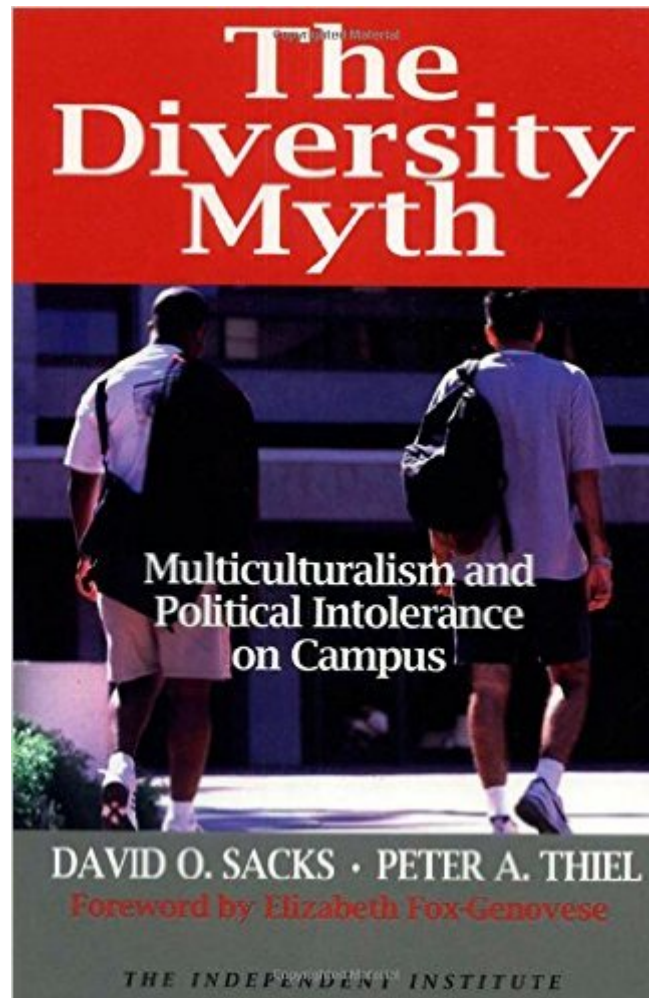


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The Diversity Myth



Synopsis

This is a powerful exploration of the debilitating impact that politically-correct multiculturalism has had upon higher education and academic freedom in the United States. In the name of diversity, many leading academic and cultural institutions are working to silence dissent and stifle intellectual life. This book exposes the real impact of multiculturalism on the institution most closely identified with the politically correct decline of higher education—Stanford University. Authored by two Stanford graduates, this book is a compelling insider's tour of a world of speech codes, dumbed-down admissions standards and curricula, campus witch hunts, and anti-Western zealotry that masquerades as legitimate scholarly inquiry. Sacks and Thiel use numerous primary sources—the Stanford Daily, class readings, official university publications—to reveal a pattern of politicized classes, housing, budget priorities, and more. They trace the connections between such disparate trends as political correctness, the gender wars, Generation X nihilism, and culture wars, showing how these have played a role in shaping multiculturalism at institutions like Stanford. The authors convincingly show that multiculturalism is not about learning more; it is actually about learning less. They end their comprehensive study by detailing the changes necessary to reverse the tragic disintegration of American universities and restore true academic excellence.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Diversity Myth" is a twenty-year-old book that nobody would remember, despite its many virtues, were it not for that its authors (and many of the young figures in its pages) have since then

become highly-visible billionaires, and, in the case of Peter Thiel, prominent public intellectuals. None of them knew that then, though (presumably!), which makes the book even more interesting. And everything old is new again. This book has, since I started writing this review, taken on new relevancy, with the puerile and ignorant, yet vicious, happenings at the University of Missouri, Dartmouth, Yale, Oberlin and other colleges last fall (2015). But let's take the book as it is. It's possible, and instructive, to draw a line from William F. Buckley's "God and Man at Yale," published in 1951, through this book (published in 1999) to today. A descending line, showing the cratering of the American academy. The declined Yale of the late 1940s and early 1950s criticized by Buckley was a paragon of excellence compared to Stanford in the 1990s, much less compared to universities today. As with any book that deals with political conflicts of the past, it is easy to see where the authors were right and where the authors were wrong. Unfortunately, they were right about the problem and wrong that it was on the way to being fixed. In fact, the problem of enforced leftist ideological conformity escaped the confines of Stanford and similar universities long ago, mutating and growing along the way, until now it not only suffocates all university discourse, but infects the entire nation's discourse.

As my header states, I'm a white male born and educated in the upper-middle class. Also, like Thiel, I am a libertarian, although politically I'm a little more to the left than he is. I gave the book five stars because I agree with the central premise; however, I understand why people of certain backgrounds and beliefs describe the book as "yellow journalism" because I do agree that it does sensationalize to some extent. If what I've written so far has inflamed you and you believe I'm a bigot then you should continue reading because you are who I want to read this. First of all, I know that in a way I'm lucky to have been born into a family that has both resources and values education and hard work. I agree that skin color, gender, and wealth create an uneven playing field. I would argue that of those three, wealth has the greatest effect and gender has the least effect. The reason I like this book is because it points out the negative long term effects of the politically correct (PC) culture that exists in the US. What do I mean by this? In a nutshell I mean that the efforts by the PC crowd have a long term effect of reducing diversity. I believe this is the central pillar of the book and I will explain more in the next paragraph. As a scientist, the type of diversity that matters to me is diversity of opinion. When everyone thinks the same, people do not innovate and society does not move forward. As much as I believe in my understanding of the issue, if you have a different opinion and can back it up with intelligent discourse, that is the diversity I value and that is a positive for society. PC culture destroys this difference of opinion. People who do not have the same views as PC activists and the

liberal media are labeled as "bigots".

This is an interesting and informative book on an important subject. It concerns multiculturalism and political intolerance at Stanford in the 1980's. The authors (both now lawyers/businessmen/non-academics) were Stanford undergraduates. Thiel took his J.D. at Stanford; Sacks took his at the University of Chicago. If nothing else, the book demonstrates the quality of the Stanford experience and/or the ability of the admissions office to select students of quality because the book is well-researched, well-argued and well-written. It is a partisan book in the sense that it adduces evidence to support a particular point of view, one wholly inimical to the multicultural (as they term it). It is not, however, a flailing, mindless screed. It points to a multiplicity of events, interactions and facts. It names names and it provides a great many of the specifics germane to the case(s). Its arguments and narratives cannot simply be dismissed as reactionary or studiously partial. If the authors have misused evidence or conveniently forgotten counter examples they should be challenged on the facts, not criticized, e.g., because of their later business success or their extensive use of campus journalistic records. Their frame of reference is far broader than that. To say that they were too involved in the issues and those issues' initial reportage is also to acknowledge that they were involved, personally and directly. Reporters are among our society's most notable writers of 'instant history'. The degree to which that instant history will stand the test of time will ultimately be decided on the actual facts of the case(s). There is a great deal of analysis in addition to the reportage. They examine, e.g., the contradictions of the multicultural.

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