

Jonathan Swift claimed that people see a reflection of everybody's face but their own in satirical portrayal - that writing offends only those who recognize themselves.¹ This introduction and apologia (but not in any sense an apology) addresses the concerns of journalists who often worry about damaging the profession to which they have given most of their lives.

Writing in a satirical genre requires the writer to become completely vulnerable. Many writers cannot expose themselves through insecurity and fear of retribution if they use their First Amendment rights to state their opinion publicly. Political silence then allows absolute control by those who have power over those who have none.

Journalists often endanger themselves when they expose malfeasance by powerful people who belong to societal elites. These groups often have a powerful influence over those who control the media. Investigative reporters often find themselves abandoned when politically correct peers, worried about their jobs, avert their eyes in wilful blindness and even vilify them publicly.

When the three branches of government (state or federal employees) behave in a manner contrary to the expectations of those who elected or appointed them then the fourth estate comes into play. As members of that estate, reporters expose malfeasance. They investigate, verify, and validate facts then write about transgressions of law and public policy by officials and quasi-public servants. That remains their primary function.

The First Amendment to the US Constitution protects investigative reporters against prior restraint and prohibitions on genre or content. It prevents those who find their writing disquieting from gagging them. The law determines that public officials and the judiciary, whose life and behavior result in public focus or interest, must remain accountable and not try to silence members of the press corps. Moreover, satire and cartoons define as protected speech under the First Amendment even if the target does not appreciate the humor.

Satire has historically ranked as a dominant rhetoric for combating tyranny especially when applied in closed societies. Upon self-recognition, tyrants resort to anger, resentment, violence, stupidity, and litigation. That describes the behavior of directors, management, in-house thugs, and trial court judges, connected with Council House, Seattle.² They apparently did not like their reflection so they have used their virtually unlimited wealth to try to destroy the mirror and to manipulate the legal system.

Journalists must remain free to disclose all that they know. They have a duty to follow their intellect to logical conclusions then write about them using whichever genre they choose or find most effective. Published material, whatever the medium, must not suffer any restraint.

Democratic governments must not censor the press except for a momentary and clearly defined crisis. Moreover, they know that a writer doubles or trebles the power of his writing when a judge imposes silence. Historically, tyrants have found that fettered words become terrible words and

that enforced silence through solitary confinement consolidates thought. Consequently, tyrants with any intelligence do not try to gag journalists.

The infamous Roman Emperor, C. Claudius Nero, who apparently instigated the great fire that destroyed most of Rome, recited his own poetry and played his lyre while enjoying the spectacle. A bloody-minded man, relentless tyrant, and evil-doer of extraordinary cruelty, he blamed Christians for all his problems - the abundant arrogance and monstrous indifference to the suffering of tenants at Council House matches that behavior.

During the same era, lawyer-satirist Decimus Junius Juvenalis (Juvenal) denounced the corruption and extravagance of the privileged classes in Rome. He wrote in *Satires*: "Bread and circuses keep the Roman citizenry pacified" - a typical Council House ruse to control tenants. However, in so doing, Council House directors and their tame judges overlooked another Juvenalian observation - *difficile est saturam non scribere* - it's hard not to write satire.

Readers have no fear if they have not attacked the satirist or committed crimes. In most cases, the targets of satire initiate it by their own behavior and statements. Satirists patiently wait for tyrants to behave with avarice and to cover up their unlawful activity then expose their deeds. The satirist recognizes and accepts that the truth, by its very nature, often inflames the sensibilities of others. It especially inflames those people who identify with the negative aspects of exposure.

Ethical writers thoroughly research their targets before writing about them to insure truthful representation. The targets seldom take the trouble to understand the crimes they commit and use their power and wealth to respond with frivolous legal action. They probably fear disclosure of their machination and a loss of the power that they have usurped through intimidation.

This appellate action will hopefully redress the judicial imbalance. The appellate decision will probably protect at least a dozen Council House tenants from retribution. They have had the courage to speak out and continue to suffer personal abuse, unlawful eviction, or incarceration, which has already resulted in at least one alleged homicide by abuse. Witness intimidation remains the order of the day.

The ongoing situation likens intellectual rape. Societal prejudices and the need for absolute control deny due process of law. As in many physical rape cases, some attorneys and trial court judges inflict additional trauma with their bizarre and abusive behavior regardless of guilt or innocence (the Kobe Bryant case comes to mind).

A judicial rape has occurred in a trial court set up to protect victims of abuse. A trial court judge has denied legal representation and discovery and made decisions based more on political affiliation and judicial bias instead of law. He encouraged frivolous litigants to silence a journalist.

Neo-absolutism describes a pernicious totalitarianism that probably surpasses the evils of the past. Undefined, it relies upon cultism (as opposed to partisan politics) and results in the mediocrity that generally exists in trial courts. In a partisan situation, individuals have a choice

between a variety of evils. Absolutely no choice exists in this new totalitarian environment especially when it applies to closed societies like senior citizen housing.

Nmesis.

1. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings* (New York, NY: The Modern Library), 1958, 368.
2. National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) formed a non-profit corporation then built and later refurbished Council House, a residence for senior citizens on Capitol Hill, Seattle. They obtained federal financial assistance through HUD for the original construction and rehabilitation.

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