

CA Fri, Sept. 24, 1976
letters To The Editor OPE-26-25

Midtown Article Was Unfounded

To The Commercial Appeal:

While the author of your Mid-South Magazine article may have intended to make a contrast between the good points and bad points of Midtown, it is quite obvious that his article was very much one-sided. Such quotes from the article as "it is dusk, three hours before the wail of sirens will be constant in the night" are totally unbelievable and unfounded unless one lives in the immediate area of the hospitals. While there may be a number of topless bars in the area, I do feel that the statement that "... there are barely twice as many churches as topless bars ..." is totally unfounded and if the writer of this article had taken the time to check into the statistical facts, he would easily have discovered that this is an untrue statement. The statement on "Midtown is a place to live on your way to somewhere else" is also very much unfounded in most situations. Personally, we sold a house in "fashionable East Memphis" in order to buy a house in Midtown. The individuals in our neighborhood seem to be quite solid and sound individuals who have great desires of remaining in the neighborhood.

This article reminded me very much of articles I wrote and perhaps other students wrote in junior high and high school with no chance to obtain factual information with which to substantiate their arguments. It would seem that Dan Henderson

had decided his direction, prior to beginning to write his article, and he made that article move in that direction. This may have been unintentional on his part since it is very easy to tear something down through sensationalism and it is much harder to dig into the hard, cold facts which are so often hidden. If the article had been written on portions of Poplar or portions of Madison, it might well have been true; however, in this article Mr. Henderson, at least on the surface, purported to describe the entire Midtown area. One could easily find the same problems in almost any section of any city.

I do feel that The Commercial Appeal is obligated, as a result of this article, to send either Mr. Henderson or another one of its reporters into the "real" Midtown area to find out the real facts about Midtown, and then print an article about that side of the coin — the real Midtown where real people with real families live in real neighborhoods. For those of us who enjoy Midtown and have moved our families into the area seeking real neighborhoods the article in Mid-South Magazine was a definite slap in the face. I do feel that in a city where there is only one company which publishes both major newspapers, it is imperative that articles such as the one that is the subject of this letter should be labeled as editorials.

CLYDE M. CRUTCHFIELD

1685 Autumn

Midtown Is Friends, Neighbors And Home

To The Commercial Appeal:

"The Good People of 'Gomorra'" was thought-provoking. I know the author meant well. He attempted to portray the variety that is the spice — and meat and potatoes — of life in Midtown. However, the cursory reading the article generally received will serve only to reinforce the stereotype of Midtown I often hear — it's a dangerous, undesirable place to live.

I traveled every street of Midtown this summer. Not once did I see a walled and guarded apartment complex as I have seen in "safer" areas of our city. As everywhere, those of us who choose to live in fear do live in fear. The rest of us jog at 10 p.m., bicycle anywhere and speak to the fascinating people we meet walking — a very visible Midtown recreation.

Many of us in Midtown are not on our way to somewhere else. We have served our time in "Ken and Barbie" land. We have brought much of the baggage of that land with us. We car-pool. We PTA. We have dancing lessons, piano lessons, art lessons, Little League, Boy Scouts, Girl

Prefers Midtown

To The Commercial Appeal:

I wish to add my voice to many others who would like to request that you do another Mid-South Magazine article on the Midtown area that would emphasize the many aspects of living in this area. We have lived here for 20 years by choice and preference and hope to live here indefinitely.

MRS. R. G. PATTERSON

1746 Autumn

Scouts, swimming lessons, backyard barbecues, church circles, neighborhood get-togethers and civic associations. But we have chosen Midtown and we plan to stay — if the stereotypes will leave us alone.

Midtown is special. Midtown is a true microcosm. Midtown is what America used to be all about. Midtown is every age, every value, every "ism," every culture, every socio-economic perspective in our land. It is all here — the moral, the amoral, the immoral, the good, the indifferent, the bad. Because of this, a commitment to Midtown living requires the maturity of knowing who you are and what your values are. Midtown is not mere tolerance of differences. Midtown is a living celebration of the beauty of differences, their right to be and the freedom to choose from an almost limitless offering of activities, people and life-styles.

Midtown living is not always care-free. Indeed, it is often a fight for survival. We are daily disturbed by seemingly illiterate truck drivers who cannot read the "No Trucks" signs on our streets. We are regularly threatened by a questionable expressway that promises to desecrate by decibels our parks and our homes. We are investing thousands of dollars in hard cash and sweat equity to rehabilitate and maintain homes that manifest structural, architectural and historical details not to be found outside the parkways.

Midtown is challenge. Midtown is choice. Midtown is friends, neighbors, friendly strangers. Midtown is home.

KAY PORTMAN

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