Expressions of hate surge on campuses

BY tim barkel
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
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It's tempting to think of college campuses as islands of enlightenment, places where students embrace new ideas, people and cultures without the specter of hate hanging overhead.

Tempting. But it's not always the case, as demonstrated by events on campuses in Missouri and across the nation in recent months.

There were cotton balls scattered outside the black cultural center at the University of Missouri-Columbia. There have been racial slurs and a threat of lynching at St. Louis University. There was a swastika scrawled on a bathroom wall near a Jewish studies center at the University of Miami. There were death threats against black students left on a bathroom wall at Hocking College in Nelsonville, Ohio. And a white fraternity sparked an uproar at the University of California at San Diego, when it sponsored a ghetto-themed "Compton Cookout" to mock Black History Month.

To be sure, such events have always been part of the American landscape. But campus and diversity experts say they have seen a surge in the last year, poking yet another hole in what increasingly appears to be the myth of a postracial America.

"I guarantee that any given campus in the nation will have small incidents like these in a given year," said Darnell Cole, an associate professor of education at the University of Southern California who studies diversity issues.

But Cole and others see a correlation between a rise in campus hate crimes and the increasingly nasty exchanges taking place among our nation's politicians and leaders — on both sides of the political spectrum. It would be naive, they say, to not expect that discord to show up on campuses.

The nation's first black presidency, he said, has simply provided "kindling for the fire."

It's difficult to know just how much hate crime is occurring on college campuses. Justice Department data suggest that 12 percent of hate crimes occur on either college or school campuses. The numbers aren't broken down to show how much of it happens at universities. And experts say many instances of racial or sexual slurs are never reported.

Even so, they say incidents reported in the news and through their own professional organizations point to a pattern.
"At least anecdotally, there seems to have been an increase. But we don’t know for certain because reporting is so bad," said Brian Levin, director of the Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino.

A search for examples need go no further than St. Louis University, which has witnessed a series of incidents in recent months. Racial slurs have been found scrawled on walls or shouted at black students. A student in early February reported being threatened with lynching during a confrontation with another student. And a cross belonging to a support group for gays and lesbians was stolen.

University investigations have resulted in punishments in two incidents, but officials say privacy laws restrict how much they can say.

"All I can tell you is that two of the students who were involved are no longer enrolled at the university," said Kent Porterfield, the university’s vice president for student development.

Of course, not every incident with racial overtones rises to the level of a hate crime. But even the lesser transgressions can cause hurt feelings and, for some students, doubts about their future on the campus.

Such was the case for Erin Whitley, a freshman at SLU from Florissant, who learned earlier this year of a Facebook group for members of her dorm floor. Among the discussion threads on the social networking site was a post about things overheard on the floor: "There's nothing I hate more than black people," it said.

The comment was later deleted. And several people involved apologized to her in writing. But the damage was done: "I thought we were all really close. But then to see their true feelings. It made me feel really uncomfortable."

In some ways, racial or hate-driven episodes can push a campus closer together. At SLU, for example, students and administrators have rallied in support of the targeted groups with town hall meetings, gatherings, diversity forums and a "We Are All Billikens" campaign, asking students to sign a diversity pledge and wear a wristband.

The university's president, the Rev. Lawrence Biondi, issued a campuswide e-mail in early February condemning hateful speech and acts of intolerance.

And while some find reason for hope in the community's reaction, many say they know there is only so much that can be done to influence long-held prejudices.

"I wouldn't say they are really changing anyone's views," said Michael Harriss, student government association president at St. Louis University. "We don't expect them to pick up a wristband and suddenly feel enlightened."

Still, some students want more from administrators. Officials recently received a form letter e-mail from more than 120 students with a list of demands, including: the establishment of a 24-
hour hot line to assist students who have been threatened; a campuswide e-mail alert system to let everyone know when an incident has occurred; and a requirement that all students take a social justice class.

"They hear us, but I don't see any action taking place," said Ono Oghre-Ikanone, president of the Black Student Alliance.

Porterfield said that administrators are reviewing the demands and that many will be addressed. But he urged students to give administrators time: "Sometimes the process takes longer than some people would like it to."

One of the more frustrating aspects of these incidents, from a college administrator's viewpoint, is the fact that colleges are composed of students with a wide range of backgrounds — not all of them good.

"Sometimes people think of college campuses as these isolated and protected environments, when in fact they are a microcosm of our broader society," said Roger Worthington, the chief diversity officer at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

The Columbia campus had its own brush with racism in the early-morning hours of Feb. 26, when two white students scattered cotton balls outside the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. The students — one is from the St. Louis area — were arrested and suspended.

As was the case at SLU — and virtually every other campus where such events have happened — the incident was followed by calls for unity. There was a daylong event organized by students, along with a town hall meeting attended by top university officials.

That the community rallied in support of black students has done a lot to keep emotions in check, said Kristen Taylor, a sophomore from O'Fallon, Ill., and member of the Legion of Black Collegians. "It didn't just affect the black students on campus," Taylor said. "We were all embarrassed that this would happen on our campus."

Lori Brown, associate professor of sociology at North Carolina's Meredith College, said campus dynamics are further complicated by students of different backgrounds not always understanding one another and how painful their actions might be.

"I do think a lot of white America doesn't understand that you can't play around with things like lynching," Brown said. "There's just no humor in that."
COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri system is expanding its conflict of interest policy for research involving human subjects.

The old policy attempted to limit outside financial gain for individual researchers. The expanded policy also covers institutional conflicts of interest at the university's four campuses in Columbia, Kansas City, Rolla and St. Louis.

A 12-member task force helped create the policy by reviewing similar rules at what President Gary Forsee's office calls a "short list" of other research universities.

The university says the new policy identifies potential areas of institutional conflict, such as gifts or grants from a company whose product is the subject of university research. It also identifies procedures on how to manage the conflict.
What’s age got to do with it?

Rachel Fernandes, Apr 6, 2010, 12.00am IST

Urmila Matondkar, Tabu, Sandhya Mridul, Manisha Koirala, Sonia Garware, Rakshanda Khan, Raell Padamsee, Sakshi Tanwar — what’s it that these ladies have in common? They are all successful women who are still single and taking their own time to ‘settle down’.

It is a known fact today that an increasing number of women are choosing to push back the marriage age, some even till their late 30s and early 40s. The reasons range right from focus on career to not meeting the right life partner or even just a plain hesitation to give up a lifestyle one has grown accustomed to. “With globalisation women are seeing futures and careers. Also, they are evolving faster than men and hence, finding it difficult to find compatible life partners. To put it simply, we are becoming choosier and our choices becoming increasingly limited,” says psychotherapist, Dr Varkha Chulani adding that quite a few women also prefer living the singleton life.

But though late marriages are slowly becoming a norm, a larger part of society still looks down on these older single women. And it’s not just in India. A new study conducted at the University of Missouri has found that women who have decided to stay away from the aisle still face the social stigma associated with being single. According to the study — titled ‘I’m a Loser, I’m Not Married, Let’s Just All Look at Me’ — even though there has been a definite increase in the number of single women, familial and societal messages given to women who are not married by their mid-30’s remained. Larry Ganong, co-chair of Human Development and Family Studies in the College of Human Environmental Sciences said, “We found that never-married women’s social environments are characterised by pressure to conform to the conventional life pathway.” In the study, experts noticed that women between the age bracket of 25-35 felt the most stigma, which may be attributed to the fact that being single is more acceptable before the age of 25. However, beyond that age, they feel more scrutinised by friends, family members and others.

Clinical psychologist Dr Kanan Khatau Chikhal explains this stigma saying it’s all about the culture of the society one lives in. “Culture plays a great role in the acceptance of certain prototypes or behavioural patterns in society and culture evolves over time. In our culture it’s a given thing that post marriage, it’s time to start a family. Having a normal, healthy baby has a certain age bracket post which the risks of abnormalities increase. Naturally, with evolution, that age bracket too is increasing. Earlier, a pregnancy post 30 was considered an elderly pregnancy, but not anymore. However, orthodox society still resists accepting this. It’s mainly the adults of
the old school of thought who tend to stigmatise older unmarried women.”

Psychologist and relationship expert Rachna Kothari opines that it is as much a stigma for the parents as it is for the unmarried women. “When a daughter is not married, and especially if she has crossed her 30s, parents get increasingly worried about how she will manage and who will look after her as she grows older. Their main worry is that if their daughter keeps pushing marriage plans forward, she will end up being an older parent. Parents tend to want their daughters to be settled down before anything happens to them. Also, they have to bear with the so-called ‘in good intentions’ comments that relatives, neighbours and friends keep passing.”
Sewer charges

City struggles to refine quandary

By Henry J. Waters III

For much longer than city administrators would like to remember, they have been trying to finalize a fair policy to charge the University of Missouri for sewer services.

For most users, sewer charges can be assessed pointedly on those with water meters. On the MU campus, more than 8,100 sewer hookups exist with no associated water meter, so in the past MU has paid one flat rate as if it were a single sewer user.

Recognizing the inequity of this arrangement, several years ago the university agreed to pay catch-up installments over 10 years to close an estimated $500,000 shortfall. Recently, city Public Works Director John Glascock proposed a different arrangement. The university would be charged a fee for all of its 185 water accounts at a 20 percent “wholesale” discount with a more explicit understanding the university would maintain its extensive network of sewer pipes and pay more attention to leakage, an expensive frailty of sewer systems.

Glascock revealed the university already has been paying some $225,000 a year for maintenance, a factor not taken into account when the $500,000 arrears were calculated. Moreover, designating the university as a wholesale customer is the same treatment given the Boone County Regional Sewer District, and Glascock likes the consistency.

Of course, this latest fix does not satisfy everyone, particularly some apartment owners who think they are discriminated against compared with the campus.

It’s easy to criticize the city for its earlier failure to adequately assess MU for sewer services, but given the awkwardness of assessing sewer charges on campus and today’s diligent effort to devise an amended policy fair to all hands, city hall deserves some slack. The problem is on the table, and visible repairs are in process.

One can make the argument MU deserves favoritism for its huge economic boost to the community. The city has made favorable infrastructure arrangements with other large users deemed economically advantageous.

Provision of sewer services is the single most powerful tool the city has to accommodate or deny growth. Nobody would argue this leverage should be used to stymie MU, but on the other hand, MU receives valuable sewer services from the city and should pay a fair share. To this end, the university ante has been upped in recent months.
City hall professionals are best equipped to wrestle this monster. I believe they are getting the beast under control and deserve credit for today's action rather than criticism for yesterday's error.
Demystifying the cardiac stress test

Cardiac stress tests, also called exercise or treadmill tests, are commonly used to find evidence of blockages in the arteries of the heart. But they’re not 100% reliable.

Dr. Marc Wallack routinely passed his cardiac exercise stress test with flying colors. He was, after all, a veteran marathon runner with respectable cholesterol and blood pressure numbers.

But as many heart disease patients discover, a treadmill analysis often isn't enough. Six months after a "normal" stress test, surgeons cracked open Wallack's chest for quadruple bypass surgery. An artery was 95% blocked.

"I thought I understood heart disease," said Wallack, a New York City surgical oncologist who has a strong family history of the illness. But his most recent stress test looked fine. So like many men, he convinced himself that the chest pain was merely heartburn.

Cardiac stress tests, also called exercise or treadmill tests, are commonly used to find evidence of blockages in the arteries of the heart. They're noninvasive—require no surgery or needles—are as easy as walking up a slight hill on a treadmill or riding a stationary bike and can be done in a doctor's office.

For people with chest pain, a positive result can determine whether the problem is heart-related. Stress tests can also evaluate heart risk before a surgery or after a heart attack. And doctors use them to jump-start exercise programs for sedentary patients.

But accuracy is a concern. Exercise stress tests are only about 60% effective, meaning they miss 40% of the problems, said cardiothoracic surgeon Kathy Magliato, director of cardiac services at St. John's Health Center in Santa Monica.

They're even less accurate for women than for men, possibly because when women have heart disease, the smaller branches of the blood vessels are often affected, Magliato said. Breast tissue can trigger false negatives. Other factors, including sex or stress hormones or estrogen's effect on the cells of the heart muscles, can also come into play.

"We don't have the perfect test for heart disease," Magliato said.

The dilemma

The high rate of false positive and false negative results doesn't just add to a patient's anxiety; it often leads to more invasive procedures and the unnecessary use of medications, said Dr. Michael LeFevre, a professor of family and community medicine at the University
of Missouri School of Medicine in Columbia. The wrong results can also give people a false sense of security or lead to a delay in treatment.

As a result, the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force does not recommend treadmill testing for those with a low risk. For high-risk populations, there's not enough evidence for — or against — screening adults with treadmill testing, the agency said.

After someone has taken a stress test, "a cascade of things can happen, and we don't have the information that people lived longer or better because we initiated the cascade," said LeFevre, who helped write the task force's 2004 guidelines.

Stress tests can effectively show whether the heart's arteries are 70% narrowed or more. But heart attacks can arise from arteries that are less than 50% blocked. This seems counterintuitive: Doesn't the artery gradually narrow because of progressive fat deposits that block the artery until blood is cut off?

Not always. Heart attacks arise from what cardiologists call a "vulnerable plaque," which can be thought of as a pimple in the artery. These pimples can suddenly erupt — no one knows why — releasing chemicals from the artery that trigger a blood clot. "It's possible for a plaque to evolve from a 20% narrowing to a complete blood clot — causing a heart attack — in a matter of minutes," said preventive cardiologist Steve Devries, an associate professor at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

The only way to uncover the pimples or large fat deposits in the arteries is through an invasive procedure called an angiogram, in which a thin ultrasound tube is inserted into the artery of the heart. But even this procedure isn't foolproof; moreover, it would never be given to a runner without symptoms.

**Your best bet**

Given the shortcomings of the treadmill test, the task force, which is reviewing the current guidelines, says prevention is a key strategy. That means reducing the risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and high cholesterol.

It's also critical to know the symptoms: chest pain, pressure, tightness or unusual shortness of breath that lasts more than five to 10 minutes. If the symptoms occur when you exercise and dissipate when you stop, it's a sign something is wrong.

For 50% of women with heart disease, however, chest pain never appears. Instead, they're fatigued or have indigestion or upper abdominal or jaw pain.

Wallack, who ran a marathon after his open-heart surgery, still gets his annual stress test. But it's even more important to pick the right cardiologist, he said. "If you have a heart history, are hypertensive or have high cholesterol or diabetes, choose carefully," he said. "A cardiologist becomes a key person in your life."
'Alternative spring breaks' catching on in college

Desire to make difference has students going around world.

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The skin disorder left the 2-year-old looking like a burn victim with withered flesh and missing hair.

"She was so happy, the happiest little thing ever. She was my favorite," said Elise Stefan, an Evangel University nursing student and part of a 21-member team that went to India on a medical trip over spring break.

"It definitely confirmed that this is what I want to do," she said.

While still rare, Stefan is among a growing number of college students participating in alternative spring breaks.

Instead of partying, they volunteer. Some travel overseas to work with child prostitutes, others help out at soup kitchens or restore America's parks. There are many reasons why this appeals to college students and benefits to the community where they volunteer and their hometown.

Interest surging

Interest in alternative spring breaks at Evangel University has more than doubled in a decade.

In 2000, Evangel had 80 participants, and 170 in 2010.

That's a national trend, said Jill Piacitelli, executive director of Break Away, an organization that works with about a third of the nation's alternative spring break programs.

In 2000, Break Away tracked an estimated 15,000 students going on alternative breaks. In 2010, it was nearly 72,000.

"We've seen a consistent 10-15 percent growth rate each year in the number of trips per campus program and in the number of overall students participating," she said.
There are more students than placements.

At Student Conservation Association, a national student conservation corps, spokesman Kevin Hamilton said within days of posting details of its 2010 spring break, they received five times as many applications as there were positions. They had to take down the listing.

The University of Missouri received 200 applications for 100 slots, said Elizabeth Augustine, president of Alternative Spring Break.

Whether or not a program grows seems to depend in part on how it's organized.

Some schools pay part or none of the cost and those programs seem more likely to grow. Other schools, like Drury University, pay for the trips, so there's typically a limited budget and the number of students doesn't fluctuate much. Drury recently took 13 students to Los Angeles.

Student Union Board adviser Allison Griffith, a sponsor, said they worked at an urban outreach center, fed people a hot meal, handed out groceries and helped assemble bunk beds for families at risk of losing their children.

Sophomore Garrett Hillman says the trip taught him the obstacles people face living in a city like L.A.

Aside from finding a useful way to spend spring break, he thinks the travel aspect appeals to students.

"Especially at Drury, since we're so interested in global community," he said.

Related

A lasting impression

Before she graduates, Allison Koch, a senior at the College of the Ozarks, wanted to spend a spring break volunteering. She joined fellow students at a Navajo reservation in March.

"For me, it was an opportunity to serve and give back instead of traditional spring break of going to the beach and getting a tan or shopping," Koch said. "It was a team-building experience."

Chuck Zehnder, dean of campus ministries at the college, said they spend days working on construction projects at a Navajo reservation and nights tutoring and mentoring students in a boarding school.

"They are committed to reaching people. They just want to show others the love of Christ," Zehnder said.

Michael Tenneson, professor of biology at Evangel, led the medical trip to India. Students shadowed and assisted various medical professionals.
They gain valuable experience and the skills they learn can help them change patients' lives in the future: physically, spiritually and emotionally. "It's a holistic encounter," Tenneson said.

Dr. Luke Shaw, second-year resident in family practice at Cox Health, understands. He took an alternative spring break trip to Honduras as an Evangel student.

"It helped me shape what type of medicine I wanted to do and really helped solidify why I wanted to do it. I'm doing family practice today because of the trips I've been on. A lot of topics interested me, but I didn't feel I could do as much in medical missions by specializing," Shaw said.

On her trip, Stefan learned the importance of compassion. It's a lesson she'll carry into her nursing career.

While some criticize Americans for going overseas instead of working domestically, there is knowledge they can gain abroad that they can't here.

At Missouri State University, 11 students spent their break on international service-learning trips in El Salvador and Nicaragua. These are credit classes and curriculum-based. They are not the same as alternative spring breaks, although some benefits are similar.

Dietitian students went to El Salvador where they could study malnutrition at a level that they would not be able to locally, said Elizabeth Strong, associate director, citizenship and service-learning.

Agriculture students who went to Nicaragua can learn completely different farming techniques and be exposed to another culture, she said.

Carmen Boyd, dietetics program director who led the trip to El Salvador, said the hands-on training gives them more experience in a week than a semester in a classroom.

For MSU's alternative spring break, students volunteered locally, said Jeremy Schenk, director of student engagement at MSU.

Schenk would love to see MSU expand its alternative spring break, but with budget cuts, it's unlikely right now.

The interest is there, though.

"There is a passion to tackle social-justice issues when you provide that opportunity," he said.

**Past disasters inspire**

So when did young people become so civic-minded?
After Hurricane Katrina, a lot of schools launched spring breaks around disaster relief, says Samantha Giacobozzi, programs director for Break Away.

Trips to New Orleans are still a staple, she said.

An increasing number of colleges offer or encourage such trips, she said. Overall, young people are volunteering more, too.

The number of young adults, ages 16-24, who volunteer rose from 7.8 million in 2007 to 8.2 million in 2008, according to Corporation for National & Community Service in Washington D.C., which keeps a comprehensive collection of volunteer information.

This benefits the country and communities.

People who volunteer are more likely to donate to charitable causes than nonvolunteers, according to that research.

Before the Drury students left for L.A., they spent a day in Springfield volunteering with Habitat for Humanity to get free tickets from Disney's "Give a Day, Get a Day" promotion.

And while MSU students helped with hurricane relief in the past, the past two years they have volunteered locally.

"Alternative spring breaks in service or mission work have become more popular because (students) have been able to experience something sweeter than self-indulgence," Koch said.

The skin disorder left the 2-year-old looking like a burn victim with withered flesh and missing hair.
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Turkey harvest will be moderate this season, experts say
by kathy etling
SPECIAL TO THE POST-DISPATCH
04/03/2010

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State turkey biologists for both the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources issued nearly identical forecasts for the spring turkey hunting season. The forecast is for more of the same, meaning estimated harvests well below those from boom production years.

"This spring's highlight is that there was a slight increase in poult production, but it was mostly limited to the southern part of the state," said Tom Dailey, the Missouri department's top turkey biologist. "The low light is that poult production continues to be poor" in what was once the powerhouse turkey producing region of northeastern Missouri.

Dailey said he expects a spring harvest of about 44,000 birds, about the same number taken last spring when hunters bagged a slightly better-than-anticipated harvest of 44,713 birds.

"The harvest estimate reflects the negative effect of the lousy production season weather in 2007 and 2008," Dailey said. "In both years, the result of that inclement weather was record low poult production. Even though production improved in 2009 in the southern part of the state, hunters would be well advised to shoot for quality by targeting 2- and 3-year old birds, and don't hammer the jakes."

"Too much rain in the north caused another year of poor production there, but turkeys are still abundant in many areas," Dailey added.

Tom Micetich, the Illinois department's top turkey biologist, said, "The 2009 Illinois brood surveys indicated that production was off — had declined — for the third straight year. The state's prior 10-year mean poult-per-hen index for the years 1999-2008 stood at 2.71. The 2009 index was 2.08, which was identical to the 2008 figure."

Illinois turkey hunting regions that registered higher poult production indices than the statewide average were Regions 2 (2.44), 4 (2.18) and 5 (2.31), Micetich said.

Record-breaking cool and wet weather during the critical egg-laying, nest-tending and poult-hatching period of April through June of the past few years has significantly reduced production in many areas.
The first severe blow to production in recent years was the 2007 Easter freeze. That was followed by heavy rain and cooler-than-normal temperatures in both 2008 and 2009. Spring green-up was delayed all three years, meaning the high-protein forage of emerging insects upon which turkey hens depend was basically absent.

**University of Missouri climatologist Pat Guinan referred to the springs of 2008 and 2009 as periods of "unprecedented wetness."**

Dailey said, "Turkeys and other ground-nesters such as quail and pheasants suffered major reductions in chick production. Heavy rains led to drowned nests and poults, poult hypothermia and increased predation."

Dailey said rabbits also suffered poor production.

Historically, this spring marks the 50th anniversary of Missouri's modern spring turkey hunting season.

**YOUTH TURKEY SEASON**

Missouri's Youth Turkey Season is slated for the weekend of April 10-11. The season is open to youth hunters from ages 6 to 15 on the first day.

The permit for the Youth Turkey Season will cost $8.50 for both residents and nonresidents. The cost is 50 percent of a regular Missouri spring turkey hunting tag.

Young hunters who shoot a turkey during that weekend will not be allowed to hunt during the entire first week of the regular Missouri spring turkey hunting season.

**TAG PRICE CHANGE**

The cost of a Missouri Spring Turkey tag for nonresidents has increased to $190 from $175. Reduced-cost landowner permits are no longer available to hunters who do not live in the state.
The North Face and The South Butt have come to an agreement.

Details of the settlement in the trademark infringement lawsuit are sparse, though.

"All I'm permitted to say is that the parties have resolved their differences amicably," said Albert Watkins, South Butt's usually loquacious lawyer. "And little Jimmy Winkelmann is currently enjoying himself a great deal down in the sunny climes of Panama City, Fla., giving away South Butt products to frolicking spring breakers."

Calls to Michael Kahn and David Roodman of Bryan Cave, local lawyers for The North Face, were not returned.

Winkelmann, 19, of Ladue, created The South Butt LLC in 2007 while a student at Chaminade College Prep. He claimed it was a parody of The North Face, a brand of trendy outdoor wear. Winkelmann is now a freshman at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Winkelmann had made only about $5,000 in profits off the clothing line as of last August, when he received a letter from The North Face, threatening legal action unless he stopped selling his products immediately. According to The North Face, Winkelmann was confusing consumers.

Winkelmann and a team of marketers publicized the letter and marketed it as a case of a multibillion dollar corporation bullying a teenager who was merely trying to make money for college. Watkins and Winkelmann steadfastly maintained that The South Butt was a parody and that no one was going to confuse it with The North Face.

At one point, Winkelmann offered to sell The South Butt to The North Face for $1 million, then rescinded the offer as popularity of The South Butt grew.

The federal court had ordered mediation in the case. It was to commence Friday, but the parties came to an agreement late Thursday evening, said Watkins. The irony that it happened on April Fool's Day was not lost on him.

"One cannot help but embrace the irony that has been pervasive throughout this case," he said.

When asked if South Butt products were still for sale, Watkins said, "Why yes, they are." The company's website at www.thesouthbutt.com confirmed this.