

Labeling government impossible, pointless

I could start this letter with some poorly veiled insult or some arrogant claim of superiority but, seeing as I'm about to actively engage myself in a thoroughly useless discussion, I feel it would be hypocritical of me.

The debate I'm talking about has to do with what term, and I can't believe I'm even saying this, should be used to describe our particularly nuanced form of government.

Democracy? Our nation's voter turnout can barely be dragged up to 55 percent in the most significant of elections, so it's hard for us to claim to be much of a democracy.

How about theocracy? The majority of our legal documentation and tender, including our Constitution, contains numerous references to a "God" when 13.2 percent of Americans claimed in the 2000 American Religious Identification Survey to be "Nonreligious/Secular."

It wouldn't be a stretch to say that this country is governed on an unfounded religious bias. People screaming about the "war on Christmas" and the need to protect the "sanctity of marriage" only serve to strengthen my point.

How about this? Oligarchy is a form of government in which political power rests with a small group of the societally elite. In traditional oligarchic governments, these few are brought into power over the many by wealth, family or military prowess; most of our illustrious national legislators have at least two of the three, so maybe oligarchy isn't a strong enough term.

An argument could be made for any of these designations, as well as probably three dozen more, varying in specificity, but what possible purpose does this serve?

The BBC refers to our government as a federal

republic. Given that this is both logically and factually true (an intersection that appears with shocking irregularity these days), I'm prepared to accept that choice.

Could we please argue about something important now?

Cameron Marston,
Fremont

Auditorium proposal at UW-Fox necessary

I'm not really a "fine arts" kind of guy. That's why I'm in the electrical engineering program at the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley.

At the same time, however, I can easily understand the need at Fox for upgrades to the auditorium to meet the needs of the fine arts programs on the campus. When Dr. Perry describes the facilities as "inadequate," he's being charitable. My own description would be considerably more blunt.

As both a longtime student at UW-Fox and a homeowner in Winnebago County, this issue directly affects me. That's why I would like to come out in support of the proposed communication arts center and strongly encourage the Winnebago County Board to look favorably on this addition to the UW-Fox campus.

Both the UW-Fox students and the general public will benefit from a suitable facility. In addition to student-developed performances, the auditorium is also used to present a regular "Scholar's Series" of presentations that are free and open to the general public. These include experts on stem cell research and medical ethics, immigration, Civil War history, geology and other varied subjects.

High-quality educational facilities are vitally important today, both to young people graduating from high school and older non-traditional students learning new skills (or improving their existing ones). UW-Fox has been a strong community asset in this respect.

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To dismiss UW-Fox and other UW two-year colleges as simply a way to "try out" higher education, as one local newspaper has done, is to do these institutions a serious disservice.

This communication arts center should be viewed by the county board as a necessary investment for the residents of the Fox Valley community. High-quality, accessible and affordable educational facilities are just as important to the Fox Valley as roads, bridges and hospitals.

Gary Robinson,
Menasha

Criticism unwarranted on Schuetze dismissal

After Raymond Wick's Dec. 29 letter, I felt it necessary to respond to some of his comments.

First, I have served on committees for my parish for 10 years and been actively involved in my parish for more than 20. I do not recall Mr. Wick serving on any of our committees or even being involved in our parish.

And yet, Mr. Wick feels it his duty to lecture our entire parish community about how we should have behaved. I don't feel that someone who has no idea of what went on behind the scenes before this

event should cast stones.

As far as things happening "infamously in Freedom," I resent the implied criticism. I believe that recent events that have put Freedom on the map, so to speak, have not been the doings of the people of Freedom.

As for his comments that we have lost a volunteer fireman, I believe he should plead ignorance. I wonder how many of our volunteer firemen we lost when Fr. Schuetze joined?

Not everyone was thrilled to have him on board. So Mr. Wick believes that losing two, three or even four firemen was balanced by gaining one.

The comment that irked me the most was about how we lost someone who could be a "chaplain-fireman if the need arose."

As a first responder for my town, I can say that situations did arise and I was unhappy with Fr. Schuetze's response.

So please don't lecture our parish and our community before you know the facts, Mr. Wick. As far as who has lost and who has won, I believe that remains to be seen.

Jodi Roskowski,
Freedom