



## Taxpayers Fleeced, Betrayed As Unis Ponder Why Christ Born A Man

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Australian universities are abandoning their role as custodians of Western civilisation in favour of a seemingly endless obsession with identity politics.

I wrote recently about the University of Sydney's Resurgent Racism project, a flagship program that provides taxpayer funds to academics so they can berate Australians for supposedly being racist.

But it is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to taxpayer-funded identity politics research.

A new report by the Institute of Public Affairs has confirmed the extent to which our universities are fixated on class, race and gender — and just how much Australians are paying for it.

[The Humanities in Crisis: An Audit of Taxpayer-funded ARC Grants](#) found the Australian Research Council's national competitive grants program has distributed \$1.34bn in funding to humanities research since 2002.



These projects cover historical studies, linguistics, cultural studies, human geography, and communication and media studies.

According to the ARC, its purpose is “to grow knowledge and innovation for the benefit of the Australian community”. It also claims “the outcomes of ARC-funded research deliver cultural, economic, social and environmental benefits to all Australians”.

So, has the research of the past 17 years done that and helped ensure our success as a prosperous, peaceful and stable nation?

Not quite. What the audit reveals is academics spending millions on projects that are narrow, incomprehensible and reflect the obsession with identity politics, cultural studies, critical theory and radical feminism.

At Macquarie University academics received \$391,000 for a historical studies project called Sexing Scholasticism: Gender in Medieval Thought, which explored “medieval theological debates about why it was necessary that Christ was born as a man”.

Academics at the University of Sydney were awarded \$735,000 for a cultural studies research project called Reconceiving the Queer Public Sphere: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Same-Sex Couple Domesticity. By “critically analysing queer home life” the project would “transform current understandings of the relation between homosexuality, private life and the public sphere”.

The ARC awarded the University of Melbourne \$100,000 for a cultural studies project examining Female Stardom and Gay Subcultural Reception. And James Cook University was given a bumper \$2.7m for a cultural studies proposal, How Gender Shapes the World: A Linguistic Perspective, the authors claimed would “enhance our nation’s capacity to interpret and manage gender roles in multicultural contexts”.

The preoccupation with identity politics is especially notable in historical studies.

There have been 616 such research proposals to have received funding since 2002 — with the total cost amounting to \$192m.

The most common theme is “identity politics”, with 112 of the proposals focusing on the leitmotifs of class, race and gender.

The second most common theme is “indigenous history and studies”, with 99 projects, while the third most common, “war and conflict” attracted 88 proposals. In contrast, there are only three research projects that talk about the rule of law and a solitary proposal examining free speech.

This shows our universities are not interested in the history or values of institutions that are essential to understanding Australia’s present and shaping its future.

As curators of Western civilisation, academics have a duty to look after some of society’s most



valuable material. But two decades of ARC funding shows they are neglecting their duties.

Having bought into the postmodernist notion that Western civilisation is a white patriarchy, they have released themselves from the obligation to study the Western canon. Aristotle's thoughts on the meaning of tragedy are apparently irrelevant, as are Shakespeare's observations of human nature and John Stuart Mill's views on democracy. There is a great deal that universities could pick up from Machiavelli when it comes to the problem of free speech on campus.

Today's academics mostly believe there is nothing we can learn from the 2500 years of accumulated wisdom and knowledge passed down to us by those who have lived before us. This arrogance was articulated by academics at the University of Sydney when they rejected the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation's proposed curriculum, which at the time was derided as "structurally, institutionally, morally and epistemically violent to other knowledges" and summarily dismissed as "white supremacy writ large".

By rejecting the Western canon, academics not only are depriving university students of their dues but they also are depriving us all of the intellectual and moral nourishment that only the humanities can provide. Academics are no longer interested in properly feeding the society that ultimately feeds them.

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