The Bexley Observer

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Well, it's that time again. Things have gone a bit too far in our otherwise happy home. Basically, the events that resulted in this document are as follows (forgive me if they're not in perfect chronological order):

1. then non-Bexleyite (now a resident) paints "Coming soon Godot" on the courtyard side of the arch, thus provoking Bill and Carol (housemasters) to request it be removed
Bill and Carol should have better judgement than to make such a request without consulting the other residents first; even worse, they asked that it be done for them. I'm not saying you can't paint over and/or remove anything you don't like, but do your own dirty work

2. Linda (house manager) obliges the request without making the plans common knowledge, and calls in a team of MIT Physical Plant workers to blast the paint off the arch
Score one against Linda; she needs to learn how things work here. This was at first excusable, given her relatively short tenure as house manager at Bexley, but in retrospect, I doubt very much she would hesitate to make the same decision now, even though she's well aware of how the people here *generally* feel

3. in retaliation, Linda's office door is painted yellow
Some thought this was a good idea, some didn't; at any rate, the door was painted and Linda threatened to use house funds to have it stripped. The artistry was removed by the artists, and a note was left, pointing out that it was a statement, but that the artists would respect her space if she respected theirs, namely the courtyard and Besk

4. Linda selectively removes things that were written on the walls at Besk
Definitely a bad move; Linda has maintenance spray white paint over the things she personally found offensive (I think these were the "assload of meat" series of poems). Again, I'm not contesting the right to paint over anything, but I am as of yet a little hesitant to believe that Linda shares the same privileges as the residents

5. a flurry of email, somewhere in the neighborhood of 200 messages, is sent to the Bexley mailing list, arguing different opinions about the right to paint and the right to remove paint
Enough said

6. a house meeting is called, which Linda attends, to try to resolve the problem
The house meeting was entirely unproductive. Nothing was resolved. All that Linda said was that she would make sure that future plans were made common knowledge before they are made

realities

7. Linda again removes things that were written at Besk
This is the squaw that stroked the camel's sac; at this point, Linda has already caused a monumental uproar (in the form of email) and necessitated a house meeting to get things straight, and now she goes and does exactly what she promised not to do. Sources inform me that her reasoning is this (paraphrased): "It is my job to make sure that there are no four-letter words at Besk, given it is a public area. Furthermore, Besk is an extension of my office, so I can do whatever I want to it."

Wrong, wrong, wrong, fucking wrong. Besk is absolutely ***NOT*** an extension of Linda's office. Besk is fully the property of the residents of Bexley; it is staffed by Bexers, not Linda. It now has become the resting place for packages, making them susceptible to theft and damage. Those who are not freshmen remember that JP kept packages in his office to ensure some degree of security, and when asked why she did not do the same, Linda whined, "My office is so small." Well, instead of keeping that useless bicycle in there, she could make room for the packages. JP was a small guy, but Linda sure isn't a giant.

As for her selective censorship, I certainly wouldn't walk into Linda's office and write "shit" and "fuck" all over the walls, but let's be realistic and admit that it's part of our vocabulary. If those words appear in something that's written at Besk, well, so be it. It starts to feel as though if someone were to quote some of "The Catcher in the Rye," she'd have it removed, just because "goddamn" was in the text.

Things have just gotten out of hand. Linda, for all her talk about wanting to work with us, has not, at least in my opinion, done anything for us. Her actions to date have been almost completely in conflict with the opinions of those she has claimed to work for.

I cannot pose any practical solution, except to have another house meeting, this time not preceded by an electronic flame war, at which we sit Linda down and explain to her exactly what we want. I also think that we should press her until we get real answers to our questions instead of something completely unrelated and incoherent followed by "Does that answer your question?"

It's time she learns where she is or empties her desk.

[By the way, these are just one person's observances. If you don't want to be part of the "we here at Bexley" that appears throughout this document, feel free not to be]