

# Is Diversity Becoming a Religious Cult?

The distinguished Catholic theologian Paul Griffiths was purged from Duke Divinity School for refusing to worship at the shrine of Diversity. No doubt this was a case of “You’re fired/I quit.” But we have here not just a question of academic freedom, but also a theological controversy, which in earlier ages would have led to the loss of much more than a job.

Familiarity with other ways of thinking, feeling, imagining, and acting is essential to civic and liberal education. Courses such as Chinese History, Cultural Anthropology, foreign languages, and World Religions are important to the formation of young minds. Whether hawks or doves, citizens and policy makers need an elementary knowledge of Islam.

Yet no one I know of proposes hiring Holocaust deniers to teach history or defenders of pedophilia to teach ethics. And the academic world is full of people who preach diversity while cutting back foreign language requirements.

Every group, from white nationalists to people who marry themselves (they are called sologamists) now feels entitled to demand that the larger society “affirm” their understanding of their identity and denounce those who disagree as bigots. (People who find self-marriage ridiculous might be called sologaphobes.) It is only a matter of time before pedophiles get themselves added to the list of officially recognized oppressed minorities; the fact that they are now universally despised, even by their fellow criminals, will be part of their case. (Those who disapprove will be called pedophobes.).

We have encountered a new religion, for which group identity replaces older forms of faith. Its central tenet is the

breakdown of the human race into a number of diverse “identities”, each with its own vision of human society and the world.

Diversitarians treat being a woman or African American or gay as if it were a religious commitment. They lose sight of the diversity among kinds of diversity, such as the differences between sexual orientation and national origin. The amount of choice among our traits varies enormously: many “homosexuals” are in fact bisexual and have chosen to pursue their same-sex attractions. Gay icon Allen Ginsberg said, “I am neither queer, nor am I bisexual. My name is Allen Ginsberg and I sleep with whoever I want.”

Members of each “diverse” group are expected to toe the group party line on pain of grave fault.

Hillary Clinton’s spokeswoman Madeleine Albright, speaking against Bernie Sanders (not Donald Trump), said, “There’s a special place in hell for women who don’t help each other!” A cardinal of Jewish origin who wanted to define himself both as a Jew and a Christian was resented by both Jews and Catholics. A light-skinned African American student of mine defended Jim Crow as a way of preventing racial conflict, so long as he had the right to define himself as white. A male to female transsexual condemns the attempt of a woman without known African American ancestors to define herself as black.

People neglect the manifest difference between men and women in favor of a multitude of “genders” (in fact, personality types), and students are not learning to understand or deal with even so small a difference of outlook as that between Democrats and Republicans.

Meanwhile straight white males, particularly if young or plebian, are expected to swallow false accusations, and discrimination, and other forms of abuse. At one school I know of, some young white men were charged with turning away black

students from a party that had already been closed by the police for being too noisy. The matter could have been quickly resolved if the administration had not forbidden the parties to meet.

Under the circumstances, no-one has the right to be surprised by the rise of xenophobic nationalism. Low-status white people – variously called hillbillies, rednecks, trailer trash, and white trash – give up their jobs to make up for the fact that their employers discriminated against black workers, or their employers' ancestors owned slaves. As a former colleague put it, "Mea culpa, you-a paya." The solidarity of white working class people, including white working class women, trumps the identity politics promoted by the Democratic Party.

When people who differ in any visible respect live together, even when the difference is as superficial as skin color, we can expect conflict. Even Norwegians and Swedes had difficulty sharing a country (they broke up in 1905). Groups need to learn to get along, separate, or fight until one group or the other prevails. America has handled the problem of diversity surprisingly well given the general record of humanity.

Besides favorable economic conditions, our most important resource has been a national ideology or civil religion, whose principal spokesmen were Jefferson, Lincoln, and Martin Luther King. We used to share a belief that all human beings, as created in the image of God, are in some fundamental though sometimes obscure sense equal. In contemporary politics the pro-life movement most strongly affirms that all lives matter.

We need a way of distinguishing progressive from reactionary causes – and hence also progressive from reactionary groups – that does not depend on the prejudices of those who define themselves as progressive. In a relativist culture no answer is forthcoming. If a few private schools devoted themselves to Diversity, as Ave Maria University devotes itself to Catholicism and Wheaton College in Illinois devotes itself to

Evangelical Protestantism, there would be no problem.

But the votaries of Diversity hold themselves entitled to take over secular institutions, and those founded to support other religions, and to persecute those who refuse to go along.

Ridding ourselves of the diversity commissars that pervade the American educational system would enable us to divert resources to academic purposes, cut tuition, and improve educational quality. The false god of Diversity must go.

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