

Author of commentary uneducated about Hillel

By Sarah Beth Kaye | Posted: Monday, January 27, 2014 12:00 am

Last Thursday, I read one of the most factually inaccurate, as well as plain meanest and rudest pieces of commentary I've ever come across in The Daily Targum — which says a lot. Colleen Jolly, who authored the commentary piece “Can Hillel’s Funding be Put to a Better use Elsewhere?” not only managed to mix up the idea of public and private funds but also found space for hurtful anti-Semitic remarks in the small-word limit. I guess the Targum’s commenting rules of conduct — stated on the website — doesn’t apply to pieces in print, because Jolly violated both number four, “Be Truthful,” and number five, “Be Nice.”

To start with, there is absolutely no reason that Hillel would donate their hard earned money, the money that will go to creating a wonderful building where all students will be welcome, to the city of New Brunswick. That would be a discrepancy of private funds for public use. If Jolly took one second to look up anything about the politics of her future “less-cool Williamsburg,” she would see that the reason this city is falling apart is because New Brunswick politics and public policy is rife with corruption and exploitation. If she wished to address the deplorable state of her home city, she should have started by talking to the right people instead of spewing ignorance towards a group that has nothing to do with her complaints.

One of the parts of this article that bothers me immensely — and there are several — is “If you know anything about Israel, you can conclude that pro-Israel parties are good at getting money ...” Jolly is insinuating the age-old incorrect stereotype of Jewish people being greedy and conniving. In reality, the Jewish religion focuses on giving back to the community and helping others before helping oneself. For example, the new Hillel building will host countless community service projects — just like the old building did, provide a welcoming space for all students and create a community focused on caring. Her comments are ignorant, anti-Semitic and downright hurtful.

I wonder what Targum’s editorial board was thinking when they decided to publish this article. I like to think that I attend a university where all groups — regardless of religion, creed, sexual orientation or any other identification — are welcome to express themselves without having to read blasphemous articles. Unfortunately, I thought wrong. I hope that in the future, Targum articles are held to higher standards — standards that don’t allow hateful and poorly written commentaries.

Sarah Beth Kaye is a School of Arts and Sciences junior majoring in planning and public policy and English.