

## An Island of Tortured Dreams and Shattered Realities

"No man is an island unto himself." The quotation really is: "No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main. [John Donne - Meditation XVII.]

"No man is an island unto himself" is true. Indeed, this maxim may be modified to say, "No person desires to be an island unto himself or herself." Humans are creatures who desire stable relationships. Just listen to the popular songs of our culture, observe our books and television, note the art we cherish. There is a cry for love. People want to know others truly and to be truly known by others, to love and to be loved. Can there be love where there is no trust? No. In order to hold someone or something dear to my heart, I must allow that person or that thing to penetrate the internal fortifications guarding my heart. To love, I must make myself vulnerable. To love, I must **trust**. [From: *TRUST NO ONE?* by Aaron Mercer, Cedarville College; this can be found at the following address: <http://www.collegevalues.org/reflections.cfm?id=185&a=1>.]

Have any of the CoB administrators become islands, broken off from the CoB continent? Let's see:

Stan Lewis, Interim SAIS Director, appears too busy to care, but remains cordial in the hallways. Maybe it is the "Interim", or maybe it is that he simply does not get it – why is Stan always working so hard on SAIS items and ACC accreditation items when no other administrator seems to care at all, much less seems to be working on anything of value (their own vita and/or wallet excluded)? Dr. Lewis is probably a peninsula.

George Carter, Chair of the EFIB Department, once a self-proclaimed devotee of transparency in departmental governance, now a zealot of opaqueness and insupportable punitive measures, is gregarious by nature and desperately wants to remain part of the continent. He has the historical departmental apparatus to support him for now, but as more of his unjustifiable actions come to light, and support of George's actions have potential consequences for those supporters, how many will stand with George? George may want to remain a part of the continent, but his decisions may make him an island, cut off, cast adrift, and shunned by the continent dwellers. This dissection may occur soon in an effort to help other administrators hold to their jobs on the continent.

Barry Babin, Chair of the Management and Marketing Department, already is an island, but one with two occupants: Barry and Harold Doty. They seem to move and act in lock-step. What Harold may not understand is this is Barry's island. Barry cares about Barry. Barry not only revels in his island status, but also luxuriates in it to a point of haughtiness unmatched in CoB history. Unlike George, Barry would not re-annex with the continent for any reason; why do you think he is looking so hard to be a dean at another school? The continent dwellers wish you all the luck in the world, Barry.

Farhang Niroomand, Associate Dean of the CoB, former CoB power broker, and current victim of oppression, illumination, and alienation. Farhang seems to have been carved out and made an island by diverse groups on the continent. First, the Barry island inhabitants have disconnected

Niroomand for all important decision making activities in the CoB. He was not at the faculty meeting when the traditional evaluation method was altered to the new “chair talks to the dean” approach. Farhang will have a difficult time helping and hurting faculty members anymore. They allow him to carry out the mundane, subordinate activities that he is trained to perform. Another group, those who will stand up to Farhang, has also cast him aside. As a bully, he folds in the presence of non-sycophants. As more of Farhang’s previously unknown activities come to light, and as he is increasingly relegated to his more appropriate status, Farhang is finding there are more non-sycophants in the CoB than ever before in history. Farhang, where is thy sting? Unknown, but it is wherever Barry and Harold left your stinger. A third group are the new hires who have gotten clued in on the realities of the CoB, or who have discovered that the fabled, once-potent Farhang has been enervated. The last of the continent dwelling groups to also rebel are the current Farhang retinue who have historically prospered by doing as Farhang told them to do. Farhang may be able to hold on to some of this group because they cannot imagine their protector being vanquished. Given the nature of the group, once it is obvious Farhang no longer can protect them, they will, as they must, seek a new master. Farhang island should prove to be a lonely, acrimonious resting place. Perhaps his egregious salary will comfort him there.

Harold Doty, Dean of the CoB, and the inferior inhabitant of Barry island. From his arrival, Doty has worked hard to blast, dig, and destroy all access to him from the vast majority of the continent dwellers. Since Doty is so very smart, witty, predominant, and mistake-free – only in his own mind – he has little need for the CoB inferiors, unless he needs votes, or real work accomplished. The reality, as is crystal clear to most of the continent dwellers, is that Harold is pompous, supercilious, erratic, and arrogant. He is lost and out of his depth, and has alienated all who could help him. Those who he still can cling to use him like a disposable device. Cheer up, Harold, one day, in some way, either you or Barry will be gone from here; that will leave Barry island with its desired one inhabitant. The continent dwellers rejoice in your absence from the continent. As someone acquainted with Texas, Harold, you should have remembered the old story that says Texas once considered building a high stone wall around Texas to block access from the other adjoining states; Texas decided to give up on the idea when Texas discovered that all the other states also thought it was a great idea to wall off Texas. Dean Texas, enjoy that island you worked so hard to create.

Is it any wonder the CoB is in this condition? As Professor Mercer pointed out in the passage quoted in the second paragraph, it takes *trust* for a continent to work. Trust may be the single rarest commodity – even displacing honesty – in the CoB. No wonder most of the CoB administrators have become islands.

In the future, look for additional *Island* installments concerning Doty’s toadies and specimens of the chairmen’s cortege.