



“Giuliani’s 9/11 image may not last in a heated primary battle.”

— KATE O’BEIRNE August 7 Issue

- HOME
- ▼ BLOG ROW
- ▼ SEARCH
- ▼ SUBSCRIBE
- NR / DIGITAL
- CLASSIFIEDS
- STORE
- DONATE
- MEDIA KIT
- CONTACT

August 10, 2006, 3:13 a.m.

[E-mail Author](#)
[Author Archive](#)
[Send to a Friend](#)
[Print Version](#)

“Dirty, Gorgeous” Full-Throated Unfairness

Johns Hopkins does paper collection.

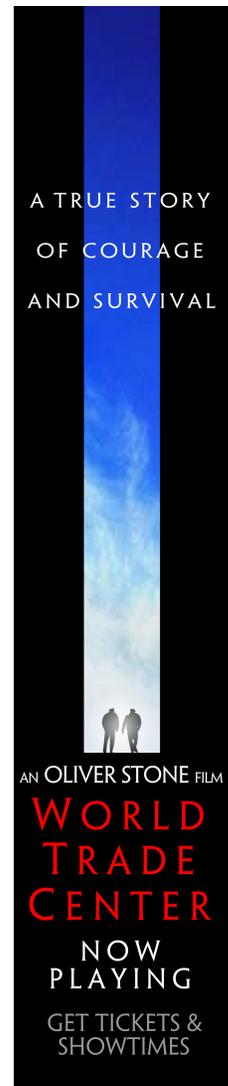
By John McCormack

When the editors of the *Carrollton Record*, a student-run conservative newspaper at Johns Hopkins University, published a story about how tuition dollars had paid for pornography, they were hoping for a controversy that would spark an increase in readership. On May 17, the day after they distributed the issue, all of the copies in the dormitories had in fact been picked up — but not because fellow students had taken them; they had, instead, been seized by the university administration. “I never expected this,” says Jered Ede, author of the controversial article. “I thought Johns Hopkins was committed to the First Amendment, but I guess I was wrong.”

ADVERTISEMENT

Conservative student journalists are all too familiar with having their work stolen, and sometimes destroyed, by illiberal liberals. What makes this case different, however, is that it directly involves administration officials. It wasn’t a bunch of hippie wannabes wearing Che T-shirts preventing distribution of the issue — it was professional education bureaucrats.

With a small staff and an even smaller budget, the *Carrollton Record* publishes about four times per year, distributing about 2,000 copies of each issue on campus. Apparently the paper’s humble presence was finally too much for Hopkins administrators, following the publication of the article in question, “Deepthroating Hopkins.” The story criticized the university for allocating tuition dollars to the Diverse Sexuality and Gender Alliance (DSAGA), which hosted transgendered porn



MORE FROM THIS AUTHOR

[“Dirty, Gorgeous” Full-Throated Unfairness](#) 08/10

NEW ON NRO

- Basham: [The Spread of Homegrown Terror](#)
- Boyles: [Armed Farces](#)
- Bennett: [Why Israel Fights...](#)
- Editors: [Window on The](#)

Week – 8/11/06	Blyth: The Hot-Headed Have their Moment
Bowyer: The Warren Buffett Paradox	Nordlinger: Impromptus
McCarthy: Connecticut? This is London Calling.	Humphreys & Satel: Think Before You Drink
Seipp: Head-in-Sand MSM	Hanson: Surreal Rules
Singer: The War We Forgot to Fight	

director Chi Chi LaRue as a campus speaker this past spring. LaRue delivered a provocative speech and distributed free pornographic DVDs. Ede [detailed](#) some of LaRue's salacious remarks: "A self-proclaimed 'condom-nazi,' LaRue commented, 'wouldn't it be great if everyone was s***ing each other off with condoms on?'" Ede also [reported](#) that, about 15 minutes

into the speech, a high-school student walked through the room while LaRue was speaking about his "dirty gorgeous sex movies" — which suggests the lack of an I.D. check at the entrance to ensure no minors were in attendance was inappropriate.

Matthew Viator, the president of DSAGA, tells *NRO* that the *Carrollton Record* wrongly "painted a picture of sexually deviant, socially irresponsible, and immoral students" and contends that "Ede libelously reported that minors attended the event."

"I stand by everything I wrote," says Ede. Although he failed to obtain the name of the high-school student in question, he had seen him at a conference for high-school students earlier in the day. Greg Lukianoff, president of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), says that even if there were errors in the article, it is unlikely that they would rise to the level of libel and that censoring student journalists isn't the right answer: "If there were any inaccuracies in the article, let DSAGA prove it and make that information public. Silencing the *Carrollton Record* is not the way to solve this."

Viator's biggest grievance against the *Record*, however, was its publication of his photo and those of other members of DSAGA alongside Chi Chi LaRue on the [cover page](#) of the issue. "We feel that the publication of those pictures — some of students who weren't even at the event — amounts to nothing less than harassment," he says. "We have asked the university to remove the *Carrollton Record* entirely from campus."

"I got those pictures off of Facebook.com," says Ede, referring to a website that allows students to join common interest groups and clubs online. The photos used by Ede were of students who had self-identified themselves and joined DSAGA's online group. This information was accessible to thousands of students at Johns Hopkins.

Ede and other *Record* staffers were investigated by the Johns Hopkins Equal Opportunity Office for publishing the issue, presumably because of harassment allegations by DSAGA. Ede tells *NRO* that they were not informed of specific charges against them and did not have the right to face their accusers. But Johns Hopkins spokesman Dennis O'Shea says that the university was merely conducting a fact-finding investigation and that staffers were informed that the complaint filed "was that the depiction of DSAGA members on the cover of the May issue constituted harassment on the basis of sexual orientation." The university recently told staffers of the *Record* that the complaint against them had been withdrawn and the case was closed.

FIRE's Lukianoff raises a broader issue, pointing out that "DSAGA and administrators at Johns Hopkins don't say, 'Stop, you're offending me.' They say, 'Stop, you're harassing me.'" He argues that "universities are doing a bad job of preparing students for entering the real world if they let students think they have a right to make decisions without facing criticism."

O'Shea maintains that what the university did was not censorship. He tells *NRO* that the *Record* had not registered with the university to distribute in the dormitories and was thus in violation of an "anti-clutter rule." In fact, this rule was not enforced against any other student

neo conservatism: why we need it
DOUGLAS MURRAY

A fresh look at the movement that replaced Great-Society liberalism, helped Ronald Reagan bring down the Wall, and provided the intellectual rationale for the Bush administration's War on Terror.

30% off

ENCOUNTER BOOKS
www.encounterbooks.com

newspapers, or even against a pizza company that had dropped off stacks of coupons in the dorms, as shown by [these photos](#). “I’ve been told this anti-clutter rule has been enforced before,” insists O’Shea — but he couldn’t list a specific instance in which another publication had been removed.

Ede says the university’s explanation for its removal of the issue has changed dramatically since FIRE became involved: “At first, [Director of Residential Life] Shelly Fickau told me, ‘You’re controversial, so we’re removing you,’ but now the administration is saying, ‘We just want to maintain a clutter-free environment.’” Fickau tells *NRO* that Ede’s account is “absolutely false” and declines further comment.

As proof that the *Carrollton Record* was not censored, O’Shea points out that “the university did not remove [it] from other locations on campus, such as academic buildings and the library.” In fact, all of the approximately 600 copies in the library were stolen; O’Shea says that the university did not open an investigation because the *Record* did not provide proof that malicious intent was behind the disappearance of the issues from the library. When asked what would constitute necessary evidence, O’Shea says university police have sole authority to make such determinations and they have refused to investigate. (If police doubted that mob censorship was occurring, they could have gone [online](#) and read one student’s defense of his decision to throw out a number of issues in a classroom because he believed the *Record* was “retarded and narrow minded,” as well as a “piece of s*** racist/sexist magazine.”) University counsel Frederick Savage [wrote](#) in response to a protest letter from FIRE that because the paper “is free of charge and there is no limitation on the number of copies one can take, any charge of theft would be difficult to sustain.” However, a 1994 Maryland law explicitly prohibits the theft of free newspapers.

Johns Hopkins administrators are meeting over the summer to decide on a new policy on newspaper distribution in the dormitories for next year. When asked if the university would honor First Amendment rights on campus, O’Shea says, “I don’t think I want to answer that in a legal sense,” but when pressed, he responds, “We are a private institution. What does the First Amendment legally cover? It covers the government. But we certainly consider ourselves supporters of open, free, and vigorous debate.”

Record staffers — and FIRE — are pressuring the university to live up to its self-declared policy of freedom of speech. But it might be easier for *Record* editors to regain the right to distribute their newspaper if they drop their criticism of Johns Hopkins students and administrators in the next issue — and replace it with a pornography section.

— *John McCormack is a Collegiate Network intern at National Review.*

* * *

NOT A SUBSCRIBER TO NATIONAL REVIEW? Sign up right now! It’s easy: You can subscribe to *National Review* [here](#), or NR / Digital [here](#). Or, you order a subscription as a gift: [print](#) or [digital](#)!

NRO Marketplace . . . save 20-30% today!



[Podhoretz](#)



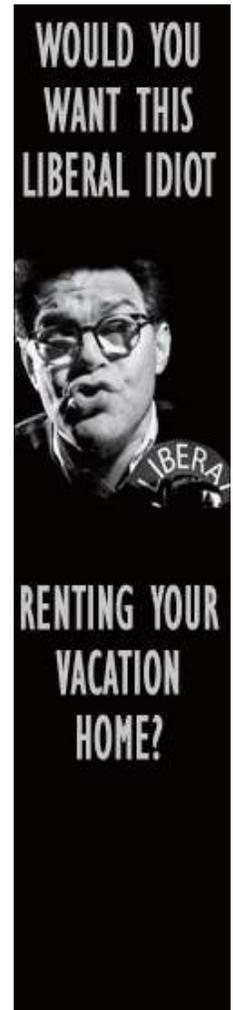
[Pannuru](#)



[Brookhiser](#)



[Shopped at our store lately?](#)



© National Review Online 2006-2007. All Rights Reserved.

[Home](#) | [Search](#) | [NR / Digital](#) | [Donate](#) | [Media Kit](#) | [Contact Us](#)

This page loaded in 0.004596 seconds.