

Telling Off White Men

By Bruce Bawer

The [op-ed](#) was entitled “Can White Men Finally Stop Complaining?” and it appeared the other day in the *Wall Street Journal*. White men, it charged, have a “victim mentality” – even though they’re back on top. Not only has Donald Trump returned to the Oval Office, but for white dudes, everything’s coming up roses:

The manosphere won. Bro podcasters top the charts. Meta’s Mark Zuckerberg declares his company needs more “masculine energy.” Elon Musk shares a post saying only “high-status males” should run the country. The White House kills diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies, and so do multiple companies, from Target to McDonalds.

Yet white men keep complaining: for over half a century they’ve “blamed others for their job losses, educational failures, economic problems and drug addictions....Somebody else is always at fault. The mighty white guy, it turns out, is quite the delicate flower.”



Who wrote this intrepid *j'accuse*? Her name is Joanne Lipman. I checked out her Wikipedia page. She was raised in suburban New Jersey; her mother was a “programmer analyst,” her father a CEO. At Yale she got she got a *summa cum laude* in history. She’s worked at Conde Nast, as “chief content officer” for Gannett, and as editor-in-chief of *USA Today*. She’s on the Council of Foreign

Relations. And she married her husband, an “entertainment lawyer,” at the National Arts Club in Manhattan.

Yes, it’s all right out of one of those *New York Times* wedding announcements. Which is another way of saying that Lipman is a member of the progressive cultural elite from Central Casting.

But back to her article. Whatever else it might have been, it was a perfect specimen of Conde Nast copy – not a sincere effort to argue a serious point, but a slick stretch of prose intended to gratify upscale left-wingers by telling them what they want to hear, even if it turns the truth on its head. How clever to assert that the very people who’ve complained about victim mentalities are the ones who *really* have a victim mentality! How cunning to contend that it’s the “mighty white guy” who’s *really* “the delicate flower”!

It’s cute. It’s facile. It’s oh so glib. It’s adorably contrarian. And it’s patently untrue. Indeed, it’s pretty offensive. In 2025 America, men – most of them white – still do the dirty jobs, the deadly jobs, the thankless jobs. Many of them choose not to go to college because the environment is

so toxically anti-male. Instead they take hard jobs, real jobs, and work long days until they're bone-weary – only to turn on the TV in the evening and hear themselves demonized by the likes of Al Sharpton and Rachel Maddow.

Of course, when it comes to dishonesty, Lipman gave Sharpton and Maddow a run for their money. Instead of fairly representing the argument against DEI, she actually harkened back to the 1970s to cite an episode of *All in the Family* on which Archie Bunker “complained about a female colleague whose pay was equal to his.” Lipman quoted Archie: “What’s the point of a man working hard all his life, trying to get someplace, if all he’s gonna do is wind up equal?!”

Does anyone really believe that this line of fifty-year-old sitcom dialogue sums up your average white American male’s point of view in the year 2025? No. It doesn’t even sum up what your average white American male was thinking in the 1970s: Archie, the working-class bigot from Queens, was a fool, a buffoon, a cartoon character – the fever dream of Malibu mega-producer Norman Lear.

Yes, Lipman included in her op-ed the obligatory “to be sure” sentences, acknowledging that in recent decades, while women have begun “earning more college degrees than men,” the loss of manufacturing jobs has resulted in the denial to “white men without college degrees” of “opportunities for a robust middle-class life.” She admitted that the media have long depicted men as “idiots” and that “white guys aren’t all sexist or racists.” Gee, thanks. Talk about faint praise. Still, she insisted that white guys have it far too good to be complaining.

Of course, the timing was perfect for Lipman’s dose of nonsense. In the November election, every county in the nation shifted to the right. Wokeness seems to be crumbling. What a time to go solidly against the grain, to rally the PC crowd! What could be more wonderfully contrarian than defending DEI

at a time when a presidential administration that was a total DEI freak show (a gay Transportation Secretary who took paternity leave; a health official who was a portly man in a bad wig; an imbecilic black lesbian press secretary; a “genderfluid” nuclear-waste administrator who stole suitcases at airports; and a mushmouthed vice president whose only credential was being Indian, Afro-Jamaican, and female) has yielded to a dream team of men, women, gays, blacks, Hindus, etc., all of whom are presentable, and all of who are there on sheer merit?

And this is all that most white men have been asking for – equality, fairness, meritocracy. Period. Reading Lipman’s piece, I recalled the time when comedian Adam Carolla, who began his career doing menial work on construction sites, testified to a congressional committee that he waited seven years after applying for a job as a fireman to be granted an interview. Waiting in line at the fire department he asked the black woman behind him when she’d applied. “Wednesday,” she said.

Carolla’s was not a unique personal story. Many men have them. When I went to grad school in the 1980s, which I was able to afford because of a teaching assistantship that covered my tuition, it was virtually impossible to get fifth-year financial support – if you were a white male. Fortunately, I finished my Ph.D. in four years. But the one black woman in the program didn’t. She ended up getting not only fifth-year support but sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and (if memory serves) even tenth-year support. That’s how desperate the department was to have a black female Ph.D. to point to.

Does Lipman really buy her own snide line about white men’s wimpy fear of “the scary DEI monster,” her premise that DEI is a tool of social justice, a cure-all for sexism and racism – rather than the decidedly unjust enemy of merit, skill, and effort? I sorely doubt it. She’s not the kind of writer who’s mounting the barricades in the name of illuminating reality,

speaking truth to power, setting the facts straight. No, I think she's just one more soldier in an army of smug, complacent pseudo-journalists whose role, as they see it, is to ratify the knee-jerk mindsets of upscale, Democrat-to-the-death readers – in this case, affirming those readers' disdain for the the overwhelmingly white male riffraff who farm their food, build their homes, connect their electricity, and maintain their roads.

I understand, then, why Lipman is a hot ticket at Conde Nast, where such glib garbage belongs. But why would the *Wall Street Journal*, one of the few remaining bastions of reasonably sane commentary in the legacy media, choose to run such a piece – especially since its most steadfast readers are, by and large, white males?

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