

Anti-semitism and the Charge of “White Privilege”: Two Dangerous Trends on Our Campuses

by Gary Fouse



Having taught part-time at a major California university (UC Irvine) from 1998-2016 and being active observing and confronting campus anti-semitism- thanks to the pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel groups on campus, I have been warning not only UCI, but other campuses as well that if anti-semitism is not addressed by administrators, there will be a tragedy on one of our campuses. Trying to bring public attention to this problem, not only at the university level, but the community level as well is like pulling teeth. Progress has been slow.

In addition, in the past couple of years I have noticed another disturbing trend in our universities: The demonizing of whites. Now activists have come up with a new buzzword: “White privilege.” That means that no matter how progressive

whites may be or how sympathetic they may be to issues of racism and discrimination, they are still “privileged” by way of their skin color and the opportunities afforded them, opportunities that have been denied-and are still being denied- to “people of color.”

As I see this disturbing development, to me it means that if you can't prove racism or discrimination on the part of certain whites, be they in politics, business, or students in the universities, you can still stigmatize them by their so-called privilege.

In addition, by separating groups on campus into whites vs people of color (non-whites), you bring in every other minority into your neat little coalition of blacks, Latinos, Asians, Arabs, Native -Americans etc. We are already seeing the partnerships form as ethnic minority student groups co-sponsor Pro Palestinian events or black events etc. Muslim groups and black groups get involved in Native-American issues like the pipeline in the Standing Rock tribal area of North Dakota. Native-American groups are told that their history in the US parallels the history of the Palestinians. They then join together as they did at UC Irvine this month in the annual anti-Israel week of anger and over-heated rhetoric. Together, they disrupted a pro-Israel event in which I was present and [videotaped what occurred.](#)

In practice, what is happening on our college campuses is that we are seeing a process of tribalization and divisiveness that is drawing us back to the 1950s and beyond. Unbelievably we are seeing black students demand-and get- black only dorms. College administrators are simply afraid to resist these demands for “safe spaces” where only members of certain ethnic groups are allowed.

And where do Jews fit into all this? They are considered as privileged whites- Super-privileged whites as all the old tropes are thrown in about the areas of politics, finance,

business and Hollywood “controlled by Jews.” In many cases, liberal Jewish students are prevented from participating in demonstrations by other minorities to express their grievances.

In responding to all this, my message to young students is that anti-semitism is a dangerous ideology that is growing worldwide and must be stopped. I also say that white Americans are not denying our past history of discrimination against other groups-in particular, our history of slavery and discrimination. However, our society-and by that I mean American society- is doing all it can to rectify those wrongs. Integration and equality of opportunity was the lesson we learned from the Civil Rights era. I experienced it personally over my own lifetime.

But today, I always tell these young kids that we (whites) are not their enemy. We are not trying to hold them down. Yes, there are some white racists out there, but there is nothing they can do to stop minorities from being all they can be.

This divisiveness is wrong. Heretofore, we have laughed at silly demands for separate dorms and facilities for blacks and other “people of color”. But it is starting to get serious. Just this week, the story broke about a black professor at Texas A&M who has been telling his classes and others that