

We never touch people so lightly that we do not leave a trace. Peggy Tabor Millin, Author

WHAT WOULD YOU DO AS A STUDENT LEADER?

#1 You are sitting in the college cafeteria by yourself when you hear a group of 4 males a few seats away making derogatory remarks to two females whom the students believe are a lesbian couple. The females are walking through the cafeteria and proceed to sit down at the table next to you. The group continues to make disparaging remarks. Both you and the couple can hear what they are saying.

- **What would you do?**
- **You tell the group “live and let live” and one of the males tells you to mind your business. What would you do?**

Instead of being alone, you are sitting in the college cafeteria with 4 of your friends when the group of males makes the derogatory remarks.

- **What would you do?**
 - **Would it matter if you were male and the group was female?**
 - **Or you were female and the group was male?**
 - **Have you ever been in a similar situation? How did you handle it? Would you handle it differently today?**
-

#2 Recently, Boston Mayor Menino touched off a firestorm when reports surfaced that he talked openly of administering street justice to three young people accused of killing a pizza delivery man. “If I saw these guys in a dark alley, I’d like to have a fight with them,” Menino said. “I’d do some things that would be worse than the death penalty. . . . Because it wouldn’t happen in a second. I would slowly torture them.” Menino, who employed the victim’s two daughters and has been personally rattled by the senseless killing, made the comments while speaking to Emerson College students. The comments were recorded by a student and printed in the Boston Globe. The Herald reported yesterday that one of the accused killer’s defense lawyers says the remarks were prejudicial and could poison the jury pool in the high-profile murder case.

- **As an elected official, should Mayor Menino have said these words in public? Why? Why not?**
 - **Would it make a difference if Mayor Menino were at home as a private citizen saying these same words with some friends?**
 - **Many of the Emerson students who heard the Mayor say these words laughed. Why do you think they did?**
-

#3 You are with a group of close friends at a restaurant having a wonderful time when one of your friends whom you greatly respect and see as a prominent member of the group makes a very disparaging remark about a particular nationality. You’re shocked at the remark and because no one comments on the remark.

- **Do you say anything?**
- **Is it more difficult to speak up because this person is a friend?**
- **Is it more difficult because it is a social occasion and everyone is having a good time?**
- **What would you say?**
- **One member of the group states the remark is offensive. Do you say anything?**

CCSLA CONFERENCE 2010

We never touch people so lightly that we do not leave a trace. Peggy Tabor Millin, Author

WHAT WOULD YOU DO AS A STUDENT LEADER?

#4 A student in your 8am class is wearing a t-shirt with a 12" vulgar word on it. No one says anything to this student. Throughout the day you see this same student same t-shirt in the cafeteria and the library. You can't believe no one has said anything to this student. As you are waiting for your next class to begin and before the Professor comes in, this same student arrives at your class.

- **Do you say anything?**
 - **If yes, what do you say? Think of the tone you would use.**
 - **How would you approach this student?**
 - **The student tells you it's his first amendment right to wear whatever he wants. What do you say? What do you do?**
-

#5 Since 2005, members of the Kansas based Westboro Baptist Church have been demonstrating across the country at the funerals of fallen soldiers killed in Iraq or Afghanistan. The group pickets military funerals with signs that say, "God hates Fags" and "Thank God for Dead Soldiers." They believe that God hates homosexuality and is punishing America for its growing acceptance of gay rights by killing US troops overseas. They also believe that they have a constitutional right to carry their message at funerals. The US Supreme Court is set to hear a high-stakes battle over free speech in an appeal filed by the father of a US Marine killed in Iraq who claims his son's funeral in 2006 was disrupted and ruined by an antigay protest. The church group said that they were 1000' away and it was only after the father saw the news reports did he file suit.

- **Is this group's picketing at funerals protected by the First Amendment?**
- **The First Amendment does not allow anyone to do anything they want: ex. pornography, hate speech. Can a line be drawn at funerals?**
- **Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Hurt feelings don't trump first amendment guarantees.**
- **Is this case more about harassment than free speech?**

6 A professor has been having problems with a clique of students in his class who continually disrupt the class with their talking throughout, and that no matter how many times he has asked them to stop, they will not cease. On one occasion, a female student got very angry and argued with the Professor when he assigned homework saying, "You can't give me this much homework. I'm going dancing on Saturday night!" She continued to argue when he explained that that was the assignment. The same female student disrupted class by making a commotion because her cousin spotted her in class as he was walking by. She became excited and made a big scene in the classroom before leaving to go see her cousin outside. Upon returning, the Professor told her know that he was upset by the scene she had just caused, asked how her "family reunion" went. She replied that it was "none of his damned business." When leaving class one night, a male student said, "You better watch yourself; you wouldn't want to fall down and break a leg." Another time, the same male student made a point of letting the Professor know that he knew exactly what kind of car that he drove and where it was parked. Several students have come to the Professor to complain that they do not feel comfortable in the class due to the environment created by this clique. One said that she feels intimidated and does not want to continue to come to class because of it. The Professor feels that it is not an environment conducive to learning and feels that something needs to be done at this point.

- **Would you do?**
- **What role can student leaders play in situations like this?**
- **Have you witnessed similar incidences on your campus and what happened?**