

MEN'S RIGHTS

How Some of the Internet Get it Wrong

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Men want rights and so they should. But why in the name of free drinks?

Take yourself to Twitter and look up the hashtag – #meninism. You will fall into an infinite pool of tweets that ask you to “piss off a feminist” or argue in less than 120 characters why “beating up an arrogant woman” is justified.

If you believe this is an isolated issue, go to Facebook and search for “Manscriminate”. You’ll find that it’s a campaign claiming to stand for gender discrimination against men. So what does this discrimination look like? According to Mancrimination, it’s when men don’t get free drinks in bars, or are expected to hold doors open (courtesy in general), when they are not entitled to sympathy because of their sex/gender and the lack of men-only transportation.

These campaigns grow from and contribute to a climate that portrays the feminist movement as absurd and unnecessary, and – timelessly – a punch line. At their worst, these are attempts at critiquing feminism through parodies. At their best, they jokingly underline the discrimination and insecurities that (some) men feel.

Movements like these have come up time and again with the intention to advocate men’s rights but have only managed to create one lasting impact: to highlight an already apathetic world where feminism is considered problematic for men. While these men proudly demonstrate opinions about feminism, they manage to miss a very crucial point – feminism is for men too.



Ain o Salish Kendra’s January to June, 2015 sexual harassment statistics (under nature of violence as harassment) stood at a total of 92 victims, out of which 5 were men. It seems like an infinitely small number against the 87 women who were accounted for being harassed. But the small number speaks volumes; it tells us that men are as threatened by sexual offences as are women and that fact requires recognition and advocacy. Also 5 is just the number on the surface, the culture of fear and stigma multiplies for

the men. Most cases go unreported and at times men would go as far as not acknowledging that a violence committed against them is categorised as violence at all. The everyday problems or insecurities that men face are pushed aside as marginalised incidents.

Men feel trapped by notions of masculinity, the kind of masculinity that defines “real” men as strong, violent, emotionally closed and sexually liberated (aggressive). Society prescribes only a selected range of social, political, and sexual attitudes that men can hold. Men who are raped are more likely to remain silent and in case they open up, they run the risk of being dismissed or laughed at. There remains little to no support for male victims of domestic abuse. The men who suffer violence or feel threatened by societal expectations are surrounded by a veil of invisibility. This veil is the result of decades of cemented societal beliefs that somehow being a man automatically excludes them from being victims.

Possibly the best way to bring needed attention to actual issues would be to avoid lumping together half-baked opinion and problems that men have under one placard bearing “advocacy”. It would bring back some semblance of legitimacy to the real causes and as a bonus increase the distance between legitimate advocacy and some of the darkest places in the internet.

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TYPES OF ENGLISH MAJORS IN BANGLADESH

IMANI KHALED

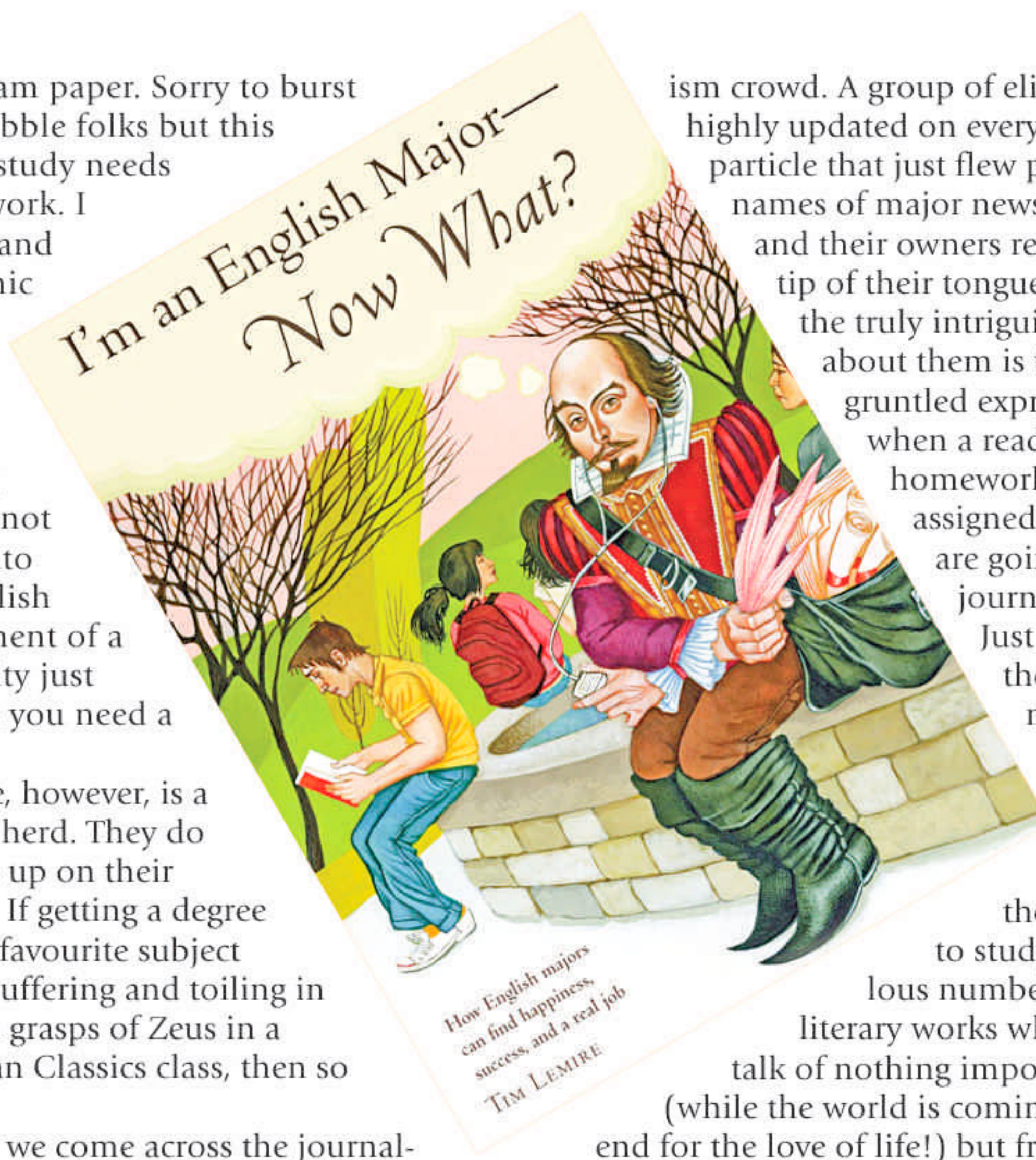
There comes a point in life when we decide to just go with it because all the dreams and aspirations, narrated with big words back in the 5th grade, do not really work out. Harsh reality, not so star spangled, hits us and we, like unfed lions, grab the first opportunity life presents us with. That is how choosing a college major feels like. Not all of us study what we have always wanted to and in effect, classrooms with varied creatures come into being. To be more specific, there are more types of English majors than those who are burning the midnight oil with a perfect cup of coffee and chilling with Hemingway or those cursing at a 15th century play.

A major number of students of the language will answer your “Why English?” with a shrug followed by a sad story about how their dream subject did not work out. While this is sad and must be sympathised and empathised with, what these brilliant minds fail to comprehend is that English is not all about reading stories and summarising it on

your exam paper. Sorry to burst your bubble folks but this area of study needs major work. I understand Economics did not work out for you but you cannot waltz into the English department of a university just because you need a degree.

There, however, is a smarter herd. They do not give up on their dreams. If getting a degree in their favourite subject means suffering and toiling in the firm grasps of Zeus in a European Classics class, then so be it.

Then we come across the journal-



ism crowd. A group of elitists, highly updated on every single particle that just flew past us, names of major newspapers and their owners rest on the tip of their tongues, and the truly intriguing part about them is the disgruntled expression when a reading homework is assigned. They are going to be journalists. Just because they did not qualify for it does not mean they have to study ridiculous number of literary works where they talk of nothing important (while the world is coming to an end for the love of life!) but frivolous

nonexistent people. Where is the sense in that? My heart goes out to all the aspiring journalists incarcerated in the English department.

As sexist as this may sound and although quite unusual in this part of the country, but many English majors are females who only need a degree. I cannot argue with that considering how inexplicably easy this field of study is. Read some summaries, some scribbled notes, and of course never ignore those Ramji Laal notes and you are good to go. You have earned yourself a proper bachelor’s degree.

Language arts is still considered a soft science in our country meant for “weaker” students. There are only a few who pursue English or any humanities major out of passion and love for the subject. It may not be your dream but it is a lot of work like all the subjects with guaranteed jobs.

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