

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Talk In The Tunnel Tanks

In picking up recent issues of the Sword, I found myself intrigued by the new "Tabloid Style". I thought it looked fairly nice. I was also very impressed with the first few stories. I had heard little about many of the trips people had taken over Christmas break and was glad to read them.

However, as I kept turning I found the article entitled "Talk In The Tunnel..." It had a disclaimer asking people to keep an "open mind when reading the above statements." It continued to say that "All entries are strictly tongue-in-cheek." I read them and found them not to be "tongue-in-cheek," but rather disgusting, hurtful, and above all inappropriate. There is nothing lighthearted about printing an insinuation that someone involved with the Communications Department is pregnant. There is nothing humorous about a Senior Psychology major cheating on his/her fiancé(e).

The fact that the compiler of this section (Hannah Dorow) makes no claim to these being true or false is immaterial and makes no difference. Even as hypothetical situations, most of these things are horrible to print in a school newspaper. I literally felt sick to my stomach in reading them and still do as

I write this letter.

There is something seriously wrong when we can take the speculations of joys and misfortunes of others and print them in a "tongue-in-cheek" manner. If any of these things are true, don't you think the situations deserve to be manifested somewhere other than in a school newspaper? If a situation would arise where a person thought one of the gossip statements was true about one of their friends or significant others, there is a potential for the ruining of relationships and reputations, whether true or false.

I don't know if you can call this an article or a story, but whatever you call "Talk In The Tunnel," I call it garbage. It is the exact opposite of this University's Mission statement:

*The Mission of Concordia University Saint Paul, a university of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, is to prepare students for thoughtful and informed living, for the dedicated service to God and humanity, and for the enlightened care of God's creation, all within the context of the Christian Gospel.*

This article's filth does not prepare students for thoughtful and informed living, but it prepares them for unthoughtful and ill-informed living. It

does not prepare them for dedicated service to God or humanity, but it prepares them for dedicated service to hurting other human beings. It does not prepare them for the enlightened care of God's creation, but it prepares them to cut down God's creation. And above all it is not within the context of the Christian Gospel. It has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sins that is in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. I would urge the Sword to discontinue this column for the sake of the spiritual life of this campus, and for the sake of decent and responsible journalism. Infiltrating and exposing people's private lives with these anonymous and ambiguous statements is libelous and unethical. It is a misrepresentation of all of us who can ever be found in the tunnel, because maybe some of those things were about you, and maybe they were about me, and I am hurt that fellow members of the Concordia Community would report such things, whether true or false about anybody, anonymous or not. "Talk In The Tunnel" reflects poorly on this university and its community. I see no value in it continuing.

-Andy Jones

Campus Ministry Assistant

Dear Editor,

Reading the latest issue of The Sword, I saw that you've introduced a gossip column ("Talk in the Tunnel") to the pages of the newspaper. I am appalled that such tasteless dribble has been deemed appropriate to print in Concordia's newspaper. Though it is written in fun, it is only a matter of time before someone gets hurt. Such a column doesn't make the paper seem more trendy or chic. In replacement of this, an investigative report into how the Facebook website and newsfeed has affected Concordia students through their "potential employers, family members," et al, would be appropriate. I hope you reconsider publishing "Talk in the Tunnel" before the next issue of The Sword.

Sincerely,

Alex Heetland

# LETTER TO THE READERS

Dear Readers,

This column [Talk In The Tunnel] is an experiment in social journalism. All information contained in this column is derived from Facebook, but to make it ethical, the names have been removed. The goal of this experiment is to see whether or not it really affects people to have the same business they are comfortable with posting on the internet to be put in the newspaper.

A recent article in the New York Times said "to attend college now means to participate in a culture of constant two-dimensional preening, for males and females alike." Facebook is, essentially, an extension of someone's personality. If you are comfortable with and willing to post your private information and personality on a social utility, a website that is now a public domain, then you should be comfortable enough to have it published in a student newspaper -- especially a small student newspaper that less people will read than Facebook. Please keep this in mind when reading the column.

As for the previous gossip columns, we apologize if any feelings were hurt, or if anyone was offended. We came

up with those columns before we recognized our purpose and decided to do this "experiment" instead. The original columns were tongue-in-cheek and were not meant to make fun of or detract from the seriousness anyone's situation or private life. Once again, we apologize if those offended anyone or if they feel it detracts from the seriousness of a school publication. As for not fitting with the mission statement of this institution, the original columns may have clashed with it. With this one, however, we hope to enhance the mission statement by using this column to prove a point that people do read what you post online, whether you are aware of it or not. What you post online could just end up in your student newspaper.

As mentioned before, we will not be using names. The epithets we use to describe individuals are also derived from Facebook. Since we are not using specific names without permission, this is considered an ethical experiment. If you have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to send an email to [hartnetk@csp.edu](mailto:hartnetk@csp.edu).