

# The Northerner Online

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## Dark times for student rights

### Radio show censorship at Occidental College raises questions about power

*By Greg Lukianoff and Will Creeley KRT*

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Despite the uproar about the Federal Communications Commission's aggressive attempts to clean up America's airwaves, a shocking case of censorship that recently occurred in California has garnered precious little attention.

What makes this case even more distressing is that it originated in a medium where one would expect free speech to be sacrosanct: college radio.

Jason Antebi, a senior at Occidental College in Los Angeles, not only lost his job at the student radio station, but was also found guilty by campus officials of "sexual harassment" for the content of his radio show.

Antebi's show was one of the station's most popular, probably due, in part, to his acerbic parody and bawdy humor.

Antebi was an "equal opportunity offender." His targets ranged from Bill O'Reilly to Al Franken, Democrats to Jehovah's Witnesses,

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But this past March, after three years of broadcasting, Antebi was hastily fired.

Why?

Student leaders Antebi had mocked on-air filed sexual harassment complaints against him. Antebi called one a "bearded feminist" and the other - a male student - a "douche." Insults like these are hardly rare on college campuses and (fortunately for satirists, commentators and comedians everywhere) fit well within the protections of free speech.

The complaining students claimed that Antebi's show promoted "disrespect and slander" against "women, diversity and Occidental College." Attempting to invoke the protection of federal civil rights law, the offended students sought to prove that Antebi's show created a "hostile environment" and "harassed" both them and his general audience in general.

Colleges have used federal harassment law as an excuse to punish protected expression for years. To stop this abuse, the Department of Education issued a letter last year explaining that federal law cannot be used to punish speech that is merely "offensive." With such a clear statement from the federal government, the case should have died quickly. *Continued...*

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