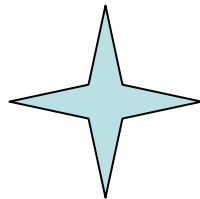


Dangerous Ideas and Safe Zones

Linda S. Gottfredson
University of Delaware
ISIR 2006, San Francisco

2 Questions

1. How (not why) is conduct & dissemination of intelligence suppressed?
2. What can we do about it, *qua* scientists?



Focus Today

Premises:

- Research on intelligence differences “highly controversial” for non-scientific reasons
- Public confusion & false claims feed controversy
- Science of intelligence has advanced, but with reduced cadre

Claim:

- Non-PC conclusions suppressed mostly by special taxes, not open bans, on “dangerous” ideas

Recommendations:

- Individually: identify, expose, & reduce taxes
- Collectively: create more tax-free zones

Protected Speech?

1. USA—First Amendment to the Constitution
 - a. Freedom of speech is to be *protected* (including in state-funded universities)
2. Many USA universities
 - a. Contractually guarantee academic freedom
 - b. Have speech codes prohibiting “offensive” speech
3. EU countries—Race Directives
 - a. Theory of biological races is explicitly rejected
 - b. Offensive and demeaning behavior is *prohibited*

Academics tend to assume that 1 and 2a provide effective protection and that 2b, 3a, and 3b pose no real threat

Protected Speech?

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 - a. **False. Enforcement is all.
Enforcement is political choice.**
 - b. Have speech codes prohibiting “offensive” speech
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Claim: Suppression is By Degrees, Not Decree

- Humans are social animals, sensitive to social reinforcement & social facilitation
- Academe is reputational system—one advances only with approval from professional peers
- One-trial learning when burned, even if vicarious
- Much suppression is self-suppression to avoid disapproval

Recent Object Lesson

Headline: *Wall Street Journal*, 6/24/06, Page 1

Head Examined

Scientist's Study of Brain Genes Sparks a
Backlash _____

Dr. Lahn Connects Evolution in Some Groups to IQ:
Debate on Race and DNA

'Speculating Is Dangerous'

Layers of Differential Reinforcement

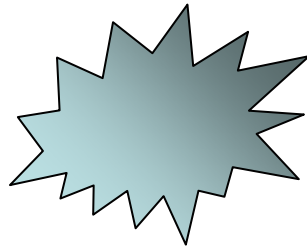
Political regulations and rights

Media controversy, confusion

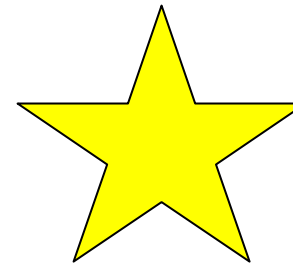
Academic institutions: Editorial review, hiring & tenure, awards

Professional recognition

Social approval

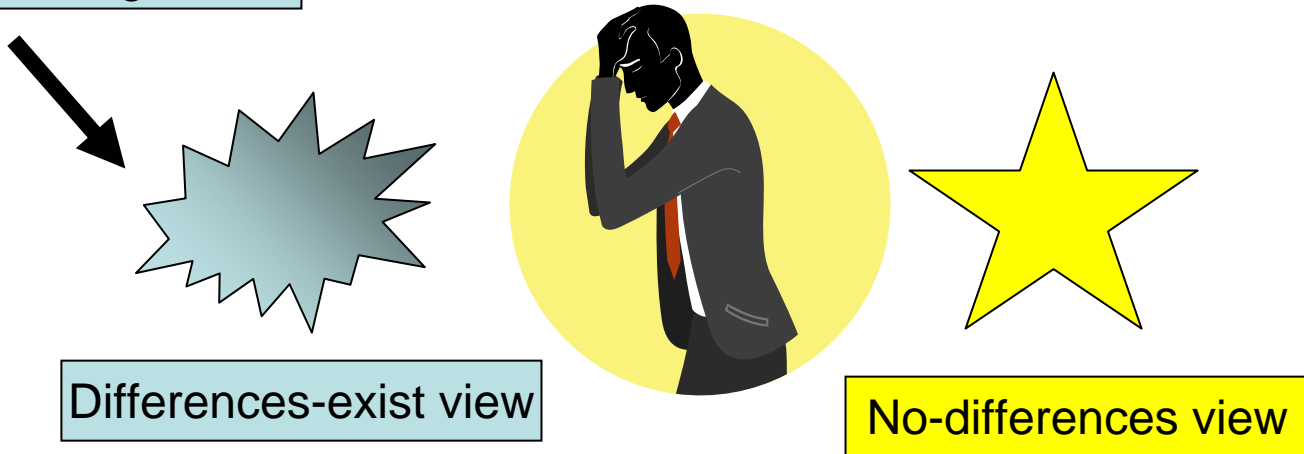
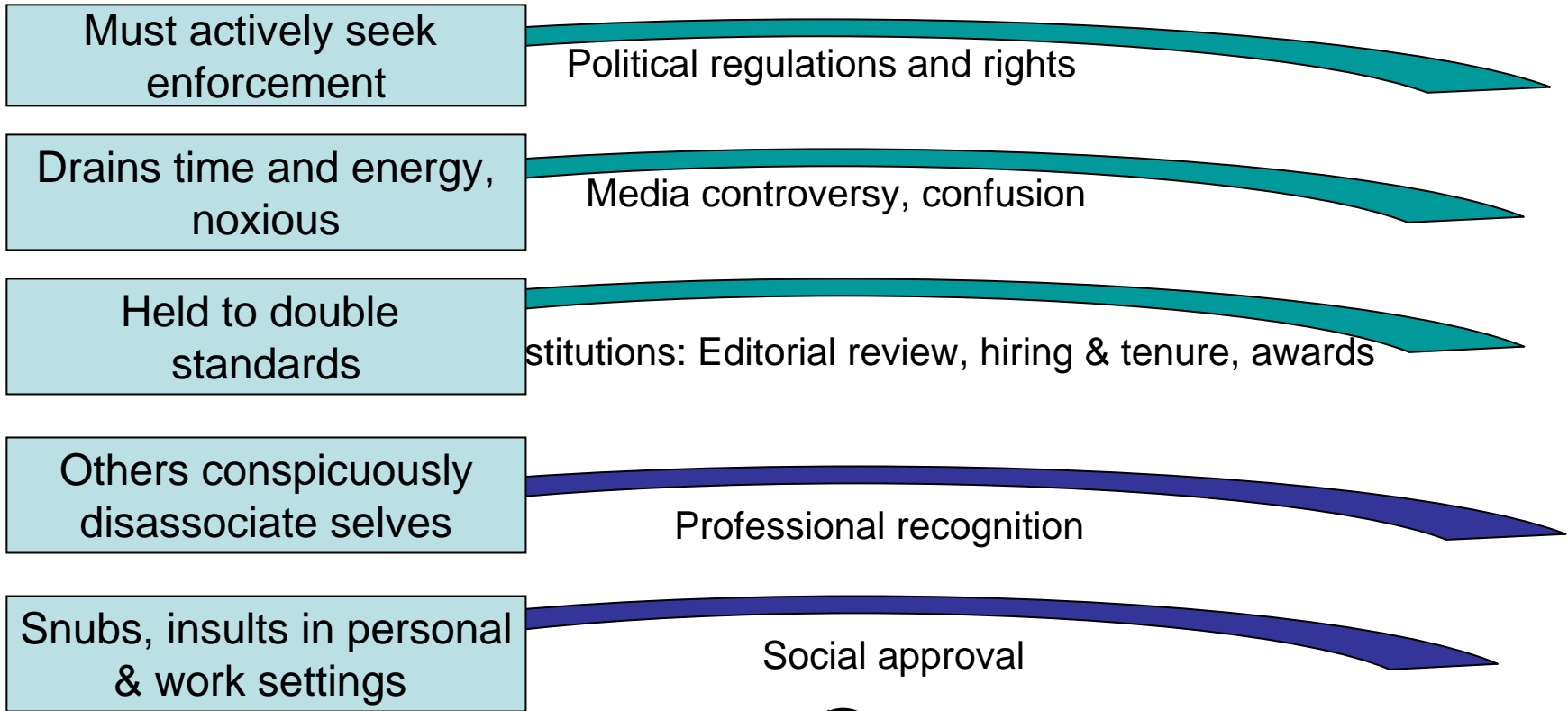


Differences-exist view



No-differences view

Special Taxes Pile Up



Accolades

Political regulations and rights

Media controversy & confusion

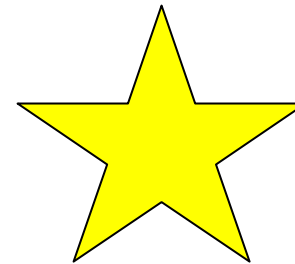
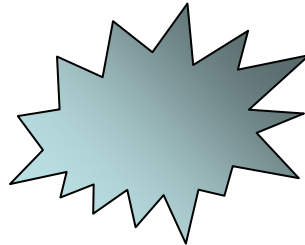
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Differences-exist view

No-differences view



Bad News Is Also Good News

- Acts of suppression/deterrence are ubiquitous but diffuse, small but cumulative, so—
 - Small acts of scientific integrity can, likewise, cumulate to block or reverse them
 - A few go a long way
- Many come in guise of promoting scientific rigor and responsibility, but with lazy justification, so—
 - Analyze illogic and error, and respond; silence is tacit assent
- Just reasserting the evidence is not enough to persuade when it's already thought “discredited,” so—
 - Identify & answer the sophistry creating that illusion

We differ in what we can do, but we can all play a role.
Think “small but consistent.”

Recommendations

(Or, What I've Seen Work)

1. Preempt predictable confusion & error with clarification (see [Handout](#))
2. Pin down sophistries; answer illogic with logic (see [Handout](#))
3. Enlarge safe zones
 - a) Provide safe cover for good science, good ammunition for consumers: e.g., group symposia, collective statements
 - b) Hold non-scientific “science” to account, scientifically
 - c) Via ISIR: student support, collegial exchange, *Intelligence*, website with user-friendly info for public

Three cheers for Doug Detterman!

Thank you.