

The Standard Petition Against the Backlash is Getting Even Faster

by Thomas Samm (January 2015)

A friend once laughed as she told me how her elderly mother had phoned to say she had sent her daughter an email, “so you’ll probably get it by tomorrow morning.” The traditional print media in its electronic form is even quicker than my friend’s now late mother could have imagined. Ready-made self-pitying activist screeds are mechanically cranked out by grown men wanting to yell and wail about their victimhood, even before the most elementary facts of a case have been drawn up in history’s first draft. One “Sydney-based writer and activist,” who faxed over to the British media a long ago-written response to his home city’s siege-murder event, was at the far opposite end of the spectrum to those carefree dumb Sydneysers who took selfies in front of an ongoing scene of kidnap and murder.

Osman Faruqi in the *Independent* expended a single negative adjective on the wrongness of the perpetrator’s act: “devastating.” (Note the word’s usual collocation with more elemental or contentious tragedies, like hurricanes or debt crises, where culpability is phenomenal or arguable.) Faruqi then used one on the victims themselves, the non-muslim residents of Australia: “patronizing.” You only have to read the title of his article to know that physicist Alan Guth got his theory of parallel universes just by flicking through the oped pages of newspapers like the *Independent*. “