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12-11-2008

December 11, 2008: The Firing of Don Guter

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Ledewitz, B. (2008). December 11, 2008: The Firing of Don Guter. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/225>

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Title: The Firing of Don Guter

Date: 2008-12-11T17:19:00.004-05:00

12/11/2008—The rest of the world is unaware that here at Duquesne University School of Law, the Dean, Don Guter, was summarily fired yesterday. No reason was given. Dean Guter did not deserve to be fired. The law school is doing very well on his watch and there is no unmentioned scandal going on. President Dougherty just wanted his own person in as dean. Guter was too independent in his judgment. This is not big news. Things like this happen all the time. But this is a Catholic Law School. Not only that, but we hear all the time about Duquesne's "mission", to serve God by serving students. I make the point in the book *Hallowed Secularism* that one of the reasons for rising secularism is that religious institutions do not behave as well as secular ones. That is not always true, but it is true here at Duquesne. When it happens, religion itself suffers. Religion is made to look ridiculous in the eyes of the non-religious world. Karl Barth once said there is the church of Esau and the church of Jacob. There is the man-made church institution and then there is the representative of the holy spirit--verily God's representative on earth. It isn't fair to expect religious institutions to be better than human beings tend to be. That is true but it is not the point. I would like to see the representatives of Our Religions under the weight of representing God. I would like to see them always asking themselves, what will the nonreligious think if we do a certain questionable thing? This is the way that Jews used to ask, what will the goyim think? I wish President Dougherty had said to himself before he acted, I had better be especially sure and especially just, because not just my reputation will suffer if I am wrong. Nor just the reputation of Duquesne University. But God's reputation will suffer. And it has.