

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION | OUR VIEW

Online Education Comes With A Cost

Like so many other longstanding businesses and institutions in our society, South Dakota's state colleges and universities are finding themselves directly — and even adversely — impacted by the Internet.

The state's Board of Regents reported recently that physical enrollment at the public higher-education schools has slowed considerably in recent years due to more people taking on-line or off-campus classes. According to the regents, the enrollment in the state school system has increased just 2 percent since 2007. Meanwhile, the number of students pursuing degrees through off-campus means has gone up 42 percent, with those taking classes without specifying degrees has shot up 44 percent.

The slowing in the public university has been dramatic. For example, the University of South Dakota last fall saw its on-campus enrollment fall below what it was in 2007.

And yet, the colleges are growing when one attaches online numbers to the picture. The schools have embraced the Web as a way to reach out to a broader geographic market by allowing the classroom to come to the student instead of vice versa.

But the relative lack of more bodies physically on campus does have a real impact. As the regents pointed out, it calls into question the allocation of resources. If more students are moving to online educations, how will that impact the funding for new facilities? In turn, how will that impact the quality of student life for those who do physically attend a campus? It also makes sufficient bandwidth for online offerings — which is essential for a quality online education experience — a more pressing priority, and possibly one that competes with other demands that a college may have.

It should also generate concerns for the communities that host universities and, thus, count on those students to help bolster the local economies. Online education is certainly an important and essential element for colleges now, but it does practically nothing for those economies. Granted, this is a residual issue in the scheme of higher education, but it cannot be dismissed. While it technically falls outside of the regents' domain, it is a very real consequence of this issue.

The answers here are not so clear. South Dakota's public universities cannot afford to roll back their educational offerings or discourage students from learning off-campus; this is the nature of 21st century society, after all — and tuition is tuition. But online growth could produce a paradigm change in higher education that will profoundly impact how those schools are funded and maintained, and could in turn alter life in the communities that host and support them.

How this issue evolves — and how the public education system, as well as the Legislature, react to it — will be fascinating to watch in the years to come.

kmh

ONLINE OPINION

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the *Press & Dakotan's* Web site are as follows:

LATEST RESULTS:

Should the National League adopt the designated-hitter rule next year?
No 34%
Not Sure/Don't Care 33.1%
Yes 32.9%
TOTAL VOTES CAST 268
The Press & Dakotan Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

CURRENT QUESTION:

Do you support the proposal to scale back mandatory-minimum sentences in federal drug cases?
To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 20, the 232nd day of 2013. There are 133 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History: On August 20, 1968, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations began invading Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring" liberalization drive.

On this date: In 1833, Benjamin Harrison, 23rd president of the United States, was born in North Bend, Ohio.

In 1862, the New York Tribune published an open letter by editor Horace Greeley calling on President Abraham Lincoln to take more aggressive measures to free the slaves and end the South's rebellion.

In 1866, President Andrew Johnson formally declared the Civil War over, months after fighting had stopped.

In 1882, Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" had its premiere in Moscow.

In 1910, a series of forest fires swept through parts of Idaho, Montana and Washington, killing at least 85 people and burning some 3 million acres.

In 1940, during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill paid tribute to the Royal Air Force before the House of Commons, saying, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

In 1953, the Soviet Union publicly acknowledged it had tested a hydrogen bomb.

In 1955, hundreds of people were killed in anti-French rioting in Morocco and Algeria.

In 1972, the Wattstax concert took place at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

In 1977, the U.S. launched Voyager 2, an unmanned spacecraft carrying a 12-inch copper phonograph record containing greetings in dozens of languages, samples of music and sounds of nature.

In 1988, a cease-fire in the war between Iraq and Iran went into effect. Eight British soldiers were killed by an Irish Republican Army land mine that destroyed a military bus near Omagh, County Tyrone in Northern Ireland.

In 1992, shortly after midnight, the Republican National Convention in Houston renominated President George H.W. Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle.

Ten years ago: Opponents of Hugo Chavez turned in 2.7 million signatures to demand a referendum on ending his tumultuous presidency. The United States won the women's overall team gold medal at the World Gymnastics Championships in Anaheim, Calif.; Romania took the silver medal

and Australia, the bronze.

Five years ago: A Spanish jetliner crashed during takeoff from Madrid, killing 154 people; 18 survived. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski signed a deal to put a U.S. missile defense base in Poland. In Beijing, Usain Bolt of Jamaica broke the world record by winning the 200 meters in 19.30 seconds. Former Chinese leader Hua Guofeng died in Beijing at age 87. U.S. Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones, the first black woman to represent Ohio in Congress, died in Cleveland at age 58. Gene Upshaw, executive director of the NFL Players Association, died near California's Lake Tahoe at age 63.

One year ago: Rep. Todd Akin, R-Mo., fought to salvage his U.S. Senate campaign even as members of his own party turned against him over his comments that women were able to prevent pregnancies in cases of "legitimate rape." (Akin lost the election.) In a historic change at one of the world's most exclusive golf clubs, Augusta National invited former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and South Carolina financier Darla Moore to become the first female members; both women accepted. Two college friends, Elizabeth Nass and Rose Mayr, were killed when a CSX train derailed on a rail bridge in Ellicott City, Md., burying the young women in coal. Comedian Phyllis Diller, 95, died at her Los Angeles home.

Today's Birthdays: Writer-producer-director Walter Bernstein is 94. Boxing promoter Don King is 82. Former Sen. George Mitchell, D-Maine, is 80. Former U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, is 78. Former MLB All-Star Graig Nettles is 69. Broadcast journalist Connie Chung is 67. Musician Jimmy Pankow (Chicago) is 66. Actor John Noble is 65. Rock singer Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin) is 65. Country singer Rudy Gatlin is 61. Singer-songwriter John Hiatt is 61. Actor-director Peter Horton is 60. TV weatherman Al Roker is 59. Actor Jay Acovone is 58. Actress Joan Allen is 57. Movie director David O. Russell ("The Fighter") is 55. TV personality Asha Blake is 52. Actor James Masters is 51. Rapper KRS-One is 48. Actor Colin Cunningham is 47. Actor Billy Gardell is 44. Rock singer Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit) is 43. Rock musician Brad Avery is 42. Actor Jonathan Ke Quan is 42. Actor Misha Collins (TV: "Supernatural") is 39. Rock singer Monique Powell (Save Ferris) is 38. Actor Ben Barnes is 32. Actress Meghan Ory (TV: "Once Upon a Time") is 31. Actor Andrew Garfield is 30. Actress-singer Demi Lovato is 21.

FROM THE BIBLE

He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



On Race Relations

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives),
On a hot August day in 1963 Martin Luther King addressed more than 100,000 people of all walks of life: whites, blacks, Latinos and Native Americans. He challenged America to take an honest look at the rampant racism of that era or any other (a good thing).

Michele Norris, who is a special correspondent for National Public Radio and director of the Race Card Project, in an article for the most recent issue of *Time* (Aug. 26-Sept. 2 tells us: "King could see the future from where he stood. The March on Washington is remembered as a civil rights protest, and many of the historical images show close-ups of brown faces. But the massive crowd that day was largely integrated. People of all colors flocked to Washington. The U.S. press did not linger on that fact, but the international press was awestruck by the diversity. It was a central theme of the foreign coverage. Decades later, it is still a focal point when people look to the U.S. from overseas. Our diversity is seen as one of the best things America has going for it. Perhaps we should recognize that too."

Michele makes a good point. Diversity should indeed be viewed by every one on the planet as an asset rather than a liability. Embracing diversity opens up opportunity for everyone and fulfilling ones aspirations creates more opportunity for others. It's a win-win for all U.S. citizens. I think that when everyone recognizes the truth of perceiving all racial groups as true equals there will be a tremendous shift in race relations in this country toward fulfilling the "Dream" Dr. King spoke of 50 years ago.

The *Time* article goes on to indicate "American Attitudes On Race Relation" as follows: They asked, "Are relations between white and blacks very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad? Sixty-six percent of blacks think relations are very or somewhat good while 72 percent of whites think the same.

My unscientific observation about race relations between whites and Natives here in South Dakota is that I think most folks would say it is moderate to very bad, depending upon which community you happen to come from. It seems there is some consternation living side by side.

"Are new civil rights laws needed to reduce dis-

crimination against blacks? Fifty-three percent of blacks said yes while only 17 percent for whites.

"Do you favor programs that make special efforts to help blacks and other minorities get ahead to make up for past discrimination? Eighty-one percent of blacks said yes while 61 percent of whites said the same.

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling race relations? Blacks — 78 percent, Whites - 25 percent approved, respectively.

"Do you think the American justice system is biased against black people? Sixty-eight percent of blacks say yes while only 25 percent of whites said yes.

"Do you support a law that says people can fight back with deadly force if they feel threatened, even if they could retreat? Thirty-seven percent of blacks say they would support such laws while 57 percent of whites support such laws.

"Are you satisfied with the Zimmerman verdict? Only 5 percent of blacks said they were satisfied while 49 percent of whites were satisfied with the verdict."

While Native people certainly face these so-called "minority" issues, it would do everyone well to remember that in addition to facing racism in their own communities, there are distinct cultural and legal issues that need to be overcome. Also for your information, Article 16 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples puts forth that: "Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society."

We need to all roll up our sleeves and get to work. There is much conversation needed and action to be taken to heal the past so that we can move into the future together. If we fail in our generation's calling to do that which we know must be done to better relations between white and Indian South Dakotans, we will only be passing on unnecessary suffering on to the next generation. Shame on us.

And now you know the rez of the story.

Doksha (later) ...

Just Clowning Around?

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — Children, children. Here we are in the midst of a bloody clash in Egypt, more than 100,000 slaughtered in Syria, another looming debt crisis at home, and we're consumed with angst over a rodeo clown who wore an Obama mask and invited the crowd to cheer for the bulls.

There's more. The clown has been fired. The president of the Missouri Rodeo Cowboy Association has stepped down. The Missouri State Fair is forcing clowns to undergo sensitivity training. The NAACP wants a Justice Department investigation into the clown act as a hate crime. And a Texas congressman has invited the clown to come on down.

It seems impossible to take this seriously, yet seriously we must take it. Here we go. The clown act was offensive for one reason only: The president is black. No peep would have been made otherwise. But therein lies a difference and a distinction that deserves our unbiased scrutiny.

A word about my own biases: I don't like rodeos and I don't like clowns. The former involve animals performing involuntarily and the latter are creepy. (I don't like zoos and circuses, either.)

But clowns are ... *clowns*! It's their job to poke the precious and touch the untouchable. They are inherently rude, irreverent, insulting, insensitive and sometimes salacious. Presidents, obviously, are fair game and every modern president's face has been made into a mask.

Still. There's something wrong with this clown act. It isn't a hate crime, which is a ridiculous charge, but it is something we need to wrap our minds around. First, let's correct a popular mischaracterization. Wearing an Obama mask is not tantamount to "blackface," which is implicitly racist. When the president's face is "black," then the president's mask is necessarily "black."

Unless, apparently, the person wearing the mask is white, as was the rodeo clown.

Question: If a black person wears a George W. Bush mask, is he racist? The next logical question answers the first: What if the clown wears a Bush mask at an event attended primarily by blacks and invites the crowd to cheer for the bulls?

This unlikely event would feel offensive for the same reasons the recent clown event did. The Missouri rodeo audience was mostly white and the



Vince
TWO EAGLES



Kathleen
PARKER

masked man in the ring was depicting a black man. This changes everything we think about humor, about clowns, and about good old-fashioned fun.

Just as N-jokes are no longer funny to almost anyone, placing a black man in the arena like an unarmed gladiator isn't amusing. As much as we aspire to racial harmony, we have centuries of history to overcome, including the mob-inspired lynching of black men, and this is what so many saw in the clown skit. Memory conquers humor.

To be honest, my first reaction was: What a lot of bull. But then, as one must, I put myself in the other's shoes. How would I feel if my face were on the clown's mask and the arena were filled with men who cheered the beast who would trample and destroy me?

This is where political commentary becomes something else. Frightening. We all know what happens when the mob is empowered, especially when further emboldened by the excuse of humor. Few statements are more dishonest than "It's just a joke."

I am the last person who would suggest that irreverence be censored or punished — or that clowns be sensitized. The excessively reverent are far scarier to me than those who would die laughing. Political satire is, in fact, a public service inasmuch as it channels aggression that otherwise might find bloody expression.

But a civil society should find reprehensible even mock violence against a president, especially one who belongs to a minority that was once targeted for state-sanctioned violence.

I sincerely doubt that the rodeo clown was motivated by racial hatred. I also doubt that President Obama much cared, except for how his daughters might feel about it. Or, to be cynical, about the degree to which public outrage accrued to his political advantage. I even give the benefit of the doubt to those who cheered the bulls as being inspired by political rather than racial animus.

And, yes, reaction has been overblown to the point of silliness, but there are lessons, nonetheless. We could stand to tone down our political expression for the sake of all our daughters and sons, who bear witness to these events and must make sense of their world. Perhaps more to the point, we might try to take ourselves more lightly.

Kathleen Parker's email address is kathleen-parker@washpost.com.

YOUR LETTERS

Changing Times

Lorrie Pullen, Utica

When did we become a nation of stingy, mean-spirited, angry people? When did we become the old geezers that we hated when we were young? I remember being young and hating the cranky old folks who railed at us, because we were happy, full of life and idealistic. I swore I'd never be one.

Well now, we Baby Boomers are the old geezers who are railing at the world about how unfair it is that we have to pay taxes and how unfair that we are getting older. Our idealism has

turned to cynicism and crankiness. Well, life didn't turn out the way we wanted — hey, that's life. What is far more unsettling to us is that our world is changing while our heads were buried in the sand raising kids. Now our world looks different.

What is depressing is that we woke up and became our intolerant parents, their world disappeared with us and now our world has changed. We have a choice: Either accept the inevitable change and thrive with it. Or we fight against it and lose control of the future by pushing our kids and grandkids away. We will be pushed into corners and left behind.