

My hats are off to *CityBeat* now and in the future for telling the truth about our gay community. The fact that Kathy Y. Wilson referred to me in her article as a black man speaks volumes; I've been called much worse in Cincinnati. — *Letter from Roy Ford responding to a CityBeat story on racial tension within the local gay/lesbian community (Feb. 14)*

Congratulations to *CityBeat* for establishing a new "concentric circle" to your comfort zone by naming Angela Leisure your 2001 Person of the Year. While you've never shied away from what might not be the popular view, you really did it this time!

— *Letter from N.E. Thomas praising our choice for Person of the Year (Feb. 28)*

April Fool's Day came early this year for *CityBeat* editors. Maybe the staff was ingesting cocaine and alcohol when discussing how great Angela Leisure is. She's so great a mother that she allowed her son to have multiple warrants for arrest and apparently approved of his running from the police.

— *Letter from Albert Zellhuber criticizing our choice for Person of the Year (Feb. 28)*

Cincinnati's, it's time to get out of your cushy comfort zone, put down your cheese coney for a minute and do the unthinkable: Get an open mind.

— *Letter from Rick Chambers (March 14)*

When corporations threaten the welfare of downtown, it's called "negotiation tactics." When boycott groups do it, it's called "economic terrorism." But the city has shown before that it can squeeze win-win outcomes from thorny impasses. It doesn't make sense not to try here as well — on issues that certainly are more important than whether Cincinnati retains an upscale store or a professional football franchise.

— *Editorial on the economic boycott of downtown (April 4)*

Citizens, unless they've been arrested or detained, have every right to run, skateboard, skip, hop or leap away from police. Police, on the other hand, have no right whatsoever to shoot citizens for "improper" behavior, and certainly not for running away.

— *Letter from Elise R. Hendrick on the one-year anniversary of Timothy Thomas' death at the hands of Cincinnati Police (April 11)*

Our editorial mission hasn't changed in the wake of this ban, even if our movie-viewing habits have.

— *Editorial on CityBeat's reinstating the Esquire and Mariemont theaters' movie times despite remaining banned for editorial coverage (April 18)*

I appreciate the strength of Kathy Y. Wilson's spirit and the insight inherent in her voice. In a city rotting under the weight of racism and political corruption, her presence is more significant than it might first appear because it gives those of us surrounded by darkness the assurance that there are, in fact, a few people who see with clear vision and are unafraid to speak the truth — even when threatened by the oppressors.

— *Letter from Jason Claudon praising Wilson's column, Your Negro Tour Guide (May 23)*

Next year, if a Women's Issue is still *de rigueur*, please give thoughtful readers more than just the self-congratulatory girl gab fest we cringed through this year. Pajama parties are for bad TV networks. A little skepticism as well as some critical input from men would make a difference, as would the assumption — apparently foreign to the *CityBeat* ladies — that women are capable of surviving some honest scrutiny.

— *Letter from Sean McDonald criticizing the Women's Issue, edited by Kathy Y. Wilson (May 30)*

Do I want my tax dollars to pay for political campaigns? Absolutely! Then elected officials will report to us voters instead of the deep pockets who write campaign checks with three or four zeroes.

— *Letter from Kathy Helmbock regarding Jene Galvin's column on campaign finance reform (June 6)*

In a culture where journalists consider themselves "media celebrities" who engage in self-censorship and self-image impression management, Gregory Flannery's cover story was an honest and elegant piece of true journalism. His insider knowledge helped us secular plebs comprehend some of the dynamics of an organization managed by people not full of love and grace but blocked by their own sanctimonious arrogance and ignorance.

— *Letter from Pete Grady regarding Greg Flannery's story on the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandal (June 13)*

Bob Woodiwiss hit a home run with his fittingly titled cover story "Death in the Afternoon." When I wasn't laughing I was crying, because every distilled, frank word in the entire story is true. Pro sports have turned fun into greed.

— *Letter from John W. Behle regarding Bob Woodiwiss' first-person account of attending a Reds game July 4*

Goodbye, Stonewall. It was inevitable, I guess. You were in our hearts for almost 20 years, but no more. A few "activists" took it to play with, and when it doesn't exist anymore they'll move on to the next poor unsuspecting group and destroy them, too.

— *Letter from Darryl Dravaland regarding a story on strife among Stonewall Cincinnati board members (July 18)*

There's really only one silver lining to a tragedy — the hope that people learn something from it so it never happens again. Purposefully refusing to learn lessons from the 1979 Who deaths is more disrespectful of those who died than moving on with efforts to improve Cincinnati.

— *Editorial supporting the return of festival seating to U.S. Bank Arena (Aug. 15)*

I think if we had "Afro-town" here in Over-the-Rhine like New York City has "Little Italy" or Detroit has "Greek-town" or San Francisco has "Chinatown," it would be great. Go for it. We need a good, classy African-American place to eat and dance for all Cincinnati's to enjoy. Just do it. If it's a success, we all win. What is Lynch waiting for? Put your neck on the line. Invest in your heritage. Start a business and hire.

— *Letter from Jim Crosset regarding a story about the Rev. Damon Lynch III (Sept. 12)*

The evil snakes in the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office have absolutely no morals and they need to go to jail. They're going down — it's just a matter of time. Everyone in this unfair city should be outraged about what transpired during Officer Robert Jorg's trial, but you have people in this one-horse town who just don't give a damn.

— *Letter from Frederick Malone regarding a story on the death of Roger Owensby Jr. (Oct. 10)*

The message is clear: If you are a leader with vision, just get away from here, we don't want your kind. That's why there are so few leaders left in the Cincinnati community. I personally am sadder and wiser and less trusting than I was. Cincinnati lost, and time will show how much.

— *Letter from Heidi Bruins, who was forced from her co-chair position at Stonewall Cincinnati (Oct. 10)*

The maneuvering leaves one with an unsavory mental picture of a small group of politicians sitting around a room in the state capital dividing the spoils — one for you, two for me, attorney general for you, treasurer for me. And with the GOP's utter dominance in Ohio (both houses of the legislature, both U.S. senators), the spoils are easy pickings.

— *Editorial supporting Democratic candidates running for statewide office (Oct. 17)*

One of these years we have to bury the prevailing attitude here that if it's a good idea it doesn't belong in Cincinnati, that Cincinnati doesn't deserve anything better and that Cincinnati is about as good as it's going to get. This is the year, and this is the election.

— *Editorial supporting progressive issues and candidates in the 2002 elections (Oct. 24)*

I know that I had enough registered voters to get on the ballot. I lost on technicalities that could have gone either way. I want to make sure that this doesn't happen ever again — not to me, not to other candidates and not to the voters.

— *Letter from Marilyn Hyland regarding the cover story "Does Your Vote Count?" (Oct. 24)*

I know that I need to do more than just bitch. I should do my part to encourage Cincinnati to thrive in ways that I value. Still, the rub is there. What I want for my child and my family isn't convenience but a life that's rich, diverse and challenging to mind and spirit. I promise to do my part for any community where I might make a home, but when I consider my values and aspirations for myself and my family, it's difficult to conceive of Cincinnati as a place to pursue our dreams.

— *Letter from Peter White regarding the cover story "Why We Left Cincinnati" (Nov. 7)*

If you want change here, speak up locally or take a lower paying position that fosters change and tolerance. It won't happen overnight, but it certainly won't happen if nobody's here to do the crap work and challenge politics.

— *Letter from Courtney Rose regarding the cover story "Why We Left Cincinnati" (Nov. 7)*

To keep our talented young people, it's time for regular working people like us to speak up and demand solutions. We can't leave this one to the elites who give us shiny stadiums (which we pay for) and dilapidated schools. The elites have failed us. On this issue, we will need to lead them.

— *Letter from Bill Collins regarding the cover story "Why We Left Cincinnati" (Nov. 14)*

Cincinnati sits on a precipice right now. Young creative professionals stream out of the city for greener pastures, while those left behind feel very alone. A beacon for young creatives here, Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival, downsizes due to a severe financial crunch. A city built on creative planning, Portland, offers hope to Cincinnati, which schemes to kill off its planning department.

— *Editorial on the reader response to the cover story "Why We Left Cincinnati" (Nov. 21)*

I've lived here, on and off, for most of my life. It seems that it was a fad to renounce this city as conservative and close-minded. I followed the fashions, and now I kinda like this town. Cincinnati has plenty of hip, but it just doesn't have any hop.

— *Letter from M. Elgazzar regarding the cover story "Why We Left Cincinnati" (Dec. 5)*

Unfortunately, the placement of a menorah in Fountain Square might very well lead to the Klan placing a cross there in the near future. For every ounce of good, there will always be an ounce of evil. But it's vitally important to prevent the evils of the world from forcing those who work for peace and love to cloak themselves in darkness and hope that they and their nemeses are both forgotten.

— *Letter from Michael S. Cody regarding a story on protests against the menorah on Fountain Square (Dec. 19)*