



Ivory towers have their own kinds of bigots

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There is a myth that people who have acquired more formal education are not as biased, judgmental or bigoted as their "less-accomplished" counterparts.

Having spent the last 40 years in higher education, however, I have come to the conclusion that those who inhabit the ivory tower include some of the most prejudiced, intolerant and narrow-minded human beings in the world.

I am not necessarily talking about race and gender, although a good case could be made for discrimination on that front considering the lack of diversity in many departments.

No, I am referring to the self-righteous indignation many academics have toward those who are not as enlightened as they obviously see themselves as being.

Although there are many who rise above this petty nonsense, I can point to a few less-than-admirable tendencies exhibited by some of my associates on a daily basis.

For instance, some faculty seem to despise administrators who are often quick to return the favor. Then there are those who denigrate their colleagues in other colleges and departments in order to reinforce a delusional sense of pseudo-superiority.

Moreover, people with doctorates are often dismissive of those without them; I have been in meetings where exceptionally talented individuals were ignored simply because their name didn't begin with "Dr."

And maybe I missed the memo, but who said the Ph.D. should be the gold standard when it comes to terminal degrees and all alternative credentials should therefore be maligned as inherently second-rate?

Maybe if we all focused more on doing the equally important jobs we were hired to do, and less on trying to enhance our place in the pecking order, our students would be better served.

Prejudice will exist as long as some have an egotistical and self-serving need to see themselves as better than those around them.

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