

# Don't bite the hand that feeds you news

With the current uproar at the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., and the upcoming presidential debates, journalists are feeling the wrath of angry protesters and politicians.

## Staff Editorial

The opinion of Times editors

What do presidential debaters and protesters in Missouri have in common? Both events involve people with deep desires. In both of these events the people involved don't trust the news media.

Recently, the Republican candidates fired back at CNBC moderators who were asking a question the candidates did not want to answer. The question was focused on the viability of their tax plans, something all Americans should be concerned about.

So why did the candidates lash out at the media? Because in today's society we want to say what we want to say and we don't want to be challenged. We don't want to be questioned. We don't want to be wrong.

But in reality, it was fair for the media to ask the question. We have freedom of speech. We think the question asked was a fair one.

The University of Missouri has been in distress due to racial tension springing from the recent unrest in Ferguson, a suburb of St. Louis. A building for African Americans was threatened; cotton balls were thrown outside in the yard, and a swastika was smeared on a door with human feces. The president of the institution resigned after the Mizzou football team refused to play.

A large protest has been happening on the main lawn of campus. A recent viral video showed a reporter from ESPN (and a Mizzou student) trying to get photographs of the protest.

The video shows the reporter being pushed away by the crowd, being physically blocked by protesters and getting yelled at.

C'mon, people. You are standing in the middle of an open space, yelling, chanting and waving signs for everyone to see, yet you don't want a journalist to take your picture?

We thought a protest was for people to see, to get your point across, not to hide.

Journalists and reporters have a First

Amendment right to take newsworthy photos in public places. Pushing away the reporter makes no sense to us. Yeah, you might not like the media, but if you want to shout something to the world, the media is your microphone.

Here at Mount Mercy, we encourage all students to let their voices be heard. We appreciate that the MMU BSU was responsive to our questions when we wanted to write about their action in support of Mizzou protestors, and we agree that the BSU and the students at Mizzou should stand up for human rights.

## Related content

BSU wears all black to back Mizzou protest, see page 1.

And we encourage MMU students to speak up. But, don't be afraid to have your ideas challenged. Everyone should bravely use their freedom of speech and allow others to speak, too.

The role of journalists is to cover news. Standing up and having your voice heard is OK—but don't shove the messenger. Journalists indeed have an obligation and a right to cover the news.

# Christmas will survive in spite of Starbucks

Now that all the hoorah over the receptacle that holds our luscious molecules of Sumatra together has died down, and the obvious has been stated over and over, I still have questions. Like why? Why would we care?

## Opinion



**Billie Barker**  
Copy Editor

ing, inclusion and diversity." They also thought customers might like to doodle on it.

Ruining Christmas and creating a culture of diversity are big responsibilities for a paper cup.

The offended few gathered round their rallying tweet: #MerryChristmasStarbucks.

The unimpressed fired back: #ItsJustACup.

Donald Trump joined the fray by suggesting at a campaign rally that Starbucks should be boycotted since they don't like Christmas. (Aside: Trump is officially on record in favor of saying "Merry Christmas.")

While I would like this to be a brilliant marketing/advertising example of using social media for free publicity, it's not.

After perusing articles on "Forbes," "The Washington Post" and "The Guardian" web sites, I find the red cup controversy to be legitimately organic. The only thing Starbucks can take credit for is its immediate response in issuing a statement.

The only thing the majority of Christians can take credit for is not responding, unless their collective "puh-lease" counts as response.

Riveting backstory over.

Again, I wondered why some of us had our undies in such a bunch, tried to find out, and found that, excepting the original internet rabble-rousers, we don't. Like Seinfeld was the show about nothing, Starbucks' red cups are the controversy about nothing.

Christmas will survive one more year.

For those distracted from popular culture by substantive issues of genuine importance, I'll catch you up. Also, fair disclosure: I'm a Christian, a former Starbucks barista and long-time customer.

Love my Jesus. Love my coffee just a little less.

First thing you need to know is that the design of Starbucks cup and seasonal coffee packaging is new every Christmas and a tradition people enjoy. This year the snowmen, ornaments and snowflakes are (gasp!) missing. The cup is naked red. Personally, I like the stark simplicity.

Some don't see it that way. They view the absence of traditional holiday symbols, though decidedly secular, to be a threat to Christmas and thus to Christianity. Taking to social media, one popular video anti-plain-red-cup-ist stated: "Starbucks removed Christmas from their cups because they hate Jesus."

Starbucks' marketing representatives responded by stating that the red cup's job was not to destroy Christmas, but to "create a culture of belong-

# Just Kidding



# Libraries still needed

Cedar Rapids residents voted against the library tax levy on Nov. 3. The money from the levy would have gone to help fund daily operations of the Cedar Rapids Library in the future.

## Opinion



**Todd Cross**  
Campus Editor

Voters expressed preference for a small amount of money annually over keeping books on the shelves for the citizens of Cedar Rapids.

As a resident of Cedar Rapids I feel it necessary to take part in local government and city decisions. I believe it is important for the people to get to the polls and let their voice be heard. The opportunity to take a stand for something you believe in does not

come along every day. I feel it is imperative to utilize the chance to express your opinion.

Local officials stated that families with a house worth \$150,000 would have paid an annual increase in property taxes of approximately \$23 if the tax levy had passed. This is a monthly increase of less than \$2.

A benefit of the tax levy that may suffer is the continued availability of current titles to select from. Books become damaged and need to be replaced. Also new books are being released that may not make it to the shelves in Cedar Rapids. Another compromise the city could have to make will include a change in hours for the library, such as closing on Sundays in the future to save money is being discussed.

On the plus side, the library will proceed with regular operations until the

current funding expires in June of next year.

The people of Cedar Rapids have resisted the payment of taxes to fund the library in the past. The library and Cedar Rapids citizens have a tumultuous relationship. Understandably, it is concerning for residents, because the Cedar Rapids Library is now in its third downtown location in 30 years. The citizens were not responsible for the construction costs of either relocation.

I believe residents are fed up with paying for the library in general. I agree that constantly being asked to increase taxes to fund the library is annoying. However, the benefits of a library for a community substantially outweigh a small amount of money. We have a beautiful new library in downtown; the citizens of Cedar Rapids should be able to enjoy it.



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The Mount Mercy Times is a biweekly student publication serving MMU students, faculty, and staff and those close to the Mount Mercy University community. The Times is published on alternate Thursdays during the school year (each issue has a Thursday date, but the paper is usually distributed Wednesday).

In addition, the Times maintains a student-run website for the dissemination of additional news in various forms, including Times TV video stories.

Membership on the staff of the Times is open to any MMU student, full- or part-time, undergraduate or graduate. Please attend one of our staff meetings, which are all open to the public, or contact an editor or our advisor for more information.

Staff Writers are listed by name on the stories they write, photographers are credited on photos.

Content in the Times represents student writers, and is not official communication from Mount Mercy University. Editorials express the opinions of the Editorial Board and may not be the opinion shared by the university nor by individual Times staff members. Bylined commentaries and cartoons reflect the opinions of the writer or artist.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. Letters should be concise and preferably emailed. The author's name, phone and address must be included. The name is published with the letter.

The Times reserves the right to edit or omit submissions. Letters may be sent to the Times via email, campus mail or brought to the Times office in the lower level of the Busse Library.

The Mount Mercy Times will not print material found to be in poor taste or that it deems detrimental to a person's personal character. However, provocative comments on matters of public interest are encouraged.

Letters are due Friday at noon for consideration of publication the following Thursday.

# Heard On the Hill

By Meg Monson



**Cameron Junge**, sophomore, history major. "I am thankful for being able to take part in many of the events that Mount Mercy organizes. It allows me to meet new people, make new friends, and help out the community."



**Elizabeth Wareham**, junior, education/music major. "I'm most thankful for all of the important people in my life, because they help me through everything. So that anything that may cause issues in my life, they're there to help me through it."



**Emma Pisarik**, senior, psychology major. "I am most thankful for my family because they are very supportive of what I do and are always there for me."

# What people are saying on topics of interest

We're all grateful for Thanksgiving break--but also, we hope, for other things, too, so the Times asked:

## What are you most thankful for?



**Jake Anderson**, junior, accounting major. "I am thankful for my mom because she is an inspirational person in my life."



**Nicole McMahon**, junior, nursing major. "My dog because she calms me down when I am extremely stressed."



**Noah Dostal**, junior, marketing major. "My dashing good looks and charismatic personality."