

## Marquette University, WIAA apply muzzles

*An unusually mild winter gave way to a spring marred only by the most insane presidential campaign in memory, as candidates turned campaign events into infomercials and discussed the size of their male appendages. Both parties seem determined to nominate their most unpopular candidates, setting the stage for what arguably could be the ugliest political face-off since Aaron Burr shot Alexander Hamilton. But at least that was over quickly and is now a hit Broadway musical. There is scant reason to think this year's campaign will be so mercifully short or fondly remembered.*

### A notable anniversary

Wisconsin marked the fifth anniversary of the passage of Act 10, the law that limited the collective bargaining powers of public sector unions. Despite the dire prediction of doom from the unionistas and their allies, the



state refused to collapse. Instead, Act 10 has saved taxpayers more than \$5 billion, a MacIver Institute analysis estimates. School

districts — including the Milwaukee Public Schools, which at one time faced a massive pension crisis — have been able to add new initiatives and positions even in the face of reduced state aid. Public employee unions, alas, are mere shadows of their former selves as thousands of government workers — given the freedom to choose for the first time — have opted not to pay dues to union bosses.

### Snowflake update

As colleges braced for more protests from hypersensitive and easily offended activists, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association weighed in, reminding member schools of its rules to protect the tender sensibilities of student athletes. A December email from WIAA cited recent “unsporting behavior” by students chanting things like “fundamentals,” “sieve,” “airball,” “we can’t hear you”



and “scoreboard.”

What strikes us is the extraordinary impulse here to bubble-wrap kids and micromanage even crowd behavior. Sportsmanship is an important value, but the WIAA “guidance” embraced the clear assumption that high school athletes are such frail and fragile flowers that they have to be protected against even relatively benign feedback from the stands. If student athletes can’t handle hearing “fundamentals” being chanted, we suspect that attending a college or pro sporting event would come as a rude shock.

No wonder we have raised a generation of snowflakes.

### Congrats, Marquette

Speaking of snowflakes, Marquette University once again received national recognition of a dubious sort. In January, Marquette President **Mike Lovell** won the third runner-up medal for worst college president of 2015, which is no mean feat, given the stiff competition. Think of it as the Super Bowl of academic awfulness, cowardice and unprincipled appeasement.



The Minding the Campus website awarded the coveted worst president award to Yale University’s Peter Salovey, who “committed millions of dollars to appease racial protesters with a basket of goodies likely to enlarge the stature of the ‘diversity’ movement on campus and its drive for mandatory courses in race and ethnicity.”

But Lovell was very much a contender. According to the website:

“A student who opposed gay marriage attempted to discuss the issue in a philosophy class, but the graduate student who taught the class refused to allow it. She said that the gay marriage issue had been settled and that class

discussion of it would hurt the feelings of gays. **John McAdams**, a Marquette professor and conservative gadfly, wrote about the incident on his blog, which resulted in hostile mail and reported death threats to the graduate student.



McAdams was suspended (though Marquette quibbles about the word), forbidden to set foot on campus, and still remains suspended more than a year later. In discussing the case, President Lovell has talked generally about disrespect and harassment. What he hasn't said is why the Catholic position on gay marriage can't be discussed in class on a Catholic campus."

Lovell's award was no fluke. In February, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) named Marquette one of the 10 Worst Colleges for Free Speech in 2016, the second year in a row. Again, Marquette was singled out for its attempt to fire McAdams. "Unless it wants to take up permanent residence in this feature," FIRE wrote, "Marquette must resolve McAdams' case and return him to the classroom without further delay." That seems unlikely, given Marquette's decision in March to suspend McAdams through the fall semester, which we suspect will not end well for either the university or its donors.

### The Spotted Cow bust

As a nation, we may not be able to protect our borders, but at least we can zealously enforce our laws against such crimes as selling Spotted Cow beer across state lines. In February, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* reported:

"In an unusual bust, undercover state investigators caught Maple Tavern illegally selling a beloved Wisconsin beer. ... The (Maple Grove, Minn.) bar had tapped kegs of New Glarus Spotted Cow, a farmhouse ale that can only be sold in Wisconsin — a felony offense. ... (Emphasis added.)



"Beer manufactured by New Glarus is distributed only in Wisconsin. The company is not a licensed manufacturer of alcoholic beverages in Minnesota, so it's illegal to distribute New Glarus beer to a retail establishment. Neither the bar's manager nor Maple Tavern are (sic) licensed to transport or import the alcoholic beverage into Minnesota."

Lest we be tempted to mock the zealous gendarmes of Minnesota, we should note that in Wisconsin, it is a crime to sell homemade cookies without a license — and that doing so could lead to a \$1,000 fine and up to six months in jail.

### Unsuppressing the vote

For years, the left and the media have warned that requiring photo IDs to vote would somehow suppress the vote. That theory was put to the test this year, and the results were impressive. "Can we finally put this myth to bed?" asked Right Wisconsin's Collin Roth.

"After years of lawsuits, whining and fear-mongering about mass disenfranchisement, Wisconsin's first statewide election with voter ID saw a significant turnout surge. In the hotly contested three-way state Supreme Court race, turnout surged more than 55% above 2013 totals and 34% above 2011 totals."

Indeed, Roth noted, the only notable story about the voter ID law involved a Milwaukee man who spent 10 minutes silently protesting the law. "The protester then got up, produced his valid driver's license and proceeded to vote."

### The silence of the pols

In January, Milwaukee got its annual dose of dismal scores on the state's standardized tests.

"In grades three through eight, 27% of MPS students scored proficient or advanced in language arts and 17% did so in math on the Badger Exam/DLM (Dynamic Learning Maps). On ACT scores, 22% of juniors were sufficient or advanced in language arts, with a score 20 or higher, and 10% did as well in math, a score of 22 or higher," the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported.

As one savvy local observer reacted, "Anyone who does not find these results a scandalous outrage is part of the problem. Sadly, that group will include nearly everyone in official positions of leadership in this community." Indeed, in the race for Milwaukee county executive, challenger Chris Larson accused incumbent Chris Abele of actually wanting to rescue failing city schools, a charge that Abele adamantly denied, vowing not to take control of any school. Mayor Tom Barrett, as is his wont, said nothing at all.

And such was the state of political debate in Milwaukee as 2016 warmed up. [WI](#)

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