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Thomas D. Clark: 1903-2005

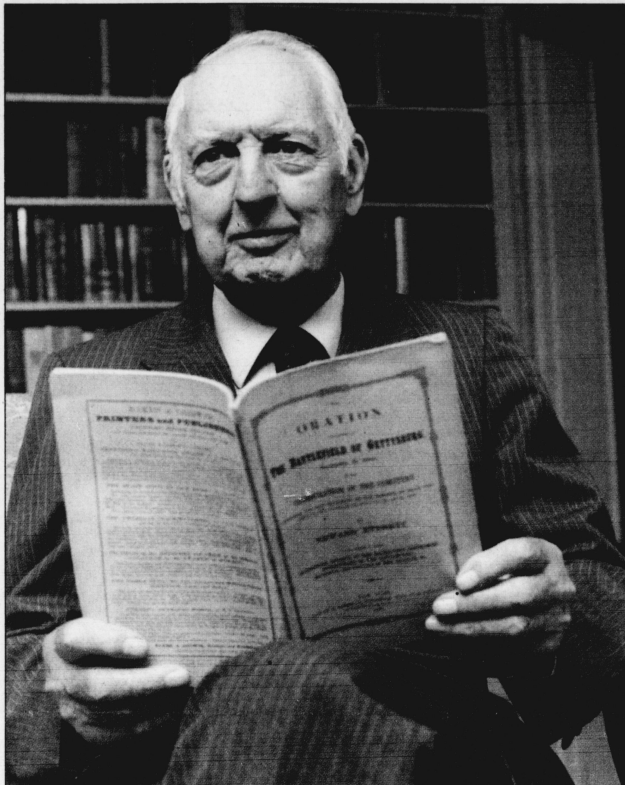


PHOTO FURNISHED BY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND RECORDS PROGRAM, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND DIGITAL PROGRAMS, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY LIBRARIES
Thomas D. Clark views a pamphlet, which included the printing of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, during the 1986 celebration of the library's acquisition of its two-millionth volume.

Clark loved Kentucky, UK, teaching

Historian and professor fought for education and preservation of state's history

By Tricia Spaulding
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

In 1928, faced with choosing between scholarships to earn his master's at the University of Cincinnati or the University of Kentucky, Thomas D. Clark did what any reasonable man would do.

He flipped a coin. As a result of that coin toss, UK won not only a professor who went on to teach more than 25,000 students, but also a prolific Kentucky historian.

Clark was a husband, teacher, author, historian, advocate for historical preservation and woodworker.

He died Tuesday at 3:45 a.m. at Mayfair Village Retirement Center in Lexington, just two weeks shy of his 102nd birthday. Kentucky history was his passion, but teaching and education captured his heart.

"He was amazing to me. He was a model of a man," said David Hamilton, an associate history professor at UK. "He was completely dedicated to teaching, to writing history and to being a public advocate for history, but his passion and his obsession was with teaching."

"He once told me that teaching was the most gratifying and satisfying thing he had done," Hamilton said.

Many may recognize his name because of the books he

wrote, the buildings that have been named after him, or even the work he has done preserving Kentucky's history. But Clark was always looking for a way to improve education as a professor at UK and chairman of the history department for more than two decades.

He could also be critical of the state and its people, Hamilton said.

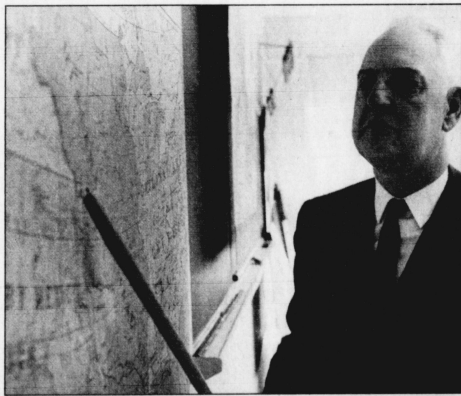
"He always placed a higher standard on education," Hamilton said, "and when people put this (emphasis) on basketball and horse racing, he resented this obsession. He resented it because we could put this obsession on education instead."

Mississippian by birth, Kentuckian by choice

Clark's love for Kentucky inspired its residents, said George Herring, a UK history professor. "He was a truly remarkable man," Herring said. "I don't know anyone like him and I don't expect to know anyone else like him."

Clark was born in Mississippi on July 14, 1903. He quit school after the seventh grade and spent the following years farming, working at a sawmill and then as a cabin boy and deck hand on a dredge boat in the Pearl River, according to an article in the winter 2000 edition of the Ken-

See CLARK on page 2



PHOTOS FURNISHED BY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND RECORDS PROGRAM, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND DIGITAL PROGRAMS, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY LIBRARIES

(Above) History Department Chairman Clark lecturing in class in 1967.

(Left) President Lee Todd and wife, Patsy, honor Clark and his wife, Loretta, with a celebration of Clark's 100th birthday, held on July 9, 2003, in the William T. Young Library. The celebration marked the three-millionth volume acquired by UK, represented by the book entitled "Thomas D. Clark of Kentucky: An Uncommon Life in the Commonwealth."

LCC gets a name change after merging onto technical college system

By Ashleigh Feltz
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

Lexington Community College and Central Kentucky Technical College have officially merged into the Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

On June 10, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System Board of Regents approved the name for the consolidated schools.

The college was officially passed on to the Kentucky Community and Technical College System on July 1,

2004. The merging of LCC and CKTC will provide students with more opportunities for growth.

The Bluegrass Community and Technical College has an enrollment of 12,300 students. The college consists of 475 full-time faculty members and staff, along with 350 part-time employees.

There are six campus locations — three in Lexington and one in Danville, Lawrenceburg and Winchester.

One problem concerning

undclared freshman Jennifer Richmond is choosing classes for future semesters.

"You can't pick the teacher you want, only the section number," Richmond said. Richmond also said she was worried that after selecting a class by section number, it might not be at a convenient location.

"I don't think we really know what all the ramifications are going to be," said Dr. Charles Coulston, head of LCC's nuclear medicine program. "We are still learning that a year later."

Coulston said there is a possibility that the curriculum will change, but his curriculum was "only slightly" altered.

There is also another nuclear medicine program, which is available through Jefferson Community College in Louisville. If there had been several nuclear medicine programs offered, it would have been expected that the curriculum would have been overhauled on a much larger scale.

Financing education is a major concern for students

and their parents. For some students, the cost of tuition is the deciding factor when it comes time to choose a college.

The consolidation of the two schools has decreased tuition for in-state residents.

Two years ago, the tuition per credit hour for in-state LCC students was \$107.55 and \$291.55 for non-resident students. Now, the tuition per credit hour for in-state students is \$98, while the non-resident tuition has slightly increased to \$294 per credit hour.

Capital projects intended to increase student services and classroom space have already begun. More than \$31 million has been designated for a new building at the Cooper Drive location.

"Several people were against (the merger) mainly because of how they perceive the relationship with UK. It was a university connection, and that carries more prestige than a community college," Coulston said. "Personally, I think the merge makes a lot of sense."

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Clark

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tucky Alumni magazine.

At 18, he returned to high school at Choctaw County Agricultural High School in Mississippi, where he played football all four years.

With money he earned from raising 10 acres of cotton, he then went to the University of Mississippi, where he received his bachelor's degree in history.

"He made his way through school by working on a golf course and a steamboat," said Jim Klotter, a state historian.

Clark then earned a master's degree from UK in 1929 and began his 37-year career as a history professor in 1931.

While at Duke University earning his doctorate in history, Clark met the woman with whom he would spend the next six decades of his life, Elizabeth Turner. They married in 1933. A year and a half after Turner's death in 1935, Clark married Loretta Gilliam Brock, to whom he remained married until his death.

While at UK, Clark did much more than teach. He was always looking for ways to preserve Kentucky history and to get Kentuckians involved in their own history.

"He was determined to have a larger public role than just professor," Hamilton said. "He felt that a faculty member should have public involvement."

Clark didn't think professors should just sit in their offices and do nothing—they should get involved, Hamilton said.

"All his life, he was for conservation and a better government," Hamilton said.

Throughout Clark's career at UK, he consistently tried to increase UK's library resource materials and persistently sought out documents with scholarly interests.

His strong desire to accumulate resources helped provide the foundation for Special Collections in the university's M.I. King Library. The collection locates and preserves materials, documenting social, cultural, economic and political history.

"Dr. Clark is the reason why we're here today," said Terry Birdwhistell, associate dean for special collections and digital programs. "He was instrumental in making this institution work and in founding it."

Clark also helped found the University of Kentucky Press in 1943, as well as the University Press of Kentucky 20 years later.

A foundation and a building, both bearing his name, pay tribute to the contributions Clark made to the University Press of Kentucky. University press produces scholarly publications and is a statewide consortium that includes most colleges and universities across Kentucky. The press has also printed some of Clark's works.



Clark, in 1955 at his desk in the history department, with one of his typewriters. PHOTO FURNISHED BY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND RECORDS PROGRAM, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND DIGITAL PROGRAMS, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY LIBRARIES

Despite Clark's many accomplishments, he was a person who never felt too important to meet the people of Kentucky.

"One thing that is notable is that he talked to people all across the state," Klotter said. "He met with people that he was writing about. He didn't just sit in an office."

Klotter attributed Clark's amicable nature to his earlier years, explaining that Clark's family wasn't very well-to-do and Clark had to work hard to put himself through school.

"In his early days, he had association with ex-slaves, and he talked with them," Klotter said. "I think all this helped him talk to people all his life."

Klotter said that these conversations and many others will be published in Clark's his memoirs, which are scheduled for publication in the near future.

A distinguished career

As history department chairman, Clark could be harsh and demanding, Klotter said. He was demanding of professors because he wanted the department to be in the top 20 in the country.

"His more warm and fuzzy reputation came after he retired from teaching in 1968," Klotter said.

Clark was chairman of UK's history department from 1942-65, distinguished professor from 1950-68, distinguished service professor at Indiana University from 1968-73 and he taught at Eastern Kentucky University as a distinguished professor.

Clark also taught as a visiting professor at the University of Wisconsin, Winthrop College, University of North Carolina, Duke University, University of Rochester, University of Chicago, Harvard, Penn State, Kent State, Stanford, University of Washington and University of Louisville. He was a guest lecturer at the University of Vienna, University of Oxford, University of Athens and University of Thessalonica, as well as in India.

Even as he passed the century-old mark, Clark did not slow down in his work. He served as president and chairman of the Lexington History Museum Inc. and continued to give lectures, visit classrooms, write and raise funds for several organizations.

'An adopted son of Kentucky'

For his decades of service, Clark received countless honors and awards.

The Kentucky General Assembly honored him by declaring him Kentucky's Historian Laureate in

1990. Because of his help raising construction funds for The Kentucky History Center in Frankfort, the center will be renamed in his honor on July 9.

"He was also committed to rural, Kentucky and seeing it thrive," Hamilton said.

"The trees he would grow on his property, he would cut down to build and make furniture out of it. He was a very skilled woodworker," Hamilton said. "He had many interests, and he pursued them all quite vigorously."

"We lost one of this university's true treasures. From the moment he walked on this campus in 1928, UK has been blessed with one of the nation's most cherished historians," Todd said.

"Dr. Clark taught with passion and vision, constantly sought new knowledge, and challenged the Commonwealth to remember its history," Todd said. "One of his greatest legacies is that he continually challenged our leaders to strive for greatness in education as well because he understood what it would mean for the future of our state and our children."

"Tom Clark, an adopted son of Kentucky, will be deeply missed but never forgotten."

In addition to his capacities as teacher, chairman, husband, and father, Clark also gathered books and artifacts for the university's libraries, wrote more than 30 books,

and owned land in eastern Kentucky and North Carolina, where he loved the countryside and growing trees.

"He was also committed to rural, Kentucky and seeing it thrive," Hamilton said.

"The trees he would grow on his property, he would cut down to build and make furniture out of it. He was a very skilled woodworker," Hamilton said. "He had many interests, and he pursued them all quite vigorously."

E-mail: news@kykernel.com

Thomas D. Clark is survived by his wife, Loretta Gilliam Clark; a son, Thomas Bennett Clark of Lexington; a daughter, Elizabeth Clark Stone of Bowling Green; a brother Ernest Clark of Dallas, Texas; two sisters, Wilma Sanders and Ethel Atkinson, both of Louisville, Miss.; three grandchildren; and five great grandchildren.

Visitations will be at the First Methodist church from 10 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., Friday.

Services will be conducted at 1 p.m., Friday, July 1 at First Methodist Church at 200 West High St., Lexington.

A private burial will follow in Lexington Cemetery.

The family suggests that memorial contributions be given to Thomas D. Clark Kentucky Center for History, 100 West Broadway, Frankfort, Ky. 40601 or to Lexington History Museum, 215 West Main St., Lexington, Ky. 40507.

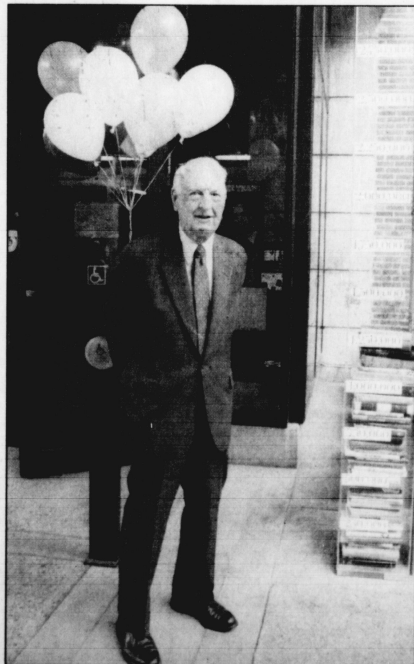


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Clark, history professor emeritus and Kentucky's historian laureate since 1990, encouraged donors for the UK Libraries' endowment fund.



PHOTO FURNISHED BY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND RECORDS PROGRAM, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND DIGITAL PROGRAMS, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY LIBRARIES
Pictured with an unidentified man looking at copy from a printing press. Clark, a noted historian and expert on Southern and Kentucky culture, helped found the University of Kentucky Press, and later, the University Press of Kentucky.

IN OUR OPINION

Mourning the loss of a Kentucky treasure

When Thomas Dionysius Clark first stepped foot on UK's campus more than 75 years ago, no one could have imagined the immeasurable impact the young man from Louisville, Miss., would have on this institution.

As a student, a professor and a historian, Clark became synonymous with the university and the commonwealth, and dedicated his life to teaching the people of Kentucky everything he discovered about his adopted home.

And it was a mission he continued to undertake until his death.

Clark's passing this week at the age of 101 marked the loss of no mere teacher or historian, but the loss of a genuine treasure to our university and Kentuckians everywhere.

The historical, literary and educational contributions Clark made throughout his lifetime are above comparison to anyone who has ever attempted to chronicle the

story of Kentucky and its people.

Starting as a history professor in 1931, Clark spent 37 years teaching at UK and chaired the Department of History from 1942 to 1965.

Among the several thousand students

Clark enlightened during his tenure included former Gov. Ned Breathitt and current UK President Lee Todd.

But his involvement at the university reached far beyond the classroom.

While on the faculty, Clark worked to build up the school's library collection, helped establish the University of Kentucky Press, aided the founding of the University Press of Kentucky, and authored several books on the commonwealth.

Even when the university's mandatory

age retirement policy forced Clark to leave UK at the age of 70, he never ventured far from Lexington.

Though Clark was no longer a regular in the classroom, the historian managed to continue educating all Kentuckians through his unrelenting research and sustained commitment to uncovering the history of the state.

Clark co-authored a book exploring the history of the Kentucky Governor's Mansion just three years ago, and remained a presence at the UK Archives office until his final days.

His life's work rightfully earned him several honors in recent years, including his declaration by the state legislature as Kentucky's Historian Laureate in 1990 and the renaming of the massive Kentucky

History Center in Frankfort in his honor, which will take place during a July 9 ceremony.

Those tributes will ensure that Clark will always be remembered as Kentucky's most important and influential historian.

But they are not needed. Clark's works and his words will undoubtedly speak louder to future generations of Kentuckians than any titles or buildings ever could.

When asked once to name an unsung Kentuckian, Clark said "...every man and woman who teaches or ever taught in Kentucky's schools is a hero in my book."

If that is indeed the true definition of a hero, then the commonwealth certainly lost its greatest this week.

And while others will step up to continue the work Clark has accomplished, there will never be anyone to match his contributions to our university, community and commonwealth.

The historical contributions of Thomas D. Clark have enlightened Kentuckians for several decades.

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THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

Free speech, property rights under assault

While many Leftist groups have spent the last several months worrying about the rights of terrorists detained in Guantanamo Bay, the federal government and Supreme Court have been quietly engineering the erosion of the rights of American citizens.



Josh Sullivan
KERNEL COLUMNIST

The government dealt a pair of crippling blows in its wars against free speech and individual liberty last week. On Monday, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted 286-130 to approve a constitutional amendment making the desecration of an American flag a felony. Last Thursday, the Supreme Court granted the government sweeping powers to seize private property by ruling 5-4 that legislatures can force people from their homes in the name of increased tax revenue.

What are we becoming? When House members vote to effectively make an act of free expression a felony, it's time for people to stop screaming about the non-constitutionally protected rights of terrorists, and start looking toward their own constitutional rights.

When we see our national flag consumed in flames on American soil, we should all be rightfully outraged. But we should also be proud that we live in a place where political speech won't land you in the back of a patrol car, or in the depths of some dungeon, or swinging from the end of a rope.

We cannot ban an act of political expression simply because we find the act itself or the politics behind it vulgar. If we allow the government to punish political speech we find offensive, we have ceded to it the power to punish political speech we support. That's why Neo-Nazis and Klansmen must be allowed to

march, and dissidents must be allowed to burn American flags.

Leaders like Sen. Mitch McConnell have successfully fought off attempts to pass flag burning amendments in the past. Everyone who cherishes their First Amendment freedoms should speak out and help them do it again.

The legislature isn't the only federal branch chipping away at individual liberty these days. By voting to expand the government's power of eminent domain, the Supreme Court has effectively stripped away our right to private property. Because of this ruling, property owners in New London, Conn., will have to stand by while their homes are demolished to make way for a hotel, a fitness center and a stretch of retail offices built by the New London Development Corporation. The court ruled that economic development is a legitimate reason to seize the private property of citizens. Because the plan proposed by the development company includes land occupied by these families' homes, the city council of New London wants the homes demolished. And our Supreme Court has agreed, citing the benefits of increased tax revenue and job opportunities.

Now, thanks to Justices Stevens, Kennedy, Souter, Breyer and Ginsburg, if a developer can build an apartment complex or an office building that will generate more revenue for the government than your property taxes, you'd better start packing. In her dissenting opinion, joined by Justices Scalia, Thomas and Rehnquist, Sandra Day O'Connor forcefully explained that wealthy companies would be the main beneficiaries of this judicial atrocity.

If a major department store chain decides it wants a piece of property occupied by a small mom-and-pop store, the government can seize that property to make way for the bigger store; all in the name of tax revenue.

For decades, the Left has been screaming that conservatives favor big business at the expense of the working class. Well, here we have four liberal and one moderate Supreme Court justices fleeing the working class of its right to private property so that government and big business can scratch each other's backs. Pfizer, the private mega-corporation, will reap much of the reward from this decision; 87-year-old Wilhelmina Dera will have to move out of the home she was born in so that the pharmaceutical giant can level it to make room for retail offices.

So, where is the righteous indignation from the Leftists who claim so loudly to be champions of the little man? It seems that as long as an act of legislative or judicial perversion empowers the government against the individual, liberals are more than happy to play along.

The Fifth Amendment's "public use" clause restricted the government's Eminent Domain capabilities to cases addressing public necessities — such as the construction of highways, railroad lines, hospitals or military bases. But now, the government can use eminent domain to demolish your home and build a shopping mall. Under the Supreme Court's rationale, your home can even be seized and handed over to your wealthy neighbor who wants to replace your house with a more expensive one that would generate more property taxes.

With liberty and justice for all ... unless your house is in the way of the new Wal-Mart.

The government is eternally hungry for more of our money to waste, and the Supreme Court just granted it a lethal weapon with which to feed itself.

Sen. Ted Kennedy once said, "we are fighting a war against the individual." It looks like he and his allies are winning that war.

Josh Sullivan is a journalism and political science graduate.
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Columnist's "Christian" views misguided

I am writing as a dismayed Christian in response to Stephen Burnett's witch hunt of a column, "Howard Dean's 'fake' Christianity." According to Mr. Burnett, it is in our "job description" to "scrutinize other 'Christians.'" Personally, I'm not about to describe my Christian walk as a job, but I suppose if I were going to look for a job description, I would head to the Bible. So, Mr. Burnett, where exactly are you getting this mandate to judge "fake" Christians from "true" believers? Was it when Jesus said "judge not, that you be not judged" (Matthew 7:1)? Was it when Christ said that "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone" (John 8:7)? Or maybe it was John 21:22, when Jesus admonished the other disciples about being overly concerned with John's spiritual walk, saying, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me," or in other words, "mind your own spiritual business." Surely, Mr. Burnett couldn't have been thinking of "why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye" (Matthew 7:3), could he? Of course not. For someone who is so eager to point out the deficiencies in Kerry's and Dean's Bible reading, Mr. Burnett does not rally one Bible verse to support his tirade, instead relying on assumptions and prejudices that will automatically appeal to his conservative enclave. What "rigorous system" is Mr. Burnett using to evaluate Dean's spiritual credibility? According to 1 John 4, "every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God." Did Dean deny that Jesus is the Son of God? If so, Mr. Burnett sure doesn't mention it. All Mr. Burnett seems to really be objecting to is that Kerry and Dean aren't on the Right side of the political fence.

Ultimately, Mr. Burnett is talking politics, not religion, as anyone who has read his prior columns can see. Many of Mr. Burnett's ilk will probably argue that religion and politics are meant to be mixed, or that they are inseparable. I'm not sure. From my own reading of the New Testament, it seems to me that matters of the spirit were often independent of the political sphere. The disciples wanted a political leader, but they got a martyr instead. They wanted someone to free their country from bondage and renew its might, but they got someone who wanted to free their souls from bondage so that they will realize their spiritual might.

Perhaps in this day and age, however, it is impossible to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's without bringing your faith into the fray. If our faith must get involved, we must keep our priorities straight: Christian first, (Insert Political Affiliation) a distant second. Being a Christian does not mean you are morally obligated to follow a particular political standard. I refuse to believe that God is a registered Republican, and if, as Mr. Burnett says, Christian beliefs "logically lead to some viewpoints that could be considered politically conservative," then I feel that many of Christ's teachings also logically lead to viewpoints that could be considered politically liberal. If some positions held by liberals seem morally untenable to a Christian, then I can see just as many positions held by conservatives that seem blatantly un-Christian. I believe that any one political party is too small, too self-interested, too worldly, to contain all of Christ's teachings.

If, Mr. Burnett, you are going to complain that certain politicians are using their religious beliefs as a political prop, then you need to keep a vigilant eye on your own party leader: after all, President Bush is the one that has the most chance of pulling the wool over your eyes. Pharisaical piety is a problem in politics, of course, but can you be such a hidebound Conservative to think it is only a Liberal problem? Obviously you are not fooled by Dean's or Kerry's attempt at playing the religion card—but I'm wondering if you haven't already been dealt one by President Bush, as many of us were in the last election. Where do you think Kerry and Dean learned about that card to begin with?

As C.S. Lewis once wrote, the Divine call can either make us very much better or very much worse. In particular, he was referring to our tendency to fall into "spiritual pride, self-righteousness, persecuting zeal," essentially playing as if we were God's viceroys on Earth. There is of course a place for standing up and criticizing what we think is wrong, but we must be careful that we are not simultaneously ramming a plank of spiritual arrogance in our own eyes. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 5:12, we have precedent for a particular form of judging, with an important caveat: "For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside." By all means, Mr. Burnett, stand up and protest when self-proclaimed Christian politicians seem to use their religion for personal gain, but as a rule, don't try to tell anyone if they are a "true Christ-follower" or not. We are all fellow guests at the same feast, not gatekeepers. Separating the wheat from the chaff, the sheep from the goats — that judgment is in God's "job description," not ours.

JOSHUA REID
English literature and art history graduate student

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Is Brooks one of D-1's worst?

Louisville sucks. We all know that. Sorry if you're from Louisville, but there's a reason you're here now, instead of there competing around. But what really chaps is, Louisville is beating UK badly in a lot of everything related to athletics.



Chris Johnson
SPORTS EDITOR

This past week was yet another indication, on sports Illustrated.com.

If you haven't heard, Stewart Mandel of SI.com made a list of the ten best, five worst, eight most underrated and four most overrated coaches in D-1.

Bobby Petrino of Louisville was ranked as the fifth-best coach in the nation.

Rich Brooks of UK was the second-worst, behind Chan Gailey of Georgia Tech.

Ouch. Nothing could be better, after they got to the Final Four and UK didn't.

After they finished in the top ten in football, won the Liberty Bowl, and UK finished 2-9.

After they took a good majority of the best in-state football recruits.

After UK lost three of its five starters to the NBA Draft, where none were selected, and Kelenna Azubuike and Randolph Morris were used as poster boys of "listening to the wrong people" by the loudest mouth in college basketball, Dick Vitale.

Nothing could be better

now that CBS.sportsline.com has revised its pre-season basketball top 25 poll to account for players staying in the draft after the deadline. It places Louisville third and UK 23rd.

As a flagship school with a separate athletics department, a golden boy AD who promised to turn the football program around and has since made impact hirings in several of the minor sports that bring in little, if any revenue for the department, and a statewide fellowship that borders on hero worship, UK should always be the top school in the state in most, if not all, athletic fields.

But they aren't. And Louisville has billboards all over the metro area depicting their top ten finishes in both major college sports.

UK has billboards depicting their four conference championships, one of which was in men's basketball, in which Louisville can claim superiority based on its finish in the national tournament.

Four conference championships in 21 sports, while admirable, is not the stuff recruiting packages are made of. Neither is 2-9 football, which is one of the reasons Mandel describes Brooks as one of D-1's worst.

"The former Oregon St./St. Louis Rams head man has been a disaster from Day 1, taking over a program that was finally starting to stick its head above water and running it straight into the ground (6-17) while failing to elicit any sense of excitement among potential recruits (mainly because they don't believe he'll be there much longer)," Mandel writes.

Brooks was Mandel's only target who had not had at least three years to build a pro-

gram. He made the exception on the grounds that it was "obvious."

Grading a coach on two years in a sanctioned program that has never been a part of the storied tradition of the SEC isn't fair; Mandel should at least have given evidence for the decision to list Brooks as his one exception. He didn't mention the scholarship restrictions the program has faced, and patience in major college athletics isn't something fans, or columnists, have been flush with lately.

But boring and puzzling of fensive schemes coupled with porous defense has been the calling card of UK football during the Brooks regime.

It may not be totally his fault, as anyone from Steve Spurrier to Bear Bryant would have had a tough time with the situation Brooks was given.

Coming out of retirement, into sanctions, at a program that hadn't been that good with the full allotment of players.

The real question isn't what was AD Mitch Barnhart thinking when he hired Brooks.

The question is, what was Brooks thinking when he took the job?

Petrino, while only being on the job at the 'Ville for two years himself, was lauded for "his unique offensive mind" and "recruiting BCS-caliber skill players."

One only has to think back two years to find Michael Bush and Brian Brohm, two of Kentucky's best high school football players since Tim Conch, as skill players recruited by Louisville.

Granted, both Bush and Brohm went to high school in Louisville, and Brohm's brother was a coach for the Cardi-

nals when he was recruited. But it can't be said that Tom Jurich isn't taking the Louisville athletic program in a direction that Mitch Barnhart prays every night the UK program will take when, and if, Brooks is shown the door.

It can't help recruiting to have your head coach be publicly thought of as one of the worst in the nation.

Though UK did land the state's Mr. Football from this past year in quarterback Curtis Pulley if he had been receiving the national attention of SI cover boy Brohm and national blue-chipper Bush, who knows where he would've landed?

A program can't help itself out of the doldrums of the nation's toughest conference without recruiting high-profile players.

Is someone regarded by a national voice as one of the worst coaches in the profession really the answer?

The opinion here is no, but a 500 (or close to it) record this season would vault Brooks off that list and perhaps into the underrated category, right beside two other coaches with UK connections: Texas Tech's Mike Leach (a former UK offensive coordinator under Hal Mumme) and Baylor's Guy Morris.

Let's hope for the best, and if Brooks was designated as the guy on the grenade, then let's hope his resignation or firing at the end of this season is accompanied by the hiring of an attractive, national-headline garnering head man who can turn a dormant power conference program around quickly and make it into a national powerhouse capable of BCS success.

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Prep wins not translating to campus successes

Backup Kentucky all-star quarterback Brandon Smith went to a knee.

A Tennessee all-star defender, Blake McAdams, took a crack at Smith.

A fracas ensued, but the game was well over. For the fourth straight year, Kentucky beat Tennessee's high school best, two weeks ago, 41-27.

And guess what? It doesn't make a bit of difference. My state's prep stars beat your state's prep stars, but it's not going to make Louisville or UK any better.

There's a contingent inside the Wildcat power fan base that UK isn't recruiting inside the state like they should.

They contend UK should be more like Florida or Florida State, who seem to sign the state of Florida's best and brightest while they're still in diapers.

There's one problem. Florida has 17 million people to pool from. Only 4 million souls live in Kentucky and only 6 million live in Tennessee and I don't think it takes a Ph.D. to figure out a state with more people has a better shot at turning out more good football players.

The best college football programs pull the best players from their state and then they pull the best players from everyone else's.

Louisville broke into the BCS top 10 last year on the talent of Kentucky players. They did it on the running of Lexington's Eric Shelton and Louisvilleian Michael Bush.

They also did it on the wrap tackles of Louisiana native Stefan LeFors and the Vekro hands of Tampa, Fla.'s J.R. Russell.

UK gets Chris Pulley no doubt an accomplished high school quarterback. Mr. Football. Threw two touchdowns in last Friday night's high school all-star game.

But does it matter? He could shine at UK. Or, if sophomore quarterback Andre Woodson, who threw for a million yards in

the Blue-White game, finds himself in a slump, fans champing at the bit to toss in the fresh could land Pulley in a world of hurt. It's a toss up.

Offensive coordinator Joker Phillips has entered countless homes on recruiting visits for two years, trying to sell the UK company line.

And he's done a pretty good job, at least in potential. Last year's freshman class showed flashes on both sides of the ball. The only problem is, UK went 2-9.

And unfortunately there's no room in the box score to tally up potential points. UK football may have plenty of problems, but it has nothing to do with the way it recruits inside the state.

The real problem is convincing the best prospects from your state to come to mine - a perennial SEC bottom-dweller with tremendous fan support and beautiful facilities.

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