

October 16, 2014

Jennifer Rubin points to GOP snake oil salesmen.

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Jennifer has more on GOP snake oil salesmen with a special emphasis on Mike Huckabee. Pickerhead would rather have a third term of the present clueless feckless hapless president than Huckabee.

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On his Fox show and online he struggled to explain what he meant. Mostly he just repeated the same empty phrases. ("Here's my advice — grow a spine! Show a modicum of knowledge about the way we govern ourselves! And lead, follow, or get the heck out of the way!") But what does that mean? Well, Huckabee really goes off the rails invoking a discredited far-right notion that we need not succumb to "judicial tyranny":

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Victor Davis Hanson says things in DC have gone from comedy to farce.

It was tragically comical that the commander in chief in just a few weeks could go from referring to ISIS as “jayvee” and a manageable problem to declaring it an existential threat, in the same manner he upgraded the Free Syrian Army from amateurs and a fantasy to our ground linchpin in the new air war. All that tragic comedy was a continuance of his previous untruths, such as the assurance that existing health plans and doctors would not change under the Affordable Care Act or that there was not a smidgeon of corruption at the IRS.

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But here is where the farcical kicks in. The squelched investigation was focused on White House staffer Jonathan Dach. And who is Dach? He was at the time a young Yale law student and White House staffer, and is now a State Department activist working on — what else? — “Global Women’s Issues.” ...

Slate tells us why decision making saps our strength and how it can be avoided.

After my first day of work in a new city, I found myself sprawled facedown on the carpet of my new apartment. I needed to buy a couch, to finish writing assignments from my last job, to walk the dog—but after deciding which route to take between home and work, choosing a health insurance plan, and setting up a dozen new account passwords, I was totally useless. My husband asked me what I wanted to eat for dinner, and I didn’t care, as long as I didn’t have to think up a menu. It turns out there’s a scientific explanation for what I was experiencing: decision fatigue.

The name is self-explanatory; constant decision-making can be overwhelming. Think about something as simple as grocery shopping after work. Do you get the organic berries at \$7 or the nonorganic at \$4? Which style of pasta? Which brand of juice? If you’re like me, you only manage to pick out a few things before you get cranky.

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Heather Mac Donald on the neo-victorianism on the college campus.

... It is impossible to overstate the growing weirdness of the college sex scene. Campus feminists are reimporting selective portions of a traditional sexual code that they have long scorned, in the name of ending what they preposterously call an epidemic of campus rape. They are once again making males the guardians of female safety and are portraying females as fainting, helpless victims of the untrammelled male libido. They are demanding that college administrators write

highly technical rules for sex and aggressively enforce them, 50 years after the proponents of sexual liberation insisted that college adults stop policing student sexual behavior. While the campus feminists are not yet calling for an assistant dean to be present at their drunken couplings, they have created the next best thing: the opportunity to replay every grope and caress before a tribunal of voyeuristic administrators.

The ultimate result of the feminists' crusade may be the same as if they were explicitly calling for a return to sexual modesty: a sharp decrease in casual, drunken sex. There is no downside to this development.

Let us recall the norms which the sexual revolution contemptuously swept away in the 1960s. Males and females were assumed on average to have different needs regarding sex: The omnivorous male sex drive would leap at all available targets, whereas females were more selective, associating sex with love and commitment. The male was expected to channel his desire for sex through the rituals of courtship and a proposal of marriage. A high premium was placed on female chastity and great significance accorded its loss; males, by contrast, were given a virtual free pass to play the sexual field to the extent that they could find or purchase a willing partner. The default setting for premarital sex was "no," at least for females. Girls could opt out of that default—and many did. But placing the default at "no" meant that a female didn't have to justify her decision not to have sex with particular reasons each time a male importuned her; individual sexual restraint was backed up by collective values. On campuses, administrators enforced these norms through visitation rules designed to prevent student couplings.

The sexual revolution threw these arrangements aside. ...

Public Radio International post on how the language of science became English.
Permafrost, oxygen, hydrogen — it all looks like science to me.

But these terms actually have origins in Russian, Greek and French.

Today though, if a scientist is going to coin a new term, it's most likely in English. And if they are going to publish a new discovery, it is most definitely in English.

Look no further than the Nobel prize awarded for physiology and medicine to Norwegian couple May-Britt and Edvard Moser. Their research was written and published in English. This was not always so.

"If you look around the world in 1900, and someone told you, 'Guess what the universal language of science will be in the year 2000?' You would first of all laugh at them because it was obvious that no one language would be the language of science, but a mixture of French, German and English would be the right answer," said Michael Gordin.

Gordin is a professor of the history of science at Princeton and his upcoming book, Scientific Babel, explores the history of language and science. ...

Right Turn

[Snake oil salesmen vs. gay marriage reality](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

In the wake of the Supreme Court's decision to let gay marriage bans fall in another batch of states, there are two types of responses from conservatives. The first acknowledges reality; the second misleads voters that there is something tangible to be done to stop the wave of social change.

In the first category, some Republicans like Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker have simply said in effect the boat has sailed. Others like [Sen. Mike Lee \(R-Utah\)](#) gave eloquent critiques of the Supreme Court and expressed his sincere disappointment the court did not act differently.

Understand [the gay marriage — by a function of legislative or federal judicial action is now legal](#) in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin, as well as the District of Columbia. Because the Supreme Court would not take circuit court decisions banning gay marriage from the 4th, 10th, and 7th Circuits, an additional batch of states (Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia and Wyoming) also must allow same-sex marriage. If the 9th Circuit decision striking down gay marriage holds (currently it has been stayed by Justice Anthony Kennedy's order) that will add Idaho, Alaska, Arizona and Montana. The only way this changes is if the Supreme Court reverses itself (almost impossible to image) or if there is a constitutional amendment, which would require three-fourths of the states. It is hard to imagine how that number could be reached given that about 70 percent of states already have gay marriage.

Then there are the pols who would have us believe there is something realistically that can stop this and that those who refuse are just weaklings. [Gov. Mike Huckabee went so far as to threaten to leave the GOP if Republicans "raise the white flag" on gay marriage.](#) Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.) introduced an amendment which would prevent federal courts from striking down gay marriage bans, although it would do nothing about state courts or popular referenda (nor is it remotely possible that it will get through both houses of Congress and then get the required support from the states). These people are selling, to be blunt, snake oil. They are attacking fellow Republicans for being in the reality-based community, and just like the government shutdown they are making a show of doing "something" which in reality has no chance of success.

I asked two separate Huckabee advisers what he actually wanted Republicans to do. Neither one could explain what that meant in concrete terms. Spokeswoman Alice Stewart replied, "He wants GOP leaders to stand firm in support of life and traditional marriage." And she provided this statement from Huckabee: "If establishment Republicans continue to capitulate on the issues of abortion and gay marriage, and if the party accepts the changes as inevitable, we will lose. The heart of the Republican party includes protecting the sanctity of life and traditional marriage, the party needs to publicly make the case for these issues." Obviously he is simply repeating himself without explaining *what can be done* to re-establish gay marriage bans, undo public referenda and re-set the gay marriage debate to 1999, before the first state recognized gay marriage.

I suppose conservatives could fight to keep gay marriage bans at the state level where they still exist and defend them in court, but that is at best a staying action and at worst a colossal waste of

time and money. In any event, that strategy applies to a minority of states and would not entail any role for Congress.

At bottom the politicians and leaders of traditional marriage groups refusing to accept reality have a problem even more fundamental than the legal issue: They have not won the debate with the American people. With each passing year more Americans support gay marriage, and more become resigned to it — as will continue as gay marriage spreads to the states listed above. If people like Huckabee were honest with their followers, they would not be promising them the impossible. And Huckabee should recognize that if those who have lost the gay marriage debate leave the GOP, they will risk ceding the presidency, both houses and a raft of issues to the Democrats. That will of course doom issues like partial birth abortion, religious liberty and other issues near and dear to conservatives.

Unfortunately this reaction is emblematic of the politics of empty gestures and illogical crusades. It bonds with voters over a sense of grievance, but offers no realistic political course to their desired end. And it vilifies their allies on a host of other issues who won't play the look-how-heartfelt-I-am-unlike-those-squishy-politicians game. It is not behavior becoming of a national leader.

I should note that social change is always more permanent and more effective if it is organic and not legislatively imposed. In this case however the Supreme Court gave a substantial amount of deference for many years up through the historic decisions last year. Had social conservatives not insisted on passing DOMA, it might have kept the Supreme Court at bay for a few more years and alerted the traditional marriage community that they had to capture the hearts and minds of America, not rely on a federal statute to try to squash what was happening in the states.

At any rate, we are where we are and voters will have to decide whether they are being sold a bill of goods from those promising not to accept the law in the vast majority of states. Unfortunately, all that effort could be better spent shoring up heterosexual marriage, preserving school choice and fighting illegitimate intrusions into religious liberty.

Right Turn

[Mike Huckabee snake oil \(part 2\)](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

As I noted last week, some Republicans are [peddling snake oil in their pitch to social conservatives](#) not to “surrender” on gay marriage. Among the worst offenders was former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee, who threatened to leave the party if the Republicans, well, if the Republicans don't . . . *what is it that he wants?*

On his Fox show and online he [struggled to explain what he meant](#). Mostly he just repeated the same empty phrases. (“Here's my advice — grow a spine! Show a modicum of knowledge about the way we govern ourselves! And lead, follow, or get the heck out of the way!”) But what does that *mean*? Well, Huckabee really goes off the rails invoking a discredited far-right notion that we need not succumb to “judicial tyranny”:

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enabling legislation and funds it, and unless the Executive branch signs it and enforces it, it certainly is not “the law of the land!” That’s often exclaimed with authority by voices that belong to people that I wonder — did they pass 9th grade civics? The law of the land requires agreement of all three branches.

I am afraid it is Huckabee who skipped civics. For over 200 years, the country has operated on the consensus that Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson made famous: “We are not final because we are infallible, but we are infallible only because we are final.” In other words, once the court rules, the executive and legislative branches do not defy it. In the case of the executive, whether it was the Dred Scott decision (which took a war to overturn) or the Nixon tapes, the president has never embraced the notion that he could simply disregard the court. The Southern states tried this — through massive resistance — after the Supreme Court ruled on *Brown v. Board of Education*, but ultimately they, too, were forced to accept the court’s ruling.

Imagine if in *Hobby Lobby*, for example, the Obama administration simply disregarded the ruling to protect religious objectors from the Obamacare mandate to cover abortion-inducing drugs. Huckabee would be leading the parade to impeach the president for lawlessness.

Huckabee has gotten himself in a box by railing at the GOP for “selling out” on gay marriage, but he is compounding the error. He is suggesting a course of action — defiance of the courts — that is not viable (e.g. he’s going to tell states to refuse to issue marriage licenses to gays covered by the circuit courts’ rulings?) and injurious to a far more important issue, the rule of law. He seems to have missed the great lesson of the Obama years. Unless the parties respect the other branches (e.g. the president needs legislation to change a statute), we have chaos, and the separation of powers collapses. (Huckabee should recall that [Newt Gingrich’s attack](#) on [judicial supremacy](#) did him no good in the 2012 race.) President Obama was bad enough in ignoring Congress; we don’t need a president who is also going to ignore the courts.

Huckabee also makes another fundamental error insisting that “our constitutional makeup does not give the minority veto rights over the majority.” Actually, that is precisely what the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, does — it protects against majority overreach and excessive government power. While Huckabee is right that “the major political and social questions of our day [have] by constitutional design been given to the majority through the legislative process,” the courts are there as a backstop to vindicate all sorts of rights — the Second Amendment (against gun bans passed by legislatures), the First Amendment (trampled on by Obamacare), etc. One can disagree whether marriage is, as the court has said, a “fundamental right” that cannot simply be brushed aside by majority rule, but it is quite another thing to declare the majority always wins.

Huckabee is no doubt sincere and acting from passion. But he is also wrong and unwise, and by his conduct leads us to believe that he is more at home in conservative media than in instructing the country on constitutional law. If he decides to run for president in 2016, he will run into the same buzzsaw Gingrich faced on the far-fetched idea that courts can be ignored.

Pajamas Media

[From Comedy to Farce](#)

by Victor Davis Hanson

It was tragically comical that the commander in chief in just a few weeks could go from referring to ISIS as “jayvee” and a manageable problem to declaring it an existential threat, in the same manner he upgraded the Free Syrian Army from amateurs and a fantasy to our ground linchpin in the new air war. All that tragic comedy was a continuance of his previous untruths, such as the assurance that existing health plans and doctors would not change under the Affordable Care Act or that there was not a smidgeon of corruption at the IRS.

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And how did young Jonathan Dach at the ripe age of 25 years land such a prestigious job as a presidential advance man? His father, Leslie Dach, was a lobbyist who gave the Obama campaign \$23,900 and was later hired on to work with Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” campaign. And, of course, Leslie Dach now has left his job lobbying for Wal-Mart. And where does he work now? For the Obama administration. Promoting what? Obamacare.

Here is the essence of the Obama administration’s abyss between word and deed: in the age of the war on women and the end to lobbyists in government, the feminist young aide is alleged to have solicited a prostitute; the most transparent administration in memory covered that fact up during the reelection campaign; the president who promised to end the revolving door and ban lobbyists from government hired not just a one-percenter lobbyist and donor, but his randy son as well.

Can it get much richer than that? Unfortunately, it can — literally, as we’ll explore on the next page.

Recently, Barack Obama offered yet another fundraiser to his small circle of billionaires at the 20-acre gated estate of — again, this is no joke — [Rich Richman](#). Some of Richy Rich’s bundled donors paid over \$32,000 to see and touch Obama, who lectured the assembled Connecticut one percent of the one percent. And what did he lecture them on? Of course on “billionaires” and their mean war on the middle class.

Not long ago President Obama flew into Fresno, Ground Zero of the California drought. Did he offer federal help for more dam, canal, and reservoir construction? [Hardly](#). Did he offer to help build coastal desalination plants? Nope.

Instead, he gave a brief lecture about global warming and offered \$160 million in aid to ameliorate its effects, although almost all California climatologists associate the state's unusual three-year drought with oceanic and atmospheric conditions unrelated to climate change, especially given the fact that the planet at large has not heated up in the last 18 years.

After briefly stopping in Fresno for a few hours, where did Barack Obama go next to emphasize the global-warming roots of our drought, and the irrelevancy of building more storage space to mitigate the atypical absence of snow and rain?

Naturally, he jetted in to see Jordan's king at one of the most artificial environments in the world — verdant Rancho Mirage in the scorching Palm Springs area desert, an artificial landscape entirely irrigated through vast manmade water transfers via canals from the Colorado River. And why did Obama detour to such a landscape incongruous with the drought-stricken state? To play more golf, reminding us that while new reservoirs are not needed, and while burning carbon fuels is the culprit, golf courses in the middle of deserts are perfectly natural destinations for climate-change believers who arrive on huge jets to putt on irrigated greens for a few hours. [Rumors then flew](#) that Obama so liked Rancho Mirage's drought-proof, irrigated attractions that he pondered retiring at a gated estate there.

Why such farce? We have forgotten two truths about the Obama administration. No president in recent memory has so hectored the American people on the dangers of elites, and no president in the last half-century has so enjoyed the perks and culture of the elite. Unfortunately, this is not just mindless hypocrisy, but rather calibrated medieval exemption: the more Barack Obama berates the high life of others, the more he feels he deserves it for himself.

Slate

[Drowning in Jam](#)

How to conquer "decision fatigue."

by Jane C. Hu



Life is like a box of chocolates: full of decisions.

After my first day of work in a new city, I found myself sprawled facedown on the carpet of my new apartment. I needed to buy a couch, to finish writing assignments from my last job, to walk the dog—but after deciding which route to take between home and work, choosing a health insurance plan, and setting up a dozen new account passwords, I was totally useless. My husband asked me what I wanted to eat for dinner, and I didn't care, as long as I didn't have to think up a menu. It turns out there's a scientific explanation for what I was experiencing: *decision fatigue*.

The name is self-explanatory; constant decision-making can be overwhelming. Think about something as simple as grocery shopping after work. Do you get the organic berries at \$7 or the nonorganic at \$4? Which style of pasta? Which brand of juice? If you're like me, you only manage to pick out a few things before you get cranky.

It may seem liberating to live in a land of infinite choices, but research in decision-making suggests otherwise. In [a classic study](#), Stanford researchers set up shop at an upscale grocery store chosen for its “extraordinary selection” of items, including 300 types of jam. One Saturday afternoon, they set up a sampling booth with 24 jams; on the next Saturday, they did the same but with just six jams.

They found that people did seem to like the idea of having a lot of choices: More customers approached the 24-jam booth than the six-jam one. But people visiting the 24-jam booth tended to try only one or two jams—the same number as people in the six-jam group. When it came to buying jam, people in the hella-jams condition shut down, exhibiting what researchers call choice paralysis; only 3 percent bought any jam, whereas 30 percent of people in the six-jam booth took home a jar. From this study, the researchers coined a theory, aptly called choice overload.

The same researchers ran a similar study with chocolates, where people were asked to choose just one chocolate from either 30 choices or six. They found that people in the 30-chocolate group were more likely to experience regret about the choice they made. Still more research has found that repeated decision-making also leads to decreased self-control.

Making decisions isn't the only daily activity that can wear you down. It's what you *aren't* doing that can exhaust you, too. Maintaining self-control takes subconscious thought and effort—the box of donuts in the break room you're resisting is a low-level distraction throughout your day. As [one group of researchers](#) put it: “Just as a muscle gets tired from exertion, acts of self-control cause short-term impairments in subsequent self-control.” Researchers call this ego depletion, referring to Freud's “ego”: the moderate, socially acceptable version of ourselves that mediates between the superego and the id.

Productivity decreases over time, so replenish your depleted ego by indulging your id.

Scientists have tried a variety of tasks to deplete people's self-control: asking them to hide their feelings after watching an emotional film, to avoid thinking about a white bear, or to resist desserts. They found that exerting self-control has effects on even seemingly unrelated tasks, such as stamina when squeezing a handgrip, whether people can stifle an inappropriate laugh, and how long they work on solving a frustrating problem.

People who are ego-depleted or decision-fatigued are looking for ways to get out of having to exert more self-control or make decisions, so they tend to be passive instead of active. In [one cruel study](#), researchers made a group of participants do an incredibly pointless and ego-depleting task: Cross out all the instances of e in a document, as long as it was more than one letter away from another vowel. (*Meal* is a no; *vowel* is a no; but *mechanical* would be a yes.)

After that mind-numbing labor, participants were told that they would need to watch a video, but could stop it at any time to watch a clip of [Saturday Night Live](#). The video was insanely boring—literally footage of a plain white wall. One group had to press a button to stop the video; the other had to hold down a button to keep watching the video. The button-pressers watched the boring video for a longer amount of time—in other words, people were so ego-depleted that even pressing a button felt like a lot of work. No wonder Netflix’s automatic “play next episode” function is so popular.

Making decisions and exhibiting self-control are unavoidable daily activities; getting overwhelmed and sometimes making bad, impulsive decisions are occupational hazards of being human. But simple awareness of how to conserve your limited resources can help you stay productive throughout the day.

First, get the important things out of the way early on in the day, before you’ve reached your frustration threshold or gotten distracted by break-room crullers. Checking off your to-do list when your cognitive resources are fresh is a good strategy for avoiding rash decisions.

Next, decrease your range of options. This may seem counterintuitive, since it requires making *even more decisions*. For instance, if you’re picking a restaurant for an important lunch meeting, first deciding on a certain part of town or type of cuisine can narrow your options. Like the participants in the jams study, you’re less likely to be paralyzed by choice if you have few options instead of dozens.

Once you’ve arrived at a decision, stick with it. Ignore the naysaying voice in your head asking if this is the mutual fund that will make you the most money in 15 years or if the route your GPS gave you is the most gas-efficient. Just accept that no decision is ever completely perfect, and remind yourself that it is the best you can do with the tools you have in the moment. Second-guessing yourself only requires making more decisions, which further depletes your cognitive resources. You might also end up happier; [researchers have found](#) that people who “satisfice,” or pick an option that meets requirements, are more content with their choices than people who try to pick the *best* option.

To limit the number of options you can consider, set a self-imposed time limit for decision-making. If you’re buying a new laptop bag, you could spend an infinite amount of time studying features and optimizing price and value—but if you give yourself only five minutes to make a decision, there are only so many bags you can consider. You’ll save time, and, if the research findings hold up in real life, you’ll be happier with your decision, too. For less important tasks, consider outsourcing your decision-making. If you’re wondering whether to hit the gym after work or call a client, let someone else make the decision for you. I use [a simple yes/no generator](#): Think of a question, hit a button, and the website spits out a randomly generated yea or nay.

After all that decision-making, give yourself a break. Remember that productivity decreases over time, and try to replenish your depleted ego by indulging your id. Walk away from your desk. Splurge on a \$6 coffee drink. Watch YouTube videos of [puppies on Roombas](#). Take a long lunch and come back fresh. If self-control is like a muscle, taking a rest can refuel your supply.

Changing your beliefs may actually make you more productive, too. Some [researchers believe that the notion of ego depletion is all in your head](#), and that rejecting the idea of self-control as a muscle can combat its effects. People who instead believe that self-control is an infinite resource are less likely to show effects of ego depletion—they actually show *increased* performance on self-control tests after completing boring, ego-draining tasks like crossing out e’s from a document. Even weirder, how you feel about [free will](#) also affects your productivity: The more strongly you

believe in it, the more likely you are to enjoy making decisions and to be happy with your choices. My apologies, readers, but your best bet at boosting your productivity may actually be to disregard what you've learned in this article.

Jane C. Hu has a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of California–Berkeley and is a 2014 AAAS Mass Media Fellow. Follow her on [Twitter](#).

Weekly Standard

Neo-Victorianism on Campus

Is this the end of the collegiate bacchanal?

by Heather Mac Donald

Sexual liberation is having a nervous breakdown on college campuses. Conservatives should be cheering on its collapse; instead they sometimes sound as if they want to administer the victim smelling salts.

It is impossible to overstate the growing weirdness of the college sex scene. Campus feminists are reimporting selective portions of a traditional sexual code that they have long scorned, in the name of ending what they preposterously call an epidemic of campus rape. They are once again making males the guardians of female safety and are portraying females as fainting, helpless victims of the untrammelled male libido. They are demanding that college administrators write highly technical rules for sex and aggressively enforce them, 50 years after the proponents of sexual liberation insisted that college adults stop policing student sexual behavior. While the campus feminists are not yet calling for an assistant dean to be present at their drunken couplings, they have created the next best thing: the opportunity to replay every grope and caress before a tribunal of voyeuristic administrators.

The ultimate result of the feminists' crusade may be the same as if they were explicitly calling for a return to sexual modesty: a sharp decrease in casual, drunken sex. There is no downside to this development.

Let us recall the norms which the sexual revolution contemptuously swept away in the 1960s. Males and females were assumed on average to have different needs regarding sex: The omnivorous male sex drive would leap at all available targets, whereas females were more selective, associating sex with love and commitment. The male was expected to channel his desire for sex through the rituals of courtship and a proposal of marriage. A high premium was placed on female chastity and great significance accorded its loss; males, by contrast, were given a virtual free pass to play the sexual field to the extent that they could find or purchase a willing partner. The default setting for premarital sex was "no," at least for females. Girls could opt out of that default—and many did. But placing the default at "no" meant that a female didn't have to justify her decision not to have sex with particular reasons each time a male importuned her; individual sexual restraint was backed up by collective values. On campuses, administrators enforced these norms through visitation rules designed to prevent student couplings.

The sexual revolution threw these arrangements aside. From now on, males and females would meet as equals on the sexual battlefield. The ideal of female modesty, the liberationists declared, was simply a cover for sexism. Chivalry was punished; females were assumed to desire sex as voraciously as males; they required no elaborate courtship rituals to engage in it and would

presumably experience no pang of thwarted attachment after a one-night stand. The default for premarital sex was now “yes,” rather than “no”; opting out of that default required an individualized explanation that could no longer rely on the fact that such things are simply not done. In colleges, the authorities should get out of the way and leave students free to navigate coital relations as they saw fit.

Four decades later, the liberationist regime is disintegrating before our eyes. The new order is a bizarre hybrid of liberationist and traditionalist values. It carefully preserves the prerogative of no-strings-attached sex while cabining it with legalistic caveats that allow females to revert at will to a stance of offended virtue. Consider the sexual consent policy of California’s Claremont McKenna College, shared almost verbatim with other schools such as Occidental College in Los Angeles. Paragraphs long, consisting of multiple sections and subsections, and embedded within an even wordier 44-page document on harassment and sexual misconduct, Claremont’s sexual consent rules resemble nothing so much as a multilawyer-drafted contract for the sale and delivery of widgets, complete with definitions, the obligations of “all” (as opposed to “both”) parties, and the preconditions for default. “Effective consent consists of an affirmative, conscious decision by each participant to engage in mutually agreed upon (and the conditions of) sexual activity,” the authorities declare awkwardly. The policy goes on to elaborate at great length upon each of the “essential elements of Consent”—“Informed and reciprocal,” “Freely and actively given,” “Mutually understandable,” “Not indefinite,” “Not unlimited.” “All parties must demonstrate a clear and mutual understanding of the nature and scope of the act to which they are consenting”—think: signing a mortgage—and a willingness to do the same thing, at the same time, in the same way,” declare Claremont’s sex bureaucrats. Never mind that sex is the realm of the irrational and inarticulate, fraught with ambivalence, fear, longing, and shame. Doing something that you are not certain about does not make it rape, it makes it sex.

The policy’s assumption of transparent contractual intention may be laughably out of touch with reality. But its agenda is serious: to rehabilitate the “no” default for premarital sex, despite a backdrop of permissiveness. In fact, the policy goes even farther into the realm of Victorian sex roles than simply a presumption of female modesty. Females are now considered so helpless and passive that they should not even be assumed to have the strength or capacity to say “no.” “Withdrawal of Consent can be an expressed ‘no’ or can be based on an outward demonstration that conveys that an individual is hesitant, confused, uncertain, or is no longer a mutual participant,” announce Claremont’s sexocrats.

Good luck litigating that clause in a campus sex tribunal. The female can allege that the male should have known that she was “confused” because of what she didn’t do. The male will respond that he didn’t notice any particular nonactivity on her part. Resolving this evidentiary dispute would not be helped by bedside cameras—the logical next step in campus rape hysteria. Pressure sensors would be needed as well to detect asymmetries in touch.

With or without cameras, adjudicating college sex in the neo-Victorian era requires a degree of prurience that should be repugnant to any self-respecting university. A campus sex investigator named Djuna Perkins described the nauseating enterprise to National Public Radio in June: “It will sometimes boil down to details like who turned who around, or [whether] she lifted up her body so [another student] could pull down her pants. There have been plenty of cases that I’ve done when the accused student says, ‘What do you mean? [The accuser] was moaning with pleasure. He was raising his body, clutching my back, exhibiting all signs that sounded like this was a pleasurable event.’”

Rather than shrinking from this Peeping Tom role, college administrators are enthusiastically drafting new sex rules that require even more minute analysis of drunken couplings. Harvard, also assuming that delicate co-eds cannot summon the will to say “no,” now allows females unfettered discretion after the fact to allege that they were sexually assaulted by conduct they silently regarded as “undesirable.”

We have come very far from the mud-drenched orgies of Woodstock. Feminists in the neo-Victorian era are demanding that written material that allegedly evokes nonconsensual sex be prefaced by warnings regarding its threatening content, so that female readers can avoid fits of vapors and fainting—a phenomenon known as “trigger warnings.” Earlier this year, Wellesley College students petitioned for the removal of a statue of a sleep-walking, underwear-clad middle-aged man, whose installation on college grounds immediately caused “apprehension, fear, and triggering thoughts regarding sexual assault” among many students, according to the petition. A hyperventilating, publicity-seeking senior at Columbia University is carrying around a mattress with her everywhere she goes on campus, like Jesus bearing his cross, until Columbia expels her alleged “rapist.” Ohio State University underwent a four-year investigation by the U.S. Education Department for its crude marching band culture, even though the only assault female band members may have experienced was on their sensibilities. Many girls, we belatedly rediscover, don’t enjoy bawdy sexual humor as much as boys do.

It turns out that when you decouple the sex drive from modesty and prudence, it takes armies of elected officials, bureaucrats, and consultants to protect females from “undesirable” behavior. Virginia’s governor Terry McAuliffe is establishing a task force on campus sexual violence comprising up to 30 top state officials and representatives from law enforcement and higher education. Connecticut is requiring colleges to form sexual assault response teams, on the model, presumably, of active shooter response teams. California has just enacted a law mandating that colleges receiving state funds require students to be in “affirmative, conscious and voluntary agreement” in order to engage in sexual activity, agreement that is “ongoing throughout a sexual activity and that can be revoked at any time.” Gloria Steinem and a gender studies professor from New York’s Stony Brook University explain in the *New York Times*: The California law “redefines that gray area” between “yes” and “no.” “Silence is not consent; it is the absence of consent. Only an explicit ‘yes’ can be considered consent.” In other words, California’s new statute, like many existing campus policies, moves the sexual default for female students back to “no.”

But isn’t this bureaucratic and legislative ferment, however ham-handed, being driven by an epidemic of campus rape? There is no such epidemic. There is, however, a squalid hook-up scene, the result of jettisoning all normative checks on promiscuous behavior. A recent case from Occidental College illustrates the reality behind so-called “campus rape.” Girls are drinking themselves blotto precisely in order to lower their inhibitions for casual sex, then regretting it afterwards.

The freshman complainant, Jane Doe (a pseudonym), began her weekend drinking binge on Friday, September 6, 2013. She attended a dance party in the dorm room of John Doe, another freshman whom she had just met, and woke up the next morning with a hangover. She soon began “pregaming” again—that is, drinking before an event at which one expects to drink further. Jane drank before a daytime soccer game and continued during the evening, repeatedly swigging from a bottle of orange juice and vodka which she had prepared. Around midnight, she went to a second party in John Doe’s dorm room, still drinking vodka. John, too, had been drinking all day. Jane removed her shirt while dancing with John and engaged in heavy petting on his bed, sitting on top of him and grinding her hips. Jane’s friends tried to shepherd her home, but before she left John’s room, she gave him her cell phone number so that they could coordinate their planned sexual tryst.

When she arrived at her own dorm room, John texted her: "The second that you away from them, come back." Jane responded: "Okay." John wrote back: "Just get back here." Jane responded: "Okay do you have a condom." John replied: "Yes." Jane texted back: "Good, give me two minutes." John texted: "Knock when you're here."

Before leaving her dorm room, Jane texted a friend from back home: "I'm going to have sex now." Jane walked down to John's room at approximately 1 a.m., knocked on his door, went in, took off her earrings, got undressed, performed oral sex, and had sexual intercourse with him. When an acquaintance knocked on John's door to check up on her, Jane three times called out: "Yeah, I'm fine." Shortly before 2 a.m., Jane dressed herself and returned to her room. On her way there, she texted her friends vapid messages, complete with smiley faces, none of which mentioned assault. She then walked to a different dorm where she sat on the lap of another male student whom she had met the night before, talking and joking. The next day she texted John asking if she had left her earrings and belt in his room and asked to come by to pick them up.

Now someone who asks a male if he has a condom, who conspires with him to have sex, who announces to a friend that she intends to have sex, who voluntarily goes to his dorm room in order to have sex, who has sex through no coercion or force on the male's part, is as voluntary and responsible an agent in that sex act as the male. Any male on the receiving end of such behavior, who is asked if he has a condom before a planned sex act, is going to rightly assume that he is facing a willing and consenting partner. And yet Occidental, under investigation from the Obama administration for ignoring sexual violence (a baseless charge), found John guilty of assault and expelled him. Though Jane's actions and statements seemed to indicate that she consented to sexual intercourse, John should have known that she was too incapacitated to consent, the adjudicators concluded.

This finding rests on a neo-Victorian ethos which makes the male the sole guardian of female safety. John and Jane were equally drunk. They both agreed to have sex. Neither of them remembered the actual moment of intercourse afterwards (though Jane remembers the oral sex). Yet John is viewed as the primary mover in that sex act, and the only member of the pair obligated to evaluate the mental capacities of his partner. Jane, however, could be deemed equally guilty of having sex with a partner who was too drunk to consent. In the neo-Victorian worldview, however, females have no responsibility for their own behavior, while the male is responsible not only for himself but for his partner as well.

Pace the feminists, the Occidental case is emblematic not of "rape culture" but of the emotional fallout from sexual liberation. Jane was a virgin before her tryst with John. She only decided to report her intercourse to the Occidental authorities, after prompting from her college advisers, when she realized how much it had affected her psychologically. She saw that John "wasn't fazed by what happened at all" and appeared to attend classes without difficulty, whereas she found herself distracted and unable to concentrate. She should not have to risk the discomfort of seeing him, she concluded, and thus, Occidental should expel him.

Jane's reactions are understandable, if hardly grounds for expulsion. While there are thankfully few actual rape victims on college campuses, there are thousands of girls feeling taken advantage of by partners who walk away from casual sex with no apparent sense of thwarted attachment. That such behavior conforms to the ground rules for campus sex doesn't matter. What campus feminists call "post traumatic stress disorder" and fear of getting "raped" again is often rather a female's quite natural embarrassment at reencountering a sex partner whom she barely knew and with whom she has no continuing relationship. Girls losing their virginity are at particular risk of being emotionally ambushed by drunken hook-up couplings. Though sexual liberation has stripped virginity and its

loss of any formally recognized significance, the lived experience can be more momentous than girls are prepared for.

The conservative response to campus rape hysteria has been only partially helpful. The main line of attack has been to say: “Yes, campus rape is a grave problem. But because rape is so serious an offense, all such charges should be tried in criminal court, not in flimsy college tribunals.” As a strategic move, this position is unimpeachable. Requiring that every campus rape allegation be sent to the criminal justice system would end the campus rape movement overnight. Very few alleged campus rape cases are brought to the police because the accuser and her counselors know that most cases wouldn’t stand a chance in court. During a debate last month (in which I participated), Occidental College professor Caroline Heldman, a leader in the campus rape movement, asserted that campus rape cases should not be taken to criminal trial because juries are steeped in rape culture—i.e., they cannot be trusted to convict. (Heldman also argued that the preponderance of evidence standard which Obama regulators are forcing on colleges for rape findings is too high. Apparently requiring that the fact-finder have a negligible 51 percent certainty that a rape occurred does not guarantee enough convictions.) So conservatives are right to call the rape hysterics’ bluff by arguing: If you believe that this is rape, treat it as such.

Conservatives are also right to criticize the glaring due process deficiencies of campus rape tribunals. Those deficiencies grow more egregious by the day. They include the absence of such traditional safeguards as a defendant’s right to cross-examine his accuser, to which one can now add the wholly subjective standards for what constitutes illegal behavior, such as whether it was “undesirable” from the female’s point of view. Colleges are under enormous pressure both from the Department of Education and the press to deliver more convictions; the *New York Times* has been running a series of articles about campus rape which presume that any acquittal in a college rape case constitutes a miscarriage of justice.

But some conservatives are making two errors. The first is to agree that campus rape is a significant problem, en route to calling for its adjudication in court. If campus rape were the epidemic that the activists allege, there would have been a stampede to create alternative schools for girls. Instead, every year the competition among girls (and boys) to get into selective colleges grows fiercer. Sophisticated baby boomer mothers start their daughters’ preparation for college earlier and earlier. The Obama White House asserts that campus rape “survivors” suffer a lifetime of psychological and physical trauma, yet females are graduating from college in ever more disproportionate numbers, after which they go on to have lucrative careers, with no evidence of crippling mental injury. The bogus statistics thrown around by the feminist-industrial complex—a one-in-four to one-in-five incidence of sexual assault among undergraduate girls—dwarf any known crime rate, even in the most brutal African ethnic wars. In 2012, Newark, New Jersey’s rate for all violent crimes—murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—was 1.1 percent; its rape rate was under .02 percent. Activist researchers attain their 20-25 percent rape incidence statistic by the strategic phrasing of questions and the exquisite parsing of definitions. In a 1986 *Ms.* survey that sparked the campus-rape industry, 73 percent of respondents whom the study characterized as rape victims said that they hadn’t been raped when asked the question directly. Forty-two percent of these supposed victims had intercourse again with their alleged assailants—an inconceivable behavior in the case of actual rape. Sixty-five percent of females whom a 2000 Department of Justice study deemed “completed rape” victims said that they did not think that their experiences were “serious enough to report,” nor did their alleged “victimization” result in physical or emotional injuries.

The campus rape crisis, in other words, requires ignoring females’ own characterization of their experience. There is simply no reason to concede any factual legitimacy to the rape hysterics, even as a debating tactic, since doing so only prolongs the life of the campus rape myth.

Conservatives' second error is a tone of occasional exasperation at the burgeoning college sex regulations. Do the bureaucrats' rules misunderstand the nature of sex? Do they take the fun out of it? You bet! And what's not to like? Leave laments about the inhibition of campus sex to *Reason* magazine.

To be sure, the new campus sex regime puts boys in danger of trumped-up assault charges heard before kangaroo courts. But the solution is not more complex procedural protections cobbled over a sordid culture, the solution is to reject that culture entirely. Just as girls can avoid the risk of what the feminists call "rape" by not getting drunk and getting into bed with a guy whom they barely know, boys, too, can radically reduce the risk of a rape accusation by themselves not getting drunk and having sex with a girl whom they barely know. Mothers worried that their college-bound sons will be hauled before a biased campus sex tribunal by a vindictive female should tell them: "Wait. Find a girlfriend and smother her with affection and respect. Write her love letters in the middle of the night. Escort her home after a date and then go home yourself." If one-sided litigation risk results in boys taking a vow of celibacy until graduation, there is simply no loss whatsoever to society and only gain to individual character. Such efforts at self-control were made before, and can be made again.

Unlike the overregulation of natural gas production, say, which results in less of a valuable commodity, there is no cost to an overregulation-induced decrease in campus sex. Society has no interest in preserving the collegiate bacchanal. Should college fornication become a rare event preceded by contract signing and notarization, maybe students would actually do some studying instead. At present, many students drink through the entire weekend without worrying about any academic repercussions. Maybe colleges should assign and grade some real homework instead of wasting faculty and administrator time drafting cringingly lurid consent scenarios. Rather than passing out tips on orgasm and the use of sex toys—a staple of campus health centers—colleges might send the message that they expect students to learn the periodic table, read the Greek tragedies, and understand the evolution of constitutional government. Parents might get some value out of their extortionate tuition payments, and boys might catch up to girls' graduation rates.

There are no sympathetic victims in the campus sex wars. While few boys are guilty of what most people understand as rape, many are guilty of acting as boorishly as they can get away with. Sexual liberation and radical feminism unleashed the current mess by misunderstanding male and female nature. Feminists may now be unwittingly accomplishing what they would never allow conservatives to do: restoring sexual decorum.

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Public Radio International

How did English become the language of science?

by Nina Porzucki



From the October 1927 Fifth Solvay International Conference on Electrons and Photons. Hendrik Lorentz, Leiden University, seated between Madame Curie and Einstein, chaired the conference.

Permafrost, oxygen, hydrogen — it all looks like science to me.

But these terms actually have origins in Russian, Greek and French.

Today though, if a scientist is going to coin a new term, it's most likely in English. And if they are going to publish a new discovery, it is most definitely in English.

Look no further than the Nobel prize awarded for physiology and medicine to Norwegian couple May-Britt and Edvard Moser. Their research was written and published in English. This was not always so.

“If you look around the world in 1900, and someone told you, ‘Guess what the universal language of science will be in the year 2000?’ You would first of all laugh at them because it was obvious that no one language would be the language of science, but a mixture of French, German and English would be the right answer,” said Michael Gordin.

Gordin is a professor of the history of science at Princeton and his upcoming book, [Scientific Babel](#), explores the history of language and science.

Gordin says that English was far from the dominant scientific language in 1900. The dominant language was German.

“So the story of the 20th century is not so much the rise of English as the serial collapse of German as the up-and-coming language of scientific communication,” Gordin said.

You may think of Latin as the dominant language of science. And for many, many years it was the universal means of communication in Western Europe — from the late medieval period to the mid-17th century, and then it began to fracture. Latin became one of many languages in which science was done.

The first person to publish extensively in his native language, according to Gordin, was Galileo. Galileo wrote in Italian and was then translated to Latin so that more scientists might read his work.

Fast forward back to the 20th century, how did English come to dominate German in the realm of science?

“The first major shock to the system of basically having a third of science published in English, a third in French, and a third in German — although it fluctuated based on field and Latin still held out in some places — was World War I, which had two major impacts,” Gordin said.

After World War I, Belgian, French and British scientists organized a boycott of scientists from Germany and Austria. They were blocked from conferences and weren't able to publish in Western European journals.

“Increasingly, you have two scientific communities, one German, which functions in the defeated [Central Powers] of Germany and Austria, and another that functions in Western Europe, which is mostly English and French,” Gordin explained.

It's that moment in history, he added, when international organizations to govern science, like the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, were established. And those newly established organizations begin to function in English and French. German, which was the dominant language of chemistry was written out.

The second effect of World War I took places across the Atlantic in the United States. Starting in 1917 when the US entered the war, there was a wave of anti-German hysteria that swept the country.

“At this moment something that's often hard to keep in mind is that large portions of the US still speak German,” Gordin said.

In Ohio, Wisconsin and Minnesota there were many, many German speakers. World War I changed all that.

“German is criminalized in 23 states. You're not allowed to speak it in public, you're not allowed to use it in the radio, you're not allowed to teach it to a child under the age 10,” Gordin explained.

The Supreme Court overturned those anti-German laws in 1923, but for years that was the law of the land. What that effectively did, according to Gordin, was decimate foreign language learning in the US.

"In 1915, Americans were teaching foreign languages and learning foreign languages about the same level as Europeans were," Gordin said. "After these laws go into effect, foreign language education drops massively. Isolationism kicks in in the 1920s, even after the laws are overturned and that means people don't think they need to pay attention to what happens in French or in German."

This results in a generation of future scientists who come of age in the 1920s with limited exposure to foreign languages.

That was also the moment, according to Gordin, when the American scientific establishment started to take over dominance in the world.

"And you have a set of people who don't speak foreign languages," said Gordin, "They're comfortable in English, they read English, they can get by in English because the most exciting stuff in their mind is happening in English. So you end up with a very American-centric, and therefore very English-centric community of science after World War II."

You can see evidence of this world history embedded into scientific terms themselves, Gordin said.

Take for example the word "oxygen." The term was born in the 1770s as French chemists are developing a new theory of burning. In their scientific experiments, they needed a new term for a new notion of an element they were constructing.

"They pick the term 'oxygen' from Greek for 'acid' and 'maker' because they have a theory that oxygen is the substance that makes up acids. They're wrong about that, but the word acid-maker is what they create and they create it from Greek. That tells you that French scientists and European scientists of that period would have a good classical education," Gordin said.

The English adopted the word "oxygen" wholesale from the French. But the Germans didn't, instead they made up their own version of the word by translating each part of the word into "sauerstoff" or acid substance.

"So you can see how at a certain moments, certain words get formed and the tendency was for Germans, in particular, to take French and English terms and translate them. Now that's not true. Now terms like online, transistor, microchip, that stuff is just brought over in English as a whole. So you see different fashions about how people feel about the productive capacity of their own language versus borrowing a term wholesale from another," Gordin said.



