

DePAUL PROFESSOR DEFAMES CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Catholics have every right to expect that Catholic colleges and universities are free from bigotry of any kind. Unfortunately, a recent ugly incident by DePaul University professor Norman G. Finkelstein has betrayed that trust. To be specific, Finkelstein wrote a column for indybay.org that suggests Alan Dershowitz be assassinated. The article is coupled with an obscene depiction of the Harvard professor.

Finkelstein has every right to quarrel with Dershowitz's proud defense of Israel's right to exist, but when he compares him to a Nazi (this despicable charge is made twice), elementary standards of civility have been shattered. Similarly, calling Dershowitz a "moral pervert" who "missed the climactic scene of his little peep show" is the language used by street propagandists, not academicians. A cartoon that accompanies the article depicts Dershowitz masturbating in glee over dead Lebanese civilians. It doesn't get much lower than this.

There are plenty of arenas in and around Chicago where those who want to rant can go to express themselves, but a university is not such a venue: the university exists so that the truth may be pursued. That is what a liberal arts education is expected to provide, and it is nothing but a travesty when the rights afforded faculty members are abused in the way Finkelstein has done. This is doubly true when it happens on a Catholic campus.