IN MEMORY OF JOHN SILBER
I write to thank and congratulate you for the splendid Winter–Spring 2013 issue of Bostonia. I was especially moved by the letters in praise of the late John Silber and your very honest and comprehensive tribute, which completely filled the space given to faculty obituaries.

John Silber was a brilliant, autocratic, but visionary leader whose legacy lives on under President Brown’s vibrant administration. The University ranks among the best urban institutions of higher learning. Silber could also be an irascible curmudgeon.

My longest pastorate was a large church in Columbus, Ohio. When we learned that Silber was passing through Columbus on his way to the Midwest, I asked if he would meet with a delegation of United Methodist pastors, all alumni, who were concerned (alarmed) about the structural changes being made at the School of Theology; eliminating the third- and fourth-floor dormitories to provide office space for University faculty.

When I raised the issue in the meeting he shot back, “The School of Theology is the most pampered school in the University, and we will not tolerate any further favoritism. Let the theologues find outside lodging like other graduate students.” In other words, preserving a sense of community be damned. No one dared challenge him. The meeting was mercifully brief. He did not “suffer fools gladly.”

Yet he transformed Boston University into a world-class institution. I wonder what he’s up to in heaven.

William E. Smith
(STH ’48,’54)
Southern Pines, N.C.

I am sure I was not alone in my outrage when I saw that President Silber’s obituary, and the discussion of his legacy, was relegated to page 76 of the latest issue of your magazine. Although Silber may have been a controversial figure at times, he not only dedicated 33 years of his life to Boston University, 25 of them as its president, but his tireless dedication was instrumental in transforming BU from a small, struggling, bankrupt, and unremarkable university into the top-tier academic institution that it has become. Your failure to put Silber’s photograph on your cover, and to have the appropriate coverage of his years of service and his passing, in the front pages of the magazine, is simply unconscionable.

It is my opinion that you owe Silber’s family, and the Boston University community, an apology. In the meantime, please unsubscribe me from your magazine and, most certainly, from your list of potential donors.

Stephanie A. Herbert
(Law ’95)
Vienna, Va.

DEFINING LIFE
After reading “What Is Life?” (Winter–Spring 2013), I felt there was something lacking. I was surprised that there was no mention of God, his marvelous creation, the human body with all its complexities, the soul, which animates the human body and returns to its Maker upon death. To me this is more believable than the idea that we crawled out of the ocean as an amoeba and grew into such complex human beings.

Joseph D. Gomes
(DED ’58)
Bristol, R.I.

FOR THE RECORD
I was very pleased to see a terrific feature article (“Taste Makers,” Winter–Spring 2013) on my industry, the industry of craft beer, in Bostonia. However, I must correct the implication that the Pink Boots Society is an “all-women beer club.”

The Pink Boots Society (PBS) is not a “club,” rather, it’s a professional organization of women in the brewing industry. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of professional women in the beer industry through education. We are about to announce our first scholarship recipient on behalf of the PBS and the Siebel Institute in Chicago.

Your story implies that the society is among other consumer-driven organizations. Being referred to as an “all-women beer club” displayed a lack of research on the organization. A little fact-checking may have properly represented its mission and function, to recognize the many women professionals in the beer industry.

I am a brewer and alumna of Boston University. I spent seven years brewing in my alma mater’s backyard, at Cambridge Brewing Company, and am currently brewmaster for Bluejacket, a brewery under construction in Washington, D.C. While I may not be at the top of a company like Al Marzzi (COM’90) or Garrett Oliver (CGS’81, COM’83), I have been a very active and prominent member of this industry for several years.

It would have been nice to be recognized along with my fellow BU alumni for our successes in this industry, into which we have all poured much blood, sweat, and tears.

Megan O’Leary Parisi
(CFA ’91, ’93)
Chevy Chase, Md.