Why We Is So Dumb #1



After a sweaty August in which our local guardians of moral probity beat down a book that contained a few naughty words, and in which an arriving freshman at Duke University pounded nails into his own palms at the prospect of reading a book that featured two women *in flagrante*, Your Narrator hoped that cooler weather and cooler heads might roll in with the new month.

Alas, it was not to be. Comes today news of yet another college freshman taking a noble stand against a bunch of books he has never – and never will – read. Read his complaints if you want; there's really nothing behind it other than a ploy for attention, a cynical career move.

This wannabe George Will knockoff<fn>Really, just look at that smirking cockknob and tell me he didn't stand in front of a mirror to practice looking like George Effing Will.</fn> takes an impassioned stand on something he knows nothing about and paints a picture of crazed liberalism running amok on our campuses where poor, besieged patriots like him are cowering in terror. The usual array of far-right websites picks up his story, leading other people who never read these books to fulminate against the atrocities inflicted by liberalism on our once-great nation. And a bunch of people who desperately wish to believe that they are under assault from mean old liberals find another reason to live another day. Never mind that his description of the books bears no semblance to reality, or that the course is one of several dozen *optional* seminars offered to University of North Carolina freshmen.

He’s here to tell you that he’s suffering, and you should, too.

In an upcoming installment of *We Is So Dumb*, Your Narrator will find himself uncharacteristically generous in his assessment of human nature, freely stipulating that most people really do want to understand the world around them. In this sad case, such benevolence is inappropriate: this freshly-scrubbed whiner embraces blinkered ignorance with aggressive enthusiasm. But even worse, he zealously works to create stupidity among his readers by assuring them that not reading something because you think it might bother you is a good and proper choice.

It doesn’t matter that his thinking has as much heft as a flea fart in a hurricane. The news stories about his column take that bland both-sides-have-a-point tone that makes most journalism as useless as a urinal in a convent, leaving most casual observers with the idea that his complaint has equivalent intellectual validity as the books he claims offend him. And thus does the notion that universities are hotbeds of liberalism grow stronger, and the desperate fantasy that “we” need to “take our country back” from some amorphous “them” attains another level of certainty.

The past 35 years have witnessed a mushroom-like spread of conservative “thinkers” like our boy Alec Dent, and it’s no mystery why. Conservative punditry is a big business, and for someone with a more or less clever wit and a willingness to stand tall in defense of pure bullshit (at best) or grotesque misanthropy<fn>See, for example, Ann Coulter, among many.</fn>, staking a claim to right-wing outrage at an early age is a pretty savvy career move. Because no matter how low or outrageous, there is a network of think tanks and foundations and new media outlets that are more than willing to pay for whatever depredatious hairballs the hustling pundit wishes to spit up. With great and inexplicable luck, our brave sycophants might end up with a sinecure at the *Post* or the

Times; at worst, a talk radio gig at 6 a.m. in a mid-tier market awaits the pundit who is willing to say anything without regard to veracity or simple human decency.

We Is So Dumb because people like this – anti-intellectual and cock-struttingly proud of his ignorance – are the recipients of approbation instead of fierce mockery and ridicule. In a sane world, someone would take this boy aside and let him know, gently, that he is displaying his ass in public, and should perhaps reconsider such juvenalia. Alas, such juvenalia has become a profitable business.

Be on the lookout soon for this Tar Heel putz – along with his kindred spirit from Duke<fn>What the hell is going on in the Research Triangle, anyway?</fn> – to publish a followup wherein he describes how hard it is for a sanctimonious humbug to find acceptance on a libertine campus while the jackboot of secular humanism has his neck pinned to the floor.<fn>He will, if he's smart, describe an almost-consummated sexual encounter which throws shade and shame on some loose-moraled wench against whom he resists Galahadishly, and boy is he glad he saved himself, though most people will read that he protests way, way too much.</fn> Which of course the "legitimate" media will cover, because these kids are now famous thought leaders who speak for a generation. In 30 years, one of these guys will replace the retiring Ross Douthat on the *NY Times* op-ed page, while the other will probably be running the *Breitbart Sanitarium for the Chuzzlewitted,* and people will read their twaddle and assume that their presence in a newspaper or on their Internet machine means that they are in fact "legitimate". Thus will this plague of Dumb pass from one generation to the next.

So cooler heads are in short supply, and it remains hotter than a sac of Balinese monkey balls, despite the almost change in season. It is to despair, no question.