

EIC reflects on semester, welcomes collaboration



Bethany Boyle
Editor-in-Chief

As we head toward the final weeks of school, I want to take a moment to reflect on this semester of news, ask for grace where we've fallen short of the standard of excellence we strive for, and thank you for your readership and participation.

Take a step back for a moment to the first issue, which appeared across campus as the class of 2019 was moving into the residence halls for the first time. As editor-in-chief and head of the Editorial Board, I promised our readers three things — that the newspaper and its staffers would strive to learn, share and serve you in our work and endeavors during this academic year.

I'd say we learned quite a bit this semester. The Blueprint Teams taught us about University administration — how it works, the formation and implication of policies, funding and budgeting. Covering the Black Lives Matter movement and our campus-wide response to the resignation of Tim Wolfe, University of Missouri system president showed the influence external events have on leaders and members of our community. The cross-country mid-race fight incident reiterated the importance of sportsmanship and courtesy among athletes.

Personally, I also learned we have a quidditch team on campus, I found out the oldest record

store in America is just up the street and I now have a better understanding of what LARPing is all about.

We also did a lot of learning in the newsroom, and among those many lessons is the most important of all — we are far from perfect. This semester had its fair share of formatting issues and other hiccups, including listing a current student as an alumnus and a headline that announced the Nether premiere on the wrong day, to name a few. We put forth our best effort, but we recognize it did not always meet the expectations we strive for. Some coverage slipped through the cracks and, on behalf of the Index Editorial Board, I apologize for failing to serve you as well as we would like and as well as you deserve.

Sifting through a stack of this semester's issues of the Index, I find myself surrounded by a lot of life — updates about the situation in Nepal, the arrival of Santana's food truck, a visit from Gov. Jay Nixon, a witty column about airport security and the possibility of state funding increases and frozen tuition. However, I also see a lot of brokenness — the death of freshman William Batterson, a Title IX harassment case, a student standing trial for rape and the community divided about the Ameren transmission line issue.

I am struck by the variety of influences we saw in the paper this semester. Several stories were pitched by individuals outside of TMN, and we received a steady stream of guest columns showcasing valuable knowledge and differing perspectives.

Together, these articles tell the story of us — Truman State and the Kirksville community. They form part of the narrative that defines us, who we are, what we do and, at the end of the day, how each of us makes our mark and fit into the overall community here at this University and in the world.

To that end, I want to thank you, the readers, for helping make this a public forum. You reached out to us with your stories and ideas, and the

result was a collaborative effort with greater potential to increase understanding, and allow more voices and stories to be heard. Just as a newspaper can fulfill its purpose to inform only if people choose to read it, that same paper can become a vehicle for public discourse only if the public chooses to engage.

And I daresay you have.

However, this accolade comes with a challenge as well — don't let it end there. As we strive to provide this vehicle for public consciousness and discourse, I once again encourage you, the reader, to participate in what is being created here. You are a part of Truman, whether you like it or not, and this is your narrative. You can choose to be a member or stand by and let other voices define the events and movements you have witnessed, and the experiences that are a part of you and this community.

This is my invitation to you.

As you prepare to leave for winter break, let me leave you with this thought for next semester. If there is something that needs to be shared, a story that isn't being told, consider that if you don't do anything about it, perhaps no one ever will. Write a guest column, email any of the editors listed in our staff box on page two and share your story. Help us create a more complete narrative. The only one who can do it is you.

For those of you who have graduated or will graduate next weekend, it doesn't end here. You might have left the Truman community, but you have the ability to impact the next community you become a part of. Become a part of the journalistic process. Put yourself in the narrative.

Bethany Boyle is a senior communication major from St. Louis, Mo.

AROUND THE QUAD

What is your opinion on the red cup controversy?

I think it's a waste of energy to complain about corporate stylisms.

Corey Schmidt
Senior



I like the red cups, it shows holiday spirit. I don't know why there's a problem with the red cup.

Jasmine Brown
Freshman



I'm in favor of the red cups. They spread holiday cheer which is really nice, but I think not having them isn't detrimental either.

Audrey Masek
Senior



It's not offensive to me, but I think a lot of people made a big deal about it.

Mosaic Shrestha
Sophomore



The holidays are not about red cups



Holly Fisher

Last month, the red cup debate hit the Internet with rampant force. Social media sites exploded as a single item sparked one of the largest controversies of the season so far — Starbucks' red holiday cup. These small objects made of colored paper had so many people up in arms the fights were almost comical. The actual debate, of course, is not about the cups themselves, but about the supposed overuse of political correctness. After taking a step back, it becomes clear the arguments made against political correctness during the holidays are simply a waste of time and energy.

The red cup is just one point in a long timeline of holiday political correctness. Companies encourage their employees to say, "happy holidays" rather than, "merry Christmas," organizations encourage snowmen or snowflake decorations instead of a full manger scenes and the abbreviation Xmas is often used in place of Christmas without a second thought. All of this is done in an effort to be more

politically correct during the holiday season, because not everyone celebrates Christmas. Contrary to the very vocal belief floating around out there, none of these actions intend to purposely do away with or completely ignore Christmas as a holiday.

Personally, I just can't see how being tolerant or inclusive of other human beings is a deliberate attack on Christmas. If anything, Christmas is about spreading joy and happiness to all people — this is why the holiday season is also the season of giving. No one is unrealistically forcing everyone to celebrate Hanukkah or Kwanzaa simply by acknowledging these holidays, so why are we so intent on forcing everyone to celebrate Christmas?

Conversely, no one is forcing anyone not to celebrate Christmas. Starbucks' "anti-Christmas" cup isn't all that rare considering it rarely produces cups with Christmas designs. Most of Starbucks' past seasonal cups have sported snowmen, sleigh rides, pine trees, snowflakes, reindeer, nutcrackers and other seasonal images. None of these are blatantly Christmas designs, but I certainly would not call the designs "anti-Christmas."

The same is true when people say "happy holidays" or when they write Xmas. Christmas has become so commercialized it does not matter whether or not people use the actual word "Christmas." Even with a deliberate effort, no one could possibly extinguish the raging fire of Christmas, as the holiday consumes everything under the sun for not just one but three whole months of the year. The least those who celebrate Christmas can do is courteously remember not everyone and their mother has fallen to the Christmas plague of mad-

ness when we wish them a happy holiday season instead of a happy Christmas season.

The other argument I often hear is how hell-bent people are to take the Christ out of Christmas in their efforts to be politically correct. This is, again, not something anyone is deliberately doing. Christmas means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. Some find happiness in celebrating togetherness and family, while others find happiness in celebrating the birth of Christ, and no one is denying one way or the other. I promise writing Xmas on a series of cards and boxes will not bring about the downfall of Christian tradition.

These simple gestures are not examples of being too politically correct as many people argue. At this point, people merely are being a little more self-aware of those around them. The day people become too politically correct during the holiday season is the day it is unacceptable to even mention Christmas in a public setting for fear of offending someone else. The world is still a very long way away from that day, and there are so many more important issues demanding our attention.

So this holiday season, instead of arguing about paper cups, let's direct our energy into something a little more productive. Let's talk about helping the homeless, providing for parents who can't afford to celebrate the holidays with their children or even the Syrian refugee crisis. Above all, let's have a wonderful holiday season.

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