

Disgraced academic Noah Carl spearheads far-right campaign on UK campuses

Thomas Scripps
7 October 2019

In December 2018, sociologist Noah Carl was appointed to a prestigious research fellowship at St. Edmund's College, Cambridge University. Carl had previously collaborated with white supremacists and eugenicists, and authored and reviewed papers alleging links between IQ, race and criminality.

Students at St. Edmund's raised the alarm and an open letter was signed by over 1,500 students and academics opposing the appointment. The letter explained that much of Carl's work was "ethically suspect and methodologically flawed," legitimised racial stereotypes and was being "used by extremist and far-right media outlets with the aim of stoking xenophobic anti-immigrant rhetoric."

After months of protest, in the face of a media smear campaign and intimidation by the college leadership, students were able to force Cambridge to rescind Carl's appointment in April 2019.

A chorus of outrage went up in the right-wing media, lamenting the "mobbing" of a "young scholar." At a public meeting in Cambridge, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) explained that this would not be the end of the issue:

"Carl is playing a significant role in the attempt to... create a right-wing 'counter spiral' in mainstream academia. As for the tears shed over Carl's endangered career, he is already well established on the right-wing lecture circuit, where his profile will be lucratively enhanced by his newfound status as a martyr."

This prediction has proved correct. Carl has now raised over \$100,000 to begin a legal appeal against the College's decision on the grounds of wrongful dismissal. The case is a cause célèbre in the right-wing media, with long-time supporter Toby Young writing in the *Spectator*, "Is this a turning point in the culture war?" and "How Noah Carl is fighting back against Cambridge."

Young has been joined by Birkbeck University Professor Eric Kaufmann, who published "Who will resist the great awakening?—Noah Carl is taking on the college that pandered to the SJWs [Social Justice Warriors]" on the

Unherd website set up by Conservative Party guru Tim Montgomerie.

Douglas Murray, former Associate Director of the Henry Jackson society, wrote, "In praise of crowdfunding" for the American right-wing news site *National Review* in support of Carl's legal fundraising campaign.

Rod Liddle, writer for the *Times*, the *Telegraph* and the *Sun*, carried out a friendly interview with Carl for the *Sunday Times* allowing him to whitewash his collaboration with Emil Kirkegaard, a white supremacist who, with no scientific qualifications, has founded various pseudo-journals to which Carl has contributed.

These efforts have been backed by a barrage of articles claiming that right-wing views are undemocratically suppressed on university campuses.

The *National Review* published, "The leftist mob comes for a Conservative scholar." The *Times* declared, "Mob rule is crushing free speech on campus," the *Spectator* wailed, "Independent thought is dying at Cambridge university," and arch-Thatcherite Roger Scruton gravely intoned, "The failure to stand up for conservative thinking is leading us into a new cultural dark age" in the *Daily Telegraph*.

Carl himself penned an attack on Cambridge's student newspaper titled, "Varsity's latest hit piece on me" and the *Economist* published, "'Academic mobbing' undermines open inquiry and destroys the soul of universities" in Carl's defence as part of its "Open Futures" series.

Every claim to be concerned about freedom of speech and independent thought is bogus. The number of high-profile figures weighing in to promote Carl in major publications makes a mockery of the idea that the right-wing is voiceless. Their real agenda is not to encourage rational debate, but to muzzle students while reactionary ideologues get on with fueling a rightward lurch in bourgeois politics.

In recent years, leaders of the fascistic National Front/now National Rally in France, Marine Le Pen and Marion Marechal-Le Pen, and Trump's fascist former advisor Steve Bannon have been invited to speak at the Oxford Union.

Bannon has also been interviewed on Radio 4 and as part of the same *Economist* “Open Futures” platform that featured Carl’s case.

The rabidly right-wing, anti-democratic character of the campaign in support of Carl is made clear by the backgrounds of those involved.

Toby Young’s filthy politics have been detailed in a previous article .

Rod Liddle has directed a documentary, “Immigration is a Time Bomb,” which allowed the leader of the fascist British National Party (BNP) Nick Griffin to comment unchallenged. On a Millwall Football Club fan forum, he posted a comment supporting the BNP’s banning of black and Asian members and another “joking” about not being allowed to smoke at Auschwitz.

Liddle has published articles including the lines, “a quick check on what the Muslim savages are up to” and “My own view is that there is not nearly enough Islamophobia within the Tory party”—the latter in defence of Boris Johnson’s likening of women wearing burkhas to letterboxes. In 2009, Liddle wrote, “The overwhelming majority of street crime, knife crime, gun crime, robbery and crimes of sexual violence in London is carried out by young men from the African-Caribbean community,” for which he was sanctioned by the Press Complaints Commission.

Eric Kauffmann is the author of a book titled *Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration and the Future of White Majorities*. The book argues that Western politics is being defined by “the tug of war between white ethno-traditionalism and anti-racist moralism,” that anti-racism is a “repression of ethnic instincts” and that white people should be able to assert “their own racial self-interest”.

Carl’s crowdfunding campaign is being organised by Connor Douglass, as revealed by the *Cherwell* and *Varsity* student newspapers. Douglass has form when it comes to organising the defence of far-right ideologues. In 2017, he helped raise \$85,000 for far-right activist Laura Loomer who had been banned from Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for extremism. Loomer worked with fascist Tommy Robinson for the far-right blog *Rebel Media* and has claimed several recent school shootings were staged.

Douglass founded a new fundraising site, MakerSupport, to back another *Rebel Media* writer and self-professed “white nationalist,” Laura Southern, after she was banned from using the popular crowd funder Patreon. MakerSupport is now a bastion for far-right causes.

With Douglass’s help, Carl has received pledges of up to \$11,236, \$10,000 and \$7,500—the biggest three single donations, all made anonymously.

St. Edmund’s College has been complicit in this rotten enterprise. A Freedom of Information request by *Varsity* has

uncovered one of two investigations into Carl’s appointment, commissioned by the College in response to student protests. The report further undermines the College leadership’s ridiculous claims that they were unaware of Carl’s background when they first appointed him.

According to the investigation, Carl was the only short-listed candidate to have his work assessed by just one instead of two external assessors. Carl included a link on his CV to his personal blog containing several posts referencing his articles published on Kirkegaard’s journal *OpenPsych*. Just one member of the committee in charge of appointing Carl said that they had googled him, and they claim not to have found anything which caused them concern, despite the existence of a recent *New Statesman* article exposing Carl’s pseudo-science connections.

The College has refused to release the second investigation, citing personal data protections.

Carl’s decision to launch a legal case and the support it has found in major institutions are serious events. Cambridge is developing into a new front in a global campaign of far right revanchism, seeking to lay the foundations for a return to some of the darkest periods of human history. Networks of professors and politicians across the world are working to “prove” that German fascism was justified, that race exists as a meaningful scientific category, that the eugenicists have a point.

In opposing this campaign, appeals to scientific reason can only have a lasting impact if they are joined with a progressive, socialist political programme. Falsifications and pseudo-science gain power despite their untruth because they animate and are promoted by reactionary social forces of the kind strengthening daily under conditions of a global capitalist crisis.

The fascist and fascistic movements in which these ideas find a home are being cultivated to defend and enforce explosive levels of social inequality and imperialist violence. Defeating them therefore requires a defence of historical and scientific truth based on a turn to a far more powerful force with diametrically opposed social interests—the international working class, now coming forward into mass struggles against inequality, war and dictatorship.



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