

The Salem Leader
Educationally Speaking
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Justin Harter

Faith, oil, jobs, haircuts, tacos and more

I go days on end thinking about what I want to write about, how I want to write it and then how I should say it without irritating too many people. I love writing these columns as part of the Leader. It's a hobby I adore. Unbelievably, I don't wake up in the morning and ask myself, "How can I tick off someone today?" I write musings about my experiences at a major urban university and my experiences as a young adult entering the world. Most days I feel as if everything is going to be all right. Then, I read things such as Hubert Hinds' rebuttal to any number of things he thinks I said. Then I think the world is going to hell in a cheap purse. I'm going to clear a few things up about what I think items that have recently been published in this newspaper and I'll offer other observations just for fun.

Foremost, people have to stop being scary. A few weeks ago, there was a Letter to the Editor asking that I drive to Salem and have dinner with Hubert Hinds as we discuss whatever it is he wants to discuss. For example, Hubert claims that no Mormon would ever say what I heard a Mormon say. First, no one knows what I heard more than I do. So stop thinking you do. Second, you can't seriously believe that I'm going to show up at your house when I've never even met you. If you want to have a debate with me, you can send me an email. I have to give kudos to Stephanie, too, for editing his letter because in the original version he sent me he actually insinuated I "come out of the closet". Before you go calling me scared, ask yourself this: would you randomly show up at my home in Indianapolis and eat dinner with me if I made slanderous accusations about you?

Secondly, people have to stop complaining about gas prices. I listen to people complain about how much money they just spent on a tank of gas as they swill a \$4 latte. Considering we have to find the oil, kill or bribe someone for the oil, pump it out of the ground, refine it, send it the opposite end of the globe, and pump it back into the ground, gas looks relatively cheap. Get all your errands done in one trip, avoid slamming the gas pedal when you can and spend a lot of time driving downhill.

Third, people have to stop ignoring the point. A couple wrote in the Leader two weeks ago in regards to my column from earlier this month about Indiana's ranking among other states in areas such as manufacturing and technology. They say I didn't look closely enough at the Kauffman Foundation's rankings of Indiana and other states. All I did in that column was paraphrase a column from the Indiana Business Journal entitled "Wedded to the Intolerance of Economics". They cited the Kauffman Foundation and yes, I did go back and look up their original results and compare. Yes, Indiana might rank high in manufacturing – but that's dropped significantly since the report was released with the loss of hundreds of jobs in Muncie, Anderson and more recently, Bedford. Specifically, Indiana ranks high in mobile home production. Yes, Hawaii ranks low on

the list – it might have something to do with the fact that they are in the middle of an ocean. Overall, Indiana's only significant job growth has been in Marion, Hamilton and Johnson Counties. The new Cracker Barrel on I-65 doesn't count. People can't live off server or cook wages. I didn't even concoct the idea that diversity creates a better economy. I wrote about it from my readings with the IBJ and the University of Michigan because a good point should be shared.

Next, people have to stop talking about petty issues. It just occurred to me that none of this matters to anyone but about five people. We have to stop caring about someone else's haircut and Paris Hilton. More importantly, we have to stop caring about what other people's religious beliefs are. They are none of your business. There are too many faiths in the world for anyone to know what is "most correct". Until someone figures it out for sure and gives me a good reason why they believe what they believe I'm staying out of the mess.

Lastly, everyone has to lighten up on Mexican immigrants. As Americans, we like their food, their booze, the hats, their music and their labor. The only thing we don't like is they aren't paying their fair share of taxes. If they want to come into our country, super, just pay taxes like everyone else. If you're still going to be angry with Mexicans you have stop wrapping everything you eat in a tortilla and dipping things in salsa.