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Hamilton College Corrections & Clarifications

	Article	Corrections & Clarifications
1	<p>BILL O'REILLY, anchor: Hi, I'm Bill O'Reilly. Thanks for watching us tonight.</p> <p>What you don't know could kill you. That is the subject of this evening's "Talking Points Memo." As we told you last night, the election in Iraq on Sunday is a defining moment for the country, even though millions of Americans don't seem to care. If Iraq descends into chaos, the terrorists will win and grow more powerful. And of course you and I are on the death list.</p> <p>For detailed analysis of my thesis, please read my new column, which debuted today in <i>The New York Post</i> and is also available on billoreilly.com.</p> <p>The problem for many Americans is exhaustion. Every day it's Iraq this, Iraq that. Some of us have just tuned out. Even the election will be undefined. Those who support the Bush policy in Iraq will spin it as a success. Those who oppose the war will say the election failed.</p> <p>No matter what happens, it's appalling when the truth is subverted for political reasons. What – that's what's going on. We're in the middle of a brutal war here. Yet many Americans feel no sense of urgency whatsoever.</p>	
2	<p>Here's the proof. There is a professor at the</p>	

<p>University of Colorado at Boulder, who is actually running around saying the Americans killed on 9/11 deserved to be murdered, and that al Qaeda is correct in trying to kill anyone who buys into the American economic system.</p> <p>The man's name is Ward Churchill. And he heads up, if you can believe it, the Ethnic Studies Department at U.C.</p> <p>Here's what he wrote. "The 9/11 victims were civilians of a sort. But innocent? Gimme a break. They formed a technocratic corps at the very heart of America's good financial empire. They were too busy braying, incessantly and self-importantly into their cell phones, arranging power lunches and stock transactions, each of which translated into the starved and rotting flesh of infants. [Al Qaeda has] given Americans a tiny dose of their own medicine...America has earned it..."</p> <p>Of course, this is insane. And Ward Churchill is an anti-American fanatic. He does have a constitutional right to these ravings, but he should be shunned by all responsible people.</p> <p>However, Churchill is not being shunned. Hamilton College in upstate New York has actually invited the man to speak next week. We'll deal with that in a moment.</p> <p>But the main point is this. Many Americans are failing to recognize the grave danger we all face. We're too busy playing political games. The election in Iraq should not be spun or used to justify a little preference one way or the other. We should all hope and pray it's a success and that the Iraqi people join us in fighting the killers that Ward Churchill so admires. The war on terror is about to take another turn. Pay attention. And that's the Memo.</p>	<p>Mr. Churchill has the right to voice his opinion. Hamilton, like any institution committed to the free exchange of ideas, welcomes to its campus people of diverse and often controversial opinions. To do otherwise would be to deny students the opportunity to encounter and respond to a broad spectrum of opinion and views, and thus fail to provide a liberal education. The College does not endorse the views of any speaker – nor, for that matter, those of any faculty member or student. We expect, as a matter of civil discourse, that the members of this academic community, as well as visitors, respect the dignity of reasoned and</p>
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		<p>principled debate. It is in this setting that the substance and credibility of a speaker's views are established as being worthy of our support, or not.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Now for the top story. Next Thursday, as I said, Churchill is set to speak at Hamilton College. We hope that institution comes to its senses and stops the madness.</p> <p>Joining us from Utica, New York is Phil Klinkner, who teaches government at Hamilton. And from Syracuse, New York, Patricia and Matthew Coppo, whose husband, father Joseph Coppo, was killed in the World Trade Center. Matthew was a sophomore at Hamilton.</p> <p>Mr. Coppo, how do you react to this guy going to Hamilton to speak?</p> <p>PATRICIA COPPO, LOST HUSBAND ON 9/11: It's just so hard. It's very painful for – I guess not only for our families, but for all the other 9/11 families. The healing has just been so difficult through this whole thing. And now it's being brought up all over again. We sort of feel like our wounds are being reopened.</p> <p>And in my case, I've spent a lot of time – I try to avoid all of the media and doing anything, except helping my children to get through this and myself also. And now Matthew is being put in a terrible position by a school that he absolutely loves. And I have to say it's devastating to him.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Yes. Did you read this guy's remarks? And of course, it emanated on the Internet.</p> <p>P. COPPO: Right.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Did you read it?</p>	<p>Churchill's heartless statements about the victims of 9/11 are deplorable.</p>

	<p>P. COPPO: I did. Actually, I read or heard some of his remarks right after 9/11. And I sort of – I just excused him as a crazy...</p> <p>O'REILLY: Yes.</p> <p>P. COPPO: ...like one of the people that was jumping up and down on the roofs because the towers went down. But...</p> <p>O'REILLY: Well, we had a guy like this on the program who said pretty much the same thing, that America was responsible for this. And this guy's father actually was killed in the World Trade Center.</p> <p>And I threw him off the show, literally removed him from the show because I thought it was disrespectful to all of the people and the families killed on 9/11 and families who suffer.</p> <p>Now Matthew, obviously, you must have confronted some people at Hamilton. What did they tell you?</p>	<p>Unpleasant speech must be protected; otherwise freedom of speech is meaningless. Of course, neither Ward Churchill nor anyone else has an inherent right to say insensitive or offensive things on anyone's campus other than his own; but once he was invited here, once he had accepted that invitation, it became a matter of free speech. The wisdom of the invitation was no longer the issue; the educational principles of our College must prevail.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>MATTHEW COPPO, LOST FATHER ON 9/11: Well, a lot of them said that it's mainly the issue of free speech and that if they don't let Ward Churchill come, then where do they draw the line?</p> <p>O'REILLY: Where do they draw the line? I mean, that's insane. You don't – no responsible university invites irresponsible people to talk on campus. I mean, you know, what do you got? Nazis and Ku Klux Klansmen there every week?</p> <p>M. COPPO: I feel completely the same way. Like I absolutely love the school. And it just hurt knowing that they're willing to put this</p>	<p>Hamilton College as well as most of the nation including members of the University of Colorado community where Churchill teaches, were unaware of his incendiary comments about 9/11. They appeared in an obscure publication unearthed by a Hamilton professor. His comments are repugnant to most of us.</p>

	<p>guy, give him the money to speak at the school.</p> <p>O'REILLY: How much is he making, do you know?</p> <p>M. COPPO: I don't know. People I've asked did not know.</p>	<p>The College has apologized to the victims of terrorism, both here and abroad, and especially to the members of the Hamilton family touched by the events of 9/11. We have heard heart-wrenching stories from many touched by the terrorist acts of September 11th.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>O'REILLY: All right. Professor, I mean, this is embarrassing for Hamilton. I mean, it's a stain upon what is a good university, a good school. What say you?</p> <p>PHIL KLINKNER, HAMILTON COLLEGE PROFESSOR: I absolutely agree. I think I share all of your sentiments about Ward Churchill and what he has to say.</p> <p>I do think, however, that there is a principle here of free speech. And as outrageous as some of the things Ward Churchill says, I think that what we're trying to do at Hamilton is to confront him on it to some extent.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Well, how are you going to do that? I mean, you know...</p> <p>KLINKNER: Well, one of the things that he did was, originally he was to be brought in to talk on a very different topic, but then when these comments came to light, the college decided that since that would be out there, it'd be better to take it on directly. So they decided to set it up as a panel confrontation to make sure that somebody who's expressed these views did not go unchallenged.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Well, wait a minute now.</p> <p>KLINKNER: Sure.</p> <p>O'REILLY: We got plenty of nuts all over the place here in America.</p>	

<p>KLINKNER: Right, sure.</p> <p>O'REILLY: You know, do you have – have you ever had anybody like this at Hamilton? I mean, do you bring in the Klan, do you bring in the Nazi party, do you bring in, you know, crazies to address your student body on a routine basis?</p> <p>KLINKNER: Thankfully, no. And again, Ward Churchill was brought in before people knew about these comments.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Well, you can cancel.</p> <p>KLINKNER: We could. That's what some institutions would do.</p> <p>But the view at Hamilton is that we shouldn't be deciding what points of view are legitimate and what points of view are not legitimate.</p>	<p>It is clear to us, knowing what we now do about Ward Churchill's views, attitudes and activities, that there are far more important people with the intellectual and ethical stature that justifies an invitation to Hamilton College. While we believe firmly in the ability of our students to weigh and distinguish truth from falsehood and to make their own decisions about the validity of ideas, we also respect reason, responsibility, ethics, integrity and decency. According to those standards, there were better choices than Ward Churchill or Susan Rosenberg. The invitation having been extended, however, we felt constrained to leave it open lest anyone argue that this College had made less than a full commitment to the principle of free speech.</p> <p>We teach democracy at Hamilton. We advocate freedom of speech. We treasure and cherish the academic freedom that Hamilton College presents and provides. Recent events have taught us extraordinarily powerful lessons that make us a better community, intellectually stronger, emotionally committed and passionately engaged in moving into the future in a free</p>
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		society.
6	<p>O'REILLY: But that's crazy. And the university has a responsibility to decide that, just as I do on this program.</p> <p>KLINKNER: Right, absolutely.</p> <p>O'REILLY: I can't subject my audience to irresponsible ravings.</p> <p>And here's how bad it is.</p> <p>KLINKNER: But there are some examples. For example, you had on the poet, Amari Baraka, who said what I consider to be some pretty irresponsible things...</p> <p>O'REILLY: Baraka was attacking the government. This guy – and I'm sorry, Mrs. Coppo, that I have to say this. Please forgive me. But I have to get this across to the audience. This guy compared Matthew's father and Mrs. Coppo's husband to Adolph Eichmann, the Nazi who killed Jews. That's what this vile human being, who we're all seeing now, who doesn't deserve to be an American citizen, by the way, who if during World War II did this would have been arrested for sedition. And we're in the middle of a war on terror now. Keep that in mind, professor. He would have been arrested and incarcerated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt during World War II.</p> <p>There's no justification for Hamilton College putting this man in any public forum, sir. None.</p>	<p>We agree with former U.S. Senator Adlai Stevenson who once defined a free society as a place where it is safe to be unpopular. But we also agree with Martin Luther King who said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Principles matter, freedom matters, and honesty, decency and sacrifice matter. Silence on any of these is a violation of our fundamental principles and our mission as a place of higher learning.</p>
7	<p>KLINKNER: I – you know, look, he's not somebody I will, even for a moment – I don't think any person with half a brain or an ounce of conscience would defend what Ward Churchill has said.</p> <p>But again, we are in a war. But we're also in</p>	

	<p>a war in which we're attempting to defend rights of freedom of speech, liberty, civil rights.</p> <p>O'REILLY: It's going to be a very black mark on Hamilton.</p> <p>KLINKNER: Right.</p> <p>O'REILLY: And I will tell you that I would call for the resignation of the chancellor of the school if I had anything to do with the school. I would have that person fired. The board of directors of the school should do that immediately. The alumni of Hamilton should not give one nickel to the school if this person appears.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Now Matthew, what are you going to do when he shows up next Thursday?</p> <p>M. COPPO: I'm torn between either if he comes, they were saying they're going to open up to a panel discussion and confronting him myself. But if I do that, then I pretty much just dignify his appearance there.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Yes. Don't do that, Matthew. Don't give involved with that dog and pony show.</p> <p>Mrs. Coppo, I'm going to give you the last word. And again, I apologize to you, madam. I don't want to make this guy's ravings public, but he's going to be at the school. And people got to know. Go ahead.</p> <p>P. COPPO: Yes. Well, it's true. In my opinion, Hamilton's just legitimizing what they're saying. And this propaganda, it's all solely his opinion. It's...</p> <p>O'REILLY: Of course, it is.</p> <p>P. COPPO: There is no – in my opinion, it's</p>	

	<p>freedom of speech equals freedom of the truth. And it just – it hurts.</p> <p>O'REILLY: It's cruel. Hamilton...</p> <p>P. COPPO: It won't only hurt me.</p> <p>O'REILLY: Right.</p> <p>P. COPPO: But it hurts...</p> <p>O'REILLY: Everybody who is guilty. Hamilton College is participating in a cruel hoax here that has consequences.</p>	<p>Hamilton, like any institution committed to the free exchange of ideas, invites to its campus people of diverse opinions, often controversial. The opportunity to encounter and respond to people from outside the college community in their intensity and their immediacy is among the key attributes of a liberal education. The views of speakers are their own. We expect, as a matter of civil discourse, that the members of this academic community, as well as visitors, respect the dignity of reasoned and principled debate. It is in this setting that the substance and credibility of a speaker's views are established as being worthy of support, or not.</p> <p>We expected that many of those who strongly disagree with Mr. Churchill's comments would attend his talk and make their views known. This is the process of both academic freedom and freedom of speech.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>I want to say one more thing to everybody watching. I don't want anybody doing anything crazy to Hamilton College. I don't want any threats going in there. I don't want any of that. Feel free to wire or e-mail the college with your complaints. And you alumni at Hamilton, do not give them a nickel if that man appears.</p> <p>Folks, thank you very much.</p>	