

EDITORIAL

OUR VIEW

Twitter slurs shouldn't affect University reputation

Some individuals offended by the recent anti-Semitic Tweets of a Truman student (see story, page 1) have suggested the University should take responsibility for her actions. The student's Tweets were posted all over anti-hate speech Web sites last week. Truman received word of the incident and no punishment has taken effect, but that doesn't mean the administration is condoning her behavior. The University shouldn't have authority over a student's right to free speech, nor should this particular student's actions reflect poorly on the University and other students.

Trying to make Truman punish this student for her offensive remarks simply doesn't make sense. If the University tried to punish every student who said, wrote or posted something that offended someone else there would be a line of guilty students two miles long outside of Dean Lou Ann Gilchrist's office in Student Affairs. What the student said wasn't OK. But the University should only seek punishment when the Student Conduct Code has been violated.

The Code does not include anything about hate speech. It does, however, forbid threats of violence and harassment. Technically, this student, sophomore Rachel Oetting, did make a threat, but neither University administrators nor Jewish students said they felt a real threat. Had there been actual danger the University would have ensured that any students receiving threats would be protected.

Most parties involved have acknowledged that the Tweet was a joke — cruel and in bad taste, but a joke. But more than one student has posted something offensive on the Internet before. Oetting's action

was inappropriate and offensive, but the University can't expel every student who behaves in an inappropriate or offensive way, nor should it be persecuted as a whole by anyone who disagrees with the opinion of a Truman student.

Ultimately, this is a disturbing incident most students aren't proud of. But like most students don't want to be associated with this Twitter incident, the remarks shouldn't reflect poorly on the University, because administrators did not condone it, and they have no way to control what students write on Twitter. At every school there are going to be people with different ideas that are offensive to others. Whether they are racial slurs, gender biases or religious persecutions, offensive things will always be said by people who, joking or not, cross the line. The University can't keep track of and prosecute everyone who is a white supremacist or a woman-hater.

The Tweets aren't something the campus at-large supports. As scholars and educators, members of the Truman community are smart enough to know that such prejudices have not benefitted humanity. The Index Editorial Board does not agree with her anti-Semitic "joke." But the community should also admit that the University shouldn't have to take responsibility for one offensive comment made by one student. Angry individuals who have implied the University's reputation has been tarnished by this one student's actions are wrong. There always will be students and staff coming and going throughout our school's future. Some may have different, even offensive, ideas, but the values of the University will stay the same, and, hopefully, so will its reputation.

CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail index@truman.edu, call us at 660-785-4449, or send a letter to Index, 1200 Barnett Hall, Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo, 63501.

CARTOON

By Alex Boles



Letter to the Editor

Congressman uses propaganda leaflet

No fair-minded person of any political persuasion objects to any elected official keeping his constituents accountably counseled as to what their legislature and executive is doing or their role in so furthering, or not, its stated agenda business, do they? Governance, totally, by TV and radio tendentious "jock" journalists would else unaccountably be the non-elected order of the sensationalistic, over-hyped for story drama day in sheer, unpleasant headline of brevity, of the turbulent kind demagogues are apt to relish, like Father Coughlin radio fascist tried in 1930s U.S. or Dr. Goebbels in Nazi times, concurrently.

But politicians who boast they are "anti-government over expenditure" in such economically recessionary times as are all afflicting us today should, conversely, be very careful. They are non-wastefully practicing what they preach, should they not? When they use free taxpayer mail privileges in vast congressional districts like our own, stretching all the way down from here in rural remoteness of Adair County, to radical Columbia campuses, and over to conservative suburban St. Charles in sheer political and social class very expensive multi-variety. If they stray into pontificating, especially if they are only narrow electoral winners, they best pay

for unadulterated propaganda, either out of their own executive former ample political pockets, or by their actual political party campaign organizations. If they do not do so, and element of costly to use charlatanism in fraud creeps into one's sense of decent veracity.

So what, may I ask, does Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer think he is doing in his "end of year review" published under taxpayer non-party Congress of the United States "free" mail we all pay for, thousands of which have come to our and other local and campus addresses recently, hot on the heels of an equally partisan rant against health care by the rival political party that, statistically, nearly ousted him party "rep" wise just last election in an able lady rival ex-state legislator candidate?

Being British in origination I will, naturally, refer to the two areas he wastes space to comment upon that are really little to do with we foreigners altogether as we mostly interpret them back for your own propaganda in what are supposed to be more objective "help" leaflets at we taxpayer fraught upon costs, or is this your notion of oddly acceptable government expenditure, conservative fanatical in mischief-making, before you even face electors in a fairer more campaign costed actual real elections?

In conclusion, why talk about Winston Churchill as promoted Cold War style by a college already amply endowed for that study purpose, engaged so over in Fulton? Left out by Blaine, the novel historian at our expense, is, of course, the historical Churchill who supported health care leg-

islation in speeches even before his secretary Charles Masterman began it all as long ago as 1912. Or the Churchill who endorsed a united Europe, reactionaries like Blaine now economically in anti-socialism fear.

Finally, to empathize with far right wingers "flat-earth" theories that there is no pollution, Blaine refers to an unnamed e-mail as showing what he calls UN academics concocting obliging climate change evidence, like the Australian conservative Liberals dumping their anti-denial leader recently because he rightly wanted the carbon trading emissions tax Blaine detests. In fact, the University of East Anglia e-mailed a strategy paper by academics as to how they could strengthen their UN anti-pollution climate change grant UN submissions, seized upon by U.S. Fox TV fanatics out of all environmentalist context altogether in right wing excess he now propaganda perpetuates. Is it not time, Congressman, you paid for your own propaganda in what are supposed to be more objective "help" leaflets at we taxpayer fraught upon costs, or is this your notion of oddly acceptable government expenditure, conservative fanatical in mischief-making, before you even face electors in a fairer more campaign costed actual real elections?

Larry Iles, Kirksville resident

INDEX

Serving the University community since 1909

Staff

Editor in Chief Blake Toppmeyer	Online Editor Patrick Gross	Managing Editor Jessica Rapp
Sports Editor Jack Nicholl	Features Editor Cassandra McCarty	Opinions Editor Brenna McDermott
Assistant Sports Editor Brent Foster	Assistant Features Editor Shawn Shinneman	News Editor Andrea Hewitt Blaise Hart-Schmidt
Sports Staff Logan Jackson Sondra Langley Jocelyn Nebel Brendan O'Brian Corey Weekes	Features Staff Corey Bommel Alex Carlson Hannah Douglas Ken Dusold Jennifer Lewis Michelle Martin Anna Meier Elizabeth Necka Anne Rebar Shannon Walter	News Staff Maximilian Ernst Tawanda Kanhema Elizabeth Koch Shihara Maduwage Dan Warner
Multimedia Editor John Moenster	Design Chief Antionette Bedessie	Copy Chiefs Alex Boles Jennifer Brownell John Marty
Photo Editor Brian O'Shaughnessy	Designers Cameron Ballentine Rose Runser Sarah Schneider	Copy Editors Sara Besserman Bethany Coury Kyle Hood Brittany Keeling Joshua Kehe Elizabeth Koch Anna Meier Joseph O'Brien Angela Scheperle Tim Schlee Kelly Schute Lauren Yarbrough Mike Solomon
Assistant Photo Editor Mayank Dhungana	Advertising Manager Karen Thrasher	Assistant Advertising Manager Melissa Franklin
Photographers Krista Goodman Amy Gleaves	Adviser Don Krause	
Cartoonist Alex Boles		
Business Manager Olivia Crandall		
Distribution and Circulation Bradley LaPlante Andrew Hamline		

Letters Policy

The Index welcomes letters to the editor from the University community. Letters to the editor are due by noon the Monday before publication and become property of the Index. Submissions are subject to editing, must contain a well-developed theme and cannot exceed 500 words except at the discretion of the Editorial Board. All letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, signed by at least one individual and include a phone number for verification. The Index does not publish anonymous letters to the editor. Letters to the editor also may be submitted by e-mail at index@truman.edu or on our Web site at www.trumanindex.com. Include the words "letter to the editor" in the subject line of the e-mail. No individual may submit more than one letter a week.

Editorial Policy

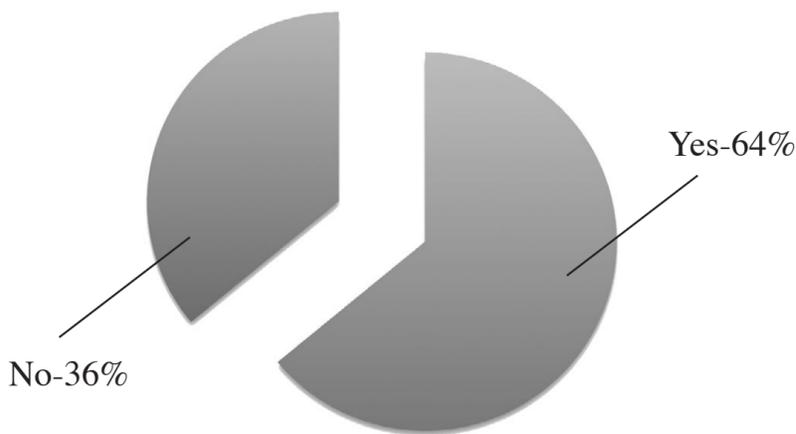
The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, and additional copies cost 50 cents each. The production offices are located in Barnett Hall. We can be reached by phone at 660-785-4449. The Index is a designated public forum, and content of the Index is the responsibility of the Index staff. The editor in chief consults with the staff and adviser but ultimately is responsible for all decisions. Opinions of Index columnists are not necessarily representative of the opinions of the staff or the newspaper. Our View editorials represent the view of the Editorial Board through a majority vote. The Editorial Board consists of the editor in chief, managing editor, news editor, copy chief and opinions editor. The Index reserves the right to edit submitted material because of space limitations, repetitive subject matter, libelous content or any other reason the editor in chief deems appropriate. Submitted material includes advertisements and letters to the editor.

Advertising Policy

For up-to-date information on current rates or to inquire about the availability of classified ads in the Index, contact our advertising department at 785-4319. Our fax number is 785-7601, or you can e-mail us at indexads@truman.edu.

WEB POLL

Are you interested in who becomes the next Truman State University President?



This week's question:

Do you plan to donate any money to organizations providing disaster relief for Haiti?

Vote online at trumanindex.com