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## Editorial: There is such a thing as bad publicity

Posted By [The Hoot Editorial Board](#) On February 1, 2008 @ 4:16 am In [Opinions](#) | [Comments Disabled](#)

In recent weeks, Brandeis has been all over the news, for all the wrong reasons. This university has had two former Presidents speak in two semesters, hosted a U.S. Senator last week, and has an ever expanding number of students advocating for myriad causes, yet every mention of Brandeis in the national and regional press for the last few weeks revolves around the administration's mismanagement of the situation involving Professor Donald Hindley.

The Massachusetts ACLU's statement last week condemning the administration's decision to punish Hindley for describing the term "wetback" in one of his classes typifies the amount of negative attention that the University has attracted recently. It is a shame that this is the issue drawing attention to Brandeis. We therefore call on the administration to end its feud with Hindley and admit that it was wrong.

At a time when the University is welcoming a more prestigious class of freshmen every year, and should be using this to polish its reputation, the administration insists on making rash decisions that negate its positive PR capital. Instead of focusing on the progress that Brandeis has made in recent years, news outlets such as The Boston Globe have instead followed the Hindley story. Even Ohio University's student-run newspaper, The Post, made the Hindley debate the focus of a Jan. 31 opinion article.

Rather than taking an objective approach to determining whether Hindley's comments were discriminatory, the administration appeared to begin the process with a judgment already in mind. Due process was ignored, and the administration instant punitive response made Hindley's guilt a foregone conclusion. Unfortunately, this is not the first event in recent years in which the administration has been criticized for failing to protect freedom of speech rights. While increasingly more competitive students matriculate at this University, the administration continues to exercise its ability to censor speech.

A search of Google news for the name "Brandeis" brings up nothing but articles about Hindley and the Brandeis sports teams. It is quite sad that, judging from an online news search, Brandeis is known for athletics and violating free speech. This is not at all what we should be known for as an institution.

With this kind of an approach, how will the University attract the high caliber professors who will be able to give the incoming classes of students the education they deserve? How will it draw students who want a free and open academic environment? The fear of the administration's trigger response to questionable remarks, coupled with an uncompetitive salary, is unlikely to stop Brandeis' brain drain or help draw professors to replace the Brandeis faculty who will be retiring in the coming years.

It is time for the administration to stop causing damage, and to start damage control. There is no advantage to continuing the current treatment of Hindley, and any further obstinance on the part of the administration will only be detrimental to the university. Students, faculty, and now outside organizations have all come to the conclusion that the allegations against Hindley were baseless, and it is in the administration's best interest to stop perpetuating a free speech debate that it can't win.

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- [2] [The Hoot Report](#) - February 1st, 2008
- [3] [Editorial: There is such a thing as bad publicity](#) - February 1st, 2008
- [4] [The Joint, sponsored by WBRS](#) - February 1st, 2008
- [5] [The Sports Blitz](#) - February 1st, 2008

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URLs in this post:

[1] Music Musings: <http://thehoot.net/?p=333>

[2] The Hoot Report: <http://thehoot.net/?p=330>

[3] Editorial: There is such a thing as bad publicity: <http://thehoot.net/?p=322>

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