

# Post-Prints: A Superiour Guide to Performing the Academic Self

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Dedication:

*One should like to dedicate this essay to every academic one has ever observed in action.*

*Thank you. It has been inspirational.*

## Preface

If you are a visual or performing artist, please substitute the word “academic” or “scholar” with the most self-indulged and pompous art critic that immediately comes to mind. Only then will the magic of the following paragraphs resurrect your soul.

## Oh! What a Splendid Introduction

If one may be so bold: this essay gleans the best of two worlds. It is as if an elite, reputable anthropologist and an internationally acclaimed self-help guru had a baby. Here, one shares one’s (infallible) conclusions and advice about how *you* can mold yourself into the perfect academic, the kind that everyone admires and bestows with respect, the kind that gets tenure. *You* will feel a sense of new direction, and we encourage you to let the glorious, inspirational quotes we have included lift your spirits for all eternity. One has even included a “Diversity 101” section at the end of this text in the unlikely event that you manage to concentrate for that long.

We realize that you may be unfamiliar with the tacit knowledge that makes an outstanding academic. Luckily, we are here to guide you through it all. The gallery of (male & white) professors you will encounter in this essay are entirely representative of academia. But, more importantly, they are fine scholars whose opinions *matter*. In a sense, one has been conducting an informal ethnography of academia for two decades—three, if one counts one’s childhood.

Much like the best Hollywood scripts, this magnificent essay is loosely based on a true story. Every word, character, and episode that made it into this essay was inspired by real events. Naturally, any resemblance to actual people or incidents is merely coincidental.

One shall speak of attitude and merit before delving into controversial topics such as women and ethnics. We always save the scrumptious bits for the end.

### **Getting Personal, If One May**

When one was in secondary school, one’s visionary, bearded geography teacher insisted that pupils use pseudonyms for all exams. In response, one (plus a friend) decided to create matching pseudonyms. Hence Professor Bob Uno Flowerbed and Professor Jofrid Natalia Lightfountain saw the light of day. Unfortunately, upon reading the geography exam, one realized that “Flowerbed” & “Lightfountain” were pretty much all one had to offer. So instead of answering the exam questions, one wrote an elaborate tale about how the geologists Lightfountain & Flowerbed were pioneers in their field and had written a five-volume encyclopedic account of their research. One’s responses were, in hindsight, great preparation for the academic one was to become.

Eg. of exam question:

What is grey soil? (Please have someone Google “grey soil” for you. Heaven knows if it exists.)

Eg. of one’s response:

In our pioneering work (Lightfountain & Flowerbed 1992, Vol.1, pp. 245-50), we outline in greater detail the intricate causes of grey soil as it has evolved over the last centuries. Here, we simply point to the fact that there are a multitude of different shades of soil that have been overlooked in previous research, which has resulted in inaccurate understandings of soil. For an extended account of soil colors, see Lightfountain & Flowerbed 1993, Vol. 3, pp. 25-125. See also Lightfountain & Flowerbed 1994, Vol. 4, pp. 1000-75, for an in-depth analysis of common misconceptions about soil.

Little did one know that this secondary school exam would provide a far better preparation for launching an academic career than any university could offer. One inadvertently unlocked the five pillars to performing an academic self:

1. Demonstrate self-importance.
2. Quote yourself extensively.
3. Do not let your lack of expertise interfere with the practice of speaking authoritatively.
4. Make sure your name is the most exciting thing about you.
5. Eliminate charisma so as not distract from what you are saying.

The soil-study example above may seem to be little more than juvenilia, but try reading it out loud, this time substituting “soil” with terminology from your particular field of expertise.

Might one suggest “neoliberal aesthetics” or “performativity” to start you off? You’re welcome.

## ATTITUDE

### Acceptance

If you are happy, then you are doing something wrong. The world should be able to tell that you are burdened with the task of thinking 24/7 while commoners may live their lives devoid of thought. Being a scholar is a burden, but, much like Jesus Christ Superstar, one is the savior of the people. A young starlet not yet unaccustomed to the misery of academia approached us one day while we were waiting for our limousine; she divulged that she was considering leaving the academy because she was unhappy. We spoke the truth: “Nobody is happy in academia, my dear,” we said. Uttering this sentence was exhilarating.

### Humility

Many top-class academics rely on self-promotion by word of mouth (mostly their own mouth) because as far as they are concerned, creating an online university profile would be such a waste of valuable time. And needless to say, someone might actually get in touch. What a dreadful thought. Still, having an online presence does not automatically disqualify your scholarly credentials. On the very rare occasion that you are a scholar who contemplates an internet profile, we strongly recommend posting a photo of you a mere thirty-seven years ago (or more).<sup>1</sup> It is essential, however, that you pretend that somebody else wrote those glorious things about you on your homepage. One comes across as arrogant and full of oneself if one writes: “I won a public scholarship award.” Compare it to: “Dr. Mal Function won the prestigious Mania Public Scholarship Award in 2011.” To the public, this latter sentence implies that someone other than you wrote this testimonial. More importantly, is it not far more delightful, not to mention far more *modest*, to address oneself in the third person? We might add that it is also a sign of maintaining a healthy academic ego.

## **Numbers Never Lie**

If you want to make a good impression, use numbers, graphs, and charts. Numbers are the best way to show the true societal impact of artwork. Nothing looks more solidly scientific than digits. When speaking, remember that numbers are powerful facts, so inflate them. This is a proven method of generating authority.

If possible, choose a number greater than fifty. Unlike images or words, numeric data demonstrate authority and knowledge in one simple stroke of genius. This technique may well get you tenure virtually on its own. You are welcome. One even saw this used by a woman academic once, a Dr. Geraldine Mag Mouniyah. We are throwing in this example for gender balance.

## **Be Enigmatic**

The ideal spirit animal for an academic is a goldfish.

## **Academic Time**

You must take time seriously. Let's say you have been allotted fifteen minutes for a talk. Do not fret. For presenters, one unit of conference presentation time is the equivalent of nine and a half units of regular time; for auditors, one minute of conference presentation time is equal to six minutes of regular time.

Thus, you can expect to receive 142.5 minutes (15 minutes x 9.5) for your riveting take on the (art) world. Still, the truth of the matter is that the best academic talks (irrespective of length) go like this:

Oh my, is time running. Oh dear! I have to skip this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this. Oh! I wish I had more time, if only I had more time, I

could have said this. You can never really get much into a fifteen-minute talk, you know. Oh! It is too bad the time is up. I really wanted to show you this five-minute video by the artist at the end of my talk which really sums up what I want to say in a more succinct way than I could ever hope to. But there is no time. My apologies for going over the allotted time. Here is a glance of the artwork on which I base my theory; unfortunately, we don't have time to properly look at the images or the multimedia installations. And I didn't get to say what I really wanted to say because there really was so little time. I have to skip this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this. Oh! I wish I had more time, if only I had more time, I could have said this. Now I will skip to the conclusion. Unfortunately, I do not have time to give you all the conclusions of our study, but hopefully you have an idea about what the study is about.

All in all, this talk leaves the audience so much wiser. While they may be left without even the remotest clue about what the talk (or the artwork) actually was about, because frankly there was no time, they do not, for one second, doubt that you are brilliant at whatever it is that you do. As such, this is exemplary use of academic time and funding. It is the norm for which we all strive.

### **Inaudibility**

Personally, one wishes that one had been informed that one's voice was too theatrical and loud. The mark of a good academic talk is that it is inaudible. It is an unspoken rule that academics of all ages ought to mumble. Articulating words requires far too much effort and sounds a lot less accomplished. The trick is to garble the words so much that each sound is indistinguishable from the other, or at the very least leave room for multiple interpretations as to which word is being attempted. Mumbler's are per definition smarter because their speech leaves you with the benefit of doubt.

Pay no heed to the academics who yawn, or fall asleep, while you speak. They are insomniacs. Nobody sleeps in academia. There simply is no time.

### **Manels**

An all-male panel, or “manel,” is the only acceptable kind of panel, really. We find that the best kind of panels are invariably all-white and cis-gendered male, comprised mostly of clones of the white professor who put the panel together in the first place. The best pedagogical tool is more of the same, with repetition. For as Professor Johnathon Wright famously said: “what good have women and/or people of color ever brought us?” Indeed, Professor Wright, one cannot argue with that logic. And let’s take a moment to consider whether Professor Wright has ever been wrong. Of—course—not. Even his name suggests he’s always right.

### **Attire**

When one was a student, one heard the shocking tale of one’s rebellious Professor James Dean, who spoke of how he had challenged the prescribed attire by appearing at Oxford university *sans* tie. He assured one that this was quite the revolutionary act. Rumor has it that several professors choked on their biscuits at teatime upon the shocking sighting of this rebel professor. One condones such acts of sartorial revolution. Your clothing should be as revolutionary as your personality and charisma. If you must make a statement of resisting the prescribed corduroy, linen, or tweed suits, then at least stick to these most suitable (and dare we say invigorating) colors: beige, tan, or dark brown.

### **Research Credentials**

We strongly encourage you to disconnect from all humans immediately. How are you supposed to conduct real and vigorous research if you are blinded by sticky feelings for a fellow human or inanimate object such as a work of art? Emotions interfere with research. Good research is undertaken without feeling, and, needless to say, there is no *I* in research.

### **Social Experimentation**

Avoid human contact at all costs. If you are wandering about in the long dusty corridors of your university, and a fellow human is walking toward you, abort mission. Search for an exit, a side corridor you can pop into, a photocopier machine you can pay homage to, a storage cupboard you can become engrossed in, a toilet seat you can caress, a water dispenser you can quench your thirst for life in . . . whatever you can lay your hands on. The options are endless, but you must act fast. Under no circumstances should you make eye contact, unless they offer you cake or sweets, in which case you should make a floundering attempt at small talk while you swallow the sugar.

### **Conviction**

Always be right, even when you are wrong. Believe you are right. Believing you are right makes you right and makes everything else all right. This is a tested fact and not a tautology. This is your gift. Use it and share it with the world as often as you please.

## **MERIT**

### **Earning it**

In academia, scholars are selected on merit alone, which is why you find that in many disciplines and universities, academic staff (at least with tenure) is exclusively white and male. One has (as you might have noticed) consulted some of these great heroes of academia, to soak up their qualified views on how we ought to manage all these preposterous demands for increased diversity in higher education. First things first, contrary to popular belief, merit is *earned*. Either you are born with it, or you are not.



Professor Dick Charlatan graciously shared his immensely insightful reflections on diversity with us:

Why should we make room for diversity and let it win over merit? It just seems ludicrous.

Hear, Hear, Dick. This demand for inclusion is indeed nonsensical. What has science ever gained from digging deeper, widening the pool of knowledge, or adding perspectives?

### **Is Diversity Inherently Good?**

We have been wallowing far too long in this Politically Correct environment that presupposes that adding less of the same will benefit all. But, as the brilliant professor (and seasoned academic) Lord James Jr. Winterbottom once had the great foresight to say (out loud), as he ambushed a young Brown (academically trained) beauty in the hallway:

We always assume that diversity is a good thing, but is it? Aesthetically I shall not quibble. So, tell me, my exotic flower, we always assume that diversity is good, but really, why is it so? Can you enlighten me? I ask in earnestness: Is diversity *actually* a *good* thing?

We shall let Lord Winterbottom's pertinent question linger as we turn to the practicalities of diversity in the academy.

## DIVERSITY 101

### **Avoid a panic attack**

On occasion you might see nonwhites in your university corridors. Do not panic. These people of color may well be cultural attachés, hired actors, cafeteria employees, UPS deliverers, cleaning staff, or students. After exhausting all other options, consider that they may actually have been hired, by your university, for academic work.

### **How to act normal**

If your workplace is *not* all white, you may need to check your—ahem—prejudice, since it is possible that that hot and/or brainy Latina or Black woman or ethnic lady isn't a live art installation, but in fact your superior. And even if she is not a full professor or head of department, it is nonetheless no longer permissible to ask her to type out or copyedit all your articles just because you are utterly confident that she would make an excellent secretary.

### **Permissible Ethnic Compliments**

We appreciate that you might be bursting with the need to share your unbridled enthusiasm and fascination with the ethnic alibi or token Brown person at your university/department/conference. But if you must give a compliment, do make sure that it fits with their ethnic sensibilities. May we suggest one of the following scrupulously tested compliments:

- African queen! (Or King)
- You have such great rhythm!
- Wow! You have such an exotic walk.
- You sway your hips just like a belly-dancer.
- You look so ethnic!
- Oh my! How I would love to touch your big afro!

- That color makes your skin tone pop.
- You are so exotic.
- Mmmm. Dark Chocolate.

### **Selfless Mentoring**

If you are un/fortunate enough to have a Benetton advertisement for a workplace, make sure to pick one or two people of color or LGBTQs as your personal mascot(s). Consider this a form of career mentoring. Pat them on the head, and compliment them on their well-spokenness, to show them that you believe in their worth. It is very empowering. On occasion, throw your arms around them and squeeze tight, to show that you are absolutely not the *slightest* bit racist or prejudiced. Clap loudly whenever your mascot says something intelligent. Always talk about your fascination with ethnic/Indigenous/Black/gay style, foods, and music to prove how down you are with their culture. Call them “ethnic,” “yummy,” and/or “exotic.” It is *never* wrong.

### **Unfounded Accusations of Racism**

One has to wonder whether all this outcry about discrimination is some kind of collective psychosis, one that is perhaps even genetically or racially triggered. Do you not find it somewhat uncanny that nobody else sees what *they* see?

—Professor Winterbottom.

In very rare cases,<sup>2</sup> you might be accused of being racist or using your white male privilege in an abusive way. Pay no heed to such folly. We guarantee you that such accusations are entirely unfounded, and not even remotely about you. There is no need to be disquieted by such oversensitive hysteria since all such complaints are shelved anyway. The logic here is impeccable. One finds that the best response to such allegations, particularly when coupled with the fictional buzzword “white fragility,” is actually to give a sincere reply such as: “I

haven't the faintest idea what you are on about, my dear. It's all me, me, me to these academic political militias.

### **Women are beautiful creatures**

Frankly, we were unable to find a single qualified woman scholar to interview for this piece. Still, we do not find that this in any way devalues the major insights we were able to divulge about gender relations in academia. The #metoo frenzy has indubitably gone too far, especially now that it has reached university corridors. Women certainly tried to grab men by the scrotum on this one.

Nonetheless, the inspirational work of great men throughout history will guide us here. For instance, on the art of female seduction, none other than the incurable French romantic, Professor Nicholas Nostalgie, shares his views on women in the academy:

I love women for all their imperfections, including their vanity. All women like to be complimented for their looks. If a female colleague goes on TV to talk about her field of expertise, make sure to compliment her on her sexy looks. That's why she wore pink lipstick. If you talk about what she said, she will be left puzzled and wondering whether she looked ugly, or worse, whether *you* think she looked ugly. To dispel all such insecurities, it's a good idea to send her amorous text messages day and night, listing in great detail how you envision your entanglements with her, in a series of steamy rendezvous.

One might add that many a great professor will graciously extend this type of courteous courtship to female students as well.

### **Hysterical Critique**

A few years back, Sir Tim Hunt caused quite a stir, simply for being honest about how difficult it was to produce accurate scientific results what with so many luscious ladies frolicking about in the laboratory. In response, the feminazis launched an utterly unfounded

hate campaign against him. One is unsure what all the fuss is about. All Sir Hunt did was allude to the Standardized Scale of Female Hotness in Science (SSFHS): HtH (Hotter than Hot), THtTA (Too Hot to Think Around), MH (Medium Hot), KoH (Kind of Hot), and NP (No Problem). Indeed, in departments that operate with the SSFHS, women will be *seen* and, invariably, *valued* for their assets rather than rendered invisible.<sup>3</sup>

### **Keeping it Hot**

Professor Carl Neander II reminds us that the feminazis are quick to blame men for all of women's failures (from being the wrong body type, to being a femme fatale lesbian seductress). Sadly, one is aware of several feminazi-hunting-down-Hunt Twitter campaigns that poked fun at men's natural instincts. One came across an anti-Hunt Twitter campaign that featured photographs of female scientists in occupation costumes tagged with the rather promising hashtag "#distractinglysexy." One was subsequently quite disappointed to discover that none of the women had posted any racy photos of themselves, and barely showed any skin at all. One does of course love a woman in a flattering nurse uniform, but as Professor Dusty Shelfton recently confided in us:

And here is yet another thing the feminazis get wrong, obviously: if you are going to engage in role-play, you should do it in the bedroom, not through some lackluster online photo shoot about dreadfully boring science.

One cannot argue with that.

### **Speaking Up**

The world-famous Professor Hara S. Mint Ford is very aware of PC riots and offers a potent rule of thumb:

Yes, yes, you will argue that female academics exist not only to satisfy *real* academic's every whim or patriarchal fantasies, blah blah, but, I counter, is that really true? Echoing the iconic famous words of Lord Winterbottom, who once stared me down on the golf course and posed perhaps the most pertinent question of our time: What good has ever come of including women in academia? What indeed, I thought. Now, I conclude once and for all: It is not that *I* am biased against women in the academy. It is simply that women are an erotic distraction, and if they continue to *insist* on invading our territory, then they must learn to appreciate our lustful advances. What a life-affirming insight.

We cannot emphasize enough how there is no intentional bias against women in academia, the arts, or the world at large.<sup>4</sup> We refuse the politicization of everything characteristic of feminazis and all other nazis of the right-wing and left-wing alike. Yes, it has been brought to our attention that we frequently happen to introduce all the men at a conference according to their credentials, while we refer to women by their first names or by implication, but we assure you that this is entirely unintentional. We do find that “Suzy” rolls off the tongue so much easier than, for instance, “Lord Chevalier Professor James Jr. Winterbottom, M. D.” We mean no disrespect of course.

The idea that we devalue women is preposterous. We actually owe no small amount of our success in academia to our patient and long-suffering wives, mothers, girlfriends, and/or typists.

### **Be Inquisitive**

One finds that the best way to connect with ethnic others and/or women and LGBTQs is to display a curiosity larger than the curiosity that killed the cat. Being inquisitive is man's best friend. If you find yourself at a loss for words, here are some useful conversation starters:

- Don't you think that your skewed, self-centered version of your discipline might somehow be a setback for academia?
- Why are you people (Select: Blacks, ethnics, sexual deviants) so emotional and/or oversensitive about the made-up notion of “structural inequality”?

- You seem uptight. Have you tried yoga or kickboxing or anger management or art therapy classes?

One finds that no question is off limits, as long as one is genuinely interested in discussing one's own perspectives of other people.

### **Check Your Privilege**

In this day in age, it is of utmost importance to show that one was not born yesterday, even though one inevitably longs for the day when the sun never set on the empire. In order to showcase one's modern understanding of the world, one must demonstrate that one is aware that there is a system of privilege. We consider this an advisable gesture of decency toward those who are not fortunate enough to qualify on the basis of merit. Of course, there is no harm in simultaneously signaling that the question of privilege is of no great personal concern, as one is firmly towering the hierarchy and will be doing so in the all foreseeable future.

We suggest asking the following questions to demonstrate one's keen interest:

- 1) Is there any way I can be an ally? Would it help if I clapped every time you spoke in public, for example?

A question that never seems to lose its applicability is:

- 2) I don't understand. Why do you people think that (x phenomenon) is racist/sexist/discriminatory?

Remember, it is always the ethnic's (and/or woman's and/or queer's) grand task in life to carefully pinpoint why anything might possibly be perceived as insulting by a bunch of politically correct twats. If, however, you find that you are suddenly met with insinuations

that it is in fact *you* who is exercising privilege by demanding that others explain *why* said activity, perspective, or verbal exchange is offensive, one finds that one must immediately respond with the following follow-up question:

3) Why did you suddenly make this about *me*? It is obviously about you, is it not?

If you ever feel stuck, you can always resort to selfless mentoring. A pat on the head, or an endearing hand on the shoulder, can be very empowering.

### **Cultural Sensitivity**

We have discovered that people of all sorts adore listening to narratives about whatever makes them most ostensibly unique. We therefore encourage you to engage wholeheartedly in such dialogue. Cultural markers and traits are topics that provide an inexhaustible font of conversation well suited for sparking enthusiasm in others.

Culturally sensitive questions one may ask ethnic academics include:

- Is it true that you are not allowed to cut your hair?
- Have you *really* never drunk alcohol?
- Are you circumcised?
- Were you a virgin when you got married?
- Can I swear in front of you?
- Is your family part of a militia/mob/terrorist organization/gang?
- Is it difficult for you to adjust to a nonviolent society like the United States of America?
- Why are you dressed like that; isn't that forbidden in your religion?
- Can I eat beef/pork/crabs/meat in front of you?

These examples of questions show that you *care deeply* about their well-being. And we must also commend ourselves for evading the often sensationalist and cursory tabloids by going straight to the source.



## **Be Charitable**

If one is an elite academic, chances are that one was born into money and thus, frankly, does not quite know what to do with it all. As such, one recommends sharing some of this wealth with someone less fortunate and/or deserving. There are many ways of doing good while also looking good. We do find that being charitable is best achieved with the proper visuals. For inspiration on how to take powerful selfies with the underprivileged in a selfless, self-promoting way, we recommend visiting the Instagram account Barbie Savior.<sup>5</sup> If one is unable to make it to the country of Africa in person,<sup>6</sup> whether because one is too frightened of impending disease or because of the locals, one may consider sending one's au pair, or performing community service closer to where one lives.

## **Politics**

What politics? We resent the intrusion of politics into academia. There is nothing political about academia, hiring processes, or the ways in which we run our departments. Lord Professor Winterbottom spares no vitriol in his critique of this intrusion:

THIS, DARE I SAY, ANGRY ACTIVIST VIEW TAKEN BY FEMINAZIS AND NONWHITES SIMPLY ILLUSTRATES WHY THEY DON'T BELONG. IN A UNIVERSITY THERE IS NO ROOM FOR FEELINGS AND PERSONAL PREFERENCES!

Still, not everybody expresses themselves in caps lock. Professor Wallter White expressed himself ever so calmly and eloquently over sherry in our office the other night:

We need to hire scholars who are able to behave in a civilized, level-headed manner, and who will not waste my precious time by calling me into superfluous meetings to discuss how they are disgusted by the fact that I served twice on the hiring committee for my spouse. Needless to say, my spouse was hired because she was the best for the job, on both occasions. Unfortunately, Aisha, Jerome, and Suneela were not as qualified as Annie because even if their profiles on paper suggest that they have more

of a generalist research profile and therefore could teach all of the courses we offer; whereas my Annie has proven time and time again that she has excellent research networks, particularly in the upper levels of the academic hierarchies where I sit. Just because she is my wife, doesn't mean that I shouldn't be allowed to hire her. That simply would go against the principles of gender equality of which you incessantly speak so highly.<sup>7</sup>

## **Inclusion**

If your name is unpronounceable, now, that's on you, isn't it? Well, technically it's on your parents or whoever adopted you. But, still, if your surname is the likes of Salamalaeikumvitsj or Akhu-Bin-'Afreet or Chathuri Sewwadi Ishna or Oluwadamilare Otegbade, how can you possibly expect us to cope with this? It is simply not fair. If you have more letters in your name than Lord Chevalier MD Professor Emeritus James Jr. Winterbottom has in his, then you are simply *asking* for your name to be mangled. It is customary to guess the spelling of names that are foreign-sounding rather than consult the email or professional page of the person in question. It is nothing personal; it's just a question of logistics. The simple copy-and-paste technique has failed us too many times. It is highly unreliable, and at times one finds that one has tagged one's swinger club rather than the scholar in question, and one blushes while simultaneously wondering if it may in fact be totally out of the question to invite said ethnic or Black person to one's swingers club. Names are often irrelevant there. But one digresses. The important thing here is to acknowledge that your name is both unpronounceable and unsellable, so we recommend finding a nice name like "Christian" or "Christina," or why not opt for a gender-neutral classic like "John Smith?"

## **Cultural Complexity**

If only more scholars learned the art of contextualization. Professor François Sans-Jollies, with his perceptive and politically brilliant mind, weighed in his opinions on democracy at a roundtable the other day. He kept on repeatedly insisting that it was indeed quite logical that

a revolution would start in Burkina Faso because, well, they speak French. He was glowing with his sense of achievement. We agree. In this day and age, everybody ought to know that democracy travels through language, and particularly the beautiful colonial languages that we have so lovingly stuffed down the throats of the inhabitants of our empire; and while one personally does not envy anyone trying to learn that ghastly sounding language that the frogs speak, we do believe our dear friend Professor François Sans-Jollies makes an excellent point. How else is one to overturn dictatorships if not through learning words like crêpe, café au lait, or couche? Ah, the wisdom of the male brain is never-ending. We are so happy that 80 to 100% of all professional intellectual thinkers are men.

### **The Bit Before The End**

It is such a shame that an increasing number of incompetent people think that there is something notoriously wrong with the academic system. Obviously, if you are suffering in academia, there is something wrong with *you* and not the system. Perhaps you have not put in enough hours of: art therapy, or yoga or meditation, or kickboxing or comedy improv or ecstatic dance or Reiki or healing sound circles—to make you a *winner*? Is it possible that you simply are not *invested* enough in the glorious academy? And more importantly, is it possible that you have not attended our complimentary “Anger-Management Class for Subalterns and Problematic Employees”? One hates to say it, but perhaps a lot more is wrong with you than can be fixed by a forty-seven-hour weekly recuperation schedule?

If you have read this far, but still find yourself unsure about how to wield yourself into the permanent ranks of the tenured professoratti, we understand. Much of what has been written thus far has been quite subtle. We have therefore distilled our great wisdom, and all the preceding inspirational quotes from the esteemed professors of no color, into eight

superior and golden survival rules. If you follow these, you cannot go wrong in academia. It is an inevitable path to success.

### **The Superior Golden Rules of Survival for Performing the Academic Self**

1. **Be dedicated.** Find something you hate and stick with it.
2. **Be a man.** i.e. be genetically predisposed to succeed.
3. **Be straight.** Heterosexual sexual harassment is the main currency. Few exceptions apply.
4. **Be a Flirt.** Ladies love it when you grab them by their fanny.<sup>8</sup>
5. **Be white.** Fair and Lovely products might help achieve lightening at a very minor cost of ruining your skin forever.
6. **Be colonial.** Ensure that everyone knows that you know that you are superior and speak frequently of how tea (or coffee) is best enjoyed as a barely visible, tasteless, lukewarm liquid.
7. **Be riveting.** Practice monotony on a daily basis. Knowledge is not supposed to be fun.
8. **Be majestic.** Praise yourself often and speak of yourself in the third person or use the royal *we*. No exceptions. One must meet certain standards after all.

For our part, we find that that this entire guide on performing the academic self is of superior quality. One was not a colonial subject for nothing.

The End.<sup>9</sup>

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One should like to thank one's colleagues, Dragana Kovačević Bielicki and Moumita Sen, and one's editor, Jonathan P. Eburne, for recognizing that "A Superiour Guide for Performing the Academic Self" is one's selfless gift to the world, a gift that is destined to elevate the spirits of academics and artists across the globe.

## Bio

Despite being born an offense to racial purists, one had a most auspicious birth. Not only was one born in Cambridge (practically in King's College), but one was also (indisputably) destined to spend: 1) a life in tweed (or at the very least in beige clothing) speaking in a very articulate yet utterly incomprehensible way, about something truly profound; or 2) a life making people laugh and joining Footlights. Alas, one chose the first of the two paths, and has since officially given up all hope of laughter and happiness in pursuit of knowledge. One embarked on one's readings in anthropology with a clear, glowingly romantic view of how one would conduct fieldwork among as of yet undiscovered peoples in the jungle, and live among them for years on end. One later adapted this to: one can conduct fieldwork anywhere in the world, as long as one has access to: an air-conditioned gym, outdoor pool, cocktails, and world-class vegetarian cuisine. By the age of twenty-two, one already knew that one preferred comfort over adventure, sun over shade (jungles can be so dark), and vegetarian diet over nutritious bugs and self-slaughtered animals. And so, a five-star-hotel-and-beach bum-ethnographer was born. Unfortunately, one's thematic interests did get one off one's sunbed. To learn more about one's glorious sense of self, visit: <https://monaabel-fadil.com>

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Consult the wisdom of the World Wide Web's Facebook page "Shit Academics Say" for visuals.

<sup>2</sup> One strongly suggests visiting AJ+ via the glorious World Wide Web and viewing its highly instructive video "White Fragility Workplace Training."

<sup>3</sup> If you too find yourself utterly confused as to how to treat women in the workplace, might we once again suggest a visit to the glorious World Wide Web in search of BBC's *Mash Report* and its video "How NOT to sexually harass someone." You might be in for a surprise.

<sup>4</sup> One suggests a visit to the glorious World Wide Web and Facebook page "Man Who Has it All" for science-based input on gender differences.

<sup>5</sup> Instagram is to be found in the frivolous corner of the glorious World Wide Web.

<sup>6</sup> Might one suggest a visit to the glorious World Wide Web and the site *Africa is a country* for more in-depth knowledge.

<sup>7</sup> To bask yourself in the spellbinding ideas of other prosperous deans, one suggests you follow the Twitter account "Ass Deans," (presumably) short for "associate deans."

<sup>8</sup> If you find yourself confused, you are probably American. More specifically, if you find yourself confused by this particular sentence, bear in mind that we are writing this text in British English. And, God Save The Queen.

<sup>9</sup> Currently we are at the prescribed maximum length of an *ASAP* essay, but one actually had so much more glorious content to add. (Luckily, footnotes [and especially bracketed footnotes] are not included in the word count, so one was able to include this crucial background information for one's precious readers and devoted admirers. And one should like to take this opportunity to leave one's devotees with this important farewell message: Rest assured, one is a never-ending well of magnificent knowledge. Thank you and Goodbye).