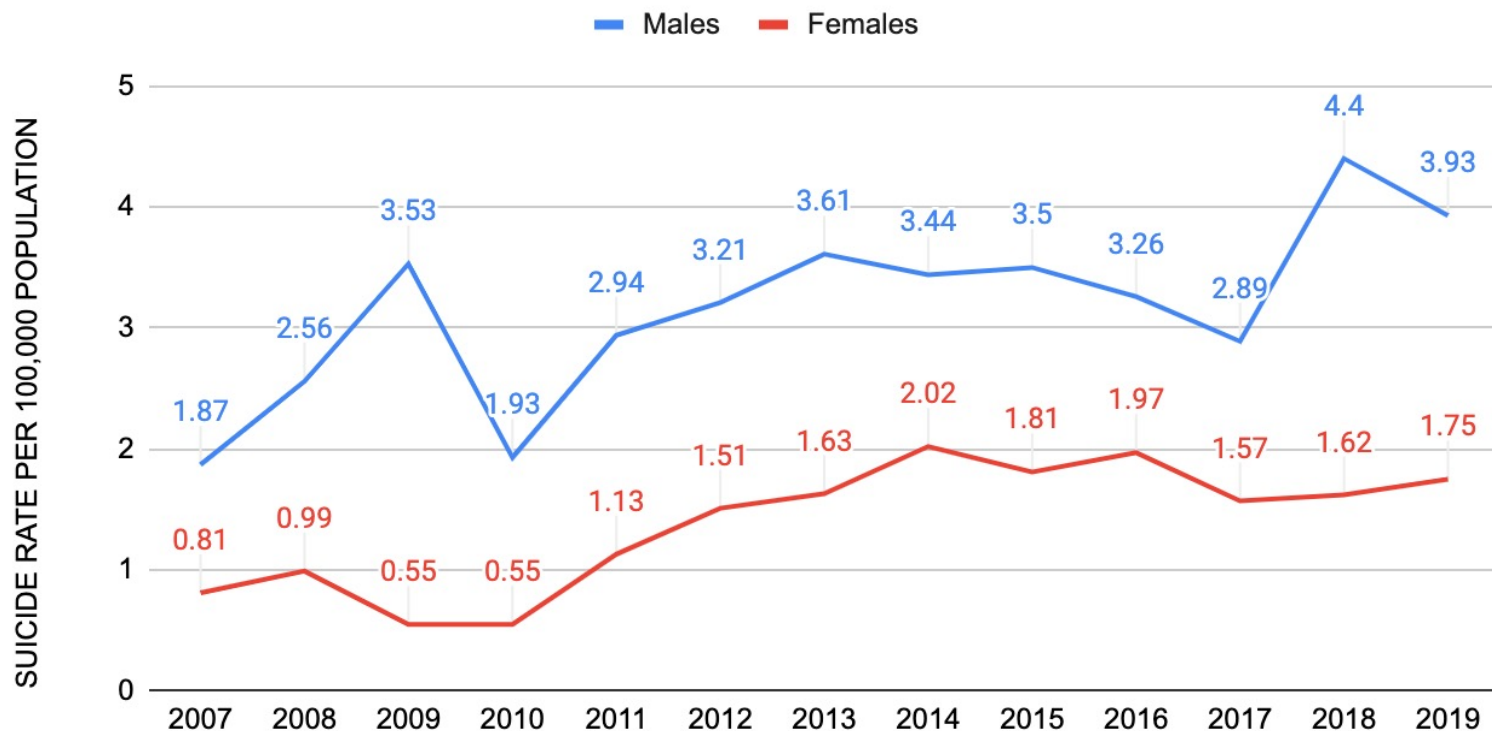
ADOLESCENCIA >

La depresión y la ansiedad en la adolescencia, una realidad en ascenso

En la actualidad, estos trastornos se diagnostican precozmente, lo que favorece el tratamiento en un rango de edad en la que los jóvenes se enfrentan a muchos cambios



Spain Suicide Rates by Gender for Ages 15-19 from 2007 - 2019



*Figure 1: Suicide rate per 100,000 population, ages 15-19, by sex.
(Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística.)*

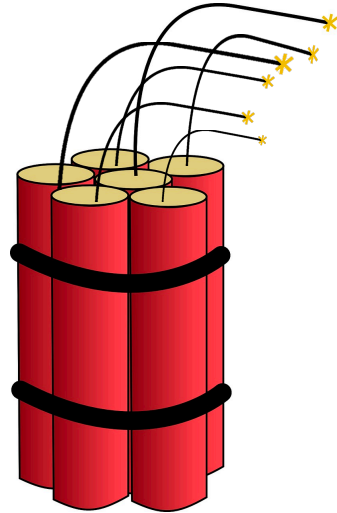
WHY ?

Why is this happening

- At the same time
- In multiple countries
- Bigger impacts on girls

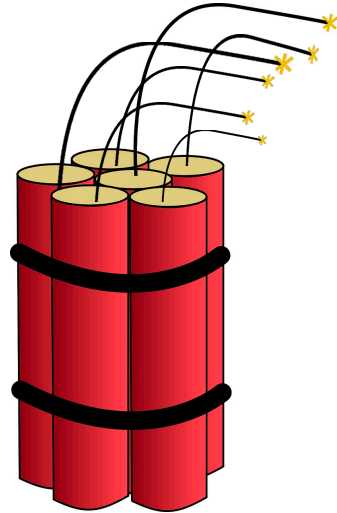
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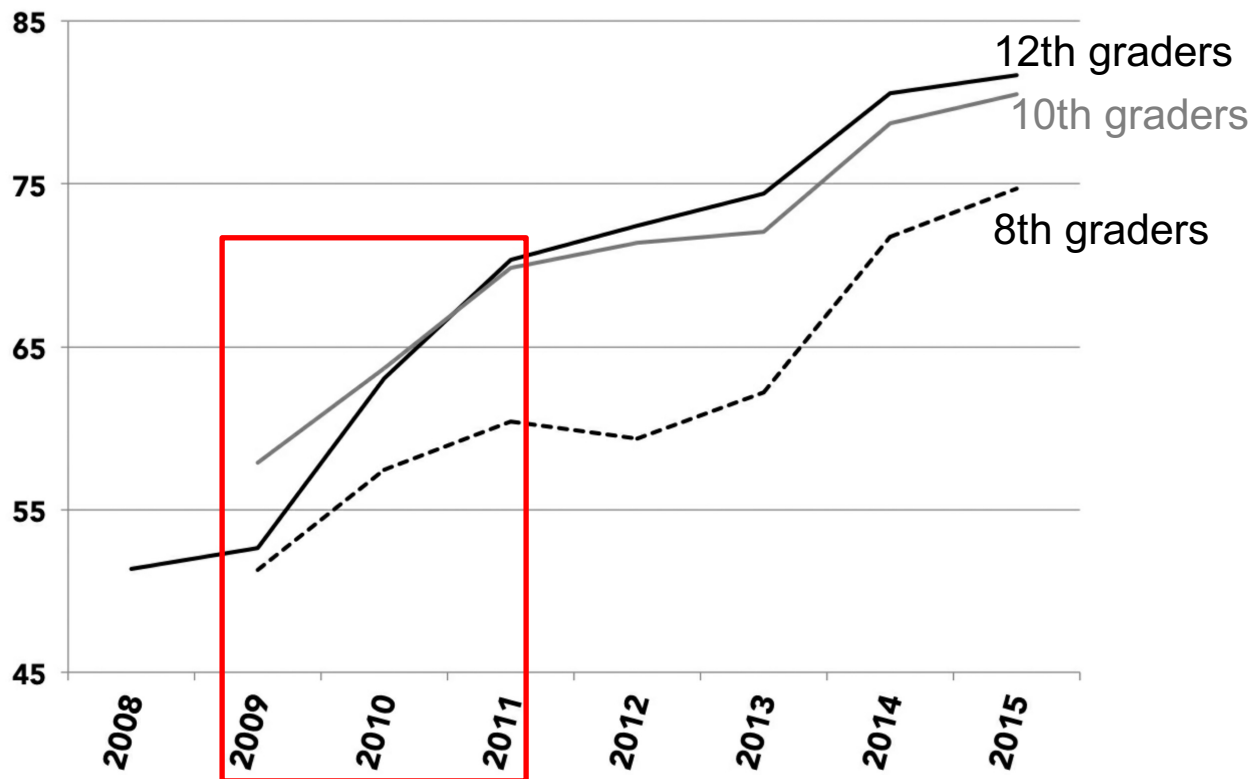
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Social Media Explains the Timing

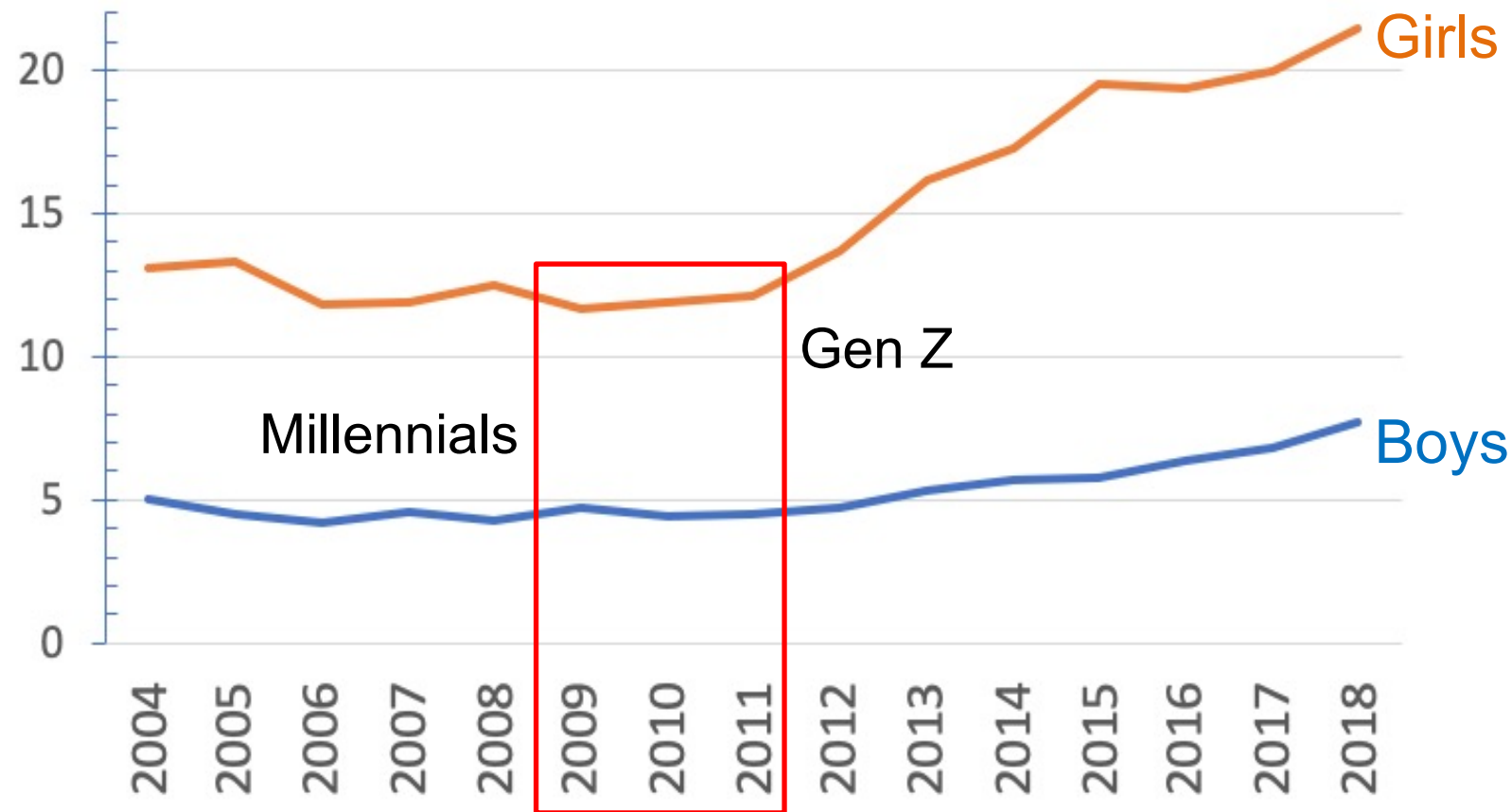
2006: FB opens to all
2007: iPhone
2009: FB adds “Like”
button; Twitter “retweet”
2009-2011: Migration of
teen social life onto
social media in USA



% of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders using social networking sites almost every day.

Source: Monitoring the Future, 2008–2015, graphed by Twenge (2017).

% of US Teens who had a major depression in the last year



Source: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Social Media Also Explains the Sex Difference

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

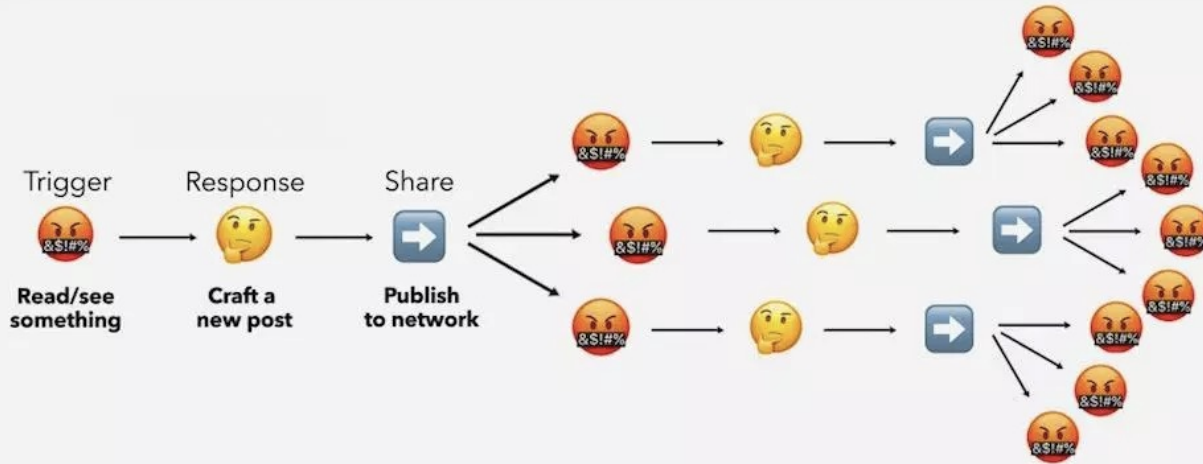
the facebook files 

Facebook Knows Instagram Is Toxic for Teen Girls, Company Documents Show

Its own in-depth research shows a significant teen mental-health issue that Facebook plays down in public



Hyperconnectivity plus engagement algorithms
also explains the *outrage cascades* since
2012: small events go viral, trigger explosions



Rose-Stockwell (2018)
Based on Brady et al. (2017)

Students are afraid:



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[Photo of the Week](#)

SEPTEMBER 22, 2016
BY THE SOPHIAN

Walking on Eggshells- How Political Correctness is Changing the Campus Dynamic

Professors are afraid:

College Faculty's New Focus: Don't Offend

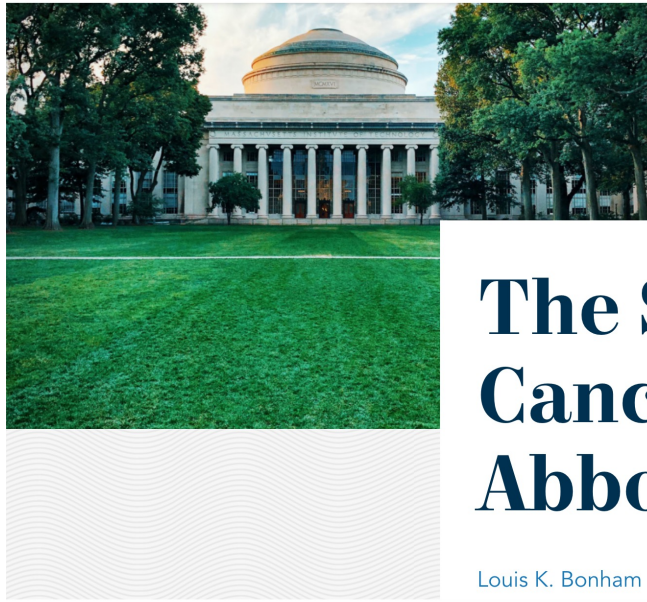
Professors across the country are adapting to an environment in which a word or turn of phrase has the power to derail a career



2017

Frank Tomasulo says he was encouraged to resign from City College of New York after he made comments about a black student. PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Administrators are afraid:



The Shame of MIT: Canceling Dorian Abbot

Louis K. Bonham

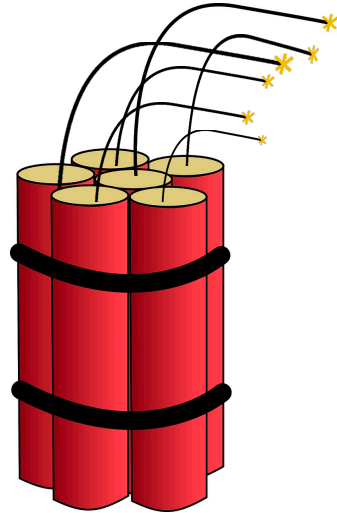
Thousands register for geophysicist's lecture after MIT caved to 'Twitter mob'

By **Emily Crane**

October 11, 2021 | 2:51pm | Updated

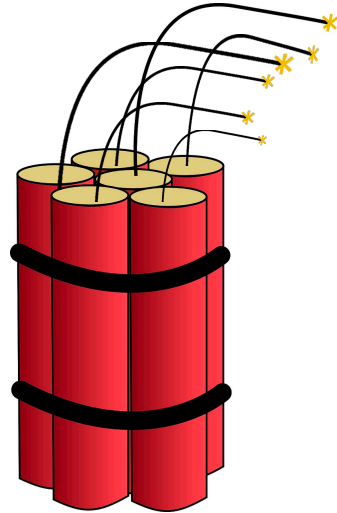
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Psych Principle: People are Anti-Fragile

*What doesn't kill me
makes me stronger.
(Friedrich Nietzsche, 1888)*





**Nassim
Nicholas
Taleb**

Author of *The Black Swan*

TOUGH TIMES DON'T LAST
TOUGH PEOPLE DO

Antifragile

Things That Gain
From Disorder

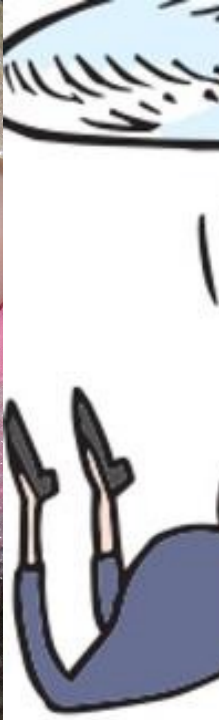
'The ultimate model to aspire to'
The Times

Systems that increase in capability, resilience, or robustness as a result of mistakes, faults, attacks, or failures.

"The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better."

Examples:

- Bones
- The immune system
- Children



The Decline of Play and the Rise of Psychopathology in Children and Adolescents



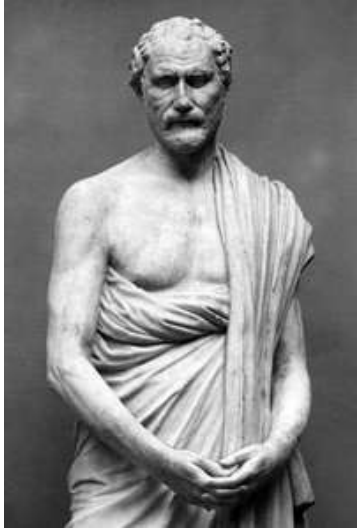
PETER GRAY

Defend mode

- Scan for dangers
- Scarcity mindset
- Cling to your team
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2011, American Journal of Play

Successful people embrace antifragility, not safetyism



Demosthenes: Overcame his "inarticulate and stammering pronunciation" by training with pebbles in his mouth, and by speaking after running sprints.

Olympic athletes train at high altitudes, to excel at lower altitudes



America's top schools embrace safetyism

Most top universities train students at low altitude, so they will find the “real world” more painful



SundayReview | CONTRIBUTING OP-ED WRITER

In College and Hiding From Scary Ideas

MARCH 21, 2015

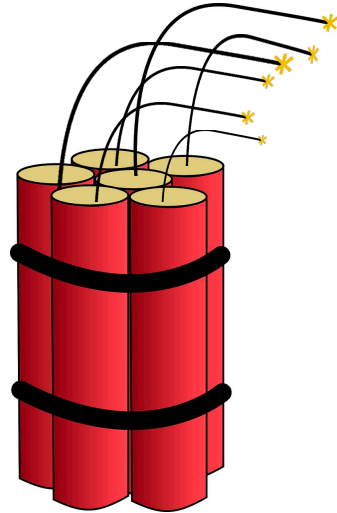


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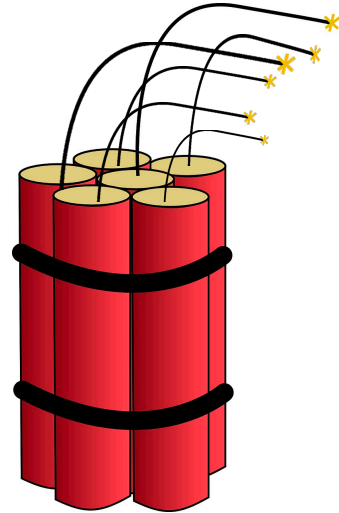
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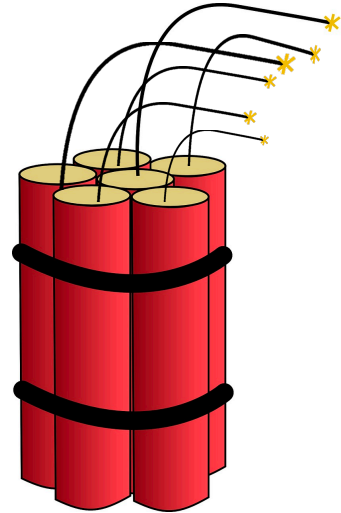
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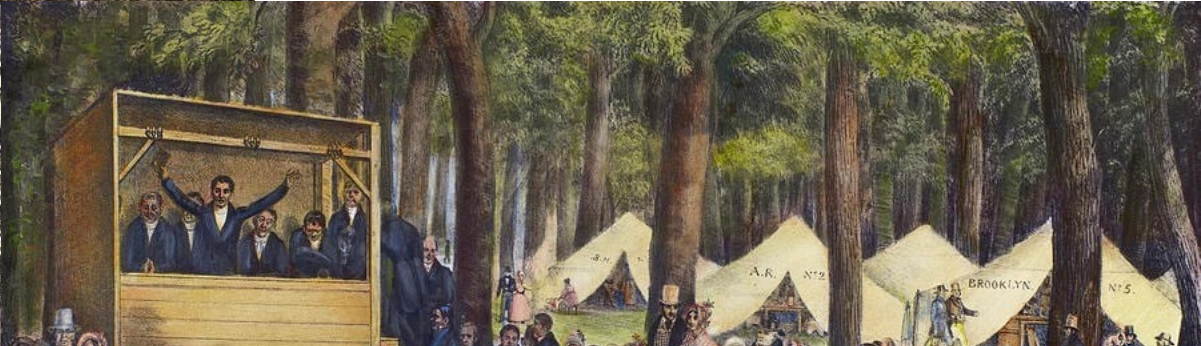
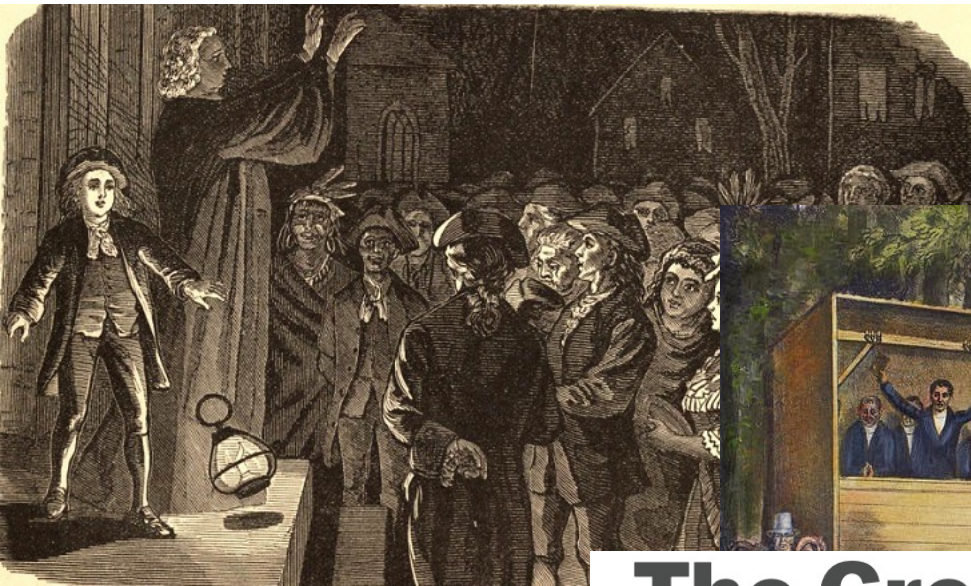


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The Great Awakenings: 1730s, & Early 19th C



The Great Awakening

Vox

A hidden shift is revolutionizing American racial politics — and could transform the future of the Democratic Party.

By Matthew Yglesias | [@mattyglesias](#) | [matt@vox.com](#) | Updated Apr 1, 2019, 9:25am EDT

Antiracism, Our Flawed New Religion

DAILY BEAST

Opposition to racism used to be a political stance. Now it has every marking of a religion, with both good and deleterious effects on American society.



John McWhorter

Updated 04.14.17 10:18AM ET

Published 07.27.15 1:20AM ET



Impiden a un profesor de la UAM impartir una conferencia en la UPF sobre los transexuales

● Pablo de Lora lamenta el boicot: «Si el signo de los tiempos es esto, vayan ustedes despidiéndose del pei



Momento en el que varios activistas radicales impiden la intervención de Pablo de Lora, hoy, en la UPF - ABC

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1886

President Cleveland
Statue of Liberty.

EDUCATION

Students demand Sussex uni fire anti-trans professor Kathleen Stock: 'We've f**king had enough'

PATRICK KELLEHER | OCTOBER 7, 2021 | [BOOKMARK ARTICLE](#)



Latest Po



ENTERTAINMENT

Timothée
Chalamet's V
Week is

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University of Sussex backs professor in free speech row

By Eleanor Lawrie
BBC News

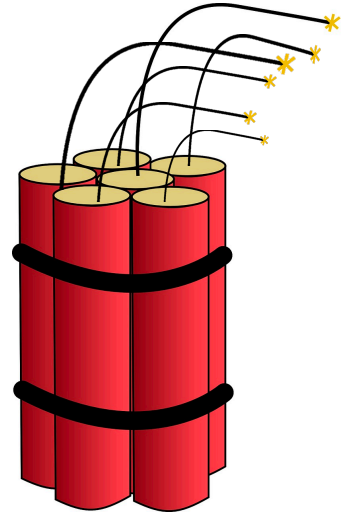
🕒 5 days ago



A rare show of
courage; a rare
defense of telos:

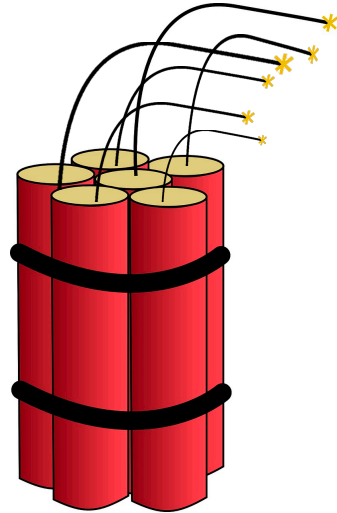
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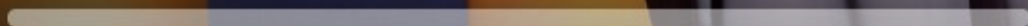
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Kimberlé Crenshaw | TEDWomen 2016

The urgency of intersectionality

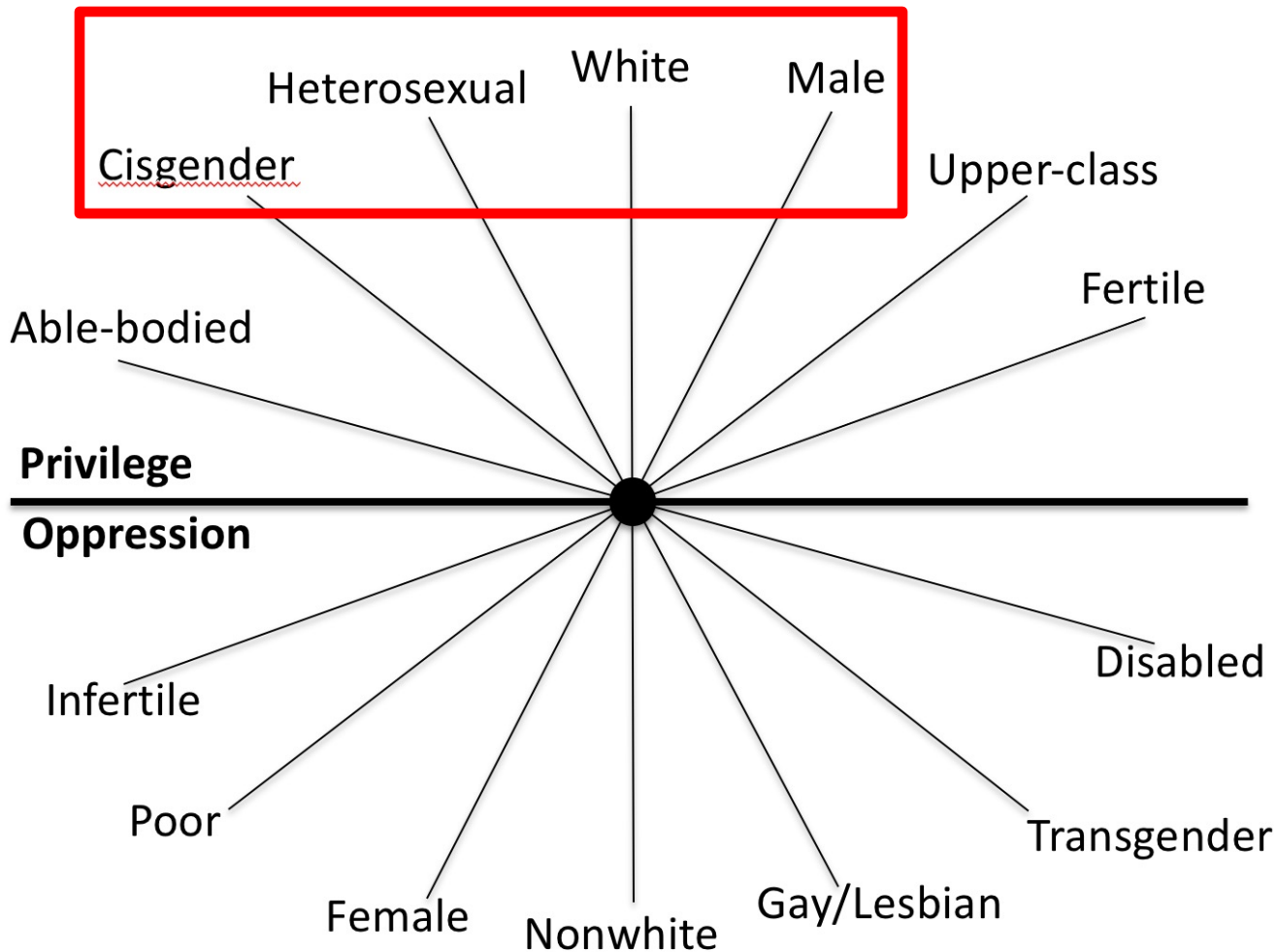


18:50



Morally
Bad

Morally
Good



Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction

July 2020

FICTION ▾ | NONFICTION ▾ | CHILDREN'S ▾ | MONTHLY LISTS ▾

When you purchase an independently ranked book through our site

1
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8 WEEKS ON THE LIST

HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST

by Ibram X. Kendi | One World

A primer for creating a more just and equitable society through opposing racism.

BUY ▾

[Read Review](#)

2
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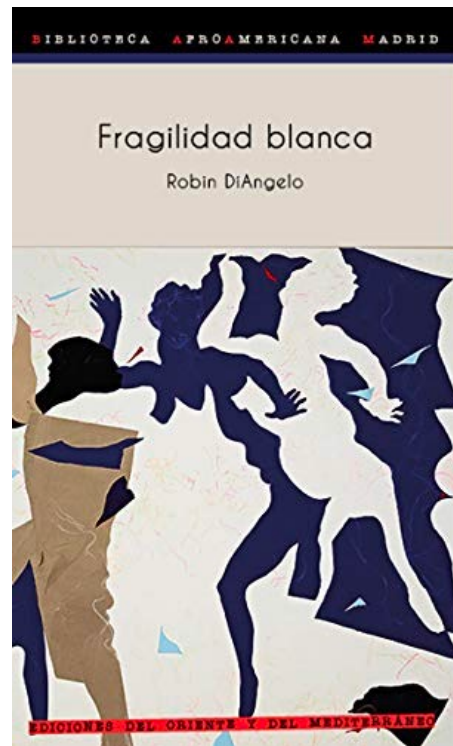
13 WEEKS ON THE LIST

WHITE FRAGILITY

by Robin DiAngelo | Beacon Press

Historical and cultural analyses on what causes defensive moves by white people and how this inhibits cross-racial dialogue.

BUY ▾



The two basic mindsets of daily life

Discover mode

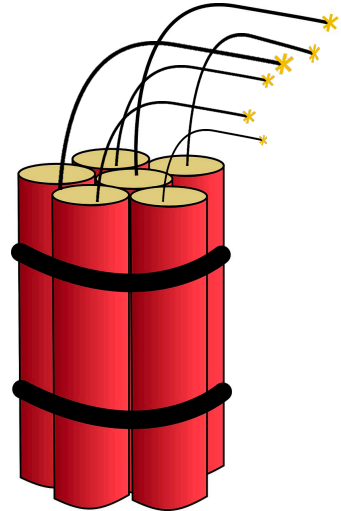
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2014-16 on US college campuses:

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- 5) The Great Awakening
- 6) Common Enemy Identity Politics



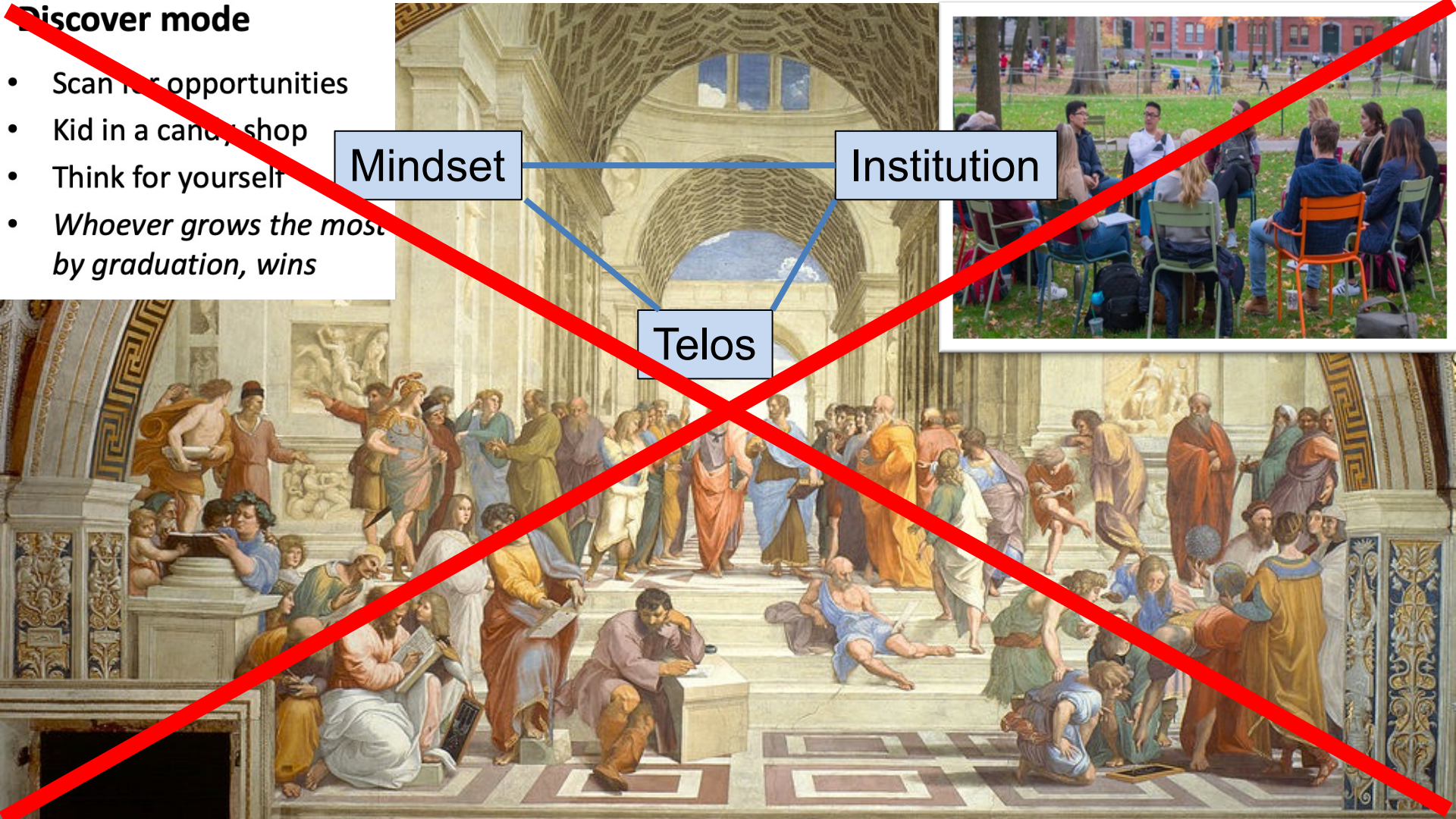
Discover mode

- Scan for opportunities
- Kid in a candy shop
- Think for yourself
- *Whoever grows the most by graduation, wins*

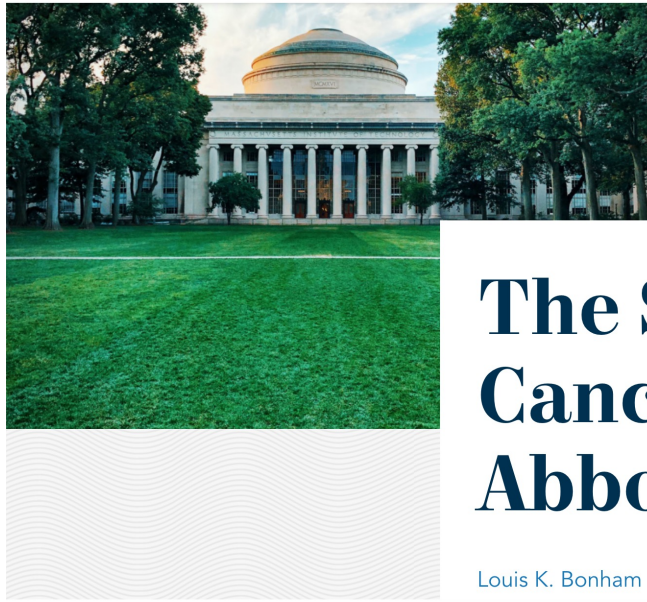
Mindset

Institution

Telos



Administrators are afraid:



The Shame of MIT: Canceling Dorian Abbot

Louis K. Bonham

Thousands register for geophysicist's lecture after MIT caved to 'Twitter mob'

By **Emily Crane**

October 11, 2021 | 2:51pm | Updated

How can you avoid the
shame of American
universities?



1) Leaders must guard the telos of truth.
You can have only one north star



2) Leaders must talk about antifragility

*“Learning is the antithesis of comfort...
The collision of views and ideologies is
in the DNA of the academic
enterprise. We do not need any
collision avoidance technology here.”*

--Ruth Simmons, Pres. Brown U



3) Leaders must respond wisely to crises

- Slow down. Panic brings bad decisions and shame
- State processes in advance. Then stick to your (slow) process
- Pay no attention to Twitter
- Talk to individuals privately, not in large public meetings
- Complexify conflicts, break binaries

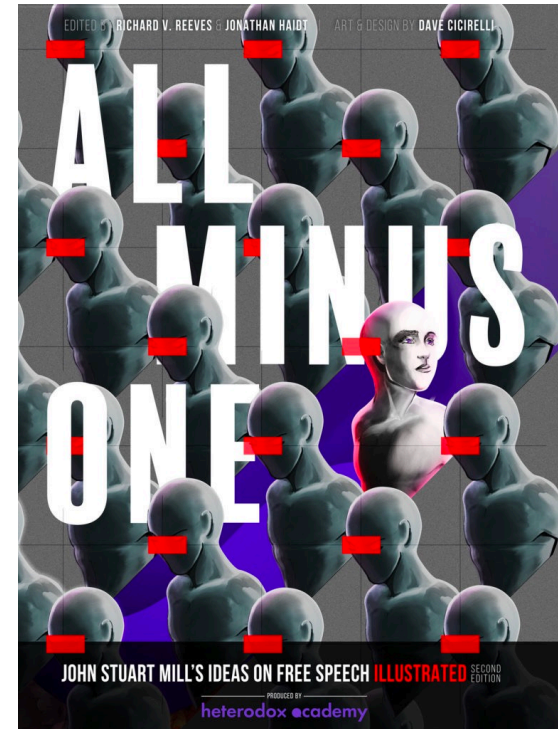
Find more advice at: TheCoddling.com

4) Praise and Increase Viewpoint Diversity

Join [HeterodoxAcademy.org](https://heterodoxacademy.org), and use our resources, e.g.



campus
expression
survey



5) Teach Critical Thinking for Civilized Coexistence: Visit OpenMindPlatform.org



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The Purpose of the University: Critical Thinking for Civilized Coexistence



Jonathan Haidt, NYU-Stern
Building Universities' Reputation
14 October, 2021