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letters

**Thanks to Post for reporting Notre Dame controversy**

I'm writing to respond to recent media coverage including the St. Louis Post-Dispatch May 11 article, "Catholics Remain Divided Over Obama Speech to Notre Dame," regarding President Barack Obama's commencement address May 17 at Notre Dame University.

Three cheers for Father John Jenkins, president of Notre Dame, for inviting President Obama to deliver the school's 2009 commencement address and receive an honorary degree.

There are many Catholics in this country and in St. Louis who do not believe in the right-wing, conservative Catholicism espoused by some Catholic leaders. From the Post May 11 article, "On Friday, former St. Louis Archbishop Raymond Burke called Notre Dame's actions "scandalous" and criticized the President for aggressively advancing an anti-life and anti-family agenda."

Interim St. Louis Administrator and Bishop, Robert J. Hermann,

writes in the May 1 St. Louis Catholic Review that the "Decision to invite President Barack Obama to give the commencement address and to receive an honorary doctorate has less to do with academic freedom than it has to do with a lack of faith and sound judgment."

What an outlandish assertion, so judgmental. How does he know what goes on between Fr. Jenkins and his maker? How does he know that Fr. Jenkins has a lack of faith? Didn't Christ say, "Judge not lest you also be judged?"

In my opinion, those church leaders who try to suppress dissent are doing their flock a disservice. The church and Catholic teaching are strong enough to withstand dissent. Thanks to the Post for writing about this controversy.

**James J. Etling**  
South St. Louis County

*P.S. I am an avid reader of the St. Louis Journalism Review and have been for many years.*

**Not my favorite columnist**

Now that she's probably waiting for instructions from the new St. Louis Archbishop, Colleen Carroll Campbell has to invent her own misrepresentations, even if she has to paint President Obama with a dirty brush. It doesn't matter if what she writes can be verified, or interpreted, as truth. Holy Colleen has to prove that she's on the side of the angels.

Nowhere has that fact been more evident than in her column of Thursday, April 23 in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, when she commented on how the U.S. President "back-slapped and joshed" with Venezuelan President, Hugo Chávez, who in Campbell's unverified claim "described Obama as an ignoramus". In the same paragraph Campbell did not hesitate to call Chávez a brutal dictator, even if once again, she failed to point out that:

1. Chávez has worked tirelessly to reform a corrupt society.
2. Under Chávez, literacy in Venezuela has increased and school

enrollments grown by more than 1,000,000 children who, under previous governments would have been excluded from education.

3. Under Chávez, land reform has been implemented, much to the objections of absentee owners, thereby permitting an agriculturally society to diminish its food imports while keeping the peasantry at home instead of adding to city-slum populations, a fact that, in a way, helped lower Venezuela's infant mortality from 21 to 17 live births.

4. Unlike Cuba, Venezuela holds no political prisoners. Furthermore, right of assembly has never been suppressed under Chávez.

At no time, unfortunately, did Holy Colleen call attention to the U.S.-supported coup of April 12, 1992, when Chávez was forced out of a democratically-elected presidency by military means which the U.S. duly encouraged. She did not, however, fail to call attention to Chávez describing George W. Bush as "the devil". I wonder what Bush would have called any foreign leaders whose schemes had helped bring down American democracy.

Granted that Campbell's objective in her article was not so much to pick on Chávez but to show Obama's weaknesses. On the other hand, the fact that she had to leave her facts somewhat hollow only goes to prove how much she needs the arrival of the new archbishop before she burns out showing how little she knows.

**Manuel L. Ponte**  
Olivette, Mo.

right hand. After returning to work he became the online editor for the Journals' West County and South County editions.

Smith told the Riverfront Times: "My family is obviously not really happy that I took a bullet for a business. But I guess in these economic times that isn't enough to save you."

The Journals, owned by Lee Enterprises, has been cutting staff across the chain.

"It was a good employee," Smith said. "It's just a tough pill to swallow."

**Deanne Lane gone from KSDK**



After 25 years as a reporter and eventually the lead anchor, Deanne Lane is "no longer here," according to KSDK, Channel 5.

KSDK, owned by Gannett, has been shedding its older workers such as Lane and before her, weatherman John Fuller. "It's all about money," said a source at KSDK.

Lane, 48, became lead anchor more than two years ago after the retirement of longtime anchor Karen Foss, who took a job with AmerenUE.

The Post-Dispatch reported that Lane balked when asked to take a big pay cut in order to renew her contract. The Post later quoted Lane as saying: "I have not and will not balk at any pay cut, especially in this economy."

Lane lives in Kirkwood and has a teen-age son. She declined to comment on her leaving KSDK but colleagues said she may be offered a job at a competing TV station.

**Fighting censorship on campus**



The following advice for student journalists was published in Quill, the magazine published by the Society of Professional Journalists.

(1) **KNOW WHAT CONSTITUTES CENSORSHIP.** You can find help from many people: your adviser, a media law teacher on your campus or someone from a journalism organization.

(2) **DON'T GO PUBLIC IMMEDIATELY.** Sometimes, college administrators or student government leaders will back off censorship, if you explain in a professional manner why their actions are improper.

(3) **KEEP RECORDS OF EVERY-**

**THING.** This includes letters, emails and any other correspondence from those who want to censor you.

(4) **KEEP OPEN THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION.** You are likely to hurt your chances of resolving the issue if you refuse to communicate with the opposition.

(5) **CONTACT ALMOST EVERYBODY FOR HELP.** That includes alumni, local media, other student newspapers and, most especially, organizations that have experience dealing with this sort of thing.

(6) **FOCUS ON REMAINING PROFESSIONAL.** Censorship battles can stir up a lot of anger and resentment, but you won't be helping your cause by expressing those emotions publicly.

(7) **KEEP YOUR CAMPUS UP-TO-DATE.** Many journalists are not eager to report on themselves. But attempts at censoring the student media affects everyone on campus, so you have a responsibility to report on it.

(8) **DON'T CENSOR YOURSELF.** You shouldn't shy away from reporting about controversial issues because you fear that you may further antagonize your would-be censor. If you did that, then the censor wins.

(9) **BE PREPARED TO BE ON THE OTHER SIDE.** Try to figure out what questions you'll be asked, and talk to fellow journalists and your adviser to determine how you should answer them.

(10) **BRACE YOURSELF FOR THE LONG HAUL.** Disputes over control of the student media can take weeks, months or years, and that means you need patience.

**Buchanan's Holocaust denial forum disappears**



In Tuesday morning's (May 12) New York Daily News, Menachem Rosensaft asked why MSNBC political commentator Pat Buchanan's web site hosted a discussion forum for Holocaust deniers. By Tuesday at 6:30 p.m., that discussion forum had suddenly and mysteriously vanished from Buchanan's Web site, reports the JTA (Jewish Telegraph Agency).

Rosensaft, the son of Holocaust survivors and general counsel for the World Jewish Congress, wrote:

Buchanan.org, his official Web

**Shot, then fired**



Reporter Todd Smith took a bullet for his company, the Suburban Journals. But the company decided to fire him recently.

Smith, 37, was wounded during the shooting rampage at the Kirkwood city hall on Feb. 7, 2008. He was covering a city council meeting when Charles "Cookie" Thornton came in with guns blazing. Thornton killed two police officers, the public works director and two council members. The mayor was also shot and died several months later. Smith was the only who was wounded to survive and has had surgeries to repair his shattered

site, hosts, on a “Buchanan Brigade Forum” for registered members of the site, a long discussion thread in which Holocaust revisionists compare notes with each other and heap venom and vitriol on Jews. It’s titled “Discussion about ‘The Holocaust’” (with The Holocaust in quotes, of course).

In 2009, when the international community is busy excoriating Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for doubting whether 6 million Jews did in fact perish at the hands of the Third Reich, Buchanan’s Web site is encouraging this very conversation.

He also provides some excerpts from the forum “which is replete with references to the ‘Holohoax’ and ‘Holocaustianity.’”

Rosensaft points out that MSNBC’s employment of Buchanan in light of this revelation doesn’t seem consistent with its past decisions in the Don Imus situation who was let go after making racially sensitive comments.

**Eric Fingerhut**

### KWMU fund drive a success



The Spring Membership Drive was a success, announced KWMU.

A total of 2,200 listeners pledged \$248,000, which represents a revenue increase of 34 percent, a 69 percent increase in number of gifts, and first-time membership up 92 percent over spring of 2008.

### Searching for Miss Right



My search for a date began after I had given up on the liberal chicks at Webster University. I don’t know if it was my love of red meat, my disdain for skinny jeans or my insistence on using the word “chicks,” but I had struck out consistently and thoroughly.

Bob Dylan once said in a Playboy interview: “You can get sex anywhere. If you’re looking for someone to love you, now that’s different. I guess you have to stay in college for that.”

The un-hip have to tamp down their expectations. Where do the Nicklebacks of the world go? So I thought on the matter. Where could I find a pool of potential dates that would be more accepting of my backward, regressive tendencies?

Then it hit me—I could go to Handinate.com, conservative pundit Sean Hannity’s online dating service. I didn’t care if his conservative values attracted people whose ideological beliefs were anathema to my own. I needed a date, not a running mate.

First I came up with a descriptive handle to attract as many Coulter-esque beauties as possible: NeoCon For Liaison. Then I provided a catchy headline for my profile: “The mind of William F. Buckley in the body of Rush Limbaugh.”

I then had to check off all the hobbies I thought would appeal to the pretty young women of the Grand Old Party. Auto racing, check. Christian and country music, check. Shooting wolves from a moving helicopter, check.

I started scanning some profiles searching for Miss Right-Wing. The first few profiles concerned me. I began to think I had jumped a little too rashly into the deep end of the political pool. I dreaded the thought

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### In My View

## For Whom The Bell Tolls

**F**or years the obits in The New York Times have been masterpieces of journalism. Recently the paper eulogized the last rites of the Seattle Post Intelligencer after more than 100 years of publication. The daily journal is no more.

Have you noticed how many obituaries these days are about the demise of some institution—the shuttering of neighborhood schools, churches, or watering hole, the death of a company, a landmark, a factory, a newspaper? The prevailing doctrine is Social Darwinism, the survival of the fittest in the capitalistic system, the end of an era. If you live long enough, you are bound to see it as we are seeing it now.

Every institution in which I have been vested—radio, television, journalism, education and religion—is in decline, not because they are outdated but because of the mediocrity that prevails in their ranks.

A century ago the St. Louis World’s Fair was the harbinger of change—the horse and carriage for the motor car, the kerosene lamp became the light bulb, Morse Code to Marconi’s wireless, the balloon for the airplane, windmills for generators. Whatever became of this and that and the other?

There have always been visions of the future. I remember Dick Tracy’s radio picture watch. He saw things we never thought we would see—the world up close on your wrist.

And whatever became of the newspaper before it shrank to a tabloid? But it is not the size of the fold—it’s what’s inside that smells. For the most part this current crop of so-called journalists can’t write—style and substance are hard to find and Mike Bush at 5 on 5 pretty well sums up the March of Time and the boredom of the talking head. Where did Deanne Lane go?

Remember William Woo, John McGuire, Jake McCarthy, Bob Duffy, Irving Dilliard, Florence Shinkle, John Lofton and Marianna Riley? They were among the Post’s and Globe’s stable of good writers. Once the spoken word resonated from the pulpit of the likes of Ferdinand Isserman, Will Scarlet, Sherman Skinner, and George Stevens, when sermons were hot topics over Monday’s morning coffee.

When did the lights go out? Today’s pedestrian has an iPod in his ear, a television wristwatch, and a cell phone with a camera. He does not have to interact with anyone but himself, He does not have to surface, and he races home to be subsumed into the black hole of cyberspace.

We cannot get that community back. It is gone forever. Only destiny beckons, and another generation will have to reckon with whatever there is to reckon with in matters of social conduct.

Sigmund Freud wrote about the catastrophic mess in his book, “Civilization and Its Discontent.” It is about societal depression which is what we are experiencing. Edward R. Murrow summed it up at the end of the his old television show, “See It Now,” by saying “Good Night and Good Luck!” At this monumental crossroads that is about all one can say, except God help us and bring in the clown in High Definition.

**Robert W. Tabscott**