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PART 3

It seems intuitive that there is a relation between tolerance of ideas and tolerance of gender and race. And the relation might be explored by asking, do tolerance of ideas, reason, and attention to evidence signal tolerance in general? And, does diversity of gender and race imply tolerance of diversity of ideas? From a practical view, however, the answer is less important than whether an institution and its members abide by their public representations of tolerance of race, gender, and expression of ideas and thought.

Identifying Diversity

Race and gender are relatively easy to identify. Ideas, on the other hand, do not have physical attributes. Furthermore, reliable observations of tolerance of ideas may be subtle, especially in an academic institution with its relatively sophisticated professorate. In other words, political correctness confounds the reliability of data. That poses a problem for identifying and reliably observing tolerance of ideas and potentially represents a weakness of survey and experimental investigations of diversity.

Given the deception inherent in politic correctness, how do we know intolerance of ideas is a motivating force of behavior? For example, we all know that the authorities in the now defunct Soviet Union would accuse people whose ideas they did not like of being crazy and banish them along with criminals to the Gulag. The same accusation of insanity, craziness, dangerousness, etc. is available to university administrators and faculty whose purpose is to discredit and banish faculty for ideas they find offensive. How do you sort through such accusations in the anxious, hysterical environment of post-Virginia Tech and, more recently, post-Tucson, AZ? An environment, you should note,

made to order for intolerant administrators and faculty. How does a faculty member deal with intolerant administrators? Keep silent? Hide? You may not have that luxury.

Be that as it may, the malevolent Soviet-style approach to discrediting faculty is a tactic currently used by intolerant administrators and faculty at American universities. See the discussion at <http://www.psychologistethics.net/>. So, how do we know intolerance of ideas motivates behavior when skill at deception underlies much of political correctness? The question is straightforward to ask, though difficult to support.

A necessary, though not sufficient, strategy is a thorough identification, review, and report of context and evidence that reveals whether the promise of tolerance of ideas is supported by behavior. This report offers a detailed insider perspective in which academic institutional promises are compared to its practices, specifically with regard to the promises and practices of diversity of ideas at an accredited university. The accreditor is the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The university is University of Southern Mississippi.