

Passions & Power

Who decided it was a good idea to cave to the demands of people too young and uneducated to understand complicated issues or even longstanding democratic traditions?

What got me thinking about this issue was the terrible treatment of Harvard University law professor Ronald Sullivan and his wife Stephanie Robinson. Both had been faculty deans at Harvard for years. And then professor Sullivan joined the defense team of Harvey Weinstein, the Hollywood executive accused of sexual abuse by many women. Students protested and Harvard caved, stripping both Sullivan and his wife of their deanships. As terrible as the accusations are against Weinstein, he is entitled to a defense. But the protestors didn't see it that way and Harvard was cowed.

This sort of thing is happening on too many campuses across the country, and it's happening a lot in the area of energy.

At universities across America and the world, students are demanding that their institutions divest from fossil fuels, even though doing so would cost their Universities a lot of money in lost investment returns. Not the sort of thing you want to do when trying to hold down the cost of tuition and student loan debt

College students are also leading the charge on stopping fossil fuel usage ASAP because they fear catastrophic man-caused climate change. How many of these students have actually studied this hypothesis in depth? Not many, but they are convinced they know best and anyone who doesn't get with the program will be shamed, or worse. Professional anti-energy activists know the young can be counted on to passionately protest things they know little about, so these groups are deeply involved in campus life, encouraging news-making events such as divestment sit-ins at Harvard, Yale, MIT, UCSB, and many other universities.

Look, there's nothing wrong with being passionate and young. But when these passions are fueled by emotions that are not restrained by some actual working knowledge, that's a problem. It's a problem our universities should be helping students to understand, instead of caving to their uninformed demands.

For the Clear Energy Alliance, I'm Mark Mathis. Power On.