

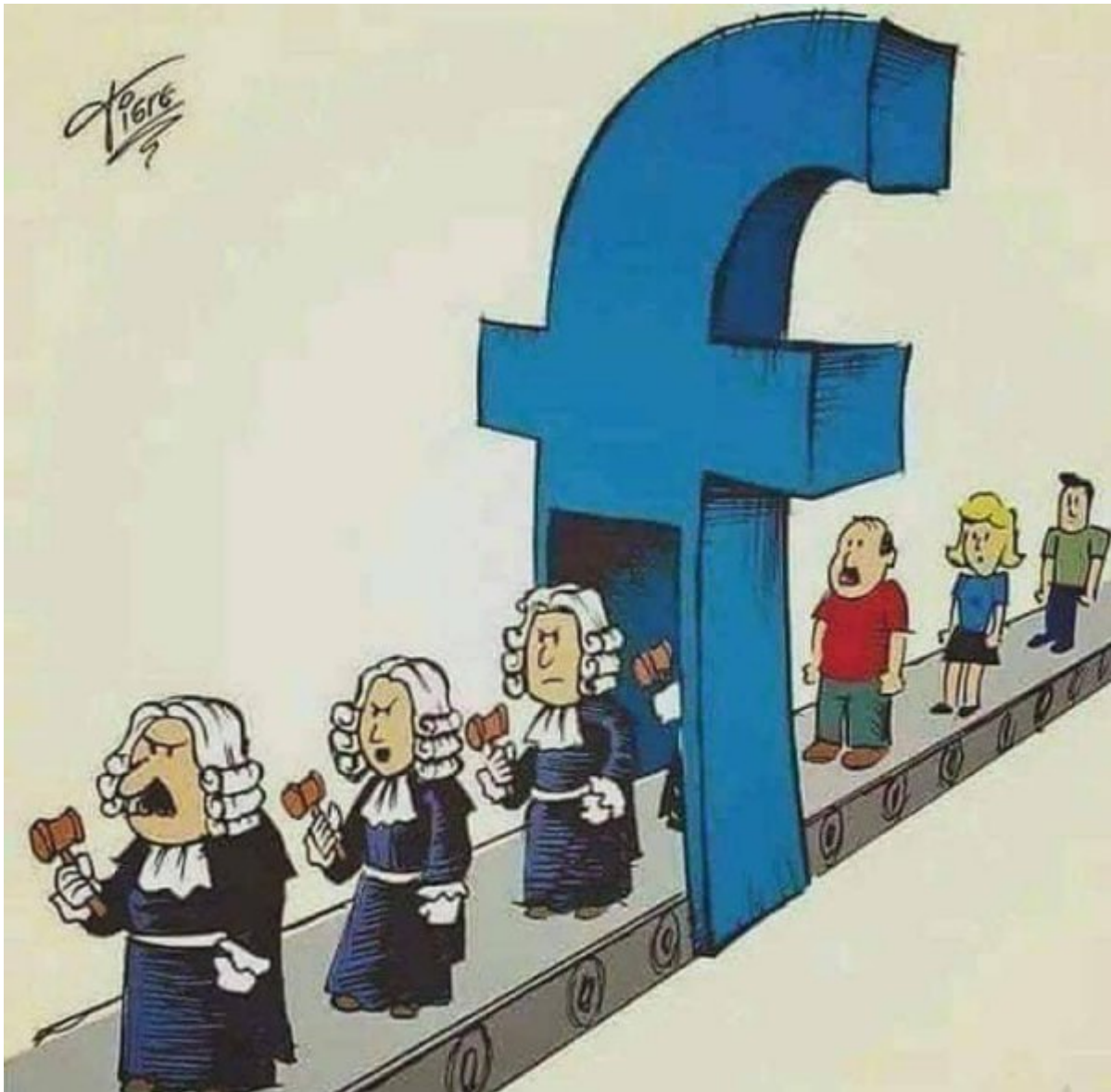
OPINION: The hypocrisy of the Facebook “lawyers” and “juries”: guilty until proven innocent only if convenient

“Dear Facebook Juries,

How quick we are to judge. How quick to convict, condemn and crucify. In fact, how quick we are to jump on any bandwagon. What is this insatiable need to stick our two cents in before we even have any facts?

This urge is nothing new but recently two opposite stories hit FB around the same time and the reactions are just more than I can bear.

The first I read was of the officer accused of rape and sexual abuse of a minor. The various posts and reposts have prompted all manner of proposals of what should be done with this man from locking him up to castration to a bullet to the head. The man is accused and has not had his day in court. The way I understand the judicial system we have a thing called innocent until proven guilty. Many would have you believe it's guilty until proven innocent.



Over the years I've noticed this trend continues with people accused of these type crimes or murders or drug charges. It almost doesn't matter the accusation. As long as the headline is spun a certain way most of you are ready to bury the accused under the jail. And in a lot of cases, the headline is all it takes. Many of you don't even read the article before you leave your self-righteous comment.

The second report I read was of an uncle and nephew who were released from prison after serving 42 years for a murder the prosecutor's office now says they did not commit. *"How much money should these two be compensated?"* the post asks. The replies were just as fervent as in the first post but this time on the side of the wrongfully accused. *"There's no amount*

that can make up for what these men had taken from them!" you all cried. "Whoever prosecuted them should go to jail!"

I wonder, were Facebook around when these men were being tried for the murder what the posts and comments would have looked like. What are the chances you'd all be calling for these men's heads on a platter? I bet many back then were and they were wrong.

"Judge not lest ye be judged." for all you so-called righteous Christians.

My point? If it's not already clear: let these things play out in the court system. Give these people their day in court. Sometimes things aren't the way they seem. Sometimes they are.

But consider if the person accused was someone you loved, wouldn't you think they at least deserved a fair trial before they're convicted?" – Rob

OPINION: New Bedford's missing ingredients to being a better community

In response to our '**Apathy is the main problem with New Bedford, not crime**' article posted to our **Facebook page**, Lois Wiseman posted her thoughts on how New Bedford is different than her new hometown in Canada.

*I no longer live in New Bedford. I married and moved to Canada. Over the past few years, I've tried to figure out how life, and people are different here. **I think you hit the nail on the head.***

Here are a few things that work here to make a vibrant, safe life and a community of involved citizens. You may not agree, and I'm not picking on you, just telling what life is like here.

First: When parents take their children out to a restaurant, you hardly ever see video games or tablets.

Next: Every town or community has a community center. Most have an ice arena, meeting rooms, a theater and town offices are located there. This week there is a Shop Local Fair, with vendors, and a Sustainability Fair, with a variety of green businesses. We have a dog park for people to meet with their dogs. We have hiking trails. People volunteer here. The hospital auxiliary, just this week, donated \$77,000 to the local hospital. We have a yearly indoor yard sale which covers an ice rink, called Hey Day. About 60 volunteers run it and make \$36,000 for the hospital. We have an active youth center. We have a group for youth, called Sea Cadets, which gives them a look at what a military career would involve. Every town has a weekend farmers' market, well-attended by the town people.

We don't have handguns. Canadians are reputed to be polite, and they are. People hold doors for each other. Family values are strong here. Kids play outside in the cold, because every child has a snowsuit. There are volunteer drives to be sure of that. We still have ham and bean suppers, pig roasts and old fashioned barbecues. That all being said, my town is about the size of Acushnet, smaller than New Bedford. I'm still working out the differences.

I visit the New Bedford area quite often. I have a different set of social skills for New Bedford, quite often driven by not feeling safe in public. I drive differently. I am afraid to drive in New Bedford and on Rt. 195. There are no cell phones in the car, or even eating, in Ontario. The fines are stiff. Speeding and reckless driving fines are stiff, and you lose your license. There are no gangs in my area, and there is

little vandalism and no graffiti. I don't have an answer for New Bedford. I'm just telling what I see here that works.

Hope you read this without judging me. I miss my hometown, but life is good here, too.

– Lois Wiseman

OPINION: Prince Henry the Navigator was one of the founders of the slave trade

“Let me give you guys a crash course on the monument that's preventing the opening of Whisk and Jane's shop at 161 Pope's Island.

Prince Henry the Navigator, has the dubious distinction of being a founder of the Atlantic slave trade. He sponsored Nuno Tristao's exploration of the African coast, and Antao Goncalves's hunting expedition there in 1441.

The two men captured several Africans and brought them back to Portugal. One of the captured men, a chief, negotiated his own return to Africa, promising in exchange to provide the Portuguese with more Africans.” – Justin Kennedy

OPINION: City being too aggressive with “No Parking” near Hathaway School and not utilizing space for the public

“Diagonally across from Ellen Hathaway school on the Union Street side is a vacant lot that parents have used to park to pick up their kids at least since my grandsons have been going to the school (5 years). I am not sure when it happened, but this morning I noticed signs put up by the city that say “City Property – No Parking” across the entrance to the lot.

I would love to know the reasoning behind putting up these signs. There is parking on only one side of the street, and most of those spaces are taken up by teachers (who have no parking lot), and residents. Parents making pickups have to park a block and a half away if they can’t use the ‘VACANT’ lot.

The lot is only used twice a day: to drop kids off in the morning and to pick them up in the afternoon. If anything; the city should level and pave it so that the parking and traffic congestion in the area is eased. If the city doesn’t want people in there at other times, put a chain across it when school is not in session.

Also, a paved parking lot would help a lot when there is a parking ban in the area; having it could eliminate the need for local residents to park in Hathaway School’s lot on school grounds.

Ian Abreu, can you get to the bottom of this, please?” Douglas Miller.

OPINION: How to make people accountable for Massachusetts loophole letting them avoid excise taxes and plate renewals?

"I was wondering about out of state license plates. My street has at least 5-10 out of state plates (some as far away as Pennsylvania) and they have parked on my street for 2-5+ years, with some having expired tags/stickers.

I got a ticket when I forgot to get my inspection sticker and in that same week, I received my excise taxes, which those out of state plates obviously did not.

Who do you call to make them accountable when it comes to switching over their out of state plates to Massachusetts plates and paying excise taxes like we have to?

It's not cheap to live in Massachusetts let alone own a car. Any help in who or where to contact would be appreciated. Thank you have a good day." – Anonymous

Worley Beds owner voices her

“strongest opposition” to recreational marijuana on Pope’s Island

In an email dated Feb 13, 2019, Worley Beds Factory Outlet owner Martha Worley voiced her opposition to New Bedford City Council President Linda Morad.

“I would like to express in the strongest terms my opposition to the efforts being made to accommodate a recreational cannabis business at 161 Popes Island by granting them a zoning waiver. My business is located at 197 Popes Island and I have been here since 1993. Not only is Marine Park located directly across the street, but as I am sure you are aware, Noah’s Playground is also there. It seems unfathomable to me that that the council would even entertain a waiver for the very first establishment that is requesting a license to operate under an ordinance that was unanimously passed by this body. The absence of any opposition by the existing business community on the island is due to the fact that we have been unaware of when the subject will come before the council and therefore, left out of the process. May I humbly request notification when this will come before you in the future so that I and my business neighbors can be heard on this? I support and want retail and commercial businesses to thrive in New Bedford, but having a cannabis business across the street from a park and a big, very popular playground is shortsighted and just a bad idea.”

Respectfully,
Martha Worley

To get caught up on the proposed retail marijuana business that hopes to open at the former strip club on Pope’s Island, go **here**.

The full email exchange between Martha Worley and Linda Morand can be seen here (use the arrows to read both pages):

02.28.2019__COMMUNICATION_-
_ZONING_WAIVER_OPPOSITION__161_POPE_S_ISLAND

Grandmother thankful for strangers at Stop & Shop helping autistic granddaughter

A grandmother shared how grateful she was for workers and strangers at the Stop & Shop on Dartmouth Street in New Bedford for helping her autistic granddaughter who lost her special doll:

“Yesterday my autistic granddaughter lost her special doll named Sandy. I would like to give a shout out to all those at Stop & Shop that went above and beyond to be sure my granddaughter Amariannah would get a new Sandy doll. My heart goes out to you all and I want to thank each and every one of you for your love and support.

Thank you to Stop and Shop on Dartmouth Street in New Bedford, specifically Franky Foscaldi in the meat/seafood department and Alexandria Rose and Alisa Marie.

Keisha Rodriguez as well for offering to buy a new doll. Hayden Lynn, Christopher Mel, Donna Monteiro, Kristi McManus, and Aaron Alfres. Special thanks to Jecka Braga’s Daughter offering her own doll to my granddaughter. Also a huge thanks

for all the support and sharing to make sure my granddaughter was ok – Derek Fernandes Alves, Jessica Tiffany Russo, Annie McCarthy, Darlene Rego, Patti Anne, Michele Shannon, Cindy Ann Thompson, Carmen Carmen, Kelli Macomber, Teresa McCormack, Donna Mello, Phillips Valver, Cody Cameron Labreque, Kim Newton, and Terri Aguiar.

These are the kind of people that make New Bedford great. Thanks again so much for all your love and support for caring about another child that you didn't know personally. We just picked up sandy. Thank you all so much." – Jennifer L Staples



OPINION: It's time to bring rent control to New Bedford

Is it time to bring rent control back to New Bedford? A member of the **New Bedford Facebook group** thinks so:

"I think it's time rent control makes a comeback. The house my sister lives in was just sold. The new landlord wants to go up \$140 a month on her rent. She only gets social security. Even someone who works isn't going to get a \$140 a month raise to pay that kind of an increase." -Pauline St.Don

Contribute to the discussion **here**.

OPINION: New Bedford resident warns of pushy energy people

A concerned New Bedford resident wants to warn others about aggressive energy people aggressively knocking on doors in the city today.

"There are some guys knocking on doors on Independent Street in New Bedford claiming to be city workers. They are asking for electrical bills. Spread awareness! They ask for electrical bills to update something on their system, If you refuse, they tell you that your electrical bill will go up." – Carlos Lazcano

OPINION: The medical system is failing those of us who need it most

"I have been a community worker for over 14 years, worked at the YWCA as a Volunteer for over 15 year and worked as a minister since 2010. I have a 22-year-old disabled son who is certified legally blind, and has Global Developmental Delay – he's non-verbal.

This winter, he went into respiratory distress and I took him to Saint Annes Hospital in Fall River. After being there for 2 days his lungs collapsed and in a week and a half and he had gone through 5-6 medical procedures. He was hospitalized for over a month and a half. He was in the ICU for a few long weeks.

I live in a rented home but I need to live on the ground floor for him. I applied for assistance in July but was told that being disabled or blind was not a priority. Aren't these places for people with low income, disabled, veterans, and those struggling financially?

As a single mom, I am paying more than what I receive. I had to quit my job as an activity Director at New Bedford Gardens Care And Rehab. due to the family emergency. There are other families like me that think that the system is failing those who **truly** need housing assistance.

A lot of people believe that everyone in housing is uneducated or just want to live off of the system, but a lot of us have situations that pull us back."

Sincerely,
Jenny