

POLITICS & POLICY

Jill Biden's Doctorate Is Garbage Because Her Dissertation Is Garbage

By KYLE SMITH | December 16, 2020 4:22 PM



Jill Biden speaks during a drive-in campaign rally held by former Vice President Joe Biden at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, Penn., November 2, 2020. (Kevin Lamarque/Reuters)

Her dissertation is not an addition to the sum total of human knowledge.

You can tell someone is smarting from an inferiority complex when he insists on being addressed as “Dr.” on the basis of holding an academic doctorate rather than being a physician. Ph.D. holders who have genuine accomplishments don’t make you call them “Doctor,” which is why you never hear about “Dr. Paul Krugman” and “Dr. George Will.” None of the professors I knew at Yale, even the ones who were eminent in their fields, insisted on the title, and I think most of them would have scoffed if someone had addressed them as “Dr.” The only reason you ever hear the phrase “Dr. Henry Kissinger” is that Kissy grew up in title-mad, airs-and-graces Germany, where people are awed rather than dismissive even if you insist on a triple-serving title (“Herr Professor Doktor”).

Insisting on being called “Doctor” when you don’t heal people is, among most holders of doctorates, seen as a gauche, silly, cringey ego trip. Consider “Dr.” Jill Biden, who doesn’t even hold a Ph.D. but rather a lesser Ed.D., something of a joke in the academic world. President-elect Joe Biden once

explained that his wife sought the degree purely for status reasons: “She said, ‘I was so sick of the mail coming to Sen. and Mrs. Biden. I wanted to get mail addressed to Dr. and Sen. Biden.’ That’s the real reason she got her doctorate,” Joe Biden has said.

Mrs. Biden wanted the credential for its own sake. As for its quality, well. She got it from the University of Delaware, whose ties to her husband, its most illustrious alumnus if you don’t count Joe Flacco, run so deep that it has a school of public policy named after him. That the University of Delaware would have rejected her 2006 dissertation as sloppy, poorly written, non-academic, and barely fit for a middle-school Social Studies classroom (all of which it is) when her husband had been representing its state in the U.S. Senate for more than three decades was about as likely as Tom Hagen telling Vito Corleone that his wife is a fat sow on payday. The only risk to the University of Delaware was that it might strain its collective wrist in its rush to rubber-stamp her doctoral paper. Mrs. Biden could have turned in a quarter-a**ed excuse for a magazine article written at the level of Simple English Wikipedia and been heartily congratulated by the university for her towering mastery. Which is exactly what

happened.

Jill Biden's dissertation is not an addition to the sum total of human knowledge. It is not a demonstration of expertise in its specific topic or its broad field. It is a gasping, wheezing, frail little Disney forest creature that begs you to notice the effort it makes to be the thing it is imitating while failing so pathetically that any witnesses to its ineptitude must feel compelled, out of manners alone, to drag it to the nearest podium and give it a participation trophy. Which is more or less what an Ed.D. is. It's a degree that only deeply unimpressive people feel confers the honorific of "Doctor." People who are actually smart understand that being in possession of a credential is no proof of intelligence.

ALSO FROM

KYLE SMITH

The Top Ten Best Movies of 2020

A Sad, Feminist Cry for Help

Where's the Beef, *Wonder Woman 1984*?

My friends, I have read this document in its

entirety and it is so equally lacking in rhetorical force, boldness of conception, and original research that it amounts to a triple null set, a vacuum inside a blank inside an abyss. If Ingmar Bergman were alive and hired to make a film about this paper, he would say, “I can’t do it, there’s so much emptiness even I cannot grasp it,” and it would sound so much worse in Swedish that suicide hotlines would have to hire extra staff. Gene Simmons has a better claim to be a Doctor of Love than Jill Biden to be a Doctor of Education; after all, Simmons has spent a lifetime demonstrating mastery of his field. As for Biden, she has spent a lot of time teaching remedial English to slow learners in community colleges. Which is like being a rock musician who’s in a bar band. That plays covers. At mixers. Held in assisted-living facilities. Mrs. Biden’s dissertation emits so much noxious methane the EPA should regulate it, Greta Thunberg should denounce it, and Hollywood celebrities should hold a telethon to draw awareness to its dangers.

MORE IN JOE BIDEN

- **Ring Out the Old, Bring In the New**
- **Our Upside-Down Post-Election World**
- **‘It Must Have Been Stolen’**

As Joe Biden has frankly noted, Mrs. Biden sought the Dr. honorific to rebuild her *amour propre*. Much of the press plays along, addressing Jill Biden as “Dr. Biden” even when actual medical doctors are referred to without the honorific if they are not currently practicing. Eminent pediatric neurosurgeon and HUD secretary Ben Carson is now “Mr. Carson” to the *New York Times*, but the same paper refers to Mrs. Biden as “Dr. Biden.” This practice appears to contradict the *Times*’ style guide, which explains that the “Dr.” title is used for non-physicians “only if it is germane to the holder’s primary current occupation (academic, for example, or laboratory research).”

Mrs. Biden until recently taught **English composition** at NoVa, a small community college in Northern Virginia. To justify addressing her as “Dr.” would require a generous view of what constitutes an “academic,” and judging by the **writing skills evinced by her students** (“She very bad teacher and it is hard to pass class. I RECOMMEND NOT TAKE THIS PROFESSOR”), they emerged from her tutelage lacking mastery of even very basic grammar. As for the contents of the dissertation, which she cobbled together

from a few secondary sources and some vapid interviews and questionnaires she sent around at the campus where she worked before her husband became vice president, Delaware Technical Community College, I'll go over them in detail in **my next column**.



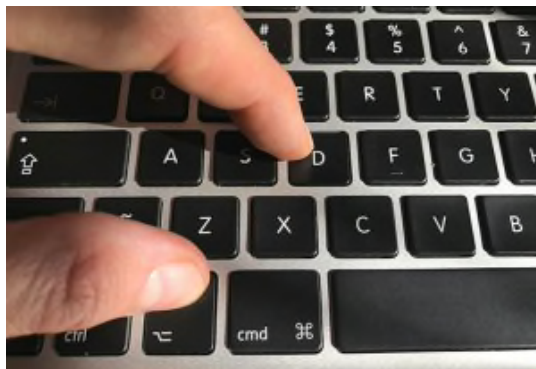
KYLE SMITH is NATIONAL REVIEW's critic-at-large. [@rkylesmith](https://twitter.com/rkylesmith)

AROUND THE WEB



Massachusetts Launches New Policy For Cars Used Less Than 50 Miles/Day

PROVIDEINSURANCE

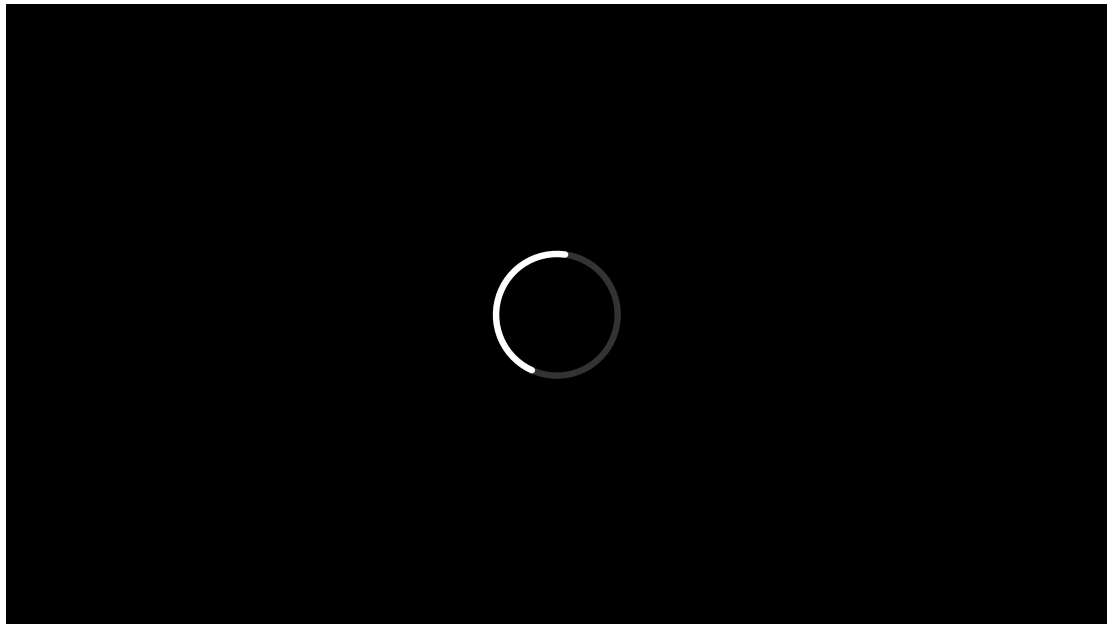


The 1 Clever Trick Most Mac Owners Don't Know (Do It Today)



The Horrifying Truth About CBD

TOMMY CHONG



How To Empty Your Bowels Every Morning - Top Surgeon Explains How

GUTHEALTHWELLNESS

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Powered by ZergNet



The Supreme Court Just Handed Team Trump A Major Win



New Details Revealed In The Death Of Louisiana Congressman-Elect



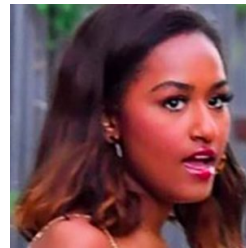
BU Professor Facing Harsh Backlash For Amy Barrett Criticism



Bad News For Georgia Democrats Seeking To Unseat GOP Senators



The President Pope John Paul Refused To Shake Hands With



The Truth About Sasha Obama Is Out in the Open