

Four hundred years ago Galileo kneeling before the Pope received his punishment of excommunication for endorsing and teaching the Heliocentric ideas of the Copernicus theory against the science teachings of the church. We might view this as only the limited educational achievements of the dark ages but similarly in 1922 the German Society of Physics ordained that “Jewish Physics” would not be taught or researched in Germany, even though just three years earlier the 1919 total solar eclipse provided the 2nd proof of Einstein’s theories of relativity and by this year 3 Nobel Prizes in Physics were already given for quantum mechanics related studies. This anti-Semitism phrase “Jewish Physics” was widely employed and used until the end of World War 2, although it did have a great advantage to the United States because it delayed German investigation into the creation of the atomic bomb by over 12 years.

This semester signs and notes were posted in Jabara Hall at Wichita State University where Physics is housed displaying insulting anti-Semitism notes with the historical phrase “Jewish Physics”. This can be viewed as coming from two possible sources: first it is anti-Semitism historically in nature since the Germany Society of Physics used it during the time it was controlled by the Nazi party as a reason not to teach or study anything that required so much high mathematics to describe Physics by Jewish scientist such as Einstein, Bohr; but, secondly the Kansas Board of Regents in 2023 questioned the necessity to teach many subjects that they deemed unnecessary and students posting such notes have taken to heart the KBOR initiative to belittle important subjects such as Physics. Whatever the reason for these notes whether it be anti-Semitism or anti-knowledge some of the blame falls on the limited educational understanding of the currently Kansas Board of Regents as well as the campus protesters (students, faculty and possibly outsiders) supporting the Gaza Palestine’s elected Hamas leadership in Gaza which Hamas is a worldwide recognized terrorist organization against Israel and Jewish people.

Although I stand behind free speech and the power of tenured faculty to freely advance research, this is not appropriate free speech and I hope the WSU Senate and our administration would denounce these insulting notes belittling certain types of sciences and against certain religions; after all if Kansas is going to make planes that can actually fly safely we need educated graduates, and to only teach applied engineering would be almost like living in the dark ages again. And, we must teach it without prejudice to any race, religion, sexual orientation or beliefs.

Article on origin of anti-Semitism phrase “Jewish Physics”:

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-2-pro-nazi-nobelists-attacked-einstein-s-jewish-science-excerpt1/>

Nikola
Tesla

Jewish
Physics