

The Emperor's Postmodern Clothes

A Brief Guide to Deconstructing Academically Fashionable Phrases for the Uninitiated

David A. Levy

PHRASE	TRANSLATION
All points of view are equally valid.	I am willing to abandon all logic and evidence just to maintain the illusion that I am being open-minded and fair.
We need to neutralize the effects of power, status, and privilege.	I wish that I had more power, status, and privilege.
There is no objective reality.	. . . except for what I'm saying right now.
In our culture, empiricism is over-privileged.	I don't have any facts to back up my argument.
Permit me to educate you.	Permit me to invalidate your opinion.
Permit me to deconstruct this sociocultural myth.	Watch me demonstrate how superior I am.
Permit me to share a personal narrative with you.	. . . and I dare you not to display an empathic response.
I am very passionate about these ideas.	The more strongly I feel, the more right I must be.
I'm not saying "better," I'm saying "different."	I'm saying "better."
Let us start a dialogue.	Let me start a monologue.
This warrants more conversation.	I can't believe that you have the temerity not to agree with me.
This warrants <i>much</i> more conversation.	I can't believe that you <i>still</i> have the temerity not to agree with me.
Don't you think that sounds kind of racist?	Good luck trying to disagree with me <i>now</i> .
These are the types of issues we don't talk about enough around here.	You're not feeling guilty enough yet.
Your conclusion is open to contestation.	You are wrong.
One can prove anything with statistics.	I should have paid more attention in stats class.
The interreferential nature of our phenomenological field can be neither deconstructed nor decontextualized from our ontological meta-narrative.	Don't I sound really intellectual and hip?
It's not about race.	It's about race.
It's about race.	It's not about race.
Discussions about cultural diversity are emotionally threatening.	It can't be <i>my</i> fault that students don't like my classes.
It is unfortunate that discrimination will always be with us.	. . . which is actually fortunate, because my entire identity would evaporate if I didn't have an enemy to fight against.
Science is merely one more opinion.	My Uncle Bill told me so.

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