

Title TBD:

In "Is This Kansas?" by Eula Biss, she describes the privilege and entitlement that take place within Universities. She explores the different perceptions of actions based on race and privilege. She highlights how white college students, when taking part in unlawful acts, often face little consequences. Meanwhile, other races seem to get more severe consequences for similar behavior. Bliss explores other major issues occurring on campus, which are often covered up by the universities. This deceitfulness creates a false sense of safety for students. These unsettling double standards and privileges that take place within universities reflect broader inequalities that people have to deal with daily within society.

From the outside, college campuses are typically seen as a fun and enjoyable place where kids mature and grow into adults. However within college campuses, the whole culture is flawed. Bliss often witnessed crowds of students wandering around, half-naked and drunk. There was always "chanting on sorority lawns," "car crashes," people falling from balconies, and cases of "alcohol poisoning" (Bliss 131). This behavior was pardoned. Maybe because the people responsible for holding them accountable, see the students as "the quickly dying sparks of [their] former selves". Because of this, very dangerous things like, date rapes and DUI's are swept under the rug. This lack of accountability creates a culture where serious consequences are uncommon, allowing harmful behaviors to continue. The privilege of white students shields them from accountability, while students of color don't have the same leniency.

Although these young-adults are expected to stop their reckless behavior after four years and become compliant and responsible adults, a diploma does not automatically change their mindsets. Bliss experienced this when she attempted to shut down a weekday party. She found a grown man “suspended upside down” while siphoning beer into another grown man’s mouth. The college kids explained the challenge of “persuad[ing] the parents to go home,” showing how these reckless behaviors can continue post graduation.

A majority of people form their opinions based on what they hear on the news. Because of this, the media plays a huge role in shaping public perception of privileged behavior. In Bliss’s rhetoric class, her students were intrigued to find out that she previously lived in New York City. Big cities like New York City have a reputation for being dangerous and full of crime. So, her students asked her many questions about it, like “where [she] worked’ and “where [she] lived”, but also “if [she] had been scared’ and if “men had harassed [her] on the street”. They were appalled to find out how Iowa City made her feel far more unsafe than New York City ever did. In Iowa City, she regularly talked to the police, could not sleep because of loud parties, was harrassed on the street, and even had her apartment broken into multiple times. This stark contrast between expectation and reality highlights the inconsistency within the media that creates a false sense of safety. These mixed perceptions factor into broader societal inequalities, where the actions of certain groups of people are either pardoned or ignored based on their status.

