

# Washington Post

INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

## EDITORIALS

# wants to teach us?

learned from the consequences of his loathsome behavior.

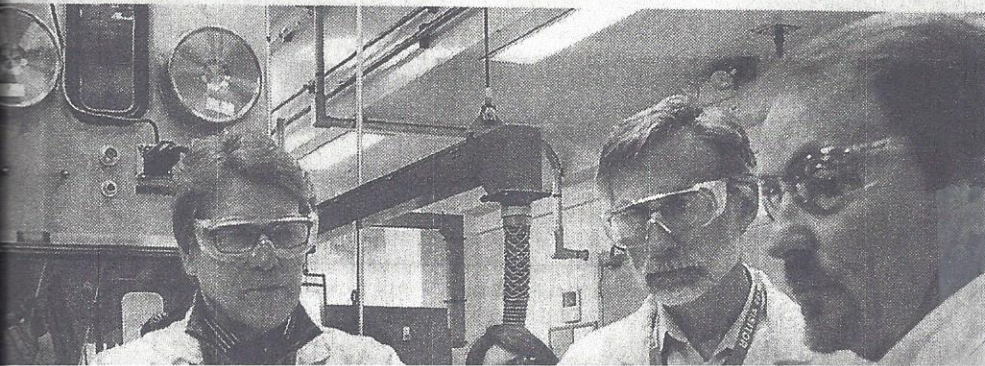
at this point can be considered sexual harassment program, for which details are still being worked out. It should include a critique of the decision by the Pennsylvania State Police to bring charges against Cosby.

representatives — and no doubt Mr. Cosby's — aim to portray Mr. Cosby, 79, as a victim of amorphous laws and reckless prosecution. He has now been freed not only to get on with his life but also to lecture others. That distorted view overlooks some facts. The failure of a jury to reach a verdict in a criminal case does not absolve him of guilt, nor does it make the charges go away. The prosecutor already announced plans to file a civil case in which Andrea Constand alleges she was sexually harassed and molested by Mr. Cosby. Other women — about 60 other women — have come forward with similar claims against Mr. Cosby, and many have brought civil suits against him. He has

vigorously denied the allegations, just as he has denied the charges in Ms. Constand's case.

But even setting those charges aside — which we don't — there is ample damning evidence in his own words that Mr. Cosby is neither a victim nor someone equipped to advise others about their sexual behavior. In a deposition taken in 2005 and 2006 in the civil case brought by Ms. Constand, Mr. Cosby admitted to giving Quaaludes to women he wanted to have sex with. He acknowledged giving pills to Ms. Constand. When questioned about whether he asked her consent to his sexual advances, he said: "I don't hear her say anything. And I don't feel her say anything. And so I continue and I go into the area that is somewhere between permission and rejection. I am not stopped."

Is "loathsome" too strong a word? There are lessons to be learned from Mr. Cosby, but they aren't the ones he — or those who enable him — seem able to recognize.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@washpost.com

### Metro is finally arriving

Regarding the June 20 Metro article "Riders too unhappy to cheer SafeTrack's finale":

I am a regular rider of Metro — buses and trains. While I know that soon there will be an increase in the costs for my daily commute, I applaud the current Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority staff for its important work this past year on making the system safe.

If anger at fare increases is directed at anyone, it should be directed at those who managed or governed WMATA for years and somehow forgot that they were supposed to keep the system safe and establish ongoing preventive maintenance throughout the entire system. The highest priority of any transportation system has to be safety; finally, there is a staff in place to have that occur. Unfortunately, some people do not want to be held responsible for governing a system that for years was dangerous and not looked after.

Scott Badesch, Silver Spring

### Et tu, Public Theater?

I'm sympathetic to Catherine Rampell's concerns in her June 20 op-ed, "The play's not the thing," about protests against this summer's "Julius Caesar." But I can't help thinking that the Public Theater exercised questionable judgment in its decision to depict the most dramatic moment in the play in such a way that might be construed as an assassination in effigy.

It's now common knowledge that John Wilkes Booth, who had participated in a Manhattan benefit performance of the tragedy in November 1864, regarded Abraham Lincoln as a latter-day Caesar and defined himself as a new-world Brutus. And given that precedent, it's not unreasonable, even for those who regard the current occupant of the White House as unfit for office, to feel that this production veered perilously close to suggesting that another Booth-like "lofty scene" would be, in Hamlet's words, "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

John F. Andrews, Santa Fe, N.M.

The writer is president of the Shakespeare Guild.

### Mr. Pruitt will do it