



South Campus location supports success of students

March 05, 2013, *The Missoulian*

Guest column by JOHN E. CECH

Integration of Missoula College with the University of Montana benefits first and foremost, the students.

Contrary to recent claims in David Werner's Feb. 21 guest column about Missoula College, a strength of Missoula College lies with its integration within the University of Montana. Missoula College students enjoy full access to all of the university's amenities, from the athletic center to the university's world class library, to the Curry Health Center and the on-campus daycare. Graduates of Missoula College's university transfer programs are able to continue on at the university to complete their bachelor's degrees without going through a reapplication process. This synergy is something other community college systems around the country are trying to create with their state university systems.

Location of the new Missoula College building does matter.

The South Campus is the right place for the college's new building. The location is on land which the university already owns and is in a location (only seven blocks from its current location) which supports Missoula College's synergy with the university while maintaining open green space for the community. The South Campus location provides convenient transportation for the hundreds of students who travel between campuses and efficient delivery of student services.

Missoula College operates as a comprehensive two-year college, providing students with affordable access to associate degrees, workforce development programs, degrees that can lead to a four-year program, and access to lifelong learning opportunities.

The students at Missoula College represent a great deal of diversity – first time college students out of high school, single mothers, veterans, displaced workers, and older nontraditional students who and are looking to make a better life for themselves and their families.

All faculty and staff of the college and the university focus on student success and nurturing assistance toward the achievement of students' personal and career goals. The arguments in Werner's recent guest column implying that integration of Missoula College and university students was a "grotesque experiment," in whatever spirit he intended those comments, were disturbing and far from forward-thinking.

Missoula College is now the largest and fastest growing two-year college in Montana.

The students of Missoula College and the community of Missoula are not being served well by the overcrowding which is occurring at Missoula College – no one should have to either attend or teach courses taught in temporary mobile home units.

The new location on the South Campus for Missoula College's primary instructional building is critical not only to accommodate the dramatic growth the college has witnessed but to further the college's comprehensive two-year mission and continued ability to serve local students, local employers, local families and the Missoula-area community.

Werner was correct with his statement that the issue is "not about saving a golf course." It's about providing affordable access to higher education and workforce development to thousands of residents of all ages from Missoula and western Montana. It's about helping to ensure Missoula's economic base has a future workforce.

John E. Cech is deputy commissioner for two-year and community college education for the Montana University System.



Schools with differing goals should be separate

February 21, 2013, *The Missoulian*

Guest column by DAVID WERNER

Bradley Layton, in a guest column in the Feb. 8 edition of the Missoulian, opposes building Missoula College on its West Campus, and backs the University of Montana’s plan to build the college on UM’s so-called South Campus. While Layton’s opinion is well-meant, it supports a concept of post-high school education that runs counter to more than 100 years of successful practice of this education in the U.S. In short, UM has tragically conducted a grotesque experiment by promoting its “integration” of Missoula College students with university students.

The farther away from the main UM campus for Missoula College, the better. MC students and university students are different. MC students do not lack intellect or talent, but they come from lower-income homes, lack the academic background of an entering UM student, and they do not want a large university environment. Yes, they will attend UM classes if forced to, but I suspect MC will gain more enrollments if it’s consolidated and located at the West Campus.

Why? Because a school like MC is locally oriented. The university is more state, national and internationally oriented. MC’s clientele is basically from west and north areas of Missoula, and outlying areas of Missoula County. MC’s mission is to serve Missoula-area students. Take them from where they are, remediate and develop them so they can qualify either for an occupational field or transfer to a university. That is not UM’s mission, nor should it be.

Forced integration of MC and UM students has an impact on the faculties. As students are different, so faculties are different. UM faculty are geared to teach students who are prepared for the university environment and high initial expectations. Not so with MC students. There is a huge leap in academic level between high school and college.

Yes, some MC students are and have been capable of learning in UM classes. However, far more Missoula residents would be served by having an institution geared to help in the transition from high school to college. Even more important, MC is/should be geared for those who have not been successful in high school, dropped out, or are, after several years, getting back into formal education. These people need a different kind of learning environment than a university should be expected to provide. The Lifelong Learning program at Missoula County Public Schools should be merged with MC to form a comprehensive post-high school learning opportunity for Missoula area residents.

UM announced a “Pedagogy Project” some months ago. “Pedagogy” means teaching K-12 students. Why would any UM faculty need training in pedagogy? Pedagogy is taught in education schools for students preparing for K-12. I suspect it’s due to UM’s grotesque experiment trying to merge MC with UM students, and it’s hard on both institutions, their students and their faculties. It’s surprising UM faculty are not up in arms about this.

If it had its own campus at the West Campus, I believe MC’s enrollment would increase. Even in our state, MC’s relationship with UM is an aberration. The other state-funded schools in Butte, Helena, Great Falls and Billings have their own campuses. MC should be no different. Also, look at the local community colleges in Kalispell, Glendive and Miles City. These schools have been flourishing for decades without proximity to a four-year school.

If MC is built on UM’s “South Campus,” MC college will have three campuses. The culinary arts program will stay at its present site near Sentinel High School. The industrial technology programs will stay at the West Campus. This configuration is nonsensical. Why not consolidate all MC programs and services at one site, one location, easily accessible to all Missoula areas? This issue cannot be tossed off as “golf vs. education.” It’s not just about saving a golf course. It’s definitely not about what’s good for UM. It’s about providing opportunity for more Missoulians to resume/continue their formal education in a less-imposing environment and improve themselves, thereby improving Missoula’s economic base.

A UM alum with two degrees and a member of UM’s Heritage Society, David Werner of Missoula was an English teacher and library director at a Colorado community college for 25 years.

Op-Ed Samples

SAMPLE 2: ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN A NEWSPAPER

LONDON (Reuters) - Smoking three pure cannabis joints is as bad for your lungs as smoking 20 normal cigarettes and marijuana is more dangerous now than it was in the 1960s, British researchers said on Monday.

In what it described as a shocking new report, the British Lung Foundation (BLF) said tar from cannabis cigarettes contained 50% more carcinogens--the agents that produce cancer--than tobacco.

"Three cannabis joints a day cause the same damage to the lining of the airways as 20 cigarettes," it said in a statement.

It also said the health dangers of cannabis have substantially increased since the 1960s because today's marijuana has increased amounts of a key chemical compound.

Campaigners for the legalization of cannabis disputed some of the findings.

"Saying that cannabis is stronger now than it used to be is like saying that orange juice is stronger these days," said Alun Buffry, spokesman for the Legalize Cannabis Alliance.

"I smoked stuff in the 1960s which was certainly stronger than what's available now and, anyway, when it's stronger, people smoke less of it."

SAMPLE 3: ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL (EXCERPTED)

Montana v. Wyoming: Sprinklers, Irrigation Water Use Efficiency and the Doctrine of Recapture

LAWRENCE J. MACDONNELL

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2007, Montana filed an original action with the United States Supreme Court asserting that certain water uses in Wyoming violated the Yellowstone River Compact ("Compact").¹ The litigation was triggered by severe drought in the basin between 2000 and 2006, during which period there was inadequate water available for Montana appropriators in the Tongue River and Powder River sub-basins.² Montana raised four primary issues: irrigation of new acreage in Wyoming; new and expanded storage facilities; new groundwater pumping, especially associated with coalbed methane development; and increased consumption of water due to improved irrigation efficiency on existing irrigated acreage.³ In 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the first substantive issue in this litigation: "Is a switch to more efficient irrigation with less return flow within the extent of Wyoming's pre-1950 users' existing appropriative rights, or is it an improper enlargement of that right to the detriment of Montana's pre-1950 water users?"⁴ The Court held that such improvements are permitted under the Compact.⁵

This article takes a careful look at this decision. It begins with an introduction to the physical setting, focusing on the Tongue and Powder sub-basins within the Yellowstone basin. It discusses Montana's arguments why the Compact precludes improved irrigation efficiency that increases consumption and the Special Master's rejection of those arguments. Next, the Article looks at the U.S. Supreme Court's opinion. Finally, it offers some observations triggered by this litigation, critiques the doctrine of recapture in western water law, and supports the Court's embrace of water use efficiency over protection of the status quo. We begin with a look at the Yellowstone River basin.

Op-Ed Samples

SAMPLE 4: EDITORIAL PUBLISHED IN A NEWSPAPER



Eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon wrote a letter to the editor of New York's The Sun, and the quick response was printed as an unsigned editorial Sept. 21, 1897. The work of veteran newsman Francis Pharcellus Church has since become history's most reprinted newspaper editorial, appearing in part or whole in dozens of languages in books, movies, and other editorials, and on posters and stamps.

"DEAR EDITOR: I am 8 years old.

"Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus.

"Papa says, 'If you see it in THE SUN it's so.'

"Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?"

"VIRGINIA O'HANLON.

"115 WEST NINETY-FIFTH STREET."

VIRGINIA, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no VIRGINIAS. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, VIRGINIA, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Op-Ed Samples

SAMPLE 5: EDITORIAL PUBLISHED IN A NEWSPAPER

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

Big Bird, Small President

Kim Strassel

October 9, 2012, 7:24 p.m. ET

Having been routed in the first debate, President Obama has found a comeback strategy: Fly Big Bird. Specifically, mock Mitt Romney's call to cut federal subsidies for the millionaires at the Sesame Workshop and pledge to defend the Public Broadcasting Service no matter how much money the Treasury has to borrow.

At least he's finally discovered a second-term agenda.

On Monday night in San Francisco, Mr. Obama claimed Mr. Romney "said he'd bring down our deficit by going after what has been the biggest driver of our debt and deficits over the last decade—public television, PBS. You didn't know this, but for all you moms and kids out there, you should have confidence that finally somebody is cracking down on Big Bird." He's also rolled out a TV ad starring the Sesame Street favorite.

Mr. Obama is mocking a small effort to reduce federal spending, but it would be funnier if Mr. Obama hadn't also rejected all the larger efforts too. From Congressional Republicans. From his own Simpson-Bowles deficit commission. From a bipartisan group in the Senate. At the San Francisco event, as at the debate, as at every other campaign event this year, Mr. Obama offered no plan to move the government's spending into the same galaxy with its revenues.

But the Big Bird jokes kept rolling, along with the usual fact-free attack against the Republican candidate.

"Governor Romney's plan is to let Wall Street run wild again, but he's going to bring the hammer down on 'Sesame Street,'" said the President, in the definition of a non-sequitur.

The United States may be on a fiscal path to Greece, and working-class guys in Toledo may have stagnant incomes, but Mr. Obama says their tax dollars must continue to flow to one of the most successful TV properties of all time. Middle-aged readers may think that Big Bird's popularity peaked in the 1970s, but his earnings power remains strong.

According to financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2011, Sesame Workshop and its nonprofit and for-profit subsidiaries had total operating revenue of more than \$134 million. They receive about \$8 million a year in direct government grants and more indirectly via PBS subsidies. Big Bird and friends also receive corporate and foundation support, and donations amount to about a third of revenue. Distribution fees and royalties comprise another third and licensing revenue makes up the rest.

At the end of fiscal 2011, Sesame Workshop and its subsidiaries had total assets of \$289 million. About \$29 million was held in cash and "cash equivalents," mainly money-market mutual funds. Another \$121 million on the balance sheet was held in "investments." According to the accompanying notes, these investments included stakes in hedge funds and private-equity funds. It's unclear from the financial statements if Big Bird has ever invested in funds run by Bain Capital, founded by Mitt Romney, but no doubt Sesame would be welcomed as a client by many investment managers.

So Big Bird likes to maximize revenues and investment gains as much as the next muppet. And now the President has made this adorable critter the symbol of federal programs that allegedly require eternal taxpayer aid, even if it has to be put on the future tax bill of today's pre-schoolers. Is that funny?

Kim Strassel is an author and member of the Wall Street Journal Editorial Board. She writes a weekly column, "Potomac Watch", which appears on Fridays.



Ken Burns: Romney's war on public TV is a loss for USA, October 9, 2012

In 2007, as we were preparing for the broadcast of *The War*, our film on how four American towns experienced World War II, I visited West Point to share some clips with cadets and discuss with them the two wars that awaited them upon graduation.

These young men and women were at most 2 or 3 years old when our film *The Civil War* aired on PBS in 1990. Yet many told us their decision to enter the military was inspired, in part, by that film.

Nearly 40 million people watched *The Civil War* during its premiere. To this day, I carry in my wallet a worn copy of the now famous letter written by Maj. Sullivan Ballou to his wife, Sarah, a week before his death in 1861 at the Battle of Bull Run: "I know how strongly American civilization now leans on the triumph of the government, and how great a debt we owe to those who went before us through the blood and suffering of the Revolution. And I am willing, perfectly willing, to lay down all my joys in this life, to help maintain this government, and to pay that debt."

For many, *The Civil War* was a remarkable moment, a brief respite from the tension in the Middle East on the eve of the Persian Gulf War, and a chance for all of us -- North and South, blue and red -- to share and reflect on our complicated and not always easy history. It was also a public television moment.

Big Bird attack

Mitt Romney's assault on PBS and Big Bird during the first presidential debate lit up the Internet with tweets and posts about the fate of this beloved Sesame Street character, one that I too, as a father of four, cherish. But the response goes beyond Sesame Street. It resonates because the American people understand that we have a debt not because of public television; we have a debt to public television.

Over the course of a year, 91% of all U.S. television households -- 236 million people -- tune into their PBS-member station. Federal funding accounts for about 15% of the money necessary to make public broadcasting possible. For every dollar in federal funding invested in local stations, they raise an additional \$6 on their own, including contributions from millions of people who voluntarily support their community-based work. It's such a tiny, tiny part of the federal budget, approximately 1/100th of 1%, that you have to question, why pick on that?

The return on investment is something a good businessman should see as spectacular. Romney knows the price of things, but he clearly doesn't know their value.

Shared experience

In an increasingly difficult world to navigate, with multiple media outlets and a constant onslaught of viewpoints, PBS remains our shared space, one where we can experience the best in arts and education, public affairs, history, science and journalism.

It is a place where we can all feel at home.

In the middle of filming *The Civil War* in the late 1980s, I had the good fortune to meet with President Reagan in the White House. When I told him I was a PBS producer working on a series about the Civil War, his eyes lit up. He told me stories of seeing the old Union veterans marching down the center of Dixon, Ill., on the Fourth of July when he was a boy.

Then he asked me how it was funded. I said I received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (something else Romney has vowed to eliminate) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which distributes this funding. Those funds had, in turn, brought in corporate and foundation monies.

Reagan put both hands on my shoulder and said, "That's it! We need public-private partnerships. The government primes the pump, and then the private sector has the motivation to get involved. Good work! I can't wait to see the finished film."

He later wrote me a kind note about how much the series meant to him.

*Ken Burns has been making films for more than 30 years. His latest documentary, *The Dust Bowl*, premieres on PBS on Nov. 18-19.*

The New York Times

Long Live Paper

By JUSTIN B. HOLLANDER

Medford, Mass. October 9, 2012

LAST week, Education Secretary Arne Duncan declared a war on paper textbooks. “Over the next few years,” he said in a speech at the National Press Club, “textbooks should be obsolete.” In their place would come a variety of digital-learning technologies, like e-readers and multimedia Web sites.

Such technologies certainly have their place. But Secretary Duncan is threatening to light a bonfire to a tried-and-true technology — good old paper — that has been the foundation for one of the great educational systems on the planet. And while e-readers and multimedia may seem appealing, the idea of replacing an effective learning platform with a widely hyped but still unproven one is extremely dangerous.

A renowned expert on reading, Maryanne Wolf, has recently begun studying the effects of digital reading on learning, and so far the results are mixed. She worries that Internet reading, in particular, could be such a source of distractions for the student that they may cancel out most other potential benefits of a Web-linked, e-learning environment. And while it’s true that the high-tech industry has sponsored substantial amounts of research on the potential benefits of Web-based learning, not enough time has passed for longitudinal studies to demonstrate the full effects.

In addition, digital-reading advocates claim that lightweight e-books benefit students’ backs and save schools money. But the rolling backpack seems to have solved the weight problem, and the astounding costs to outfit every student with an e-reader, provide technical support and pay for regular software updates promise to make the e-textbook a very pricey option.

As both a teacher who uses paper textbooks and a student of urban history, I can’t help but wonder what parallels exist between my own field and this sudden, wholesale abandonment of the technology of paper.

For example, when cars began to fill America’s driveways, and new highways were laid across the land, the first thing cities did was encourage the dismantling of our train systems. Streetcar lines were torn up. A result, for many cities, was to rip apart the urban core and run highways through it, which only accelerated the flow of residents, commerce and investment to the suburbs.

But in recent years, new streetcar lines have been built or old systems extended in places like Pittsburgh, Jersey City and Phoenix. They are casting aside a newer technology in favor of an older one.

This lesson of technology-inspired extinction can be retold in many other domains of life: the way phonographs nearly disappeared when the music CD was invented; the rejection of bicycles in the middle of the 20th century; the shuttering of Polaroid factories with the advent of digital cameras.

My point is not that these are all pernicious or reversible developments. On the contrary, we have all benefited from new advances in medicine, communications and computing, even those that displaced familiar technologies.

The Polaroid is a wonderful device for what it is, but it will and should remain a technological novelty. On the other hand, few higher-tech formats deliver the lush sound quality of the vinyl record, and younger generations have recently returned to the format.

In other words, we shouldn’t jump at a new technology simply because it has advantages; only time and study will reveal its disadvantages and show the value of what we’ve left behind. *(Continued...)*

Op-Ed Samples

Which brings us back to paper. With strength and durability that could last thousands of years, paper can preserve information without the troubles we find when our most cherished knowledge is stuck on an unreadable floppy disk or lost deep in the “cloud.”

Paper textbooks can be stored and easily referenced on a shelf. Data are as easy to retrieve from paper as reaching across your desk for a textbook. They are easy to read and don’t require a battery or plug. Though the iPad and e-readers have increasingly better screen clarity, the idea that every time a person reads a book, newspaper or magazine in the near future they will require an energy source is frightening.

The digitization of information offers important benefits, including instant transmission, easy searchability and broad distribution. But before we shred the last of the paper textbooks, let us pause and remember those old streetcars, and how great it would be if we still had them around.

Justin B. Hollander is an assistant professor of urban and environmental policy and planning at Tufts University and the author of “Sunburnt Cities: The Great Recession, Depopulation and Urban Planning in the American Sunbelt.”

SAMPLE 8: READER COMMENTS, NEWSPAPER ONLINE EDITION



Americans must educate themselves to stand up to corrupt powers

Americans need to educate themselves with talk radio and the Internet, because America has many problems which could cause disastrous results.

Americans should work together to solve these problems and to protect their health and freedom. The Constitution has been ignored, so Americans’ basic rights are threatened. Americans should be alarmed, because the federal government is trying to spy on everyone, stop free speech and arrest people for no reason without a trial (National Defense Authorization Act). Americans should not take freedom for granted and should defend themselves against collusion between corrupt federal agencies and unscrupulous corporations. Super rich people like the Bilderbergers use their money to gain power and control over people. They own the Federal Reserve and other corporations that use the federal government to get unfair advantages for themselves.

Americans need to break free of the New World Order and revive the Constitution. For example, big drug companies have an unfair advantage because of corruption in the Federal Drug Administration. Together they promote unhealthy treatments and discourage herb and vitamin supplements.

Monsanto has an out-of-control monopoly on seeds, encouraged by corruption in the federal government. Monsanto promotes genetically modified crops which cause health problems in animals and people. Americans should ban GMO foods and genetically modified animals before the natural crops and animals disappear.

New technologies are probably hidden from the public by secretive agencies and companies to give themselves an unfair advantage. Inventors of new energy technologies get their labs raided. JFK complained that the CIA was out of control in the ‘60s. The Federal Reserve should be abolished. It is a privately owned bank that has an unconstitutional monopoly with too much power. Our entire economy could collapse because the Fed is printing too much money – look up hyperinflation. Don’t become helpless slaves of a ruthless global dictatorship!

Op-Ed Samples

Wolves: The experiment has failed

Enough of the wolves! Enough of the unnatural balance of biodiversity. Enough of the intense, heavy-handed, well-financed movement allowing wolves to proliferate rapidly, hence eating and eroding such a great elk and deer population.

Food banks are running low in Montana and nationwide, as published over the last few weeks. Wolves provide very little as a food source, continue to terrorize livestock, and have clearly taken away millions of dollars in revenue from our great state of Montana. Please support the anti-wolf movement. The failed wolf experiment can and should be corrected sooner rather than later.

Climate change: Thank Republicans for smoke

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan ripped the solar panels off the White House, setting the stage for 26-plus years of Republicans obstructing progress on climate change. The Bitterroot Valley set yet another record recently for consecutive days without rain.

While no single event is a confirmation of climate change, when added to the huge number of weather records being set – worldwide – ignoring the evidence is simply irresponsible. So when people in Montana wake up with coughs and sore throats – due to smoke from this extremely long forest fire season – they should all say: “Thanks Republicans ... FOR NOTHING!”

Cellphones: Police are talking and driving

Our daughter recently was given a ticket for talking on her phone while driving. We paid the \$123 fine knowing she was in the wrong.

However, in the past week we have witnessed three different police officers talking on their phones while driving. This seems extremely hypocritical and wrong. If they are going to give tickets to citizens for talking on their phones while driving they should not be doing the very same thing. I suggest the police department provide hands-free devices to its officers, pronto.

Middle East: Declared quiet war on whole world

Are we now free to roam around all the countries of the Middle East and the world assassinating this person and that with these drone missiles? Are we at war with Yemen? Pakistan absorbs drone strikes every day. Each drone sows revenge. Sort of like shooting neutrons into a uranium nucleus until the atom becomes unstable and blows apart.

What happened to due process of law? This joystick technology has revolutionized war and taken democratic process with it. It's cheap and lethal, leading the president to order more and more strikes in more and more countries on executive authority. Perceived tactical gains mask big strategic losses. Are we gaining allies from countries with this terror weapon in their skies?

We've declared a quiet war on the whole world, putting them on notice that the U.S. will target whomever they select, sovereignty be damned.

The framers of the Constitution were familiar with unbridled executive power and inserted Article I, Section 8, Subsection 11 to give war authority to Congress, where it would presumably be debated and the greater wisdom prevail. The U.S. suffers from an overweening presidency, but even more from a weak Congress.

Nothing would do more for political stability and the global economy than for the U.S. to honor and comply with its own laws when far from home. You're still Americans.

Op-Ed Samples

Opposition to Pat Williams' confirmation on Board of Regents about principle, not politics

A year ago, Pat Williams made a derogatory statement about the University of Montana football program. Just recently he was compelled to speak to the New York Times and ESPN about the UM football program recruiting “thugs” – and the “thuggery has got to stop.” Many people are disappointed in Pat Williams’ words.

As a proud University of Montana grad and a born and raised Montanan, I know the UM football program to be one of the top programs in the country – and one that has prided itself on character and academics. Board of Regent members should be ambassadors of this great state and spokesmen of higher education. Unfortunately, in this situation, Williams is neither.

Your inflammatory words about the University of Montana football program and its players have crossed the line. A petition to oppose the confirmation of Pat Williams to the Board of Regents is available to sign at Change.org. In the search box, type “oppose Pat Williams.” The petition will come up. I urge you to make your voice heard and sign this petition. This petition has absolutely nothing to do with politics; it has everything to do about principle!

Society: Who is fooling whom?

Hollywood, television and their wonderful elite glamorized single-parent families, and we have them; 42 percent of children are born into a single parent family and are 70 percent more likely to be raised in poverty.

Hollywood and television glamorized abhorrence of authority, and we have it. Control of children in many schools, along with learning, is nonexistent. Disrespect for police has become a badge of honor.

Hollywood and television have championed the diminishment of religion and moral standards, and they were successful, and we have crime, cheating and bullying at an unprecedented level.

Hollywood and television have redefined love and commitment to a “free” sexual encounter, they were successful, and we have rampant problems with sexually transmitted diseases and unwed, unsupported mothers and children. Hollywood and television have created an atmosphere where drug use was shown to be the way to be “in sync” with the fashionable elite, and they were successful. We have mothers addicted to hard drugs giving birth to babies who are addicted to hard drugs.

Hollywood, television and video game producers have glamorized violence and graphically given impressionable minds access to virtual scenarios that would make a seasoned warrior cringe. They are successful and we have Columbine, Colo.; Sandy Hook, Conn.; Tucson, Ariz.; Aurora, Colo.; and numerous other atrocities occurring with alarming frequencies.

The solutions tendered by the “elite” liberal thinkers revolve around the ban of a chunk of iron called a gun. The only problem I see is that the chunk of iron, if left alone by people affected by the above propaganda, would harm no one as it sat there slowly turning to rust.

Perhaps instead of looking at the Second Amendment, we should consider restraining the abuse of portions of the First Amendment!