

Guest editorial: The civility of discourse

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“They’ll tell anything on you down in town.”



Bill Leonard So the serpent-handling woman says as she sits on her Appalachian front porch, killing flies and defending her church’s approach to the sixteenth chapter of Mark’s Gospel. Whether in cheap novels, academic treatises, or documentary exposes, serpent-handlers have been analyzed, critiqued and caricatured for their belief that the sacraments are alive and can kill you. Nonetheless the Appalachian woman is right: They’ll tell anything on you down in town, on Twitter, or “Morning Joe,” especially in an election year. Most mornings bring new denunciations or scurrilous accusations from candidate and surrogate alike.

[Read the full column at Baptist News Global.](#)

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