

Hamilton Hooey, Cont'd
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Editorial
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Hamilton College Corrections & Clarifications

	Article	Corrections & Clarifications
1	<p>So it turns out that the folks who run upstate Hamilton College are not only fools, but moral cowards too.</p> <p>This became clear yesterday when the school canceled a scheduled appearance by Ward Churchill, the Colorado academic who likened 9/11 victims to Nazis.</p> <p>Joan Hinde Stewart, Hamilton's president, said she pulled the plug for security reasons, citing "multiple death threats" against the speaker and officials.</p>	<p>We're a college campus and we're responsible for the safety of other people's children. The safety of our students supersedes all other issues. Hamilton only needed one credible threat to believe canceling was the right thing to do. Law enforcement authorities in New York are currently investigating five threats they deem credible. More than 100 threats of violence were directed at Mr. Churchill and Hamilton College.</p>
2	<p>"We have done our best to protect what we hold most dear — the right to speak, think and study freely," she said.</p> <p>No, what Hamilton actually sought to do was foist a phony "scholar" on its student body — and then to score some publicity: The college's first response to complaints about Churchill was to move the event to a 2,000-seat hall, vs. the original 300-seat venue.</p>	<p>The venue was moved to accommodate the much larger-than-expected audience.</p>
3	<p>Next, as the "controversy" grew embarrassing, officials tried to mitigate the criticism by adding another speaker to tell the other side of the story.</p> <p>The problem there is that Churchill's "side" is that the 9/11 killers are praiseworthy fellows — while their thousands of victims are "little Eichmanns."</p>	<p>Ward Churchill was originally invited to speak on Native Americans and prisons. Once his views about 9/11 became known, the College instructed the Kirkland Project to change the focus of the panel and to add two additional speakers so that Mr. Churchill's views on 9/11 could be confronted.</p>

	<p>Is dialogue possible with a fellow like that? What exactly <i>is</i> the other side of Churchill's story, anyway?</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>This is in no way a First Amendment case. The constitution enjoins <i>government</i> from interfering in most speech. It certainly doesn't bar college administrators from correcting gross miscalculations like hiring speakers of Churchill's ilk.</p>	<p>From the beginning of this republic it has always been understood, and reaffirmed by our greatest statesmen, that it is precisely unpleasant speech that 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 had been invited here, once he had accepted that invitation, it <i>became and remains</i> a matter of free speech. The wisdom of the invitation is no longer the issue; the educational principles of our College are.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Hamilton should have canceled the forum outright. Now, school officials have compounded deplorably bad judgment by caving in to crank phone calls — guaranteeing more of them in the future, for whatever reason.</p> <p>Fools and cowards, every one.</p>	<p>We're a college campus and we're responsible for the safety of other people's children. The safety of our students supersedes all other issues. More than 100 threats of violence directed at Mr. Churchill and Hamilton were received, including one caller who threatened to bring a gun to the event.</p>