



Foundation for Individual Rights in Education

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PRESIDENT

May 29, 2007

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VICE PRESIDENT OF
OPERATIONS

The Honorable Michael Bloomberg
Office of the Mayor
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Samantha K. Harris
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND
PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Sent via U.S. Mail and Facsimile (212-788-8123)

Alan Charles Kors
CO-FOUNDER AND
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

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race or gender and that is so “severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive” as to have a “systemic effect” of denying a student the opportunity to receive an education. However tasteless they may be, jokes in student magazines come nowhere near this standard and are, in fact, strongly protected by the First Amendment.

Tufts apparently also failed to inform you that *TPS* was found guilty of harassment not only for the December parody, which mocked race-based admissions, but also for an article appearing in *TPS*’ April 11 issue. Specifically, the offending item was a satirical advertisement entitled “Islam—Arabic Translation: Submission,” that satirized Tufts’ “Islamic Awareness Week” by pointing out what the authors described as “astonishingly intolerant and inhuman behavior” in the Muslim world. The article relies on quotes from the Koran and factual assertions including: “Author Salman Rushdie needed to go into hiding after Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini declared a fatwa calling for his death for writing *The Satanic Verses*, which was declared ‘blasphemous against Islam,’” and “The seven nations in the world that punish homosexuality with death all have fundamentalist Muslim governments.”

While most of these statements are flatly true (our own research indicates there are, in fact, eight Islamic countries that punish homosexuality by death), Tufts nonetheless found that the article constituted harassment because it allegedly “tar

legal term. Third, Bacow says he supports curtailing anonymous or pseudonymous speech. As you well know, it is common practice for newspapers not to sign their editorials or to author articles as an institution. Furthermore, anonymous and pseudonymous writing has been crucial not only in the founding of the United States, but throughout our country's history. Sadly, that *TPS* was found guilty of such a serious offense has