



Re-education at George Mason

This week begins my 34th year serving on George Mason University's distinguished economics faculty. You might imagine my surprise when I received a letter from its Office of Equity and Diversity Services notifying me that I was required to "complete the in-person Equal Opportunity and Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures training." This is a leftist agenda for indoctrination, thought control and free speech suppression to which I shall refuse to submit. Let's look at it.



Ideas such as equity and equal opportunity, while having high emotional value, are vacuous analytical concepts. For example, I've asked students whether they plan to give every employer an equal opportunity to hire them when they graduate. To a person, they always answer no. If they aren't going to give every employer an equal opportunity to hire them, what's fair about forcing employers to give them an equal opportunity to be hired?

I'm guilty of gross violation of equality of opportunity, racism and possibly sexism. Back in 1960, when interviewing people to establish a marital contract, every woman wasn't given an equal opportunity. I discriminated against not only white, Indian, Asian, Mexican and handicapped women but men of any race. My choices were confined to good-looking black women. You say, "Williams, that kind of discrimination doesn't harm anyone!" Nonsense! When I married Mrs. Williams, other women were harmed by having a reduced opportunity set.

George Mason's Office of Equity and Diversity Services has far more challenging equity and diversity work than worrying about the re-education of Professor Williams. They must know that courts have long held that gross racial disparities are probative of a pattern and practice of discrimination. The most notable gross racial disparity on campus, and hence probative of discrimination, can be found on GMU's fabulous men's basketball team. Blacks are less than 9 percent of student enrollment but are 85 percent of our varsity basketball team and dominate its starting five. It's not just GMU. Watch any Saturday afternoon college basketball game and ask yourself the question fixated in the minds of equity, diversity and inclusion hunters: Does this look like America? Among the 10 players on the court, at best there might be two white players. In 2010, 61 percent of Division I basketball players were black, and only 31 percent were white.

Allied with the purveyors of equity, diversity and inclusion are the multiculturalists, who call for the celebration of cultures. For them, all cultures are morally equivalent and to deem otherwise is Eurocentrism. That's unbridled nonsense. Ask your multiculturalist: Is forcible female genital mutilation, as practiced in nearly 30 sub-Saharan Africa and Middle Eastern countries, a morally equivalent cultural value? Slavery is practiced in Sudan and Niger; is that a cultural equivalent? In most of the Middle East, there are numerous limits on women — such as prohibitions on driving, employment, voting and education. Under Islamic law, in some countries, female adulterers face death



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by stoning, and thieves face the punishment of having their hand severed. Are these cultural values morally equivalent, superior or inferior to those of the West?

Western values are superior to all others. Why? The greatest achievement of the West was the concept of individual rights. The Western transition from barbarism to civility didn't happen overnight. It emerged feebly — mainly in England, starting with the Magna Carta of 1215 — and took centuries to get where it is today.

One need not be a Westerner to hold Western values. A person can be Chinese, Japanese, Jewish, African or Arab and hold Western values. It's no accident that Western values of reason and individual rights have produced unprecedented health, life expectancy, wealth and comfort for the ordinary person.

Western values are under ruthless attack by the academic elite on college campuses across America. They want to replace personal liberty with government control and replace equality before the law with entitlement. The multiculturalism and diversity agenda is a cancer on our society, and our tax dollars and charitable donations are supporting it.

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